Relationships Among School-Based Agriculture Educators in Multi-Teacher Departments: Managing Conflict and Competition

by

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Abstract

This research aimed to identify situational factors causing conflict among multiple School-Based Agriculture Education (SBAE) teachers. It explores non-traditional variables, such as attribution, which affect teacher longevity and success. The dynamics of teacher relationships in multi-teacher departments are complex and can lead to elevated levels of efficacy and notable ineffectiveness (Vallone et al., 2022). While many SBAE programs have a single teacher managing various responsibilities within the agricultural education model, larger school systems often feature multi-teacher departments and workgroups. Boone and Boone (2009) highlighted critical challenges for SBAE teachers, including opportunities to improve relationships with faculty and peers. This research investigates the factors contributing to conflict in multi-teacher departments. It investigated whether conflict management and resolution skills are taught in educator preparation programs, SBAE teacher associations, and the school systems where SBAE teachers work. SBAE teachers were surveyed on several topics, including the professional duties outlined in the 3-Circle model, positive and negative perspectives on teaching partners, interworking measures, and potential causes of dysfunction in multi-teacher settings. The survey instrument also included questions from the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument. The findings indicated that SBAE teachers primarily employed avoiding and compromising conflict management modes in their professional interactions.

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ATAT Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas

SBAE School-Based Agriculture Education

TKI Thomas & Kilmann Conflict Modes Assessment Instrument

Chapter 1

Introduction

Teacher relationships in multi-teacher departments have many dynamics that can lead to varying levels of efficacy and ineffectiveness (Vallone et al., 2022). The synergistic effect of accomplishing an FFA advisor's goal, such as the advancement of a leadership development event (LDE) team, can feel euphoric and give feelings of task attainment; in contrast, when there is conflict in a school-based, multi-teacher department, training an LDE team can create issues of competing and division between advisors (Solomonson et al., 2019). Numerous school-based agriculture education (SBAE) programs have one teacher who balances the duties of the agriculture education model. However, larger school systems have higher occurrences of multi-teacher departments and work groups (Eck & Edwards, 2019). While SBAE teachers have the potential to transform their communities and produce life-changing student outcomes, SBAE teams also face the inevitability of conflict (DeChurch et al., 2013). There is a need for research that explains how an SBAE teacher can support themselves within a multi-person group dynamic (Newburgh, 2019). Research addressing the intersection of personal coaching and professional training, including conflict resolution, within multi-teacher departments for SBAE teachers is minimal.

The Abstraction of Conflict

Conflict is an amorphous term whose definition has as much to do with the culture of the person defining it as it does with the person experiencing it (Himes, 2008). De Drue and Gelfand (2008) described conflict as a natural process that arises when an individual or group perceives differences and opposition between themselves and others regarding interests, resources, beliefs, values, or practices that are important to them. Many times, at its core, an individual's values, purposes, missions, passions, beliefs, etc., can lead to conflict or strife (Himes, 2008). Conflict consistently arises in the workplace due to goal incompatibility or unification in planning and implementing goals (Cornille,1999). Emerging conflict in a multi-teacher department can appear throughout the workday in many variations. However, some limited interpretations can be seen as a lack of motivation, task incompletion, and verbal discord between group members (Larson et al., 2022).

The term "conflict" is commonly used in everyday language to describe various human experiences, from uncertainty to disagreements (Savio, 2015). Some scholars suggest four main types of conflict, while others propose variations within human conflict (Pondy, 1967). Rahim (2003) identifies four primary types of conflict: interpersonal, intrapersonal, intergroup, and intragroup. Conflict can be classified into three types: task conflict, relationship conflict, and value conflict (Sunkanmi, 2013). Simons and Peterson's (2000) study focused on task conflict, revealing that it is often mistaken for personal conflict, which can lead to relationship conflict. Both relationship and task conflict will be further discussed in this introduction and subsequent literature review. Value conflict arises when individuals or groups fundamentally oppose beliefs, values, or principles (Kouzakova et al., 2012). These conflicts emerge when individuals or

groups prioritize different issues or have varying perceptions of what is proper, necessary, or ethical. Value conflicts can be more challenging than conflicts over resources or tasks because they are connected to fundamental aspects of a person's identity and worldview (Arooj, 2024).

Workplace conflict can stem from various sources, including incompatible goals and task differentiation. Conflict occurs when parties have incompatible goals, especially when these goals are perceived as opposing, and one party believes the other is hindering their ability to achieve their objectives. This perception of obstruction distinguishes conflict from mere competition (DeChurch et al., 2013). Goal incompatibility occurs when the objectives or desired outcomes of two or more parties are at odds with each other (Böhm et al., 2020). When two or more parties have goals that cannot be achieved simultaneously or are mutually exclusive, it creates tension and disagreement, leading to conflict. There are three types of goal incompatibility. Goals that cannot be achieved simultaneously are labeled as mutually exclusive goals. When different parties prioritize opposing outcomes, this is labeled as conflicting interests. If goals are based on differing values or beliefs—such as one teacher prioritizing preparation for officer elections while another focuses on attending livestock shows at the first teacher's expense—this is termed value-based incompatibility. According to Böhm et al. (2020), a leading cause of goal incompatibility could be organizational structures, limited resources such as time, or the weight of different SBAE duties. Conflicting goals can manifest in conflicts through challenges in meeting deadlines, managing team projects, negotiating delegated duties among SBAE teachers, and impacting personal relationships. These goals can lead to increased polarization, with SBAE teachers becoming more entrenched in their positions and viewing the goals of their colleagues as direct threats to their own (Böhm et al., 2020). The conflict over incompatible goals can lead to misunderstandings, as each SBAE teacher may focus more on

defending their position rather than understanding the other teacher's perspective. Conflict can lead to inefficiency, as time and resources are spent on resolving disputes rather than achieving productive outcomes (Haun, 2001). Open communication, compromising, and mediation are all key tactics to solving and reducing goal incompatibility.

Individualistic Cultures versus Collective Cultures

It is essential to distinguish what SBAE teams disagree about and how they interact to resolve their differences (DeChurch et al., 2013). While attempting to manage the frequency and nature of conflict, we may discover how SABE educators interact to address differences significantly influencing their performance and emotional outcomes (DeChurch et al., 2013). SBAE teachers in multi-teacher departments can collaborate to utilize their diverse strengths, improving team performance while minimizing perceived conflicts that can hinder emotional well-being (DeChurch et al., 2013). Collectivism and individualism are two significant cultural orientations that profoundly impact how conflicts are perceived, managed, and resolved (Appelbaum, 1998). These orientations influence individuals' behaviors, values, and decision-making processes and play a crucial role in shaping the dynamics of conflicts. Collectivism emphasizes group goals, social harmony, and interdependence (Appelbaum, 1998) and has been associated with improved performance, heightened concern for team members, and decreased withdrawal behaviors (Jackson et al., 2006). According to DeChurch et al. (2013), teams that adopt a collectivistic conflict process prioritize concern for and reliance on others, fostering a preference for teamwork, cooperation, and achieving shared goals. In contrast, teams with an individualistic conflict process tend to prioritize individual or sub-team efforts, focusing more on personal or small-group objectives.

In collectivist cultures, people prioritize the needs and interests of the multi-teacher group or organization. Contrarily, individualism emphasizes personal autonomy, individual rights, and self-expression (Chirkov, 2008). In individualistic cultures, SBAE teachers may prioritize their goals, achievements, and personal fulfillment over the multi-teacher groups' interests. In a collectivist culture, conflict often threatens group harmony and social cohesion. According to Milch et al. (2009), the perception of conflict is framed in terms of how it affects the group rather than the individual. A conflict that disrupts group unity is viewed negatively. In an individualist culture, conflict is often seen as natural and sometimes necessary to meet organizational goals. It is a way to assert individual rights, clarify differences, and achieve personal goals. A conflict that impedes personal goals or autonomy is viewed negatively.

The collectivist and the individualistic SBAE teachers manage conflict differently. Collectivist cultures often prefer to avoid conflict or accommodate the other party to preserve group harmony. The SBAE teacher may suppress their desires or opinions to maintain peace. Individualist cultures are more likely to address conflicts directly, with open expression of differences and focus on individual needs and goals. Individuals may use competitive or assertive strategies to pursue their interests, sometimes at the expense of others. These two archetypes also resolve conflict differently. In the collectivist culture, the goal is to restore harmony and maintain relationships within the group. Solutions are often crafted to ensure that no one loses face and that social bonds remain intact. In the individualist culture, the goal is to achieve a fair and just outcome, even if it means the conflict is openly discussed or debated. In a collectivist workplace, a conflict between SBAE teachers might be managed through group discussions to find a consensus, emphasizing team unity. In contrast, in an individualist multi-teacher department, the conflict might be addressed directly between the SBAE teachers

involved, with each teacher openly expressing their viewpoints and working towards a solution that benefits them individually. Challenges to these cultural operating systems can include the role of power dynamics, balancing individual and group needs, and adaptability. In individualist cultures, power may be more evenly distributed, with everyone's voice being considered equally in conflict resolution. SBAE teachers in their multi-teacher departments need to be adaptable, recognizing when to adopt a collectivist approach and when an individualist approach is more appropriate.

Relationship Conflict versus Task Conflict

It is essential to distinguish between relationship and task conflict for successful conflict management and organizational achievement (Giebels & Janssen, 2005). Jehn (1995) explained that relationship conflict arises from interpersonal incompatibilities among group members, often leading to tension, hostility, and frustration. In contrast, task conflict occurs when group members disagree about the content of tasks, resulting in differing perspectives, ideas, and opinions (Chernetsky et al., 2024). Task conflict involves disagreements over work-related tasks, goals, processes, or strategies. DeChurch and Marks (2001) state that task conflict can encourage diverse perspectives, problem-solving, innovation, and improved team performance. It pushes team members to think critically and consider alternative solutions. Task conflict can be addressed through open communication, goal clarification, and collaborative problem-solving. The emphasis should be on aligning the team around shared objectives and finding mutually agreeable solutions. When managed effectively, task conflict can enhance creativity and foster a culture of constructive debate (Simons & Peterson, 2009). Relationship conflict centers on personal differences, emotions, or interpersonal tensions (Lim & Yazdanifard, 2012). It is more

likely to become destructive, resulting in negative emotions, reduced cooperation, and lower productivity. SBAE teacher relationship conflict can often harm team cohesion, communication, and morale. It can distract from the task at hand and create an environment of hostility or mistrust, lowering overall performance (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). It requires addressing underlying interpersonal issues, improving emotional intelligence, and fostering respect among team members (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). It may involve mediation, counseling, or team-building activities to rebuild trust and collaboration (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). According to Hede (2007), if left unresolved, it can lead to long-term resentment, reduced engagement, and high turnover. It undermines the team's social fabric and can have lasting adverse effects on both individual and collective well-being. Distinguishing between task conflict and relationship conflict helps organizations apply the right strategies for resolution, maximizing the benefits of task conflict and minimizing the detrimental effects of relationship conflict (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003).

Emergent States versus Process Conflict

Team conflict states and processes arise from actual or perceived differences in members' values, working styles, and ideas (DeChurch et al., 2013). In conflict theory and management, distinguishing between emergent states and processes is essential for effectively analyzing and addressing conflicts (Rahim, 2023). Emergent states and processes refer to how conflicts develop and change. The conflict state-process distinction is defined as shared perceptions among SBAE team members about the intensity of disagreement over either task (such as goals, ideas, and performance strategies) or relationships (such as personality clashes and interpersonal styles). Team conflict is classified as processes (commonly labeled “conflict management” in conflict

literature) that occur while members are working through task and interpersonal disagreements during their interactions (Marks et al., 2001, p.368).

Understanding SBAE teacher conflict processes is critical because they characterize the interactions among team members that give rise to emergent states (DeChurch et al., 2013). DeChurch et al. (2013) discussed how team members' interactions about conflict (i.e., conflict process) determine their perceptions of differences (i.e., conflict states); likewise, members' conflict states shape their behavioral repertoires in response to perceived differences (i.e., conflict processes).

Emergent States

Emergent conflict states are evolving properties or conditions that develop within a team, group, or organization (Jehn et al., 2008) due to interactions among SBAE teachers. This state can also be described as the "what" of conflict. These states are not static but evolve as the conflict progresses, influencing how the conflict is experienced and addressed. The emerging states of conflict are cohesion, trust, team climate, psychological safety, commitment, team learning and adaptability, role clarity, one's emotional state, group norms, and performance outcomes (De Dreu & Triki, 2022).

Process of Conflict

Processes of conflict refer to the sequence of actions, behaviors, and interactions that occur during a conflict. These processes involve how the conflict begins, escalates, is managed, and is resolved (Ding et al., 2024). These processes can be characterized as the methods by which conflict unfolds. The dynamics of team conflict can be categorized into several

components: antecedents (triggers and context), perceptions (attributions and awareness), manifested conflict, conflict management and resolution, outcomes, and post-conflict (Hoogenboom et al., 2024).

The interplay between emergent states and conflict processes can be expressed through feedback loops. For example, a hostile emotional climate (emergent state) can lead to more aggressive behaviors (process), which in turn can further deteriorate trust (emergent state) (De Dreu & Triki, 2022). These two ideas can also impact outcomes. Classifying which emergent states and conflict processes the conflict can determine whether a conflict is resolved constructively or destructively (Wurzel et al., 2024). Effective processes can mitigate negative emergent states, while poor processes exacerbate them. How a conflict is managed (processes) can reinforce or alter an emergent state within the group. For example, successful mediation can restore trust and improve group cohesion. I will concentrate on elucidating conflict processes for this research, as they are deemed more explanatory than emergent states for managing conflict (Schouten et al., 2024). Several studies have investigated the constructs of team conflict processes. This encompasses research on team collaboration, competition, avoidance, and openness (DeChurch et al., 2023). Conflict dynamics refers to the sequence of actions and interactions during a conflict. These include how the conflict begins, escalates, manages, and resolves. The team's level of collaboration can heavily influence these processes' effectiveness.

Team Collaboration. According to Adegbola et al. (2024), team collaboration refers to the way members of a team work together towards a common goal, sharing knowledge, resources, and responsibilities. In conflict, collaboration involves team members collectively engaging in open communication, problem-solving, and decision-making to address and resolve

disagreements (Adegbola et al., 2024). Elevated levels of team collaboration can prevent conflict escalation by fostering early identification and discussion of issues before they intensify. SBAE teachers who collaborate effectively are likelier to actively listen, clarify misunderstandings, and share information transparently during conflicts (McLaney et al., 2022). According to Lam and Xu (2019), power imbalances within the team can hinder collaboration, as those with more power may dominate the conflict process, leading to resentment or disengagement among other team members. However, when SBAE teacher teams are collaborative, they are better equipped to engage in effective negotiation and problem-solving during conflict.

Collaboration encourages a problem-solving mindset, where team members work together to find solutions that satisfy the needs of all parties involved rather than competing for individual interests (Wheelan et al., 2024). Team collaboration enhances the likelihood of achieving a successful resolution to conflict. When team members work together to resolve a conflict, they are more likely to reach a consensus acceptable to everyone (Thompson, 2023), leading to a more sustainable and positive outcome. After resolving conflict, ongoing collaboration helps rebuild trust, reinforce relationships, and integrate the lessons learned into future interactions (Barker & Manning, 2024). Collaborative teams are more likely to reflect on the conflict, address any lingering issues, and use the experience to strengthen their working relationships (Barker & Manning, 2024).

Team Competition. Team competition is the dynamic where team members or subgroups compete to achieve their individual goals, gain recognition, or outperform one another (Park et al., 2024). This competition can manifest in several ways, including striving for leadership roles, competing for resources, or seeking to have one's ideas or strategies adopted by

others. Healthy competition within a team can significantly influence team dynamics and decision-making processes. It can lead to heightened collaboration and innovation as team members strive to outperform one another. However, if not managed effectively, competition can also escalate conflicts and create divisions within the team. When channeled constructively, competition can motivate team members to resolve conflicts that benefit the entire group, improving performance and outcomes. Team competition can rapidly escalate conflicts as members become firmly entrenched in their positions, perceiving the conflict as a scenario where one side must prevail while the other must lose. This competitive mindset can fuel aggressive behaviors, increase tension, and make it difficult to find common ground (Benard et al., 2024). In a highly competitive environment, communication can become less open and more strategic, with SBAE teachers withholding information, misrepresenting facts, or using persuasive tactics to gain an advantage. This can hinder the free flow of information and make it challenging to address the underlying issues of the conflict. Competition can complicate negotiation and problem-solving, as an SBAE teacher may prioritize personal goals over the team's collective objectives. Conflict resolution might involve compromises that leave some team members dissatisfied, leading to lingering resentment and the potential for future conflicts. After a conflict, a competitive environment can hinder the reintegration of the team, especially if the conflict resolution leaves some members feeling defeated or marginalized (Benard et al., 2024). Competitive attitudes may persist, preventing the team from moving on and rebuilding trust.

Healthy competition can motivate team members to perform at their best, think creatively, and push for excellence. This can lead to better outcomes if the competition is channeled constructively. Conversely, competition can increase tension and stress within the team, leading to a more adversarial atmosphere. This can make conflict processes more difficult

and reduce overall team effectiveness. Dysfunctional conflict processes include excessive competition that can create division within SBAE teachers, leading to rivalry and undermining multi-teacher group cohesion (Kwofie et al., 2024). Managing team competition during the conflict processes can include promoting healthy competition, facilitating open communication, establishing fair practices, addressing power imbalances, and fostering a practice of reflection (Heinze & Soderstrom, 2024).

Team Avoidance. Team avoidance is a conflict management strategy where team members or the entire team choose to ignore, sidestep, or delay addressing a conflict (Brown & Jarldorn, 2024). This approach can significantly impact conflict dynamics, influencing how conflicts evolve, are managed, and resolved. Team avoidance plays a complex role in conflict dynamics (DeChurch et al., 2013), as it can either temporarily defuse tensions or exacerbate long-term issues. While avoidance can be a functional strategy in certain situations, it often leads to unresolved conflicts, decreased trust, and long-term dysfunction if overused (Tabassi et al., 2024). Team avoidance occurs when SBAE teachers, either individually or collectively, choose not to engage directly in a conflict. This might involve avoiding discussions about the conflict, postponing decisions, or failing to address underlying issues. According to Brown and Jarldorn (2024), avoidance can be a deliberate choice driven by fear of confrontation, a belief that conflict is unimportant, or the hope that it will resolve itself over time. Avoidance can influence each stage of the conflict process, often in ways that delay resolution or allow conflicts to fester. Avoidance reduces open communication, as team members are reluctant to discuss conflict or address issues. The absence of communication can result in misunderstandings (Korkut et al., 2018), misinterpretations, and assumptions, further complicating the conflict. When teams avoid addressing issues, it can lead to a lack of progress in resolving the conflict, causing frustration

and the feeling that problems are being ignored or dismissed. Avoidance can prevent timely conflict resolution, as underlying issues remain unresolved. This can lead to unresolved conflicts resurfacing later, potentially in a more severe form. In some cases, avoidance can lead to dysfunctional outcomes, resulting in dissatisfaction and disruption. Unresolved issues may continue to affect team dynamics, making it difficult for the team to rebuild trust and cohesion (Kilag et al., 2024).

While avoidance is often seen as a negative approach to conflict, there are situations where it can be functional or appropriate (Kwofie et al., 2024). If the conflict over a minor issue does not significantly impact the team's goals or functioning, avoidance can be a practical strategy. This prevents wasting time and energy on issues that do not matter overall and can be used as a temporary strategy to allow emotions to cool down before addressing the conflict (Tabassi et al., 2024). This can prevent escalation and allow for more rational discussion later. If a conflict involves significant power imbalances where addressing the conflict could lead to negative repercussions for some team members, avoidance might be used to protect those members until a safer context for resolution can be established (Tabassi et al., 2024). When team avoidance is dysfunctional, SBAE teachers may experience escalated conflict outcomes. When conflicts are avoided, team members may feel their concerns are not valued (Hall, 2023), leading to lower morale and reduced overall team effectiveness (Kwofie et al., 2024). Understanding the role of avoidance in conflict processes is crucial for recognizing when this strategy may be appropriate and when it could lead to negative consequences.

Team Openness. Team openness is a critical factor in managing conflict processes within a team (Bradley et al., 2013). It refers to the extent to which team members are willing to

share their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and feedback, particularly when disagreements or conflicts arise (Eleftherakis et al., 2024). In conflict, team openness means that team members are open to discussing issues, listening to each other's viewpoints, and working together to find mutually beneficial solutions (Murray, 2006). Conflicts are more likely to be identified early when a group of SBAE teachers is open. SBAE teachers in a multi-teacher department may feel comfortable bringing up concerns or disagreements, allowing the team to address potential issues before they escalate. Openness can prevent the unnecessary escalation of conflicts by fostering an environment where team members can discuss issues calmly and constructively. By addressing conflicts openly, teams can manage emotions and misunderstandings that might otherwise lead to escalation (Han et al., 2024). Open communication can lead to a more thorough understanding of conflict and more effective problem-solving (Neiman, 2011). Openness facilitates effective negotiation and problem-solving by promoting transparency and a willingness to explore different options. Sacramento et al. (2024) highlighted that when team members feel valued and the process is fair, they are enthusiastic about engaging in collaborative problem-solving, leading to positive outcomes. Successful conflict resolution is achieved by ensuring that all voices are heard and that the resolution is accepted by all SBAE teachers involved. This can lead to more sustainable and positive outcomes, as teachers may feel their concerns have been addressed. After a conflict is resolved, openness helps the team to integrate the lessons learned, rebuild any trust that may have been damaged, and improve their approach to future conflicts.

Team openness can foster trust and psychological safety within a multi-teacher department (Sacramento et al., 2024). The challenges to facilitating and implementing team openness can deter SBAE teachers from practicing this conflict management and resolution

process. Cultural differences can affect transparency, as some team members may come from backgrounds where direct communication is not the norm (Han et al., 2024). This can lead to varying levels of comfort with open conflict discussions. Team members may fear negative consequences for speaking openly, such as damaging relationships, losing face, or facing retaliation (Eleftherakis et al., 2024). Power dynamics within the team can hinder openness, as individuals with less power may feel that their opinions are not valued or that speaking up could lead to negative consequences. Emotions can create barriers to openness, as individuals may feel too angry, hurt, or stressed to communicate openly. This can lead to defensive behaviors or withdrawal from the conflict process. Promoting constructive feedback, where SBAE teachers focus on providing specific, actionable, and positive feedback during conflict processes, is paramount in effectively managing and resolving conflicts (Sacramento et al., 2024).).

Interpersonal Conflict

According to Engbers and Khapova (2024), interpersonal conflict can be categorized into two distinct types. Substantive conflict focuses on disagreements over tasks, decisions, or processes. When managed effectively, this conflict fosters growth, encourages open communication, and leads to creative solutions. Affective conflict involves emotional clashes from personal issues like dislike, jealousy, or rivalry. This type of conflict is often destructive and can harm relationships.

Van de Vliert and Euwema (1994) found that interpersonal conflict related to team collaboration, competition, and avoidance was used to describe interaction patterns within the team (DeChurch et al., 2013) as they resolved and integrated their differences. Applying these processes determines if a multi-teacher group is moving towards *collaborating*, *competing,* or

avoiding conflict modes (DeChurch et al., 2013). The fourth construct, openness, refers to open discussions meant to reach mutually beneficial solutions and is like the collaborating process (DeChurch et al., 2013). Teams have been found to develop behavioral norms that vary based on their concern for group members, preference to work within the group, reliance on group members, acceptance of group norms, and prioritization of group goals (DeChurch et al., 2013).

Is Conflict Functional or Dysfunctional?

Conflict can be seen as dysfunctional (Collins et al., 2024), but in many cases, if it is effectively managed, it can be practical and help peers create a better outcome (Wienclaw, 2021). Through appropriate conflict management techniques, individuals inside and outside of the conflict can alter the severity and the type of conflict to maximize benefits and minimize consequences (Wienclaw, 2021). It is crucial for the success of a multi-teacher department to differentiate between functional and dysfunctional team conflict processes (DeChurch et al., 2013). Determining whether the thought process of SBAE teachers is collective or individualistic will help assess if the conflict can be considered functional. Fair conflict resolution will improve process effectiveness, repair working relationships, and increase positive outcomes for SBAE teachers (Thomas, 1992).

Functional or constructive conflict occurs when disagreement or tension between parties leads to positive outcomes (Badriyah et al., 2024). Fostering open communication and collaboration can enhance performance, stimulate creativity, improve problem-solving, and strengthen relationships. Dysfunctional or destructive conflict occurs when disagreement or tension between parties leads to adverse outcomes (Pletzer et al., 2024). This type of conflict can

harm relationships, reduce performance, create stress, and undermine organizational effectiveness.

Factors that can determine whether a conflict is functional or dysfunctional can include the management and resolution of the conflict, the communication style of the teachers involved, the power dynamics of the multi-teacher group, the intent and attitude of those involved, and the anticipated outcomes and consequences (Liao et al., 2021). Conflict between groups can sometimes enhance team dynamics, cohesiveness, and task focus (Braun et al., 2020). However, if the conflict becomes overly emotional, it can lead to a win-lose mindset, resulting in adverse outcomes like groupthink, job dissatisfaction, frustration, and increased stress (Al Maita et al., 2015). Team dynamics refers to the behavioral relationships and interactions among teachers in a multi-teacher department of SBAE. These dynamics are influenced by team members' personalities, communication styles, roles, and relationships, as well as the team's structure, goals, and leadership (Nguyen et al., 2024). Team cohesiveness refers to the extent to which members feel a sense of attraction and commitment to the team, motivating them to remain a part of it. A cohesive, collaborative team works effectively to achieve shared goals (Forstyh, 2021).

Some critical aspects of team cohesion are solid interpersonal bonds, shared goals and vision, high morale and motivation, effective communication, conflict resolution skills, commitment and accountability, positive group norms, team stability, and psychological safety (Maman et al., 2024). Task orientation focuses on completing tasks efficiently and effectively within a team or organizational setting. It involves prioritizing achieving specific goals, objectives, or outcomes, often emphasizing productivity, quality of work, and meeting deadlines. Task orientation is one of the critical components of how individuals and teams approach their

work, and it contrasts with relationship orientation, which emphasizes interpersonal relationships and team cohesion (Ahmed et al., 2024).

How is Conflict Managed?

Conflict management encompasses various strategies and approaches to address and resolve disputes constructively (Keashly et al., 2020). According to Stein and Zechner (2020), the primary goal of effective conflict management is to mitigate the adverse effects of conflict while capitalizing on potential benefits, such as promoting creativity and enhancing interpersonal relationships. The initial step in managing conflict involves understanding its underlying causes (August, 2024). Conflicts may emerge from various sources, including disparities in values, objectives, communication styles, or personality traits. Accurately pinpointing the origin of conflict facilitates the selection of an appropriate strategy for resolution while assessing the conflict's intensity, duration, and overall impact (August, 2024). Recognizing whether the conflict is personal, structural, or task-related serves as a critical guide in determining the approach to managing the conflict effectively (Hoogenboom et al., 2024).

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety in the workplace, particularly within teams, refers to an environment where employees feel safe to take risks, express their thoughts, and make mistakes without fear of negative consequences (O'Donovan & McAuliffe, 2020), such as ridicule, punishment, or rejection (Dong & Li, 2024). Creating a psychologically safe environment where team members feel confident they can speak up without fear of negative consequences is critical to a healthy and productive work environment (O'Donovan & McAuliffe, 2020). According to Moffet et al. (2024), psychological safety enables teams to collaborate more effectively, innovate, and

perform at their best; this includes addressing any power imbalances and ensuring that all voices are heard and respected (Shafaei et al., 2024). Critical characteristics of psychological safety include but are not limited to open communication, acceptance of mistakes, inclusivity, supportive leadership, trust, and respect (Dong & Li, 2024).

Psychological safety is foundational for effective teamwork and a positive workplace culture. The benefits of a psychologically safe workplace far outweigh the work of incorporating these conflict management practices into multi-teacher teams. Enhanced innovation and creativity, improved development, higher performance, and reduced turnover are some outcomes of a psychologically safe workgroup (Sacramento et al., 2024). Addressing negative behavior, providing training, and fostering inclusivity can build and maintain psychological safety. Creating psychological safety can be challenging in organizations where a blame culture or hierarchical structures are deeply ingrained (Bransby et al., 2024). It requires a cultural shift that starts with leadership. Employees might be hesitant to speak up if they have experienced or witnessed negative consequences for doing so in the past (Moffet et al., 2024). Maintaining lofty standards and accountability while ensuring team members feel safe meeting those standards is essential. Psychological safety does not mean avoiding challenges or difficult conversations. Elevated levels of unmanaged conflict can lead to increased turnover as SBAE teachers, particularly those highly skilled or in high demand, choose to leave rather than continue working in a contentious environment. When experienced SBAE teachers go due to conflict, the profession loses valuable institutional knowledge, which can negatively impact continuity, efficiency, and the overall functioning of the profession (Maslach & Leiter, 2022).

Consequences of Unmanaged Conflict

According to Ågotnes et al. (2024), when conflicts in large groups are not managed, they can have far-reaching and often harmful effects. This affects the people involved and the group's overall functioning, productivity, and morale. The larger the group, the more complex and pervasive these consequences can be, as conflicts tend to escalate and spread more efficiently within a larger context. The potential outcomes of unmanaged conflict can include agitations that often distract group members from their primary tasks. Instead of focusing on their work, they become preoccupied with the conflict (Maryani & Gazali, 2024). This distraction can lead to missed deadlines, reduced quality of work, and overall inefficiency (Maslach & Leiter, 2022). Additionally, unmanaged conflict can result in duplication of effort within a multi-teacher department, where different SBAE teachers work on similar tasks separately due to a lack of coordination and avoidance, leading to wasted resources (Ågotnes et al., 2024). Conflict that is not managed can erode trust among group members, leading to a breakdown in collaboration and communication (Hussein, 2021). In the case of the teacher association or other large SBAE teacher groups, teachers may become divided into cliques or factions because of unmanaged conflict. These subgroups often work against each other rather than together, further weakening group cohesion (Yafei, 2024).

Persistent conflict without resolution can lead to frustration, dissatisfaction, and a general decline in morale (Omene, 2021). Group members may feel unsupported, undervalued, or unfairly treated, leading to disengagement and a lack of commitment to group goals (Maryani & Gazali, 2024). Unresolved conflicts can lead to significant stress and anxiety for group members, especially if the conflict is intense or involves personal issues. This stress can result in burnout,

absenteeism, and turnover (Kilag et al., 2024). Unmanaged conflict often results in poor communication, as individuals may avoid interacting with those they conflict with or communicate in a hostile or passive-aggressive manner. SBAE teachers may sometimes need to be more active and avoid discussing critical issues, leading to a lack of transparency and perpetuating unresolved problems (Varma & Gupta, 2023). When left unmanaged, conflict can result in decision-making paralysis, where important decisions are postponed or avoided due to disagreements and lack of consensus (Sharma et al., 2024). Over time, unmanaged conflict may lead to resistance to change as group members become entrenched in their positions and unwilling to compromise or adapt, making it challenging to implement new strategies or initiatives (Kilag et al., 2024). If conflicts are consistently left unmanaged, the group may develop a culture of dysfunction where conflict becomes the norm rather than the exception (Shaibu & Njoku, 2024).

The Impact of Conflict Management Training on Teacher Interactions

Conflict management training significantly impacts teacher work groups (Myer et al., 2022) by enhancing their ability to manage disputes constructively and improving overall team dynamics (Kilag et al., 2024). Research indicates that such training can increase teachers' confidence in managing conflicts, fostering a more collaborative environment. Conflict management training in educational settings reduces the frequency and intensity of conflicts and helps build a more cohesive and supportive work environment (Watanabe et al., 2024). Teachers trained in conflict management are better equipped to interact positively with colleagues, students, and parents, leading to a more harmonious school environment and improved student outcomes.

Problem Statement

There is limited research on the relationship between conflict management and conflict resolution and their impact on teacher work output and student outcomes in multi-teacher SBAE programs (Tippens et al., 2013). Tippens's (2013) research categorized working conditions as including administrative support, school conditions, and additional expectations, but it did not address interworking in multi-teacher departments, such as conflict management. There is a need to develop, conduct, and publish conclusive research to determine whether the interactions of two or more SBAE teachers impact (Collins et al., 2024) measurable student outcomes related to task conflict and conflict management in multi-teacher departments. This quantitative study examined the interactions among SBAE teachers and the conflict management styles they employ within their programs.

The Research Objectives Were:

1. Describe the occupational characteristics of SBAE teachers in Texas;
2. Determine if SBAE teachers are being taught to participate in conflict management during pre-service training, through professional organizations, school districts, or other organizations;
3. Determine whether there is a relationship between SBAE teachers' conflict management modes and the SBAE teachers and their interworking.

Defining the Duties of a SBAE Teacher

The course of action in developing an individual into a school-based agriculture educator is a purposive process (Collins et al., 2024) that requires training, certifications, and enrichment (DiBenedetto, 2024). The traditional SBAE teacher training process entails enrolling in, completing a teacher preparation program, and earning a passing score on a state or national-

based exam (Collins et al., 2024) and an additional agriculture knowledge content exam (Rice & Kitchel, 2015); (Swortzel, 1999). Developing SBAE teachers involves pre-service and practicing teachers (DiBenedetto et al., 2018). Pre-service teacher programs prepare future SBAE teachers through teaching observations, program planning, and teaching methods courses (McKibben et al., 2022b; Samoei, 2020; Smith et al., 2015). A practicing teacher has classroom experience (Haddad et al., 2023). In-career teachers who teach school-based agriculture education have distinct experience stages and specific needs.

Teacher preparation programs are broad (Collins et al., 2024) and cover many topics to prepare future educators for lesson planning, student leadership development, community outreach, and the management of supervised agricultural experiences (Hainline et al., 2019). In educator preparation programs, students were entrenched in a block of courses that pre-service teachers experience just before heading out to their student teaching location (Swortzel, 1999); more common now, the training plan covers many semesters with clusters of courses to prepare the pre-service teacher (Eck et al., 2021). The practicing teacher receives training and staff development from the school district (Cheng, 2001) and the professional teacher organizations (Smalley et al., 2019) that integrate current education initiatives with educational-derived data to create continuing education standards for professional SBAE teachers (Tobin, 2012). Although this pre-service practice can be an exhilarating experience, it does lack some domains (Collins et al., 2024) that are assumed to come naturally for future educators (Smalley et al., 2019), one of them being conflict management (Boone & Boone, 2009).

To understand what is fully needed to cultivate secondary agriscience students' academic and leadership needs, we must first understand the complexities and nuances of the SBAE teacher (Cheng, 2001). The SBAE teacher must perform various duties and activities that

promote positive and measurable student outcomes (Eck et al., 2021; Frovola et al., 2019). The Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas (ATAT, 2024) defines the SBAE teacher as someone responsible for conducting an instructional program that educates students about career pathways in agriculture, enhancing youth leadership through FFA, providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy, informing students about agriculture, initiating classroom discussions, creating lesson plans, overseeing agricultural experience programs, supervising and maintaining the school laboratory, and preparing and submitting FFA rosters, entries, registrations, etc. When you review the career description, there are many responsibilities and objectives to meet. To aid in developing the skills needed by SBAE teachers, pre-service programs will prepare future SBAE teachers for lesson planning, supervised agriculture experience, program management, and leadership development (Eck et al., 2021). The SBAE teachers will gain information in their pre-service programs that will equip them to effectively increase the rate of agriculture literacy while being a stakeholder in their community in leadership development and career advancement (Collins et al., 2024).

Some SBAE programs offer many pathways for secondary students to matriculate and earn industry-based certifications; SBAE teachers must know about operating systems that manage those certifications. During the SBAE pre-service program, they will learn creative ways to make student learning innovative and exciting around leadership development while using agriculture to cultivate transferable life skills in each student enrolled in their program (Eck et al., 2019; Hancock et al., 2024).

Interworking

The work duties of an SBAE teacher can be found in the description of several professional web pages and on many school systems' career pages that solicit application

submissions for vacant positions. The position criteria, job requirements, expectations, salary, and stipends are listed. However, explicit addresses need to be provided on whether the SBAE teacher will work alone or alongside one or more SBAE teachers in an established cohort. During the interview, the applying teacher will discover whether the program is a multi-teacher department by asking other SBAE teachers about the demographics of teachers in respective programs.

The number of teachers involved in a program depends on its scope and size. These teachers cover various courses, from animal science to turf management (Lemons et al., 2015). The descriptions of SBAE courses are diverse and can lead to differences in teaching methods, classroom management, and student outcomes (Duncan et al., 2006; Hancock et al., 2024). In addition to classroom and laboratory instruction, components such as SAE and FFA are considered intra-curricular as they are crucial to a comprehensive SBAE program (Eck et al., 2023). I have defined interworking as SBAE teachers working together on all components of the 3-Ring Model.

Interworking refers to the daily operations of being a school-based agriculture education teacher and the collaborative practices of fulfilling those responsibilities with two or more SBAE teachers. According to Doss et al. (2023), the relationships between SBAE teachers, classroom teaching activities, supervision of agriculture experiences, professional development and advancement activities, and other unspecified factors can be defined as interworking in the context of research studies. When SBAE teachers collaborate on duties such as budgeting, fundraising, parent relationships, managing competitive livestock SAEs, training LDE and CDE teams, and overseeing school farms or facilities, these activities are considered interworking (Doss et al., 2023). Doss (2023) explored the impact of challenges faced by SBAE teachers on

their perceived ability to perform their jobs. For instance, within the construct of miscellaneous activities and factors, teacher burnout was identified as an element that significantly and unfavorably influences SBAE teachers' perceived ability to do their jobs, highlighting an ongoing issue identified in previous research (Clark et al., 2014; Touchstone, 2015; Walker et al., 2004). Burnout may indicate negative interworking, leading to dysfunction as a symptom of unmanaged conflict.

Conflict and the SBAE Teacher

In multi-teacher departments, teachers can observe their teaching partners' outcomes, work ethic, and relationships (Collins et al., 2024), which may evoke feelings of admiration or envy (Chernyak & Rabenu, 2018). Employee envy arises from a loss of self-esteem when another individual achieves outcomes that one personally desires. This emotion stems from a desire to possess another's attributes or achievements to benefit oneself (Weiner, 2021). In contrast, jealousy is an emotional state triggered by a perceived threat to a valued relationship, motivating behavior aimed at countering the threat (Dogan & Vecchio, 2001). Doss (2023) recommended that agricultural education teacher preparation programs provide additional training for preservice teachers and teachers already in the field on managing the miscellaneous activities related to teaching. Some of those activities, like time management, organization, and conflict resolution, are skills that can be learned through professional development or other means.

Conflict management is an issue that affects SBAE teachers in multi-teacher departments and could be a reason for high turnover in the profession, recruitment and retention concerns, and a decrease in career viability (Cano & Miller, 1992). Boone and Boone (2009) indicated a difference in the nature and degree of problems teachers face in West Virginia when comparing

the size of the single-teacher versus multi-teacher departments. They further report that there may be a relationship between multi-teacher department teachers and their relationships with faculty and peers. Tippens et al. (2013) examined four factors that may increase attrition. They stated compensation, family and personal factors, employment factors, and working conditions as factors that increase attrition; the working conditions factor did not address how conflict could impact job satisfaction. Beck and Betz (1975) argue that as organizations grow and the number of individuals working together increases, the likelihood of disputes also escalates.

Training, recruitment, and retention are strategic goals for The National Council of Agricultural Education (The Council) (AAAE et al., 2018). The Council aims to increase teacher recruitment efforts to meet the demand for new and expanding programs and to enhance agriculture teacher retention efforts (AAAE et al., 2018). This goal to attract and maintain new and experienced teachers will remain a priority until 2025 when stakeholders will revise the current strategic goals. An objective of the Council has been to develop models of preparation for agriculture educators (Duncan et al., 2006) that include coursework, collaborative experiences, and professional outcome alignment among all teacher preparation programs. The strategic goal of ensuring a supply of future leaders for the agricultural education profession will expand and enhance professional development programs for agricultural educators (Coleman et al., 2020). Standard six of the Standards for SBAE Teacher Preparation Programs (SSTPP) addresses professionalism and teacher preparers to develop pre-service teachers, modeling personal leadership traits involving investment and empowerment (Lawver, 2022) while collaborating with other educators. Standard seven of the SSTPP asks teacher preparers to cover the topic of personal dispositions with pre-service teachers, directly concerning and demonstrating professional communication skills (speaking, listening, and writing) (Standards

for School-Based Agricultural Education Teacher Preparation Programs, 2017). The requests for training related to personal dispositions are specifically addressed and include areas of attention such as inclusiveness, adaptability, and having prominent levels of professional communication.

Limitations of this Study

This study investigated whether a teacher's preferred conflict resolution mode affected their attitudes towards teaching and their relationships with their teaching partners. The study was limited to a sample of teachers from the state of Texas, so the findings can only be generalized to this specific group.

Definition of Terms

Agriculture educator – an instructor who educates students on topics related to agriculture, food, and natural resources; by covering these areas, agriculture educators help students develop a broad range of skills, including science, mathematics, communication, leadership, management, and technology (National Association of Agricultural Educators, 2024).

Attribution theory- Attribution theory is a psychological framework that explores how individuals interpret and assign causes to events and behaviors. It focuses on the cognitive processes individuals use to determine whether the cause of an event or behavior is internal (stemming from personal factors such as ability, effort, or personality) or external (resulting from situational factors such as luck, other people, or environmental conditions). Attribution theory is crucial in understanding how people perceive responsibility, control, and predict outcomes, which can influence emotions, motivation, and social interactions. By analyzing how individuals

attribute causes, the theory helps explain variations in behavior, judgments, and responses to success, failure, or conflict (Science Direct, 2024).

Groupthink- a psychological phenomenon where the desire for harmony or conformity in a group leads to irrational or dysfunctional decision-making. In this environment, group members suppress dissenting opinions, overlook alternative solutions, and prioritize consensus over critical analysis. This often results in poor decisions because the group needs to consider all possibilities and risks. Groupthink can be triggered by high group cohesiveness, isolation from outside opinions, and strong leadership that discourages diverse perspectives (Britannica, 2024).

Interworking- the day-to-day operations of being a school-based agriculture education teacher and the cooperative practices to implement those duties with two or more SBAE teachers.

Organizational psychology- a subfield of industrial-organizational (I/O) psychology, focuses on understanding human behavior within organizational settings, aiming to enhance workplace productivity, employee well-being, and organizational effectiveness. It involves the application of psychological principles to issues such as employee motivation, performance, leadership, team dynamics, job satisfaction, and organizational development. Researchers and practitioners in this field examine individual and group behaviors, using scientific methods to develop strategies for improving recruitment, training, organizational culture, and conflict management. Critical topics in organizational psychology include job analysis, work-life balance, employee engagement, decision-making processes, and the impact of organizational structures and leadership styles on employee outcomes. Additionally, this field applies various psychological assessments and interventions to promote a healthy and efficient work environment (American Psychological Association, 2024).

Pre-service educator preparation- The time spent and curriculum typically taught in a university setting in undergraduate or master's programs that prepare students for secondary agricultural education teaching, extension, and non-profit outreach. It includes coursework, observation hours, and student teaching experiences with a mentor before working in the school system.

Professional association- A professional association is an organization or group formed to represent the interests and promote the growth of individuals within a specific profession or industry. These associations often provide members with resources such as networking opportunities, professional development, educational resources, certification programs, and advocacy on policy issues relevant to the profession. They may also establish ethical standards, best practices, and guidelines to enhance professionalism and accountability within the field (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024).

Work Organization- refers to the structure and processes by which tasks, roles, and responsibilities are arranged and managed in a company or institution to achieve its goals efficiently. It encompasses designing jobs, coordinating and motivating people, and allocating resources to maximize productivity. Work organization includes hierarchy, team dynamics, communication channels, leadership, and decision-making processes (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024).

School-based agriculture education- the system or organization that provides instruction that covers a myriad of agriculture subjects in K-12 educational settings. The focus is classroom instruction, agriculture demonstrations, leadership development, supervised agricultural experiences outside the classroom, and community stakeholder engagement.

School-based agriculture education program- an educational system in which students, grades K-12, learn about agriculture science through hands-on applications and demonstrations. The

capstone of the secondary programs is student reflections and practical demonstrations to validate their learning.

School district- a geographical unit for the local administration of schools.

Teacher educator is used here as an inclusive term to encompass all professionals engaged in the initial and ongoing education of teachers, including those who work in schools, colleges, and universities.

Workplace- A workplace is any location where employees perform tasks related to their job. It can range from traditional office environments to remote or field locations, depending on the nature of the work. The concept of workplace safety is vital, with various organizations and government agencies, like the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), focusing on maintaining environments that are free from hazards, ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of employees (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 2020).

Chapter Summary:

This study explores teacher relationships in multi-teacher departments within School-Based Agricultural Education (SBAE), focusing on how collaboration and conflict affect program efficacy (Vallone et al., 2022). In larger SBAE departments, where multiple teachers collaborate, conflicts arise more frequently due to goal incompatibility or limited resources (Eck & Edwards, 2019; Böhm et al., 2020). These conflicts can lead to task incompletion, lack of motivation, or interpersonal discord, manifesting in ways that impact the entire team (Larson et al., 2022). De Drue and Gelfand (2008) define conflict as a process in which perceived opposition regarding interests, resources, beliefs, values, or practices creates discord. Understanding the different forms of goal incompatibility—mutually exclusive goals, conflicting interests, and value-based incompatibility—illustrates how competing priorities can escalate conflicts within SBAE teams, impacting personal relationships and team cohesion (Böhm et al., 2020). This goal incompatibility is further complicated by SBAE organizational structures, competing time demands, and the unique weight of various duties (Böhm et al., 2020). Task conflict can be constructive, encouraging growth and creativity when managed effectively (Engbers & Khapova, 2024), while relationship conflict is often destructive. Effective conflict management—including communication, compromise, and mediation—enables SBAE teams to navigate conflicts, frequently transforming them into growth opportunities (Haun, 2001; Wienclaw, 2021). Professional development programs for SBAE teachers should emphasize these conflict management techniques and skills in time management and organization to prepare teachers for the demands of multi-teacher environments (Doss, 2023). Equipping teachers with these tools enhances the potential for both practical and transformative outcomes in SBAE programs.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The existing literature needs to conclusively establish whether the interactions among two or more SBAE educators impact the level of work output within multi-teacher departments. Additionally, there is a need to research the effects of conflict among SBAE teachers on attrition rates, job placement, and the intensity of work output. Boone and Boone (2009) found severe problems for SBAE teachers, including relationships with faculty/peers at their school. They also found that issues emanated from the previous teacher's influence on their past program. The lingering impact of the old teacher caused issues and damaged student and colleague relationships. Boone's research also found that differences existed for SBAE in a single-teacher department versus a multi-teacher department (Boone et al., 2009).

The role of the SBAE teacher is varied and multi-dimensional (Collins et al., 2024). The one dimension and dynamic that could affect success as an SBAE teacher is the impact of conflict, especially within a multi-teacher department. There are numerous reasons why the SBAE teacher will change schools (Lemons et al., 2015) or leave the profession altogether (Ingersoll, 2001). Exiting and migration reasons for SBAE teachers leaving the profession include work-life balance, time commitment, lack of administrative support, administrative support, and compensation (Clemons et al., 2021; Haddad et al., 2019). Boone and Boone (2009) found that attrition is linked to the number and types of problems teachers face in many situations. A teacher's success or failure in their profession depends on their ability to solve problems effectively (Sancar et al., 2021). Boone and Boone's (2009) research centered on four questions, with the most relevant objective being whether there is a difference in the nature and

extent of problems faced by teachers in West Virginia based on department size (single teacher vs. multi-teacher departments).

Newburgh (2019) found that teaching is unlike any other profession, where personal and public life intersect at a potentially precarious juncture. However, the organizations that define standards for teacher development focus on the public or outward aspects of teaching (Traini et al., 2023). Many accreditation standards for teachers emphasize students achieving measurable outcomes in the classroom through state-based data. Pre-service or teacher induction standards prioritize the public facets of teacher education over intrinsic factors (Bartell, 1995). Teachers and administrators can measure the public elements of lesson development, assessment creation, and career development event team training (Doss et al., 2023). Conversely, intrinsic factors, which are intangible and cannot be easily measured, include personal beliefs, personal life, personality styles, and conflict management modes (Keilwitz, 2014)

Wienclaw (2021) stated that conflict frequently arises in the workplace and that goal incompatibility between groups or individuals, differentiation, task interdependence, scarce resources, ambiguity, and communication problems can all promote conflict. Role confusion, task conflict, and role salience can interfere with SBAE outcomes in multi-teacher departments (Greer & Egan, 2012). The lack of effort to identify the issues affecting SBAE instructors in multi-teacher departments contributes to high turnover, recruitment and retention challenges, and reduced career visibility.

Boone and Boone (2009) indicated a difference in the nature and degree of problems teachers face in West Virginia when comparing the single-teacher versus multi-teacher department size. Boone and Boone (2009) further reported that there could be a correlation between multi-teacher department teachers' problems that relate to relationships with faculty and

peers. Their study employed a t-test statistical analysis to assess differences in problem severity based on department size (Boone & Boone, 2009). Statistically significant differences were found between single-teacher and multi-teacher departments in SBAE programs (Boone & Boone, 2009). The relationships among faculty and peers could be hypothesized to include interactions within multi-teacher departments as an external factor.

The SBAE Teachers' Association's Psychology

High school agriculture educators face the current scenario of collaborating with peers and faculty. Gallo (2022) reported that 94% of respondents said they worked with a "toxic" person in the previous five years. Workers have reported that their primary source of workplace tension is relationships with peers (Giebels & Janssen, 2020). A peer can be described as one at equal standing as their counterpart in an organization. The school is an organization, and the collection of agriculture educators, as a profession, is an organization. There is a research gap in evaluating the organizational psychology of agriculture educators' leadership, particularly concerning conflict management in multi-teacher departments (Yang et al., 2024). A distinct organizational culture exists between for-profit and nonprofit workplaces (Shier et al., 2019). Although public schools function as nonprofit entities, they often display a for-profit organizational disposition. Most agriculture educators work in nonprofit environments that occasionally adopt corporate practices, such as role delegation and performance reviews, which can affect contract days and stipends.

Organizational Psychology

Organizational psychology, also known as industrial-organizational psychology, is a field of psychology (Conte, 2024) that applies psychological principles and research methods to the workplace (Schein, 2015). Industrial-organizational psychology enhances organizational

efficiency and employee well-being (Guest, 2017). This discipline combines various psychological concepts, including motivation, leadership, team dynamics, and individual behavior, to enhance the functioning of organizations. Key competencies of organizational psychology include employee selection and recruitment, training and development, performance management, workplace well-being (psychological safety), organizational development and change management, leadership and team dynamics, organizational behavior, and diversity and inclusion (Pandey & John, 2023).

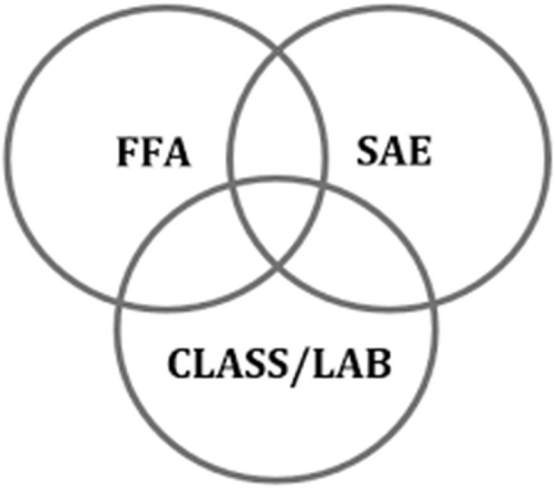
Understanding that school-based agriculture programs face workplace safety issues enables us to view conflict management and resolution as essential for enhancing productivity and career longevity. Workplace safety encompasses the climate of peer interactions, including threats, verbal abuse, and bullying (Shier et al., 2019). Addressing workplace safety is integral to sustainable leadership and personal growth in these educational settings. Organizational psychology is essential in today's complex and dynamic SBAE teacher work environments. By applying psychological principles to SBAE teachers' organizational challenges, research will help to improve SBAE teachers' effectiveness, enhance workplace satisfaction, and create a healthier, more productive multi-teacher workgroup. Incorporating the practices of organizational psychology is crucial for navigating changes, managing a diverse workforce, and maintaining a fully trained collective of SBAE teachers.

The pre-service program allocates more time to preparing future teachers for daily facilitation of the Three Ring Model (Figure 1) but not for navigating the workplace culture regarding faculty and peer interactions. Quantitative data and lesson plan development cannot solely predict an SBAE teacher's personal growth; instead, secondary agricultural educators

should be assessed and nurtured through pre-service and in-service training processes (Gegenfurtner et al., 2020).

Figure 1

The SBAE Program 3-Circle Model



Boone and Boone (2009) argued that the study should be expanded due to its significant implications for agriculture education teacher preparation programs and SBAE teacher outcomes. Their literature review could—and should—impact the content of teacher education programs, in-service opportunities for current and induction teachers, and coordination between state departments of education and teacher preparation programs. The workplace health safety culture's narrative regarding multi-teacher dynamics and interworking with faculty and peers should be assessed and addressed by teacher educators and agriculture teacher associations. A descriptive analysis of the workplace climate between faculty and peers could account for unknown variables contributing to SBAE teacher attrition. McKibben et al. (2022a) cited Blustein's relational theory between working and relationships domains that can affect peer and faculty relationships. Blustein's (2011) propositions are consistent with the analysis of

interpersonal relationships, but McKibben et al. (2022a) synthesis and interpretation of the interworking of relationships provide processed insight for simplification and understanding.

Agriculture education researchers have addressed mental and emotional exhaustion in length due to external factors but have not addressed interworking relationships with faculty and peers (Theiman et al., 2012). Exhaustion can lead to burnout, described as occupational stress caused by job dissatisfaction, personal strain, and those individuals who may not use personal coping strategies (Chenevy et al., 2008). Symptoms of burnout can be seen in agriculture teachers when they exhibit emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Teachers experiencing higher levels of emotional exhaustion are more susceptible to burnout due to occupational stress (Agyapong et al., 2022), often resulting in their leaving the profession (Tippens et al., 2013). Prolonged stress can lead to significant conflict among SBAE teachers, consequently affecting the dynamics of working groups. Emerging conflicts can be managed quickly by adequately identifying the issues and mitigating a professional conflict management plan. Conversely, a more calcified conflict can do irreversible damage if not correctly identified and managed. Theoretically, Hakvoort (2020) argues that minor distractions and disturbances constitute conflicts because the actions of one person (the lead teacher) can prevent, block, or interfere with another teacher's ability to achieve their goals (Hakvoort et al., 2020). Since these conflicts are emerging, they are referred to as emerging conflicts (Hakvoort et al., 2020).

Attribution Theory

Perceived attributions could influence conflict processes. Attribution theories examine how people interpret their own and others' emotions, motives, and events and how these interpretations affect behavior (Belosevic et al., 2019). This theory attempts to explain how humans understand and explain behavior, such as conflict. Recognizing that others' behaviors

can be influenced by external, uncontrollable factors can foster empathy and reduce unnecessary blame or conflict (Kelly & Michela, 1980).

Some may perceive the lead agriculture teacher as a manager rather than a leader, an important distinction (Dumitru et al., 2015). The interactions among SBAE teachers in a multi-teacher department appear transactional (Haddad et al., 2023; Queen, 2024). However, these interactions become clearer when examined through the lens of Attribution Theory. The relationship between SBAE teachers and their peers is an adaptive process, where workload responsibilities should shift from transactional to relationship-based, fostering solutions rooted in trust and mutual understanding (Heifetz et al., 2009). Trust moderates the connection between task and relationship conflict, while the interpretive process significantly influences the transformation of one type of conflict into another, potentially severing their link (Haddad et al., 2023). In the framework of attribution theory, SBAE educators can collaborate and navigate functional conflict. Yet, persistent conflict can prompt the group to delve into methods for achieving improved results and pinpointing underlying factors. Disagreements may surface over specific matters, such as deciding who will train competitive teams, mentor state officer candidates, or act as the district's representative in organizational affairs. Furthermore, the individual experiences and interpretations of SBAE teacher behaviors can significantly influence teacher retention.

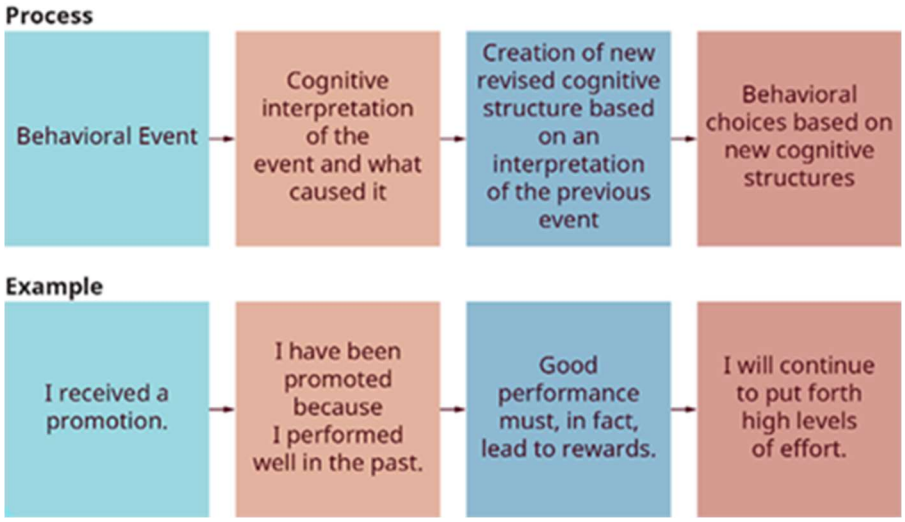
Theories and Models of Attribution

Attribution Theory, developed by Fritz Heider in 1958, is a psychological framework explaining how individuals infer the causes of events and behaviors (Harvey & Weary, 1984). Heider proposed that people attribute behavior either to internal dispositions (personal traits, motives, or intentions) or to external situations (environmental factors or pressures) (Malle,

2022). His theory laid the groundwork for later models, such as those by Harold Kelley (1967) and Bernard Weiner (1985), which further explored the complexities of attribution. Kelley's (1973) covariation model, for instance, introduced the concepts of consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness to help determine whether attribution is more likely to be internal or external (Hewstone & Jaspars, 1983).

Figure 2

The Attribution Process



There are notable differences, comparisons, and extensions between attribution theories and frameworks. Heider and Weiner focus on how people make sense of the causes behind events and behaviors, recognizing the distinction between internal (dispositional) and external (situational) attributions. Heider's research laid the groundwork for Weiner to develop a more nuanced understanding of how attribution affects motivation and emotions, particularly in achievement contexts (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014). Weiner introduced additional dimensions: stability (whether the cause is permanent or temporary) and controllability (whether the cause is controllable or uncontrollable by the person) (Forsyth & McMillan, 1981). Weiner's

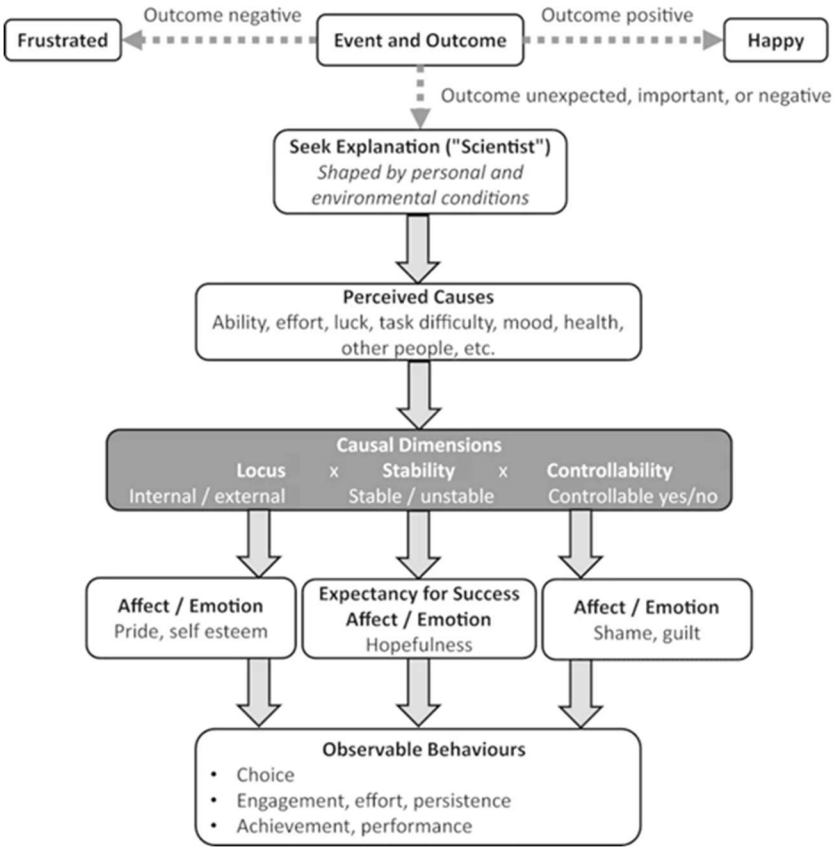
work specifically focused on attributions in achievement-related contexts and their implications for motivation and emotions (Martinko, 1995).

The 3-Dimensional Model

Bernard Weiner expanded on Heider's framework to explore how attributions influence motivation in academic and achievement contexts. He identified three extensions of attribution theory: achievement motivation, emotional reactions, and attributional retraining (Weiner, 2010, p. 95). Weiner posited that the type of attribution—internal vs. external, stable vs. unstable, and controllable vs. uncontrollable—affects future expectations, emotional responses, and task persistence (Forsyth & McMillan, 1981).

Figure 3

Weiner's Attribution Theory Model



Three-Stage Process to Make Attributions

Weiner's Attribution Theory (1972) serves as the conceptual framework for this study, emphasizing a three-stage process for understanding connectivity and clarity. This process involves observing or perceiving behavior, determining its intentionality, and attributing it to internal or external causes. Observation in the attribution process occurs when an individual perceives an action or behavior in themselves or another person. The next phase leads the person to interpret if the behavior is intentional or unintentional. The last phase involves categorizing this behavior as either internal or external. Each stage can correlate to SBAE habits and classroom longevity, providing context for teacher choices and experiences.

Controllability. Weiner's model showed how different attributions lead to distinct emotional responses. For example, attributing failure to a lack of ability (internal, stable, uncontrollable) might lead to feelings of helplessness, while attributing it to a lack of effort (internal, unstable, controllable) (Weiner, 2012) might lead to feelings of guilt and motivation to try harder (Anderman & Anderman, 2009). Attributional retraining, based on Weiner's extended theory, proposes that interventions can assist individuals in changing maladaptive attributional styles (Perry et al., 1993). For instance, teaching SBAE teachers to attribute failures to lack of effort (a controllable factor) rather than lack of ability (an uncontrollable factor) can enhance motivation and improve performance (Weiner, 2012).

Attributions can significantly influence an SBAE teacher's beliefs about their teaching partners and organization. For instance, if a teacher attributes success to their effort (internal, controllable, unstable), they are likely to expect future success with continued effort (Weiner, 2012). Conversely, if they attribute failure to a lack of ability (internal, uncontrollable, stable), their expectancy for future success may decrease (Weiner 1990). Positive attributions (e.g.,

success due to effort) enhance expectancy, while negative attributions (e.g., failure due to lack of ability) lower expectancy (Weiner 1990). Attributions also influence the value a person places on a task. When individuals attribute their successes to internal factors such as effort or ability, they may perceive the task as more valuable because of the direct link between their actions and outcomes (Weiner, 1985). Conversely, if outcomes are attributed to external, uncontrollable factors (Hurt & Wellbourne, 2018), the perceived value of the task may diminish as individuals feel less agency over the results (Weiner, 1985).

External behaviors are those either performed or observed (Martinko & Mackey, 2019). When a behavior is deemed external, individuals are less inclined to alter it. Determining intentionality is also known as causation (Quillien & German, 2021). Determining causes is complex in practice (Anderson, 1991). This is particularly relevant in scenarios involving SBAE teacher group work, where appreciating different perspectives is essential, and the success or failure of actions may be judged based on the teachers' motivations (Lagnado & Channon, 2008). Individuals make distinctions between internal and external causes of attribution. An SBAE teacher's success can help determine whether events are positive or negative based on the outcomes (Kelly & Michela, 1980).

Stable versus Unstable. Attributing failures to unstable but internal factors like lack of effort or poor strategy (such as not ordering scantrons in time for a contest) can lead to frustration and anxiety. The SBAE teacher might feel they must try harder or find a better approach but may also be uncertain about the outcome. When attributing others' misfortunes to external, unstable, and uncontrollable factors, individuals are more likely to feel empathy and compassion (Zeigler-Hill & Shackelford, 2020), recognizing that the other person was subjected to unfair or difficult circumstances beyond their control (Shaver & Drown, 1986). Positive

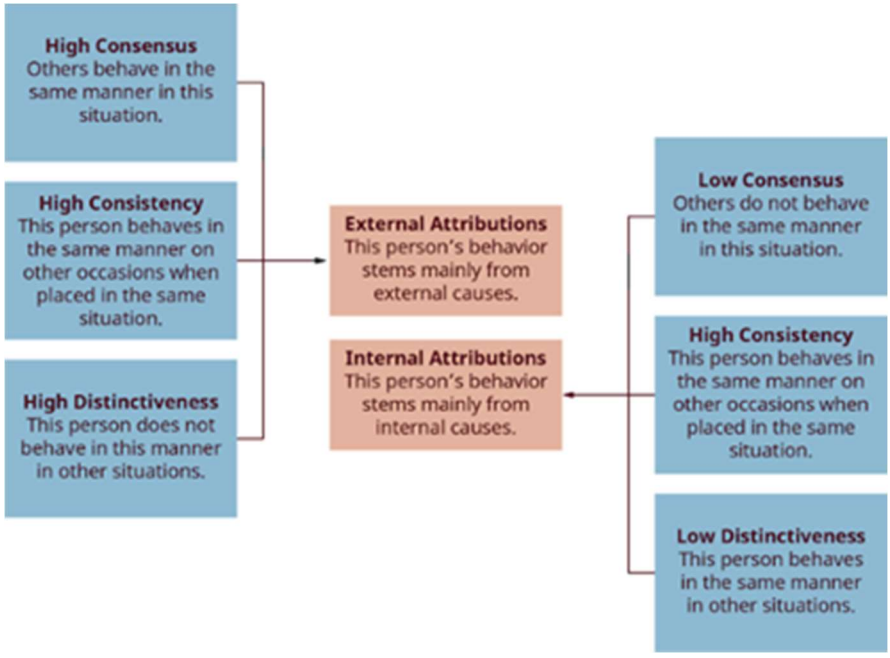
events attributed to internal, stable, and controllable factors can foster feelings of contentment and confidence. These emotions help build a powerful sense of self-efficacy and resilience (McKibben et al, 2024). When people attribute adverse outcomes to their controllable actions (e.g., a lack of effort or poor decision-making), they may experience regret and remorse, which can motivate corrective action but also lead to self-reproach (McKay et al., 1991)

The ability to differentiate stability enables people to determine whether the causes of events are stable or unstable (Buchanan et al., 2013). By understanding the causes of past events, individuals can make predictions about future behaviors and outcomes; for example (McCarthy et al., 2017), attributing success to stable internal factors (likeability) suggests future successes, whereas attributing it to unstable factors (lack of professional development) may not.

X Marks the Spot. Loci or locus refers to the point of origin and can also describe the location where a gene undergoes a chromosomal mutation. Causal locus and causal stability are two key dimensions in Bernard Weiner's attribution theory that help explain how people interpret the sources of events and behaviors. The causal locus dimension refers to whether the cause of an event is perceived as internal or external to the person (Brun et al., 2021). Internal locus refers to causes originating within the person, such as personal traits, abilities, or efforts (Annisa & Ginarti, 2023; McKibben et al, 2023). External locus refers to causes originating outside the person, such as situational factors, luck, or the actions of others (Hamilton & Lardon, 2023). The causal stability dimension refers to whether the cause of an event is perceived as stable (unchanging over time) or unstable (changeable over time) (Körner et al., 2020).

Figure 4

Internal and External Causes of Attributions



A stable cause is consistent and unlikely to change (Bleidorn et al., 2022), such as a person's innate ability or personality traits. An unstable cause can vary from one situation to another, such as effort, mood, or temporary circumstances. Stability attributions for conflict can determine the magnitude of emotions, as conflicts perceived as stable elicit stronger emotional responses (Hurt & Wellbourne, 2018). Emotional reactions to conflict vary due to different attributions formed by team members, which in turn affect the emotional response of the team as a whole and can generate negative or high energy (Hurt & Wellbourne, 2018).

Internal attributions are positively predicted by perceived consistency and negatively by perceptions of distinctiveness and consensus (Tamborni et al., 2018). Perceived consistency involves determining whether someone acts the same in each situation every time it occurs (Graham, 2020) and whether the same person would act similarly over time in response to similar cues, stimuli, or scenarios (Kelley, 1973). Distinctiveness requires analyzing what

contributes to situational triggers (Hilton & Slugoski, 1986), examining if the individual consistently behaves in similar situations (Guest et al., 2021), or if others in similar situations would act the same way (Weiner 1990). When reaching a consensus, we must examine how many SBAE teachers demonstrate the same behavior in similar scenarios and deduce if the contextual consensus is environmentally external or internal.

Internal attributions are shaped by effort, ability, and personality traits. For instance, an SBAE teacher in a multi-teacher department might attribute the success or failure of an initiative to their own or their colleagues' efforts (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014). Teachers may attribute successful outcomes to their partners' stable personality traits in these settings. However, external attributions involve concerns such as task difficulty, external resources, external support, group dynamics, and external circumstances. In group work, attributional loci significantly impact group dynamics, performance, and individual satisfaction (Ashford & Fugate, 2006). This literature review on attribution theory aims to discover where the mutation occurs in the work environment with multiple SBAE teachers before, during, and after conflict. Understanding and addressing attributions related to group dynamics can help resolve conflicts.

A practical application of attribution theory in work groups involves discussing and mediating perceptions of effort and contributions to prevent misunderstandings and improve cooperation. By recognizing and managing these attributions effectively, groups can enhance their functioning, address challenges constructively, and foster a supportive and productive environment (Gorton, 2005). A clearer understanding of attributions can improve communication by helping individuals express their perceptions and understand others' perspectives better. Attribution theory aids in identifying and challenging maladaptive attributions, such as blaming

oneself excessively for failures, which can contribute to depression and low self-esteem (Kelly & Michela, 1980).

Understanding attribution helps individuals develop adaptive attributions, seeing setbacks as temporary and changeable. The theory encourages individuals to reflect on their actions and the factors influencing their outcomes, leading to greater self-awareness and personal growth. By understanding the role of internal controllable factors, individuals can take greater responsibility for their actions and outcomes (Foster & O'Mealey, 2022), fostering a proactive approach to personal and professional development. In organizational settings, understanding attributions can help preparers support SBAE teachers in learning to appropriately attribute their successes and challenges, leading to better performance and job satisfaction.

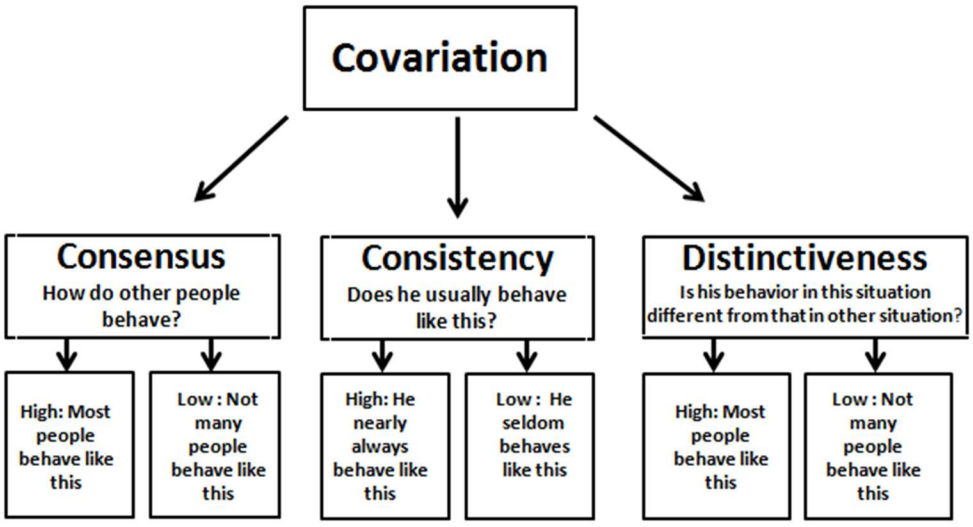
Covariation

Attribution is categorized as either situational or dispositional. Three factors determine whether attribution is dispositional or situational: consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency (Ployhart et al., 2005). Consensus considers whether an individual's behavior aligns with what others in a group would do in a comparable situation. Distinctiveness examines if the individual's behavior varies across different situations (Goldman & Shapiro, 2012), indicating whether they always behave similarly in similar contexts. Consistency examines whether an individual behaves similarly in each situation every time it occurs (Graham, 2020). If a person consistently responds similarly to familiar cues, stimuli, or conditions, they have developed consistent attribution biases. Contributors to consistency are related to external stimuli and past experiences. According to Stewart et al. (2010), situational attribution factors include social influences, environmental conditions, task difficulty, unexpected events, and cultural norms. External attribution causes can be connected to compensation, workplace disposition, and

broader external factors such as performing or observing situational scenarios (Weiner, 2010). Dispositional attribution factors include personality traits, attitudes and beliefs, abilities and skills, motivations, and emotional states. These internal factors construct the framework for attribution theory. Understanding these factors provides insight into the underlying causes of SBAE teacher behaviors and can inform strategies for improving teacher retention.

Figure 5

Kelly's Covariation Model



Interpretation, Explanations, and Blame

Attribution helps us interpret others' behaviors and actions (Kelley, 1973). It encompasses two key aspects: behavior explanations and blame assignment. Malle (2011) identified two common meanings in the attribution process: attribution as an explanation, where a behavior is linked to its cause, and attribution as an inference, where an observed behavior leads to assigning certain qualities or attributes to the person. SBAE teachers can exhibit varied behaviors across different situations (Haddad et al., 2023).

Attributions that may be Triggering Conflict

Attributions significantly influence the feelings and emotions individuals experience in response to events and behaviors. When an SBAE teacher attributes success to internal, stable, and controllable factors (Schaumberg & Tracy, 2020), such as their ability and effort, they often feel pride and satisfaction, reinforcing their self-worth and motivation. Conversely, attributing failures to internal, stable, and uncontrollable factors, like a perceived lack of ability, can lead to feelings of shame and guilt (Graham, 2020). This can negatively impact self-esteem and increase vulnerability to depression. When individuals attribute negative outcomes to external, controllable factors (like other people's actions), they may feel anger and resentment towards those they hold responsible. Similarly, the SBAE teacher attributing one's failures to others or external factors might result in blaming and anger rather than constructive self-reflection. Attributing negative events to internal, stable, and uncontrollable factors (Graham & Chen, 2020) can lead to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness and may trigger anxiety (Taylor & Wald, 2003). This is indicative of depressive thinking and can reduce motivation and engagement in SBAE teacher activities. When negative outcomes are attributed to external, unstable, and uncontrollable factors, such as a non-supportive administrator (Murphy-Sharp, 2023) or temporary circumstances like COVID, individuals may feel relief and gratitude that the situation was not due to personal failings and is unlikely to reoccur.

Causal Motivations

Attribution theory can enhance motivation by encouraging individuals to attribute their successes to internal, controllable factors such as effort and strategy (Bandhu et al., 2024), which can be influenced and improved (Ariyanto, 2009). It provides insight into how different attributions can lead to varying emotional and behavioral responses, enabling more effective

coping and improvement strategies. Additionally, we must consider the motivation behind dispositional factors in attributing behavior, as motivation directs and sustains performance (Weiner, 2010). Weiner's (2012) motivation sequence includes need, incentive, and force, which represent the tendency to behave.

Kelly (1971), as cited by Weiner (1985), found that the attributor, in seeking knowledge, aims to manage themselves and their environment effectively. Once a cause is assigned to a situation, a treatment plan or guide can be devised for future attributions to manage potential outcomes effectively. Causal motivations and emotions, such as laziness or tolerance, can be considered non-volitional, but they do not stabilize internal attributions (Weiner, 1985). The measurement of laziness or indifference can be interpreted differently through the lens of internal and external attributions (Zeigler-Hill & Shackleford, 2020).

Interpretations and Attitudes

Attribution theory is linked to the attitudes individuals form based on their interpretations of event causes and subsequent behaviors. SBAE teachers with an optimistic attributional style tend to attribute positive events to internal, stable, and global factors (Gordeeva et al., 2020) (e.g., "I succeeded because I am talented") and negative events to external, unstable, and specific factors (e.g., "I failed because it is difficult to teach students from different backgrounds"). In contrast, SBAE teachers with a pessimistic attributional style attribute positive events to external, unstable, and specific factors (e.g., "My team advanced because I got lucky") and negative events to internal or stable factors (Malle, 2022, p.101) (e.g., "I failed because my school district does not support me"). Individuals who attribute their successes to internal and stable factors tend to have higher self-esteem (Zogmaister & Maricutoiu, 2022), as they perceive themselves as capable and effective (Forsyth & McMillan, 1981). Those attributing failures to internal and

stable factors may suffer from lower self-esteem, believing they lack the necessary traits or abilities to succeed (Zeigler-Hill & Shackleford, 2020). High motivation is often associated with attributing successes to internal, controllable factors like effort and strategy, which empower individuals to pursue future success. Conversely, low motivation can stem from attributing failures to internal, uncontrollable factors such as a lack of ability, leading to feelings of helplessness (Weiner & Kukla, 1970). Resilient individuals typically attribute setbacks to external, unstable, and specific factors, allowing them to maintain a positive outlook and persist in facing challenges. Less resilient individuals may attribute setbacks to internal, stable, and global factors, leading to discouragement and withdrawal. SBAE teachers who believe they have control over the outcomes of their actions (attributing events to internal, controllable factors) are more likely to take responsibility and engage in proactive behaviors (Hakavoort et al., 2017). SBAE teachers who believe external forces determine their outcomes (attributing events to external, uncontrollable factors) may feel powerless and exhibit more passive behaviors. When attributing others' behaviors, the SBAE teacher might show a bias like the fundamental attribution error, where they overemphasize internal traits and underestimate situational factors (Davison & Smothers, 2015). This can lead to unjust blame or judgment. In contrast, self-serving bias leads SBAE teachers to attribute their successes to internal factors and their failures to external factors, protecting their self-esteem but potentially distorting accountability (Coutts et al., 2020).

Traits, attitudes, feelings, genetics, and abilities are dispositional factors we can attribute to behavior (Reeder & Brewer, 1979). Attribution traits refer to the characteristics or factors individuals use to explain the causes of their and others' behaviors (McLaughlin et al., 1992). These traits are crucial in attribution theory, which explores how people interpret and assign

causes to events (Malle, 2022). Attribution traits encompass several dimensions: internal versus external, stable versus unstable, global versus specific, and controllable versus uncontrollable (Malle, 2022). These attribution traits influence how people perceive successes and failures, affecting their motivation, emotions, and behavior (Graham, 2020). For example, attributing success to internal, stable, and controllable factors such as effort can enhance motivation (Weiner, 2021), while attributing failure to external, unstable, and uncontrollable factors can help preserve self-esteem (Pelz, 2014).

Inherited Traits that Influence Attribution

Genetics can indirectly influence attribution theory by affecting personality traits, cognitive styles, and emotional responses. While attribution theory primarily focuses on how individuals interpret the causes of behavior and events (Weiner, 2021), genetic factors can shape the predispositions and tendencies that impact these interpretations (Weiner, 1990). Genetics contributes to developing personality traits (Zeigler-Hill & Shackleford, 2020), such as optimism, neuroticism, and conscientiousness (Ilies & Dimotakis, 2015). For instance, individuals genetically predisposed to optimism might be more likely to attribute positive outcomes to internal, stable factors and negative outcomes to external, unstable factors (Stolarski et al., 2024). Traits like resilience and stress reactivity, which have genetic components, influence how individuals cope with and attribute causes to stressful or challenging situations. Genetic factors can influence cognitive styles, such as how people process information and judge (Ilies & Dimotakis, 2015). Specific individuals tend to think in either an analytical or holistic manner, impacting how they attribute causality. Genetic predispositions can also shape susceptibility to cognitive biases, such as the fundamental attribution error, which involves overestimating personal factors and underestimating situational ones, and the self-serving bias,

which attributes successes to internal factors and failures to external ones (Hamilton & Lordon, 2023). Genetics also play a role in emotional regulation and temperament. Those with a genetic predisposition to emotional stability are likely to demonstrate different attributional styles compared to individuals genetically predisposed to anxiety or depression (Lebowitz, 2014). Genetic variations can influence how individuals respond to stress, affecting their attributions. For example, people with a heightened stress response may be more likely to attribute negative outcomes to stable internal factors (Troy et al., 2023), potentially leading to feelings of helplessness or depression. Genetic influences on brain structure and function can affect how individuals perceive and interpret events (Bouchard, 2024). Differences in neural pathways related to reward processing, threat detection, and executive function can shape attributional tendencies. Genetic factors can influence levels of hormones like cortisol (associated with stress) and serotonin (associated with mood regulation), which in turn can affect how people make attributions (Epel et al., 1999) (Ford & Collins, 2010, p.414). If the behavior is distinctive, it is deemed out of character. If it is out of character, then the cause for the SBAE behavior was external.

How individuals attribute behavior influences how we react to it, particularly in conflict situations with our peers. Attributions and reactions to conflict by those viewed as causing it can create negative outcomes and workload deficiencies (Meier, 2013). Attribution theory can give all parties involved some insight into each other's perspective and why we respond to situational conflict the way we do (Hurt & Wellbourne, 2018). Individuals evaluate their behaviors differently than others; attribution styles, errors, and bias help us assess if a person's behavior is attributable to external or internal factors. During a conflict scenario, individuals often use attributions (Hurt & Wellbourne, 2018), attempting to understand the cause of the conflict

(Weiner, 2021). Conflict causation can be attributed to two types: cognitive (task) and affective (relationship) (Chung & Lee, 2021). A conflict's decisions, solutions, and outcomes are influenced by numerous factors that determine whether its resolution is positive or negative. Identifying these contributing factors is essential. Emotions consistently play a role in the process, influencing which attributing factors generate different loci, biases, and causes.

Every emotion is associated with an expected outcome that can elicit a positive or negative response. Subordinates targeted by their supervisor's anger report significant increases in tension, fear, and distrust (Hurt & Wellbourne, 2018). Conversely, low-intensity expressions of anger may result in positive outcomes, such as enhanced cooperation and effective execution of chapter activities. The appraisal of the emotion can determine its attributed cause and detail if it will be a controllable or uncontrollable event that caused the emotion (Hurt & Wellbourne, 2018). Conflicts attributed to internal, non-controllable causes can be seen as a lack of effort or skill (Weiner, 2012). A stressful work environment brings frustration that focuses on the outcome; professional growth standards and student outcomes can be affected by conflict between SBAE (Frolova et al., 2019). We should investigate if the SBAE teacher processes produce shame, guilt, or negative attributions from various situations.

Attribution in SBAE Teachers' Tasks and Roles

Task attribution refers to how individuals attribute the causes of their actions or behaviors related to specific tasks or activities (Linxiang et al., 2024). Task attribution can influence how individuals perceive and cope with conflicting roles in role conflict. For example, if someone cannot fulfill a task due to conflicting role demands, they may attribute their failure to external factors, such as the demands of those roles, rather than their abilities or effort (Bruening & Hoover, 1991, p. 42). This attribution can affect their feelings of stress, guilt, or frustration

related to role conflict and their strategies for resolving or managing it. There is a relationship between task and relationship conflict and their performance outcomes. Task conflict, or cognitive conflict, refers to perceived disagreements among group members (Weingart & Jehn, 2023) regarding the content of their decisions, involving differing viewpoints, ideas, and opinions (Simons & Peterson, 2000). Relationship conflict, or emotional conflict, refers to the perception of interpersonal incompatibility (Bessolo, 2023) and often involves tension, irritation, and animosity among group members (Simons & Peterson, 2000). The distinction between these two types of conflict is fundamental as it provides deeper insight into managing conflict and resolution among SBAE teachers. Groups that experience task conflict tend to make better decisions than those that do not (Folger et al., 2021), as task conflict stimulates deeper thinking and encourages adaptive problem-solving. It is beneficial because it fosters emotional acceptance of group decisions by all members, making everyone feel included in the planning and implementation of work goals and outcomes (Simons & Peterson, 2000). Additionally, task conflict allows individuals to express their opinions and concerns (Jordan & Troth, 2021), contributing to the continued success of the group's goals.

Conflict Management Modes and Attribution

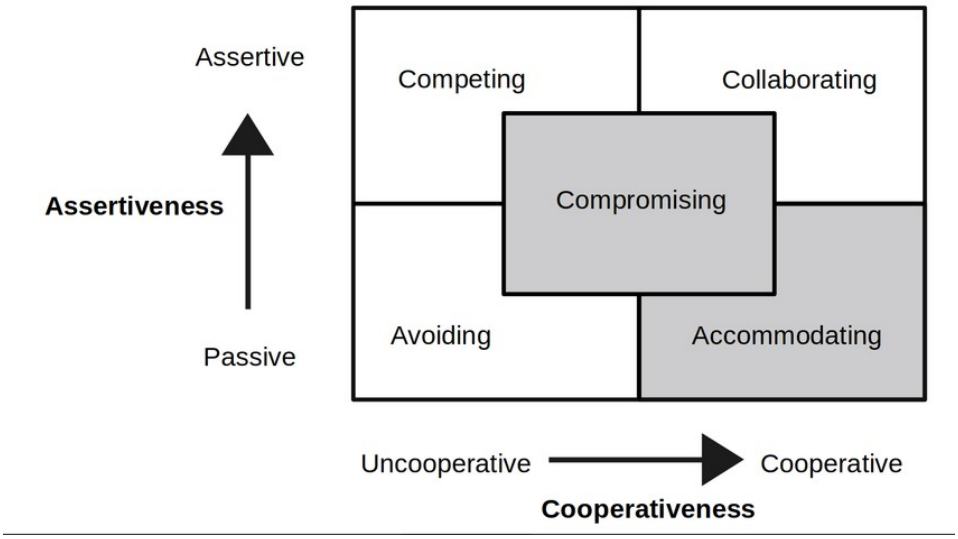
The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) and attribution theory can be connected through their shared focus on how individuals manage conflict and make sense of their behaviors and choices. The TKI utilizes two axes—assertiveness and cooperativeness—to structure the instrument for relatability (Martin, 2020). The TKI is a tool used to identify a person's preferred conflict-handling mode (Thomas, 2008), which can be categorized into five modes: *competing*, *collaborating*, *compromising*, *avoiding*, and *accommodating* (Thomas, 2008).

These modes reflect diverse ways individuals approach and manage conflict based on their assertiveness and cooperativeness.

Competing is characterized by high assertiveness and low cooperativeness, where individuals prioritize their needs and goals over others (Kelly, 2020). They often pursue their interests at the expense of others, using power and influence to secure their position. This mode is effective in situations requiring quick, decisive action, such as emergencies (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). *Collaborating*, which is high in both assertiveness and cooperativeness, involves working with others to find a solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both parties (Qadir, 2020). It requires exploring differences to develop a creative solution that integrates multiple perspectives. This mode is ideal for addressing complex issues where consensus is needed (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). *Compromising* balances assertiveness and cooperativeness, aiming for a middle ground where both parties make concessions to reach a mutually acceptable solution (Omene, 2021). This approach is advantageous when the goals are necessary but not significant enough to justify the potential disruption caused by a more assertive strategy (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). *Avoiding*, which is low in assertiveness and cooperativeness, involves sidestepping or withdrawing from conflict (Rambuyon & Domondon, 2021). This mode is suitable when the conflict is trivial, when there are more pressing issues to address, or when the potential damage from confrontation outweighs the resolution benefits (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). *Accommodating* is high in cooperativeness but low in assertiveness, involving yielding to the other party's concerns while neglecting one's own (Guerrero, 2020). This mode is effective when the issue is more important to the other party or when maintaining harmony and avoiding disruption is critical (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974).

Figure 6

Thomas & Kilmann Conflict Modes Model



In parallel, attribution theory examines how individuals explain the causes of events and behaviors (Weiner, 2012), focusing on whether these causes are attributed to internal or external factors. Their attribution style can influence an individual's preferred conflict-handling mode, as identified by the TKI. For example, someone attributing conflicts to external factors might prefer avoiding or *accommodating* mode to minimize confrontation. In contrast, someone attributing conflicts to internal factors might be more likely to engage in *competing* or *collaborating* modes to address and resolve the conflict directly. Individuals use attribution theory to make sense of the outcome after a conflict is managed using a particular TKI mode (Lerner et al., 2023). For instance, if a person adopts a *compromising* mode and the conflict is resolved, they might attribute the successful resolution to their negotiation skills (internal attribution) or the cooperative nature of the other party (external attribution) (Westmaas, 2022). Understanding the attributions behind conflict handling can help develop more effective conflict management strategies. If people recognize that they tend to avoid conflict because they attribute it to

uncontrollable external factors, they might develop more assertive modes to manage conflicts more constructively.

Examining the Relationship between Conflict Management Modes Training and SBAE Teachers' Experiences

Conflict management training significantly impacts teacher work groups (Jordan & Troth, 2021) by enhancing their ability to manage disputes constructively and improving overall team dynamics (Weingart et al., 2023). Research indicates that such training can increase teachers' confidence in managing conflicts, fostering a more collaborative environment. This training helps teachers to address conflicts more effectively, which is crucial in the complex and often stressful environment of schools. Conflict management training in educational settings reduces the frequency and intensity of conflicts and helps build a more cohesive and supportive work environment. Teachers trained in conflict management modes are better equipped to interact positively with colleagues, students, and parents, leading to a more harmonious school environment and improved student outcomes. These findings underscore the importance of integrating conflict management training (Collins et al., 2024), (Folger et al., 2021) into teacher professional development programs (Parker & Bickmore, 2020) to enhance their interpersonal skills and create a more conducive learning environment.

In the *competing* mode, a teacher using the *competing* mode might push for their preferred teaching method or curriculum, even if it creates tension within the group. This mode can be effective when quick, decisive action is needed, such as during a crisis (Hakiki et al., 2023). However, overuse can lead to resentment and a breakdown in collaboration (Samanana, 2022) among teachers. In *collaborating* mode, the group must integrate multiple perspectives in ideal situations, such as when developing a new curriculum or policy. Teachers *collaborating*

may engage in open discussions, actively listen to each other, and jointly develop strategies that benefit everyone. This mode fosters teamwork, innovation, and long-term problem-solving. Teachers might use *compromising* when there is a need to resolve a conflict quickly, and both parties are willing to give up something. For example, when deciding on the timing of parent-teacher meetings, teachers may agree on a time that, while not ideal for everyone, is acceptable to most. *Compromising* can be helpful when time is a constraint, but it may only sometimes lead to the best long-term solutions. In avoiding, a teacher using the avoiding mode might ignore a colleague's suggestion or refrain from discussing a controversial issue in staff meetings. While avoiding might prevent immediate confrontation, it can also lead to unresolved problems festering over time, potentially causing more significant conflicts later. It is best used when the issue is trivial or when emotions are too high for productive discussion. Teachers might *accommodate* when maintaining a positive relationship is more important than winning on a particular problem. For instance, a teacher might agree to implement a colleague's preferred classroom management strategy to avoid friction, even if they disagree. While this can promote group cohesion, overuse may lead to a lack of input from the accommodating teacher and potential burnout. The effectiveness of these conflict management modes in teacher work groups depends on the context and the personalities involved. Ideally, a balanced approach is most effective, where teachers can shift between modes depending on the situation. For instance, *collaboration* is the most constructive in educational settings where long-term relationships and shared goals are paramount. However, understanding when and how to use other modes can help teachers navigate complex interpersonal dynamics, minimize conflicts, and create a more positive work environment.

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) is a valuable tool for teachers, particularly in their interactions and collaborations with other educators, rather than dealing with students. The TKI helps teachers understand their preferred conflict management style and how it affects their relationships and teamwork within their professional environment. TKI helps teachers identify whether they are more likely to *compete*, *collaborate*, *compromise*, *avoid*, or *accommodate* conflicts (Ma et al., 2012). By recognizing their default style, teachers can become more mindful of their reactions during disputes, which is crucial in a collaborative work environment like a school. Teachers can learn to adapt their conflict style depending on the situation. For instance, a teacher who avoids conflict might recognize situations where engaging and collaborating with colleagues to solve a problem is more beneficial. If one teacher is more accommodating and another is more competitive, knowing this can help them communicate better and find a balanced approach to problem-solving. When teachers know their conflict styles, they can consciously collaborate, which is the most constructive approach in educational settings. This can lead to better decision-making and more innovative solutions to challenges (MacDonald et al., 2022). A teacher who recognizes that they tend to compete might choose to collaborate instead, avoiding unnecessary friction. The TKI helps teachers balance assertiveness (standing up for their needs) and cooperativeness (considering others' needs). This balance is essential in a school setting, where collaboration and teamwork are crucial to success. For teachers in leadership positions, such as department heads or team leaders, understanding conflict management through TKI is particularly important. It helps guide their teams through conflicts and fosters a positive, productive work environment. By applying the TKI model, teachers can better understand their conflict management styles, improve collaboration with colleagues, and contribute to a more positive and productive school environment (Weingart &

Jehn, 2023). This tool is especially useful in helping teachers navigate the complex interpersonal dynamics often present in educational settings.

Chapter Summary:

This chapter addresses the need for more research on the relationship between conflict management, teacher output, and student outcomes in multi-teacher School-Based Agricultural Education (SBAE) programs. It highlights that no conclusive evidence exists on how interactions between multiple educators in a department affect their work output or how conflicts impact job performance, attrition, and student outcomes. Boone and Boone (2009) found significant differences in the nature and severity of problems faced by single-teacher versus multi-teacher departments, suggesting more research on the dynamics and relationships within multi-teacher SBAE programs. Gallo (2022) reported that workplace relationships are a significant source of tension, and many workers have encountered toxic colleagues, which is also a concern for agriculture educators. The chapter emphasizes the importance of intrinsic factors such as problem-solving, conflict resolution, and effective communication in multi-teacher departments. It suggests that pre-service and in-service training should address these aspects to improve the workplace climate and reduce attrition. McKibben et al. (2022a) and other researchers have explored the impact of workplace relationships on job satisfaction and retention, highlighting the need for a supportive environment for SBAE teachers. Attribution theory, developed by Heider and expanded by Weiner, is discussed as a framework for understanding how teachers interpret and respond to conflicts. This theory helps explain how teachers attribute causes to conflicts and their implications for motivation and behavior. An individual's attribution style influences their preferred conflict-handling mode. Those attributing conflicts to external factors may prefer *avoiding* or *accommodating* modes to minimize confrontation. Conversely, those attributing conflicts to internal factors may engage in *competing* or *collaborating* modes to resolve conflicts directly. After managing a conflict with a particular TKI mode, individuals use attribution theory

to make sense of the outcome. For instance, if a conflict is resolved through *collaborating*, the individual might attribute the success to their negotiation skills (internal attribution) or the other party's cooperativeness (external attribution).

Chapter 3

Methods

Research Approach and Design

This research targeted the five conflict types of the TKI for SBAE teacher interactions and aimed to help facilitators use conflict management modes as a discourse for teacher preparation. It will also aid the SBAE teacher in adequately applying the conflict management and resolution discourse within the group dynamics of multiple SBAE teachers.

To determine what strategies may mediate and prevent conflict in the future, our instrument consisted of Likert scale questions that assessed participants' personal and professional experiences in a multi-teacher department (Collins et al., 2024). The instrument was divided into several categories to evaluate the experiences of working in a multi-teacher department and address the interactions and experiences the participants have with faculty and peers concerning their teaching partners (Collins et al., 2024). Instrument sections included question blocks about conflict modes, personality, and behavioral dimensions; as Moberg (2001) recommended, sections contained anywhere between fourteen to thirty questions for 105 questions. I included the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Interest Instrument to assess SBAE teachers' conflict resolution modes.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was all agriculture teachers in Texas (Collins et al., 2024) during the 2023-2024 school year (N = 2,600). Conducting a genuinely random sample of all agriculture teachers in Texas was deemed impractical due to the unavailability of an accurate and

comprehensive list of these individuals. However, a list of agricultural education chapters was accessible. Therefore, the decision was made to sample the chapters instead and contact all agriculture teachers within those selected chapters. Contact information for 1,097 agricultural education chapters was obtained from a publicly available list provided by Texas FFA. Using Cochran's formula (1977), it was determined that a sample of 284 chapters would be necessary to achieve a representative sample. Since the study's objectives focused on the relationship between teaching partners and program outcomes, chapters were chosen as the unit of analysis for random selection. Using the online system commonly utilized in Texas, JudgingCard™, contact information for all teachers within the selected chapters was obtained and organized into a table. This process resulted in 738 contacts, who were then considered the sample of agriculture teachers for this study.

Contact and Distribution

Dillman's Tailored Design Method was employed for the sample survey to increase response rates (Dillman et al., 2014). Multiple contacts were planned as part of this approach. Initially, a pre-invitation letter was sent via the Qualtrics online system, informing potential respondents of the study's purpose and the rationale for their selection and emphasizing the importance of their participation. This was followed by an email containing a link to the survey instrument, managed through the Qualtrics system (Wright et al., 2021). As responses were received, the resulting 'wave' of respondents was closely monitored. Following Dillman's survey research methods, it was determined that if a day passed with fewer than three responses, a reminder email with the survey instrument link would be sent. This process was repeated four additional times, resulting in 157 complete responses.

The survey instrument was emailed through Qualtrics to a randomly selected sample of SBAE teachers in Texas (N = 738). The email included solicitation wording and embedded links to the survey instrument. Of these, 57 emails bounced back due to disconnected addresses, and one was duplicated, resulting in a final sample size of 681 (n = 681). A total of 204 survey instruments were initiated, with 157 completed to the predetermined standard of 100% completion. This led to a final response rate of 123 completed instruments (n = 123).

Non-response bias poses a significant threat to survey-based research, as it occurs when respondents differ meaningfully from non-respondents, potentially leading to false differences and invalid data (Ary et al., 2002). This can undermine the transferability of results to other similar samples. Various methods for mitigating non-response bias are suggested in the literature. According to Lindner et al. (2001), in agricultural education, three standard methods are typically used to address non-response error: method 1- comparison of early to late respondents; method 2 - using days to respond as a regression variable; and method 3 -compare respondents to non-respondents.

This study determined that the most appropriate approach was statistically comparing early and late respondents on a critical area of interest (Dooley & Lindner, 2003). Respondents were coded based on their response time, and an independent t-test was conducted (Collins et al., 2024) to compare the first and last respondents (Lindner et al., 2001). The analysis revealed no significant differences, suggesting the data is free from measurable non-response bias.

Instrumentation

A comprehensive instrument consisting of three major sections was developed to achieve the study's objectives. The first section included a series of Likert-type scale questions designed to gain insight into the experiences of SBAE teachers in multi-teacher departments. This section

focused on the characteristics of the teacher, the composition of their program's student body, the makeup of the teaching staff, and the methods by which the teachers were trained to perform their roles.

The second section of the instrument employed the Conflict Modes Management Assessment, as redesigned and validated by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). This section was used to assess the teachers' conflict management styles. The original instrument, The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI), was developed by Thomas and Kilmann in 1974. The TKI assesses an individual's behavior in conflict situations (Kahn, 2003) by examining two primary dimensions: (1) assertiveness, the extent to which an individual attempts to satisfy their concerns (Etodike et al., 2020), and (2) cooperativeness, the extent to which an individual attempts to satisfy the concerns of others (Martono et al., 2020). These two dimensions define five conflict-handling modes: competing, problem-solving, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating (Thomas, 2008). The TKI consists of 30 pairs of statements (Ogunyemi et al., 2010), with respondents choosing between an 'A' or 'B' item for each pair. Each pair of statements was carefully designed to be equal in social desirability through research (Thomas, 2008).

The third section of the instrument focused on the teachers' attitudes towards their teaching partners, their community, their administration, and their feelings about decision-making processes and their roles in those processes. This section included blocks of questions that asked respondents about their perspectives on and interactions with their teaching partners, programs, schools, communities, students' parents, and professional organizations. Respondents were presented with declarative statements and asked to indicate their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly) (Lindner & Lindner,

2024; Zheng et al., 2024). These blocks represented five predetermined constructs: teaching partner professional 3-Ring duties, teaching partner positive perspectives, teaching partner negative perspectives, interworking measurements, potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction, and perceptions of the professional organization.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are critical to ensuring survey-based research instruments' accuracy, repeatability, and generalizability (Ary et al., 2002). Reliability, often described as a measure of internal consistency, refers to the likelihood that the instrument would yield the same results if administered again (Ary et al., 2002). In this study, the existence of mathematical counter constructs—where certain constructs are expected to produce different mean scores—necessitated treating each construct as a separate section and calculating a reliability coefficient for each. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of individual constructs, with a threshold of $\alpha > 0.70$, as Field (2013) suggested, set as the minimum for acceptance.

1. **Construct One:** This construct consisted of eight questions related to the professional duties of the 3-ring model, including whether SBAE teachers viewed themselves as equals in the program, shared program/chapter responsibilities equally, and resolved disagreements effectively. The reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.94$), indicating a reliable construct. Survey Question: I have/had a teaching partner(s) with whom I agree on the direction our program and chapter are going.
2. **Construct Two:** This construct included nine questions addressing potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction. Questions explored scenarios such as envy among teaching partners in interactions with parents, the officer team, and industry professionals (Dogan & Vecchio, 2001). The reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha =$

0.97), indicating a reliable construct. Survey Question: I have/had a teaching partner(s) who is/are envious of my relationships with students and other SBAE teachers.

3. **Construct Three:** This construct focused on SBAE teachers' positive interactions, perceptions, and experiences with their teaching partners, such as whether partners spoke positively about them to students, parents, administration, or within the teacher's association. The reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.98$), indicating a reliable construct. Survey Question: I have/had a teaching partner(s) who speak positively about me to administration.
4. **Construct Four:** This construct addressed negative interactions, perceptions, and experiences with teaching partners, including whether partners undermined their authority with students, parents, other agriculture teachers, and community members. The reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.97$), indicating a reliable construct. Survey Question: I have/had a teaching partner(s) who undermined my authority with parents.
5. **Construct Five:** This construct included questions about the inner workings of SBAE teachers' interactions with their teaching partners, such as whether partners undermined their authority, exhibited work/life balance, were accountable for mistakes, and spoke about politics or religion at work. The construct also included questions on self-reflection practices. The reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.76$), indicating a reliable construct. Survey Question: I have/had a teaching partner(s) that take accountability for their mistakes.
6. **Construct Six:** This construct focused on SBAE teachers' perceptions and interactions with their agriculture teacher professional association. The reliability coefficient was

calculated using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.80$), indicating a reliable construct. Survey Question: Professional associations/organizations run without bias.

Content & Face Validity

Face validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure based on subjective judgment (Nevo, 1985). A panel of experts was convened to content validity, and a pilot study was conducted. This phase included a panel of experts assembled at the 2024 Southern Region AAAE Conference (Collins et al., 2024) to have an open dialogue about emerging research topics in agriculture education. During that session, agriculture education stakeholders reviewed the themes from our exploratory research portion and offered feedback on possible theoretical frameworks and potential outcomes from the research (Collins et al., 2024). Face validity was a pilot study panel of five experts: two tenured faculty members with experience as SBAE teachers, one recently retired SBAE teacher and administrator, and one pre-tenured faculty member with extensive experience in SBAE in Texas. All panel members held doctorates in Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications. After the panel confirmed face validity, a pilot study was conducted with retired and former agriculture teachers. Participants were asked to interact with the instrument online, as they would in the actual research, and were then asked for their feedback about the survey.

Data Analysis

This study used descriptive procedures to achieve its objectives. Each objective is reported along with the corresponding data and analysis. Objective One was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, modes, standard deviations, and frequencies. Objective Two was analyzed using frequency distributions. For Objective Three, an ANOVA was

conducted to perform a correlational analysis of the constructs. Additionally, constructs were analyzed using ANOVA and t-tests, and intergroup variance was measured.

Chapter Summary:

This chapter outlines the methodology and data analysis procedures used in the study to achieve its objectives. The chapter is divided into sections detailing the instrument development, data collection, reliability, validity assessments, and the statistical methods employed to analyze the data. A comprehensive instrument consisting of three major sections was developed to assess the study's objectives. The first section included Likert-type scale questions aimed at understanding the experiences of SBAE teachers in multi-teacher departments, focusing on teacher characteristics, program composition, and training methods. The second section employed the Conflict Modes Management Assessment, utilizing the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) to assess conflict management styles. The last section focused on teachers' attitudes toward their teaching partners, community, administration, and decision-making processes. This section used 5-point Likert scales to assess perspectives on various constructs related to teaching partner interactions and professional responsibilities. Reliability and validity were carefully addressed to ensure the accuracy and generalizability of the study's findings. Each construct in the instrument was treated as a separate section, with reliability assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Thresholds of $\alpha > 0.70$ were set for acceptance as reliable. Face validity was evaluated by a panel of experts and a pilot study with retired and former agriculture teachers. Content validity was further validated through a roundtable discussion at the Southern Association of Agricultural Sciences Research meeting, where researchers and practitioners reviewed the survey instrument items. The study employed a combination of statistical and descriptive procedures. Objective One was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, modes, standard deviations, and frequencies. Objective Two was examined through frequency distributions. For Objective Three, an ANOVA was conducted to perform a

correlational analysis of the constructs. Further analysis included ANOVA and t-tests, with intergroup variance measured to provide additional insights.

Chapter 4

Findings

Overview

In this study, I sought to determine the interworking of SBAE teachers in programs with multiple teachers. Interworking causes of conflict can affect multiple teachers' interactions with students, parents, administrators, other agriculture teachers, and other stakeholders. The survey instrument was emailed to 738 SBAE teachers in Texas. To err on the side of caution, a response was removed from consideration if the respondent had not answered the TKI and specific question matrices; this eliminated 34 responses. Analysis was conducted with the remaining respondents ($N = 123$).

The objectives of this research were as follows:

1. Describe the occupational characteristics of SBAE teachers in Texas.
2. Determine whether SBAE teachers are being taught to participate in conflict management during preservice training, through professional organizations, school districts, or other organizations.
3. Determine whether there is a relationship between SBAE teachers' conflict management modes and the SBAE teachers and their interworking.

Research Objective 1

Research Objective 1 was to describe the occupational characteristics of SBAE teachers in Texas. The typical respondent was a white (89%) woman (54%) who had been teaching for 1–4 years (26%) and had taught in only one school for the duration of her career (30.9%). This

SBAE teacher taught within a department with four or more educators (36.6%), was not related to her teaching partner (90.2%), had at least one teaching partner of the opposite gender (76.4%), and was traditionally certified (74.0%). A small margin (50.4%) indicated that this typical respondent taught in a school system with only one high school and had 100–300 students in her SBAE program. She believed that no single SBAE teacher in their program had received the label of lead or head agriculture teacher (34.1%). The typical respondent received conflict resolution training from the school system that employed her (56.1%). (Table 1).

Table 1

Characteristics of School-Based Agricultural Education (SBAE) Teachers in Multi-teacher Departments

Category	*f*	%
Gender		
Female	87	54.0
Male	75	46.0
Years of teaching experience		
5–11	38	30.9
0–4	32	26.0
12–20	25	20.3
21–30	18	14.6
≥31	10	8.1
Race/ethnicity		
White/Caucasian	103	83.7
Hispanic	7	5.7
Black/African American	5	4.1
Mixed	7	5.7
Familial relation to SBAE teaching partner		
No relation	111	90.2

Marriage, blood, or adoption	11	8.9
Teaching department size		
≥4	45	36.6
3	43	35.0
2	21	17.1
1	14	11.4
SBAE teaching partner of the opposite gender		
Yes	94	76.4
No	29	23.6
Number of schools taught in over career		
1	38	30.9
≥4	30	24.4
2	27	22.0
3	27	22.0
Certification type		
Traditional	91	74.0
Alternative	28	22.8
District of Innovation	2	1.6
Not Certified	2	1.6
Number of high schools in the local school system		
1	67	54.5
>1	56	45.5
Number of students in the current program		
101–300	62	50.4
301–500	30	24.4
<100	17	13.8
501–1,000	13	10.6
≥1,001	1	0.8
Position in SBAE program		
No one is head of SBAE	42	34.1

Someone else is the head SBAE	35	28.5
Titled head SBAE	27	22.0
Not titled head SBAE but acts in that role	18	14.6

The data on the occupational characteristics of SBAE teachers in multi-teacher departments reveals various profiles among educators. Gender distribution shows a near-even split, with 54% female and 46% male teachers. Experience varies widely, with 30.9% having 5–11 years of teaching experience and a smaller proportion holding experience beyond 31 years. Most teachers identify as Caucasian (83.7%), while other racial/ethnic groups are underrepresented. Familial connections within the teaching staff are rare, with 90.2% having no relation to their colleagues. Teaching department sizes are small, with 36.6% working in departments of four or more teachers and 11.4% in single-teacher departments. Most teachers collaborate with a partner of the opposite gender (76.4%), and most have taught in one school throughout their careers. Traditional certification is standard (74.0%), with alternative certifications being less frequent. Most teachers are situated in school systems with one high school (54.5%), and half of the teachers manage programs with 101–300 students. Within the SBAE program, positions vary, with 34.1% having no designated head, 28.5% reporting someone else as head, and 22.0% holding a titled head position.

Research Objective 2

Research Objective 2 was to determine whether SBAE teachers are taught conflict management during preservice training through professional organizations, school districts, or other organizations. To determine SBAE teachers' exposure to conflict management and resolution training, respondents were asked whether they had participated in formal conflict

management training and, if so, who had provided it. Most respondents (68%) indicated they had received training from their professional organizations (Table 2).

Table 2

School-Based Agricultural Educator Conflict Management and Resolution Training Experiences

Experience	Conflict training	
	f	%
While in the school district	69	56.1
During university education	49	39.8
Within teacher association	35	28.5
None	27	22.0
Outside the education space	16	13.0
In the military	2	1.6

Research Objective 3

Research Objective 3 was to determine whether a relationship exists between SBAE teachers' conflict management modes and their feelings toward their work experiences. Among the respondents who completed the TKI part of the survey instrument (n = 123), the most frequently used conflict modes were compromising (30.1%), problem-solving (28.5%), accommodation (21.1%), avoidance (19.5%), and competition (0.8%).

Table 3

Frequencies of Conflict Modes from the Thomas-Kilmann Instrument

Conflict mode	*f* (%)		
	Never	Sometimes	Frequent
Problem solver	10 (8.10)	78 (63.4)	35 (28.5)
Accommodator	34 (27.6)	62 (50.4)	26 (21.1)

Conflict mode	*f* (%)		
	Never	Sometimes	Frequent
Competitor	92 (74.8)	30 (24.4)	1 (0.8)
Avoider	27 (22.0)	72 (58.5)	24 (19.5)
Compromiser	8 (8.0)	78 (63.4)	37 (30.1)

Note. For analysis of the competitor mode, the "sometimes" and "frequent" responses were grouped (because of the small number of "frequent" responses) to determine which conflict mode school-based agricultural education teachers may use to shape interworking relationship outcomes.

Respondents were asked to determine their feelings towards experiences and perceptions of their relationship with their teaching partner (Collins et al., 2024) and their community (teachers, school, students, parents, association). Respondents felt overall positive towards their teaching partners as a partner (*M = 4.00, SD = 1.25).* Respondents were neither positive nor negative about their perceptions of whether their teaching partners thought or spoke of them negatively or positively *(M=4.00, SD=.25).* They were slightly favorable to neutral about their interactions with their teaching partners concerning the duties that are typical to an SBAE teacher and labeled here as "three-ring duties" (*M = 3.77, SD = 1.07).* Respondents were neutral in their responses in their perceptions of their SBAE teacher interworking *(M= 3.20, 0.83).* Respondents were neither positive nor negative when reflecting on their experiences with their SBAE teaching partner that may cause dysfunctional conflict *(M=3.21, SD=1.08).* Respondents were neither positive nor negative in their experiences with professional organizations *(M=3.77, SD=1.07).*

Table 4

Constructs of Feelings Towards the Interworking of the SBAE Profession

Constructs	*M*	*SD*
Teaching partner professional three-ring duties	3.77	1.07
Teaching partners positive perspectives	4.00	1.00
Teaching partner negative perspectives	3.08	1.25
Interworking measurements	3.20	0.83
Potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction	3.21	1.08
Experiences with professional organizations	3.77	1.07

I created five constructs corresponding to questions designed to collect information about the positive and negative interworking of SBAE teachers in multi-teacher departments. The question blocks addressed professional duties in the classroom, FFA advisors, and supervised agriculture experiences. They also addressed each respondent's teaching partner's positive perspectives, their teaching partner's negative perspectives, the interworking of multiple SBAE teachers, and probable causes of teaching partner conflicts from the respondent's perspective.

Respondents answered a series of questions using Likert-type scales to determine the interworking of SBAE teachers and their teaching partners. Those questions were negatively and positively worded and asked about a respondent's perceptions of their teaching partner's interactions with the community, school administrators, students, parents, other agriculture teachers, and the respondent as a teacher. The responses were then summed to form three subconstructs summarized as potential causes of dysfunctional outcomes (Dogan & Vecchio, 2001).

I measured the perceptions, interactions, and experiences of the SBAE teachers using those five constructs: (a) teaching partner professional three-ring duties, (b) teaching partner

positive perspectives, (c) teaching partner negative perspectives, (d) interworking measurements, (e) potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction, and (f) experiences with professional organizations (after conducting factorial analysis on those that negatively affected reliability, I created another construct and recoded the data).

The constructs were then compared with the TKI conflict modes to determine whether statistically significant differences existed in respondents' conflict modes based on their perceptions of their relationships with their teaching partners.

Table 5

Analysis of Constructs Against TKI Conflict Management Modes

Constructs	*PS*	*AC*	*CO***	*AV*	*CM*
Teaching partner professional three-ring duties	.957	.933	.603	.598	.625
Teaching partners positive perspectives	.997	.934	.372	.611	.908
Teaching partner negative perspectives	.857	.921	.175	.434	.123
Interworking measurements	.658	.824	.309	.723	.675
Potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction	.870	.910	.098	.503	.004*
Experiences with professional organizations	.223	.440	.003*	.049*	.314

Note: PS=Problem solver, AC=Accommodator, CO=Competitor, AV=Avoider, CM=Compromiser

* Significant at the .05 level

** Analyzed using t-testing due to two independent groups

Avoider

Table 6 displays descriptive statistics for experiences with professional organizations according to the avoider conflict mode. Experiences with professional organizations differed statistically ($p < .05$) based on the reported use of the avoider conflict mode. $F(2,111) = 3.092$, $p = .049$.

A post hoc test run using Bonferroni correction indicated no significant differences between the three groups using the avoider conflict mode.

Table 6

Scores for Experiences with Professional Organizations by Use of Avoider Conflict Mode

Response	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Do not use	27	3.37	1.11
Sometimes use	65	3.10	0.99
Frequent use	22	3.68	1.00

Competitor

Table 7 displays descriptive statistics for experiences with professional organizations according to competitor conflict mode. Experiences with professional organizations differed statistically significantly based on the reported use of the competitor conflict mode. An independent samples *t-test* indicated there was a statistically significant difference in the score for potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction between those who had used the competitor conflict mode ($n = 29$) and those who had not ($n = 89$), $t(116) = -2.978$, $p < .01$.

Table 7

Scores for Experiences with Professional Organizations by Use of Competitor Conflict Mode

Response	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Do not use	89	3.05	1.06
Sometimes use	29	3.72	1.01

Compromiser

Table 8 displays descriptive statistics for potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction according to the compromiser conflict mode. Potential causes of multi-teacher dysfunction differed in a statistically significant way (p = .004) based on the use of the compromiser conflict mode. Combining sometimes use (n = 28), and frequent use (n = 1) created a binary variable with any use (n = 29) as a value. F(2,111) = 5.468, p = .003.

Table 8

Scores for Potential Causes of Multi-teacher Dysfunction by Use of Compromiser Conflict Mode

Response	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Do not use	7	3.47	0.84
Sometimes use	72	3.48	0.94
Frequent use	35	2.81	1.00

Post hoc testing using Bonferroni correction determined no specifically significant differences between conflict management group types. Post hoc analysis using Bonferroni post hoc correction indicated significant differences between frequent and sometimes users of compromiser. Frequent users of *compromising* reported significantly lower feelings about their relationship with their professional organization (M =2.81, SD = 1.00) than sometimes users of compromise (M = 3.48, SD = 0.94).

Problem Solver

Analysis of variance indicated no statistically significant differences in training partner positive perspectives based on using the problem solver conflict mode, F(2, 115) = 0.003, p = .997.

Accommodator

Analysis of variance indicated no statistically significant differences in training partner positive perspectives based on the use of the accommodator conflict mode, $F(2, 114) = 0.069$, $p = .934$.

Chapter Summary:

This chapter thoroughly analyzes the characteristics, training experiences, and conflict management preferences of SBAE teachers in Texas, emphasizing key findings and their implications for professional development and collaborative relationships. Most respondents were female and White, with no familial ties to their teaching partners, typically working in departments comprising four or more teachers. The study discovered that 68% of the respondents had undergone conflict management training facilitated by professional organizations, which was more prevalent than training received during university education or from school districts. The conflict management modes utilized by the respondents were compromise (30.1%), problem-solving (28.5%), accommodation (21.1%), avoidance (19.5%), and competition (0.8%). These modes were evaluated with the teachers' sentiments towards their job roles and community interactions. Further, the study explored the impact of conflict management training on the relationships between SBAE teachers and their teaching partners. Analyses using constructs designed to measure professional responsibilities, perspectives, operational dynamics, and potential factors leading to dysfunction revealed distinct outcomes. Teachers identifying with conflict management's avoidance and compromise modes exhibited significant variations in their experiences with professional organizations. Conversely, those favoring the competitive mode demonstrated significant disparities in factors contributing to dysfunction within multi-teacher environments.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusions

This study aligns with research priority three of the American Association of Agricultural Education's goals (Sanders, 2021), focusing on effective methods and practices for recruiting and supporting agricultural educators, leadership, and communication practitioners (Alston et al., 2019). It extended beyond traditional teacher roles to include employer characteristics, FFA program duties, and personal traits of educators. It explored non-traditional factors like attribution contributing to longevity and success (Clemons & Lindner, 2019). The findings offer valuable insights into conflict management and professional dynamics within SBAE settings, highlighting three significant relationships between conflict management modes and six interworking constructs.

Connection to Research Objective 1

Research Objective 1 aimed to describe the occupational characteristics of SBAE teachers in Texas. Most respondents were occupationally described as female and Caucasian, with no familial ties to their teaching partners, typically working in departments comprising four or more teachers. The wide range of teaching experience, with a notable proportion having 5–11 years of experience, suggests a mix of new and more seasoned educators. Understanding how varying experience levels impact teaching effectiveness and program development could be valuable. The predominance of Caucasian teachers and the underrepresentation of other racial/ethnic groups highlight a need for increased diversity within SBAE programs. Efforts to recruit and support a more diverse teaching staff could enhance inclusivity and broaden perspectives in agricultural education.

Demographic Insights and Implications

The demographic composition of the average respondent, female and Caucasian, in this study on SBAE teachers in Texas, has several implications that can influence various aspects of the educational environment, professional development, and research interpretations. A female and White respondent group may not fully represent the diverse range of experiences and challenges faced by SBAE teachers of other genders, races, or ethnic backgrounds. This could limit the generalizability of the study's findings to different demographic groups (White, 2024) within the profession. The underrepresentation of male teachers and teachers from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds might skew the understanding of conflict management styles and professional dynamics in SBAE settings, potentially missing culturally or gender-specific approaches to conflict resolution and professional interaction.

The near-even split between male and female teachers suggests a gender-balanced environment. However, it may be helpful to explore whether gender influences roles, responsibilities, or career advancement within SBAE programs. Cultural and gender norms can influence conflict management styles. For example, research suggests that women often prefer collaborative and accommodating approaches to conflict resolution. Understanding these tendencies can help tailor professional development programs sensitive to these preferences while challenging stereotypical norms, which is beneficial. Demographic makeup can influence workplace dynamics, potentially impacting how the staff develops, implements, and perceives policies. For instance, diversity in leadership positions and teaching roles can affect decision-making processes (Maringe et al., 2007) and the inclusivity of different perspectives.

The rarity of familial connections among teaching staff (90.2% with no relation) indicates that most teachers work in non-familial environments. This could influence team dynamics and

collaboration strategies within departments. Working in departments with no familial ties among teaching partners and the commonality of larger group sizes presents unique dynamics and challenges that can significantly influence workplace harmony and conflict management. Lack of familial relations can lead to more defined professional boundaries, which might reduce personal conflicts and enhance professionalism. However, it might also limit the depth of personal relationships, potentially affecting team cohesion.

Decisions may be more objective and less influenced by personal biases or relationships, which could enhance fairness and transparency in departmental operations. Larger departments and a lack of familial relationships might necessitate more formal communication structures. While this can help maintain clear and organized communication, it might also impede spontaneous or informal knowledge sharing that enhances team bonding. In larger groups, the risk of miscommunication or information dilution increases. Effective conflict management in this context requires robust communication systems and regular check-ins to ensure alignment and address misunderstandings promptly. Conflicts in settings without familial ties are less likely to be personal, which could simplify resolution processes. However, it may also mean that emotional support or understanding among colleagues could be less accessible, affecting resolving conflicts with a personal or emotional component.

The prevalence of small teaching departments (11.4% in single-teacher departments and 36.6% in departments of four or more) suggests varying levels of support and resource availability. Smaller departments might face unique challenges in terms of workload and collaboration. Larger departments often mean a greater diversity of conflict management styles. This diversity can be a strength if managed well, allowing for various approaches and solutions

to problems. However, adept management must also harmonize these styles to avoid fragmentation or ongoing disputes. Teams without familial ties may need more structured team-building activities to develop strong interpersonal relationships that support effective collaboration and conflict resolution. In larger departments, individuals find it more challenging to feel connected to the team, impacting motivation and engagement.

Doss (2023) found that SBAE teacher relationships, program activities, classroom activities, and professional activities all positively influenced SBAE teachers' ability to do their job. Leadership fosters a sense of belonging (Nieminen, 2023) and ensures all team members feel valued and understood. Leaders in such environments may need to adapt their management styles to effectively address the needs of a diverse team (Kakabadse & Bank, 2004). This might include emphasizing inclusive leadership practices, mediation skills, and proactive conflict management. Effective management should focus on inclusivity, ensuring all team members have equal opportunities to contribute and advance regardless of their background or relationship status (Salas et al., 2013). Resources must be allocated to training programs that enhance conflict management capabilities across diverse team structures, promoting a healthy and productive work environment. Policies should be designed to accommodate the dynamics of more extensive, non-familial teams, including guidelines on conflict resolution, communication norms, and collaboration techniques. Understanding and addressing these factors can help design better organizational structures, improve team dynamics, and implement more effective conflict management strategies in educational and other professional settings.

Most teachers collaborating with a partner of the opposite gender (76.4%) could influence teaching dynamics and collaboration. It may be worth exploring how these gender-

diverse partnerships affect program management and outcomes. The high rate of traditional certification (74.0%) compared to alternative certifications implies a preference or requirement for conventional pathways. This could impact recruitment and professional development strategies. The fact that more than half of teachers work in school systems with only one high school (54.5%) could affect their ability to collaborate and share resources with other SBAE programs. Understanding how this impacts their teaching and program management could be insightful. The distribution of program sizes and the variation in positions within SBAE programs (with 34.1% having no designated head) suggest various levels of leadership and organizational structures. This could impact how programs are run and how responsibilities are distributed among staff.

Connection to Research Objective 2

Research Objective 2 sought to determine if SBAE teachers were taught conflict management and resolution skills and concepts. The study discovered that 68% of the respondents had undergone conflict management training facilitated by professional organizations, which was more prevalent than training received during university education or from school districts.

Connection to the Profession

An apparent reality in modern organizations is that teams of interdependent specialized members accomplish increasingly complex tasks (DeChurch et al., 2013), such as managing

program budgets, student leadership development, and combined decision-making (DeChurch et al., 2006). While this research study aligned closely with research priority three of the American Association of Agricultural Education's research goals, specifically, question two discusses what methods, models, and practices are effective in recruiting agricultural leadership, education, and communication practitioners (teachers, extension agents, etc.) and supporting their success at all stages of their careers (Alston et al., 2019), I wanted to elaborate on these findings to our professional association. This study addressed characteristics beyond the traditional role of the teacher, including employer characteristics, FFA program and advisor duties, and personal characteristics of the agricultural educator (Clemons & Lindner, 2019), and sought to identify non-traditional variables accounting for longevity and success, such as attribution and its connection to conflict. Our findings gave us some insight into where SBAE teachers receive their ongoing leadership training and development, and it indicated that SBAE teachers receive most of their training from their teacher association.

Little is known about how organizational conditions impact turnover within SBAE programs. Turnover can stem from the school system and the teacher organization (Ingersoll, 2001). Despite extensive prescriptive advice from both applied and academic communities on managing team differences, the development of practical, evidence-based strategies (DeChurch et al., 2013) has been hindered by a focus on conflict states (i.e., what teams disagree about) rather than conflict processes (i.e., how teams interact to address these differences) (DeChurch et al., 2006). Conflict within formal organizations often arises from incompatible goals and values

within substructures. When organizational resources, including decision-making power, are limited and shared (DeYoung, 1981), simultaneously satisfying all interests can be challenging (Beck & Betz, 1975, p. 61). To improve interworking relationships among SBAE teachers, implementing effective conflict negotiations and power-sharing strategies is essential. Negotiation is critical to addressing differences among individuals.

We must evaluate whether the organizational structure effectively supports conflict management for SBAE teachers. Team conflict involves emergent states and behavioral processes (Folgers et al., 2021), each influencing team performance and outcomes. While both are significant predictors of team outcomes, teams' processes to manage their differences explain more variance in outcomes (Jordan & Troth, 2021) than their emerging perceptions of those differences (DeChurch et al., 2006).

Structural differentiation and the centralization of authority are pivotal factors influencing conflict within organizations. The extent of structural differentiation is indicated by administratively distinct but functionally interdependent subunits (Corwin, 1969, p. 507), such as SBAE teacher committees (Corwin, 1969). Centralization creates various positions with diverse interests and establishes unequal decision-making power, fostering conditions conducive to conflict (Beck & Betz, 1975). The existing organizational framework may encourage the development of intrinsic factors, such as problem-solving, conflict resolution, and effective communication (Stanton, 2011), which are essential for the functioning of multi-teacher departments (Thompson, 1961, p. 520).

Centralization often results in significant power imbalances, where those in higher positions have greater control over decisions, resources, and policies, while lower-level

employees experience reduced autonomy and input. This imbalance can generate resentment and dissatisfaction among marginalized people in decision-making processes. Additionally, centralization may lead to longer communication chains, increasing the risk of miscommunication, misunderstandings, and delays. The lack of direct communication can also breed mistrust and suspicion at organizational levels. While centralization might initially seem effective for maintaining hierarchical order, it can limit participation in decision-making and information sharing, stifling innovation and adaptability. This can frustrate SBAE teachers who find their initiatives continually blocked or ignored, potentially leading to conflict as a form of protest or disengagement.

The impact of centralization on conflict is also influenced by leadership style. Leaders who practice inclusive and participatory decision-making can alleviate some conflicts associated with centralization. The culture and dynamics of the professional teacher association or school system are crucial in determining how centralization affects conflict. Centralization may be more accepted in workgroups that value hierarchy and top-down control with less overt conflict. Conversely, in groups that prioritize egalitarianism and democratic participation, centralization can provoke significant resistance and conflict. SBAE teachers often face tensions between the autonomy required to develop their leadership styles and an unwritten expectation to exemplify ideal leadership. This discrepancy between expectations and actual practice can lead to conflicts (Beck & Betz, 1975, p. 60). Kreisberg's definition of conflict as a relationship between parties with incompatible goals (as cited by Beck & Betz, 1975) may not fully capture the complexities of our profession. It is essential to align behavior with a nuanced understanding of conflict to ensure coherence in group dynamics while examining the existing leadership framework (Hakvoort et al., 2022).

Leaders must have a deep understanding of conflict management and possess high conflict competence (Rahim, 2023) to be practical in their schools. Msila's (2012) research indicates that conflict often leads to staffroom cliques, suspicion, communication breakdowns, and low teacher morale. Participants in the study also noted that conflict negatively impacts teaching and learning, and none of their teacher training adequately prepared them for conflict management. Despite this, conflict remains a daily challenge in their schools. Effective conflict managers must first determine and define the nature of the conflict before seeking resolution (Msila, 2012, p. 26).

To improve the management of SBAE teachers, school systems and teacher associations need to work more cohesively. Administrators who instigate conflict among SBAE teachers can be a significant source of discord. Literature highlights that high employee turnover often results from and contributes to organizational ineffectiveness and low performance (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 505). A thorough turnover analysis should examine the organizational conditions and character affecting SBAE teachers. This analysis should involve state personnel, local school systems, and teacher associations to identify best practices for improving working conditions and enhancing interaction dynamics among SBAE teachers.

Efficacy and Accessibility of Conflict Management Training

Integrating comprehensive conflict management training into university curricula and school district professional development programs can significantly enhance educational environments and administrative effectiveness. Educators with conflict management skills are better prepared to address disputes and tensions, creating a more conducive learning and working atmosphere. Such training ensures that educational programs remain relevant and responsive to

the evolving demands of academic settings (García-Pérez et al., 2021), emphasizing the importance of soft skills.

Effective conflict management fosters a positive school culture (Schipper et al., 2020), where issues are resolved constructively, reducing stress and improving relationships among staff and students. Educators trained in these skills can model effective conflict resolution for their students, promoting a learning environment that values dialogue and understanding over confrontation. This supportive classroom environment can lead to improved academic performance and student well-being. Additionally, conflict management training enhances teamwork among educators by providing tools to navigate interpersonal differences, leading to more effective collaboration and shared responsibilities. A well-managed conflict environment can improve job satisfaction and reduce educator turnover rates. More precise guidelines and procedures for managing conflicts can be developed, ensuring a consistent approach across the institution.

Effective conflict management may also decrease the need for disciplinary actions and the resources allocated to managing behavioral problems, allowing schools to focus more on proactive educational initiatives. Institutions known for effective conflict management are likely to build stronger relationships with their local communities, demonstrating a commitment to a safe and inclusive environment. Schools and universities prioritizing conflict management and a harmonious educational climate can attract prospective students and staff who value supportive and progressive environments. Ultimately, integrating conflict management training into academic curricula and professional development programs equips educators to manage disputes

more effectively and fosters a broader culture of respect and cooperation, transforming educational institutions into models of constructive interaction.

Connection to Research Objective 3

Research Objective 3 explores the relationship between SBAE teachers' conflict management modes and their interactions within their teaching environments. The most frequently utilized conflict management modes were compromise (30.1%), problem-solving (28.5%), accommodation (21.1%), avoidance (19.5%), and competition (0.8%). These modes were examined in terms of teachers' attitudes toward their job roles and community interactions.

The study sought to identify how SBAE teachers manage conflicts by assigning TKI conflict management modes to their interpretations of professional experiences within their teacher associations and various organizations. It was found that SBAE teachers used avoidance and compromise when dealing with professional organizational experiences. Additionally, the frequent use of the competitive mode in interactions with teaching partners was noted, highlighting a significant relationship between this mode and potential causes of dysfunction in multi-teacher settings.

These findings suggest several implications: SBAE teachers may rarely practice distributive leadership, indicating an imbalance in power sharing and a need for more decentralization of authority. The study also assessed the impact of conflict management training on the relationships (Kilag et al., 2024) between SBAE teachers and their teaching partners. Analyses of constructs related to professional responsibilities, perspectives, operational

dynamics, and potential dysfunctions revealed that teachers who preferred avoidance and compromise modes experienced significant differences in their interactions with professional organizations. Conversely, those who favored competitive conflict management displayed considerable disparities in factors contributing to dysfunction within multi-teacher environments.

Utilization and Effectiveness of Conflict Management Modes

The prevalence of compromise, problem-solving, and accommodation as the most frequently used conflict management modes reflects a tendency towards cooperative strategies in workgroup settings. Each mode carries distinct advantages and disadvantages that influence team dynamics and effectiveness.

Compromise often leads to quicker conflict resolution as it involves mutual concessions, which can expedite negotiations. It is perceived as fair, enhancing mutual respect and cooperation. However, a compromise might not address the root causes of conflict (Weingart & Jehn, 2023), potentially resulting in recurring issues. It may also leave the parties somewhat satisfied, as each makes concessions, which can lead to a lack of total commitment to the agreed solution. Additionally, concentrating on splitting differences may limit the exploration of more innovative solutions that could satisfy all parties involved more effectively.

Problem-solving aims to address all parties' underlying needs and concerns (Rott et al., 2021), often resulting in more sustainable and creative outcomes. This approach can strengthen relationships through open communication and collaboration, building trust and understanding. By addressing the root causes of conflicts, problem-solving helps prevent similar issues from reoccurring. However, this mode can be time-consuming, requiring thorough analysis and

discussion, which may be challenging under tight deadlines or high-pressure environments. It also demands significant skills in communication, negotiation, and critical thinking.

Accommodating quickly reduces tension by meeting the other party's needs, preserving team harmony, and enhancing personal relationships. It is effective when the issue is more important to one party than the other, allowing for efficient prioritization. Nevertheless, overuse of accommodation can lead to exploitation, where more assertive members may take advantage of the accommodating ones. This approach can result in inequitable outcomes if the accommodating party's needs are consistently sidelined and may undermine the accommodator's authority or respect within the team, especially if perceived as a sign of weakness.

In workgroup settings, the effectiveness of these conflict management modes depends on the context, the nature of the conflict, and the personalities involved. Teams that adeptly blend these approaches, tailoring them to specific situations and needs, will achieve more positive outcomes regarding productivity and cohesion (Jordan & Troth, 2021).

Relationships and Conflict Management Styles

Reasons to Use the Avoider and Compromiser Mode. My findings highlighted that SBAE teachers use compromise (30.1%) and avoidance (19.5%) as conflict management styles. These preferences may be influenced by various personal, interpersonal, and organizational factors (Collins et al., 2024).

Avoidance is often employed to preserve harmony and prevent disruptions, especially if teachers perceive the conflict as potentially damaging to team relationships or believe it is not worth the disturbance. This mode may reflect personal discomfort with confrontation due to past

negative experiences, low self-confidence in conflict resolution, or a naturally non-confrontational personality. Teachers who choose avoidance might also do so if they believe the conflict cannot be resolved favorably or lack the skills to manage the dispute effectively, viewing avoidance as a way to prevent worsening the situation.

Conversely, compromise achieves a fair resolution where all parties make concessions, promoting a sense of equity among colleagues. It is particularly effective when power dynamics are balanced, ensuring that all voices are heard and preventing individuals from dominating the decision-making process. Teachers might compromise to build or maintain relationships with colleagues, demonstrating flexibility and cooperation, which is crucial in collaborative environments like education. Compromise can also be a safer choice than more assertive conflict styles that risk aggression or retaliation, significantly when conflict outcomes could affect professional standing or job security.

Both avoidance and compromise can significantly impact group dynamics. Avoidance may result in unresolved issues lingering beneath the surface, potentially leading to more destructive outbursts later. However, it can temporarily maintain group functionality if the conflict is separate. Compromise ensures progress and continuity but may only sometimes address the root causes of conflicts, leading to repeated tensions. To address these challenges, administrators should consider providing professional development focused on enhancing conflict management skills. This could include training in assertive communication, negotiation techniques, and effective conflict-resolution strategies. By deepening teachers' understanding of conflict dynamics, they can better select appropriate management styles for different situations, improving collaborative efforts and educational outcomes.

Reasons to use Competitor Mode. The data from our respondents indicated that SBAE teachers in Texas used the competitive mode of conflict management the least (0.8%) among all TKI conflict modes. This low usage of the competitive style can be attributed to various personal, situational, and organizational factors.

Personal characteristics play a role in competitive strategies. Teachers with high self-confidence might adopt a competitive approach, believing their ideas and methods are superior. They may view competition as a way to drive excellence and justify it as beneficial for the group's performance. Past experiences where competitive behaviors led to successful outcomes can reinforce the use of this approach.

Situational factors can also prompt the use of competition. In scenarios where critical outcomes are at stake—such as funding allocations, program direction, or leadership roles—teachers might feel compelled to prioritize their interests through competition. Limited resources, like time and funding, can create a competitive environment where teachers vie for their share. If previous collaborative or accommodating methods fail to resolve significant issues, competition may be seen as a more effective way to achieve goals (Oubrich et al., 2021).

Cultural and organizational influences contribute to the adoption of competitive behaviors. Teachers may be more inclined to compete in districts or teacher associations that value individual achievement over collaboration. Without sufficient training in collaborative skills or conflict resolution, teachers might default to competitive approaches, especially under stress or uncertainty. Additionally, competitive behaviors modeled by school leadership or respected colleagues can influence teachers to adopt similar strategies if they associate such behaviors with professional advancement or recognition.

While competitive behavior can yield short-term successes or advance specific initiatives, it can also foster resentment, reduce trust, and damage long-term team cohesion. Persistent use of competition can erode a collaborative culture, undermining a supportive educational environment. Educational leaders should consider the broader implications of competitive behaviors on team dynamics and school atmosphere. Balancing assertiveness with cooperation can help ensure that competitiveness enhances rather than detracts from collaborative efforts and the educational mission.

Would SBAE teachers admit that they are Competitive?

In agricultural teaching, a discontinuity often exists between the imposed, competitive state and the more natural, non-competitive state. This discontinuity can lead to a fluid transition between competitive and avoiding behaviors, depending on the SBAE teachers' perceptions of the situation. Several terms and practices are commonly associated with a competitive approach, where individuals or subgroups prioritize their personal goals and achievements over collaborative efforts and shared objectives. I created synonyms and practices that describe the competitive nature and experiences of SBAE teachers in multi-teacher departments and work groups.

Table 9

Synonyms for Competition that can be demonstrated by SBAE Teachers

Term	Definition
Power Struggles	Disputes where individuals vie for influence or control within the team
Cutthroat Behavior	Actions that involve undermining others to get ahead
Win-Lose Attitude	The mindset that one party's gain is another party's loss

Self-Interest	Prioritizing personal gain or success over team objectives
Dominance	Seeking to assert one's views or decisions over others'
Competition for Resources	Contending for limited resources like budget, recognition, or opportunities
One-Upmanship	The practice of trying to outdo others or demonstrate superiority

Envy is a harmful emotion in the workplace that can significantly affect colleague relationships (Menon & Thompson, 2010). In our study, we examined the experiences of SBAE teachers with their teaching partners, where envy often surfaced due to unresolved conflict and misattributions. Conflict occurs when there is a disparity between an individual's self-interest and the interests of others (Kilag et al., 2024). Although having power can benefit those who possess it, it can also have detrimental effects when influential individuals interact with others in a group context (Greer & Chu, 2019). This dynamic is worsened by social undermining—often called cutthroat behavior—which includes actions intended to hinder others from forming positive relationships, achieving success, and maintaining a good reputation (Hilal, 2021). Such competitive motives are often driven by personal outcomes that employees anticipate or receive, reflecting a self-interested decision-making model (Stroebe & Frey, 1982).

Wong et al. (2020) argue that ethical leadership is essential for promoting cooperative conflict management and reducing competitive approaches (Wong et al., 2020). This emphasizes the importance of organizations implementing training and selection processes to cultivate more ethical leaders. By prioritizing the reduction of competitive conflict management, leaders and employees can understand that imposing solutions and striving to "win" in conflicts undermines the effectiveness of ethical leadership, consequently weakening relationships among team members and fostering suspicion. Furthermore, Hakanen (2024) suggests that teamwork

characterized by autonomy and other empowering qualities can enhance engagement. Meaningful decision-making processes that involve interpersonal and social relations may influence the work environment, whether through informal climate-related interactions or structured, goal-oriented organization at the group level.

Competition for wages, competencies, resources, and promotions is a fundamental aspect of most modern organizations, as Sischka et al. (2021) emphasized. Management practices that reward relative rank can significantly intensify competition among employees. This competitive environment can lead to bullying, mainly when in-group members use their superior informal political positions to target and isolate out-group members (Ramsay et al., 2011). Role clarity is an indispensable job resource that supports effective work organization. Regarding interpersonal and social resources, friendliness and team empowerment are non-negotiable, while servant leadership and justice are indispensable organizational resources. It is imperative to address these interconnected factors - envy, competition, ethical leadership, and team dynamics - to foster a healthier, more collaborative workplace environment.

Table 10

Competitive Practices that SBAE Teachers may demonstrate

Activity	Definition
Secretive Work	Withholding information or resources from others to maintain an advantage
Sabotage	Deliberately undermining or obstructing others' efforts to ensure one's success.
Excessive Rivalry	Creating or fostering intense rivalries among team members
Manipulation	Using deceit or manipulation to gain personal advantages or outcomes

Aggressive Negotiation	Engaging in brutal bargaining tactics aimed at maximizing personal gain, often at the expense of others
Credit Hoarding	Taking sole credit for group achievements or projects rather than acknowledging team contributions
Overemphasis on Individual Achievement	Valuing personal accomplishments and recognition over collective success
Undermining	Criticizing or diminishing others' work or ideas to promote one's own
Exclusive Decision-Making	Making decisions unilaterally or within a small clique without involving or considering the broader team

In the study, participants were asked whether they felt involved in decision-making or excluded by their teaching partners. This inquiry was based on a thematic analysis conducted during the research exploration phase (Collins et al., 2024). Understanding these dynamics can help address challenges and promote a more collaborative and effective working environment. Lin and Huang (2010) emphasized that group size plays a crucial role in a team's structure and composition. Previous research indicates that larger group sizes can hinder information-sharing as they often allow members to disengage from contributing. This increased size complicates the assessment of each individual's contributions, leading to a lack of accountability (Lin & Huang, 2010). In contrast, smaller groups tend to foster a sense of individual importance, making members feel that their contributions are vital to the team's success (Lin & Huang, 2010).

Knowledge sabotage is a significant concern, motivated by personal satisfaction and a desire to retaliate against colleagues rather than seek revenge against the organization (Serenko, 2020). The perpetrators of knowledge sabotage and their targets tend to claim innocence: the saboteurs see their actions as necessary responses to inappropriate behavior from others (Serenko, 2020), while the targets blame the saboteurs for their misconduct. This highly counterproductive behavior concerning knowledge is influenced by social desirability bias

(Serenko, 2020); for instance, saboteurs may minimize the frequency or seriousness of their actions (Bogdanović, 2022), often admitting only to minor offenses while concealing more damaging behaviors.

It is essential to consider the impact of competition on teamwork engagement. Team size, gender, and seniority can influence collaboration, rivalry, and engagement. Using structural composition as a criterion for selecting teams for future research is crucial. The organizational structure significantly influences how tasks are performed, decisions are made, and, consequently, team cooperation and commitment. Additionally, this structure affects the relationship with the surrounding environment, which can intensify rivalry. Rivalry may be influenced by organizational initiatives and policies and the individual characteristics of employees (Riyanto et al., 2021). Combining these individual traits with the organizational context can exacerbate competition and elevate its intensity (Moczulska et al., 2024). Studies on post-negotiation behavior suggest that aggressive negotiation tactics can lead to relationship conflicts (Boothby et al., 2023) and diminish motivation to fulfill obligations to counterparts after reaching agreements (Hart & Schweitzer, 2020). Duffy et al. (2006) emphasized that social undermining is a low-intensity behavior that can harm work attitudes (Ahmad et al., 2022). Such undermining behaviors can result in immediate negative consequences, including increased rumination, emotional exhaustion, and partner social undermining (Rodríguez-Muñoz et al., 2022). Furthermore, Anderson et al. (2020) found that disagreeableness did not predict the attainment of power. Individuals who are selfish, deceitful, and aggressive are no more likely to gain power than those who are generous, trustworthy, and kind (Rodríguez-Muñoz et al., 2022). While disagreeable individuals may appear intimidating and thus gain some control, their poor interpersonal relationships often negate potential advantages (Rodríguez-Muñoz et al., 2022).

Impact on Professional Relationships and Environment

Conflict management styles significantly influence dynamics within multi-teacher work groups, with each style impacting team interactions in diverse ways. The competitive style, which emphasizes pursuing one's goals at the expense of others (Latham, 2023), can contribute to dysfunction in several areas. Characterized by assertiveness and low cooperativeness, the competitive style often focuses on winning rather than collaboration, leading to potential conflict if not managed properly.

Although our findings did not show a significant relationship between the competitive mode and specific constructs, exploratory evidence suggests that competitiveness impacts various aspects of the 3-ring model (Collins et al., 2024). The competitive style can elevate tension among team members, as individuals focused on personal goals may view others as rivals, making cooperation difficult. This rivalry can result in fragmented efforts and diminished synergy as individuals prioritize outperforming their colleagues over working collaboratively. Persistent competitiveness can breed frustration and resentment, affecting overall morale. When some team members feel consistently undermined or disregarded, trust within the group can erode. Trust is crucial for effective teamwork, and a competitive approach may undermine it by creating a fear of being undermined or unable to rely on colleagues. Additionally, competitive individuals might need more time to maintain a perceived advantage, leading to unequal contributions and reduced collective success.

A win/lose mindset often accompanies competitive behavior, escalating conflicts rather than resolving them. This approach can lead to prolonged disputes and a toxic work environment, where teachers work in isolation to protect their ideas, creating silos that hinder overall effectiveness. To mitigate these adverse effects, fostering a more collaborative environment is essential. Encouraging cooperative styles, focusing on mutual goals, and collective success can enhance team productivity and morale. Implementing team-building activities, promoting open communication, and setting clear collective goals can shift the focus from competition to collaboration, creating a more positive and effective work environment (Li, 2024).

Connection to Attribution Theory

The demographic makeup of SBAE environments, predominantly female and Caucasian, may influence attributions related to workplace behaviors and expectations. Teachers might attribute specific conflicts or harmonious interactions to these demographic similarities or differences, impacting their approaches to conflict resolution and departmental interactions.

Teachers with professional conflict resolution training may attribute their abilities to the skills acquired during such training, perceiving themselves as more adept at managing disputes. In contrast, those who need formal training might attribute their challenges in conflict resolution to the lack of such education or perceived inadequacies in their preparation. The choice of conflict management modes, such as compromise or problem-solving, can reflect teachers' attributions of effectiveness based on their past experiences and beliefs about what strategies work best.

Teachers' perceptions of conflict management effectiveness are influenced by their adopted modes. For example, those who use avoidance might attribute fewer direct conflicts to

their approach but may still perceive underlying tensions as unresolved. In cases where competitive styles lead to dysfunction, individuals might attribute this dysfunction to personality clashes or a lack of cooperation, potentially affecting team morale and perceived effectiveness in collaboration. These attributions can significantly shape how conflicts are managed and resolved within SBAE departments.

Connection to Efficacy

Attributions of efficacy, or beliefs about one's ability to manage situations effectively, can significantly impact how individuals use the five conflict modes (Thomas, 2008) identified by the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI). Here is how efficacy beliefs might affect each mode. In competing, Individuals who believe they are highly effective at resolving conflicts may lean more toward the competing mode. They might feel confident in their ability to assert (Ginn, 2021) their position and win the conflict. Those needing more confidence may still use the competing mode but do so defensively or aggressively. They may overcompensate for their perceived ineffectiveness by being more confrontational.

The accommodating mode individuals with high efficacy may use the accommodating mode strategically, believing that they can balance their needs with others and that accommodating will eventually lead to positive outcomes. Those with low efficacy may default to accommodating more often, believing they cannot effectively assert their needs or resolve conflicts. This can lead to them sacrificing their own needs too readily. In the avoiding mode, SBAE teachers with high efficacy might avoid conflicts if they believe addressing them could be more disruptive than beneficial or if they think they can manage the situation better later. Those with low efficacy might avoid conflicts out of fear of being unable to manage them successfully. They may feel they need to gain the skills to address the issues effectively. In collaborative

settings, high-efficacy individuals might compromise when they believe they can successfully find a middle ground that meets all parties' essential needs. Conversely, those with low efficacy may resort to compromising to avoid more complex conflict resolution strategies. They might believe compromising is the safest approach when they doubt their ability to resolve the conflict entirely. By addressing efficacy beliefs and improving confidence in conflict management, individuals and teams can become more adept at using the most appropriate conflict-handling strategies for different situations.

Connection to Attribution Styles

To navigate interactions effectively with other SBAE teachers, we must recognize our attribution styles and their impact on emotions and outcomes. Attribution theory can help resolve conflicts by increasing awareness of our own and others' attributions. SBAE teachers can request or provide feedback, present evidence, and offer alternative viewpoints to help colleagues correct behavior. For instance, if agriculture education teachers perceive inequity in workload, resources, or recognition, they may attribute these disparities to intentional favoritism or bias by school administrators. Teachers bearing most of the workload may be misattributed as over-achievers or unwilling to delegate responsibilities. Suppose one teacher is assigned more challenging classes or fewer resources. In that case, they might believe this is due to personal bias rather than logistical constraints, leading to feelings of unfairness and conflict.

Utilizing attribution theory within SBAE teacher work groups can reduce friction, improve communication, and increase collaboration. Misattributions can create feelings of distrust in multi-teacher departments. Simons and Peterson (2000) state that distrust can lead to ambiguous conflict behaviors interpreted as sinister (Semmer, 2020) and conveying distrust through conduct, increasing task conflict. Trust among SBAE teachers encourages accepting

disagreements at face value and reduces the likelihood of misattributing conflict behaviors. Mishra (1996) found that task conflict leads to relationship conflict, primarily due to misattributions, highlighting the moderating role of interpersonal relationships. Positive interpersonal relationships facilitate conflict resolution, as individuals are more likely to engage in constructive dialogue (Collins et al., 2024) and find mutually beneficial solutions. Good relationships can buffer negative emotions, while strained relationships can amplify them.

SBAE teachers make professional and personal decisions based on experience, education, family, and career needs (Solomonson et al., 2021), making it essential to understand the rationale behind these decisions for teacher retention. Due to the formation of intrinsic attributions, SBAE teachers need tools to address hurt feelings from poorly managed conflict and abnormal language, which can set up an emotional defense that leads to causal attributions. Personal animosity often underlies attributions, leading to task and relationship conflicts. Relationship conflict can trigger task conflict, such as sabotage, where one teacher makes tasks more difficult for a partner by falsely manufacturing task conflict. Identifying the conflict source—task or relationship—is crucial to isolating the cause and creating a management plan to increase productivity. Attribution theory aids in identifying and challenging maladaptive attributions, such as blaming oneself excessively for failures, which can contribute to depression and low self-esteem (Kelly & Michela, 1980).

SBAE conflict should be assessed at various stages to prevent and mediate conflict. Emerging disputes can be managed quickly with the proper identification of the issues and by utilizing a professional conflict management plan. Conversely, a more calcified conflict can do irreversible damage if not correctly identified and managed. Theoretically, scholars argue that minor distractions and disturbances are conflicts because the actions of one person (Hakavort et

al., 2017) will prevent, block, or interfere with the possibilities of another teacher to reach their goals. As these conflicts are in an emerging stage, we refer to them as emerging conflicts (Hakvoort et al., 2020).

Individual, professional, and firsthand experiences and the perception of SBAE teacher behaviors profoundly influence teacher retention. What we may have previously categorized as perceptions could be attributions we have yet to recognize or understand. Acknowledging that others' behaviors can be influenced by external, uncontrollable factors can foster empathy and reduce unnecessary blame or conflict (Kelly & Michela, 1980). School systems and the association can effectively mitigate these conflicts and cultivate a more harmonious and productive workgroup by promoting clear communication, equitable practices, and a supportive environment.

Overall, attribution theory deeply enriches the interpretation of how SBAE teachers manage conflict by highlighting the underlying beliefs that influence their choice of strategies and their interactions with peers. Understanding these attributions can help design interventions that address the behaviors and beliefs that drive these behaviors, leading to more effective conflict management strategies (Ford et al., 2020) in educational settings.

Strategies to Manage Conflict

Effective conflict management within multi-teacher groups requires a structured approach incorporating several key strategies. Communication techniques such as active listening, clarification, and summarizing ensure that all parties feel heard and understood (Furlong, 2020). Conflict resolution methods should include negotiation, mediation,

collaboration, compromise, and accommodation, each contributing to a balanced and constructive resolution process.

To achieve effective outcomes, it is crucial to establish clear conflict management procedures, provide comprehensive training and development, and set ground rules that foster psychological safety. Leaders have a pivotal role in this process by modeling appropriate behavior, facilitating open discussions, and ensuring that conflicts are addressed promptly and fairly. Encouraging teachers to take responsibility for managing their conflicts while providing them with the necessary tools and support can enhance their ability to manage disputes constructively (Furlong, 2020). By tackling conflicts early and effectively, schools can minimize negative impacts and leverage conflict as a catalyst for innovation, collaboration, and growth.

Recommendations for Future Research

Results from this study will be utilized to develop lessons and courses focused on conflict management, resolution, and adaptive leadership aimed at enhancing the organizational psychology skills of SBAE teachers. Understanding the gaps in SBAE teacher professionalism is crucial, and gaps need to be filled (Cheng, 1996). These gaps can manifest as power imbalances, communication barriers, resistance to change, leadership styles, and organizational dynamics. One notable research gap is the identification of emerging conflicts as they happen and how to mediate them. Emerging conflicts are challenges to the short-term or long-term teaching plans of SBAE teachers, often triggered by communication shortcomings and conflicts of interest (Hakvoort, 2018).

Areas for further research include longitudinal studies to track changes in conflict management training and its effects or comparative studies across different states or educational settings to enhance understanding of cultural or regional differences in conflict management.

There is a clear need for further research that includes a more diverse array of participants to explore whether the findings hold across different demographic groups or if different strategies and challenges emerge in more varied samples. Further research could investigate how attributions change over time with sustained conflict management training or vary across distinct cultural or educational contexts. This could help us understand how attributions to conflict styles or training efficacy evolve and influence behavior in academic settings.

To help SBAE teachers self-identify and resolve conflicts, we can develop a comprehensive training module that includes the following components: self-assessment tools, conflict resolution strategies, role-playing scenarios, and emotional intelligence training. In this study, I utilized a questionnaire derived from the experiences of SBAE teachers. For instructional and practical purposes, alongside my instrument, teacher educators, teacher associations, and school systems can utilize the Work Attributional Style Questionnaire for diagnostic purposes (Ashforth & Fugate, 2006). This instrument will allow our profession to isolate specific events that trigger attribution bias and errors that may lead to group conflict. The TKI can be used to assess SBAE teacher working groups through an experiential process that measures the Transition from TKI Assessments to Effective Behavior. An assessment of the organizations should take place to determine if we have the professional competencies to facilitate workshops and courses about conflict management. The personality of the head of the pedagogical team and the level of their competence determine the effectiveness of prevention and resolution of conflict situations (Frolova, 2019).

Reconciliation after conflict involves restoring trust and collaboration among SBAE teachers after a conflict. Frovola (2019) summarized Minchin's (2009) research, which detailed that overcoming the negative consequences of conflict should focus on cooperative technologies,

collaborative educational environment design, and mechanisms for introducing conflict management methods at various organizational levels. Research should be done to assess these key steps: open communication, apology and forgiveness, collaborative problem-solving, reflection, and follow-up. According to Jhangiani and Terry (2022), focusing on understanding the causes of events or feelings is more productive than assigning blame when attributing them. This approach promotes a more objective and constructive perspective, enabling individuals to address the underlying issues without becoming entangled in personal grievances. By adopting this mindset, SBAE teachers can approach conflicts with a focus on resolution and improvement rather than fault-finding, leading to a more harmonious and effective working environment.

One potential cause of teacher migration is the lack of effective conflict management and resolution and its underlying factors. Ingersoll (2001) observed that teacher migration represents a form of turnover that does not decrease the overall supply of teachers, as new hires typically offset departures. From a macro or systemic viewpoint, this may suggest that teacher migration does not contribute to staffing challenges. However, at the organizational level, the data indicate that teacher migration can impact staffing stability. While moving to a new school may reinvigorate an SBAE teacher's commitment to the organization's mission (Rada, 2023), it is essential to consider that the migrating teacher might be displaying a "fight or flight" response due to unresolved conflicts with other SBAE teachers.

Conclusion

Enhancing the quality and effectiveness of SBAE teachers involves more factors than this study revealed. Future research should investigate the effectiveness factors of future SBAE teachers based on their high school experiences, ethnicity, and race (Eck et al., 2021). To effectively address conflicts among SBAE teachers, it is crucial to identify the specific causes

(Jiménez-Herrera et al., 2020), understand the emotions involved, and determine the factors or individuals perceived as responsible for the conflict. Attribution theory helps us understand how individuals assign responsibility for events and outcomes. When disputes arise, it is common for individuals to attribute blame to others, external circumstances, or even themselves. This can exacerbate tensions and hinder resolution efforts.

As an organized profession, we should aim to assign causality to understand why agriculture educators experience conflict and why retention rates fluctuate, leaving larger states like Texas with over 100 vacancies annually. Pre-service programs need to produce more SBAE teachers to fill these positions. Teacher recruitment programs alone will not solve the staffing problems of schools if they do not address the organizational sources of low retention (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 501). In examining SBAE teacher attrition, it is essential to consider the impact of unresolved conflict and the benefits of effectively managing conflict to enhance the collaboration among SBAE teachers, which can influence student outcomes. Conflict can be constructive when its root causes are identified through assessment, leading to targeted training for SBAE teachers, which will help them manage their emotions and thoughts through the attributional process. Proximity fosters care, while distance breeds fear and negative emotions. The further we distance our profession from the essential work of conflict mediation, the longer it will take to achieve significant growth in recruitment, reduce attrition rates, and achieve a prominent level of psychological safety for all SBAE teachers. Perception is not always reality. By positioning ourselves closer to conflict, we can begin to make adaptive changes in both our personal and professional lives. Embracing the opportunity to mediate and understand conflict will lead to better outcomes for SBAE teachers (Richardson et al., 2014) and their students while fostering a more resilient and supportive working environment.

Chapter Summary:

My findings provided insight into SBAE teachers' conflict management modes and their application within the professional environment. SBAE teachers use avoider and compromiser modes in professional organization experiences, while the competitor mode is more common in their interworking, correlating with multi-teacher dysfunction. The study calls for integrating conflict management training into teacher preparation and professional development programs to support SBAE teachers better.

Using attribution theory can reduce friction, improve communication, and increase collaboration among SBAE teachers. Trust encourages accepting disagreements at face value and reduces the likelihood of misattributing conflict behaviors. SBAE teachers need tools to address hurt feelings from poorly managed conflict. Identifying the conflict source—task or relationship—is crucial to creating a management plan to increase productivity. Misattributions and misunderstandings can lead to perceived inequities, blame, and miscommunication, fueling conflict. Clear communication, equitable practices, and a supportive environment can mitigate these conflicts and promote a harmonious and productive workgroup.

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EXEMPT REVIEW APPLICATION

For assistance, contact: The Office of Research Compliance (ORC)
Phone: 334-844-5966 E-Mail: IRBAdmin@auburn.edu Web Address: http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs Submit completed form and supporting materials as one PDF through the IRB Submission Paae
Hand Mitten forms are not accepted. Where links are found hold down the control button (Ctd) then dick the link..

1. Prolect Identification Today's Date: February 26, 2024

Anticipated start date of the project: March 1, 2024 Anticipated duration of project: 1 Year

a. Project Title: An Assessment of the Interworklng Relationships of School Based Agriculture Educators in MultiTeacher Departments

b. Principal Investigator (PI): Andra Collins Degree(s): DoctorateRank/Titte: Graduate Student
DepartmenVSchool: Education
Role/responsibiiities in this project: Principal Investigator
Preferred Phone Number: (832)746-6280 AU Email: auc0001@auburn.edu

Faculty Advisor Principal Investigator (If applicable): Jason McKibben
Rank/Titie: Professor Department/School: Curriculum and Teaching
Role/responsibilities in this project: Oversee and assist with the study
Preferred Phone Number: (979) 587-1065 AU Email: jdm0184@auburn.edu

Department Head: Paul Fitchett Department/School: Curriculum and Teaching
Preferred Phone Number: (334) 844-3233 At-J Email: pgf0011@aubum.edu
Role/responsibilities in this project: Oversee and assist with the study

c. Project Key Personnel — Identify all key personnel who will be involved with the conduct of the research and describe their role in the project. Role may include design, recruitment, consent process, data collection, data analysis, and reporting. (To determine key personnel. see decision tree). Exempt determinations are made by individual institutions; reliance on other institutions for exempt determination is not feasible. Non-AU personnel conducting exempt research activities must obtain approval from the IRB at their home institution.

Key personnel are required to maintain human subjects training through CITI. Please provide documentation of completed CITI training, with course tide(s) and expiration date(s) shown. As a reminder, both IRB and RCR modules are required for all key study personnel.

Name: Andra Collins Degree(s): PhD

Rank/Title: Graduate Student Department/School: Curriculum and Teaching Role/responsibilities in this project: analyze and collect information from individuals over the age of 18

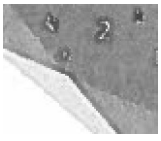
- AU affiliated? 8 Yes O No If no, name of home institution: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Plan for IRB approval for non-AU affiliated personnel? n/a
- Do you have any known competing financial interests, personal relationships, or other interests that could have influence or appear to have influence on the work conducted in this project? D Yes No - If yes, briefly describe the potential or real conflict of interest: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Completed required CITI training? Yes O No If NO, complete the appropriate CITI basic course and update the revised Exempt Application form.
- If YES, choose course(s) the researcher has completed: Human Sciences Basic Course 1/27/2027

Human Sciences Basic Course Expration Date

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from 03/19/2024 to

Protocol # 24-769 EX 2403

Name: Christopher Clemmons Degree(s): Cbck ot tap here to enter text.



RanWTitte: Assistant Professor Department/School: Agricultural Education Role/responsibiiities in this project: Oversee

- AU affiliated? @ Yes O No If no, name of home institution: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Plan for IRB approval for non-AU affiliated personnel? n/a

- Do you have any knom competing financial interests, personal relationships, or other interests that could have influence or appear to have influence on the work conducted in this project? O Yes @ No

- If yes, briefly describe the potential or real conflict of interest: Click or tap here to enter text.

- Completed required CITI training? Yes O No If NO, complete the appropriate CITI b?Sic course and update the revised EXEMPT application form.

- If YES, choose course(s) the researcher has completed: Choose a course Expiration Date Choose a course Expiration Date

Name: Jason McKibben Degree(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

RanklTitle: Assistant Professor Department/SchooI: Agricultural Education

Role/responsibilities in this project: Oversee

- AU affiliated? Yes O No If no, name of home institution: Click or tap here to enter text.

- Plan for IRB approval for non-AU affiliated personnel? n/a

- Do you have any known competing financial interests, personal relationships, or other interests that could have influence or appear to have influence on the work conducted in this project? O Yes @ No - If yes, briefly describe the potential or real conflict of interest: Click or tap here to enter text.

- Completed required CITI training? E Yes O No If NO, complete the appropriate CITI basic course and update the revised EXEMPT application form.

- If YES, choose course(s) the researcher has completed: Choose a course Expiration Date Choose a course Expiration Date

d. Funding Source — Is this project funded by the investigator(s)? Yes @ No O ts this project funded by AU? Yes O No If YES, identify source Ctqck or tap here to enter text, Is this project funded by an external sponsor? Yes O No @ If YES, provide name of sponsor, type of sponsor (governmental, non-profit, corporate, other), and an identification number for the award.

Name: nla Type: n/a Grant #: n/a

e. List other AU IRB•approved research projects and/or IRB approvals from other institutions that are associated with this project. Describe the association between this project and the listed project(s):

n/a

2. Project Summary

a. Does the study TARGET any special populations? Answer YES or NO to all.

Minors (under 18 years of age; if minor participants, at least 2 adults must

be present during all research procedures that include the minors)	Yes O No ☒
Auburn University Students	Yes D No ☒
Pregnant women, fetuses, or any products of conception	Yes O No ☒
Prisoners or wards (unless incidental, not allowed for Exempt research)	Yes O No ☒
Temporarily or permanently impaired	Yes O No ☒

b. Does the research pose more than minimal risk to participants? Yes O No n

If YES, to question 2.b, then the research activity is NOT eligible for EXEMPT review. Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research is not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance ofroutine physical or psychological examinations or test. 42 CFR 46.102(i)

c. Does the study involve any of the following? If YES to any of the questions in item 2.c, then the research activity is NOT eligible for EXEMPT review.

Procedures subject to FDA regulations (drugs, devices, etc.)	Yes O No @
Use of school records of identifiable students or information from instructors about specific students.	
Protected health or medical information when there is a direct or indirect link which could identify the participant.	YesO No n
Collection of sensitive aspects of the participant's own behavior, such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior or alcohol use.	YesO No E
d. Does the study include deception? Requires limited review by the IRB*	YesO No @
	YesO No n

3. MARK the category or categories below that describe the proposed research. Note the IRB Reviewer will make the final determination of the eligible category or categories.

0 1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normat educational practices. The research is not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn or assessment of educators providing instruction. 104(d)(1)

@ 2. Research only includes interactions involving educational tests, surveys, interviews, public observation if at least ONE of the following criteria. (The research includes data collection only; may include visual or auditory recording;

may NOT include intervention and only includes interactions), Mark the applicable sub-category below (l, ii, or iii). 104(d)(2)

☒ (i) Recorded information cannot readily identify the participant (directly or indirectly/ linked);

OR

- surveys and interviews: no children;
- educational tests or observation of public behavior: can only include children when investigators do not participate in activities being observed.

D (Il) Any disclosures of responses outside would not reasonably place participant at risk; OR

O (IN) Information is recorded with identifiers or code linked to identifiers and IRB conducts limited review; no children. Requlres limited review by the IRB.*

0 3. Research involving Benign Behavioral Interventions through verbal, written responses including data entry or audiovisual recording from adult subjects who prospectively agree and ONE of the following criteria is met. (This research does not include children and does not include medical interventions. Research cannot have deception unless the participant prospectively agrees that they will be unaware of or misled regarding the nature and purpose of the research) Mark the applicable sub-category below (A, B, or C).

104(d)(3)(i)

O (A) Recorded information cannot readily identify the subject (directly or indirectly/ linked); OR

O (B) Any disclosure of responses outside of the research would not reasonably place subject at risk;

OR

☐(C) information is recorded with identifies and cannot have deception unless participants prospectively agree. Requires limited review by the IRB.•

0 4. Secondary research for which consent is not required: use of identifiable information or identifiable biospecimen that have been or will be collected for some other 'primary or 'initial' activity, if one of the following criteria is met.

Allows retrospective and prospective secondary use. Mark the applicable sub-category below (l, Il, iil, or IV). 104(d)(4)

O (i) Bio-specimens or information are publicly available;

O (il) Information recorded so subject cannot readily be identified, directly or indirectty/linked investigator does

not

contact subjects and will not re-identify the subjects; OR

O (iii) Collection and analysis involving investigators use of identifiable health information when us is regulated by HIPAA 'health care operations" or [e]research" or "public health activities and purposes" (does not include bio-specimens (only PHI and requires federat guidance on how to apply); OR

O (iv) Research information collected by or on behalf of federal govemment using government generated or collected information obtained for non-research activities.

0 5. Research and demonstration projects which are supported by a federal agency/department AND designed to study and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i)public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or service under those programs. (must be posted on a federal web site). 104.5(d)(5) (must be posted on a federal web site)

D 6. Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives and consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The research does not involve prisoners as participants. 104(d)(6)

*Limited IRB review — the IRB Chair or designated IRB reviewer reviews the protocol to ensure adequate provisions are in place to protect privacy and confidentiality.

'*Category 3 — Benign Behavioral Interventions (BBI) must be briefin duration, pajnless/harmless, not physically invasive, not likely to have a significant adverse lasting impact on participants, and it is unlikely participants will find the interventions offensive or embarrassing.

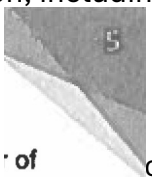
***Exemption categories 7 and 8 require broad consent. The AU IRB has determined the regulatory requirements for legally effective broad consent are not feasible within the current institutional infrastructure. EXEMPT categories 7 and 8 will not be implemented at this time.

4. Describe the proposed research including who does what, when, where, how, and for how long, etc.

a. Purpose

To assess if school-based agriculture educators have been taught conflict management in their teacher preparation programs, professional organizations and in their organizations (where they work).

b. Participant population, inctuding the number of participants and the rationale for



determining number of participants to recruit and enroll. Note if the study enrolls minor participants, describe the process to ensure more than 1 adult is present during all research procedures which include the minor.

A national research project that could include up to 8,000 responding high school agriculture teachers. Large states have an upward of 1500 SBAE. Smaller states have approximately 100 to 200 teachers.

c. Recruitment process. Address whether recruitment includes communicationslinteractions between study staff and potential participants either in person or online. Submit a copy of all recruitment materials.

Cover letter wili be emailed and posted for participants. Email letter Wii' be attached and wording included in the email.

d. Consent process including how information is presented to participants, etc.

Information will be presented digitally. Compliance/ cover letter will be presented with link to survey and imbedded in digital version of the survey.

e. Research procedures and methodology

Agriculture educators will meet the following criteria: 21 years of age or older, previously or currently teaching agriculture in the US. They will be administered a Qualtrics survey instrument to answer questions about their demographic characteristics,

professional development experiences, pre-service preparation and experiences working in a mufti-teacher department. Participant data will be collected and analyzed to determine what specific professional development and course adjustments need to be created.

f. Anticipated time per study exercise/activity and total time if participants complete all study activities. 15 minutes

g. Location of the research activities.
Participants will complete the online questionnaire at the location of their choice

h. Costs to and compensation for participants? If participants will be compensated describe the amount, type, and process to distribute.
There is no cost or compensation to participants for participation.

i, Non-AU locations, site, institutions. Submit a copy of agreements/lRB approvals.
NIA

j, Describe how results of this study will be used (presentation? publication? thesis? dissertation?) The results of this study wilt be used for the completion of my dissertation.

k. Additional relevant information.
N/A

5. Waivers

Check applicable waivers and describe how the project meets the criteria for the waiver.

Q Waiver of Consent (Including existing de-identified data)

@ Waiver of Documentation of Consent (Use of information Letter, rather than consent form requiring 

signat

O Waiver of Parental Permission (in Alabama, 18 years-olds may be considered adults for research purposes) https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/orc/irb/lRB 1 Exempt and Expedited/11-113 MR 1104 Hinton Renewal 2021-1.pdf

a. Provide the rationale for the waiver request.
This study provides minimat risk to participate and the survey is conducted online. By clicking the consent button, this can take the place of a signature.

6. Describe the process to select participants/data/specimens. If applicable, include gender, race, and ethnicity of the participant population.
Agriculture educators will meet the following criteria: must be 21 years of age or older, must have taught agriculture or currently teaching agriculture grades 9-12 in the US.

7. Risks and Benefits
7a. Risks - Describe why none of the research procedures would cause a participant either physical or psychological discomfon or be perceived as discomfort above and beyond what the person would experience in daily life (minimal risk).
Participants will experience no risk no more than what would be expected in everyday life.

7b. Benefits — Describe whether participants witl benefit directly from participating in the study. If yes, describe the benefit. And, describe generalizabte benefits resulting from the study.
The benefits of the study will allow educators an opportunity to assess their conflict management styles and share their experiences working in multi teacher programs.

8. Describe the provisions to maintain confidentiality of data, including cottection, transmission, and storage. Identify platforms used to collect and store study data. For EXEMPT research, the AU IRB recommends AU BOX or using an AU issued and encrypted device. Ifa data collection form will be used, submit a copy. There will be no identifiers in any form to track which respondents replies with their responses.

a. If applicable, submit a copy of the data management plan or data use agreement. n/a

9. Describe the provisions included in the research to protect the privacy Interests of participants (e.g., others will not overhear conversations with potential participants, individuals wilt not be publicly identified or embarrassed).

Individual results and data will be classified as a number to protect their identity and responses ensuring privacy.

10. Does this research include purchase(s) that involve technology hardware, software or online services? O YES NO 'f YES:

A. Provide the name of the product n/a and the manufacturer of the product n/a

B. Briefly describe use of the product in the proposed human subject's research. n/a

C. To ensure compliance with AU's Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Policy, contact AU CT Vendor Vetting team at vettinq@auburn.edu to leam the vendor registration process (prior to completing the purchase).

D. Include a copy of the documentation of the approval from AU Vetting wlth the revised submission.

11. Additional Information and/or attachments.

In the space below, provide any additional information you believe may help the IRB review of the proposed research. If attachments are included, list the attachments below. Attachments may include recruitment materials, consent documents, site permissions, IRB approvals from other institutions, data use agreements, data collection form, CITI training documentation, etc.

Survey Instrument Questions; Dissertation Cover Page and Chapter 3; Consent/cover letter/ CITI Training certificates; Email Survey Request Information

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Required Signatures (If a student PI is identified in item 1.4 the EXEMPT application must be re-signed and updated at ***every*** revision by the student PI and faculty advisor. The signature of the department head is required only on the initial submission of the EXEMPT application, regardless of Pl. Staff

ad signature on the original submission)

estigator:

sor (If applicable): Jason Mc Kibben

of Faculty Advisor Paul G. Fitchett Digitally signed by Paul G. Fitchett Date: 2024.03.01 08:42:16 -06'00'

and faculty PI submissions require the PI signature on all version, the department head signature on the

Signature of Principal Investigator: Date: 2/26/24

26/Feb/2024

Signature Date:

Signature of Dept. Head: Date:

Version Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

I like to resolve problems through negotiating.				
I'm willing to give up my own views if it will help the other person feel better.				
I always try to work together to solve problems.				
I aim to avert uncomfortable situations when possible.				

I do what I can to avoid tension.
I aim to convince others that I am right.

I stall in order to take some time to think about problems before approaching them.
I am willing to compromise when others do.

I know what I want and I go forit.
I aim to discuss problems openly so that they can be worked out right away

Sometimes conflicts are better left not discussed.
I try to get what I want.

I know what I want and I go for it.
I like to resolve problems through negotiating.

I aim to discuss problems openly so that they can be worked out rightaway.
I sometimes aim to make the other person feel better in order to end a conflict

At times I keep my views to myself in order to avoid conflict.
I prefer a "give and take" solution to problems where both sides make adjustments

If the other person can agree to disagree, I can do the same.
I make sure others know my views.

I share my thoughts and ask others to share theirs
I aim to convince others that I am right

I sometimes aim to make the other person feel better in order to end a conflict.
I aim to avert uncomfortable situations when possible.

I try make sure the other person does not get upset
I try to make sure others understand my reasoning and why I am right
I know what I want and I go for it.
I aim to avert uncomfortable situations when possible.
I allow others to voice their opinions without objecting if it makes them feel better
I prefer a "give and take" solution to problems where both sides make adjustments.
I try to work out problems with others right away.
I sometimes stall in order to take some time to think about problems before approaching them
I try to work out problems with others right away
I prefer to figure out what the fairest outcome would be from everyone's perspective
I try to pay attention to the other person's opinions when we are working out problems
I prefer to talk about problems directly
I take a problem-solving approach where all sides figure out what we can agree on and what we are willing to give up.
I tell others what I want.
I tend to worry about making everyone happy
Occasionally I hold back and let others figure out how to resolve the conflict.
I try to please others if it seems important to them
I aim to work together to settle our differences through a bargaining approach
I try to convince people to agree with me
I try to pay attention to the other person's opinions when we are working out problems.
I try to find a way for different sides to meet half way in a conflict

oes your school district have staff development over conflict management with teacher peers?

oes your school district have staff development pertaining to conflict management with administrators?

y administration has influence within me and my teaching partner/s

y administrator suports a positive relationsip between my teaching partner/s and I

I tend to worry about making everyone happy

At times I keep my views to myself in order to avoid conflict

I allow others to voice their opinions without objecting if it makes them feel better

I know what I want and I go forit

I always try to work together to solve problems

I try to find a way for different sides to meet half way in a conflict

Sometimes conflicts are better left not discussed

I try make sure the other person does not get upset

I tell others when something is wrong so that we can work together to make it right

Original Questions

Answer Options:

strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

Have you had any trainings where you analyzed your leadership style?

I have attended a workshop that addressed my interpersonal leadership style

Were you taught conflict resolution in your agriculture teacher certification program?

I have a teaching partner that participates in the planning of the program of activties

I have a teaching partner who's contract days are longer or shorter than mine

Have you experienced sabotage from your teaching partner?

Does your workload affect your conflict management skills?

Does working with your teaching partner make you uncomfortable?

Does working with your teaching partner cause stress?

Do you feel as if you and your teaching partner/s have cohesion?

Does your administrator emphasize cohesion within the agriculture team?

O

What are your coping strategies to deal with conflict in the workplace?

I regugarly take prescribed medications that are related to my mental health

Has conflict between you and your teaching partner affected your home life?

Has conflict between you and your teaching partner decreased your promotion capacity?

Has conflict between you and your teaching partner affected your home life?

Has conflict between you and your teaching partner affected your decision making?

Has conflict between you and your teaching partner affected your professional development?

3

My teaching partner is *envious* of the way students respond to me

My teaching partner is envious of the way parents respond to me

My teaching partner is envious of the way administrators respond to me

My teaching partner/s speaks to outside faculty about my actions

My teaching partner/s speaks to students about my actions

My teaching partner/s speaks to parents about my actions

My teaching partner/s speaks to administartors about my actions

My teaching partner undermines my authority with my principal

My teaching partner undermines my authority with my students

My teaching partner undermines my authority with my administrators

I feel that my professional opinion is valued in my teachers association?

I feel that my professional opinion is heard in my teachers association?

I feel that professional organization runs without bias?

Choose how true you belive the following statements are

Answer options:

very true	TRUE	neutral	sometimes true	not true

I have a teaching partner/s that exhibits a healthy work life balance

I have a teaching partner/s that takes accountability for their mistakes

I have a teaching partner/s whose age gap affects our relationship

I have a teaching partner/s who talks about politics in the work environment

I have a teaching partner/s who talks about religion in the work environment

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2 COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS*

- Scores on this Requirements Report (Part I) reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. The Transcript Repott (Part 2) lists more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- Name: Andra Collins (ID: 13015251)
- Institutlon Affiliation: Auburn University (ID: 964)
- Institution Email: auc0001@aubum.edu

- Curriculum Group: IRB # 2 Socia! and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher
- Course Learner Group: IRB # 2 Socia* and Behavioral Emphasis -AU Personnel
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course
- Description: Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Key Personnel (including AU Faculty, Staff and Students) and Faculty Advisors Involved primarily in SociaVBehavioral Research with human subjects.

- Record ID: 60829556
- Completion Date: 05-Mar-2024
- Expiration Date: 05-Mar-2027
- Minlmum Passing: 80
- Reported Score*: 88

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Belmont Report and Its Principles (ID: 1127)	29-Jan-2024	2/3 (67%)
The Federal Regufations - SBE (ID: 502) 29-Jan-2024 5/5 (100%) Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503) 29-Jan-2024 4/5 (80%)		
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	05-Mar-2024	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	05-Mar-2024	415 (80%)
Students in Research (ID: 1321)	05-Mar-2024	415 (80%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14928)	05-Mar-2024	5/5 (100%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation wlth the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

This document was generated on 05.Mar•2024. Verify at:

www.ßitiprogram.org/verify/?k8d17d326-fd46-4853-b92c-e54c715b4214-60029556

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
101 NE 3rd Avenue

Suite 320
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US

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support@citiprogram.orq
Phone: 888-529-5929
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COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

COMPLETION REPORT PART 2 OF 2 COURSEWORK

**Scores on this Transcript ReQQd (Part 2) reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. The Requirements Report (Part 1) lists the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- Name: Andra Collins (ID: 13015251)
- Institution Affiliation: Aubum University (ID: 964)
- Institution Email: auc0001@auburn.edu

- Curriculum Group: IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher
- Course Learner Group: IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course
- Description: Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Key Personnel (including AU Faculty. Staff and Students) and Faculty Advisors involved primarily in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects.

- Record ID: 60829556
- Current Score'** 88

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Belmont Report and Its Principles (ID: 1127)	29-Jan-2024	2/3 (67%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	29-Jan-2024	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	29-Jan-2024	4/5 (80%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	05-Mar-2024	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	05-Mar-2024	4/5 (80%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14928)	05-Mar-2024	5/5 (100%)
Students in Research (ID: 1321)	05-Mar-2024	4/5 (80%)

For this Report to be valld, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

This document was generated on 05-Mar-2024. Verify at:

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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US

Email: sun.QQÄ@AÆ.agr.am.QL.g
Phone: 888-529-5929
Web: https:/(www.pitiprogram.qrg

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 05-Mar-2024
Expiration Date 05-Mar-2027
Record ID 60829556

This is to certify that:

Andra Collins

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher
(Curriculum Group)
IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

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Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US
www.citiprogram.org

Generated on 05-Mar-2024. Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w166a751c-118b-44fe-a8a7-6fcdc9bf2945-60829556

Completion Date 04-Mar-2024
Expiration Date 04-Mar-2027
Record ID 61532976

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

ng CITI Program course:

onsible Conduct of Research
(Curriculum Group)
for ALL Faculty, Staff, Postdocs, and Students
(Course Learner Group)
1 - RCR
(Stage)

y:

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Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US
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Completion Date 27-Jan-2024
Expiration Date 27-Jan-2027
Record ID 60829558

This is to certify that:

Andra Collins

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

IRB Additional Modules
(Curriculum Group)
Cultural Competence in Research
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative
101 NE 3rd Avenue, Suite 320
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US

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CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 02-Aug-2023
Expiration Date 02-Aug-2026
Record ID 57204963

This is to certify that:

Jason McKibben

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher
(Curriculum Group)
IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US
www.citiprogram.org

Generated on 11-Jan-2024. Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wdec641d2-cbfc-4ed6-970f-49b6f294706d-57204963

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 02-Aug-2023
Expiration Date 02-Aug-2026
Record ID 57204962

This is to certify that:

Jason McKibben

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

IRB Additional Modules
(Curriculum Group)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

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Generated on 11-Jan-2024. Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w518422e4-486d-49ba-b95e-659d2855aca2-57204962

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 02-Aug-2023
Expiration Date 02-Aug-2026
Record ID 57373878

This is to certify that:

Jason McKibben

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Responsible Conduct of Research
(Curriculum Group)
AU Basic RCR Training for ALL Faculty, Staff, Postdocs, and Students
(Course Learner Group)
1 - RCR
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

101 NE 3rd Avenue, Suite 320
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US
www.citiprogram.org

Generated on 11-Jan-2024. Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?we56f10cb-b2d8-4b7d-9e44-a063f3f3d822-57373878

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 01-Sep-2023
Expiration Date 01-Sep-2027
Record ID 58020888

This is to certify that:

Jason McKibben

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

CITI Conflicts of Interest
(Curriculum Group)
Conflicts of Interest
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Stage 1
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

101 NE 3rd Avenue, Suite 320
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US
www.citiprogram.org

Generated on 11-Jan-2024. Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w7e5d2883-6d45-4036-864a-5dddcbbe9df1-58020888

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 20-May-2020
Expiration Date 19-May-2024
Record ID 36011300

This is to certify that:

Christopher Clemons

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelerate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).

CITI Conflicts of Interest (Curriculum Group)
Conflicts of Interest (Course Learner Group)
2 - Refresher (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w69571357-20ee-4918-9c86-2887727cd151-36011300

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 24-Aug-2022
Expiration Date 23-Aug-2025
Record ID 49526811

This is to certify that:

Christopher Clemons

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher
(Curriculum Group)
IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w5fc560b9-5426-4cb6-aba9-8b3f36450536-49526811

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 24-Aug-2022
Expiration Date 23-Aug-2025
Record ID 50321242

This is to certify that:

Christopher Clemons

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Responsible Conduct of Research
(Curriculum Group)
AU Basic RCR Training for ALL Faculty, Staff, Postdocs, and Students
(Course Learner Group)
1 - RCR
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 24-Aug-2022
Expiration Date 23-Aug-2025
Record ID 48743254

This is to certify that:

Christopher Clemons

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

IRB Additional Modules
(Curriculum Group)
Internet Research - SBE
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

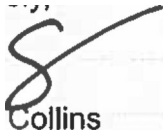
Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w9e89b237-a410-4640-9ec0-b961df99c924-48743254

The Auburn University
Institutional
Review Board has approved this
Document for use from
03/19/2024 to----------
Protocol # 24-769 EX 2403


Collins

CU RRI CU LUM A N D TEAC H I NG

AUBURN

UNIVERSITY March 4, 2024

My name is Andra Collins. I am a doctoral candidate in the College of Education at Auburn University. I would like to invite you to participate in my research study for the completion of my degree which investigates the relationships of school based agriculture educators in multi-teacher departments.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and your survey responses will be kept strictly confidential. The risks associated with this study are minimal and not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily fife.

Attached to this email is the consent form which is required of you to participate in the study. If you choose to participate, click the link and complete the Qualtrics survey that is attached to this email.

Every completion of this survey is important and the data will be used to improve the profession.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this research project.

Sincerely,

S040 Haley Center

Auburn, AL 36849-5212 Andra Collins

auc0001@auburn.edu

Telephone:(832) 746-6280

334-844-4434

fax.•

334-844-6789

www.auburn.edu

Version Date (date document create#

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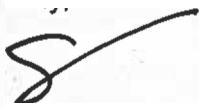
03/19/2024 to ----------
Protocol # 24-769 EX 2403

AUBURN
UNIVERSITY

E OF EDUCATION



5040 Haley Center

Auburn, AL 36849-5212

Telephone:

334-844-4434

Fax:

334-844-6789

www.auburn.edu

March 4, 2024

To whom it may concern,

The following study is for completion of my dissertation research for Auburn University's Doctoral Program. Participants in this study must meet the following criteria: must be 21 years or older, currently teaching secondary agricultural education, retired from secondary agricultural education or have taught secondary agricultural education. The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of school based agricultural educators that work with one or more teaching partners. Completion of this study will provide insight for teacher preparer programs, agriculture teacher associations and school districts. Your participation in this study is voluntary, greatly appreciated and needed. Please select the appropriate response to proceed with this survey. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Andra Collins aug0001@auburn.edu

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

for a Research Study entitled

Assessment of the Interworking Relationships of School Based Agriculture Educators in Multi-Teacher Departments

You are invited to participate in a research study that addresses how two or more agricultural teachers work together within their agriculture program. This study is being conducted by doctoral candidate Andra Collins, Associate Professor Jason McKibben, Associate Professor Chris Clemmons and Professor James Lindner in the Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. You are invited to participate because you are an agriscience education teacher and are 21 years or older.

What will be involved if you participate? Your participation is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked a series of questions using an interview guide and your responses will be recorded using a digital audio recorder. The purpose of the recording is to transcribe your comments for analysis. The recordings will be deleted after the transcription process is complete. Your total time commitment will be approximately one-hour.

Are there any risks or discomforts? The risks associated with participating in this study are minimal and no more than encountered in everyday life. To minimize these risks, data will be collected confidentially, you will not be asked to leave your name.

Are there any benefits to yourself or others? There are no direct benefits to your participation in this study. Benefits within the field of agriscience education will aid teacher preparation programs in teaching pre-service teachers conflict management and resolution skills and to aid practicing teachers in identifying conflict and developing conflict management skills.

Will you receive compensation for participating? You will not receive any compensation for your participation.

Are there any costs? Other than your time there are no costs associated with your participation. If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time by not responding or

not returning the distributed consent form. Your decision about whether to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the College of Education, Curriculum and Teaching, and the Agriscience Education program.

Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by maintaining your confidential responses. At the conclusion of each survey all identifiable information will be deleted Information collected through your participation may be used for presentations at academic conferences, journals, population publications.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Doctoral Candidate Andra Collins at auc0001@auburn.edu , Associate Professor Chris Clemons at cac0132@aubum.edu or 334.844.4411 , Assistant Professor Jason McKibben at jdm0184@auburn.edu or 334.844.4411, or Professor James Lindner at jr10039@aubum.edu or 334.844.4411.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION ABOVE, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE m THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN TO ANDRA COLLINS AT auc0001@auburn.edu.

YOU MAY PRINT A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO KEEP. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS To PARTICIPATE. Participant's Signature Date

The Auburn University
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Protocol # 24-769 EX 2403

Investigators Obtaining Consent

Andra Collins

Date

Jason McKibben Date

Chris Clemons Date

James Lindner Date