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Leadership and Learning in Asia Pacific: Challenges for Research and Practice

Conflict and Conflict Management in School Management Teams: Evidence from China

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This study focused on examining conflict experiences in school management teams. Survey data was collected from a sample of 112 vice principals at primary and secondary schools in Guangdong, China. The results revealed that: School management teams experienced relatively higher levels of task conflict, lower levels of process conflict, and lowest levels of relationship conflict.

The sequential order of sampled school management teams' preferences for dealing with conflict were: cooperative approach, principal-dominant approach, avoiding approach, and forcing approach.

Only cooperative approach was positively related to desirable outcomes such as team trust, decision comprehensiveness, and school performance. Forcing approach was negatively related to team trust, decision comprehensiveness, and school performance. More importantly, principal-dominant approach and avoiding approach were not significantly related to team trust, decision comprehensiveness, or school performance.

The results of types of conflict and conflict management approaches were discussed in light of cultural assertions concerning conflict management style of school leaders in Asia.

Key words: conflict types, conflict management approaches, school management teams, China



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