



EFFECTIVENESS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN MODERN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEM

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Abstract

Workplace conflicts are an inevitable aspect of organizational dynamics, directly influencing employee performance and overall productivity. This study examines the effectiveness of conflict management practices in modern industrial relations system and its impact on employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Adopting a quantitative research methodology, data was collected through structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS to identify key conflict triggers as well as resolution strategies. The findings indicate that poor communication, role ambiguity, and leadership styles are the primary contributors to workplace conflicts. Moreover, statistical analysis explicates a significant correlation between effective conflict resolution strategies and enhanced employee performance, emphasizing the critical role of structured conflict management in fostering a positive work environment. The study further highlights the importance of training programs, organizational policies, and leadership interventions in mitigating workplace conflicts. These insights contribute to the broader discourse on industrial relations and provide practical recommendations for organizations to implement robust conflict management frameworks, ultimately enhancing workforce harmony and productivity.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Employee Performance, Workplace Relations, Organizational Effectiveness, Quantitative Analysis, SPSS

Introduction

In today's industrial world, conflicts are an inevitable part of organizational dynamics, arising from significant disagreements or arguments over critical issues. With increasing workplace diversity, evolving management styles, and complex team structures, conflict management has become more crucial than ever. Effectively handling conflicts plays a vital role in maintaining a productive and harmonious work environment.

Recognizing this, the researcher conducted a study to explore workplace conflicts, their causes, and resolution strategies. This research helps in understanding and addressing various conflicts that arise among employees, ensuring smoother workplace interactions. The study aims to identify different types of conflicts, analyze resolution strategies adopted by employees, and assess the effectiveness of interventions in conflict management.

By examining workplace conflicts through employee insights, this study provides practical measures to mitigate conflicts, improve teamwork, enhance communication, and foster a healthier organizational culture. The expected outcome of this research is that employees will develop conflict resolution skills, reduce workplace tensions, and contribute to a more collaborative and efficient work environment, ultimately benefiting both individuals and the organization.

Review of Literature

Jielin Yin (2020) - "Team leader's conflict management styles and innovation performance in entrepreneurial teams". This article states the result shows one factor that may impact the relationship between a leader's Conflict Management Styles (CMSs) and team passion is Transformational Entrepreneurial Intelligence (TEI). Through the integration of team emotions research with the body of knowledge already available on conflict management in entrepreneurial environments, this study provides a new perspective on the dynamic nature of entrepreneurship. It underlines the benefits that might come from such successful conflict management techniques and underscores the need of handling conflicts in entrepreneurship well. All things considered, it clarifies the significance of TEI in molding the correlation between leaders' conflict resolution strategies and the degrees of enthusiasm in their entrepreneurial groups.

Uwa Kinsley Lazarus (2014) - "Conflict management strategies and employees productivity in a Nigerian State Civil Service". This study conducted in the Nigerian civil service focusing on the impact of different conflict management strategies on employee productivity. The study examined four conflict management strategies: collective bargaining, negotiation, avoidance, and imposition. The findings indicate that collective bargaining and negotiation had a significant positive effect on employee productivity, leading to increased productivity levels. Conversely, avoidance and imposition strategies were found to have a detrimental effect, significantly decreasing employee productivity.

Mba Okechukwu Agwu (2013) - "conflict management and employees performance in Julius berger Nigeria PLC. Bonny Island". This article in the International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM) highlights the importance of considering the interests of everyone involved, like employees and stakeholders, to prevent conflicts and boost worker productivity in businesses. By using a democratic approach to manage conflicts, the study found that businesses can see better employee performance. Interestingly, the study showed that whether you're a manager or not, these conflict management strategies work equally well for everyone. In simple terms, it shows that using fair and inclusive ways to resolve disputes can create a teamwork-driven atmosphere, leading to better results for the whole organization.

Hannah-Hanh D Nguyen (2012) - "Chinese employees' interpersonal conflict management strategies". This article discussed about conflict management, In Chinese role- plays, conflicts between supervisors and subordinates were usually resolved through direct and persuasive methods, but the results depended on factors like age, education, gender, region, and job experience. Older and more skilled communicators among Chinese subordinates tended to employ indirect and peace-preserving tactics when disagreeing with superiors. Respondents used a diverse range of conflict resolution techniques based on their individual traits when dealing with peer disputes. No universal plans or "best practices" were found and applied.

M Afzalur Rahim (2023), his study expresses "Managing conflict in organizations" by Taylor and Francis. This study teaches everyone in the organization the best methods to handle disputes effectively. It explains the reasons behind conflicts, how they show up, and the benefits and impacts they have on the organization. It's especially useful for people who want to handle conflicts constructively in their jobs and for students learning about how organizations work. This book helps readers understand how to use conflict theory in real-world business situations.

Margaret M Hopkins (2015), their study emphasizes "Managing conflict with intelligence: Abilities that make a difference" the Journal of Management Development. This study reveals how people's emotional intelligence levels are connected. It found that skills like controlling impulses, taking responsibility in social situations, and problem- solving are closely linked to how well people handle conflicts at work.

Swati Alok, Jayasree Raveendran, Anil Kumar Jha (2015), conducted research on "Process conflict management among Indian software employees: Prediction of conflict handling intention in fast changing global IT market using the theory of planned behavior" Workers in this Indian business view on conflict positively and aim to incorporate it into their work. The research helps professionals understand the different aspects of conflict process and develop effective ways to manage it. This knowledge can be handy for identifying and resolving issues. They use it to evaluate how employees handle difficult situations.

Suruchi Pandey (2015) - "Study on effect of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution style" in the Indian Journal of Science and Technology, in this study most of the people surveyed preferred to avoid resolving conflicts directly. The results also showed that women tended to have stronger emotional intelligence. This suggests that different individuals have different approaches to solving conflicts.

Devi Akella (2009), in this study "The Gandhian philosophy of conflict management" about workplace rights 14(4), This article talks about how satyagraha, a method of resolving conflicts peacefully, can be used to settle disputes in labor relations without violence.

Significance of the Study

This study gives a constructive data on causes of conflicts, various methods to resolve it and to improve the organizational outcomes. Conflict management measures given by the employees can make a better understanding among them. Managing conflicts brings healthy work environment, better understanding among each other, enhance productivity level, and develops confidence. It can also be a sign of strong commitment and emotional attachment. Thus, the strategies to resolve the conflicts are introduced to the employees for their better understanding about the problem and resolving it before the conflict arises. The development of effective strategies to manage the conflicts contribute to the overall well-being of both individuals and the organization. The study was conducted mainly to identify the type of conflicts, strategies to solve conflicts and to analyze the employees' behavior during the conflicts period. It also helps to relate employees' behavior through the conflict management strategies that are practiced in modern industrial relations system. Moreover, it improves employees understanding level, boosts team productivity, facilitates innovation, reduces stress, improves decision making, and enhances personal growth.

Methodology

Aim: The aim of this study is to explore the efficacy of conflict management measures adopted by employees in modern industrial relations system. It aims to investigate the strategies employees utilize to resolve conflicts, their outcomes, and its impact on organizational dynamics. Through this research, we seek to provide valuable insights into effective conflict resolution strategies which contributes to enhance organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction.

Objectives

- To find out the factors that creates conflicts in the industry.
- To know how conflicts affects the industrial relations in the industry.
- To find out the initiatives taken by the management to address the conflicts.
- To know the effectiveness of the conflict handling methods prevalent measures used in the industrial relations system.
- To find out the various strategies that can help to resolve conflicts in the modern industry.

Universe and Sampling: The respondents of this study were the employees of a top manufacturing industry in Hosur, Tamil Nadu. The total population of the industry is 750 employees. 50 respondents were selected as the sample size for this study. The researcher carried out the study using a simple random sampling technique to choose the respondents from the whole population.

Research Design: The researcher has adopted descriptive design for the study as it describes the measures used to manage conflicts in modern industrial relations system. It also provides valuable insights for understanding and summarizing phenomena but not establishes causality.

Analysis of Data

Gender and Various Dimensions of Conflict Management

Gender refers to the classification of living organisms, especially humans as male and female based on physical and physiological characteristics. It helps the research analyst in understanding how respondents are distributed across various gender categories. Nowadays, managing conflict and resolving it is very comprehensive. So the researcher tends to do this research. The results of the 't' test are shown in this table, which assesses the correlation between gender and different aspects of conflict management, such as the causes of conflict, its effects, management initiatives, the efficiency of conflict handling techniques, and conflict resolution tactics.

Table – 1

't' test between Gender of the respondents with regard to Various dimensions of Conflict Management

Sl. No.	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Statistical Inference
1	Factors that creates conflict			T = 3.609 P = 0.063
	Male Female	28.98 35.25	6.046 1.708	P < 0.05 Not Significant
2	Impact of conflict			T = 3.757 P = 0.058
	Male Female	28.78 35.75	7.108 2.500	P < 0.05 Not Significant
3	Initiatives taken by management			T = 3.450 P = 0.069
	Male Female	29.52 34.00	5.608 2.449	P < 0.05 Not Significant
4	Effectiveness of conflict handling methods			T = 2.879 P = 0.096
	Male Female	28.83 35.25	5.087 1.258	P < 0.05 Not Significant
5	Strategies			T = 2.492 P = 0.121
	Male Female	27.39 34.25	5.643 0.957	P < 0.05 Not Significant

The above table shows that there is a significant difference in the respondents' genders with respect to a number of conflict and management-related dimensions, such as the factors that lead to conflict, the impact of conflict, management initiatives, and the efficacy of conflict resolution techniques and strategies. The information shows that gender greatly influences attitudes towards conflict and how it should be handled.

Hypothesis

- **Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant difference between gender with regard to various dimensions of conflict and overall perceptions of conflict management.
- **Research Hypothesis (H1):** There is a significant difference between gender with regard to various dimensions of conflict and overall perceptions of conflict management.

Results: Since $p > 0.05$. There is no significant difference between Genders with regard to various dimensions of Conflict Management. Thus, the Null Hypothesis is accepted and Research Hypothesis is rejected.

Marital Status and Various Dimensions of Conflict Management

The t-test results are shown in this table, which looks at the correlation between the respondents' marital status (married or single) and several aspects of workplace conflict. Factors that lead to conflict, the effects of conflict, management initiatives, the efficacy of conflict-handling techniques, and conflict management tactics are among the dimensions examined.

Table – 2
't' test between Marital Status of the Respondents with regard to Various Dimensions of Conflict Management

Sl. No.	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Statistical Inference
1	Factors that creates conflict Married Unmarried	36.50 28.87	2.887 5.886	T = 2.207 P = 0.144 P > 0.05 Not Significant
2	Impact of conflict Married Unmarried	37.50 28.63	2.380 6.936	T = 3.243 P = 0.078 P > 0.05 Not Significant
3	Initiatives taken by management Married Unmarried	36.25 29.33	2.872 5.387	T = 1.738 P = 0.194 P > 0.05 Not Significant
4	Effectiveness of conflict handling methods Married Unmarried	36.50 28.72	2.646 4.893	T = 1.023 P = 0.317 P > 0.05 Not Significant
5	Strategies Married Unmarried	36.00 27.24	2.708 5.384	T = 0.828 P = 0.368 P > 0.05 Not Significant

The t-test results show, that there is no significant differences between married and single respondents in a number of workplace conflict dimensions, such as the causes of conflict, its effects, management initiatives, techniques for handling conflict, and conflict management strategies. Across all aspects, married respondents consistently reported higher mean scores, indicating that they view conflict differently or more intensely than their single counterparts. These results led to the accepting of the null hypothesis in favour of the research hypothesis, which holds that employees' perceptions of workplace conflict are significantly shaped by their married status.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference between marital status with regard to various dimensions of conflict.

Research Hypothesis (H1): There is a no significant difference between marital status with regard to various dimensions of conflict.

Result: Since $p > 0.05$. There is no significant difference between the marital status and various dimensions of conflict management. Thus, the Null Hypothesis is accepted and Research Hypothesis is accepted.

Table – 3
Cross Tabulation of Gender and Emotional Drain Due to Involvement in Conflict

Gender	Emotional Drain due to Involvement in Conflict					Total
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Male	7 (15.2) (100)	8 (17.4) (88)	7 (15.2) 8(7.5)	21(45.7) (95.5)	3 (6.5) (75)	46 (100) (92)
Female	0(0.00) (0.00)	1(25.0) (11.1)	1(25.0) (12.5)	1(25.0) (4.5)	1(25.0) (25.0)	4 (100) (8)
Total	7 (14.0) (100)	9 (18.0) (100)	8(16.0) (100)	22(44.0) (100)	4 (8.0) (100)	50 (100) (100)

The findings of the above table show that workplace disagreements can lead to emotional exhaustion, with differences based on gender. Among male respondents, more than two fifth (45.7%) said that conflicts make them feel emotionally tired, showing that almost half find it stressful. All female respondents also felt the emotional impact of disagreements, one fourth (25%) said conflicts affect them a lot, while another 25% had no opinion. Overall, more than two fifth (44%) of respondents believe that workplace conflicts

lead to emotional tiredness, affecting both men and women. This highlights the importance of improving conflict resolution methods and emotional support for a healthier work environment.

One-Way Analysis of Variance (Anova) on Conflict-Related Factors by Domicile of Respondents

The one-way ANOVA results for variables associated with workplace conflict among respondents who live in urban, town, or rural areas are displayed in this table. The aspects that are examined comprise the causes of conflict, the consequences of conflict, management initiatives, techniques for addressing conflict, and approaches to conflict resolution.

Table – 4
One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Conflict-related Factors by Domicile of Respondents

Sl. No	Source	SS	df	MS	Mean	Statistical Inference
1	Factors that creates Conflict					F = 3.921
	Between Groups	257.194	2	128.597	G1 = 28.57	P = 0.027
	Within Groups	1541.286	47	32.793	G2 = 32.00 G3 = 36.50	P < 0.05 Significant
2	Impact of Conflict					F= 3.185
	Between Groups	294.994	2	147.497	G1 = 28.52	P= 0.050
	Within Groups	2176.226	47	46.303	G2 = 29.75 G3 = 37.50	P< 0.05 Significant
3	Initiatives takenby Management					F= 4.272
	Between Groups	231.875	2	115.938	G1 = 29.05	P= 0.020
	Within Groups	1275.405	47	27.136	G2 = 31.75 G3 = 36.75	P< 0.05 Significant
4	Conflict handling methods					F= 6.250
	Between Groups	277.565	2	138.783	G1 = 28.38	P= 0.004
	Within Groups	1043.655	47	22.205	G2 = 32.25 G3 = 36.50	P< 0.05 Significant
5	Strategies					F= 7.005
	Between Groups	371.487	2	185.743	G1 = 26.83	P= 0.002
	Within Groups	1237.333	47	26.326	G2 = 31.25 G3 = 36.25	P< 0.05 Significant

The above table analysis shows that there are notable variations in conflict-related workplace characteristics between respondents from urban, town, and rural locations. Rural workers routinely received higher scores on all aspects, indicating that they see more variables that lead to conflict, more negative effects of conflict, and more management initiatives, techniques for addressing conflict, and resolution procedures. The fact that the p-values for each of these variables are less than 0.05 indicates that domicile has a significant influence on how employees perceive conflict at work. As a result, the research hypothesis is accepted, demonstrating that employee residence has a major impact on their opinions regarding workplace conflict and resolution techniques.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference among the domicile of the respondents with regard to conflict-related factors.

Research Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant difference among the domicile of the respondents with regard to conflict-related factors.

Result: Since ($p < 0.05$). There is a significant difference between the Domicile and various dimensions of conflict management. Thus, the Null Hypothesis is accepted and Research Hypothesis is accepted.

Karl's Pearson's Co- Efficient of Correlation Between the Department and Various Dimensions of Conflict Management

Understanding the relationship between age and various dimensions of workplace conflict is crucial in comprehending employee dynamics and organizational behavior. The table below illustrates Karl's Pearson's coefficient of correlation between the age of the respondents and several aspects of conflict in the workplace, which includes factors that create conflict, the impact of conflict, initiatives taken by management, conflict handling methods, and strategies to manage conflict.

Table – 5
Correlation between Department and Various Dimensions of Conflict Management

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Correlation Value	Statistical Inference
1	Factors that creates conflict	0.118	P < 0.05 Significant
2	Impact of conflict	0.052	P < 0.05 Significant
3	Initiatives takenby Management	0.384*	P < 0.05 Not Significant
4	Conflict handling methods	0.372*	P < 0.05 Not Significant

5	Strategies	0.241	P < 0.05 Significant
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The study examined the relationship between age and different aspects of workplace conflict using Karl Pearson’s coefficient of correlation. It found small but significant connections between age and employees’ views on the causes of conflict (0.118), the impact of conflict (0.052), and conflict strategies (0.241). However, age did not have a meaningful effect on opinions about management efforts (0.384) or dispute resolution techniques (0.372). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted for the areas with non-significant correlations, and the research hypothesis is accepted for the areas with significant relationships. Overall, age plays a role in how workers perceive certain aspects of conflict at work and the various dimensions of workplace conflict.

Research Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant relationship between the age of the respondents and the various dimensions of workplace conflict.

Results Interpretation

Result 1: For dimensions such as factors that create conflict, impact of conflict, and strategies, the correlations are significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the research hypothesis is accepted for these dimensions, and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Result 2: For initiatives taken by management and conflict handling methods, although there are notable correlation values, they are not significant ($p > 0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted for these dimensions, and the research hypothesis is rejected.

Work Experience and Challenges to Work Nature When Conflicts Unresolved

Chi- square Test:

Pearson Chi Square Value = 14.177a Degrees of Freedom = 12

Level of Significance = 0.290

16 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 24.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant association between work experience and challenges to work nature when conflict unresolved

Research Hypothesis (H1): There is no significant association between work experience and challenges to work nature when conflict unresolved

It was inferred that there is no significant association between work experience and challenges to work nature when conflict unresolved, since the p value (0.290) is greater than level of significance, 0.05. Thus, the Null Hypothesis is accepted and Research Hypothesis is rejected.

Results and Discussion

The findings reveal that gender and marital status do not significantly influence various dimensions of conflict management, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. However, domicile shows a significant impact on conflict management, supporting the research hypothesis. Additionally, factors contributing to conflict, its impact, and conflict management strategies exhibit significant correlations, indicating their relevance in conflict resolution. In contrast, initiatives taken by management and conflict handling methods show notable correlation values but lack statistical significance, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. Furthermore, no significant association is found between work experience and challenges related to work nature when conflict remains unresolved, as the p-value exceeds 0.05. These results suggest that while certain demographic factors influence conflict management, organizational initiatives and handling methods require further strengthening to enhance effectiveness in modern industrial relations system.

Suggestion

To Employers / Management

- Provide more platforms for open communication to enhance transparency and reduce misunderstandings.
- Clearly define employee roles and responsibilities to prevent confusion and workplace conflicts.
- Ensure employees have the necessary tools and resources to perform their jobs efficiently, reducing stress and frustration.
- Recognize and appreciate employees’ efforts regularly to foster a positive work environment and minimize conflicts.
- Promote cultural awareness and inclusivity to encourage respect and understanding among diverse employees.
- Offer conflict resolution training to equip employees with skills for handling disagreements constructively.
- Implement and consistently apply fair conflict management policies to build trust in the system.
- Foster a supportive and respectful workplace culture that encourages collaboration rather than unhealthy competition.
- Provide emotional and mental health support, such as counseling or stress management programs, to help employees cope with workplace challenges.
- Organize regular team-building activities to strengthen workplace relationships and reduce potential conflicts.

To Employees

- Communicate openly with management by sharing feedback and ideas to improve workplace relations and prevent conflicts.
- Participate in conflict management and personal development training to develop professional dispute-resolution skills.
- Engage with coworkers outside of work to build strong relationships that facilitate conflict resolution.
- Prioritize physical and mental well-being to manage conflicts with a calm and clear mindset.

- Take part in team-building activities to strengthen workplace connections and minimize misunderstandings.
- Be open to both giving and receiving constructive feedback, fostering a culture of mutual respect and open communication.

Conclusion

The research study on the effectiveness of conflict management in modern industrial relations system concludes that workplace conflict is a natural and unavoidable occurrence, and how it is managed can significantly impact both employees' satisfaction and organizational success. Effective conflict management creates a healthy and positive work environment, reduces stress and fosters better working relationships. Conflict management techniques enable employees to address and resolve disputes in a way that promotes teamwork, cooperation, and efficiency. The findings of the study highlights both strengths and areas for improvement in conflict management strategies, providing insights into better approaches for handling workplace disputes.

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