

Interpersonal Conflict Management– Inevitable but Manageable (with Reference to M/S Karvy Computershare Pvt. Ltd, Hyderabad & M/S Anand Rathi, Bangalore)

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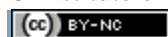
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ABSTRACT

Introduction: A conflict has generally been defined as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time. Scholars generally agree that there needs to be more than one part to have a conflict, and that the time factor is important. What does cause concern is the term scarce resource.

Objective of the Study: To examine the effect of strategies adopted for managing interpersonal conflict on organizational performance, to examine the perceptions of the employees in the organization under study and to offer suggestions to minimize the inter-personal conflicts and to improve conducive environment for organizational success

Method of the Study: The study employed both descriptive survey design and explanatory research design. It targeted a population of 650 employees of purposively selected units under study. A sample size comprising 450 employees from M/s Karvy Computershare and 200 from M/s Anand Rathi were selected using stratified random sampling techniques.

Results of the Study: Conflict escalation has according to this study it's foundation in emotional involvement. A person focused conflict has a higher risk of escalation and to evolve towards becoming dysfunctional. Through this study it has been revealed that conflict management can be divided into two areas, prevention of conflicts and management of functional conflicts. Feedback can be counted as preventive tools to help develop employee's behaviour and to ensure that the opinions and feelings are passed on through controlled communication channels.

Keywords: Conflict, Empowerment, managing interpersonal conflict, Managers, Executives.

INTRODUCTION

A conflict has generally been defined as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time. Scholars generally agree that there needs to be more than one part to have a conflict, and that the time factor is important. What does cause concern is the term scarce resource. The central point in this argument is scarcity, but resources need also be included in the discussion. Peter Wallensteenq has pointed out that resources are not only economic in nature, and that the terminology might miss conflicts involving economic orientation, human security, environment, historical issues, etc. Such conflicts are not necessarily about resources, and when they are, these resources are, more importantly, not necessarily scarce. A conflict is, moreover, in many cases based on perceptions, rather than on attitudes or behavior as it has generally been defined.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT - CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Conflict has both positive and negative effects. It can be positive when it encourages creativity, new looks at old conditions, the clarification of points of view, and the development of human capabilities to handle interpersonal differences. Unfortunately, the term "conflict" has only the connotation of "bad" for many people; so much so that they think principally in terms of suppression, giving little or no attention to its more positive side. Rico emphasizes this by stating that it seems entirely likely that many, if not most, organizations need more conflict, not less.

Tjosvold (1998) complements this statement arguing that conflict is not the opposite of cooperation but a mechanism that allows perceiving benefits of cooperative work. Furthermore, conflict is considered psychologically and socially healthy. It is psychologically healthy because it provides a breather for frustrations and enables a feeling of participation and even of joy. And it is sociable healthy because it encourages opposition to the status quo and provides conditions for social chances and democracy stemming from pluralism and respect to diversity. Therefore, conflict is ubiquitous, not necessarily dysfunctional and can be required to defy people to perform and stimulate progress.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The conflict resolution strategies that were considered in this study include avoiding, smoothing, forcing, compromising and confronting strategies. Avoiding strategy involves physical removal of

oneself from conflict. Shows minimal concern for both parties involved in conflict and mostly results in a lose-lose situation between employees and employers. Smoothing strategy involves putting great emphasis on the concern for one's own detriment while accommodating the other party's concerns. Here neither the management nor the superiors loses or wins. Confronting strategy involves handling conflict directly and solving it to a mutually satisfactory resolution. Here both the management and the employees win. According to Newstrom (2007) in most organizations conflict among different parties is unavoidable and sometimes the amount of conflict is essential. Therefore it is important for management to employ different conflict resolution strategies to encourage harmony and good working relationship with employees.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mooney (2014) affirmed that conflict naturally arises when employees are discriminated against based on their gender. Workers can have problems relating to one another when there is unfair treatment by management to certain employees. Workers might argue instances of bias as they fight for equality in their place of employment. For example, if a male employee is junior to a female employee but is still promoted ahead of her, it will probably be difficult for the woman to accept this man as a supervisor, and she might argue with management regarding this decision.

Miller and Vaske (2015) used survey analysis to measure the changes in reported interpersonal and social values conflict over a more than 10-year period at the Vail Pass Winter Recreation Area (VPWRA) in central Colorado. The results showed interpersonal conflict decreased over the period for both non-motorized and motorized recreationists. Both groups, however, continue to report interpersonal conflict even with an established zoning system. Despite an established active management approach at the VPWRA, social values conflict among non-motorized recreationists increased over the period. One important finding was that despite a system of zoning at the VPRWA, there are areas with both non-motorized and motorized recreationists present. These mixed-use areas, it was hypothesized, may have been responsible for the lingering interpersonal and social values conflict.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The management of M/s Karvy Computershare and M/s Anand Rathi feels that the total qualitative productivity in terms of customer/investor services satisfaction of their companies can be further enhanced as per the demand of the Industry requirement. Moreover, researcher argues that companies selected under study have suffered, and are still suffering from the phenomenon of conflict either between individuals or between groups, departments and organizations. This concept is supported by experts who suggest that the factors causing all types of organizational conflict need to be studied in-depth in the M/s Karvy Computershare and M/s Anand Rathi units.

M/s Karvy Computershare and M/s Anand Rathi companies have consistently faced many problems, such as managerial, technical and financial problems, which have led to low productivity and customer/investor services. Based on the perceived relationship between performance and organizational conflicts, Interpersonal Conflict may be one of the managerial problems causing interpersonal conflict [IPC] in the selected units of the study and will not address the factors that cause other types of Organizational conflict. Thus, this research gap [research problem] has been identified as there is no known existence of any research under taken on the factors causing IPC in the selected units under study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study are proposed of the following objectives:

- To examine the effect of strategies adopted for managing interpersonal conflict on organizational performance.
- To examine the perceptions of the employees in the organization under study.

- To offer suggestions to minimize the inter-personal conflicts and to improve conducive environment for organizational success.

HYPOTHESIS OF PRESENT STUDY

In line with the objectives stated above, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested for the purpose of the study.

H₁: Strategies adopted for managing interpersonal conflict do not significantly affect organizational performance.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

Research Design

In pursuance of the above mentioned objectives and hypotheses, the following methodology was adopted for the study. It is an empirical method based on both primary and secondary data. The first objective of the study was pursued by the collection and analysis of data from secondary sources whereas all the other objectives have been achieved by collection and analysis of primary data.

Sample Design

The study follows proportionate sampling design. The list of sampling units and sample respondents status wise is given as follows:

Table: 3.1

SAMPLING	M/S KARVY COMPUTERSHARE			M/S ANAND RATHI		
	MANAGERS	EXECUTIVES	TOTAL	MANAGERS	EXECUTIVES	TOTAL
UNIVERSE	255	1990	2245	137	863	1000
SAMPLE	50	400	450	27	173	200

The study follows proportionate sampling design, the researcher could not select sample randomly because the risk that the respondents randomly selected might not cooperate in data collection. Since reliable data willingly provided by the respondents is very crucial for the study, the researcher has selected samples based on their willingness to provide data. Hence, to study the sampling adequacy

Data Collection

This study consists of primary data that are the responses from employees obtained through the questionnaire. The secondary data in this study was represented by the various relevant studies previously conducted and was referred in most of the chapters in this study. The tertiary data in this study comprises of Bibliography and other indexes.

Since, the researcher has already served in the organization under study, got ample opportunities to mingle with all the cadres of employees. Also, the researcher had actually experienced the working conditions, environment, culture, change and also other problems among the employees, regarding adapting to the recent technological developments. These factors prompted me to feel about the Interpersonal Conflict (IPC) Management concept in the organization. These factors enlightened me to make an attempt to study the effect of the conflict management in the organization and felt that this may expose the pros and cons of the IPC prevailing at present. Taking the line on the above aspects, the experience and the knowledge gathered in the organization made me to construct the questionnaire tool, on his own.

The researcher also conducted a pilot study among 60 employees of the sample organizations. He observed that the employees found the questionnaire devoid of ambiguity and had abundant clarity of purpose and it was easy to respond in minimum duration.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The proposed study is confined to

- The research work has been carried out only in few selective Offices of selected units and the findings may not be applicable to the other branches.
- The sample has been collected using random-sampling technique. As such result may not give an exact representation of the population.
- Normally, employees hesitate to disclose the information so it leads to preconception.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings from this study, the researcher recommends the following suggestions. Here are some methods in life skills to effectively deal with interpersonal conflict. Conflict resolutions in this study provide some effective interpersonal communication skills:

Efforts should be made by the managers to occasionally stimulate constructive task conflict by encouraging divergent views and rewarding staff and department for outstanding performance while relationship conflict should be completely prevented.

Outcomes of interpersonal conflict should not be overlooked by managers and accounted for as part of the normal outcomes of doing business but should be minimized by clarifying to staff at large where to go for advice in case of conflict and build peer-support structure of conflict advisors.

Managers should develop diverse but appropriate strategies to resolve and manage conflicts as they arise before escalating to unmanageable level.

Proper communication procedures should be put in place to resolve conflict. For instance, when any disagreement arises among the employees, it should be reported to the management and then management should get statements from the parties involved, brainstorm the issue and make recommendations on how to resolve the conflict for better work culture and ethos.

TABLE 2.1: DATA ANALYSIS RESULT VALUES USING MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION, MEAN DEVIATION TECHNIQUE AMONG MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES OPINIONS OF BOTH M/S KARVY COMPUTERSHARE &M/S ANAND RATHI UNITS

S. No	Statements	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean deviation	Result inference
1	RUSHED EVEN UNDER PRESURE	81.25	41.74	34.625	High Deviation
2	TAKE THINGS ONE AT A TIME	81.25	48.79	41.06	High Deviation
3	SLOW IN DOING THINGS	81.25	57.55	51.25	High Deviation
4	ABILITY TO ACKNOWLEDGE MISTAKES	81.25	27.14	23.06	High Deviation
5	MAINTAINS POLITNESS IN ANY INTERACTION	81.25	33.64	25.37	High Deviation
6	MANY INTERESTS	81.25	44.86	38.31	High Deviation
7	CONFLICT RESOLUTION BEHAVIOUR	81.25	56.09	46.25	High Deviation
8	DIFFICULT TO IMITATE THE ACTION OF OTHER PEOPLE	325	156	156	High Deviation
9	BEHAVIOUR USUALLY REFLECTS TRUE FEELINGS, ATTITUDES OR BELIEFS	325	291	291	Low Deviation
10	WILLING NESS TO ENGAGE IN MEETINGS AND SOCIAL GATHERING	325	21	21	High Deviation
11	SPEECH ON ALMOST ANY TOPIC - EVEN KNOWN VERY LITTLE	325	31	31	High Deviation
12	ABILITY TO THINK ON ONES FEET AND RESPOND WITH CREDIBLE CHOICES, ALTERNATIVES AND IDEAS	325	238	238	High Deviation

13	SOMETIMES PUT ON A SHOW TO IMPRESS OR ENTERTAIN PEOPLE	325	62	62	High Deviation
14	ACCEPTING THE VIEWS OF THE OTHERS, RATHER THAN ROCK THE BOAT	325	254	254	High Deviation
15	IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS AND WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE OFTEN ACT IN DIFFERENT WAYS	325	155	155	High Deviation
16	ATTITUDE OR ACTIONS WITH NOT CHANGE TO PLEASE OTHER PEOPLE OR WIN THEIR APPROVAL	325	55	55	High Deviation
17	SOMETIMES PEOPLE THINK OF EXPERIENCING STRONGER EMOTIONS THAN REALITY	325	299	299	Low Deviation
18	NOT ESPECIALLY GOOD AT MAKING OTHER PEOPLE	325	11	11	High Deviation
19	HAVING STRONG REASONS FOR DOING THINKS, CAN LOOK OTHERS IN THE EYE AND LIE WITH A STRAIGHT FACE	325	59	59	High Deviation
20	USUALLY FIRM IN PURSUING GOALS	325	258	258	High Deviation
21	AT A PARTY, KEEPING THE JOKES AND STORIES ARE ENTERTAINED	325	107	107	High Deviation
22	NOT ALWAYS AN EASY PERSON, MOODY SOMETIMES	325	17	17	High Deviation
23	KEEP MYSELF, IF PEOPLE DON'T RESPECT OPINIONS	325	119	119	High Deviation
24	IDEA SHARING WITH SUPERVISOR TO CREATE NEW ALTERNATIVES	92.85	94.24	69.22	Low Deviation
25	SHY AWAY FROM TOPICS WHICH ARE SOURCES OF DISPUTES WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	40.66	32.65	High Deviation
26	MAKE OPTION KNOWN IN A DISAGREEMENT WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	40.13	30.97	High Deviation
27	SUGGEST SOLUTIONS WHICH COMBINE A VARIETY OF VIEWPOINTS WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	73.08	64.4	Low Deviation
28	STEER CLEAR OF DISAGREEABLE SITUATIONS WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	60.41	52.08	High Deviation
29	GIVE IN A LITTLE ON IDEAS WHEN SUPERVISOR ALSO GIVES IN	92.85	51.98	47.8	High Deviation
30	FEEL THAT THE DIFFERENCES ARE NOT ALWAYS WORTH WORRYING ABOUT SUPERVISOR	92.85	53.84	45.26	High Deviation
31	INTEGRATE ARGUMENTS INTO A NEW SOLUTIONS FROM THE ISSUES DISCUSSED	92.85	51.73	45.83	High Deviation
32	GO HALF-WAY FOR A SOLUTION WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	22.7	15.34	High Deviation
33	ONCES STANDARDS ADOPTED IS STRONGLY IF NECESSARY DEFEND WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	41.85	37.55	High Deviation
34	OFFER CREATIVE SOLUTIONS IN DISCUSSIONS OF DISAGREEMENTS WITH SUPERVISORS	92.85	62.16	51.87	High Deviation
35	KEEP QUIET ABOUT VIEWS IN ORDER TO AVOID DISAGREEMENT WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	31.75	25.83	High Deviation
36	FIND A COMPROMISE SOLUTIONS WITH SUPERVISORS	92.85	63.95	60.12	High Deviation
37	DOWNPLAY THE IMPORTANCE OF A DISAGREEMENT WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	36.38	33.83	High Deviation
38	REDUCE DISAGREEMENTS BY MAKING THEM SEEM INSIGNIFICANT WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	47.29	42.1	High Deviation
39	FIRM USUALLY PURSUE SUBORDINATE GOALS WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	49.11	42.36	High Deviation
40	PURSUE ARGUMENTS UNTIL SUPERVISOR UNDERSTAND POSITION	92.85	25.37	23.26	High Deviation
41	SOMETIMES SACRIFICE WISHES FOR THE WISHES OF SUPERVISOR TO GENERATE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS	92.85	45.7	38.16	High Deviation

42	OFFER TRADE-OFFS TO REACH SOLUTIONS IN DISAGREEMENT WITH SUPERVISORS	92.85	64.95	57.3	High Deviation
43	ARGUE INSISTENTLY FOR STANCE WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	53.85	43.83	High Deviation
44	SUPERVISORS CONFRONTS SUBORDINATES ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES	92.85	40.6	34.16	High Deviation
45	PREFER NOT TO ARGUE BUT LOOK FOR THE BEST SOLUTIONS POSSIBLE WITH SUPERVISORS	92.85	40.04	35.26	High Deviation
46	TRY TO SMOOTH OVER DISAGREEMENTS BY MAKING THEM APPEAR UNIMPORTANT WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	39.24	33.83	High Deviation
47	INSIST POSITION BY ACCEPTING DURING A DISAGREEMENT WITH SUPERVISORS	92.85	46.65	40.4	High Deviation
48	MAKE DIFFERENCE SEEMS LESS SERIOUS WITH SUPERVISORS	92.85	62.01	59.26	High Deviation
49	HOLD RATHER THAN ARGUE WITH SUPERVISORS	92.85	32.25	28.73	High Deviation
50	CONFLICT BY CLAIMING DIFFERENCES ARE TRIVIAL WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	47.4	39.79	High Deviation
51	STAND FIRM IN EXPRESSING VIEWPOINT DURING A DISAGREEMENT WITH SUPERVISOR	92.85	50.95	42.4	High Deviation

From the table it is depicted of the result values of mean, standard deviation, mean deviation technique among managers and executives opinions of both M/s Karvyand M/s AnandRathi respondents towards interpersonal conflict management. The result values of inferences are given in the table for every attribute. From the inferences it can be concluded saying that few aspects need to be improvised towards organizational performance by reducing conflicts among employees in the selected units under study. The parameters identified where they have high deviation among managerial & executive positions respondents shows opinion deviation for respective attributes need a change in a strategic approach which results to performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

- *Treat Others Respectfully:* One way of dealing with conflict have major impacts on the relationship between the results. People assess conflict behavior of others abilities. A person can manage conflict, respect for other person is must. If a man becomes very angry and even use violence to resolve conflict, people will condemn this person.
- *Set the Right Tone for the Conversation:* Tone of conversation throughout the conflict resolution process may have a huge impact. It is important to know that both sides have the will to resolve the conflict, rather than fighting. It can be a good diversion to spend some time on things unrelated to the conflict and expressing appreciation of counterpart’s willingness to cooperate.
- *Active Listening:* One of the obstacles to solve a conflict efficiently is a human tendency to “listen ahead”. This means that during a conversation one’s own thoughts about what a speaker says cause us to jump to conclusions about what the person is trying to say. Once we think we “know” it, we do not further listen to what is really being said.
- *Perspective Taking:* Brown (1965) emphasizes that all successful interpersonal communication requires that the point of view of the other person be realistically understood, Perspective taking is largely an internal process, fostered by active listening, in which you try to understand how it might feel to be the other person in the situation. In other words, perspective taking is trying to understand the other person’s needs concerns, difficulties, and pain in this situation to a similar extent as you understand your own needs, concerns, etc.
- *Solve Conflicts When They Are Small:* Many people think that the conflict will go away. In most cases, an untouched conflict over time, resentment and negative emotions will increase. Besides, when the emotions are intense, and the causes of the conflict are unclear because time has passed from the first incident, it is much more difficult to deal with.

- *Direct Discussion*: Individuals involved in a conflict talk openly with one another about their perception of the problem, their feelings about it, and possible solutions. The conflict is clear and understood by the involved people. Resolution of the conflict is supported by the participants, since they came up with it.
- *Policy and Procedures (Power or Authority)*: An authority, position, majority rule, or a persuasive minority settles the conflict. Power is used to impose a solution. When speed or efficiency is most important, this style may be effective. It also demonstrates the status of the person or group in authority.
- *Do Nothing (Denial or Suppression)*: Person tries to solve problem by denying its existence. Differences are played down and surface harmony is preserved. If issue is relatively unimportant, this style allows a cooling off period or simply lets time "heal" the problem.
- *Conflict prevention is often divided into two categories*: direct prevention and structural prevention. Direct conflict prevention refers to measures that are aimed at preventing short-term, often imminent, escalation of a potential conflict. Structural prevention focuses on more long term measures that address the underlying causes of a potential conflict along with potentially escalating and triggering factors

On the basis of our analysis of research studies conducted on the relationship between conflict management strategies and several aspects of organizational effectiveness, we can conclude that the problem – solving strategy or Behaviour may be viewed as the most effective way of managing conflicts in organizations, and it may be supplemented by the use of smoothing Behaviour. Thus, there is a need to encourage managers to enhance their utilization of these two conflict management strategies or methods, especially in the context of the emerging scenario of increasing education and skills.

CONCLUSION

Conflict escalation has according to this study it's foundation in emotional involvement. A person focused conflict has a higher risk of escalation and to evolve towards becoming dysfunctional. In comparison, task focused conflicts can lead to improved group functioning and decreased tension between members in the work team. Therefore the manager should get involved in task-focused conflicts to the extent that it benefits the work.

Through this study it has been revealed that conflict management can be divided into two areas, prevention of conflicts and management of functional conflicts. Feedback can be counted as preventive tools to help develop employees Behaviour and to ensure that the opinions and feelings are passed on through controlled communication channels. In order to resolve a conflict a conflict competent manager should be able to see the conflict from an independent perspective which was brought forward through the interviews and highlighted in the theoretical framework. In addition, the leader has to be able to decide the design of decision making processes, to determine if a quick time-saving decision should be taken or whether to involve the group and encourage fairness.

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