

Causes Of Conflicts, Resolution Strategies, And Their Effects On Farmers And Fisherfolk Associations

Mary Jeany Permetis-Ortega

Municipal Agriculture Office, Municipal Local Government of Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, Philippines
Email: mpermetis18@gmail.com

Karen Luz P. Yap

Visayas State University, Visca, Baybay City, Leyte, Philippines
Email: karen.yap@vsu.edu.ph

Leomarich F. Casinillo*

Visayas State University, Visca, Baybay City, Leyte, Philippines
E-mail: leomarich.casinillo@g.msuiit.edu.ph

*Corresponding Author

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Abstract:

This study investigates the causes of conflicts and the effectiveness of resolution strategies within farmers' and fisherfolk's associations in Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, Philippines. These associations were organized to discuss agricultural and fisheries techniques, improve their expertise, and defend their rights and interests. The study employed a descriptive research design and collected data from 260 respondents across six farmers and fisherfolk associations. The gathered data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and presented in a tabular manner. The results revealed that conflicts often arise from a lack of cooperation, communication, and unity among members. The primary conflict resolution strategies employed include negotiation, compromising, and smoothing, which foster member participation and understanding. While these strategies positively influence organizational productivity and member engagement, their impact on income generation and service quality remains moderate to low, primarily due to economic challenges and resistance to change. The findings highlight the need for improved communication and management practices to enhance conflict resolution and overall association effectiveness.

Keywords: Conflict resolution, Farmers And Fisherfolks Associations, Economic Strategies

Introduction

Since time immemorial, one of the main issues affecting global peace is the emergence of conflicts in various global dimensions. Organizations, nations, and agencies frequently face conflict, disagreements, and change (Hafner-Burton & Montgomery, 2006). If a dispute is not settled right away, coercive methods may be used to suggest a winner who will use force. Generally, a "conflict" is an argument, battle, or collision between opposing forces, ideologies, people, or organizations (Lumineau et al., 2015). It can occur in social interactions, political situations, and international relations, among other scenarios. Disagreements about aims, values, interests, or views can lead to conflicts, which can also be verbal or physical. Conflicts are foremost intimidating to agricultural production and reduce the success rate of the farming culture (Ogbonnaya, 2021; Suryadi, 2023).

Conflicts can lead to the destruction of farmland, equipment, and infrastructure, which disrupts agricultural production. Farmers may be forced to abandon their fields, decreasing crop yields and food shortages (Suryadi, 2023). Rural populations may be uprooted by armed conflicts or civil disturbance, which would force residents, including farmers, to evacuate

(Schwartz & Bar-Dayan, 2008). In addition to having an impact on their means of subsistence, this relocation may cause them to lose the agricultural expertise and methods required for sustainable farming.

Further, access to essential resources like water, seeds, and fertilizers is frequently hampered by conflicts. Food insecurity may result from this restricted access, which can reduce agricultural output (Adelaja & George, 2019). In addition, conflicts destabilizing local and regional markets might cause food costs to fluctuate. Due to disruptions in the supply chain or decreased demand, farmers may find it difficult to sell their goods or may receive a lower price. Conflicts among fishermen can have serious repercussions on the environment and society. Disagreements on fishing locations, regulations, and methods may lead to excessive fishing or inappropriate handling of fish populations, affecting both immediate sustenance and long-term viability (Pomeroy et al., 2007). Conflicts among fishermen might make it more difficult for them to collaborate on initiatives like conservation, sustainable fishing practices, and policy lobbying. Resolving these conflicts through open dialogue, transparent decision-making processes, and mediation is necessary to support more substantial and more resilient fisherfolk associations. All supply chains are disrupted by conflicts, from agricultural production to consumption in agri-based industries, which results in a drop in the country's overall financial system (Celestin & Sujatha, 2024). The output of agriculture is frequently declining, with farmers' arguments coming up every day. In the Municipality of Barotac Nuevo, there have been some documented dispute reports between members of associations, their leaders, and sometimes barangay officials who were also involved in conflicts. Fortunately, some of these disputes have been resolved, but some still remain.

Money issues, conflicts of interest, and miscommunications between the officials and members were the leading causes of the disagreement (Brems et al., 2021). In the case of farmers, settlements were reached in the Municipal Agriculture Office and the Office of the Barangays to end disputes. Additionally, the association employed several techniques for resolving disputes to keep the organization peaceful and its members and officers united. Each association employed various resolution strategies based on their suitability. Since disagreements will inevitably arise between these associations, this study aims to assist the farmers' and fisherfolk's associations in determining the effects of conflict resolution strategies on their associations' productivity by assessing the conflict resolution techniques employed and any potential repercussions on their revenue generation, member engagement, and services provided. The study examined the effects of conflict resolution strategies of selected farmers and fisherfolk associations on their organizational productivity in the Municipality of Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo. Specifically, the study sought to: (1) identify the causes of conflicts in farmers and fisherfolks associations; (2) determine the conflict resolution strategies used by the associations; and (3) determine how the associations' employment of dispute resolution techniques affects organizational productivity in terms of members' participation, the organization's income, and organizational services offered. This study is significant to all farmers and fisherfolk who are members of associations, as the findings will provide them with ideas on how to get along with other farmers and how to settle disputes amongst them in an amicable manner.

Framework of the Study

The process of resolving a disagreement and coming to a decision that is acceptable to both sides is known as conflict resolution (Olawoyin, 2025). Conflict Resolution Strategies are approaches used to address and resolve disagreements or disputes between individuals or groups (Dublenkova et al., 2021). These strategies aim to manage conflicts in a constructive way to minimize negative impacts and promote understanding. Effective conflict resolution enhances relationships, fosters cooperation, and contributes to a positive environment,

whether in personal or professional contexts (Adu et al., 2015). The application of conflict resolution techniques promotes understanding, controls emotions, and fosters dialogue. In interpersonal connections, the workplace, society, and international relations, it is a crucial talent. Organizational productivity is the measurement of an organization's overall effectiveness in using its resources, practices, and strategies to achieve its goals and objectives (Lumineau et al., 2015). It is a measure of how well an organization converts input (such as labor, materials, capital, and technology) into outputs (such as products, services, or overall outcomes). Conflict can have a profound effect on organizational productivity. Disputes among farmers, association officers, extension workers, and other officials can lead to diminished morale, increased stress levels, and reduced productivity within farmers' organizations. These factors can adversely affect the performance of individuals, associations, and the organization as a whole. Furthermore, conflict situations can undermine the overall effectiveness of organizations by creating discord among members, which in turn negatively influences organizational performance (Olawoyin, 2025). This occurs as valuable time and resources are squandered during conflicts within organizations.

Conflict can have a profound effect on organizational productivity. Disputes among farmers, association officers, extension workers, and other officials can lead to diminished morale, increased stress levels, and reduced productivity within farmers' organizations (Ogbonnaya, 2021). These factors can adversely affect the performance of individuals, associations, and the organization as a whole. Furthermore, conflict situations can undermine the overall effectiveness of organizations by creating discord among members, which in turn negatively influences organizational performance. This occurs as valuable time and resources are squandered during conflicts within organizations. The variables adopted by this study are conflict resolution strategies and the organizational productivity of farmers and fisherfolk. This conceptual framework of this study sought to investigate the influence of conflict resolution strategies on the farmers' organization productivity in terms of members' participation, organization's income, and organizational services offered.



Figure 1 Conceptual framework model of the study

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive research design was used in the study employing a quantitative method through a survey to identify the conflict resolution strategies used by farmers and fisherfolk associations and to assess the influence of these conflict resolution strategies on the farmers' and fisherfolk's organizational productivity.

The study was conducted in the Municipality of Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo. In the Philippine province of Iloilo, Barotac Nuevo—officially known as the Municipality of Barotac Nuevo—is a second-class municipality. The Spanish word "baro," which means mud, and the second syllable of the Hiligaynon word "lutac," which also means mud, are the sources of the name "Barotac." "Nuevo" was added to the name to set it apart from another town, Barotac Viejo, which is located immediately north. The town is 31 kilometers (19 miles) from Iloilo City, the provincial capital. To the west of the town lies Pototan; to the northwest is Dingle; to the northeast is Anilao; and to the south is Dumangas. Politically, Barotac Nuevo is separated into 29 barangays. Of these 29 barangays, the study covered six farmers' associations (FAs), namely, Cabilauan FA, Monpon FA, Lamintao Small Fisherfolks Association, Jalaud Fisherfolks Association, GUIPABA Irrigators Association, and SOJAAG Irrigators Association. These associations were selected because they have the most significant number of members and have been registered and operating for more than five years.

Purposive sampling was used in selecting the six (6) farmers' and fisherfolk's associations. These associations are the largest when it comes to the number of members and have been registered and operating for more than five years, and it is for this purpose that these associations were selected in this study. From a total of seven hundred forty-two (742) members from six (6) selected farmers and fisherfolks associations, a sample size of 260 was computed using Slovin's formula (Table 1). Sample size per association was obtained by proportionate sampling.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by farmers' and fisherfolk's associations

Name Of Farmers And Fisherfolks Associations	Number Of Members	Sample Size
Cabilauan Farmers' Association	121	42
Monpon Farmers' Association	110	39
Lamintao Small Fisherfolk Association	150	53
Jalaud Fisherfolk Association	66	23
Guipaba Irrigators Association	190	67
Sojaag Irrigators Association	105	36
Total	742	260

A researcher-developed questionnaire was used to conduct facilitated interviews with the respondents in order to gather data for this study. The first part of the questionnaire described the respondents' personal details, and the second part focused on causes of conflicts encountered, as well as the conflict resolution strategies used in their associations and how the employment of these strategies affected their organizational productivity in terms of members' participation, organizational income, and services offered. The interview questionnaire was validated by experts (PhD holders) and found to be reliable and valid, which captures the desired information needed for this research study. Before the conduct of the survey, a consent letter was secured from the higher authorities and respondents, informing them of the intention of the study. Moreover, respondents were informed that their participation in the interview was voluntary and that the information collected must be confidential.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, means, and ranges. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20) was used to analyze the data. To determine the influence of conflict resolution strategies on their organizational productivity in terms of members' participation, organization's income, and organizational services offered, the weighted mean was used.

Results and Discussion

Farmers' profiles by civil status, sex, religion, highest educational attainment, access to credit, association name, and position are shown in Table 2. Based on the findings, most of the respondents are women (55.40%), with men making up the remaining group (44.60%). The majority of farmers are married (73.50%), while a few of them are widowed (15.80%), and very few are single (10%) and separated (.8%). One typical explanation for single farmers is their low economic standing, which prevents them from getting married, and for separated respondents, their partners were being forced to leave them and work outside their locality, which ultimately led to their separation. As to educational attainment of the respondents, about 32.7% of them have completed high school, 16.9% have finished college, 12.7% have completed high school, and a few, or 8.1% have completed elementary. The majority of farmers (97.3%) identified themselves as Roman Catholic, while 0.8% are Seventh-day Adventist, 1.2% are Baptist, and 0.4% are Pentecostal. In terms of membership to associations, the GUIPABA IA has the highest number of members (25.80%), followed by the Lamintao Small Fisherfolks Association (20.40%). This is due to the large number of members in these associations. The majority of them (83.5%) lack access to loans. When it comes to positions held in the associations, the majority of the respondents are just members and do not hold positions (90.4%), very few (3.80%) are BOD members, secretaries (2.3%), and presidents/chairmen (1.5%).

Table 2: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (n=260)

Variable	No. of farmers	Percent
Civil Status		
Single	26	10.00
Married	191	73.50
Separated	2	0.80
Widow/er	41	15.80
Sex		
Male	116	44.60
Female	144	55.40
Religion		
Roman Catholic	253	97.30
Seventh-day Adventist	2	0.80
Baptist	3	1.20
Born Again	1	0.40
United Pentecostal Christian	1	0.40
Highest Educational Attainment		
Elementary Level	21	8.10
Elementary Graduate	29	11.20
HS Level	33	12.70
HS Graduate	85	32.70
Vocation course	20	7.70

Variable	No. of farmers	Percent
College Level	28	10.80
College Graduate	44	16.90
Access to Credit		
Yes	43	16.50
No	217	83.50
Name of the Association		
Cabilauan Farmers Association	42	16.20
Monpon Farmers Association	39	15.00
Lamintao Small Fisherfolk Association	53	20.40
Jalaud Fisherfolk Association	23	8.80
GUIPABA Irrigators Association	67	25.80
SOJAAG Irrigators Association	36	13.80
Position in Association		
President/Chairman	4	1.50
Vice-President	1	0.40
Secretary	6	2.30
Assistant Secretary	0	0.00
Treasurer	1	0.40
Assistant Treasurer	1	0.40
Auditor	0	0.00
Assistant Auditor	0	0.00
Board of Directors (BOD)	10	3.80
Member	135	90.40
Association Adviser	2	0.80

Table 3 shows the profile of farmer-respondents by household size, age, number of years of farming experience, and number of years as a member. The results show that the majority of them (79.20%) have one to six members in the household, a few (19.20%) have seven to twelve, very few have (0.80%) thirteen to eighteen, and four members in the household (0.80%). As to age distribution, about 8.50% of them are between the ages of 38 and 51, 27.70% are between the ages of 52 and 65, and 5.00% are between the ages of 80 and 93. The majority of farmers who are still farming are between the ages of 66 and 79 (58.80%), and have been farming for 19 to 36 (37.70%) years. In addition, there are 33.50% of farmers who have been farming for 37 to 54 years, and only 10.4 % have been farming for 1 to 18 years. When it comes to the length of membership to associations, results show that 35.40% of the respondents have been members for 1-5 years, while most (58.80%) of them have been members for six to ten years already. Only 4.6% of them have been a member of the association for 16 to 20 years, and 1.2% for 11 to 15 years. Farmers and fishermen remain members of their associations because they provide them a platform to voice their concerns and interests, particularly in the context of devolved governance systems. Similar to how farming and fishing communities fight for their rights and needs, local associations are essential in promoting community interests (Allison et al., 2012).

Table 3. Profile of farmers in terms of household size, age, number of years in farming, and number of years as a member (n=260)

Variable	No. of farmers	Percent
Household Size		
1-6	206	79.20
7-12	50	19.20
13-18	2	0.80
4.00	2	0.80
Age		
38-51	22	8.50
52-65	72	27.70
66-79	153	58.80
80-93	13	5.00
No. of years in farming		
1-18	27	10.40
19-36	98	37.70
37-54	87	33.50
55-72	48	18.50
Number of years as a member		
1-5	92	35.40
6-10	153	58.80
11-15	3	1.20
16-20	12	4.60

Frequency of Encountered Conflicts in the Association

Found in Table 4 is the frequency of encountered conflicts of the respondents in the associations. Results show that only 28.46 percent of farmers said that conflicts emerge in their association very often, while the majority of the respondents revealed that conflicts in their associations occur often (66.54%). Only 0.77 percent of respondents said that conflicts do not occasionally emerge in their connection, compared to 4.23 percent who said that they sometimes do. People disagree because they see things differently, want things differently, and they have thinking styles which encourage them to disagree, or are predisposed to disagree (Hafner-Burton & Montgomery, 2006). The associations are made up of various social beings with varying interests, visions, or purposes; conflicts are inevitable and frequently produce friction (Brems et al., 2021).

Table 4: Frequency of encountered conflict in the association (n=260)

Variable	No. of farmers	Percent
Frequency of encountered conflict (1)		
Very often	74	2.46
Often	173	66.54
Sometimes	11	4.23
Never	2	0.77

Causes of Conflicts in Farmers and Fisherfolk Associations The causes of conflicts in the respondents' associations are ranked and presented in Table 5. Results show that the number one reason for conflicts in farmers and fisherfolk associations is the lack of cooperation among members. Farmers claimed that the people who were causing disputes by questioning, arguing, and refusing to work together in the association were typically the farmers who were not attending monthly meetings, resulting in their ignorance of the association's policies, leadership, programs, and projects. Also, power struggles, the presence of cliques, or exclusionary behaviors within the association are some reasons why members in the association do not cooperate.

The second cause of conflicts in the association is the lack of communication and participation among the members and officers. According to the respondents, the association's failure to inform them regarding the schedule of meetings and gatherings causes them not to participate. Additionally, farmers typically have demanding schedules, especially during planting and harvest seasons, which can make it challenging for them to attend meetings (Salvador et al., 2011). According to Red et al. (2021), the empirical evidence suggests that agricultural development activities mainly depend on information exchange between and among farmers, on the one hand, and a broad range of other development actors, on the other hand. Communication has been acknowledged as a crucial element for achieving agricultural development goals and is considered one of the triggering factors for promoting and facilitating development efforts.

Third on the list is the lack of unity among members and officers in the association. Uniting members and officers in an association can be challenging because of different leadership styles or visions, varying interests and priorities, which can lead to conflicts and difficulties in reaching consensus (Adelaja & George, 2019)

Rank 4 of the causes of conflicts in the association is the farmers and fisherfolk's weak economic status. Farmers with weak economic status often lack connections that would keep them informed about meetings or agricultural opportunities (Casinillo & Seriño, 2022). Also, many farmers with tight financial conditions can make it hard for them to justify taking time away from their farms for meetings (Casinillo, 2022). Moreover, farmers may not see the value in attending meetings due to previous experiences (traditional way of farming) that were not beneficial, or believe their economic status will make their input less valued (Red et al., 2021).

Rank fifth is the low educational attainment of members and officers. Some respondents believed that members with low education levels struggle to articulate their needs, concerns, and ideas effectively. It leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations during meetings, resulting in conflicts over shared goals and strategies. The members' lack of understanding of their associations' regulations, agreements, or policies also leads to conflict. Moreover, conflicts over the association's direction occurred when officers were ignorant of the organization's overarching objectives. Members became frustrated and conflicted because their interests were not being reflected or taken into consideration. Further, conflicts among farmers and fishermen usually happened during the distribution of limited farm inputs, fishing gears, and other equipment and assistance (Pomeroy et al., 2007; Suryadi, 2023). They believe that their officers' lack of understanding of equitable resource distribution gives the impression of partiality or unfairness. They became resentful of their officers because they were unable to fairly distribute resources or benefits. Rank 6.5th involves disrespectful members and officers, money matters, uncredible officers, lack of transparency, and attitude of some members in the association. It has been stated that members and officers who act disrespectfully to one another damage communication and trust, which results in more serious complaints within the association. Also, the negative attitudes and a reluctance to work together of the members and officers of the association exacerbated the tensions and made it more difficult to cooperate

effectively (Suryadi, 2023). Conflicts over the mismanagement of finances or transparency regarding financial practices also lead to hostilities and lower member satisfaction. In fact, this is also related to the ninth-ranking cause of conflict in the association.

Poor extension services (Rank 8) and dishonesty of officers in the association (Rank 9) bring ill feelings among their members. When officers are dishonest, it erodes the trust that members place in their leadership. Members may question the integrity of decisions made by dishonest officers, leading to skepticism about the association's governance (Olawoyin, 2025). Further, disagreements on leadership legitimacy arise from a lack of confidence in leadership because of perceived incredibility. Farmers stated that if extension agents were seen in the field or present at the association's meeting, conflicts could be prevented. When farmers lack timely and credible information from extension services, these factors lead to misunderstandings and conflict among farmers regarding best practices, market access, and crop management (Pomeroy et al., 2007; Suryadi, 2023). Extension services can help establish clear channels for communication, ensuring that all members can express their opinions, concerns, and ideas, reducing misunderstandings and the potential for conflict.

The last in rank is poor leadership and management of the association's officers. The leadership and management of the officers were seen by the farmers and fisherfolk as one of the factors in establishing a strong association. With a credible officer, with clear direction and good judgment, they believed that the association would prosper. However, some of the officers failed, and it brought turmoil to their association. Their poor leadership and management cause confusion, disagreement, tension, and even division among the members. They believe that by addressing these leadership shortcomings, they can prevent conflict and promote cooperation within their association.

Table 5: Causes of conflict in the association

Variable	Frequency	Percent Of Responses	Percent Of Cases	Rank
Causes Of Conflict (2) Multiple Response N=260				
Lack Of Unity Among Members And Officers In The Association.	78	15.60	30.00	3
Lack Of Communication And Participation Among The Members And Officers.	129	25.80	49.62	2
Lack Of Cooperation.	134	26.80	51.54	1
Weak Economic Status Of Members And Officers.	28	5.60	10.77	4
Low Educational Attainment Of Members And Officers.	27	5.40	10.38	5
Disrespectful Members And Officers.	24	4.80	9.23	6.5
Dishonesty Among The Association's Officers.	20	4.00	7.69	9
Poor Leadership And Management Of The Association's Officers.	14	2.80	5.38	10
Poor Extension Services	22	4.40	8.46	8
Others- Money Matters, Officers Are Not Credible, Lack Of Transparency, Attitude Of Some Members	24	4.80	9.23	6.5
Total	500	100.00	192.31	

Conflict Resolution Strategies Used by the Association

Table 6 shows the conflict resolution strategies used by the associations. Results show that the top strategy used in resolving conflicts in the associations is negotiation (58.89%). Farmers and fisherfolk believed that negotiation is an effective way to resolve conflict in the association. The officers conducted an assembly to tackle concerns and solicit possible solutions. In such a way, everyone has a chance to discuss the conflict, its causes, and suggest possible actions to employ. Farmers and fishermen can better comprehend one another's interests, difficulties, and viewpoints through negotiation (Uskul et al., 2008). They can create an agreement and pursue solutions that take into account the requirements of both sides, depending on this understanding. This strategy helps increase their members' participation and prevents them from withdrawing from the group. Through open communication in a structured setting, negotiation enables parties to voice their demands and concerns (Brems et al., 2021). This exchange of ideas is essential to comprehending different viewpoints. Effective communication during negotiations can result in more accurate assessments of each party's interests, minimizing misunderstandings.

The second in rank strategy that the association employed to resolve conflict is compromising (23.34%). The associations used this strategy to preserve connections, encouraged cooperation, and both parties can feel heard and respected. Farmers and fisherfolk said that during the meeting, they acknowledged each other's needs and interests (Uskul et al., 2008). The association also takes into account one another's requirements by being willing to change their stance on less important matters. They then retain what truly matters and engage in discussions that are both constructive and respectful of each other's positions.

By maintaining relationships, promoting cooperation, and ensuring that all parties feel heard and respected, compromise strategies can lead to more durable conflict settlements. A compromise strategy can effectively foster connections, especially in contexts such as partnerships, community-based groups, or cooperative activities among people with different interests. By allowing parties to protect their fundamental interests while pursuing flexibility on less important matters, this strategy promotes cooperation and strengthens bonds. According to organizational behavior research, groups that successfully use compromise typically have more satisfied and engaged members, which improves results and makes their efforts more sustainable (Casinillo, 2020; Ogbonnaya, 2021).

Third in rank used strategy is the smoothing or obliging (10.80%). The smoothing/obliging strategy, like compromise strategies, permits groups to be flexible on less significant problems while prioritizing crucial ones. The association used this strategy to preserve the relationship among members and to encourage their participation. As conflicts arise within the association, they find a solution to solve it immediately. The farmers and fisherfolk stated that this strategy is effective in showing interest in understanding the concerns and needs of the members and redirecting the conversation to encourage collaboration (Uskul et al., 2008). This helps discussions run more smoothly and produce more desirable results.

The last strategy used by the association in resolving conflict within their group is withdrawing/avoiding (6.97%). Conflicts within the group make the environment uncomfortable, and some members choose to avoid it by leaving the group. When disagreements come up during a meeting, some members would rather avoid them by shifting the subject or staying silent rather than confronting the uncomfortable topics. Sometimes, to prevent tension from growing worse, both parties would be requested to leave the meeting place for a while, to calm themselves and meditate. Or, the officers will call the involved person to privately settle disputes and solve the problems. By doing so, the conflicts can be stopped or minimized. In the context of disputes or negative group dynamics, avoiding

conversation can result from a number of actions or behaviors that make participants uncomfortable or disengaged (Pomeroy et al., 2007). Fortunately, all the identified associations have not required an arbiter to settle disputes within their association. It shows that they can resolve the conflicts within their own hands. It also shows that they have a sense of teamwork as they come together to solve problems and understand different perspectives (Lumineau et al., 2015). Finally, it resulted in higher participation and satisfaction within the organization.

Table 6: Conflict resolution strategies used by the farmers/fisherfolks association

	Frequency	Percent Of Responses	Percent Of Cases	Rank
<i>CRS1-Multiple response (n=260)</i>				
Negotiation	169	58.89	65.00	1
Compromising	67	23.34	25.77	2
Withdrawing/avoiding	20	6.97	7.69	4
Smoothing/obliging	31	10.80	11.92	3
Arbitration	0	0.00	0.00	-
Total	287	100.00	110.38	

Member's Participation

As shown in Table 7, the identified conflict resolution strategies (negotiation, compromising, smoothing/obliging, and withdrawing/avoiding) used by the associations had a high influence on their organizational productivity in terms of member participation, with WM of 3.92. The associations believed that through negotiation, they were encouraged to actively participate in conversations, which gave them the opportunity to echo their needs and opinions. They also became more inclined to contribute because their opinions are valued. Through negotiation, they received a better grasp of the various viewpoints that promoted a cooperative environment in the group. The compromising strategy also leads members and officers of the associations to participate and work together by finding common ground. It promoted unity and satisfaction among them as members of the association. As they find ideas that the whole association can benefit from, this cooperative approach promotes continued participation (Ogbonnaya, 2021).

Also, by putting harmony first and attending to others' needs, smoothing/obliging fosters a positive atmosphere in the associations. This strategy helps build trust among members and officers in the association. They become more inclined to participate in group activities as they feel respected and comfortable. Finally, this strategy encourages more open communication of ideas from people who might otherwise be reluctant to join (Sunmee & Taeyoon, 2019). The withdrawing or avoiding strategy helps the association avoid conflicts from arising within the meeting. It also promotes participation among members within the association by avoiding conflicts or unpleasant interactions. Moreover, temporarily avoiding harsh confrontations and difficult situations enables the association to work in harmony. This can result in more considerate answers, ease stress, and create a more tranquil environment. Although withdrawal might not always be the answer, consciously avoiding negativity, it can be very helpful in creating a more wholesome and positive environment within the association.

Income of the Association

The conflict resolution strategies used by the associations have a medium influence on their organizational productivity in terms of income, such as collecting their dues and fees with WM of 3.68 (Table 7). The conflict resolution strategies used had a medium influence on organizational productivity in terms of accumulating and generating income in the association.

One of the reasons for these results is that farmers and fisherfolk have a weak economic status that prevents them from paying their dues in the association (Uskul et al., 2008). Also, some delay their payments because of some important reasons like medical expenses, students' allowances, and household expenses. To encourage members to join the association, the association employed strategies like giving appreciation, incentives, and discounts to those who pay within the agreed schedule. This is effective as some of them testified that the members were encouraged because of the reward waiting for them for complying. Though some were encouraged, few still were uncompliant, and the association can only encourage them to be responsible members and not impose a penalty.

Effective conflict resolution strategies foster a more harmonious and productive environment, which in turn leads to higher member satisfaction and improved collaboration among members (Salvador et al., 2011). This atmosphere of cooperation can ultimately result in increased income generation for the association. Research has shown that organizations that prioritize conflict resolution are better able to innovate and respond to member needs, enhancing overall financial performance (Suryadi, 2023).

Organizational Services Offered

As revealed in Table 7, the various conflict resolution strategies used by the associations had a low influence on the organizational offered services, with a weighted mean of 2.5. The reason for this outcome is that conflict resolution techniques may overlook the root causes in favor of focusing on the issues at hand. This could lead to a temporary rather than permanent solution, which could result in recurring disagreements that lower productivity. Another is that ineffective dispute resolution may reduce the amount of time available to provide services, hence lowering the quality of services provided by the association. Lastly, despite the adoption of successful conflict resolution approaches, other members rejected the changes brought about by conflict management, which has an impact on the association's services.

Despite the fact that conflict resolution techniques are frequently seen as crucial to creating harmony within the association, some research suggests that their influence on organizational efficiency may be limited, particularly when it comes to association services. Specifically, when conflict is managed without addressing the underlying systemic issues, it can lead to superficial compliance rather than genuine engagement, resulting in minimal improvements in service delivery and productivity (Suryadi, 2023; Peñaflor-elorde et al., 2024).

Table 7: Extent of influence of conflict resolution strategies on organizational productivity

	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating*
Member's participation	3.92	Conflict resolution strategies used had a high influence on organizational productivity in terms of members' participation.
Income of the association	3.68	Conflict resolution strategies used had a medium influence on organizational productivity in terms of the association's income.
Organizational services offered	2.50	Conflict resolution strategies used had low influence on organizational productivity in terms of the associations' offered services

Conclusion

The farmers and fisherfolk's association consists of people with diverse backgrounds and personalities. These individual differences influence how parties perceive and approach conflict resolution. Conflict resolution strategies vary for several reasons, reflecting the complexity of human interactions and the unique contexts in which conflicts arise. The absence of extension agents hinders capacity-building efforts within the association. Without training and knowledge transfer, members have lacked the skills and information necessary to implement best practices or innovative solutions effectively. Many associations rely on the expertise of extension agents to design and implement programs tailored to the needs of their members. If agents are not actively involved, the effectiveness and relevance of these programs may be compromised, leading to poor outcomes. The association should select officers that are capable of providing direction and setting a strategic vision for the association. They should take responsibility for articulating goals and inspiring members to work towards them. They are capable of adhering to their bylaws and policies, maintaining compliance with legal and ethical standards. They should have credibility and also be trustworthy, because they are responsible for creating policies needed to improve the association in terms of members' participation, income generation, and services. Extension agents should also allocate time to visit their supervised association, attend meetings, provide services, trainings, and scientific learning, help settle associations' disputes, and maintain peace and order in the association. It is believed that their presence would be of great help in changing the association's ambiance and promoting collaboration among its members. Provision of incentives, travelling services, and allowances for extension agents to facilitate external services. Also, there is a need to hire more extension agents and enable paraprofessionals to supplement the vast work. The government should encourage farmers and fisherfolk to be members of the association and only give subsidies to those who are members. This way, the reputation of the organized association will increase and encourage participation in the community. Association officers should undergo a financial record-keeping workshop and financial literacy training to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed and effective financial decisions. Their empowerment can lead to improved financial outcomes and greater confidence in managing their associations' finances.

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