FMDB *Transactions on Sustainable Techno Learning*

Correlating the Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution Strategies of School Leaders

Restituto M. Millondaga[1*], Demar G. Cahilig[2], Runato A. Basañes[3]

[1]Department of Education, Egana National High School, Sibalom, Antique, Panay, Philippines.
[2]Department of Education, Sibalom South District Office, Sibalom, Antique, Panay, Philippines.
[3]Department of Education, University of Antique, Sibalom, Antique, Philippines.
restitutojr.millondaga@deped.gov.ph[1], demar.cahilig001@deped.gov.ph[2], runato.basanes@antiquespride.edu.ph[3]

Abstract: This descriptive correlational study examined the emotional intelligence and conflict resolution tactics of Southern Antique public secondary school leaders. We used the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and Conflict Mode Instrument to collect data. Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test for independent samples, one-way ANOVA, Tukey HSD, and Pearson's r with inferential data set at 0.05 in a two-tailed test were employed. The study found that school leaders have "very high" emotional intelligence and "very good" conflict resolution skills, both collectively and by sex, age, highest educational attainment, and length of experience. School leaders' emotional intelligence differed by sex in regulating emotions and empathy, as well as social skills, with experience length being a significant factor, although age and highest educational achievement were not. Sex significantly affected school leaders' conflict resolution tactics, although age, highest educational attainment, and length of experience did not. A positive significant relationship was found between school leaders' emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies in managing emotions, accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, and compromising; motivating oneself with competing; empathy with all five CRS dimensions; and social skills with collaborating. A policy recommendation was made to enhance school leaders' emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Conflict Resolution Strategies; Public Secondary; School Leaders; Statements of Demand and Change; Interdependent Relationships; Management and Leadership.

Received on: 26/05/2024, **Revised on:** 04/08/2024, **Accepted on:** 11/09/2024, **Published on:** 09/12/2024

Journal Homepage: https://www.fmdbpub.com/user/journals/details/FTSTL

DOI: https://doi.org/10.69888/FTSTL.2024.000344

Cite as: R. M. Millondaga, D. G. Cahilig, and R. A. Basañes, "Correlating the Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution Strategies of School Leaders," *FMDB Transactions on Sustainable Techno Learning*., vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 194–214, 2024.

1. Introduction

In today's complex and rapidly changing educational landscape, emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical factor in effective conflict management and leadership. Research has shown that leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence are more successful in managing conflict and achieving their organisational goals. In this context, emotional intelligence can be applied to conflict management, including the use of empathy, active listening, and effective communication. Conflicts in educational settings arise from diverse sources, including miscommunications, resource scarcity, opposing values, and cultural

*Corresponding author.

differences. These conflicts involve not only students and teachers but also among teachers themselves, impacting various aspects of school functioning. In the Philippines, conflicts within educational institutions are similarly prevalent and stem from various factors, including cultural diversity, differing socio-economic backgrounds, and the significant relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and conflict management skills (CMS), emphasising the need for effective conflict resolution strategies tailored to the local context. This underscores the importance of EI in navigating the complex social dynamics within Filipino schools. Conflict in educational settings impacts the quality of the learning environment and teacher performance, underscoring the importance of emotional intelligence in conflict management. Additionally, emotional expression is a crucial component of conflict management, underscoring the importance of emotional intelligence in this context.

Effective conflict management styles and strong leadership are crucial in mitigating the negative effects of conflicts on school performance. Effective conflict management can lead to positive outcomes, including increased creativity and innovation within schools. Therefore, educational institutions must implement effective mediation and communication practices to address conflicts and maintain a positive school environment. Despite theoretical discussions, empirical research on EI and conflict resolution in school leadership, particularly in the southern Antique, is limited. Understanding how EI influences conflict resolution strategies among school leaders can inform evidence-based policies and interventions tailored to local educational needs, fostering collaboration and effective problem-solving. By identifying factors that shape leaders' approaches to conflict, the research aimed to guide the development of evidence-based policies and interventions tailored to local educational needs. These initiatives have the potential to foster collaboration and effective problem-solving, benefiting the entire school community. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies among public secondary school leaders in southern Antique, Philippines.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The researcher assumed that emotional intelligence is crucial to effective conflict resolution within an organisation, including educational institutions. The theoretical framework of this study is grounded on Goleman's EI Performance Model and Thomas and Kilmann's Conflict Management Theory, providing a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between emotional intelligence (EI) and conflict resolution strategies among secondary school leaders in southern Antique. Central to this framework is the concept of emotional intelligence, as defined by Goleman's EI Performance Model. According to Goleman, EI is a cluster of skills and competencies focused on four key capabilities: self-awareness, relationship management, social awareness, and emotional regulation. Goleman argues that these four capabilities form the basis of 12 'subscales' of EI. He suggests that these subscales are: emotional self-awareness, emotional self-control, adaptability, achievement orientation, positive outlook, influence, coaching and mentoring, empathy, conflict management, teamwork, organisational awareness, and inspirational leadership. Furthermore, Thomas and Kilmann's (TKI) conflict management theory enriches the framework by offering a structured approach to understanding and navigating conflicts within educational settings. Their model provides a range of strategies, including rivalry, cooperation, compromise, avoidance, and accommodation, demonstrating its versatility and relevance in conflict management across various contexts. By integrating both emotional intelligence and conflict management theories, this framework offers a comprehensive perspective on the factors influencing conflict resolution strategies among school leaders.

2.2. Emotional Intelligence of School Leaders

Emotional intelligence is a crucial trait for school leaders, as it impacts job satisfaction, well-being, and leadership effectiveness. Studies emphasise the significance of emotional intelligence in enhancing school improvement, fostering resilience, and promoting effective leadership styles.

Definitions and Models of Emotional Intelligence: Emotional intelligence can be conceptualised through various models, including competency models that view it as a single ability and mixed models that incorporate both personality traits and emotional intelligence. The Mayer and Salovey definition of emotional intelligence highlights its role in understanding and regulating emotions, suggesting that it can be learned and enhanced over time. Factors such as gender, parenting styles, and temperament influence the development of emotional intelligence, as outlined in the Multilevel Investment model. Emotional intelligence encompasses perceiving, accessing, understanding, and regulating emotions to support personal growth. Different models, such as ability, trait, and mixed models, emphasise emotional intelligence as the ability to process emotional information effectively. Widely recognised models include those by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, as well as Goleman and Bar-On. Emotional intelligence involves identifying, comprehending, and managing emotions in oneself and others to foster positive relationships.

The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership: Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in educational leadership, as it is positively related to various leadership styles and effectiveness. Research indicates a strong connection between emotional intelligence and components of transformational leadership, such as idealised influence, inspirational motivation, and individualised consideration, as well as contingent rewards in transactional leadership. Furthermore, emotional intelligence is identified as a measure for identifying potentially effective leaders and as a tool for developing effective leadership skills [10]. In the context of educational leadership, emotional intelligence provides leaders with new ways of thinking and acting by emphasising the importance of feelings and the continuous reflection, evaluation, and improvement of leadership and supervisory skills.

This is particularly important for academic leaders in higher educational institutions, where attention to emotional intelligence is essential for transformational leadership and effective decision-making. Additionally, emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between school principals' sustainable leadership behaviours and their diversity management skills, underscoring its significance in fostering inclusive and effective leadership in educational settings. Moreover, emotional intelligence is associated with leadership effectiveness in various educational contexts, including secondary schools, nursing education, and academic leadership in higher education. Studies have emphasised its importance in enhancing leadership performance and productivity in educational settings. Emotional intelligence is also a core element of leadership among headteachers, significantly affecting school and student performance. The impact of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness is evident in various domains, including developing collective goals, instilling an appreciation for work activities, generating enthusiasm and trust, encouraging flexibility in decision-making, and establishing a meaningful organisational identity. Educational leaders' emotions significantly influence decision-making, as emotions and cognition interact to shape decisions. Additionally, individual differences and organisational contexts impact leaders' emotions and subsequent decision-making processes. In higher education, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in fostering transformational leadership and informed decision-making among academic leaders.

Emotional intelligence also significantly impacts self-leadership, showing a positive effect. It is crucial for leadership emergence in small groups, indicating its importance in leadership development and decision-making processes. The incorporation of emotional intelligence in educational leadership preparation programs has implications for curriculum development and the future of educational leaders. In non-profit organisations, emotional intelligence skills improve the quality and effectiveness of decision-making processes [4]. Additionally, emotional intelligence influences the attribution of intentionality in leader-member relationships, impacting leadership dynamics. Emotional intelligence is essential for effective leadership communication, providing a framework for professional development, enhancing leadership capacity, and informing educational and curricular development. Furthermore, the relevance of emotional intelligence to leadership effectiveness is demonstrated by its contribution to leaders' self-awareness, self-discipline, motivation, and social skills. Effective academic leadership in higher education is critical, positively impacting school and student performance [5]. Emotional intelligence also impacts leadership in healthcare, enhancing resiliency, reducing burnout, improving communication, and increasing productivity. Emotional intelligence exhibits significant variance in self-perceptions and rater-perceptions of transformational leadership, specifically associating it with certain leadership styles. High emotional intelligence among educational leaders enables the effective implementation of various leadership styles, underscoring its importance in educational leadership.

Emotional intelligence also influences organisational culture. Studies have shown a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, emphasising its importance for senior-level managers. Organisational culture mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership practices, underscoring the influence of emotional intelligence on organisational dynamics [16]. Academic leaders in higher education must ensure effective decision-making and demonstrate transformational leadership. Moreover, emotional intelligence is linked to organisational commitment and citizenship behaviour. For instance, emotional intelligence, servant leadership, and organisational commitment have been shown to impact organisational citizenship behaviour significantly [3]. Emotional intelligence assessments in hiring can determine job satisfaction, organisational commitment levels, and leadership type preferences, ultimately influencing organisational performance. Emotional intelligence also shapes the organisational culture within small and medium-sized enterprises and other contexts, influencing work environments.

Assessment Tools for Emotional Intelligence: Various tools are available for assessing emotional intelligence, including the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI), Emotional Intelligence Appraisal (EIA) Intelligence Version, Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale (LEAS), and Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT). These tools have been utilised in various studies to assess emotional intelligence across different contexts, including academia, healthcare, and entrepreneurship. Researchers have employed tools such as the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) and the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) to assess emotional intelligence levels and their impact on factors including job satisfaction, burnout, academic performance, and mental health. The use of standardised tools in these studies underscores the importance of accurate and reliable assessments in understanding the role of emotional intelligence across various domains.

Factors Influencing Emotional Intelligence: Demographic factors, such as sex, age, educational attainment, and work experience, have been shown to influence the emotional intelligence of school leaders significantly. Studies have highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in enhancing school leaders' capacity for change, job satisfaction, and overall well-being.

Sex: Sex can indeed play a role in influencing emotional intelligence among school leaders. Research has shown that gender can interact with emotional intelligence levels, influencing how school leaders perform emotional labour. Studies have also shown that demographic factors, such as gender, can significantly influence emotional intelligence levels, with results indicating variations in emotional intelligence based on gender. Furthermore, evidence suggests that women leaders with high emotional intelligence may exhibit superior leadership performance, indicating a positive direct effect of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness.

Age: Age is a significant factor influencing the emotional intelligence of school leaders. Research has shown that emotional intelligence tends to increase with age among school administrators. Emotional intelligence is crucial for effective school leadership. Studies have linked emotional intelligence to leadership quality, job performance, and leadership effectiveness. As school leaders age, their emotional intelligence can positively impact their leadership style, job satisfaction, and overall well-being [12]. Therefore, understanding the influence of age on emotional intelligence is essential for the development of successful school leaders.

Educational Attainment: Educational attainment has been shown to significantly influence the emotional intelligence of school leaders, impacting their ability to manage change effectively and lead inclusively. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in the success of school leaders and is linked to improved academic achievement. Studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance and behaviour. Enhancing emotional intelligence levels among school administrators indirectly contributes to the development of cognitive flexibility skills. Principals with higher emotional intelligence levels tend to apply effective conflict management strategies. Therefore, developing emotional intelligence in school leaders can enhance leadership performance and positively impact school effectiveness.

Length of experience: The duration of experience is a significant factor influencing emotional intelligence among various professionals, including caregivers, teachers, and auditors. Research indicates that emotional intelligence tends to increase with work experience as individuals mature over time. Moreover, emotional intelligence has been linked to long-term affective benefits and can positively impact various aspects of performance, such as team cohesion and job performance. Studies have shown that emotional intelligence can be acquired and improved with practice and that accumulated life experiences contribute to its development. Additionally, the influence of emotional intelligence on various outcomes, including academic achievement, employee performance, and leadership quality, has been well-documented.

2.3. Conflict Resolution Strategies of School Leaders

Conflict resolution strategies are crucial in educational settings to maintain harmony and promote effective communication among students, educators, and staff. Various approaches, including competition, avoidance, accommodation, compromise, and collaboration, have been identified as effective strategies. These strategies are applicable in diverse educational contexts and can be effective in preventing violence through partnerships. Teachers often face the challenge of developing conflict resolution strategies to address conflicts among students and faculty. However, resources for teaching these strategies often lack detailed implementation tools. Implementing educational modules regarding conflict resolution has been shown to improve compliance and best practices within pediatric inpatient units. Historical and sociological perspectives have identified various strategies, such as avoidance, assimilation, coercion, cooperation, and settlement. Research has explored the types of conflict resolution strategies used by early childhood educators and their effectiveness. Implementing effective conflict resolution programs in a whole-school context has positive effects extending beyond the classroom. Different strategies are required for various situations, emphasising the need for adaptable approaches. In software engineering, systematic strategies have been developed to address conflicts arising during the software development process. Educational approaches fostering negotiation and constructivist methods guide children through conflict resolution, promoting peace in the classroom. These strategies are also applied within clinical settings to address conflicts among healthcare professionals.

Successful school leaders are expected to develop conflict management skills to achieve positive outcomes, ensuring that relationships are not adversely affected. Interpersonal approaches to conflict resolution are effective when embedded within structural and cultural nonviolent strategies. Recommendations for improving conflict resolution skills in educational settings include making educational materials readily accessible to staff. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education has recognised the importance of conflict resolution skills in the training of residents. Civic Education provides awareness of fundamental rights, empowers citizens for effective decision-making, fosters critical thinking, imparts conflict resolution skills, and helps in appreciating cultural diversity.

Factors Influencing Strategy Choice: Demographics such as gender, age, educational background, and experience can influence the strategy choices of school leaders. Research suggests that these factors play a role in shaping the decisions and actions of school leaders.

Sex: Sex can significantly influence the strategies chosen by school leaders. Research suggests that the gender roles modelled by school leaders can influence students' perceptions of gender norms. Women leaders often employ resilience and diverse leadership approaches, fostering feminist consciousness within their schools and organisations. Additionally, feminised leadership styles can present challenges for women leaders [15]. Understanding how gender intersects with leadership styles and decision-making processes is crucial for promoting gender equality in educational leadership. By recognising and leveraging the unique experiences and perspectives of female leaders, schools can foster more inclusive and effective leadership practices.

Age: Age is a significant demographic factor influencing the strategy choice of school leaders. Research has shown that school leader characteristics, including age, play a role in decision-making processes related to strategy selection. Additionally, factors such as prior experience, role type, and background demographics are considered in the context of strategy planning and implementation. Furthermore, studies have highlighted age as a distinguishing variable affecting attitudes and decisions in school choice. Understanding how age and other demographic factors influence the actions of school leaders is crucial for comprehending enrollment patterns and strategic decision-making processes.

Educational attainment has a significant influence on the strategic choices made by school leaders. Principals who undergo training related to human capital, executive leadership, school culture, and strategic operations perceive these activities as highly influential [6]. Additionally, factors such as individual competencies, prior experiences, and feasibility considerations impact school leaders' decisions on implementation planning and strategy selection. Effective leadership strategies, when imparted through training and support, can drive the adoption of innovative practices in schools. Furthermore, the interaction between school leaders and their environment plays a crucial role in shaping the strategies employed for school effectiveness [1].

Length of experience: The experience of school leaders significantly influences their strategy choices. Experienced leaders are more likely to prioritise training related to human capital, executive leadership, and strategic operations, all of which are crucial for effective leadership [6]. Additionally, the organisational culture cultivated by leaders through hiring practices and professional development opportunities can either stagnate or enhance student growth. School leaders recognise that environmental opportunities and threats play a vital role in shaping their strategies and professional conduct, emphasising the importance of adapting to the external environment for effective school management [1].

2.4. Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution

The relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and conflict resolution has been extensively studied across various fields, including human resource development, workplace bullying, negotiation, and conflict management. Research has consistently shown that emotional intelligence has a significant influence on conflict resolution, particularly in organisational settings. For example, studies have found that emotional intelligence is associated with preferred styles of conflict resolution and can prevent the arousal of task, process, and relationship conflicts [14]. Additionally, emotional intelligence has been shown to moderate the relationship between workplace bullying and flourishing, as well as the positive association of proactive behaviour with workplace anxiety and work-family conflict. Furthermore, emotional intelligence has been found to influence negotiation outcomes, rapport, and counterpart satisfaction in a negotiation context. Moreover, emotional intelligence has been linked to conflict resolution preferences in different cultures, suggesting that sociocultural norms of conflict interaction mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution.

In specific professions such as nursing and education, emotional intelligence has been found to impact job satisfaction, performance, and conflict resolution strategies. For instance, in the nursing profession, emotional intelligence has been shown to affect job satisfaction and performance, while in education, emotional intelligence weakens the influence of role conflict on employee performance. Additionally, emotional intelligence has been linked to the behaviour styles of middle managers in business communication and is related to a process-oriented approach in negotiations. In addition to its impact on conflict resolution, emotional intelligence has been studied concerning negotiation effectiveness, mindfulness, and intercultural challenges in managing workplace conflict [9]; [8]. Studies have also highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in developing evidence-based negotiation expertise in emotion management, emphasising the strategic display and response to emotions in negotiations.

Organisational Culture and Conflict Management: Organisational culture plays a crucial role in shaping conflict management within organisations. This emphasises the significance of a conflict culture perspective, which provides new

insights into the dynamics of conflict management in organisational contexts. This perspective extends beyond the individual level and sheds light on how leaders influence conflict cultures and their organisational-level consequences. The work of Roy and Perrin [7] further supports this by demonstrating how organisational culture is a key element in explaining the sources of conflict and conflict handling in high- and repeated-conflict situations [7]. Pérez-Yus et al. [8] highlight the impact of cultural differences and acculturation factors on post-acquisition conflict, showing that organisational cultural differences and preservation increase conflict, while partner attractiveness decreases conflict. This highlights the impact of organisational culture on conflict dynamics. Moreover, Ullah [14] reveals that cultural values and temperament are predictors of conflict management styles, providing comprehensive evidence for the predictors of conflict management style preference. Explores the influence of conflict management culture on job satisfaction, identifying dominant, collaborative, and avoidant conflict management cultures and their impact on organisational dynamics. This aligns with the notion that conflict management styles have a positive correlation with organisational performance, as demonstrated by Wei et al. [16].

Nir [1] emphasises the impact of organisational culture on informal conflict management, highlighting the need to consider the implications of culture on conflict management within organisations. This is further supported by the work of Hess [4], who argues that the benefits of cultural diversity, including constructive conflict, are realised when an organisational culture of diversity underlies the management of that diversity. In addition, the study by Perkasa et al. [3] highlights that due to differences in organisational culture, universities and companies tend to employ "self-referential standards" when considering their values, management philosophy, and organisational practices, resulting in inefficient cooperation. This highlights the crucial role of organisational culture in shaping collaborative efforts and conflict resolution.

3. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and conflict resolution strategies among public secondary school leaders in southern Antique. Demographic factors included sex, age, educational attainment, and length of experience, as well as the emotional intelligence levels and the selection of conflict resolution strategies. Data on respondents' level of EI were collected using the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQue) adopted from Goleman [2]. For their conflict resolution strategies, the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI), adapted from Kilmann and Thomas [13], was employed. This study was conducted in twenty-three (23) public secondary schools in the southern Antique, Philippines, which are all under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education (DepEd) – Schools Division of Antique. The respondents of this study were the thirty-nine (39) school leaders from public secondary schools within southern Antique, Philippines. These school leaders include principals, assistant principals, department heads, and other administrative personnel actively engaged in managing and leading public schools under the supervision of the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Schools Division of Antique. The selection of respondents is based on their roles and responsibilities in overseeing educational operations, decision-making processes, and conflict resolution within the public school system (Table 1).

Table 1: Shows the distribution of respondents according to variables

Variable	F	%
A. Entire Group	39	100
B. Sex		
Male	14	36
Female	25	64
C. Age		
Young	23	59
Old	16	41
D. Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	14	36
Master's Degree	19	49
Doctorate	6	15
E. Length of Experience		
Short	10	26
Average	15	38
Long	14	36

The instruments consisted of three parts. Part I collected demographic information about the respondents, including sex, age, highest level of educational attainment, and length of experience. Part II is the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQue), and Part III is the Kilmann-Conflict Mode Instrument (KCI).

The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire [2]: The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQue) is one of the most commonly used EI tests. Developed by Goleman [2], it comprises five domains: self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills. Self-awareness points to the ability to recognize what one feels and to understand their habitual emotional responses to events; managing emotions is the ability to stay focused and think even when confronted by powerful emotions; motivating oneself is the ability to use one's deepest emotions to move and guide them towards their goals; empathy is the ability to sense, understand and respond to what other people are feeling; and social skill is the ability to manage, influence and inspire emotions in others. In all, the IEQue has 50 items. To answer the instrument, respondents were asked to rate their emotional intelligence using the options: 4 – Always, 3 – Sometimes, 2 – Rarely, and 1 – Never.

The Thomas Kilmann-Conflict Mode Instrument [13]: The TKI is used by individuals and professionals to understand how different handling styles impact personal and group dynamics. It is the number one best-selling instrument for conflict resolution. This easy-to-use exercise is powerful and does not require debriefing by a professional counsellor (Human Capital, 2023). The assessment identifies a person's preferred conflict-handling style within five different modes: accommodating (unassertive and cooperative), avoiding (unassertive and uncooperative), collaborating (assertive and cooperative), competing (assertive and uncooperative), and compromising (between assertive and cooperative). The TKI consists of thirty (30) pairs of statements. To answer the instruments, the respondents were asked to determine their conflict resolution strategies using the options 4 – Always, 3 – Sometimes, 2 – Rarely, and 1 – Never. The scores of the individual respondents in the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQue) were determined by adding the numerical equivalents, and the means were computed (Table 2). The means were transformed into a numerical scale with the corresponding verbal description presented below:

Table 2: Scale interpretation

Scale	Description
3.26-4.00	Very high
2.51-3.25	High
1.76 – 2.50	low
1.00 – 1.75	Very Low

Likewise, the scores of the individual respondents in the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) were determined by adding the numerical equivalents, and the means were computed. The means were transformed into a numerical scale, along with the corresponding verbal description. Ethical considerations played a fundamental role in every stage of this research study, ensuring the protection of participants' rights, privacy, and well-being. Firstly, informed consent was provided and obtained from all respondents, clearly outlining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the potential risks and benefits involved. Participants were given the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the data collection and analysis process. Any personally identifiable information collected from participants was kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

Data were securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel involved in the research paper. Anonymity was ensured by assigning unique identifiers to participants, thereby dissociating responses from individual identities. This approach safeguarded participants' privacy and minimised the risk of identification or stigmatisation. Moreover, the research adhered to principles of fairness and equity, ensuring that all participants were treated with respect and dignity regardless of their demographic characteristics or professional roles. Measures were implemented to prevent any form of coercion, undue influence, or discrimination during the recruitment and data collection process. Finally, the research upheld the principles of academic integrity and transparency. Any conflicts of interest or biases were disclosed, and the research findings were reported accurately and objectively, without misrepresentation or manipulation.

4. Results and Discussion

Level of Emotional Intelligence of School Leaders: The level of emotional intelligence of public secondary school leaders in terms of self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills as to sex, age, educational attainment, and length of experience was measured and described using their mean scores in the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQue).

Entire group: Data in Table 3 show that as an entire group, the public secondary school leaders have very high level of emotional intelligence (M=3.24, SD=.24). Results likewise reveal that the respondents' level of emotional intelligence in all the identified dimensions is also very high with self-awareness attaining the highest mean value of 3.57 (SD=.27). The rest of the aspects of emotional intelligence obtained the following mean scores: empathy (M=3.44, SD=.33), social skill (M=3.43, SD=.30), motivating oneself (M=3.42, SD=.29) and lastly, managing emotions (M=3.27, SD=.32). These results indicate that

the respondent school leaders can manifest their ability to manage both their own emotions and understand the emotions of people around them as well. Based on the results, it can be inferred that the respondents have nearly identical mean and standard deviation scores across all the identified aspects. These findings were supported by Parrish [5], who concluded that secondary school leaders must possess adequate emotional intelligence, as it is associated with leadership effectiveness. The same positions were presented by Pulido-Martos et al. [9]. Palmer et al. [10] also contended that educational leaders possess high emotional intelligence, as this is essential in their decision-making process, particularly in aspects of professional and curricular development. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3: Level of emotional intelligence of school leaders as an entire group

Dimension	Mean	SD	Description
Self-awareness	3.57	.27	Very high
Managing emotions	3.27	.32	Very high
Motivating oneself	3.42	.29	Very high
Empathy	3.44	.33	Very high
Social skill	3.43	.30	Very high
Over-all Mean	3.42	.24	Very high

Regarding sex, the results in Table 4 reveal that both male and female school leaders have a very high level of emotional intelligence, with overall means of 3.51 (SD = .25) and 3.38 (SD = .22), respectively. Among male school leaders, it was indicated that they have very high levels of EI in all five dimensions with the highest mean value attained self-awareness (M=3.61, SD=.30). This is followed by empathy (M=3.59, SD=.28), social skill (M=3.51, SD=.31), motivating oneself (M=3.45, SD=.30) and managing emotions (M=3.41, SD=.30), all described as very high. These results suggest that although male school leaders are capable of managing their own emotions and understanding why other people behave the way they do, they are particularly adept at recognising their unique personal feelings and emotions during a given situation. Female school leaders have also demonstrated very high levels of EI in all aspects, except for managing emotions, where the mean value (3.19, SD = .30) is described as high. Like their male colleagues, the highest mean is also indicated in self-awareness (M = 3.54, SD = .26). This is followed by motivating oneself (M = 3.40, SD = .29), social skills (M = 3.38, SD = .29), and empathy (M = 3.36, SD = .34).

Although it can be observed that the mean values attained by female school leaders are slightly lower than those of males, these still have the same statistical description, suggesting that they too are highly skilled in dealing with their own emotions as well as those of other people. It is also worth noting that the standard deviations for both categories are consistently low, indicating that the data points are tightly clustered around the mean score for each aspect. The foregoing findings are consistent with those of Pretorius and Plaatjies [11], who state that educational leaders generally possess high emotional intelligence, enabling them to implement various leadership styles. Suleman et al. [12] present a similar view, suggesting that school leaders of different genders can exhibit high emotional intelligence, which is credited for their effective decision-making and transformational leadership. However, the study by Odell [15] generally exhibits high emotional intelligence, enabling them to lead more effectively. Table 4 contains the data.

Table 4: Level of emotional intelligence of school leaders by sex

Dimension	Male			Female		
	Mean	SD	Description	Mean	SD	Description
Self-awareness	3.61	.30	Very high	3.54	.26	Very high
Managing emotions	3.41	.30	Very high	3.19	.30	High
Motivating oneself	3.45	.30	Very high	3.40	.29	Very high
Empathy	3.59	.28	Very high	3.36	.34	Very high
Social skill	3.51	.31	Very high	3.38	.29	Very high
Over-all Mean	3.51	.25	Very high	3.38	.22	Very high

Regarding age: As presented in Table 5, the results for this variable reveal that school leaders have a very high level of emotional intelligence, with overall means of 3.37 (SD = .24) for the younger ones and 3.45 (SD = .22) for their older colleagues. Young school leaders demonstrated high levels of EI in all five dimensions, except for managing emotions (M = 3.21, SD = .33), which was described as high. For this group, the highest mean value was attained in self-awareness (M = 3.46, SD = .31). This was followed by empathy (M = 3.44, SD = .28), social skills (M = 3.34, SD = .28), and motivating oneself (M = 3.28, SD = .30), all of which were described as very high. These results suggest that young school leaders can competently manage their own emotions and effectively handle the behaviour of others. Old school leaders on the other hand, manifested

very high levels of EI in all the identified aspects with self-awareness on top of the others (M=3.62, SD=.24). This is followed by social skills (M=3.47, SD=.30), empathy (M=3.45, SD=.36), motivating oneself (M=3.43, SD=.30) and managing oneself (M=3.30, SD=.31). It can be observed that the mean values attained by younger school leaders are slightly lower than those of their older colleagues. However, these still have the same statistical description, suggesting that both groups are highly skilled in handling their own emotions and even those of other people they encounter in their daily living activities. Furthermore, it is notable that the standard deviations for all dimensions are consistently low, indicating that the data points are closely clustered around the means. The foregoing findings are consistent with those of Wei et al. [16], who concluded that emotional intelligence tends to increase with age. Previous studies have also shown that as school leaders age, their emotional intelligence improves, which in turn affects their leadership style, job satisfaction, and overall well-being [12]. Suleman et al. [12] highlighted the influence of age on the emotional intelligence of school leaders. Table 5 contains the data.

Table 5: Level of emotional intelligence of school leaders by age

Dimension	Young			Old		
	Mean	**SD**	**Description**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Description**
Self-awareness	3.46	.31	Very high	3.62	.24	Very high
Managing emotions	3.21	.33	High	3.30	.31	Very high
Motivating oneself	3.38	.28	Very high	3.43	.30	Very high
Empathy	3.44	.28	Very high	3.45	.36	Very high
Social skill	3.34	.28	Very high	3.47	.30	Very high
Over-all Mean	3.37	.24	Very high	3.45	.24	Very high

As to eeducational aattainment: Data in Table 6 show that as to educational attainment, school leaders in all three categories have very high levels of emotional intelligence thus: bachelor's degree (M=3.45, SD=.28), master's degree (M=3.39, SD=.21) and doctorate (M=3.47, SD=.26). A closer scrutiny of the results reveal that school leaders with bachelor's degree have very high levels of EI in all of the five dimensions topped by self-awareness (M=3.57, SD=.35). This is followed by empathy (M=3.50, SD=.33), social skills (M=3.47, SD=.34), motivating oneself (3.40, SD=.29) and managing emotions (M=3.29, SD=.34). School leaders who hold master's degree also have very high levels of EI in all of the identified aspects except for managing emotions (M=3.25, SD=.28), described as high. For this group, the highest mean (3.56, SD=.23) is indicated in self-awareness, followed by empathy (M=3.42, SD=.34), motivating oneself (3.39, SD=.30) and social skills (M=3.34, SD=.24). Finally, school leaders who are doctorate holders also manifested very high levels of EI with social skills as the dimension with the highest mean value of 3.56 (SD=.25). This is followed by self-awareness (M=3.56, SD=.25), motivating oneself (3.55, SD=.25), empathy (M=3.38, SD=.35) and managing emotions (M=3.27, SD=.41).

These results suggest that school leaders from the three categories of educational attainment possess high levels of skill in managing, controlling, and understanding their feelings and emotions, as well as those of the people they encounter daily, particularly in terms of self-awareness, empathy, and social skills. Results also show that the data are closely situated to the means for each aspect based on the extracted standard deviations. These findings concur with the position of Palmer et al. [10], who stated that the higher the degree an education leader achieves, the better their emotional intelligence gets. Research on emotional intelligence has repeatedly shown that as educational leaders further their professional growth and development, this also contributes to the refinement and stability of their emotional intelligence. Table 6 presents the results.

Table 6: Level of emotional intelligence of school leaders according to highest educational attainment

Dimension	Bachelor's degree			Master's degree			Doctorate		
	Mean	**SD**	**Desc.**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Desc.**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Desc.**
Self-awareness	3.57	.35	Very high	3.56	.23	Very high	3.56	.25	Very high
Managing emotions	3.29	.34	Very high	3.25	.28	High	3.27	.41	Very high
Motivating oneself	3.40	.29	Very high	3.39	.30	Very high	3.55	.25	Very high
Empathy	3.50	.33	Very high	3.42	.34	Very high	3.38	.35	Very high
Social skill	3.47	.34	Very high	3.34	.24	Very high	3.57	.33	Very high
Over-all Mean	3.45	.28	Very high	3.39	.21	Very high	3.47	.26	Very high

As to Length of Experience: In this variable, results in Table 7 reveal that school leaders belonging to the three categories identified have manifested very high levels of emotional intelligence based on the overall means thus: short (M=3.33, SD=.22), average (M=3.51, SD=.19) and long (M=3.52, SD=.27). Examined closely, the results reveal that school leaders with short years of experience have very high levels of EI in all of the identified aspects except for managing emotions (M=3.14, SD=.28), described as high. For this group, the highest mean (3.51, SD=.30) is indicated in self-awareness, followed by empathy

(M=3.36, SD=.33), social skills (M=3.33, SD=.25) and motivating oneself (3.32, SD=.26). Further, school leaders with average years of experience have very high levels of EI in all of the five dimensions with self-awareness getting the highest mean of 3.63 (SD=.25). This is followed by social skills (M=3.55, SD=.30), empathy (M=3.50, SD=.23, motivating oneself (3.48, SD=.26) and managing emotions (M=3.38, SD=.27). Finally, school leaders who have long years of experience also manifested very high levels of EI with self-awareness as the dimension with the highest mean value of 3.61 (SD=.24). This is followed by empathy (M=3.56, SD=.44) and motivating oneself (3.56, SD=.33), social skills (M=3.46, SD=.37) and managing emotions (M=3.41, SD=.34).

These results indicate that school leaders belonging to the three categories of experience are very competent in managing, controlling, and understanding their own feelings and emotions, as well as those of others, enabling them to deal with these individuals as effectively as possible. This competence is evident in the aspect of self-awareness, which has the highest score in all categories of this variable. Results also show that the data are closely clustered along the means for each aspect based on the resulting standard deviations. These findings agree with those of Pulido-Martos et al. [9], who reported that emotional intelligence among school leaders tends to increase with work experience. Several more researchers have found that accumulated work experience contributes to the development of emotional intelligence among school principals. Table 7 presents the results.

Table 7: Level of emotional intelligence of school leaders as to length of experience

Dimension	Short			Average			Long		
	Mean	SD	Desc.	Mean	SD	Desc.	Mean	SD	Desc.
Self-awareness	3.51	.30	Very high	3.63	.25	Very high	3.61	.24	Very high
Managing emotions	3.14	.28	High	3.38	.27	Very high	3.41	.34	Very high
Motivating oneself	3.32	.26	Very high	3.48	.26	Very high	3.56	.33	Very high
Empathy	3.36	.33	Very high	3.50	.23	Very high	3.56	.44	Very high
Social skill	3.33	.25	Very high	3.55	.30	Very high	3.46	.37	Very high
Over-all Mean	3.33	.22	Very high	3.51	.19	Very high	3.52	.27	Very high

Conflict Resolution Strategies of School Leaders: The conflict resolution strategies of public secondary school leaders in terms of accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, competing, and compromising as to sex, age, educational attainment, and length of experience were determined and described using their mean scores in the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI).

Entire group: Data in Table 8 show that as an entire group, the public secondary school leaders have very good conflict resolution strategies (M=3.34, SD=.30). Results likewise reveal that the respondents' conflict resolution strategies in three of the five components are also very good thus: collaborating (M=3.38, SD=.38). There were two dimensions – accommodating and avoiding – where the school leaders manifested good conflict resolution strategies with mean values of 3.21 (SD=.39) and 3.11 (SD=.43), respectively. These results indicate that respondent school leaders are aware of and utilise strategies that enable them to resolve conflicts within their organisations effectively. Based on the results, these abilities are more evident in the areas of collaboration, compromise, and competition. Additionally, it can be noted that the resulting data are closely clustered around the means, given the consistently low standard deviation for each dimension. The foregoing findings align with the position of Pérez-Yus et al. [8], who reported that school leaders skilled in conflict resolution are generally successful in their roles. This is further affirmed by Parrish [5], who stated that school leaders have improved their respective educational contexts courtesy of their consistent practice of various conflict resolution strategies. Additionally, according to Hess [4], educational leaders are typically equipped with the ability to employ conflict resolution strategies. Table 8 presents the results.

Table 8: Conflict resolution strategies of school leaders as an entire group

Dimension	Mean	SD	Description
Accommodating	3.21	.39	Good
Avoiding	3.11	.43	Good
Collaborating	3.53	.38	Very good
Competing	3.38	.37	Very good
Compromising	3.44	.41	Very good
Over-all Mean	3.34	.30	Very good

Regarding sex, the results in Table 9 reveal that both male and female school leaders possess very good conflict resolution strategies, with overall means of 3.43 (SD = .16) and 3.28 (SD = .34), respectively. Among male school leaders, it was indicated

that they have very good CRS in all five dimensions, except for the avoidance dimension (M=3.24, SD=.27), which was described as good. For this group, the highest mean value of 3.61 (SD = .31) was observed in the compromising category. This is followed by collaborating (M = 3.60, SD = .29), competing (M = 3.39, SD = .32), and accommodating (M = 3.33, SD = .22), all of which are described as very good. These results suggest that although male school leaders are capable of settling conflicts amicably, they are particularly adept at doing so in the areas of compromising and collaborating. Conversely, the effectiveness of these two strategies may have already been proven by the respondents.

Meanwhile, female school leaders have also demonstrated very good CRS in three of the dimensions, with collaborating at the top, followed by competing and compromising, with mean values of 3.50 (SD=.42), 3.38 (SD=.40), and 3.34 (SD=.43), respectively. The female respondents reported possessing good CRS in the areas of accommodating (M = 3.14, SD = .45) and avoiding (M = 3.24, SD = .48). It can be observed that the mean values attained by female school leaders are slightly lower than those of their male counterparts. Still, the two groups have demonstrated very good CRS in similar dimensions, such as collaboration, competition, and compromise. It is also worth noting that the standard deviations for both categories are consistently low, indicating that the data points are tightly clustered around the mean of each aspect. The foregoing findings concur with those of Perkasa et al. [3], who reported that school leaders, regardless of sex, are generally competent in handling and resolving conflicts. The results are somewhat contradicted by previous findings that women school leaders are better equipped to utilise conflict resolution strategies compared to their male counterparts, a consequence of their feminised leadership style and efforts to promote gender equality in the field of educational leadership. Table 9 shows the results.

Table 9: Conflict resolution strategies of school leaders by sex

Dimension	Male			Female		
	Mean	**SD**	**Description**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Description**
Accommodating	3.33	.22	Very good	3.14	.45	Good
Avoiding	3.24	.27	Good	3.04	.48	Good
Collaborating	3.60	.29	Very good	3.50	.42	Very good
Competing	3.39	.32	Very good	3.38	.40	Very good
Compromising	3.61	.31	Very good	3.34	.43	Very good
Over-all Mean	3.43	.16	Very good	3.28	.34	Very good

Regarding age, Table 10 reveals that school leaders in both categories, young and old, possess very good conflict resolution strategies, with overall means of 3.36 (SD = .30) and 3.33 (SD = .30), respectively. Examined closely, the results show that young school leaders demonstrated very good CRS in four of the five dimensions, with the highest mean of 3.57 (SD = .42) obtained in the compromising dimension. This is followed by collaborating (M = 3.54, SD = .35), competing (M = 3.32, SD = .27), and accommodating (M = 3.28, SD = .47), all of which are described as very good. The lowest mean for young school leaders was observed in the aspect of avoiding (M = 3.08, SD = .42), but was still described as good. These results suggest that young school leaders are equipped with effective strategies that help them resolve conflicts in a manner acceptable to all parties concerned. Based on the results, these are more evident in the areas of compromising and collaborating.

Meanwhile, old school leaders have also shown very good CRS in three of the dimensions still with collaborating on top of the others (M=3.53, SD=.40), followed by competing (M=3.42, SD=.41) and compromising (M=3.38, SD=.40). Further, this group came out to possess good CRS in the areas of accommodating (M=3.18, SD=.35) and avoiding (M=3.13, SD=.43). It can be observed that the mean values attained by old school leaders are slightly lower than those of their younger colleagues. Still, it can be readily noticed that the two groups have manifested very good CRS in similar dimensions. These include collaboration, competition, and compromise. It is also worth noting that the standard deviations for both categories are consistently low, indicating that the data points are tightly clustered around the mean of each aspect. The foregoing findings are consistent with those of Parrish [5], who emphasised that age is crucial in the ability of school leaders to make decisions aimed at resolving upcoming or existing conflicts within the school. Odell [15] likewise posits that with age, school leaders become more competent in weighing issues relative to a particular conflict; hence, there is a better chance of not compromising one party in a conflict to advance the interest of the opposing side. Table 10 shows the results.

Table 10: Conflict resolution of school leaders by age

Dimension	Young			Old		
	Mean	**SD**	**Description**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Description**
Accommodating	3.28	.47	Very good	3.18	.35	Good
Avoiding	3.08	.42	Good	3.13	.43	Good
Collaborating	3.54	.35	Very good	3.53	.40	Very good

Competing	3.32	.27	Very good	3.42	.41	Very good
Compromising	3.57	.42	Very good	3.38	.39	Very good
Over-all Mean	3.36	.30	Very good	3.33	.30	Very good

As to highest educational attainment: Data in Table 11 show that as to educational attainment, school leaders in all three categories have very good conflict resolution strategies thus: bachelor's degree (M=3.36, SD=.24), master's degree (M=3.33, SD=.32) and doctorate (M=3.29, SD=.39). A closer scrutiny of the results reveal that school leaders with bachelor's degree have very good CRS in four of the five dimensions topped by collaborating (M=3.51, SD=.42). This is followed by compromising (M=3.43, SD=.41), competing (M=3.40, SD=.33) and accommodating (3.30, SD=.23). They have slightly lower CRS in terms of avoiding (M=3.17, SD=.28), which is described as good. Meanwhile, school leaders who hold master's degree have very good CRS in three dimensions including collaborating (M=3.52, SD=.32), compromising (M=3.43, SD=.41) and competing (M=3.37, SD=.41). This group indicated lower CRS described as good in two areas – accommodating and avoiding – with mean values of 3.21 (SD=.42) and 3.13 (SD=.45), respectively. Finally, school leaders who are doctoral holders also manifested very good CRS in three similar dimensions as those with a master's degree. These are: collaborating (M = 3.63, SD = .34), compromising (M = 3.50, SD = .45), and competing (M = 3.40, SD = .36). This group also scored lower in two components of CRS, including accommodating (M = 3.00, SD = .54) and avoiding (M = 2.93, SD = .61), which are described as good.

These results indicate that school leaders from the three categories of educational attainment are well-skilled in resolving or managing conflicts within their respective organisations. This competence is manifested in three similar groups of strategies: collaboration, compromise, and competition. The standard deviations are also consistently low, suggesting that the data points are closely gathered around the mean of each dimension. These findings are consistent with those of Tingle [6], who reported that school principals who undergo sustained training become better equipped to address issues at school. Research has shown that effective school leadership, which is essential in creating a conducive school environment that fosters collaboration rather than unhealthy competition, can be achieved if school leaders continue to advance their educational qualifications [1]. Table 11 presents the results.

Table 11: Conflict resolution strategies of school leaders according to highest educational attainment

Dimension	Bachelor's degree			Master's degree			Doctorate		
	Mean	SD	Desc.	Mean	SD	Desc.	Mean	SD	Desc.
Accommodating	3.30	.23	Very good	3.21	.42	Good	3.00	.54	Good
Avoiding	3.17	.28	Good	3.13	.45	Good	2.93	.61	Good
Collaborating	3.51	.42	Very good	3.52	.37	Very good	3.63	.34	Very good
Competing	3.40	.33	Very good	3.37	.41	Very good	3.40	.36	Very good
Compromising	3.43	.41	Very good	3.43	.41	Very good	3.50	.45	Very good
Over-all Mean	3.36	.24	Very good	3.33	.32	Very good	3.29	.39	Very good

As to length of experience: In this variable, data in Table 12 show that school leaders in all three categories have very good conflict resolution strategies thus: short (M=3.27, SD=.33), average (M=3.44, SD=.24) and long (M=3.33, SD=.27). Examined closely, results reveal that school leaders with short years of experience have very good CRS in three of the five dimensions with the highest mean of 3.54 (SD=.37) attained in collaborating. This is followed by compromising (M = 3.38, SD = .45) and competing (M = 3.36, SD = .42). They have slightly lower CRS scores in terms of accommodating (M = 3.11, SD = .41) and avoiding (M = 2.99, SD = .42), which is described as good. Meanwhile, school leaders with average years of experience have very good CRS in all five dimensions topped collaborating (M=3.60, SD=.40), followed by compromising (M=3.51, SD=.41), competing (M=3.43, SD=.28), accommodating (M=3.33, SD=.29) and avoiding (M=3.32, SD=.18). Finally, school leaders who have long years of experience manifested very good CRS in four dimensions with collaborating on top of the others (M=3.43, SD=.38), followed by compromising (M=3.48, SD=.28), competing (3.38, SD=.42) and accommodating (M=3.28, SD=.43). This group, however, scored lower in the aspect of avoiding (M=3.10, SD=.59), described as good.

These results indicate that school leaders from the three categories of experience can competently handle and amicably resolve conflicts that may arise within their midst. As with the other variables, this competence is consistently indicated in three similar dimensions that include collaborating, compromising, and competing. The standard deviations are also consistently low, suggesting that the data points are closely clustered around the mean of each aspect. These findings are supported by Tingle [6], who emphasised the significance of work experience in contributing to the development of school leaders' competence in managing conflicts within their school. Goleman [2] and Nir [1] also report similar findings regarding the significance of work experience as a determinant of school leaders' ability to adopt and effectively utilise various conflict resolution strategies. Table 12 presents the results.

Table 12: Conflict resolution strategies of school leaders as to length of experience

Dimension	Short			Average			Long		
	Mean	SD	Desc.	Mean	SD	Desc.	Mean	SD	Desc.
Accommodating	3.11	.41	Good	3.33	.29	Very good	3.28	.43	Very good
Avoiding	2.99	.42	Good	3.32	.18	Very good	3.10	.59	Good
Collaborating	3.54	.37	Very good	3.60	.40	Very good	3.43	.38	Very good
Competing	3.36	.42	Very good	3.43	.28	Very good	3.38	.38	Very good
Compromising	3.38	.45	Very good	3.51	.41	Very good	3.48	.28	Very good
Over-all Mean	3.27	.33	Very good	3.44	.24	Very good	3.33	.27	Very good

Differences in the Emotional Intelligence of School Leaders: The significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence of public secondary school leaders in terms of self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself and social skills as to sex and age were determined using t-test for independent samples, while One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the difference in the level of their EI as to highest educational attainment and length of experience. The significance level was set at 0.05 alpha.

As to sex: Results in Table 13 show that significant difference exists in the level of emotional intelligence of public secondary school leaders in terms of managing emotions where, $t(37) = 2.180$, $p < .05$ and empathy, $t(37) = 2.074$, $p < .05$. The p-value that is less than 0.05 level of significance implies that sex as a variable influence how the respondents understand, control and interpret their own and other peoples' feelings and emotions. This means that the level of emotional intelligence of male school leaders in these dimensions differs significantly from that of their female counterparts. The results indicate that the difference favours the female school leaders. On the other hand, results in the same table reveal that no significant difference exists in the level of emotional intelligence of public-school leaders in terms of self-awareness where, $t(37) = .686$, $p > .05$, motivating oneself, $t(37) = .515$, $p > .05$, and social skills, $t(37) = 1.289$, $p > .05$. The p-value that is greater than 0.05 level of significance suggests that the sex of the respondents has no bearing as regard their competence to manage and deal with differing human behavior, including their own. This means that the levels of emotional intelligence, specifically in terms of self-awareness, self-motivation, and social skills, among male school leaders do not significantly differ from those of their female colleagues. Based on the above findings, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the levels of emotional intelligence among public-school leaders in terms of managing emotions and empathy by sex, is rejected. However, in terms of self-awareness, motivation, and social skills, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The above findings on the influence of sex on the emotional intelligence of school leaders are affirmed by Palmer et al. [10]. The finding that female school leaders manifest higher EI was also supported by Hess [4]. It is noteworthy that, in all five dimensions of EI in this study, male school leaders have higher mean values compared to their female counterparts. However, significant differences in favour of the male respondents were observed in managing emotions and empathy. According to the literature review, it is established that sex indeed influences an individual's level of emotional intelligence. Managing emotions is considered the most crucial component of emotional intelligence, as it involves regulating emotions to respond appropriately to one's own and others' prevailing feelings or sentiments. According to Suleman et al. [12], men generally tend to regulate their emotions through actions rather than words. In this manner, they tend to become better emotional managers and, consequently, exhibit higher emotional intelligence. While people can express emotions through physical acts and gestures or by conversing about emotional issues, men tend to specialise more in action-based regulation of emotions than women, who tend to specialise more in verbal regulation of emotions.

Empathy, as discussed earlier, is the feeling of a person imagining themselves in another's situation, proverbially, "putting himself or herself in the other's shoes". The significant difference in this aspect, in favour of male school leaders, lacks support in previously completed research. A study by researchers from the University of Cambridge reported that, regardless of their geographical location or cultural or family background, women tend to be better at empathising with others than men. It was, however, emphasised that the study could not explain why women exhibited significantly more cognitive empathy than men, nor could it address individual differences among participants. In the case of this study, the researcher could not specifically pinpoint why male school leaders differed significantly in their EI in terms of empathy from their female colleagues. Table 13 has the findings.

Table 13: T-Test results of the difference in emotional intelligence of school leaders by sex

Emotional Intelligence	Mean		t value	df	Sig level
	Male	Female			
Self-awareness	3.61	3.54	.686	37	.497
Managing emotions	3.41	3.19	2.180*	37	.036

Motivating oneself	3.45	3.40	.515	37	.610
Empathy	3.59	3.36	2.074*	37	.045
Social skills	3.51	3.38	1.289	37	.205

As to age: In Table 14, results reveal that no significant difference exists in the level of emotional intelligence of public school leaders in all of the identified dimensions, thus: self-awareness, t (37) =-1.471, p > .05, managing emotions, t (37) =-.821, p > .05, motivating oneself, t (37) =-.506, p > .05, empathy, t (37) =-.067, p > .05 and social skills, t (37) =-1.304, p > .05. The p-value that is greater than 0.05 level of significance indicates that age as a variable does not influence the capability of the respondents to better understand and control their feelings and emotions including those who they come across with. This means that the level of emotional intelligence of young school leaders, in terms of the five identified dimensions, is similar to or identical to that of the older respondents. Based on the above results, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the levels of emotional intelligence among public school leaders in terms of self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills, as a function of age, is not rejected. These findings contradict those of Odell [15], who stated that age influences the emotional intelligence of school leaders. Table 14 presents the data.

Table 14: T-Test results of the difference in emotional intelligence of school leaders as to age

Emotional Intelligence	Mean		t value	df	Sig level
	Young	Old			
Self-awareness	3.46	3.62	-1.741	37	.090
Managing emotions	3.21	3.30	-.821	37	.417
Motivating oneself	3.38	3.43	-.506	37	.616
Empathy	3.44	3.45	-.067	37	.947
Social skills	3.34	3.47	-1.304	37	.200

As to the highest educational attainment: ANOVA results in Table 15 show that no significant difference exists in the level of emotional intelligence of public school leaders in all of the identified dimensions, thus: self-awareness, F (2, 36) =.997, p > 0.05, managing emotions, F (2, 36) =.924, p > 0.05, motivating oneself, F (2, 36) =.485, p > 0.05, empathy, F (2, 36) =.722, p > 0.05 and social skills, F (2, 36) =.229, p > 0.05. A p-value greater than 0.05 indicates that this variable does not significantly affect the capability of school leaders to understand, control, and manage their own emotions as well as those of the people they are dealing with. This means that the level of emotional intelligence among school leaders who hold bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees does not differ significantly from one another. In view thereof, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the levels of emotional intelligence among public-school leaders in terms of self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills, according to their highest educational attainment, is not rejected. These findings are inconsistent with the position of Pretorius and Plaatjies [11], who state that educational attainment can influence the level of emotional intelligence in school leaders. Table 15 contains the data.

Table 15: ANOVA results of the difference in emotional intelligence of school leaders according to the highest educational attainment

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-awareness	Between Groups	.001	2	.000	.003	.997
	Within Groups	2.846	36	.079		
	Total	2.847	38			
Managing emotions	Between Groups	.017	2	.008	.080	.924
	Within Groups	3.770	36	.105		
	Total	3.787	38			
Motivating oneself	Between Groups	.125	2	.062	.739	.485
	Within Groups	3.033	36	.084		
	Total	3.157	38			
Empathy	Between Groups	.076	2	.038	.329	.722
	Within Groups	4.160	36	.116		
	Total	4.236	38			
Social skills	Between Groups	.265	2	.133	1.535	.229
	Within Groups	3.109	36	.086		
	Total	3.374	38			

Regarding the length of experience, Table 16 reveals that a significant difference exists in the level of emotional intelligence among public-school leaders in terms of managing emotions, with $F(2, 36) = 0.038$, $p < 0.05$. A p-value less than 0.05, the level of significance, indicates that this variable influences the respondents' ability to understand, manage, and control their own and others' behaviour. Hence, it can be inferred that, in this dimension, the level of emotional intelligence of public school leaders with short, average, and long years of experience differs significantly from one another. However, results also show that no significant difference exists in the level of emotional intelligence of public school leaders in other dimensions, thus: self-awareness, $F (2, 36) =.399$, $p > 0.05$, motivating oneself, $F (2, 36) =.097$, $p > 0.05$, empathy, $F (2, 36) =.278$, $p > 0.05$ and social skills, $F (2, 36) =.128$, $p > 0.05$. A p-value greater than 0.05 indicates that this variable does not significantly affect the capability of school leaders to deal with their own and others' emotions. This means that, in terms of self-awareness, motivation, empathy, and social skills, the level of emotional intelligence among school leaders with short, average, and long years of experience does not differ significantly from one another. Based on the above findings, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence of public school leaders in terms of managing emotions, is rejected. Still, in terms of self-awareness, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills, the same null hypothesis is not rejected. These findings contradict the results of earlier research, which stated that the length or duration of work experience can significantly influence the level of emotional intelligence in school leaders, particularly in terms of managing emotions. Table 16 shows the results.

Table 16: ANOVA results of the difference in emotional intelligence of school leaders as to length of experience

		Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Self-awareness	Between Groups	.142	2	.071	.943	.399
	Within Groups	2.705	36	.075		
	Total	2.847	38			
Managing emotions	Between Groups	.631	2	.316	3.601*	.038
	Within Groups	3.155	36	.088		
	Total	3.787	38			
Motivating oneself	Between Groups	.385	2	.192	2.497	.097
	Within Groups	2.773	36	.077		
	Total	3.157	38			
Empathy	Between Groups	.291	2	.145	1.327	.278
	Within Groups	3.945	36	.110		
	Total	4.236	38			
Social skills	Between Groups	.365	2	.182	2.180	.128
	Within Groups	3.010	36	.084		
	Total	3.374	38			

**p<.05*

Moreover, LSD test results for multiple comparisons reveal that in terms of managing emotions, respondents who have short years of experience, differed significantly in their level of emotional intelligence with those who have average and long years of experience (Mean Difference=-.030), the same goes between public school leaders who have long years of experience and those who have short and average years of experience (Mean Difference=.230), hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of public school leaders in terms of managing emotions as to length of experience is rejected. As discussed earlier, and based on inputs from related literature and studies, work experience can indeed contribute to an individual's emotional stability. In the case of this study, this was specifically manifested in the aspect of managing emotions, where the difference lies in favour of school leaders with average and long years of experience in school leadership.

Ullah [14] posited that one’s current emotional experience is likely a reflection of one's early life experiences. A person’s ability to manage core feelings such as anger, sadness, fear, and joy often depends on the quality and consistency of their early life emotional experiences. In the context of school leadership, it follows that those who have been in the job for much longer can be more adept at managing their emotions. They can deal better with demands from school personnel, students, parents, other stakeholders, and even higher education officials. It is for this reason that school heads, who are considered more senior in terms of experience, serve as mentors to those new to the field. The learning they have acquired as they anticipate, deal with, and resolve the challenges that come their way as school leaders eventually turns them into better emotional managers. This can further strengthen their emotional foundation, upon which they can draw the much-needed stability as they thrive in a job that is oftentimes vulnerable, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. Conversely, school leaders with longer years of experience can be relied upon to manage their emotions more effectively than those who are just starting. Table 17 shows the findings.

Table 17: LSD results of the difference in emotional intelligence of school leaders in terms of managing emotions as a function of length of experience

Dependent Variable	(I)	(J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Managing emotions	Short	Average	-.23816*	.036
	Short	Long	-.27566*	.034
	Average	Short	.23816	.036
	Average	Long	-.03750	.783
	Long	Short	.27566*	.034
	Long	Average	.03750	.783

**. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.*

Differences in the Conflict Resolution Skills of School Leaders: The significant difference in the conflict resolution strategies of public secondary school leaders in terms of accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, competing, and compromising as to sex and age were determined using t-test for independent samples, while One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the significant difference in their CRS as to highest educational attainment and length of experience. The significance level was set at 0.05 alpha.

As to sex: Results in Table 18 reveal that significant difference exists in the conflict resolution strategies of public secondary school leaders in terms of compromising where, $t(37) = 2.082$, $p < .05$. The p-value that is less than 0.05 level of significance implies that the respondents' sex affects their competence to handle and resolve conflicting sides and situations. It can be inferred, then, that the conflict resolution strategies of male school leaders differ significantly from those of their male counterparts. The results indicate that the difference favours the male school leaders. On the other hand, results in the same table 18 reveal that no significant difference exists in the CRS of public school leaders in terms of accommodating, $t(37) = 1.457$, $p > .05$, avoiding, $t(37) = 1.602$, $p > .05$, collaborating, $t(37) = .824$, $p > .05$ and competing, $t(37) = .909$, $p > .05$. The p-value that is greater than 0.05 level of significance suggests that the sex of the respondents holds no bearing in their ability to settle and resolve clashes or strife that prevails within the organization. It can be inferred, therefore, that the conflict resolution strategies employed by male school leaders across all five identified dimensions do not differ significantly from those of their female colleagues. With the above findings, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders in terms of sex, is rejected. However, in terms of accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, and competing, the said null hypothesis is not rejected. Except for the compromise, the above findings are contrary to the position of Pretorius and Plaatjies [11], who confirm that sex can significantly influence the strategies chosen by school leaders to manage and resolve conflicts amicably in their school. The significant difference noted in this study, in terms of compromise in favour of male school leaders, is indeed notable, as men are known to stand firmly by their choices or decisions. However, in a recent study, this only became more evident when men made joint decisions. According to research by Perkasa et al. [3], men tend to flex their muscles when making decisions, resulting in more extreme outcomes, particularly when working with other men.

The study further reported that when two men work together to reach a decision, they are more likely to reach an all-or-nothing outcome than when working alone or with a woman. Such is not the case among women, who are more likely to reach a compromise to settle or resolve issues. According to Pulido-Martos et al. [9], "Women act the same together as they would alone because they do not need to prove anything in front of other women. Womanhood is not precarious and does not need the same level of public defence as manhood." In the case of this study, it is assumed that male school leaders appear to be more compromising as they work mostly with the opposite sex. It is worth noting that in many schools, the majority of school personnel, particularly teachers, are female. It is further assumed that male respondents in this study work in schools where they rarely deal with issues involving fellow male school leaders or male school personnel. Therefore, having to work with the opposite sex most of the time makes male school leaders more inclined to compromise, as indicated in the research cited above by Pérez-Yus et al. [8]. In essence, male school leaders in this study find it unnecessary to stand their ground in front of their mostly female subordinates or coworkers. However, they would rather meet them halfway, or better still, reach a compromise in resolving a conflict. Table 18 has the findings.

Table 18: T-Test results of the difference in conflict resolution of school leaders by sex

Conflict Resolution	Mean		t value	df	Sig level
	Male	Female			
Accommodating	3.33	3.14	1.451	37	.155
Avoiding	3.24	3.04	1.602	37	.102
Collaborating	3.60	3.50	.824	37	.415

Competing	3.39	3.38	.909	37	.370
Compromising	3.61	3.34	2.082*	37	.044

As to age: In Table 19, it is shown that no significant difference exists in the conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders in terms of accommodating, t (37) =.157, p > .05, avoiding, t (37) =-.369, p > .05, collaborating, t (37) =.059, p > .05, competing, t (37) =-.739, p > .05, and compromising, t (37) =1.414, p > .05. The p-value that is greater than the 0.05 level of significance suggests that sex as a variable does not influence the competence of the respondents to dispose of the conflicts that they need to resolve amicably. Thereby, it can be said that the conflict resolution strategies of young school leaders in all the identified dimensions appeared to be congruent with those of the older school leaders. With the above findings as a basis, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders in terms of accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, competing, and compromising, based on age, is not rejected. The above findings are contrary to the position presented by Wei et al. [16], thus: "Age is one demographic profile that significantly determines the choice of strategies by school leaders relative to conflict resolutions in their schools. Table 19 shows the findings.

Table 19: T-Test results of the difference in conflict resolution of school leaders as to age

Conflict Resolution	Mean		t value	df	Sig level
	Young	Old			
Accommodating	3.28	3.18	.757	37	.454
Avoiding	3.08	3.13	-.369	37	.714
Collaborating	3.54	3.53	.059	37	.953
Competing	3.32	3.42	-.739	37	.464
Compromising	3.57	3.38	1.414	37	.166

As to the highest educational attainment, results in Table 20 reveal that no significant difference exists in the conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders in terms of accommodating, F (2, 36) =1.456, p > 0.05, avoiding F (2, 36) =2.338, p > 0.05, collaborating, F (2, 36) =.507, p > 0.05, competing, F (2, 36) =.153, p > 0.05 and compromising, F (2, 36) =.446, p > 0.05. The p-value greater than 0.05 indicates that this variable does not significantly influence the respondents' ability to ventilate and settle grievances and misunderstandings that arise under their watch. This means that the conflict resolution strategies of school leaders, regardless of whether they hold a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree, do not significantly differ from one another in all five dimensions. In consideration of the foregoing results, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders in terms of accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, competing, and compromising as to highest educational attainment, is not rejected. These findings are inconsistent with those of Tingle [6], who reported that educational attainment can significantly influence the adoption of appropriate strategies for conflict resolution in the school context. Table 20 presents the data.

Table 20: ANOVA results of the difference in conflict resolution of school leaders as to the highest educational attainment

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Accommodating	Between Groups	.425	2	.212	1.456	.247
	Within Groups	5.251	36	.146		
	Total	5.676	38			
Avoiding	Between Groups	.789	2	.395	2.338	.111
	Within Groups	6.075	36	.169		
	Total	6.864	38			
Collaborating	Between Groups	.147	2	.074	.507	.607
	Within Groups	5.239	36	.146		
	Total	5.387	38			
Competing	Between Groups	.043	2	.021	.153	.859
	Within Groups	5.028	36	.140		
	Total	5.071	38			
Compromising	Between Groups	.151	2	.076	.446	.644
	Within Groups	6.103	36	.170		
	Total	6.254	38			

As to length of experience: In Table 21, no significant difference was found in the conflict resolution skills of public school leaders in terms of accommodating, F (2, 36) =1.264, p > 0.05, avoiding F (2, 36) =.666, p > 0.05, collaborating, F (2, 36)

=.240, p > 0.05, competing, F (2, 36) =.035, p > 0.05 and compromising, F (2, 36) =.071, p > 0.05. A p-value greater than 0.05, indicating a level of significance, implies that the length of experience as a variable does not influence the respondents' capability to objectively resolve issues that cause conflicts and misunderstandings among people under their supervision. This means that the conflict resolution strategies of school leaders, regardless of their experience, do not differ significantly from one another. Because of the foregoing results, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders in terms of accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, competing, and compromising as to length of experience, is not rejected. These findings are not congruent with Tingle's [6] position, who stated that school leaders' work experience can significantly influence their ability to handle, ventilate, and resolve conflicts in their school. Table 21 presents the data.

Table 21: ANOVA results of the difference in conflict resolution of school leaders as to length of experience

		Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Accommodating	Between Groups	.378	2	.189	1.284	.289
	Within Groups	5.298	36	.147		
	Total	5.676	38			
Avoiding	Between Groups	.245	2	.122	.666	.520
	Within Groups	6.619	36	.184		
	Total	6.864	38			
Collaborating	Between Groups	.071	2	.035	.240	.788
	Within Groups	5.316	36	.148		
	Total	5.387	38			
Competing	Between Groups	.010	2	.005	.035	.966
	Within Groups	5.061	36	.141		
	Total	5.071	38			
Compromising	Between Groups	.025	2	.012	.071	.931
	Within Groups	6.230	36	.173		
	Total	6.254	38			

Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution Strategies of School Leaders: This study also aimed to investigate the significance of the relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies among public school leaders. This was determined using Pearson's *r* Correlation Coefficient. As shown in table 22, it is indicated that significant relationships exist between the emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders among the dimensions of managing emotions and accommodating (r=.633, p < 0.05), avoiding (r=.495, p < 0.05), collaborating (r=.656, p < 0.05) and competing (r=.374, p < 0.05); in terms of empathy and all dimensions of CRS thus: accommodating (r=.625, p < 0.05), avoiding (r=.617, p < 0.05), collaborating (r=.346, p < 0.05), competing (r=.334, p < 0.05) and compromising (r=.530, p < 0.05); in terms of motivating oneself and competing (r=.334, p < 0.05); and in terms of social skills and collaborating (r=.325, p < 0.05). On the other hand, results show that no significant relationships were found between the EI and CRS of the respondents in terms of self-awareness and accommodating (r=.232, p > 0.05), avoiding (r=.201, p > 0.05), collaborating (r=.121, p > 0.05), competing (r=-.100, p > 0.05) and compromising (r=.107, p > 0.05); in terms of managing emotions and competing (r=.309, p > 0.05); and in terms of social skills and accommodating (r=.313, p > 0.05), avoiding (r=.301, p > 0.05), competing (r=.255, p > 0.05) and compromising (r=.226, p > 0.05). These results suggest that although the emotional intelligence of public school leaders correlates with their conflict resolution strategies in several dimensions, there are also aspects where their EI does not significantly influence their capability to settle and resolve conflicts that are brought to their attention. With these data, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between EI and CRS of the respondents, is not rejected in terms of managing emotions vis-à-vis competing and compromising, motivating oneself and competing, empathy, and all the dimensions of CRS, as well as social skills and collaborating. The said null hypothesis, however, is rejected in terms of self-awareness and all the dimensions of CRS, including managing emotions and competing, as well as social skills vis-à-vis accommodating, avoiding, competing, and compromising.

These findings are supported by Ullah [14], who reported that emotional intelligence has a significant influence on conflict resolution, particularly in organisational settings. For example, studies have found that emotional intelligence is associated with preferred styles of conflict resolution and can prevent the arousal of task, process, and relationship conflicts. Additionally, according to Roy and Perrin [7], emotional intelligence has been found to influence negotiation outcomes, rapport, and counterpart satisfaction in a negotiation context. Moreover, emotional intelligence has been linked to conflict resolution preferences in different cultures, suggesting that sociocultural norms of conflict interaction mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution. Specific to education, Nir [1] noted that emotional intelligence has been found to impact conflict resolution strategies among school leaders. Table 22 shows the results.

Table 22: Pearson's *r* result on the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies of public school leaders

Emotional intelligence	Conflict Resolution Strategies									
	Accommodating		Avoiding		Collaborating		Competing		Compromising	
	r-value	Sig	r-value	Sig	r-value	Sig	r-value	Sig	r-value	Sig
Self-awareness	.232	.155	.201	.221	.121	.464	-.100	.545	.107	.515
Managing emotions	.633**	.000	.495**	.001	.656**	.000	.309	.056	.374*	.019
Motivating oneself	.173	.292	.249	.126	.210	.199	.568**	.000	.300	.064
Empathy	.625**	.000	.617**	.000	.346*	.031	.334*	.038	.530**	.001
Social skills	.313	.052	.301	.063	.325*	.043	.255	.117	.226	.166

5. Conclusions

Based on the above findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Public school leaders are well-attuned with both their own emotions and the emotions of those around them. They can recognise and understand the various feelings that sweep through them and manage these feelings appropriately. It is therefore concluded that school leaders are effective in manifesting the concept of self-awareness, in managing emotions and motivating oneself, and in showing empathy and competent social skills.
- Public secondary school leaders can effectively resolve problems or disputes while maintaining a healthy, conducive, and meaningful relationship among the parties involved. This capability is supported by strategies related to accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, competing, and compromising. In the school context, parties that may be involved in these conflicts can include learners, teachers and staff, parents, and other stakeholders.
- Public secondary school leaders have an identical level of emotional intelligence in most of the identified dimensions, particularly in terms of the independent variables considered, such as sex and highest educational attainment. The significant difference that existed in the respondents' EI in terms of managing emotions and empathy in favour of female school leaders can be attributed to the fact that male school leaders are not as open in showing their emotions as well as in expressing empathy.
- Public secondary school leaders are equally competent in utilising effective conflict resolution strategies related to the identified dimensions and independent variables, particularly in terms of age, highest educational attainment, and length of experience. The significant difference in their CRS in terms of sex, favouring male school leaders, can be attributed to the assumption that male school leaders are more competent in exercising assertiveness in resolving conflicts compared to female school leaders.
- Generally, the emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies of public secondary school leaders are interrelated. These correlations were particularly evident between managing emotions and the four dimensions of CRS, as well as all five dimensions of CRS. These two IE dimensions, therefore, can be considered to have a direct impact on the strategies employed by the respondents in resolving conflicts. The absence of a significant relationship between self-awareness and all dimensions of CRS suggests that being able to recognise and understand one's feelings, thoughts, and emotions does not necessarily influence the capability of respondents to resolve any form of conflict that confronts public school leaders.

5.1. Recommendations

Because of the findings of the study, the researcher puts forward the following recommendations:

- Department of Education officials and education policy makers may consider the revitalization of initiatives and advocacies that can foster the enhancement of school leaders' emotional intelligence and capability to prevent, handle and resolve conflicts in schools and put the same in an integrated and updated policy that must be implemented in the regional, division, district and school levels;
- Human resource managers and members of the personnel selection board may place a high premium on the level of emotional intelligence and conflict management and resolution skills of prospective or potential school leaders, considering these as one of the criteria in the agency's hiring and promotion systems.
- Professional development program developers, such as the NEAP and SEAMEO, may prioritise the inclusion of training and short-course programs on emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills enhancement in their annual packages, particularly those intended for school leaders.
- School leaders themselves may invest in improving or upgrading their emotional intelligence, as this can effectively guide them in preventing, handling, and resolving the various conflicts that commonly occur in an educational

context. School leaders who possess emotional intelligence and stability can effectively drive their school toward achieving its set educational goals.

- Teaching and non-teaching staff may take the initiative to invest in and enhance their own emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies, so that they can become reliable partners of their school leader in creating a more emotionally conducive and conflict-free school environment. This can be done by suggesting topics and training that can be included in the school's in-service training (INSETs)
- It is recommended that learners, led by the SSLG, advocate for the promotion of emotional intelligence among their ranks so that they, too, can contribute to the mitigation, if not prevention, of learner-instigated conflicts that can add to the multifaceted responsibilities of school leaders.
- Additionally, parents can offer their support and volunteer their services, or serve as partners, if necessary, in implementing PPAs that promote the importance of emotional intelligence among school personnel and learners, and help prevent and resolve conflicts within the school.
- Other stakeholders, including LGU, NGO, and national government agency partners, Alumni, and others, may offer their services, facilities, technical expertise, and financial resources to fully implement and sustain proposed programs and papers on enhancing emotional intelligence for school leaders, teachers, and learners.
- Other stakeholders, including LGU, NGO, and national government agency partners, Alumni, and others, may offer their services, facilities, technical expertise, and financial resources to fully implement and sustain proposed programs and projects aimed at minimising, if not preventing, conflicts in schools.
- Future researchers may conduct further studies on emotional intelligence and conflict resolution strategies not only among school leaders but also among other actors in the education sector, utilising a different set of respondents and variables.

Acknowledgement: The researchers are profoundly indebted to the people who helped them complete the study, especially those who extended their time and efforts to enable the study and support data collection. Thank you also to their siblings and relatives for their prayers, moral support, and understanding that motivates them. Above all, the researchers are grateful to God Almighty for giving them wisdom, health, and strength to conduct this study.

Data Availability Statement: This research contains data related to multicultural education and diagnostic information profiling preliminary findings.

Funding Statement: No funding has been obtained to help prepare this manuscript and research work.

Conflicts of Interest Statement: No conflicts of interest have been declared by the authors. Citations and references are cited as per the information used.

Ethics and Consent Statement: The consent was obtained from the Department of Education, Schools Division of Antique, during data collection, and has received ethical approval and participant consent.

References

1. A. E. Nir, "The emergence of hybrid role conflict in conflicting settings: A unique challenge for school leaders," Int. J. Educ. Reform, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 343–360, 2011.
2. D. Goleman, "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ". Bantam Books, New York, United States of America, 1995.
3. D. H. Perkasa, F. Abadi, and D. F. A. Shandy, "The effect of emotional intelligence, servant leadership, and organizational commitment on organizational citizenship behavior: A study of the south tangerang city education and culture office," in Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Management, Economics and Business, Jakarta, Indonesia, 2019.
4. D. Hess, "Conflict management strategies for educators," International Journal of Educational Research, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 212–225, 2019.
5. D. R. Parrish, "The relevance of emotional intelligence for leadership in a higher education context," Studies in Higher Education, vol. 40, no. 5, pp. 821–837, 2015.
6. E. Tingle, "District leadership development program investing in school principals," in Proceedings of the 2019 AERA Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada, 2019.
7. L. Roy and C. Perrin, "Managing conflicts in the nonprofit sector through organizational culture change," J. Organ. Chang. Manag., vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 60–83, 2018.

8. M. C. Pérez-Yus, E. Ayllón-Negrillo, G. Delsignore, R. Magallón-Botaya, A. Aguilar-Latorre, and B. Oliván Blázquez, “Variables associated with negotiation effectiveness: The role of mindfulness,” Front. Psychol., vol. 11, no. 6, pp. 1–13, 2020.
9. M. Pulido-Martos, E. Lopez-Zafra, and J. M. Augusto-Landa, “Perceived emotional intelligence and its relationship with perceptions of effectiveness in negotiation: Perceived emotional intelligence and perceived effective negotiation,” J. Appl. Soc. Psychol., vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 408–417, 2013.
10. B. Palmer, M. Walls, Z. Burgess, and C. Stough, “Emotional intelligence and effective leadership,” Leadersh. Organ. Dev. J., vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 5–10, 2001.
11. A. Pretorius and B. O. Plaatjies, “Self-awareness as a key emotional intelligent skill for secondary school principals’ leadership toolkit,” Research in Educational Policy and Management, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 52–74, 2023.
12. Q. Suleman, M. A. Syed, Z. Mahmood, and I. Hussain, “Correlating emotional intelligence with job satisfaction: Evidence from a cross-sectional study among secondary school heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan,” Front. Psychol., vol. 11, no. 3, p. 240, 2020.
13. R. H. Kilmann and K. W. Thomas, Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, PsycTESTS Dataset, 1974. [Online]. Available: https://doi.org/10.1037/t07404-000 [Accessed by: 18/06/23].
14. R. Ullah, “The buffering role of emotional intelligence in conflict transformation,” Int. J. Confl. Manag., vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 223–244, 2022.
15. S. M. Odell, “‘You have an affiliative leadership style. That’s going to be a problem for you.’: Feminized orientations to school leadership and navigating the pipeline,” Front. Educ., vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 1–13, 2023.
16. K. K. Wei, M. A. B. Mohd Noor, M. B. Monsor, and Z. Awang, “Mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership practices,” Int. J. Acad. Res. Bus. Soc. Sci., vol. 11, no. 12, pp. 2190-2205, 2021.