

---

## CONFLICTS IN ORGANIZATIONS AND WAYS TO COUNTER THEM

### Article Particulars

Received: 20.04.2018

Accepted: 24.04.2018

Published: 28.04.2018

### R. AJITH

Research Scholar in Management, Alagappa University  
Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu, India

### Dr. R. PERUMAL

Research Supervisor, Department of Management, Alagappa University  
Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu, India

### Abstract

*Conflicts are unavoidable at workplace since human beings have varied opinions over anything and are entitled to them. When conflicts arise, camaraderie vanishes. This causes a ruffle among co-workers, leading to unproductive work, thus affecting the productivity and growth of an organization. Hence, it is very important to counter conflicts and arrive at a common solution for the betterment of organizations. The paper deals with conflicts that arise in a workplace, its impacts and the skills required to counter them efficiently for better handling of relationships as well as maintaining a successful organizational system.*

**Keywords:** Conflict, Interpersonal conflict, Intrapersonal conflict, Confrontation, Resolution, and management.

---

### Introduction

Individuals in an organization experience conflict on a daily basis. The need to feel superior over another is the major reason for conflicts. Individuals tend to let their emotions get the better of them, leading to getting super drunk on ego, thus resulting in dispute or argument. Since an organization has various hierarchies, it is pretty much impossible to stop conflicts from happening. This causes the need for the question-why? Reason being, human beings primal instinct is to constantly get better and to feel superior over one another. Hence they feel insecure if their thoughts are valued lesser than anyone else's. This creates a sense of insecurity in them and makes them panic. Hence most people get involved in banter or a heated discussion so that they feel secure about their knowledge.

The more the hierarchies, the more the chances for conflicts to happen, so what can an organizational possibly do to counter this? They should start conducting special sessions on the importance of values and emotions which can involve pep talks, videos about keeping one's emotions under check and respecting one's opinion. Also, Conflicts can be constructive or destructive. To a certain extent, conflicts can induce

a healthy competition among the co-workers. Only when it exceeds a particular point, it can result in aggression and tension between workmates. Depending on the nature, conflict can be perceived, latent, manifest, line and staff, organized and unorganized conflict.

Also, conflicts do not happen overnight. It develops gradually over a period of time. There are various sources of conflict. Often inter-personal conflicts arise because of challenges that organizations toss up, ego clashes, and different sets of values, scenarios that challenges one's status, difference in moral opinions, and lack of trust between workers. On the other hand intra-personal conflicts arise due to the role ambiguity and role conflict. Hence this problem needs a solution now more than ever. The process of managing conflict is a tedious task but not a herculean one. Effective assessment results in effective solutions to counter the issue.

### **Forms of Conflict in Organizations**

Conflict can take on several different forms in an organization, including interpersonal, intrapersonal, intergroup, intergroup and inter organizational conflicts. Note that the prefix inter implies –between while the prefix intra implies –within.

#### **Interpersonal Conflict**

Interpersonal conflict stresses the interaction of human factors in an organization. Here we are worried about these components as they show up in a dynamic relationship. Conflict between individuals can emerge from numerous individual differences, including personalities, disposition, qualities, recognitions and other differences. It might be substantive or emotional or both. Two people discussing each other aggressively on the benefits of contracting a job candidate is a case of a substantive interpersonal conflict. Two people ceaselessly in disagreement over one another's decision of work clothing is a case of an emotional interpersonal conflict.

#### **Intrapersonal Conflict**

Intrapersonal conflict is internal to the individual (however its belongings can significantly impact organizational working) and is maybe the most troublesome type of conflict to investigate and oversee. Intrapersonal conflict is essentially a conflict between two inconsistent propensities. It emerges when an improvement inspires two different and contradictory propensities and the individual is required to separate between these inclinations. In such a circumstance usually for individuals to encounter disappointments and to enable their conflict circumstance to be communicated in a range of behavioral procedures running from lack of care and fatigue to truancy, intemperate drinking or damaging conduct. On the off chance that such behavioral results are to be maintained a strategic distance from, at that point it is basic to analyze individual discernment and use a few techniques that would diminish anxiety-

evoking stimuli and increment consonance between individual conduct and organizational prerequisites. Intrapersonal conflicts frequently include real or saw weights from incongruent objectives or desires for the accompanying sorts: Approach–approach conflict happens when an individual must pick between two positive and similarly appealing choices. A precedent needs to pick between an esteemed advancement in the organization or an attractive new job with another firm. Avoidance– avoidance conflict happens when an individual must pick between two negative and similarly ugly options. A precedent is being asked either to acknowledge a job exchange to another town in an unfortunate location or to have one's employment with an organization fired. Approach– avoidance conflict happens when an individual must choose to accomplish something that has both positive and negative outcomes. A precedent is being offered a higher paying job whose duties involve undesirable demands on one's personal time.

### **Ways to Counter Conflicts**

Different people use different strategies to counter conflicts. Generally one is not in his/her senses when a conflict arises. When an individual gets involved in a conflict, there are two major concerns they have to take into consideration:

### **Accomplishing your Personal Goals**

Individuals are in conflict since individuals have a goal that conflicts with someone else's goal. Individual goal might be of high significance to him, or it might be of little significance to him.

### **Maintaining a Healthy Relationship with Others**

Individuals have to face each other on a daily basis irrespective of their differences. The relationship might be vital to individual or might be of little significance to him. How vital your personal goals are to you and how vital the relationship is to you influences how you act in a conflict. Given these two concerns, it is conceivable to distinguish styles of overseeing conflict in an organization are as per the following:

### **Effective Employee – Employer Relationship**

An employer appointing another employee for a job means not only bringing simply an employee but also beginning another relationship with that employee. Since the employer and employee need to work around other people regularly, there automatically can be created relationships. Dealing with these relationships is crucial to business achievements. This healthy relationship between the employee and employer can improve employee satisfaction and profit of the organization. So keeping the relationship between employee and employer is the main priority of an organization.

## Inter personal Relationship

Inter personal Relationship is a nearby affiliation between at least two individuals. Inter personal relationship can likewise be characterized as the social affiliation, association or connection between at least two individuals. In other words, inter personal relationship is the idea of cooperation that happens between at least two individuals. Conflicts in an Inter personal relationship may occur due to various reasons may be intentional or not. If there is a strong relationship between employees, conflicts can be avoided in an Organization.

## Confronting

Confronting style alludes to solid helpful and decisive conduct. It is the win-win approach to interpersonal conflict being dealt with. The individual utilizing confronting style wants to augment joint outcomes. An individual who utilizes this style will in general consider conflict to be common, useful, and prompting a progressively innovative solution whenever took care of appropriately. Confronting style is most functional to locate an integrated solution when the two sets of concerns are too essential to even think about being undermined, when objective is to learn, to pick up duty by consolidating worries into a consensus and to work through emotions that have construed with a relationship.

## Objectives of the Study

- To understand the reasons for the occurrence of conflicts within organizations
- To analyze the impact of conflicts caused on employees working in organizations
- To identify the perception of employees on conflicts and conflict management in organizations
- To comprehend the importance of conflict management strategies within organizations
- To determine suitable conflict management strategies for organizations.

## Review of Literature

**Robbins (2005)** has defined conflict as —a process that begins where one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect something that the first party cares about. This is so true as it depicts the true nature of conflicts and it also depicts that conflicts are not to be considered as truth.

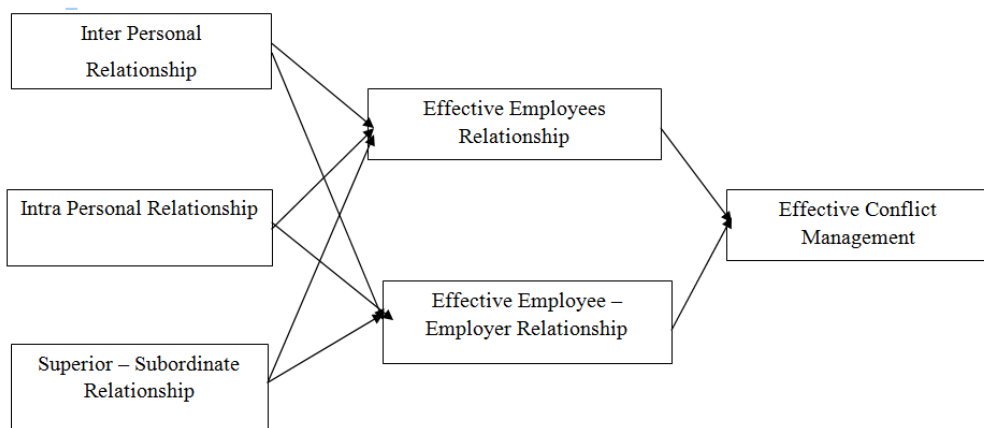
**Rivers (2005)** published research that suggested that the mere fact of categorization (between us and them) is enough to cause conflict. They term this the social identity theory. This categorization is exactly what happens when groups are formed; representing different functions within an organization and it support the notion that is inevitable.

**Davis Keith (2005)** asserts that there are numerous sources of conflict. He also says that these conflicts' significance varies based on the mindset of the individual. Interpersonal conflicts arises from various form of sources such as personality clashes, difference in sets of values, threats to status, organizational change and contrasting perceptions and lack of mutual trust.

### Research Methodology

Details regarding the research design, data collection questionnaire, sampling plan, area of the study and statistical tools used are as mentioned below.

### Conceptual Framework



**Fig.1**

### Statistical Tool Used for Analysis

- ANOVA
- Chi-Square
- SEM (Structural Equation Modeling)

### Null Hypothesis

#### Anova

**H01:** There is no significant difference between age groups with regards to the Inter Personal Relationship, Intra Personal Relationship, Superior – Subordinate Relationship, Effective Employees Relationship, Effective Employee – Employer Relationship and Effective Conflict Management.

**H02:** There is no significant difference between educational qualification groups with regards to the Inter Personal Relationship, Intra Personal Relationship, Superior – Subordinate Relationship, Effective Employees Relationship, Effective Employee – Employer Relationship and Effective Conflict Management.

**Chi-Square**

**H03:** There is no association between Age and the Income

**One Way Anova (AGE)**

**H01:** There is no significant difference between age groups with regards to the Inter Personal Relationship, Intra Personal Relationship, Superior – Subordinate Relationship, Effective Employees Relationship, Effective Employee – Employer Relationship and Effective Conflict Management.

**Table 1**

Variance		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig
Inter Personal Relationship	Between Groups	49.604	3	16.535	0.716	0.543
	Within Groups	3992.611	173	23.079		
	Total	4042.215	176			
Intra Personal Relationship	Between Groups	31.221	3	10.407	0.605	0.612
	Within Groups	2973.661	173	17.189		
	Total	3004.881	176			
Superior – Subordinate Relationship	Between Groups	14.404	3	4.801	0.228	0.877
	Within Groups	3650.308	173	21.100		
	Total	3664.712	176			
Effective Employees Relationship	Between Groups	30.257	3	10.086	0.848	0.469
	Within Groups	2057.111	173	11.891		
	Total	2087.367	176			
Effective Employee – Employer Relationship	Between Groups	19.453	3	6.484	0.624	0.001
	Within Groups	1798.954	173	10.399		
	Total	1818.407	176			
Effective Conflict Management	Between Groups	10.931	3	3.644	0.357	0.784
	Within Groups	1765.250	173	10.204		
	Total	1776.181	176			

\* Significant at the 5% level

## Analysis

It can be seen from the above Table – 1 that null hypotheses are rejected as the p values are lesser than 0.05 levels for Effective Employee – Employer Relationship. For all other dimensions, since the p value is greater than 0.05 null hypotheses is accepted.

## Discussion

There is a significant difference existing between age groups with regards to Effective Employee – Employer Relationship.

There is no significant difference between age groups with regards to Inter Personal Relationship, Intra Personal Relationship, Superior – Subordinate Relationship, Effective Employees Relationship and Effective Conflict Management.

## One Way Anova (Educational Qualification)

**H02:** There is no significant difference between educational Qualification groups with regards to the Inter Personal Relationship, Intra Personal Relationship, Superior – Subordinate Relationship, Effective Employees Relationship, Effective Employee–Employer Relationship and Effective Conflict Management.

**Table 2**

Variance		Sum OF Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Inter Personal Relationship	Between Groups	49.604	3	16.535	0.716	0.043
	Within Groups	3992.611	173	23.079		
	Total	4042.215	176			
Intra Personal Relationship	Between Groups	31.221	3	10.407	0.605	0.612
	Within Groups	2973.661	173	17.189		
	Total	3004.881	176			
Superior – Subordinate Relationship	Between Groups	14.404	3	4.801	0.228	0.877
	Within Groups	3650.308	173	21.100		
	Total	3664.712	176			
Effective Employees Relationship	Between Groups	30.257	3	10.086	0.848	0.469
	Within Groups	2057.111	173	11.891		
	Total	2087.367	176			

<b>Effective Employee – Employer Relationship</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	19.453	3	6.484	0.624	0.601
	<b>Within Groups</b>	1798.954	173	10.399		
	<b>Total</b>	1818.407	176			
<b>Effective Conflict Management</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	10.931	3	3.644	0.357	0.784
	<b>Within Groups</b>	1765.250	173	10.204		
	<b>Total</b>	1776.181	176			

\* Significant at the 5% level

**Analysis**

It can be seen from the above Table – 2 that null hypotheses are rejected as the p values are lesser than 0.05 levels for Inter Personal relationship. For all other dimensions, since the p value is greater than 0.05 null hypotheses is accepted.

**Discussion**

There is significant difference between educational qualification groups with regards to the Inter Personal relationship.

There is no significant difference between education qualification groups with regards to Intra Personal Relationship, Superior – Subordinate Relationship, Effective Employees Relationship and Effective Conflict Management.

**chi - Square**

**Association between Age and Monthly Income**

**H03:** There is no association between Age and the Monthly Income

**Table 3**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</b>	<b>Statistical Inference</b>
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	467.616 <sup>a</sup>	9	.000	<b>X<sup>2</sup>=467.616<sup>a</sup></b> <b>Df = 9</b> <b>P= .000 &lt;0.05</b> <b>*Significant at 5% level</b>
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	398.664	9	.000	
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	3.415	1	.065	
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	177			

\*Significant at 5% level

**Analysis**

It can be seen from above Table- 3 the P value is lesser than our chosen Significance at = 0.05 levels, the null hypothesis is rejected.



## Discussion

It is therefore concluded that there is an association between age and Monthly income factors.

## Structural Equation Modelling

### The observed, endogenous variables

- Effective Employees Relationship
- Effective Employee - Employer Relationship
- Effective Conflict Management

### The observed, exogenous variables

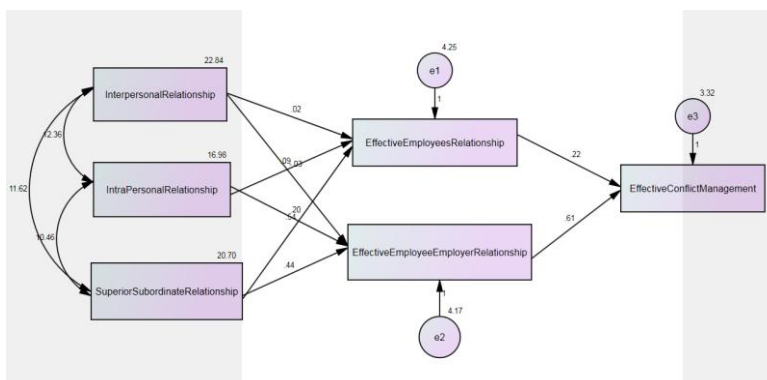
- Inter personal Relationship
- Intra Personal Relationship
- Superior - Subordinate Relationship

### The unobserved, exogenous variables

- e1 (Effective Employees Relationship)
- e2 (Effective Employee - Employer Relationship)
- e3 (Effective Conflict Management)

### Variable counts (Group number 1)

- Number of variables in your model: 9
- Number of observed variables: 6
- Number of unobserved variables: 3
- Number of exogenous variables: 6
- Number of endogenous variables: 3



Source: Primary Data

**Table 4 Major Model Fit Indices Summary**

Parameters	Acceptable values for Good Fit	Research Model values
GFI	>0.9	0.951
AGFI	>0.9	0.946
CFI	>0.9	0.966
RMSEA	<0.06	0.043
RMR	<0.10	0.044

The Goodness of Fit index (GFI) value was 0.951, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) value was 0.946 and Comparative Fit index (CFI) value was 0.966. All these values were greater than 0.9 indicating a very good fit. It was found that Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value was 0.043 (lesser than 0.06) and Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) value was 0.044 (lesser than 0.1).

**Discussion:** Good fit exists for research model.

### Conclusion

An organization comprises of various departments, consisting of numerous people of different designations. Hence there is always competition among co workers and it is very important to make sure that the competition is healthy. Letting ego take over sensibility while discussing a subject that is prone to have varied views would only result in dispute. Hence it is very important to listen, as it is always better in, listening to understand and not to reply. Also, it is the duty of management to present a system that negate the effect of conflict in work atmosphere. Conflicts can be avoided if there is a healthy relationship between the employees and also between the employees – employers. The strength in this relationship paves the way to establish the roles and responsibilities of the individuals which in turn provide an Effective conflict management based system in the organization.

### References

1. Robbins, S.P. (2005) Organisational Behaviour (11th ed.) New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.423. De Dreu, C. & Van de Vliert E. (1997) Using Conflict in Companies, London: Sage Publications.
2. Rivers, E. (2005) Management of difference and Conflict in Cpmpanies: A Guide for Busy HR Professionals. Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution.
3. Davis Keith And Newstron J. W (2003), "Conflict Management" from "Organizational Behaviour – Human Behaviour At Work", New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill Publishing House, pp. 311-330.