

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES ADOPTED BY ACADEMIC STAFF OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Almas Kayani, Sidra Kiran

Director, Women Development Studies Center, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University
Rawalpindi, PAKISTAN.

almaskiani@uaar.edu.pk, sidrakiran67@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Conflict is a deliberate attempt to oppose, resist or compel the will of another person. In order to keep momentum of routine activities successfully it is very important to manage conflict. The current study is descriptive in nature. Therefore, this study involved the investigation of conflict management styles of the academic staff of public and private universities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad and this study identified challenges faced by academic staff in managing conflicts. For this study population comprised of academic staff include Lecturers, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors. Researcher used proportionate random sampling technique to collect data. The instrument of the study consisted of Farooqi Organizational Conflict Inventory (FOCI). For the analysis of data researcher used t-test. The study is significant at Higher Education level as under the light of this study the academic staff of universities can know that under which styles they manage their conflicts. The study will also serve as a situational analysis in identifying and reducing the challenges which academic staff face while managing conflict.

Keywords: conflict management, academic staff, comparison, public, private, universities.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict as a Concept

The word conflict infers pictures, for example, enmity, battles between parties, resistance procedures and dangers to collaboration. Be that as it may, not all contentions come in these structures particularly in the educational system. They come in type of should be met or wants to be fulfilled, contradictions to be settled and thoughts to be shared that in the end prompt difference in states of mind, emotions and recognitions. Schramm-Nielsen (2002) defines conflict as a state of serious disagreement and argument about something perceived to be important by at least one of the parties involved. In his opinion, Aguba (2009) refers to conflict as a struggle or contest, when workers and management have incompatible, conflicting or irreconcilable views on issues that could lead to conflict.

Many individuals see struggle as an action that is absolutely negative and has no saving graces, while different schools of thought acknowledge it as useless, ruinous, however in the meantime, as an impetus for change, innovativeness and creation (Posisha&Ogbuvwa, 2009).

No human organization is thus immune to conflict. Conflict can also brake out when one party attempt to hinder the goal achievement of the other one. Alabi (2010) sees conflict to be in opposition to another or each other or as disagreement”.

However, Pondy (1966) opines that it is plausible that the reasons for clashes are not profoundly connected with objective and target accomplishments in circumstances of routine conduct where strategies are very much characterized and condition is steady. In these

conditions, struggle factors are most likely more identified with identity, self-rule reasons, utilitarian reliance and status.

It is conceivable to contend that contention is endemic in human nature connections and social orders. It is the aftereffect of cooperation among individuals, an unavoidable attending of decisions and choices and a statement of the essential actuality of human reliance (Adejwone and Okewale, 2009). Conflict involves friction in activities, absence of concordance in conclusion so as to accomplish one's objective. It means difference, twists, irregularities, and oppositions existing in a specific framework. Henceforth, Akinwonmi (2005) brings up that an aggregate nonattendance of contention in any association would be mind boggling, incomprehensible, unfortunate and exhausting, and it is a solid pointer that such clash is smothered.

Awosusi (2008), in his own view, distinguishes different wellsprings of contention in colleges as: understudies expert clash, staff-specialist strife and other between assemble clashes. Between bunch clashes may happen when there are conflict of interests between the scholarly staff and their non-showing partners or when there are issues between one understudy gathering (affiliation, society or club) and another. Another gathering of contention is one that is relational (either between a staff and understudy or amongst staff and another staff, or between an understudy and another understudy). Additionally, struggle may emerge between staff or understudy and the host group.

Understudy specialist struggle happens when there is a conflict of enthusiasm between the understudies and the college experts. College specialist feels that their rights as pioneers are undermined, while the understudies feel that their advantages are smothered. The presumption makes a circumstance of grievance and strife between the understudies and the specialist.

At the point when two people are united and each with his particular abilities, and aptitudes, a contention may result if their characteristics are not coincided together coordinately. Collaboration between people with various demeanors, qualities and requirements can deliver struggle conduct and influence authoritative execution. Strife can make negative effect to gathering however may likewise prompt constructive outcomes relying upon the idea of the contention.

In view of the entries of various researchers, it sounds that contention is an important malice that a institutional framework can't manage without, yet in the event that not very much oversaw, it could prompt significant negative results.

Effects of Institutional Conflict

Undertaking struggle is interrelated with helpful and different occasions in the redesigns (Simons et al., 2000). Assignment struggle winds up noticeably articulated while choice occurring are unpredictable in nature or exceptionally gifted in its appearance. It prompts negativism in the advancement and practicality of the group, henceforth execution is being defaced in such like circumstances (De Dreu and Weingart, 2003). In the event that contention emerges and not oversaw appropriately, it will prompt shutting down of managerial exercises in the University, prolongation of time of study, loss of lives and properties, punishment to all understudies, for example, installment of alert charges, low efficiency of graduates.

Conflict Management Strategies

The scholars and specialists have imagined many styles of peace promotion. As per Rahim and Bonama 1979 there are five styles of peace making, i.e. staying away from style,

overwhelming style, Obliging style, incorporating style and trading off style. Later on the greater part of the analysts have settled upon these styles five styles to be connected for peace making (Blitman, B. A. 2002, Goodwin, J. 2002, Aritzeta, et al, 2005). The characteristics of these styles are as under:

Integrating Style

Integrating style intends to determine a contention issue through trade of learning, use of various alternatives, and evaluation of polarities to achieve an answer which is adequate for the two gatherings. As per specialists, (Kinicki, An., and Kreitner, R.2008) coordinating style effectively utilized when one of the gatherings neglects to determine an issue alone and feels the need of some examination accomplice to look for thoughts for the arrangement of the issue. The experimental confirmations over the globe uncover that this style is generally utilized by the managers (Copley, R. D.2008, Su'udy, R,2009).

Obliging Style

Obliging style alludes to decreasing hostility through general methodologies. It is utilized when one gathering is eager to relinquish a slight with the expectation of accomplishing the greatest from the other party. So also, scientists (Kinicki, An., and Kreitner, R, 2008, Rahim, M. A. 2002) revealed that obliging style is appropriated when a gathering bargains from powerless position with wish that minding relationship is huge with the other party. It produces accord and societal attraction; be that as it may, it limits innovativeness and development (Ozkalp, E., Sungur, Z., and Ozdemir, A. A. 2009). On the in spite of this idea, a specialist of peace promotion (Rahim, M. A, 2002) expressed that obliging style is useless just when one gathering accepts about itself to be right and noteworthy while second gathering as flawed and degenerate.

Dominating Style

Dominating style alludes to forceful conduct in which one gathering attempts to increase greatest objectives neglecting the will or worries of the other party. There is no regard for the interests of the second party. This style can be utilized particularly when some dire choice is required and the subordinates are not skilled in managing unprecedented circumstance and specialized basic leadership process. Intense gatherings use the ruling style in fast and sharp choice to increase greatest (Kinicki, et al, 2008).

Avoiding Style

Avoiding style alludes to avoid the unfavorable conditions. This style is deadly to manage essential issues. As per (Rahim, M. A.2002) maintaining a strategic distance from style is unseemly to settle on convenient and hurried choices, especially when bunches are not prepared to hold up. The dodging party bombs in fulfilling itself and the others. In some piece of world, chiefs utilize this style. As indicated by (Cingo z-Ulu et al, 2007), maintaining a strategic distance from style was liberally used by Turkish individuals in peace making. Also, (Luk, Chung-leung, 2002) expressed that Chinese individuals offer inclination to this style to oversee clashes in their separate associations.

Compromising Style

Compromising style is occupied with corresponding arrangement of the issue which is satisfactory for the two gatherings. It is used at the phase when the two gatherings wish to finish up the issue through give and take strategy. By and large, bargaining is thought to be a provisional determination of the contention and connected when both of the gatherings bomb in dealing with the issue. Specialists viewed it as unsatisfactory for complex issues. However, it is extremely bizarre and deadly when heads utilize this style for the arrangement

of confused issues and build up the capable exchange answers for the issues (Kinicki et al, 2008, Rahim, M. A, 2002).

Examination of contention in tertiary foundations demonstrates that they influence the fulfillment of institutional objectives decidedly or antagonistically. Struggle now and again could encourage co-operation, cultivate objective accomplishment in any establishment if legitimately took care of. Then again, clashes among staff, understudies, foundation expert and group, if not very much oversaw, could prompt loss of lives, demolition of properties and interruption of typical scholarly exercises. The existence of any foundation hence, to a great extent relies on the improvement of better methods for settling clashes (Aja, 2012).

Another method for adapting to authoritative clashes is to roll out basic improvements. This implies changing and incorporating the targets of gatherings with various perspectives. In settling tertiary organizations' contention, building up a useful correspondence process and powerful clash moderator's identity are imperative. Most likely, college can't abstain from encountering one clash or the other yet a lot of such clash can be overseen and be directed from upsetting college endeavors towards accomplishing its show and idle objectives if the clashing gatherings are precise in the way they convey their grievances, circumstance of the contention and preparation to consult for peace and if the mediator intervening the determination procedure is of good identity (Agbonna et al, 2009).

Significance

The results of this study may help academic staff of the sampled universities to comprehend their own particular refereeing techniques. Second, the way that overseeing clashes in the work put have critical monetary effect on university and additionally social effect and hypothetical significance, certain proactive measures may happen to reconsider arrangements identified with human capital, the most essential resource in the university. Given the way that conflict can altogether influence universities, authoritative pioneers may distribute more assets to oversee conflict in working environment.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify demographics of the academic staff of the sampled universities such as age, job experience, marital status etc.
2. To investigate conflict management styles of the academic staff of the sampled universities.
3. To explore challenges faced by academic staff in managing conflict.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference between the conflict management strategies of the academic staff of public and private sector universities.
2. There is no significant difference between the challenges faced by academic staff of public and private universities in managing conflicts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The focus of this research was to compare conflict management styles adopted by academic staff of public and private universities. This portion is based on research methodology used in this study. It includes research design, purpose of the study, population, sample and instruments used in research and their validity and reliability. Additional, research methodology presented the practice of the study, data collection method and the last section based on well-constructed data analysis technique. Specifically, the methodology used in this research to draw conclusions exposed the strength of this work.

Sample/Sampling Technique

For the current study target population was the academic staff of the universities. The sample of the research was 64 (71.11%) teachers from public sector Universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad and 26 (28.88%) teachers from private sector universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad were selected from target population.

According to the nature of the study, Random Sampling Technique was used to collect the data. The sample was categorized into four strata i.e. Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors and Lecturers.

Instrument

Farooqi Organizational Conflict Management Inventory (FOCI) as a tool of research was used to identify the conflict management styles of the academic staff of sampled universities. This inventory is based on 34 items under five conflict management strategies. Extensive work had been reviewed prior to the development of items of each factor. Initially 39 items were finalized with the help of experts. During the factor analysis it was found that five items have low correlation against the set standards, thus those were deleted from the final draft. The Chronbach Alpha (co-relation value) analyzed was 0.83. Alpha Reliability Coefficient of each factor was also calculated ranging from 0.51 (for avoiding style factor) to 0.64 (obliging style factor). Thus, it was highly recommended by the researchers for applying this inventory to investigate the conflict management styles. Researcher used this inventory for the purpose of data collection after seeking permission from the author of the inventory.

Data Collection

Data was collected in an organized and structured manner from the sampled Universities Rawalpindi and Islamabad. An institutional arrangement was established for data collection and request for participation in research was given to the teachers to ensure the maximum participation.

Data Analysis and Results

According to the nature of the study data was analyzed by using frequencies, percentages and t-test.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

Table 1 shows the demographics of the academic staff of the public and private sector universities who participated in the study as respondents. The first demographic variable was designation of the academic staff of public and private universities under four strata such as four Professors, four Associate Professors, seventeen Assistant Professors and thirty nine Lecturers from public sector universities. Whereas four Professors, three Associate Professors, three Assistant Professors and sixteen Lecturers were from private sector universities.

The next demographic variable titled as nature of employment there were twenty six permanent academic staff members in public and two from private sector universities twenty three respondents were on contract in public and fifteen respondents from private universities. There were fifteen members from academic staff who were on tenure in public universities and nine from private universities.

With respect to qualification three respondents were holding MA/M.Sc degree from public and four respondents from private universities. Number of respondents having M.Phil degree

were forty from public and eighteen from private universities. Ph.D respondents were twenty one in number from public and four were from private sector universities.

Table 1. Demographic Variables of Academic Staff of Public and Private Universities

Demographic Variables	Public Universities		Private Universities	
	n	%	n	%
Designation				
Professor	4	6.25	4	15.38
Associate Professor	4	6.25	3	11.53
Assistant Professor	17	26.56	3	11.53
Lecturer	39	60.93	16	61.53
Nature of Employment				
Permanent	26	40.62	2	7.69
Contract	23	35.93	15	57.69
Tenure	15	23.43	9	34.61
Qualification				
MA/M.Sc	3	4.68	4	15.38
M.Phil	40	62.5	18	69.23
Ph.D	21	32.81	4	15.38
HEC Approved Supervisor				
Yes	24	37.5	12	46.15
No	40	62.5	14	53.84
Post Doc				
Yes	9	14.06	15	57.69
No	55	85.93	11	42.30
Age				
20-35 Years	41	64.06	20	76.92
36-50 Years	17	26.56	6	23.07
51-65 Years	6	9.37	0	
Gender				
Male	35	54.68	19	73.07
Female	29	45.31	7	26.92
Marital Status				
Single	20	31.25	8	30.76
Married	44	68.75	18	69.23
Current Location				
Rural	20	31.25	9	34.61
Urban	44	68.75	17	65.38

In public universities twenty four respondents were HEC approved supervisor whereas from private universities twelve respondents were HEC approved supervisor.

With respect to age forty one respondents from public and twenty respondents from private universities fall under first category that ranges from 20-35 years of age. In the second category seventeen respondents from public and six from private universities fall between 36-50 years of age. Only six respondents from public universities fall under 51-65 years of age.

There were thirty five male from public and nine teen from private universities whereas twenty nine female respondents belonged to public and seven were from private universities.

Twenty respondents from public and eight respondents from private universities were unmarried at the time of data collection. From public universities forty four respondents and from private universities eighteen respondents were married.

With respect to the demographic variable titled as current location twenty respondents from public and nine from private belonged to rural area where as forty four respondents from public and seventeen from private reported that they belong to urban area.

Table 2. Difference between Conflict Management Strategies of Academic Staff of Public and Private Sector Universities

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-value	p-value	Results
Conflict Management Strategies	Public	64	2.172	0.918	88	0.263	0.45	H ₀ Accepted
	Private	26	2.115	0.515				

Table 2 shows that conflict existed in both types of universities. Its t-value is 0.263 and p-value is 0.45 on the basis of these values H₀ is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the conflict management strategies of the academic staff of public and private sector universities. Hence the hypothesis is accepted. One most noteworthy finding under the light of collected data is that compromising conflict management strategy is mostly adopted by the academic staff of public and private sector universities.

Table 3. Challenges Faced In Managing Conflicts by Academic Staff

S.No.	Challenges in Managing Conflicts	Public		Private	
		n	%	n	%
1	Difference of opinion and cultural diversity of people	9	14.06	2	7.69
2	Insufficient provision of funds, insufficient provision of positive information.	8	12.5	2	7.69
3	Negative criticism and some dominating inferences/references pressure.	7	10.93	4	6.25
4	When people keep dual faces and professional politics.	10	15.62	4	6.25
5	Sometimes the ego of others. Most of the time it's difficult to solve any conflict due to rigid behavior of others.	10	15.62	2	7.69
6	Preference for self-interest on mutual interests. Recruitment under the influence of politicians. Grouping in staff. Hindrance from management.	8	12.5	3	11.53
7	Less educated staff on high ranks. Barriers of different types on the way of potential and intellectual members.	9	14.04	3	11.53

Table 3 shows the responses of respondents regarding the challenges faced in managing conflicts. From public sector universities nine and two respondents from private sector universities reported difference of opinion and cultural diversity as challenges in managing conflicts. Insufficient provision of funds and positive information are challenges in managing conflicts according to eight from public and two from private sector universities. Negative criticism and some dominating pressures as challenges in managing conflicts were reported by seven public and four private sector respondents. From public ten and from private sector universities four respondents reported that because of dual faces and professional politics it is difficult to manage conflicts. In managing conflicts ten respondents from public and two from private reported ego and rigid behavior of people as a challenge in managing conflicts. With the ratio of eight to three respondents from public and private sector universities self-interest on mutual interests, recruitment under influence of

politicians, grouping in staff and hindrance from management as challenges in managing conflicts. Less educated staff on high ranks and barriers of different types on the way of potential and intellectual members was reported as challenges in managing conflicts by nine respondents from public and three from private sector universities.

CONCLUSION

Under the light of the findings of collected data it is concluded that public sector universities are having more academic staff as compared to private sector universities but conflict is equally faced by the academic staff with no significant difference between the conflict management strategies to manage conflicts. Respondents of the study also reported some challenges in managing conflicts such as Difference of opinion, lack of serious attitude, economic and financial distances, less experience and informal attitudes, insufficient provision of funds, insufficient provision of positive information, fruitful layout disability, less educated staff and high ranks, To convince others when especially you're senior is on another side, when people keep dual faces and professional politics, it is difficult to manage conflicts, financially independence is not there, Grouping in staff, Hindrance from management, religious differences, late response, over enrolment. Limited infrastructure,

Sometimes the ego of others, Most of the time it's difficult to solve any conflict due to rigid behavior of others, cultural diversity of people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following recommendations are made under the light of the data of the study:

1. Universities should have sufficient number of academic staff in this way academic staff will not have work load and conflicts can be managed.
2. Academic staff in universities should be provided with sufficient resources to accomplish the given tasks.
3. Proper allocation of duties should be considered among staff members.
4. Proper time to time meetings should be held in order to negotiate, share and understand each other's point to view to properly manage conflict.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Adejuwon, K. D., & Okewale, R. A. (2009). Ethnic militancy, insurrections and democracy in Africa: The case of Nigeria. *Journal of Social and Policy Issues*, 6(4).
- [2]. Afzalur Rahim, M. (2002). Toward a theory of managing organizational conflict. *International journal of conflict management*, 13(3), 206-235.
- [3]. Aguba, C. R. (2009). *Educational Administration and Management—Issues and Perspectives*. Enugu: Tons and tons PDS.
- [4]. Aja, O. J. (2012). *Conflicts as a barrier in tertiary institutions for national transformation*. A paper presented at the 31st Annual national conference of Nigerian association for education administration and planning (NAEAP) October. Benue Hotels Makurdi.
- [5]. Alabi, A. O. (2010). Management of conflicts and crises in Nigeria: Education planner's view. *Current Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(6), 311-315.
- [6]. Aritzeta, A., Ayestaran, S., & Swailes, S. (2005). Team role preference and conflict management styles. *International Journal of conflict management*, 16(2), 157-182.

- [7]. Blitman, B. A. (2002). Conflict Resolution Techniques: Dealing with Debtors, Creditors, Clients and Other Adversaries or When the Check Isn't in the Mail. *Com. L. Bull.*, 17, 12.
- [8]. Cingöz-Ulu, B., & Lalonde, R. N. (2007). The role of culture and relational context in interpersonal conflict: Do Turks and Canadians use different conflict management strategies? *International journal of intercultural relations*, 31(4), 443-458.
- [9]. Copley, R. D. (2008). *Conflict management styles: A predictor of likability and perceived effectiveness among subordinates* (Doctoral dissertation).
- [10]. De Dreu, C. K., & Weingart, L. R. (2003). Task versus relationship conflict, team performance, and team member satisfaction: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88(4), 741–749.
- [11]. Goodwin, J. (2002). Auditors' conflict management styles: An exploratory study. *Abacus*, 38(3), 378-405.
- [12]. Kinicki, A., & Kreitner, R. (2008). *Organizational behaviour: Key concepts skills and practices* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill International Edition.
- [13]. Luk, C. L. (2002). *Personality and Normative Influences on Online Shopping Behavior*. ACR :Asia-Pacific Advances.
- [14]. Özkalp, E., Sungur, Z., & Ayşe Özdemir, A. (2009). Conflict management styles of Turkish managers. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 33(5), 419-438.
- [15]. Pondy, L. R. (1966). A systems theory of organizational conflict. *Academy of Management Journal*, 9(3), 246-256.
- [16]. Posigha, B. E., & Oghuvwu, V. (2009). Conflict among library staff in Bayelsa and delta State of Nigeria". *International Journal of Labour and Organisational Psychology*, 3(1&2).
- [17]. Rahim, A., & Bonoma, T. V. (1979). Managing organizational conflict: A model for diagnosis and intervention. *Psychological reports*, 44(3_suppl), 1323-1344.
- [18]. Schramm-Nielsen, J. (2002). Conflict Management in Scandinavia. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=305153
- [19]. Simons, T. L., & Peterson, R. S. (2000). Task conflict and relationship conflict in top management teams: the pivotal role of intragroup trust. *Journal of applied psychology*, 85(1), 102.