THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
STYLES AND STRATEGIES
OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was to interview and to observe five designated subjects and analyze their communicative behavior using specific parameters as noted in the previous literature about conflict management. Five secondary school administrators were interviewed and observed by the researcher over a period of more than a year. Their responses to the interview questions served as a guideline to determine personal perceptions of conflict management styles and strategies. Observations of the subjects formed the data as to conflict management styles and strategies used. The five categories of conflict management style (competitor, collaborator, compromiser, accommodator, and avoider) used to organize the data were based on the research of Hocker and Wilmot (1985). The general categories of strategies (avoidance and engagement strategies) were also based on the research of Hocker and Wilmot (1985). Using the interview and observation data, the researcher found evidence to support both the theory of Pace (1983), which states that individuals possess one conflict management style only,
and the theory of Hocker and Wilmot (1985), which states that individuals use different styles in different situations. The researcher also found that the use of conflict management styles and strategies depends upon a variety of variables. Examples of these include sex, race, referral teacher, and student's prior record.
CHAPTER ONE

CONFLICT

It is worth repeating here that the conflict-free company has never existed and never will exist. Antagonisms, tensions, aggressions, stereotypes, negative attitudes and the frustrations of perceived conflicting needs will always be present wherever men are forced to live and work together. (Pace, p. 59.)

Conflict is a perpetual given of life, although varying views of it may be held. Some may view conflict as being a negative situation which must be avoided at any cost. Others may see conflict as being a phenomenon which necessitates management. Still others may consider conflict as being an exciting opportunity for personal growth and so try to use it to his or her best advantage. Wherever one may fall on this continuum of viewpoints concerning conflict, seldom would one expect to be in a continual state of conflict as the basis for employment. However, conflict in academic settings is a daily occurrence because a consensus of opinion concerning rules governing the school seldom exists among the participants.
administrators, teachers, students, and parents. These parties, particularly administrators and students, see one another as adversaries, not as those working toward a common goal, as is generally the case in other organizations. In particular, secondary school principals and assistant principals are expected to deal with conflict situations not only on a daily basis, but frequently on an hourly basis. These administrators are primarily responsible for the management of discipline, frequently spending up to six hours per day in conference with students who have been referred to the administrator by teachers, school staff, social service agencies, and parents. There is potential for conflict in practically every decision which the administrator must make. Coping efficiently and effectively with potential and bona fide conflicts is possibly one of the most important aspects of the administrator's position (Nebgen, 1978).

Conflict presently continues to be a factor in academic life. Schools frequently appear to be centers of tension; on occasion, they are perhaps a manifestation of problems in the community. Why schools seem to absorb community hostilities is seldom addressed in literature. However, Schofield (1977) states that it is nonetheless essential for administrators to know why they, as school
leaders, are so often central in community controversies. According to Spillane (1972), one of the reasons why the schools are so tension-ridden is because they are 

most directly concerned with the shaping of the future. Many of the forces upon which parents have traditionally looked to for support in the task of raising their children...have lost virtually all of their ancient force. (p. 18)

Since conflict is seemingly unavoidable, particularly in a scholarly setting, it is obviously necessary for administrators to be able to recognize conflict, to view its constructive as well as destructive potential, to learn how to manage conflict, and to apply conflict management strategies in a practical way.

Conflict Defined

Conflict theory is significant to the role of the administrator, but it emanates primarily from fields such as business, sociology, and psychology, and not from communication or even education. Conflict is difficult to define, or rather it is difficult to come to a consensus concerning the definition of this term. Coser (1967, p. 8) says that conflict is "a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate the rivals." Deutsch (1973) states that
Conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur... An action which is incompatible with another action prevents, obstructs, interferes with, injures, or in some way makes it less likely or less effective (p. 156).

Schmidt and Kochan (1972) define conflict by saying that a perceived opportunity exists for interfering with the other's goal attainment. Finally, Hocker and Wilmot (1985, p. 23) define conflict (from a communication perspective) as "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals."

Obviously, there are many definitions of conflict. The sheer variety of definitions may make an analysis of conflict management episodes confusing. Therefore, in chapters four and five, Hocker, and Wilmot's (1985) definition is utilized because it is communication-based and also thorough.

Conflict Assumption and Recent Changes

Perhaps definitions of conflict vary so much because attitudes toward conflict and images of conflict's role also vary widely. Hocker and Wilmot (1985) asked people to respond to the word "conflict" and were given the following responses: destruction, anger, disagreement,
hostility, war, anxiety, tension, alienation, violence, competition, threat, heartache, pain, and hopelessness. Obviously, these people viewed conflict as a concept which evoked negative images. Until the early 1960's, even scholars primarily portrayed conflict as an undesirable process to be avoided (Simons, 1972). Hocker and Wilmot (1985) offer a list of negative assumptions about conflict that are widely held:

1) Harmony is normal and conflict is abnormal.
2) Conflicts and disagreements are the same phenomena.
3) Conflict is pathological.
4) Conflict should be reduced or avoided, never escalated.
5) Conflict can be the result of clashes of personality.
6) Emotions are different from genuine conflict. (pp. 7-9)

Deetz and Stevenson (1986) also list negative assumptions about conflict that are prevalent. They include:

1) Conflict is an unnatural departure from human sociability.
2) Conflict can and should be avoided in most situations.
3) Conflict is largely a result of a communication failure -- conflicts arise mostly from misunderstandings. (p. 205)

However, in the last twenty-five years, many
scholars (and some of the populace) have changed their views concerning conflict. Conflict is now seen as having the potential for positive growth. Both Hocker and Wilmot (1985) and Deetz and Stevenson (1986) have written about the positive assumptions concerning conflict in order to nullify the earlier, negative views. Hocker and Wilmot (1985, p. 32) say "Conflict can have highly desirable, productive functions in a relationship." They point to Coser (1967), who noted that elastic systems aren't likely to be threatened by conflict. Also, they consider the various works which say that conflict is present in both happy and unhappy marriages, but that the former are characterized by their management of conflict (Braiker and Kelley 1979; Altman and Taylor 1973; Navran 1967; Locke 1951; Birchler, Weiss, and Vincent 1975).

Deetz and Stevenson (1986) list three assumptions that indicate conflict can be positive. Their belief is that "management of conflict serves as a more useful conception of the process of dealing with conflict than conceptions like conflict resolution" (p. 205). Their three assumptions are the following:

1) Conflict is natural.

2) Conflict is good and necessary.

3) Most conflicts are based on real differences. (pp. 205-207)
Conflict is considered natural by these researchers due to life's uncertainty, to decision-making in connection with goal attainment, to the number of people interpersonally interacting, to contrary needs and goals, and limited resources. That conflict is good and necessary is suggested because conflict can stimulate innovative thinking when properly managed. Lacking conflict, thoughts and actions are performed because they are habitual. Conflict allows an examination of the necessity of these thoughts and actions. The third assumption points out that people are frequently timid in facing the reality that legitimate differences may exist and instead blame conflicts on poor or nonexistent communication. It may seem easier to live with an unresolved misunderstanding than to face the fact that real, fundamental differences do exist and so demand recognition and management (Deetz and Stevenson, 1986).

In addition to the aforementioned pairs of scholars, another pair of researchers expresses the view that conflict is positive. Corwin and Edelfelt (1977) feel that conflict is normal due to two factors. First, conflict is "inherent in the fact that authority is problematic" (p. 76). Second, conflict is "promoted by inconsistent goals, success criteria, and heterogeneity of
the clientele" (p. 76). In other words, conflict naturally occurs because the supervisor-subordinate relationship is given to conflict; conflict is promoted by differing goals and definitions of success; and, conflict can be affected by the make-up of the clientele. Also, these researchers say that conflict "can improve organizations by forcing change and compromise. It challenges assumptions and creates discomfort with existing practices" (p. 77).

Perhaps Coser (1956) puts the positive role of conflict best.

In loosely-structured groups and open societies, conflict, which aims at a resolution of tension between antagonists, is likely to have stabilizing and integrative functions for the relationship. By permitting immediate and direct expression of rival claims, such social systems are able to readjust their structures by eliminating the sources of dissatisfaction. The multiple conflicts which they experience may serve to eliminate the causes for dissociation and to re-establish unity. These systems avail themselves, through the toleration and institutionalization of conflict, of an important stabilizing mechanism.

In addition, conflict within a group frequently helps to revitalize existent norms; or it contributes to the emergence of new norms. In this sense, social conflict is a mechanism for adjustment of norms adequate to new conditions. A flexible society benefits from conflict because such behavior, by helping to create and modify norms, assures its
continuance under changed conditions. Such a mechanism for readjustment of norms is hardly available to rigid systems: by suppressing conflict, the latter smother a useful warning signal, thereby maximizing the danger of catastrophic breakdown.

Internal conflict can also serve as a means for ascertaining the relative strength of antagonistic interests within the structure, and in this way constitute a mechanism for the maintenance or continual readjustment of the balance of power. Since the outbreak of a conflict indicates a rejection of a previous accommodation between parties, once the respective power of the contenders has been ascertained through conflict, a new equilibrium can be established and the relationship can proceed on this new basis. (pp. 154-155)

It is certainly apparent that conflict is viewed much differently today than it had been just a few decades ago. In chapters four and five, conflict episodes are analyzed based on the current conceptions of many scholars that conflict is natural and has potential for good.

Conflict and Communication

Certainly conflict (definitions, assumptions, or management of) cannot be fully discussed without linking it to communication. Hocker and Wilmot (1985, p. 20) state that "communication is the central element in all interpersonal conflict." They note that communication and conflict are related in three ways.

1) Communication behavior often creates
conflict.

2) Communication behavior reflects conflict.

3) Communication is the vehicle for the productive or destructive management of conflict. (p. 20)

Vash (1980) reinforces Hocker and Wilmot (1985) by noting that since the basis of power is shared through communication, communication is seen as the single largest problem in organizations.

Haley (1963) further says that the expression of conflict via the process of communication is carried out through both content and relationship information. Hocker and Wilmot (1985) clarify this by noting the following two points:

1) Every communicative message, both verbal and nonverbal creates meaning through sharing specific content information.

2) Each person defines the relationship in every communication transaction and communicates that relational definition to the other, along with specific content. (p. 20)

Conflict managers need to understand and to be able to deal with both facets because both are inherent in conflict.

Although communication is extremely important in dealing with conflict, conflict is more than communication and its accompanying behavior. Blake and Mouton (1984)
Communication permits us to get at causes but the cause is not in communication. The causes that underlie interface conflict are more than simply telling people the rationale of decisions reached or how expensive it is for them not to cooperate or sitting them down in a room to work it out for themselves. The key involves communication between the contending groups, but far more than just communication. Behind all of these influences may be historical behavior that has led to mutual disrespect, lack of confidence, and suspicion. Under these conditions, if people were to communicate, which is another way of saying "open up," they would communicate incendiary emotions at the risk of escalating, not diminishing, the conflict. (p. 286)

In chapters four and five, Blake and Mouton's (1984) summation of the relationship between conflict and communication is used to aid the analysis of conflict episodes.

Conflict Management

It is obvious that conflict is an unavoidable reality of living; but, while one may recognize this, it still does not negate the fact that conflict is difficult to define, is often viewed much differently today than it was a few decades ago, and is linked to, but is more than, communication. Perhaps because conflict is such an elusive entity, one tends to discuss it in terms of sources, types, and stages. Considering this, conflict
management seems to be a concept that can be dealt with pragmatically. Much has been written about the management of conflict. A great deal of the literature is derived from the business world. Conflict management is frequently also broken into categories such as conflict management styles and conflict management strategies. Before considering these ideas in chapter two, however, a general look at conflict management may be helpful.

Blake and Mouton (1961) list eight activities that constitute conflict management:

1) definition of the problem
2) review of the problem
3) development of the range of alternatives
4) debate of alternatives
5) reaching of solutions
6) explanation and evaluation of solutions
7) weighing alternative solutions
8) selection of the appropriate solution.

In simpler terms, Huseman (1977) views conflict management as distinguishing between useful conflicts and conflicts that should be eliminated. Also, conflict management should involve the ability to develop individuals who can work under stress but continue to be productive. Reinforcing this view of conflict management,
Kahn and Boulding (1964, pp. 75-76) state "the objective of conflict management should be to see that conflict remains on the creative and useful side of an invisible but critically important line that separates the good or natural conflict from that which is bad or unnatural." Even more succinct is Thomas' (1971, p. 1) definition of conflict management as "a process of cooperative confrontation."

Deetz and Stevenson (1986) discuss a number of items which must be kept in mind when preparing for conflict management. First, the manager must try to understand the type of conflict that he or she will be dealing with. It may be a conflict of differing opinions, incompatible roles, incompatible goals, or differing resources. Identification of the type of conflict will help in managing the conflict. Second, the manager must also be aware of the importance of the conflict so as to select appropriate strategies for management. Third, the manager must recognize the complexity of the conflict as this can vary widely. Finally, the manager must also be able to assess the energy and resources available for managing the conflict.

Deutsch's (1977) recognition of five types of conflict corroborates Deetz and Stevenson's (1986) first
managerial suggestion. Deutsch's five types of conflict are: veridical, contingent, displaced, misattributed and false conflict. Veridical conflict is that which is perceived accurately and exists objectively. Contingent conflict is defined as that in which the existence of conflict is dependent upon readily rearranged circumstances, but this fact is not recognized by the parties in conflict. Displaced conflict happens when the conflicting parties are in opposition about the wrong thing. Misattributed conflict occurs between the wrong parties, frequently over the wrong issues. False conflict has no objective basis.

Recognition of the variables affecting the course of conflict may also be useful to conflict managers. Deutsch (1977) lists seven of these variables.

1) Characteristics of the parties in conflict (values, motivations, resources for waging/resolving conflict, conceptions of strategy and tactics)

2) The parties' prior relationship to one another (attitudes, beliefs, expectations)

3) The nature of the issue which has given rise to the conflict (scope, rigidity, motivational significance)

4) The social environment within which the conflict occurs (facilities, restraints, social norms)

5) The interested audiences to the conflict (their relationships to the parties in
conflict and to one another)

6) The strategies and tactics employed by the parties in conflict (promises, rewards, threats)

7) The consequences of the conflict to each of the participants and to other interested parties (gains, losses, precedents).

Theoretical Perspective and Research Question

From the previous introduction to conflict, it is apparent that many variables affect the conflict situation. This is particularly true of conflict management styles and conflict management strategies, on which this research will focus. These facets of the conflict situation can certainly be influenced by a myriad of variables. Watzlawick's, Beavin's, and Jackson's (1967) expression of the pragmatic perspective is helpful here. They believe that communication creates a relationship, and the relationship then creates communication. Emphasized is "mutual influence in systemic, cyclical patterns of interaction" (Leslie-Bole, p. 22). Two roles create a relationship, but without the relationship in which to define them, there is no possibility of roles. Watzlawick et al. (1967) state that "Any communication implies a commitment and thereby defines the relationship" (p. 51). In chapters four and five, conflict situations, specifically, administrator-
student conflicts, are examined. The pragmatic perspective will be the theoretical basis upon which these conflicts will be analyzed.

Conflict management can obviously be linked to many disciplines. In education a fair amount of literature has been written linking conflict management to the secondary principal. Bailey (1971) believes that field experience is best when it comes to developing conflict management skills. School administrators should learn by doing. He offers some ideas on managing conflict to the school administrator. First, the administrator should be able to recognize and respond to grievances by colleagues, teachers, and students. Second, "collective judgment should be substituted wherever possible for personal discretion" (p. 229). Third, when conflicts have gone beyond logical negotiation, then one should estimate one's resources, estimate one's enemy's resources, judge one's plan of action, implement one's judgment, persuade one's leaders of the plan's merit, and mass one's forces for attack. Last, the administrator should be very realistic about his/her limits to managing conflict.

In conjunction with the above, the purpose of this thesis, then, is to describe and analyze the conflict management behaviors of secondary school administrators.
Specifically, conflict management styles and strategies are examined.

Chapter two examines the literature about conflict management. Chapter three presents the methodology of this research. Chapter four analyzes specific administrator-student conflicts in order to present a view of conflict management styles. Chapter five also analyzes specific administrator-student conflicts, but presents a view of conflict management strategies. Finally, chapter six presents the conclusions of this research.
CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

CONCERNING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Previous to a review of the specific literature which discusses secondary school administrators in terms of their conflict management styles and strategies, a look at each facet of the topic will be helpful in furthering the understanding of this research as a whole. Therefore, a review of the literature of conflict management styles and strategies and their application to the role of the principal are undertaken in separate sections.

Conflict Management Styles

According to Pace (1983), people handle conflict in habitual ways. They react this way because repetition is comfortable to them. In handling conflict, they see themselves and others as competing for a share of scarce resources. Conflict management styles, therefore, are a result of one's concern for accomplishing one's goals and one's concern about the other person's accomplishing his/her goals. Synthesizing the research of Hall (1969),
Blake and Mouton (1970), and Kilmann and Thomas (1975), Pace (1983) generates five conflict management styles.

The first conflict management style is that of the competitor or tough battler. This style is exemplified by the person who ambitiously realizes his/her goals at the expense of others. To the competitor, losing indicates weakness, while winning is indicative of strength. Winning is the competitor's only goal. The second conflict management style is that of the collaborator or problem solver. This style de-emphasizes the significance of winning and losing. The collaborator's goal is to help find mutually acceptable solutions to group members' problems. The third conflict management style is that of the compromiser or maneuvering conciliator. This person works to help the group at the expense of the individual, as he/she sees everyone as standing to lose in a conflict. A situation of "giving in" frequently evolves. The fourth conflict management style is called that of the accommodator or friendly helper. The possessor of this style is nonassertive. He/She neglects personal needs and goals to maintain an atmosphere of harmony within the group. Lastly, the fifth conflict management style is that of the avoider or impersonal complier. This person sees conflict as a totally negative entity and,
therefore, removes himself/herself from the conflict by refusing to become involved.

Cragan and Wright (1986) also list these five conflict management styles in their discussion of managing conflict communication in groups. In reference to conflict management style as a facet of managing conflict, their conclusion is to work toward a compromising or collaborating style because "decision-making groups in organizations do not long tolerate a competing style of leadership unless it happens to be a powerful appointed leader" (p. 243). Conversely, the accommodator and avoider get little or no respect from other group members. Cragan and Wright (1986) create an integrated model of group conflict in which conflict management styles are central, while types of conflict (ideational, role, CR, interpersonal) surround them.

Hall (1969) lists five conflict management styles. These styles are labeled in terms of the administrator's concern for the goals of the organization and/or the people in the organization. The first type exhibits concern both for goals and people. This is called the team management style. The second type is middle-of-the-road management which is similar, but more moderate. The third style emphasizes goals at the expense of people. It
is called the task management style. Fourthly, a style which emphasizes people to the detriment of goals is called the country club management style. Lastly, a manager whose style de-emphasizes both goals and people is said to possess an impoverished management style. Hall (1969) says that when an organization is running well, the first two management styles are utilized by managers. However, managers use one of the unbalanced styles when they are under pressure. This conclusion seems to dispute the findings of Pace (1983), which express the idea that, in most situations, people habitually use only one conflict management style.

Hocker and Wilmot (1985) initially discuss conflict management styles in terms of assumptions. Their assumptions are:

1) People develop patterned response to conflict.

2) People develop conflict styles for reasons that make sense to them.

3) No one style is automatically better than another.

4) People's styles undergo change in order to adapt to the demands of new situations (pp. 37-39).

In discussing specific styles, Hocker and Wilmot (1985) use the research of Kilmann and Thomas (1975).
Determining conflict management style are the competing goals of concern for one's self and concern for others. Five styles are derived: competitive, collaborative, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. These styles are descriptively similar to those of Pace (1983).

Hocker and Wilmot (1985) discuss the reasons why looking at individual conflict styles can be disadvantageous. They are:

1) Perceptions of style differ according to one's vantage point.
2) Views of styles from questionnaires are not process-oriented.
3) Conflict-measuring instruments assume situational consistency.
4) The focus is on the individual and not in the pattern of communication in the relationship.
5) We often assume that one's style of conflict is a clear reflection of an underlying motivation.
6) The conceptual classification of styles is subject to alteration (pp. 49-51).

In conclusion, conflict management styles seem to be important as a method used to generalize a certain view of conflict, but should not be used as a method to specify the "right" or "wrong" of a conflict. Styles are important as guidelines. Specifically, most research focuses on classifying those in a conflict as having one
of five styles: competitive, collaborative, compromising, avoiding, or accommodating. The data in chapter four will be analyzed using these popular designations.

Conflict Management Strategies

Many communication texts make reference to strategies used by individuals (or small groups or organizations) in the management of conflict. Some include a spectrum of strategies, while others concentrate on an elaboration of a single strategy. Some try to link conflict management strategies to conflict management styles, while others focus on strategies as discrete from styles. While there seems to be a general unity to the research done on conflict management styles because a finite number of styles are generally identified (most clearly in Blake and Mouton [1970] and Kilmann and Thomas [1975]), this unity is lacking in the research concerning conflict management strategies. Although some researchers have described a variety of strategies, no one makes the claim that his/her list would include all possible strategies apparent in a conflict situation.

Fraser and Hipel (1984) refer to a strategy as "any set of options that can be taken by a particular player (participant)" (p.7). Although these researchers
deal with conflict analysis in systems design engineering, their general plan in approaching conflict strategically is thought-provoking. While noting that the function of conflict analysis is the enabling of participants to make better decisions, they recognize three steps in approaching conflict. First, they recommend what is referred to as modeling; that is, the considering of conflict as a whole. Second, the participant must determine all possible resolutions to the conflict. Third, particular strategies must be evolved.

Robbins (1974) concentrates on strategies specifically labeled as resolution techniques. He lists eight techniques as follows:

1) problem solving
2) superordinate goals
3) avoidance
4) smoothing
5) compromise
6) authoritative command
7) altering the human variable
8) altering structural variables (pp.67-73).

While avoidance, compromise, and authoritative command are self-explanatory, the other five techniques need elaboration. Problem solving involves coming face-to-face
with the conflict's underlying causes. Superordinate goals refers to the need to define shared goals and to recognize that shared goals cannot be achieved without the other party. Smoothing is a technique in which differences are played down, while common interests are emphasized. The technique of altering the human variable is done traditionally through education, while altering structural variables involves changing the organization through the movement of people such as by creating positions.

Robbins (1974) believes that conflict management historically has been defined as the study of conflict resolution, but personally believes that conflict management is a "planning and evaluating of conflict levels" (p. 76). While traditionalists seek to eliminate conflict, interactionists encourage conflict. Hence, Robbins (1974) believes that "problem solving is the most effective" (p. 76). Since problem solving is a technique which necessitates recognizing the underlying causes of a conflict and possibly realizing that there can be no resolution, it is logical that Robbins (1974) would highlight the first of the eight techniques. The author also looks at conflict management through a mathematical phrasing. He proposes that "Ct = f (Cm, S, P-B) or
conflict is a function of communication, structure, and personal-behavior factors" (p. 113).

Thomas (1971) examines conflict management strategies by focusing on general strategies used by administrators in an educational setting. In his research he points out that there is no difference between management and leadership; hence, manager is synonymous with leader. Thomas' eight strategies for management are:

1) citizens' advisories
2) confrontation sessions
3) sensitivity training
4) process involvement
5) educational pluralism
6) volunteerism
7) cooperative studies
8) failure (p. 5)

While not offering any elaboration on these eight management strategies, Thomas (1971) refers to Bailey (1971) for practical advice for educational administrators. Bailey (1971) says that a successful conflict manager is aware of and sensitive to the needs of the young; is realistic about his/her own strengths and weaknesses; substitutes collective judgment for personal wisdom in order to promote collective wisdom; has a
strategy to fall back on when conflict gets out of hand; and recognizes the necessity of "staying the course" at times. This list may appear to be a very simplistic set of suggestions for educational administrators as opposed to a recognizable list of conflict management strategies, but it is valuable to illustrate the diversity in the literature concerning conflict management strategies.

Fitzpatrick and Winke (1979) propose a list of five strategies culled from a list of more than seventy strategies given a group of subjects. These strategies were used by individuals in interpersonal relationships. First described is the strategy of manipulation, which uses such techniques as avoiding someone or getting someone into a good mood. A second strategy is that of non-negotiation, in which actions like avoidance, refusal to openly discuss a topic, and constant repetition of a personal view with the intent of wearing another person down are used. The third strategy devised by Fitzpatrick and Winke (1979) is that of emotional appeal, which involves actions which appeal to another person's emotions, such as crying, pouting, and looking hurt. Constantly asking another person, "Do you love me?" would also be an example. The fourth strategy noted is that of personal rejection. This involves not dealing with the
apparent conflict's causes, but rather using name-calling, withholding affection, and refusing to speak to the other person to get what one wants. Finally, the fifth strategy is that of empathic understanding, which involves trying to understand the other person's point of view, remaining calm, and cooperating.

In examining these strategies considering gender as a variable, the researchers found that a conflict involving men engenders primarily the strategy of non-negotiation. A conflict in which only females are participatory usually yields the use of the strategies of personal rejection and emotional appeal. In a conflict in which both males and females participate, the closeness of the relationship is paramount. Casually-involved couples use manipulation and non-negotiation, while married couples use emotional appeal and personal rejection. Neither type of duo uses empathic understanding.

Deetz and Stevenson (1986) offer five basic strategies for dealing with conflict. The first strategy is avoidance, which is based on blocking any discussion in connection with the conflict. While avoidance may be regarded as a negative strategy, in some cases it can be viewed as valuable. For example, avoidance can delay the discussion of the conflict until participants have "cooled
Another example in which avoidance could be used positively, according to Deetz and Stevenson (1986), is whether the issue "isn't really worth the effort" (p. 211). The second strategy, pacification, is also based on blocking discussion of the conflict. Rather than avoid conflict, pacification seeks to undermine the conflict by minimizing or maximizing it. The result is to "subvert that conflict discussion" (Deetz and Stevenson, p. 212).

The third strategy, competition, is based on accepting the conflict context. Communication blockage is not acceptable. Competition evolves when individuals in a conflict decide to get what each one wants. Competition has the potential for growth, as well as for destruction. Fair play usually determines which outcome is manifested. Like competition, compromise is a strategy also based on the acceptance of the conflict context. Compromise causes everyone involved to be more satisfied than if he/she had lost, but seldom satisfies anyone fully. Finally, creative integration is a strategy which aims to break "the perceived conflict context by finding options outside that context" (Deetz and Stevenson, p. 210). Creative integration requires much effort, but offers the greatest opportunity for the good, long-term health of a relationship. It involves four steps. They are:
1) Identify the goals of each participant.

2) Combine the goals of all participants and think of them as if they were all the desires of each.

3) Identify activities and resources that may accomplish many, or ideally all, of the listed goals and needs.

4) Select and implement a course of action. (Deetz and Stevenson, p. 217)

Although creative integration would require practice, time and energy, it would be appropriate to use it in the managing of long-term conflict situations.

Huseman (1977) lists two general areas of conflict reduction. The first is that of conflict reduction through the organization's hierarchy. Conflict is referred up the hierarchy -- above the level on which it takes place. Frequently, the strategies of dominance and compromise are used with the result that the conflict is only suppressed. Institutionalized methods are used. The use of standard mechanisms can actually intensify the conflict.

The second area of conflict reduction involves problem-solving approaches. Problem-solving is ranked by organizational members as the best method of conflict reduction, although it is the most difficult to achieve. Characteristics of effective problem-solving are:
1) Problem-solving needs to emphasize solving the problem, not accommodating different points of view.

2) Problem-solving recognizes that conflict is frequently a relationship between groups.

3) Problem-solving should attempt to help the conflicting parties to see the broader opportunities for cooperation. (Huseman, p. 230)

Obviously, Huseman (1977) advocates a problem-solving strategy to the detriment of institutionalized methods. Although problem-solving necessitates time and energy, the use of the strategy is preferred to "passing the buck."

Conrad (1985) divides communication strategies in conflicts into three general categories. They include structuring strategies, confrontive strategies, and avoidance strategies. Structuring strategies reduce any ambiguity inherent in the conflict so that a productive solution is achieved. Specific strategies include defining the issue, establishing evaluative criteria, and manipulating relationships (bribery, altercasting, predicting self-feelings, altruism, and appeals to guilt). Confrontive strategies are frequently used as a "last resort." Specific strategies include coercion (both overt displays of power and threat/promises), personalization, and toughness. Finally, avoidance strategies allow participants to avoid the conflict overtly or subtly. The
result of avoidance strategies can be constructive, although avoidance is usually looked upon as being destructive. Specific strategies include delays, procrastination, regression, revenge, and the refusal to admit that a conflict actually exists.

Faria (1982) divides the view of conflict management strategies into two general areas. They are avoidance and approach strategies. Avoidance strategies are concerned with goals connected to survival and resource conservation. These strategies are used to avoid or inhibit conflict. They focus on protecting what one possesses. Under "self-survival," withdrawal and displacement would be examples of specific strategies. Under "resource conservation" would be the strategies of repression, conciliation, and resistance.

Approach strategies are concerned with goals which are related to control and problem-solving. Control frequently involves confrontations between people and situations, while problem-solving highlights the need to maintain a sense of order within a social setting. Specific strategies under "control of people" are threats, manipulation, coercion, deterrence, and physical aggression. Under "problem solving," listed strategies are isolation, fact-finding, smoothing, confrontation,
mediation, and compromise, according to Faria (1982).

While the aforementioned research focuses on conflict management strategies as lists of bona fide strategies, specific techniques, or simple suggestions, many researchers concentrate on the development of an individual strategy. For example, Hartman (1981) modified a technique from the 1960s to facilitate conflict resolution and decision making. The Delphi Technique replaces perpetual meetings with questionnaires which are circulated to each participant. The group member writes out his/her answers and sends them back. All answers are then circulated to all members who then are asked to re-write the questionnaire considering other members' answers. Hartman's (1981) modifications to the Delphi Technique included requiring those who disagreed with a questionnaire statement to offer alternatives and the offering of alternate statements initially. This modified Delphi Technique is a valuable conflict management strategy in certain circumstances because it is anonymous (and therefore uninhibiting) and because it requires every member to reply to every statement (unlike a meeting in which some members are overshadowed).

Brett (1984) focuses her research on the popular strategy which involves bringing in a third party. The
third party may direct discussion about conflict, ask questions, rule out information, and make decisions. "The strength of the inquisitorial third-party model within organizations (or in any other context) is that conflict gets resolved rather efficiently" (Brett, p. 674).

According to Lindskold and Collins (1978), another way to manage conflict is to apply Osgood's (1962) GRIT strategy. GRIT stands for Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-Reduction. The initiator of a GRIT strategy makes an initial statement of intent to work towards conciliation. Then he/she carries out a series of clearly announced unilateral conciliatory acts not expecting immediate reciprocation as he/she understands that the target doesn't trust the initiator. These actions may be viewed as a plot to make the target vulnerable. Eventually, the target will reciprocate because it serves his/her purpose to reduce hostilities, to eliminate defensiveness, and to cooperate.

Another strategy in dealing with conflict is the "creative, peaceful approach" propounded by Fogg (1985). He defines creative as "specific outcomes that are unusual, remote, flexible, numerous" (p. 31). Fogg (1985) says that a repertoire of these strategies is particularly useful for closed-minded people who readily turn to
violence or withdraw in conflict when simple compromise is not achieved. These creative, peaceful solutions include varying who is involved (call in a third party or change the parties involved), varying what is involved (seek common interests and the fractionation of the conflict), varying where things are involved (postpone the conflict), varying how things are involved (use nonviolence, use requests that are fair, acceptable, and face-saving), and varying the reasons why things happen (convert to new values and give attention).

Perhaps the most extensive research assembled concerning conflict management strategies is that of Hocker and Wilmot (1985). These researchers divide strategies into avoidance and engagement tactics. Avoidance tactics seek to minimize any discussion which recognizes conflict. The first example of an avoidance tactic is simple denial, which vaguely negates the existence of any conflict. A second example is extended denial, in which elaborate statements as to the basis of the denial are put forth. A third example is underresponsiveness, in which after a person comments on the conflict, its existence is not acknowledged or is denied by the other person. The fourth of the avoidance tactics is topic shifting, which ends the discussion about
a conflict issue before the conflict is finished. The fifth strategy is topic avoidance, in which statements are made that stop discussion of a conflict issue before an opinion is espoused. The sixth strategy is abstractness or the use of purposely vague generalizations. The seventh strategy is semantic focus, in which one participant diverts another participant by putting emphasis on the meanings of words, rather than content, in a discussion. The eighth strategy is process focus, in which procedural statements take the place of the discussion of conflict. The ninth strategy is joking, which also supplants the discussion of conflict. The tenth strategy is that of ambivalence, in which contradictions are made about the conflict's presence. Finally, the eleventh strategy is labeled as pessimism, in which pessimistic comments made about the conflict take the place of a discussion of conflict issues.

Hocker and Wilmot (1985) also list specific examples of engagement tactics. These tactics are divided into two groups: competitive tactics and collaborative tactics. The first strategy listed as a competitive tactic is that of faulting or the direct criticism of the partner's person. Rejection is the second strategy. This combines disagreement with the partner as well as personal
antagonism. The third tactic is called hostile questioning. Leading questions are asked which fault the partner. Hostile joking, another tactic, involves joking about the partner in a faulting way. Fifth is the strategy of presumptive attribution, in which items are attributed to the partner without his/her acknowledgement. Sixth is avoiding responsibility, in which personal responsibility for the conflict is denied. Prescription involves the use of requests, demands, and other prescriptive statements to achieve a change in the behavior of the partner. Lastly, violence or force is considered a competitive tactic.

Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) collaborative tactics include nine specific strategies. Description involves the use of nonevaluative comments about observable incidents as they relate to the conflict. Qualification is a strategy which employs exact qualified statements about the conflict. Disclosure is similar to description except that it deals with unobservable items like feelings and motivations. Soliciting disclosure seeks to elicit disclosure from the partner. Negative inquiry involves the solicitation of "complaints about oneself" (p. 121). Empathy uses supportive statements that express understanding of the partner. Emphasizing commonalities
is a strategy in which common interests are focused on. Accepting responsibility is a tactic in which responsibility for the conflict is attributed to oneself or to both parties. The last strategy is called initiating problem solving, in which statements are made which emphasize working together to solve the conflict.

From the review of the literature which concerns conflict management strategies, it is obvious that specific strategies are abundant. Hocker and Wilmot (1985) recognize that while strategy to some implies "doing something," avoidance strategies are far from "doing nothing." They are many, varied, frequently effective, and possibly the chosen, pre-planned strategies of many. Strategies which involve a party "doing something" (engagement tactics) can be simplistically divided into "good" (collaborative) and "bad" (competitive) strategies. However, as recognized by many researchers, "bad" strategies may work and good strategies may fail. Each conflict situation is different from every other conflict situation, and thus varying strategies may be employed with varying degrees of effectiveness. In chapter five, a number of conflict situations is analyzed with the focus on conflict management strategies. Although attempts at the categorization of conflict
management styles vary greatly, the research uses the designations of Hocker and Wilmot (1985) because they are extensive and communication-based.

Conflict Management Styles and Strategies as Related to the Role of the Educational Manager

Conflict management, as a concept, knows few, if any, boundaries. Business people and politicians, to name just two groups, labor frequently under stressful situations in which conflict is often present. The management of this conflict is vital to enable the business or political situation to grow and thrive. This is most certainly true of educational situations as well. Educational managers, many of whom are under such demands as diverse as budget-trimming and extracurricular supervision, need to be aware of conflict management, particularly such avenues as style and strategy. This is necessary so that schools may become or continue to be places of growth and vitality.

Unfortunately, though some texts and articles discuss educational managers in connection with conflict management, the diversity of literature concerning principals reflects the diversity of the tasks inherent in the position. Welch (1978) likens principals to sin-
eaters -- those who symbolically eat the sins of the dead for payment. According to Welch (1978), sin-eating "is the conscious, voluntary accepting of the transgressions of others" (p.8). This is the principal's job. Conaway and Coleman (1984) discuss the pragmatic problem of burnout as one of the many facing administrators of schools and review the large amount of literature written on this topic. Wedman (1982) focuses on a particular skill necessary to be a good principal: time management, particularly as it concerns instructional supervision. He exhorts administrators to re-evaluate their priorities and to realign instruction close to the top of the list. Markham (1980) proposes ten general "principles for principals" to use in the everyday running of the school. Kostman (1972) describes his personal experience as an urban secondary school principal, particularly highlighting a period of student rioting. Hightower (1979) writes about the role of the principal from practical (false fire alarms, bus seat damage) to pseudo-spiritual (the principal's creed). The diversity of literature can be overwhelming as it ranges from personal accounts to be used as examples, to lists of guidelines and necessary skills, to analyses of coping with the hardships of the position.
Focusing on the role of the principal as it is related to conflict management frequently yields articles based on the simple plea that conflict is not necessarily an evil entity. Perhaps due to the fact that principals are so frequently in conflict with students, teachers, and parents, it is necessary to impress upon principals through the literature that conflict does have potential for positive growth. It doesn't have to be something that's associated with stress, problems, and burnout. Tye (1972) says:

Conflict most often arises because of differences in values, philosophies, or perceptions. The typical administrator tends to suppress or avoid conflict, assuming that it will go away. Suppressing conflict, however, usually results in some type of confrontation at a later date. Often, such confrontations, in turn, result in irreparable damage to the organization. Conflict of ideas is healthy in a changing organization, for it frequently leads to new and better ideas. In a communicative school climate, the principal and others are able to deal with differences in points of view, while still maintaining a common purpose. (p. 81)

Schofield (1977), in reviewing the literature about conflict in education, notes that three concepts are implicit in that literature. They are:

1) Conflict is a very broad, all-encompassing term.

2) Conflict is the raw material of school administration.
3) Conflict is desirable and necessary for growth and change in education. (pp. 1-2)

In addressing a group of educational administrators, however, Schofield (1977) realizes that this view, fundamental to the understanding of conflict management, is difficult for many to accept.

I know that this is fine in theory. But some of you are perhaps thinking that this view of conflict wouldn't be very practical. It is, I think, very hard for us to change our thinking about conflict, given the cultural values and expectations with which we've been raised. Many of us desire to avoid conflict...But as one principal said to me, "You can't ultimately avoid conflict anyway" (p. 3).

Kelley (1979) initiates his discussion of the principles of dealing with conflict by reiterating the basic information of Schofield (1977). He states:

The goal of an effective organization or leader...is not the reduction or elimination of conflict...the goal is to increase organizational or individual capacities for handling conflict (p. 11).

Kelley (1979) states that certain factors (increased interdependence, increased pressure by external forces, increased variety in groups which make up an organization) increase the potential for conflict. Given these conditions, schools can have a great potential for conflict because interdependence typifies the educational process and increased involvement in the schools by
parents' groups and students' groups is evident.

Kelley (1979) proposes a number of considerations for school administrators in dealing with conflict. He directs principals to simply be optimistic and to be realistic in viewing conflict and their ability to manage it. A principal should also regard any change (temporary or permanent) within the school, community, or society as having the potential for conflict and plan accordingly. Fourth, an administrator should identify the basis of the values as represented in the opposing points of a conflict. Realization that a conflict can't always be solved is necessary. Fifth, Kelley (1979) admonishes administrators to identify their own toleration spans. He points to dissonance theory, which says that one becomes more convinced that he/she is right when faced with discrepant information. A principal should also "identify the role source of the conflict" (p. 15). One frequent role conflict juxtaposes the role as spouse/parent to the large amount of time demanded by educational administration. The administrator should be skilled in predicting possible (and probable) conflict outcomes and be able to pinpoint the positions of each party in a conflict. Last, a principal should listen to all points of view before making a final decision. Kelley's (1979)
ten principles are valuable as general guidelines when the principal is considering a course of action in managing conflict, but few could be called specific strategies.

Nebgen (1979), like Kelley (1979), directs her research on conflict management toward the educational administrator. She, however, focuses on specific strategies as used in educational settings. She lists four conflict management strategy categories: avoidance techniques, use of force, use of a third party, and rational approaches. Avoidance techniques (withdrawal, isolation, procrastination, and smoothing) usually are a temporary solution. The use of force (coercion, suppression, domination, and imposition) may resolve a conflict, but the lingering feeling of dissatisfaction may breed another quickly. The use of a third party (arbitration and mediation) is effective in many situations, such as conflicts caused by communication (since the arbiter or mediator can clarify the position of each party). The effectiveness of the use of rational approaches to conflict management (persuasion, compromise, and confrontation) vary according to the cause of the conflict. Connecting these strategies to the educational administrator, Nebgen (1979) says:

Unmanaged or mismanaged conflicts can drain the school organization of the
energy it should be directing toward achievement of its goals. The effective management of conflict, then, becomes one of the most important, if not the most important, function of the school administrator. (p. 27)

A specific study was done by Hughes and Robertson (1979) to assess how principals view and handle conflict. Thirty-two principals from urban areas were extensively questioned in fifty minute interviews previous to which they had completed a 132 item questionnaire. Concentrating solely on data which was gleaned from secondary school principals, the following results were gathered. When asked who they had conflicts with most often, the administrators were split between students and teachers (each 29.4%). The experiment's results revealed that, as perceived by secondary administrators, the most frequent conflict issue was the treatment of students (41.2%), with the job role of teachers (35.3%) second. Concerning how the principals managed, most felt that they had a general conflict management style. Most (41.2%) saw their style as joint problem solving, followed by a varying style dependent upon the situation (29.4%), administrative decision (17.6%) or authority, and withdrawal (5.9%). Of those who said that they managed by joint problem solving, only 36.4% really did manage by using this strategy. Joint problem solving was used 100%
of the time with parents, but only 54.5% of the time when teachers were the second party. The final conclusion that the researchers reached using this data was "that conflict management has been grossly overlooked both as a research topic and as a role component for the school administrator" (p. 15).

Sexton and Bowerman (1979) address the specific topic of secondary school principals and conflict management styles and strategies. While noting a need for principals to understand the four types of conflict (role, power, crisis, maintenance), they reinforce the idea that there is no correct answer to handling a conflict, rather "the secret to successful conflict-handling is to use an appropriate style and to intervene at the appropriate time" (p. 8). To this end, Sexton and Bowerman (1979) have devised an extensive self-test and grid specifically for secondary school principals, the only such instrument of its kind.

In summing up the literature in which conflict management is viewed in an educational setting, one can see that the information available is relatively scant and elementary. Perhaps the reason for this is that, while the information is of interest to educational scholars, its purpose is to help very busy principals do a better
job and, consequently, must be kept simple to even attract administrator readers.

Concluding the second chapter, one can see that while the information available concerning conflict management (specifically styles and strategies) in education is minimal, there is a fair amount of research available on conflict management styles and an abundant amount of material on conflict management strategies. Most of the information about styles is based on Blake and Mouton (1970) or is a reflection of their structure of a limited amount of set styles used to explain not necessarily one's general approach to conflict, but rather one's approach to each conflict in which he/she is involved. The extensive research on strategies reflects the human being's myriad of choices in dealing with conflict -- verbal or nonverbal, avoiding or engaging, collaborating or competing. Each conflict is unlike any other conflict, and so necessitates a different set of conflict management decisions.

After introducing conflict in chapter one and reviewing the literature of conflict, with a special emphasis on conflict management styles and conflict management strategies, in chapter two, the methodology of this study is described in chapter three.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The research for this study took place at a high school (grades nine through twelve) in a county school system on Maryland's eastern shore. The county system included four other high schools, six middle schools, and twelve elementary schools. This both suburban and rural system was directed by a superintendent who was chosen by an elected school board. During the time of the observation, the superintendent was sporadically on leave due to a mental breakdown. Much of the county's daily business was assumed by the two assistant superintendents. The superintendent was eventually forced to retire in June, 1987. As the superintendent was extremely powerful in determining school policies, his absence allowed experimentation with school rules during this time. Some examples of change during this period were the following: smoking by students was prohibited on school property; the senior lounge was dismantled; and notes from home excusing student absences were discontinued and then reinstated.

Obviously, policy governing the schools was in a
state of flux. This was reflected in the specific high school in which the observations took place. Students caught smoking in the bathrooms when there was a smoking court were automatically suspended for three days. Students caught smoking in the bathrooms when there was no smoking court were simply warned, suspended for one day on the second offense, and three days thereafter. Students caught cutting class were warned on the first offense during one year and suspended for a day during the next year. While these two examples show the inconsistency of the disciplinary policy during the time of observation, it was also true that punishments for infractions could be arbitrarily applied. Students referred to the office by teachers for "mouthing off" got a variety of punishments like verbal or written warnings, detention, suspension, or paddling. Much of this was determined by which teacher made the referral and what the student's previous disciplinary history was. Teachers who frequently sent students to the office generally saw them get off with lighter punishments than did those who seldom referred students to the office. Students with a vivid history of infractions were frequently punished more than those who had no prior "record."

The students to whom these policies applied were a
varied lot. Rural poverty existed. Some students had minimal food, little clothing, and homes with dirt floors. Other students lived in upper middle-class developments with copious amenities. Drop-outs co-existed with merit scholarship winners. Primarily white, the school population was seven percent black with a smattering of other ethnic mixtures. The majority of those generally disciplined were poor, non-college prep, white males.

Subjects

The subjects of this study were five, male, secondary school administrators. They had all, at one time, been assistant principals or principals at a selected senior high school in a Maryland county school system. The subjects ranged in age from thirty-seven to fifty-one. They all held a minimum of a Master’s degree, plus fifteen graduate credits. All but one had begun his career as a teacher, with an average of five and one-half years in that position. The average length of years spent as an administrator was twelve.

Administrator A was the principal during the entire period of observation. In response to interview questions, it was established that he was fifty-one years old, had graduated from Towson State University in 1958
with an undergraduate degree in secondary education (history), and had graduated from Towson State University in 1967 with a Master's degree in secondary education administration, though no thesis was required as part of his program. Also, Administrator A had forty-five additional credits beyond the Master's degree obtained from the University of Delaware, the University of Maryland, Loyola College, and Towson State University.

Administrator A had taught eight years and worked in administration twenty-one years. Despite his extensive experience and education, he had no courses concerning conflict management. He did feel that it was an important concept, particularly as it concerned his job. He estimated that administrator-student conflicts required his attention (management) forty percent of each day. Administrator-teacher conflicts demanded another forty percent of his daily time. Administrator-staff conflicts necessitated approximately ten percent of his daily time, while administrator-central office conflicts required less than five percent of his daily time. Almost ninety-five percent of his daily time was spent in managing conflicts with various school populations. Administrator A said that he possessed a single management style which he did not vary from situation to situation although he could not
identify or name what style he believed that he had.

Administrator B was an assistant principal during the initial phase of observation. He was later transferred to another high school in the county system in an administrative rearrangement. In response to interview questions, it was established that he was forty-two years old, had graduated with an undergraduate degree in French Literature in 1967 from Catholic University of America, and had graduated with a Master's degree in counseling (psychology) in 1973 from Manhattan College, though no thesis was required as part of his program. He had an additional fifteen credits beyond his Master's degree in Administration and Supervision from Towson State University in a certification program and had participated in an I/D/E/A Institute sponsored by Appalachian State University.

Administrator B had taught ten years and served as an administrator for ten years (two of those years as a guidance counselor). He had two courses which involved conflict management. They were "Improving Human Relations" and "Coping Skills for Educators" (both taken at Loyola State University). Administrator B felt that all his daily time was spent in managing conflict. Seventy-five percent of his time was spent with students,
while twenty percent was spent with teachers. Administrator-staff conflict required four percent of his attention per day, while only one percent of his time was used in managing administrator-central office conflicts.

Administrator C was, like Administrator B, an assistant principal during the initial stage of this observation. He was transferred to a middle school after the summer of 1986. He was, as derived from the interview process, forty years old, had graduated with a B. A. in history from Tusculum College in 1969, and had graduated from Towson State University in 1974 with an M. Ed. in Administration and Supervision, although a thesis was not a part of his program. Beyond the Master's level, he had thirty credits in Administration, Supervision, and Personnel.

Administrator C had taught five years and had been an administrator for thirteen years. He had numerous courses involving conflict management. They included "Disruptive Youth," "Personnel Management," and "Recent Trends in Education." He estimated that he spent four hours per day in managing administrator-student conflicts, while three hours a day were spent with administrator-teacher conflicts. Also, he estimated that he spent one hour a day dealing with administrator-staff conflicts,
while only one-half hour was spent daily in managing conflicts with the central office.

Administrator D was an assistant principal during the latter part of this observation. He had been transferred into the school when Administrators B and C were transferred out of the school. In response to interview questions, he established that he was thirty-nine years old, had graduated in 1970 from California State College (of Pennsylvania) with an undergraduate degree in secondary education (industrial arts), and had graduated with a Master's degree in Secondary Guidance and Counseling in 1975 from Millersville University. His thesis topic dealt with community service. Also, Administrator D had thirty additional credits in a variety of subjects beyond the Master's level. He had taken these extra courses at Pennsylvania State University, the University of Maryland, Loyola College, Catholic University of America, Millersville University, and the University of Delaware.

Administrator D had been a teacher for five years and an administrator for twelve years. He had had no courses involving conflict management. He estimated that he spent half of his work day managing conflicts involving students. Thirty percent of his daily time was spent
involved with teacher conflicts. Conflicts between the administrator and staff required one to two percent of his time, while administrator-central office conflicts necessitated less than five percent of his day's time. As much as eighty-seven percent of his daily activities involved conflict. He described his style of conflict management as pleasant, but said that he did vary his styles depending on the student and situation. The previous principals did not venture an opinion as to what to label their individual conflict management styles.

Administrator E was an assistant principal during the latter part of this observation. Like Administrator D, he was transferred from another high school to replace Administrators B and C. In the interview process, it was established that he was thirty-eight years old, had graduated with an undergraduate degree in political science/history from Wilmington College in 1971, and had graduated from the University of Delaware in 1975 with a Master's degree in educational administration. His thesis topic dealt with desegregation in Delaware. He had an additional forty-five credits beyond the Master's level in a variety of subjects.

Administrator E had taught four years and had been an administrator for ten years. He had had one course
involving conflict management. Entitled "Conflict Management," it was a thirty hour course sponsored by the NASSP set aboard a (seven day) cruise ship. He estimated that he spent ten percent of his daily time involved in managing conflicts with students, while three percent of his time daily is spent between administrator-teacher and administrator-staff conflicts. He spent no time in conflict with the central office. He had two conflict management styles. They were "good" or non-defensive and "bad" or defensive. These styles were determined by the other person's (in the conflict) attitude toward him.

The five subjects were chosen because they were easily accessible to the researcher who was also a teacher in the high school where these administrators were employed.

Apparatus

While most of the data collected was gathered by observation, additional data was provided by the researcher's interview with each administrator. These interviews took approximately one-half hour. The researcher asked each subject the same set of specific questions in the same order given to all other participants. (Figure 1 in the appendix.) The researcher
constructed this series of questions based on the idea that certain background factors may have influenced the conflict management behavior of the participants. Questions asked included birth date; undergraduate college, graduation date, and major; graduate college, graduation date, major, and thesis topic; additional education including credit hours, subjects, and colleges; conflict management courses including number and titles; length of teaching career; length of administrative career; and time spent per day in conflict management with students, teachers, staff, and central office personnel.

Age was considered pertinent, in that it could influence on a subject's view of conflict as needing to be either resolved or managed. Questions about education were included because training in conflict management would most likely be dependent on this factor. Length of career was asked because experience could possibly factor into the use of certain conflict management strategies. Specific questions about time spent in conflict management were asked with the purpose of fathoming the subjects' perceptions of the constitution of conflict management.

Procedure

Observation of the administrators began in the
spring of 1986. At that time, there were one principal and two assistant principals governing a high school of approximately 1,300 students from rural/suburban backgrounds. As of the summer of 1986, the two assistant principals were transferred to other schools within the county in an annual administrative personnel "shake-up."

Beginning with the 1986-1987 school year, two new assistant principals replaced the originals. Therefore, the principal was observed from the spring of 1986 until the spring of 1987, though not during the months of July and August. The original assistants were observed during the spring of 1986 and the second group of assistant principals was observed from the fall of 1986 to the spring of 1987.

Originally, the researcher planned to sit unobtrusively in each administrator's office and observe primarily formal conflict situations. However, the researcher's presence created additional administrator tension and student queries about privacy. The researcher then decided to sit in the outer administrative office off of which each principal's door opened. From this vantage point, observation could be conducted through open doors. Also, impromptu conflicts which frequently happened before students were led into the inner offices were able to be
closely observed and recorded. The researcher was also able to accompany each administrator on his rounds of the school grounds, the purpose of which was primarily to apprehend students who were breaking school rules, such as sitting in cars and smoking in the bathroom.

Each setting obviously had its restraints. Observing administrator-student interactions from a vantage point outside the office yielded a great deal of information, but not of an unrestrained, intimate nature. If personal information arose in conversation or if emotions got too high (on either the administrator's or student's side), the administrator could (and would) simply close the door. This effectively cut off the researcher's data source in several instances. Another restraint of this setting was distance. Depending upon which office was targeted, the distance between the researcher and the parties being observed was as much as eight feet. This occasionally prohibited the researcher from exact observation, particularly in connection with sound. Thus, due to the administrator's door serving as a barrier and distance serving as a sound impediment, the observations could be stilted to favor loud, but routine interactions.

Observing administrator-student interactions by
accompanying each administrator on his rounds of the building also had its drawbacks. Since the researcher's presence was so obvious, the administrators tended to "put on a show." Students, who otherwise might have been simply warned and told to move on, were diligently apprehended and sent to the office for further discipline. A lack of ease on behalf of the administrator was noted by the researcher. Another variable perhaps stiltling the observations was the physical settings themselves. Crowded areas (cafeteria, senior lounge) made it difficult for the blocking of the research's sight by people. Obviously, certain areas were "off-limits" to the female researcher, such as the boys' bathrooms and locker rooms.

All of the administrators were cooperative when they were informed by the researcher of the importance to this project of utilizing extensive observation. After observations were completed, each administrator was interviewed by the researcher utilizing a specific format as described in the previous subsection. Although all but one administrator was enthusiastically cooperative during the interviews, there seemed to be reluctance on the part of the principals to discuss conflict management training. Some administrators tried very hard to think of any course that they had taken that was related to conflict
management only to come up with no answer. Most were chagrined by their lack of formal training as they knew that conflict management was the researcher's topic.

A great amount of data was gathered by the researcher during the year-long period of observation. Approximately forty-one hours of observation were needed to gather the 127 dialogues. However, due to the abundant amount of data which cannot be incorporated into a thesis of limited size, only selected data are analyzed in the following two chapters. Fifty conflict dialogues are analyzed from which the conclusions of this research are generated. Twenty of these dialogues are presented in their entirety as examples to support the conclusions. The names of the people observed by the researcher were changed. The data examined were selected by the researcher as the best representations of conflict management styles (chapter four) and conflict management strategies (chapter five). The data analyzed in chapter four are scrutinized as to their applicability in connection with Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) view of conflict management styles. Specifically, the data are judged to fit the five management styles of competition, collaboration, compromise, avoidance, and accommodation. The data in chapter five are analyzed based upon Hocker
and Wilmot's (1985) study of conflict management strategies, specifically avoidance and engagement strategies.
Prior to an analysis of a number of examples of conflict interactions between the five subjects and various students, it is helpful to review the research of Hocker and Wilmot (1985) as it concerns conflict management styles. These researchers propound four assumptions concerning conflict management styles. First, they say that people do indeed respond to conflict situations in a patterned way. Second, that patterned way makes sense to them. A third assumption is that people do change their responses depending upon the given situation. Finally, they say that no style is necessarily better than another style. Given these generalities, these researchers also caution that it can be disadvantageous to look at individual conflict management styles due to, among other reasons, people's varying perceptions, problems with conflict-measuring instruments, and the placement of the focus on people and not on communication. Despite these disadvantages, an analysis of a variety of
conflict interactions between the subjects and specific students in varying settings can serve as a basis to see if particular conflict management styles are used.

While many scholars have devised categories in which to place people's conflict management styles, Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) five designations based on the research of Kilmann and Thomas (1975) are used as the basis for the present analysis. They include the competitor (who uses aggressive and uncooperative behavior), the collaborator (who uses aggressive, but cooperative behavior), the compromiser (who uses moderately aggressive and cooperative behavior), the accommodator (who uses nonassertive, but cooperative behavior), and the avoider (who uses nonassertive and uncooperative behavior).

Principle A, in the observed conflict dialogues, exhibited the use of various styles. Though primarily a competitor, he also exhibited instances in which his style was determined as that of a collaborator. The following examples support this conclusion.

The first conflict dialogue took place in the school's busy main office. It was observed by three secretaries, two teachers, and at least seven students.
Principal A's loud voice carried out into the busy hall as students were changing classes and, therefore, a number of students in the hall also heard at least part of the interaction.

Conflict Dialogue #1

Principal A (quite loudly): Snicker behind my back will you! Get back into that office now!

Bill: (goes into office)

Principal A: So you think it's real funny. You get a two-day vacation for cutting class and then you stand right in front of the office and tell your friends like it's a big joke.

Bill: I wasn't saying anything.

Principal A: Don't you lie to me. I saw you. Do you think I'm stupid? Well, do you?

Bill: No.

Principal A: Well, now for your smart mouth you've got an extra day. Go sit in the office until your mother comes.

It is obvious that in this situation, Principal A feels personally affronted by the student, Bill. According to Principal A, Bill had received a two-day suspension for cutting class and instead of feeling chagrined about it, Bill had gleefully told his friends...
about his "vacation" in full view of Principal A. He is perhaps upset that Bill is not in the least feeling rebuked by his punishment, but seems most upset that Bill has flaunted his lack of anxiety in front of him. Principal A's loud shouting and informal vocabulary ("two-day vacation" and "smart mouth") substantiate this. Using the five categories of conflict management styles, Principal A would be labeled as a competitor because he seems to need to "win" this situation and does so by being highly aggressive (voice, actions) and uncooperative.

The second conflict dialogue involves Principal A with a different male student, Robert. The dialogue took place in Principal A's office. Although the door was open, the lack of loudness and positive tone of Principal A's voice did not attract the attention of those people working in the central office.

Conflict Dialogue #2
Principal A: Sit down, Robert (student does so). I have a referral notice from your homeroom teacher that you've been tardy again. I thought I made myself perfectly clear that this was to stop. You said you'd stop, didn't you?
Robert: Yeah...it wasn't my fault this time. I overslept. My mom had to get out of bed to bring
me in.
Principal A: Why did you oversleep?
Robert: I worked until midnight. I guess I just couldn't get up.
Principal A: Why are you working on a school night so late?
Robert: 'Cause I got to.
Principal A: O.K. We'll let this one go, but next time it's back to detentions. Now go get a pass to get back to class from Mrs. Ventnor.

Unlike the circumstances of the first conflict dialogue, Principal A does not appear to feel personally threatened by Robert's behavior. Robert's verbal and nonverbal communication is not defiant. Although he is not chagrined by his situation, he calmly answers Principal A's queries. In this situation Principal A could be labeled as a collaborator because while he is cooperative with Robert, he also is aggressive in his questioning of the student. He wants to know the source of the problem and when he is satisfied that he does know the true situation, he solves the problem by giving Robert a second chance. This may seem to be a compromise, but in Principal A's position of power he does not have to be lenient.
In analyzing ten examples of conflict dialogues involving Principal A, it is evident that Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) assumption that people do change their conflict management styles depending upon the situation can be true. Principal A displayed three different conflict management styles (competitor, collaborator, and avoider) in ten different interactions with students although the majority of these dialogues found him to use a competitive style.

Principal B, in the observed conflict dialogues, showed the use of a variety of conflict management styles just as Principal A did. Principal B primarily was either an avoider or a compromiser, but he also exhibited the use of the collaborative conflict management style. The following examples support this conclusion.

The third conflict dialogue took place between Principal B and a male student, Jerry. It took place in Principal B's office.

Conflict Dialogue #3

Principal B: Come in Jerry and close the door. Sit down, please. I have a referral form from Miss Skelly that says that you've been tardy to her fifth period class four times this semester. What's the
problem?
Jerry: I just get talking. I sometimes have to go to the
lavatory.
Principal B: Do you have a physical problem?
Jerry: Maybe, sometimes.
Principal B: All right. Get your mother to write me a
note and I'll waive this detention. Otherwise,
I'll see you again.

Principal B invited Jerry into his office and
asked Jerry to sit down. When he questioned Jerry about
his tardiness, Principal B "put words into his mouth" by
suggesting a physical problem. Jerry's response is
hesitant, but he is willing to accept an excuse if it is
conveniently given to him by Principal B. In this
conflict dialogue Principal B could be labeled both a
compromiser or an avoider. He is a compromiser because he
exhibits a partial amount of cooperation while also
showing some aggression in his questioning. His
cooperation is shown in his asking Jerry to sit down and
in using "please." The tone that is set is positive, but
Principal B quickly made his own excuse for Jerry's
discipline problem. Thus, Principal B may be more
accurately labeled as an avoider because he is avoiding
punishing Jerry for his tardiness by giving him an excuse
(and allowing the possibility of a forged note to exist). Principal B has "given in" and even Jerry does not get what he needs -- guidance to help him stop being late to class.

The fourth conflict dialogue took place between Principal B and a male student, John. It too took place in Principal B's office.

Conflict Dialogue #4

Principal B: Come in, John. Sit down.
John: What's wrong?
Principal B: I have a note from Mr. Mickle that says that you were not in class yesterday and not on the absentee.
John: But I was absent.
Principal B: I'll just call home and confirm with your mother that you were sick yesterday.
John: My mom and dad both work -- they won't be home.
Principal B: Have your mom write me a note and bring it to me before homeroom tomorrow. Don't forget.
John: O.K. Thanks.

Principal B also appeared to be a compromiser or an avoider in this dialogue. He presented John with the problem (that he had been turned in for cutting class) and
allowed John to refute this charge. He accepted John's claim that this may have been a clerical oversight, but did make an attempt to contact John's parents to corroborate this which he had not done in the previous conflict dialogue. However, Principal B readily accepted John's claim that his parents could not be contacted and so a written note would be substituted. This indicates that Principal B could be avoiding parental confrontation and, therefore, he would be labeled as an avoider.

Pace (1983) suggests that people develop conflict management styles which do not alter with the situation. The previous two conflict dialogues suggest that Principal B is a compromiser who "gives in" to the students before he is even asked. He is also an avoider in that he appears to want to distance himself from any chance of a face-to-face parental conference and, hence, his repeated suggestion to communicate by using written correspondence despite the possibility that the student could forge this type of note.

Principal C, in the observed conflict dialogues, exhibited an almost exclusive use of the competitive style of conflict management. The following two dialogues serve as reflections of this conclusion which was based on ten observed conflict dialogues.
The fifth conflict dialogue took place initially in the central office and then returned there after a gap of time. The dialogue primarily was between Principal C and a female student, Wanda.

Conflict Dialogue #5

Female Student: (Racing into the office) There's a fight out front.

Principal C: (to the secretary) Call Mr. Blake. (returns with two dishevelled female students) Get in that office and sit down. Patty, you go in my office. Wanda, sit here. Right here. Are you deaf?

Wanda: I ain't deaf.

Principal C: Then don't act like it.

Wanda: (mumbles)

Principal C: What did you say?

Wanda: Nothin'.

Principal C: It better be nothing. I don't want to hear one word out of you. One word and you're out. Understand?

Wanda: (glares)

Principal C: Understand?

Wanda: Uh-huh.

Principal C would be labeled as having a
competitive conflict management style in this situation. He was highly aggressive as demonstrated by his threatening language and tone. Also, he showed little cooperation with the students. However, considering that Principal C had just broken up a physical fight between two female students, it is not surprising that he found it necessary to exert his authority in a highly visible manner. He obviously felt that since the situation itself was quite public, then he also had to be public in his handling of the conflict. There seemed to be a feeling of a need to "out do" the student fighters or "win" the conflict.

The sixth conflict dialogue took place between Principal C and a male student, Frank. The dialogue took place in Principal C's office. In the school year following this altercation, the policy on corporal punishment existed in writing, but was not acted upon by the succeeding vice-principals due to their reluctance to be taken to court by a parent. Thus, this conflict was one of the last examples in which corporal punishment was used.

Conflict Dialogue #6
Principal C: I've had it with you this time, Frank.
You've got your choice: suspension or paddling.
What will it be?

Frank (jauntily): I'll take a beating.

Principal C: Fine with me. We'll do it right now. Mrs. Ventnor, come in here.

Frank: Why does she have to be here?

Principal C: We need a witness.

Frank: The more the merrier.

Principal C: You won't be so jolly when I'm finished.

Bend over. (Administers two whacks) Now think about that for the rest of the afternoon.

By virtue of Principal C's choice of punishment, he would be labeled a competitor in this conflict. He was highly aggressive by using this form of punishment, although the student did choose this punishment. Due to the fact that the student chose the punishment (which caused physical pain) and that the student's attitude was cavalier, Principal C used threatening language ("You won't be so jolly when I'm finished.") and a great deal of physical force when administering the beating. On a surface level, Principal C seems to simply be cooperating with Frank's request, but given the situation in that Frank could choose only some form of punishment, to label Principal C a collaborator would be erroneous. He is a competitor in this situation.
Principal D, in the observed conflict dialogues, shows the most variety in his use of conflict management styles. Although primarily a collaborator, he exhibits at least one instance of each of the five behaviors in the ten observed interactions. The following examples substantiate this conclusion.

The seventh conflict dialogue took place between Principal D and a male student, Mike. This dialogue took place in the main lobby directly after the morning bell had rung to allow students to enter the building. Principal D's habit was to stand in the lobby and greet students as they entered the building.

Conflict Dialogue #7
Principal D: Good morning. Hello. Hi, Bob. Mike, let me see that shirt.
Mike: What's the matter?
Principal D: Don't you think that's a bit much?
Mike: I paid ten dollars for this shirt.
Principal D: Well, I don't want to see it in school again. Now, get out of here.
Mike: (laughing) O.K.

Principal D showed high aggressiveness in singling Mike out in the mass of students and ordering him to
explain what was written on his shirt. However, he was highly cooperative because he allowed Mike to keep the shirt on in school while handling the problem in a joking manner. His solution to allow Mike to wear the shirt this one time, but not to repeat its wearing also showed cooperation. Thus, in this instance, Principal D could be said to exhibit a collaborative style of conflict management.

The eighth example of a conflict dialogue was between Principal D and a female student, Marla. It took place in his office.

Conflict Dialogue #8

Principal D: Marla, come sit down. Close the door before you do.
Marla: Mrs. Ventnor said to come in here.
Principal D: Yes. I have a referral from Mr. Costy about your tardiness to his class. It's five times now.
Marla: I'm sorry to be late, but honestly, I just cannot make his room from the gym in under five minutes. I end up running sometimes.
Principal D: Yes, it's a big school. But, what are we going to do about you?
Marla: Could I leave gym earlier?
Principal D: Talk with Mrs. Zook and if you can get
dressed in a hurry, ask her to let you go before the bell.

Marla: O.K. Thanks.

Principal D also shows the collaborative style in this interaction. He is very cooperative in working with Marla to solve a problem that actually stems from the physical distance between Marla's two classes and not from her behavior. However, he is aggressive in his questioning of her and in his need to find a solution to the problem. He and Marla work together and both are satisfied with the outcome.

Principal E, in the observed conflict dialogues, exhibits a variety of conflict management styles, but most overtly wavers between being an avoider and a competitor. The following examples of conflict dialogue support this.

The ninth example of a conflict dialogue took place between Principal E and a female student. It occurred just previous to the beginning of the homeroom period while students were in the halls on their way to their appropriate classrooms.

Conflict Dialogue #9
Principal E: (Moving rapidly down the hall, gesturing students to go to homeroom) Let's go, let's move.
Homeroom!

Female student: (to Principal E with hands to ears) Stop it! God!

Principal E looks at the students, then moves down the hall and out the door.

Principal E initially gives the impression of being quite aggressive in his appearance in the hall (a principal generally does not appear outside the office area) and in the use of his loud voice. However, his loudness irritated a student as he passed her and her reply to him was peremptory and disrespectful. Despite his apparently aggressive stance, his reaction to her verbalization was not in the least aggressive. He simply looked at her and moved on. Thus, he exhibited low aggression and cooperation and so would be categorized as an avoider in this instance.

The last example of a conflict dialogue was between Principal E and a student, Mary. The dialogue took place during a morning class and was witnessed by the class' teacher and students.

Conflict Dialogue #10

Principal E: (Knocks on classroom door and pokes head in to address teacher) Do you have Mary Fisher in
class now?
Teacher: Yes, she's right there.
Principal E: (Looks menacingly at Mary) Get out here now, miss!
Principal E: (in the hall) Don't give me any excuses--I saw you at McDonald's yesterday afternoon during school.
Mary: I signed out.
Principal E: On what excuse?
Mary: I was sick.
Principal E: Not too sick to be at McDonald's. Get down to the office.

Interrupting a class while it is in session is a very unusual occurrence on the part of the principal. Thus, to do this shows high aggression by Principal E. Due to the fact that his loud voice and peremptory tone were heard by a large class of Mary's fellow students, humiliation also plays a role in this situation. By interrupting class, by singling out Mary, and by speaking loudly, Principal E used aggression and exhibited a lack of cooperation. He would be labeled a competitor in this situation.

The five subjects (as a group) used all five conflict management styles although some appear to favor a
particular style or two, while others vary their approach. The reasons for this are many. All the subjects seem to react differently to students who appear cooperative and respectful. Thus, conflict management style could be said to vary dependent upon the student's attitude toward the principal. Female students generally were treated differently than male students. The females were either treated more cooperatively or were treated as objects to be bullied. Thus, conflict management style could be said to be dependent on the sex of the student. The setting also influenced the conflict management styles employed in specific situations. Altercations which took place in the offices of the principals as opposed to those that took place elsewhere tended to be more subdued than the office conflicts. This might be the result of the situation itself. In patrolling the halls, the principals are looking to catch overt offenders, while those sent to their offices are there for a variety of reasons. Other variables influencing conflict management style could be the principal's personality, the time of day, the time of year, and the student's prior record.

The data was corroborated by two volunteers who were asked to read Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) chapter, "Conflict Tactics." The volunteers then were asked to
read the text of the conflict dialogues and to identify the style that each principal used in the ten dialogues observed. Discrepancies between the data of the researcher and that of the volunteers could be attributed to the fact that the volunteers did not observe the dialogues first-hand, thus eliminating clues like voice tone. Also, the volunteers did not have any personal experience with the subjects, thus eliminating contextual considerations. The volunteers' selections agreed with the researcher's choices (as seen in Table 1) eighty-eight percent of the time.

Table 1
Conflict Management Styles

<table>
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<th>Principal: Style:</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Competitor</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromiser</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodator</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoider</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
From the above data, it is seen that in most conflict dialogues, the competitive style of conflict management is exhibited. The next most frequently used styles are the collaborative style and the avoidance style. The compromising style of conflict management is seen to be the fourth used style in this research. Least displayed was the accommodating style.

In analyzing these ten examples of conflict dialogues in which conflict management styles are exhibited, it is apparent that Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) five categories of conflict management styles can be both useful and limiting. By being forced to examine and to categorize conflict management styles, one can be guided as to recognizing recurring patterns of behavior that if detrimental, can hopefully be changed. However, also apparent in this analysis is the unresolved conflict between Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) assumption that conflict management styles change due to the situation and Pacels's (1985) assumption that one develops a single conflict management style and primarily uses it in any given situation. Also, the categories can be limiting in that there is overlap between them specifically in conflict dialogue five. Another limitation is the appearance of changing styles within a single dialogue.
dependent upon which part of the dialogue is examined.
CHAPTER FIVE
AN ANALYSIS OF
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

While an analysis of conflict dialogues for the purpose of investigating conflict management styles is fairly simplistic due to the fact that five specific categories are the basis of most of the literature, an analysis of conflict dialogues for the purpose of scrutinizing conflict management strategies is much more complex. This is because while general categories exist into which varying strategies can be placed, the categories, as well as the strategies, are not consistent. For example, Conrad (1985) divides a group of conflict management strategies into structuring strategies, avoidance strategies, and confrontive strategies, while Faria (1982) divides conflict management strategies into only two categories: avoidance strategies and approach strategies. Another example is that of Hocker and Wilmot (1985), who divide conflict management strategies into the categories of avoidance strategies and engagement strategies.
While these researchers all have a category of avoidance strategies, the specific strategies named are not the same in each researcher's group. Perhaps the difficulty in analyzing conflict management strategies stems from the term itself. Most definitions are general. As previously mentioned, Fraser and Hipel (1984) define "strategy" as "any set of options that can be taken by a particular player (participant)." (p. 7) By considering a strategy any option, a wide range of verbal and non-verbal behaviors can be classified as a strategy. Since such a diversity of strategies exists, the classification of them is difficult. While Conrad (1985), Faria (1982), and Hocker and Wilmot (1985) attempt broad categorical labelings, their categories are not all the same, nor do they contain the same specific strategies. However, the most thorough and specific of the literature is that of Hocker and Wilmot (1985), and so their general categories (avoidance and engagement strategies) and specific strategies as described in chapter two are used to analyze the following conflict dialogues.

Principal A exhibits a variety of specific conflict management strategies covering both general categories (avoidance and engagement strategies). The following examples of conflict dialogues support this
The first conflict dialogue took place between Principal A and a female student, Mary. It took place in the principal's office.

Conflict Dialogue #1

Principal A: Go into my office, Mary (he follows). So, Mrs. Melrose has caught you smoking in the bathroom again. Not only are you going to get in trouble for this, but I'm going to take away your smoking privileges for the rest of the year. I'm sick and tired of having that filthy smoking court out there and then you don't even use it. You want to smoke up the bathrooms, too. I'm suspending you for one day and no more smoking! Go out and tell Mrs. Ventnor to call your mother to pick you up.

Mary: But...(starts to cry)

Principal A: That won't get you anywhere. Go do what I tell you.

The administrator in this conflict used both avoidance and engagement strategies. He used topic shifting (when Mary started to cry) by terminating the interview and ordering her out of his office. He also
used engagement strategies, specifically competitive strategies. He used faulting when he accused her of being too lazy to use the smoking court and when he implied that her tears were a deception. He used hostile questioning when he said that she'd been caught again smoking in the bathroom. Finally, he used prescription, specifically threats and demands. He threatened to (and does) take away Mary's smoking privileges for a year and then suspended her. He demanded that she leave his office and have the secretary call her mother despite the tears on her part. Thus, at least four strategies were exhibited by Principal A in this altercation.

The second example of a conflict dialogue which involved Principal A also occurred in his office and was with a female student, Sue.

Conflict Dialogue #2

Sue: Mrs. Botley said to come back and see you.
Principal A: Come in. Sit down. Now, what are you here for?
Sue: Mrs. Mecker sent me down for not turning in my report card.
Principal A: Well, why won't you give it to her?
Sue: I told her I lost it. I said my mom had seen it and she'd write me a note, but Mrs. Mecker told me to
go to the office.
Principal A: Well, go get Mrs. Vester to call your mom and verify she'd seen it. I'll write Mrs. Meeker a note.

Principal A used two engagement strategies in this conflict dialogue. Both are collaborative strategies: emphasizing commonalities and initiating problem solving. There seemed to be a shared understanding between Principal A and Sue that the teacher, Mrs. Meeker, was being unreasonable. Principal A's negation of the teacher's possible intention to get Sue "into trouble" supports this. Thus, the strategy of emphasizing commonalities was used. The strategy which involved the initiation of problem solving was exhibited by Principal A in his solution to placate Mrs. Meeker with an administrative note, while allowing Sue her justice by calling her mother for corroboration of the lost report card.

These two examples lead one to conclude that Principal A used a variety of strategies in managing conflicts with various students. Both avoidance and engagement strategies were used, but primarily engagement strategies were used. Depending upon the perceived student's behavior toward Principal A, as well as the type
of infraction, varying strategies were employed by the administrator. Principal A also used a variety of non-verbal behaviors to reinforce his verbalization. Examples of this were voice loudness and polite indications to sit down. Non-verbal behavior, with the exception of violence, is not included as a strategy in the research of Hocker and Wilmot (1985).

Principal B also used different strategies when he expressed himself in conflict dialogues with students. However, most of his strategies were either avoidance strategies or collaborative engagement strategies. The following two conflict dialogue analyses support this.

The third conflict dialogue occurred in Principal B's office between himself and a male student, Deshon.

Conflict Dialogue #3

Principal B: Sit down. This is the third fight this semester, Deshon. What is going on?
Deshon: I didn't do nothing. He pushed me and I pushed back.
Principal B: Why did you push back?
Deshon: He was messing with me.
Principal B: Maybe it was an accident. Whatever, you know what this means?
Deshon: You going to suspend me?
Principal B: I have to -- that's the rules.
Deshon: I need a holiday anyhow.
Principal B: What is going to happen to you, Deshon?

Principal B used both avoidance and engagement strategies in conversing with Deshon. He used the collaborative engagement strategy of soliciting disclosure in that he asked Deshon to tell him what had happened in this fight from Deshon's perspective. He used a number of avoidance strategies. He used process focus when he said that he had to suspend Deshon because it was the "rules." Procedure supplanted the real problem. He exhibited the avoidance strategy of simple denial when he excused the fight as a possible "accident," even though that is not what Deshon claimed. Finally, he showed the avoidance strategy of abstractness in his final exasperated comment about Deshon's future.

The fourth conflict dialogue took place between Principal B and a female student, Marcia. It occurred in his office.

Conflict Dialogue #4
Principal B: Marcia, go sit in my office. (closing door)

Now what about this cutting class? Ms. Burt says
that she saw you in the hall, but you're on the absentee list. What are you doing?

Marcia: I was on the absentee list because I signed in late. I was at the doctor's.

Principal B: Maybe we'll call your mother to verify that.

Marcia: She's at work and doesn't have a phone.

Principal B: How about if I call your doctor? Who is he?

Marcia: I forget. I was at a clinic.

Principal B: Marcia, I sure hope that you aren't lying.

I'll give you this note to take to your mother. I want her to call me tomorrow. If I don't hear from her, I'll drive to her work. Go ahead back to class.

Principal B expressed three different collaborative engagement strategies in the fourth conflict dialogue. He used the strategy of soliciting disclosure in his continual asking of Marcia about the circumstances of her late arrival. He also used empathy or support in his expression that he hoped Marcia wasn't lying. Finally, he initiated problem solving by allowing Marcia to have her mother call him the next day. However, he qualified this by noting that if there was no call, it would necessitate his driving to Marcia's mother's work place to clarify the situation.
Principal B seemed to waver between using avoidance strategies and using collaborative engagement strategies as illustrated by these previous examples of conflict dialogues. The wavering seemed dependent upon the student's attitude toward school and his/her record. Students who exhibited poor attitudes toward school as shown by engaging in fights or being verbally disrespectful to adults and whose records tended to be highlighted by a string of infractions were inclined to be treated to a series of avoidance strategies. Students who were seldom an administrative problem or whose infractions were minor tended to be targets of collaborative strategies by Principal B. Perhaps a reason for this was that Principal B considered students like Deshon "too far gone" to save, hence not worth the effort needed to apply collaborative strategies. Meanwhile, Marcia was considered salvageable and so worth the effort of engagement tactics.

Principal C used competitive engagement strategies almost exclusively. The following conflict dialogue analyses support this claim.

The fifth conflict dialogue took place between Principal C and a male student, Jimmy. It took place in Principal C's office.
Conflict Dialogue #5

Principal C: Now why are you using this language? Go into my office. We can't have this.

Jimmy: She asked me where I was and I told her.

Principal C: You didn't have to use that language. Why didn't you say that you were in the toilet?

Jimmy: I don't know.

Principal C: Geesh! What has your mother been teaching you? Mrs. Webster has every right to be really mad. You're getting detention for this.

Jimmy: But I didn't do nothing wrong!

Principal C: Don't give me any grief or we'll just have you in detention all year. Now keep your mouth shut while I write this form out to your mother. I don't want a word out of you.

In this conflict dialogue, Principal C used a number of competitive engagement tactics. They included faulting, hostile questioning, presumptive attribution, and prescription. He used faulting by criticizing Jimmy's language appropriateness and his mother's raising of him. He used hostile questioning in his opening query as to Jimmy's language and also later in the dialogue in his question as to why Jimmy didn't use "toilet" instead of the apparently offensive term. Principal C used
presumptive attribution in his asking Jimmy why he didn't use the word "toilet" -- he's perhaps inferring that Jimmy's reply was for shock value. Lastly, Principal C used prescription, specifically threats and demands. He threatened Jimmy with detention and extended detention. He demanded Jimmy be quiet by telling him to "keep your mouth shut" and "I don't want a word out of you."

Conflict dialogue six took place between Principal C and a female student, Veronica, in Principal C's office.

Conflict Dialogue #6
Veronica: Mrs. Bodine said to come in here.
Principal C: Your homeroom teacher tells me that you've been out fifty-four days so far. Is that right?
Veronica: Probably.
Principal C: Well, from now on, you'll need a doctor's official note to get an excused absence slip. I'm putting you on the medical excuse list. Do you understand? Any more absences without a note and you can't make up work.
Veronica: I know.
Principal C: Well, let's get in here to school.

Principal C used the competitive engagement strategies of faulting and prescription in the previous
conflict dialogue. By asking Veronica if she understood the simple concept of the necessity of a medical slip for any absence, he implied that she wasn't very intelligent, thus subtly faulting her. Also; prescription is used, specifically threats. Principal C threatened Veronica by putting her on a medical excuses list which necessitated an official note from a doctor or no school work could be made up.

Principal C had the smallest variety of strategies used among the five administrators observed. As corroborated by the previous conflict dialogue analyses, Principal C primarily used competitive engagement strategies, specifically focusing on faulting, hostile questioning, and prescription (usually threats). His limited use of conflict management strategies was a probable result of his own perception (and that of the student's) of himself as the "tough" principal. Although Principals A and E could be, like Principal C, loud and highly visible, Principal C seldom waivered as to the strategies he used. His limited repertoire of conflict management strategies made his administration of discipline very consistent. Hence, he was the most popular administrator with the faculty because the faculty members could rely on what kind of treatment a referred
Principal D used a wide variety of conflict management strategies including examples of both avoidance and engagement strategies. Within the general category of engagement strategies he used both competitive and collaborative strategies. No one category or specific style predominated. The following two examples of conflict dialogues substantiate this conclusion.

The seventh conflict dialogue occurred between Principal D and an anonymous female student. The altercation took place in a school hall which opened onto a sidewalk leading away from the building.

Conflict Dialogue #7
Principal D: (Observing a female student lighting up a cigarette outside on the school steps) What a stupid thing to do. Come with me. (Walking down the hall) Honestly, to smoke where everyone can see -- a real dumb thing. (Pause) Step it up now. I'm late for a meeting and this is a real annoyance.
Female student: (Mumbling) Big deal.
Principal D: What did you say?
Female student: Nothin'.
Principal D: Sure. (Principal D marched the student to the office and then went immediately to his meeting.)

Principal D exhibited both competitive engagement strategies and avoidance strategies in the previous conflict dialogue. He used faulting by telling the female student that her actions were "stupid." He also used prescription (demands) in ordering the student to hurry her walking. Principal D also used topic shifting in changing the emphasis of the dialogue from the student's smoking to his lateness to a meeting. In ignoring the student's potent satiric comment, Principal D exhibited simple denial -- he probably heard her comment, but chose to ignore it because he was late for a meeting.

The eighth conflict dialogue happened in Principal D's office. It took place between Principal D and a female student, Mandy.

Conflict Dialogue #8

Principal D: Go sit in my office, Mandy. (Follows and sits down) I see you were out all last week and have pretty poor attendance otherwise. Where were you?

Mandy: I was sick.
Principal D: Mandy, you can't stay home on the least provocation and expect to graduate.
Mandy: I was sick.
Principal D: I can't imagine that you can constantly be sick. You're not an invalid, are you? You've got to come to school.
Mandy: O.K.
Principal D: If you don't, I'll have to withdraw you from the rolls, O.K.?
Mandy: O.K.

In this conflict dialogue Principal D exhibited engagement strategies, both competitive and collaborative. He solicited disclosure (a collaborative engagement strategy) by asking Mandy to explain why her attendance is so poor. However, he also used competitive engagement strategies by threatening that she would not graduate and that she'd be withdrawn from the school role. Also, he used hostile questioning in that he asked Mandy if she was an "invalid" due to her high absenteeism.

Of the observed subjects Principal D had the least categorizable use of strategies. While some other subjects varied their use of strategies, no other administrator was comparable to Principal D in the range of strategies used. This is supported by the examples of
conflict dialogues. The reason for this may have been that Principal D had training as a guidance counselor and indicated that certain graduate courses taken in conjunction with his studies for his Master's degree were about conflict management. Given his education, he may have been more aware of methods in managing conflicts than the other subjects and, perhaps, he consciously employed the strategies used in each conflict.

Principal E used a variety of conflict management styles just as Principals A, B, and D did. Primarily, he varied his use of strategies between avoidance strategies and competitive engagement strategies.

The ninth conflict dialogue took place between Principal E and a male student, Johnny. It took place in the school lobby previous to the start of classes.

Conflict Dialogue #9
Principal E: Johnny, take off that hat.
Johnny: (Ignores Principal E)
Principal E: (Bounding across the hallway and snatching the hat) I said take off the hat and I mean it.
Johnny: Gimmee my hat, man. That's not fair.
Principal E: I'll show you what's fair. Take a trip to my office right now.
In this conflict dialogue Principal E used competitive engagement tactics. He used prescription in his initial loud demand that Johnny remove his hat. (Wearing hats in school is prohibited.) He used violence or force to physically remove the student's hat after the student blatantly ignored the demand. Finally, he used prescription again in vaguely threatening the student to "show you what's fair" and in demanding that Johnny go to the principal's office.

The tenth example of a conflict dialogue took place between Principal E and a female student, Marianne, and her silent, female friend. It took place in the hall while classes were in session.

Conflict Dialogue #10

Principal E: (Observing two students lingering at their lockers) Ladies! Let's get to class.
Marianne: We'll hurry.
Principal E: Your teachers will end up waiting all day, then. Let's go.
Marianne: We're hurrying.
Principal E: O.K. (Exits as the girls are still at their lockers)

Primarily displayed in this conflict dialogue is
the use of avoidance strategies by Principal E. He used joking which took the place of any serious discussion about why the girls were not in class but instead were lingering in the halls by commenting that the teachers will be waiting all day for these two students. Also, he used under-responsiveness in that although he recognized the problem and took action on it, his leaving the girls still socializing at their lockers is not responsive to their infraction.

Supported by these examples of conflict dialogues, Principal E emphasized the use of either avoidance strategies or competitive engagement strategies. Though seemingly opposites, these strategies were reflective of Principal E's "hot and cold" personality. Although well-liked by the student body for his leniency and youthful persona, his unpredictable temper made for sporadic loud vocal scenes. The reason for this might have been that Principal E took students' behavior and comments in a personal way. When he perceived that he was "under attack," he lashed out by using competitive engagement strategies. If a student did not personally impede him, he was apt to avoid confrontation.

In reviewing the ten examples of conflict dialogues as reflective of the general data, one can see
that no definitive conclusion can be made as to predicting what strategies may be employed in specific conflict situations. While Principals A, B, and E used varying but repetitive strategies, Principal C used strategies almost entirely limited to competitive engagement strategies and Principal D used a wide variety of strategies covering all general categories.

In tables 2, 3, and 4, this diversity can be seen. To support reliability, two volunteers were asked to read each conflict dialogue and to mark the strategies used by each administrator in that specific conflict encounter. Their knowledge of the different conflict strategies came from a reading of Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) chapter, "Conflict Tactics." They were not present to observe the conflict dialogues as they occurred nor did they know any background material concerning the subjects as did the researcher. Also the researcher labeled multiple strategies in each conflict episode while the volunteers usually labeled only one. This could account for discrepancies between the researcher's analysis and those of the volunteers. Note that although each principal was observed in ten different conflict situations, numbers vary because more than one strategy could be used in a single conflict situation. The volunteers' choices
supported the choices of the researcher seventy percent of the time.

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Competitive Engagement Strategies

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A number of conclusions can be made from the tabulated data. First, it is apparent that the researcher identified more strategies employed by the subjects than did the volunteers. As noted, this may be due to the volunteers' lack of immediate observation and contextual clues. However, as the volunteers progressed through the fifty conflict dialogues, they seemed more confident of their choices, and so their number of identified strategies increased.

Second, certain strategies were noted as appearing very frequently while the use of others was totally absent. Also, the researcher identified the use of more varied strategies than did the volunteers. Although this may be appropriate, it is worth noting that simple-to-understand strategies appear more often than those that aren't self-explanatory. Faulting, prescription (or threats, demands, and requests), hostile questioning, soliciting disclosure, and simple denial are the most popular strategies, while extended denial, semantic focus, rejection, avoiding responsibility, description, qualification, disclosure, negative inquiry, and accepting responsibility garnered no responses. Among this group are a number of difficult-to-understand terms. Consequently, the volunteers may have been hesitant to note a strategy because of a lack of
thorough familiarity with it.

Third, while many strategies were employed by the five subjects, three subjects tended to settle into one or two general categories, while the other two subjects choices appeared to be evenly spread across the three divisions. Principal A used eleven different strategies. Four were avoidance strategies, while seven were engagement strategies. Four of the seven engagement strategies were competitive strategies and three were collaborative strategies. Principal B used twelve different strategies. Six were avoidance strategies and six were engagement strategies. Two were competitive strategies, while four were collaborative strategies. Principal C used only six strategies. No avoidance strategies were used, while four competitive strategies were used and two collaborative strategies were used. Principal D used eleven different strategies. Four were avoidance strategies, three were competitive strategies, and four were collaborative strategies. Principal E used six strategies. Three were avoidance strategies, while two were competitive strategies, and one was a collaborative strategy. Thus, the subjects used a different number of strategies, a different categorization of strategies, and different specific strategies.
Fourth, the most popular strategies were competitive strategies. This was most likely a reflection of the rather stilted balance of power in the conflict dialogues. The administrator held the power to evoke punishment. The student with whom the dialogue took place was usually referred to the administrator because he/she broke a rule or generally misbehaved. Thus, punishment was not only the culminating detention or suspension, but included the threats, demands, personal aspersions, and hostile questioning that were part of the conflict episode.

Another conclusion based on a separate tally was that females are treated differently than males are treated by the five male subjects. Of the fifty conflict dialogues analyzed, thirty-two involved male students while eighteen involved female students. The majority of the conflict dialogues which involved female students used collaborative engagement strategies, while there was a variety of strategies used involving male students. Since only a small portion of the fifty conflict dialogues involved black students, no conclusions as to racial orientation and strategies used were made.
CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The preceding analysis concentrated on the communicative behavior of five, secondary school administrators. Specifically, their conflict management styles and conflict management strategies used in conflict interactions with a variety of students were examined. The academic setting was unique in that the subjects were employed primarily to manage conflict. Although the administrators noted that conflict occurred between themselves and a variety of people (students, teachers, school staff, and county administrators), the majority of their conflict episodes took place between themselves and students. Thus, the basis of the research was the observation and analysis of fifty conflict dialogues which involved five educational administrators from the same secondary school.

After an examination of the definition of conflict, changing assumptions about conflict, conflict and communication, conflict management, and the concept's relationship to the pragmatic perspective in chapter one,
a review of the literature about conflict, conflict management, conflict management styles and strategies, and conflict in educational settings was discussed in chapter two. The researcher's methodology was explained in chapter three. The researcher spent a year observing the five subjects in conflict with a number of students. She observed the conflicts from a diversity of viewpoints: inside the administrators' offices, outside the administrators' offices, in the outer central office, and accompanying the administrators to many other areas of the school (hallways, cafeteria, gym, lobby, and classrooms). The researcher also interviewed each administrator (Appendix) to ascertain information about their personal and professional backgrounds. Variables such as education, experience, and age were considered to have a potential bearing on personal conflict management styles and specific strategies employed by individual administrators.

In chapter four two conflict dialogues per administrator were presented verbatim as reflections of the conclusions which were based upon the larger group of ten dialogues. A central debate regarding conflict management styles concerns the assertion by Pace (1983) that individuals develop a single conflict management
style and use this style without regard to the specific situation versus the declaration by Hocker and Wilmot (1985) that individuals vary their conflict management styles dependent upon the specific conflict interaction. The research supported both claims. While Principal C used the competitive style of conflict management very frequently (thus supporting Pace's (1983) observation), the other administrators, particularly Principal D, used many different styles as seen in the conflict dialogues (thus supporting Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) claim). Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) conflict management style designations were the basis of the categorization.

In chapter five two conflict dialogues per administrator were also presented verbatim as reflections of the conclusions which were founded upon the larger group of ten dialogues. Apparent from the data is the conclusion that different subjects used different strategies. While Principal C used primarily competitive engagement strategies, the other administrators used a combination of avoidance strategies, competitive engagement strategies, and collaborative engagement strategies. It was postulated that many variables influenced a principal's choice of strategies used in a specific conflict interaction. Possibilities included the
student's attitude toward the principal, the student's prior record, and the student's sex.

By examining five secondary school principals in fifty specific conflict encounters for the purpose of analyzing their conflict management styles and the conflict management strategies they used, a number of conclusions was reached by the researcher. The initial conclusions consider the limitations of the study.

Using the communication-based definition of Hocker and Wilmot (1985), which defines conflict as "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals," (p. 23) some of the observed situations did not seem to exhibit the formality that the definition implies. Although administrators in the role of disciplinarians obviously perceive "incompatible goals" between themselves and the students, an overt recognition of these conflicting goals is seldom expressed in the conflict dialogues examined. "Scarce rewards" also do not appear as an entity that is even perceived and so is seldom expressed. "Interference," however, is perceived and expressed. Since definitions are a type of category, defining conflict and fitting the data into this
definition, exhibits the same problems as categorizing any data; namely, that by virtue of inventing delineations, parameters are constructed which necessitate molding the data to fit the category and, therefore, possibly losing contextual matter. Although the definition of conflict by Hocker and Wilmot (1985) was chosen because it was thorough, still the researcher found that certain observed conflict situations did not fulfill the definition completely.

The definition also uses the phrase "expressed struggle." However, in examining varying conflict dialogues for the purpose of analyzing conflict management strategies, the only strategy noted by researchers that wasn't verbal was violence. "Expressed" should also connote the use of non-verbal strategies. Many behaviors were observed by the researcher that should be considered as conflict management strategies, but were not able to be categorized based upon the current literature. Examples of non-verbal strategies (as perceived by the researcher) were the use of a loud voice, shouting, voice tone, the non-verbal head or hand indication to sit down, the decision to make a student stand throughout an interview, the shutting of an office door, and the decision to leave the office door open. More research needs to be done on
conflict management strategies which are non-verbal.

The use of categories to illuminate concepts is usually necessary to make sense of the concept; however, it is also limiting. Most research concerning conflict management styles presents five categories of styles. While this may help one recognize recurring behavior patterns, it also is very restrictive. In a conflict interaction different styles may be noted, possibly changing from dialogue line to dialogue line. Although one can qualify the use of styles by noting that styles can change from interaction to interaction, how could one label the style of an individual if it varies within an interaction? A simple majority count would negate the value of the other styles observed. While there is not a consistent basis for categorizing conflict management strategies, some researchers have identified specific behavior as strategies and delineated these behaviors into general categories. Again, categorization is helpful in recognizing similarities and differences between behaviors, but is restrictive in its lack of scope and limited recognition of non-verbal behaviors.

Conclusions were reached by the researcher concerning both conflict management styles and conflict management strategies. Pace (1983) maintains that one
style of conflict management is developed by an individual and used primarily without regard to the situation. Hocker and Wilmot (1985) believe that individuals vary their use of conflict management styles from situation to situation. The researcher found that both assumptions can be substantiated by the data in the study. While the majority of the subjects exhibited more than one style consistently, others used one style with little regard to the conflict situation. The reason for both views being substantiated by the data could be that numerous variables affect the style of a specific subject during a given conflict interaction.

A subject's style in a given conflict situation could be dependent upon education (Principal D used the most styles and was the principal who said he knew the most about conflict), experience (Principal A also used varying styles and was the most experienced educator), administrator's personality, student's attitude toward the administrator, student's prior record, conflict setting, type of infraction committed by the student, student's sex, student's race, time of day, and time of school year. These variables were all observed by the researcher to have some effect on the conflict management style of an administrator in at least comparable situations. More
research needs to be done to identify the variables that do influence the choice of style, and the amount of influence they have.

In examining conflict management strategies, the researcher concluded that some individuals used a wide repertoire of strategies covering all general categories, some individuals used many strategies within a general category, some individuals used few strategies covering general categories, and some individuals used few strategies limited to a single general category. As with the consideration of conflict management styles, the diversity may be dependent upon a variety of variables that influence an individual in a specific situation. Again, variables like education, experience, conflict setting, and student's sex could influence individual strategy choices.

The conflict situations observed as the basis for the study were examples of conflict in an unusual situation. Unlike those in most occupations, educational administrators expect to spend most of their working day in conflict with students who have done or are doing something "wrong." While certain styles and strategies are considered appropriate in certain circumstances, the effort to practice the needed skills or even the
inclination to do what is best is frequently absent due to the administrator's continual state of agitation. More research needs to be done to examine the effect of continual stress generated by an expected or given state of conflict.

Another conclusion of this research refers to the previously mentioned study of Hughes and Robertson (1979). These researchers concluded from their data that most principals spent an equal amount of time in conflict with students and teachers. They also found that most principals used a single conflict management style, specifically problem-solving. The present research does not corroborate the first conclusion because the principals in this study noted that most of their time was spent in conflict with students. Concerning the second conclusion of these researchers, the present research does partially support the idea that principals may have a single conflict management style, although problem-solving was not one of the categories found in the present research.

A separate conclusion is based on the principals' responses to the interview questions. When given an opportunity to add to the solicited data, two principals (D and E) said that they had certain styles. Principal D
labeled his style as pleasant. This is not one of Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) definitions. He also said that he didn't alter this style. The data show that this is not so. Principal D used every one of the five styles. Principal E stated that he varied his style depending upon a student's attitude toward him. He used four of the five styles, but primarily he used the competitive style in managing conflict. The researcher concluded that the principals had erroneous perceptions about their own conflict management styles.

Another conclusion was reached by the researcher concerning the conflict management strategies used by the principals. Many of the strategies were not used by the principals in the view of both the volunteers and the researcher. This may be because the situation prohibits certain strategies from being used. Avoiding responsibility is a strategy that was not cited by anyone as being used by any of the principals. This may be because the job of the principal is based on accepting the responsibility to discipline fractious students.

The researcher selected fifty conflict dialogues upon which the study's analysis was based. Certain subtle strategies (qualification, disclosure) could have appeared in the dialogues not used, as the researcher was looking
for the "best" dialogue examples to exhibit conflict management strategies. Also, certain strategies may not be chosen because Hocker and Wilmot's (1985) designations are based on the research of Kilmann and Thomas (1975) which may be oriented toward general feelings or intuition as opposed to being based on concrete, statistical data. Thus, the strategy categories may be biased.

The data did support general assumptions about conflict. That conflict is natural is the basis of the observed occupation. That conflict is good is seen in the behavior changes of some of the students. Continual conflict may not be good for the administrator, however.

Based on the analysis in this research, a number of questions can be raised. First, very little has been said about the role of nonverbal behavior in conflict management. What nonverbal behaviors can be considered conflict management strategies? Second, what is the connection between managers perceptions of their conflict management styles and their actual styles? And finally, do management settings determine the types of conflict management strategies to be used, or are they more dependent on the individual managers?

Blake and Mouton's (1984) observation that
"communication permits us to get at causes but the cause is not in communication" (p. 286) is substantiated by the fact that context plays an important part in the selection of conflict management styles and conflict management strategies. However, the pragmatic perspective is expanded by Leslie-Bole (1985) in her assertion that communication involves "mutual influence in systemic, cyclical patterns of interaction." Certainly, the administrators influence the students (and vice-versa) in interactions that are patterned, at least partially, by conflict management styles and conflict management strategies.
APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your date of birth?
2. From what college did you get your undergraduate degree?
3. What year is your graduation year?
4. What was your major?
5. From what college did you get your graduate degree?
6. What year was your graduate graduation year?
7. What was your graduate major?
8. Did you write a thesis?
9. What was your thesis title?
10. Name any additional courses you have taken beyond your graduate degree, the number of credits earned, and the colleges where they were taken.
11. How long have you taught?
12. How long have you been a supervisor?
13. Have you taken any courses which involved conflict management as a topic and name these courses.
14. Approximately how much of your daily time do you
spend in conflict management with the following:

a. Administrator-student
b. Administrator-teacher
c. Administrator-school staff
d. Administrator-central office

15. Do you have any additional comments about conflict management and if so, explain them.
REFERENCES


