

## **Conflict and Conflict Management**

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**Abstract:** *Conflict cannot be avoided since it is an inevitable aspect of work teams. Conflict may be defined as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals. Conflict on teams is inevitable; however, the results of conflict are not predetermined. Conflict might escalate and lead to nonproductive results, or conflict can be beneficially resolved and lead to quality final products. Therefore, learning to manage conflict is integral to a high-performance team. Although very few people go looking for conflict, more often than not. Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills, and establishing a structure for management of conflict in organizational environment. This paper presents types of conflict describe the benefits and detriments of conflict and present the causes of conflict. Strategies are also presented to prevent and to effectively manage conflict.*

**Key Words:** *Interpersonal conflict, Intrapersonal conflict, Smoothing, Confrontation, Super ordinate goals*

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### **Concept of Conflict:**

As long as organizations continue to use work teams, conflict cannot be avoided since it is an inevitable aspect of work teams. Conflict is an outcome of behaviors. It is an integral part of human life. Whenever there is interaction there is conflict. Conflict means expression of hostility, negative attitudes, antagonism, aggression, rivalry, and misunderstanding. It is also associated with situations that involve contradictory interest between two opposing groups. It can be defined as a disagreement between two or more individuals or groups with each individual or group trying to gain acceptance of its view over others.

Conflict has been studied over centuries by many great minds. But a more systematic study has been possible only since the twentieth century (Schellenberg 1996). With the emergence of political anthropology as a special branch of social anthropology, marked by the publication of "African Political Systems" (1940), edited by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, that the study of conflict resolution became prominent. However, theoretical controversies over the subject of conflict and its resolution have survived a long history of the study. From the very outset, scholars do not agree upon whether conflict is a disjunctive process or sociation. Some scholars have contended that conflict has a divisive effect. For instance, Durkheim (cited in Sipova, 1989) considered conflict as an abnormal phenomenon. He used the term anomie or pathology to describe it. Similarly, Wilson and Kolb (1949, cited in Colser, 1964) believed that conflict has a disjunctive effect.

Many other scholars have repudiated this view. Park and Burgess (1921) and Simmel (1955), cited in Colser (1964) argue that every interaction among men is a sociation, so is conflict. Conflict is a means to solve and avert complete fission, thereby preserve some kind of unity. Similarly, Bohannan (1967: XI - XIV) characterizes conflict to be as basic as culture is in society, which possibly controlled and utilized profitably for better cultural development and maintenance of social order. Schellenberg (1996) states that conflict is neither bad nor good, but one of the essentials in human social life. Gluckman (1956), Gulliver (1963) and Nanda (1994) agree with the view that conflict is a part of social life and society is impossible without it. Further, Marxian view conflict not only as built into the social system but also as the primary stimulus for social change (Seymour-Smith, 1986: 51).

Robbins (2005) has defined as "a process that begins where one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affects something that the first party cares about". This is a very apt definition emphasising that conflict is about perception not necessarily real hard facts. It points to the emotional nature of conflict, by referring to a word like "care". It states that more than one party is involved and that there may be future component attached to it.

Conflict means to be in opposition to one another. It refers to disagreement between people or members of organisations. Such disagreement is inherent in relationships between all human beings. Larfela (1988) concurs with this view when he defines conflict as: "Part of the competition process that is basic to the survival and successful evolution of the species, homosapiens and to his search for new and better ways to cope with limited resources and stress from environmental change." According to this definition it is obvious that conflict

always exists between people, groups of people, members of an organisation and between organisations which are related in one way or another.

Organizational conflict is defined as the behaviour intended to obstruct the achievement of some other person's goals. Conflict is therefore a product of incompatibility of goals and it arises from opposing behaviours. According to Lewis, French and Steane (1997), conflict within an organisation is inevitable. This is a consequence of boundaries arising within any organisational structure, creating separate groups that need to compete for scarce resources.

Rivers (2005) published research that suggested that the mere fact of categorisation (between us and them) is enough to cause conflict. They term this the social identity theory. This categorisation is exactly what happens when groups are formed; representing different functions within an organisation and it supports the notion that is inevitable. (Lewis, 1997).

Appelbaum, Abdallah and Shapiro (1999) further builds on this by stating that conflict is a process of social interaction. It involves a struggle over claims to resources, power and status, beliefs, preferences and desires. Darling and Walker (2001) link this idea to the organisation by stating that, even when conflict is a natural phenomenon in social relations, it can nevertheless be managed within companies.

**Transition in views of Conflict:** There has been a transition in the way conflict has been viewed over time.

- **Traditional School View of Conflict:** This school views conflicts as bad for organizations because it is disruptive, unnatural and represents a form of deviant behaviour which, should be controlled and changed if the objectives of the organization is to be achieved. To the traditional school, conflict situations can have tragic consequences for some people and adverse effect on organizational performance. Both the scientific management approach and the administrative school of management relied heavily on developing such organizational structures that would specify tasks, rules, regulations, procedures and authority relationships so that if a conflict develops than these built in rules and regulations would identify and correct problems of conflict. General view was that conflict indicates a malfunction within a group and must be avoided. This view proposed that very little value ever stemmed from conflict Robbins (2005) called this the traditional view.
- **Human Relation school view of Conflict:** According to this similar theory that conflict is avoidable by creating an environment of goodwill and trust. Management has always been concerned with avoiding conflict if possible and resolving it soon if it occurs.
- **The Inter actionist school view of Conflict:** Townsend (1985) sees conflict as a sign of a healthy organization up to a point. A good manager according to him, does not try to eliminate conflict, he tries to keep it from wasting the energies of his people... if you are the boss and your people fight you openly when they think you are wrong, that's healthy. If your people fight each other openly in your presence for what they believed in - that's healthy. But keep all the conflict eyeball to eyeball. Robbins (1998) believes that conflict is a positive force and necessary for effective performance. This approach encourages a minimum level of conflict within the group in order to encourage self-criticism, change and innovation and to help prevent apathy or too great a tolerance for harmony and the status quo. Conflict is an inevitable feature of organizational life and should be judged by its on performance.
- **Integrationist school view of Conflict:** This is the most recent perspective and explicitly argues that some conflict should not only be seen as good or bad but rather that some conflict is absolutely necessary for a group to perform effectively (De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997).

**Forms of Conflict in Organisations:**

Conflict can take on any several different forms in an organisation, including interpersonal, intrapersonal, intergroup, intergroup and interorganisational conflicts. It is important to note that the prefix inter means "between" whereas the prefix intra means "within".

- **Interpersonal Conflict:** Interpersonal conflict emphasizes the interaction of human factors in an organization. Here we are concerned with these factors as they appear in a dyadic relationship. Conflict between people can arise from many individual differences, including personalities, attitude, values, perceptions and other differences. It may be substantive or emotional or both. Two persons debating each other aggressively on the merits of hiring a job applicant is an example of a substantive interpersonal conflict. Two persons

continually in disagreement over each other's choice of work attire is an example of an emotional interpersonal conflict.

- **Intrapersonal Conflict:**

Intrapersonal conflict is internal to the individual (though its effects can profoundly influence organizational functioning) and is perhaps the most difficult form of conflict to analyze and manage. Intrapersonal conflict is basically a conflict between two incompatible tendencies. It arises when a stimulus evokes two different and incompatible tendencies and the individual is required to discriminate between these tendencies. In such a situation it is common for individuals to experience frustrations and to allow their conflict situation to be expressed in a range of behavioural strategies ranging from apathy and boredom to absenteeism, excessive drinking or destructive behaviour. If such behavioural consequences are to be avoided, then it is essential to diagnose individual perception and utilize some techniques that would reduce anxiety-eliciting stimuli and increase consonance between individual behaviour and organizational requirements. Intrapersonal conflicts often involve actual or perceived pressures from incompatible goals or expectations of the following types: Approach–approach conflict occurs when a person must choose between two positive and equally attractive alternatives. An example has to choose between a valued promotion in the organization or a desirable new job with another firm. Avoidance–avoidance conflict occurs when a person must choose between two negative and equally unattractive alternatives. An example is being asked either to accept a job transfer to another town in an undesirable location or to have one's employment with an organization terminated. Approach–avoidance conflict occurs when a person must decide to do something that has both positive and negative consequences. An example is being offered a higher paying job whose responsibilities entail unwanted demands on one's personal time.

- **Intergroup conflict:**

Intergroup conflict occurs among members of different teams or groups can also have substantive and/or emotional underpinnings. Intergroup conflict is quite common in organizations, and it can make the coordination and integration of task activities very difficult. The classic example is conflict among functional groups or departments, such as marketing and manufacturing, in organizations. The growing use of cross-functional teams and task forces is one way of trying to minimize such conflicts and promote more creative and efficient operations.

- **Intragroup Conflict:**

Conflict that occurs within groups or teams is called intragroup conflict. There are two types of intragroup conflict: Task conflict and Relationship conflict. Task conflict is a perception of disagreement group members or individuals about the content of their decisions and involves differences in viewpoints, ideas and opinions. For example task conflict about the distribution of resources, about procedures or guidelines and about the interpretation of facts. Relationship conflict is a perception of interpersonal incompatibility and includes annoyance and animosity among individuals.

- **Interorganisational Conflict:**

Conflict that occurs between two or more organisation is called interorganisational conflict. Competition can heighten interorganisational conflict. Corporate take over's, mergers and acquisition can also produce interorganisational conflict.

Ikeda observed that organizational conflict involves interpersonal conflicts with colleagues or supervisors, or intergroup conflicts within different sections of an organization. There are two essential types of conflict in organizations: vertical and horizontal. Vertical conflict occurs in groups of different hierarchical levels, such as supervisors and salesmen, whereas horizontal conflict occurs between individuals of the same level, such as managers in the same organization. In the vertical conflict, differences in status and power between groups are in general larger than in the horizontal conflict because these aspects tend to equalize in equivalent hierarchical levels. When vertical conflict takes place between operational workers and administration, their sources refer to: (i) psychological distance: workers don't feel involved in the organization and feel that their needs are not met; (ii) power and status: workers feel powerless and alienated; (iii) differences in value and ideology: this difference represents underlying beliefs on objectives and goals of an organization and; (iv) scarce resources: disagreements regarding benefits, salary and work conditions.

In vertical conflict, apparently individuals in lower organizational level seek to avoid conflicts with higher hierarchical levels. Pondy observed that it is expected that the top management peers perceive more conflict internally between their groups than those of lower position. This happens because of the following

reasons: (i) people in higher hierarchical level, rather than the lower ones, are engaged in non-routine activities and development of politics, where orientation for the actions are less clear and chances for disagreement, bigger and; (ii) people in higher hierarchical level, rather than the lower ones, are probably less flexible in their points of view. Hence conflict resolution is more difficult. Considering the vertical conflict, research examines the short-term and long-term effects of perceived fairness in organizational conflicts between employees and supervisors. Employee's fairness is important in the resolution of organizational conflicts. When employees realize that there was fairness in the conflict resolution, the bond between the groups strengthens. Perceived and distributive fairness significantly enhances job satisfaction, positive organizational commitment and satisfaction with outcome of conflicts.

### **1. Sources of Conflict**

Throughout the history of the study of conflict, whether the aggressive behavior is an inborn human quality or a reaction to social, political and economic factors is where lay the controversy among the scholars (Nader, 1968, Collier, 1975, Tadesse, 1988, 1994). Some scholars have agreed that the causes of conflict are deep rooted in our biology. Schellernberg (1996) describes such an approach as individual characteristic theory that focuses on the individual and his acts, rather than the context of the act. This view of conflict has its root in the work of Freud, who believed that violence is rooted in our basic nature as animals. Human conflict is inevitable not because it is part of social life, but for it is a biological fact lying within us all. Later writers have used Freud's assertion, too. Nineteenth century social Darwinists stressed the role of competition and conflict in all human societies. Taking the idea of the "survival of the fittest" as a basis, they analyzed conflict as part of a universal struggle urged by inborn aggressive tendencies. The new theoretical perspective under the name of ethnology also supports Freud's view. This approach, according to Schellenberg (1996: 43) emphasizes the genetic instance of social behaviors. Ardrey (1961, 1966) and Lorenz (1963, 1966) cited in Tadesse (1988) and McCauley (1990), who argue and popularize that human violent behavior is inherited, were representatives of this approach. Tadesse (1988) further illustrated that a given society or individual persons could be peaceful and/or violent across time and circumstances. Anthropologists have effectively used these ethnographic works to refute the biologically based explanation of the sources of conflict and show its inadequacy.

Even those who have challenged the innate nature of human aggression have taken different paths to treat the sources of conflict. Whether or not material ends are the final causes is another point of debate. According to Roberchek (1990), ecological functionalists (for instance, Harris, 1972, Gross, 1975, Ross, 1978, Ferguson, 1984) assert that material causes are the final arbiter of human behavior. Opposing this view, Gibson (1990) argues that the materialistic and deterministic final cause argument is inadequate to explain the causal dynamics of particular conflicts. It is unable to link material cause with cultural elements, and it leaves no room for consideration of human decision-making.

Katz identifies three sources of conflict. These are: (1) structural conflict (conflict arising out of the need to manage the interdependence between different organizational sub-units), (2) role conflict (conflict arising from sets of prescribed behaviour) and (3) resources conflict (conflict stemming from interest groups competing for organizational resources). Robbins identifies three sources of organizational conflict and indicates that an understanding of the source of a conflict improves the probability of effective conflict management. The main factors which serve as sources of conflict are identified as (1) communicational (conflicts arising from misunderstandings etc.), (2) structural (conflicts related to organizational roles), and (3) personal (conflicts stemming from individual differences). Methods of conflict management which are appropriate in one case may not necessarily be appropriate when applied to a conflict generated from another source. Different perspective which traces the source of organizational conflict to the unit of analysis involved. Units of analysis are the parties to a conflict. They perceive, initiate and sustain a conflict. Their characteristics specify the conditions which affect the course of a conflict and determine the mode of its management. Thus, we have conflicts that originate in the individual person, conflicts that have their basis in the relationship between individuals, and conflicts that occur as a result of interactions between groups. In such a situation it is common for individuals to experience frustrations and to allow their conflict situation to be expressed in a range of behavioural strategies ranging from apathy and boredom to absenteeism, excessive drinking or destructive behaviour.

Jung declares that conflict is clearly associated with power and can emerge when goal achievement of an organization is avoided. It is also believed that people are aware of the factors that generate conflicts such as scarcity, obstruction and incompatible interests or goals. Conflict can also be broken out when one party avoids the goal achievement of the other one. However, Jung opined that it is probable that causes for conflicts are not

highly correlated with goal and objective achievement in situations of routine behavior where procedures are well defined and environment is stable. In these circumstances, conflict variables are probably more related to personality, autonomy reasons, functional interdependence and status.

Some of the reasons that justify conflict escalation according to Ikeda AA, Veludo-de-Oliveira, Campomar MC, 2005 are: (i) as departments grow, people lose contact with other departments, or yet, members of a department start to think differently from other areas; (ii) the increase of emphasis in the financial measures as a tool for motivation for managers and the establishment of different profit centers inside an integrated business system end up creating many conflicts; (iii) the increasing rise of emphasis in functional specialization, politics of promotion and recruiting reinforce the isolation of departments, generating conflicts; (iv) today there is more room for workers to show criticism among each other, while this freedom of speech can be beneficial for society as a whole, in organizational context can be transformed into conflicts and (v) consumers demand lower prices, better quality in products and services, creating pressures so that departments work more effectively which can result in conflicts among departments.

Another reason pointed by Kumar N, Scheer L, Steenkamp J, 1995 for the occurrence of conflicts is the asymmetric degree of interdependence that affects the level of trust and commitment of the groups. Asymmetric interdependence occurs when parties have different levels of dependence among each other. That is, in one same group some individuals can depend on people that, in turn, show independence in relation to them. In total interdependence, on the other hand, individuals are totally dependent on one another. Kumar *et al* states those relationships with total interdependence have less conflict than the ones with asymmetric interdependence. For, conflict is smaller in highly dependent relationships because, in general, the dependent party conforms itself that it can not alter the situation and accepts the leader's power.

According to Capozzoli (1995) there are seven causes of conflict: (1) Team members bring culturally diverse values to their work teams. (2) Team members have different attitudes that result in different goals for team members. (3) Team members have different needs that are not met, which result in frustration that exacerbates conflict. (4) Various expectations of the team members are not met and result in conflict. (5) Team members have different perceptions that result in differing interpretations of the same information. (6) Limited resources often result in an increase in conflict. (7) Team members have different personalities that clash with each other.

(Rayeski and Bryant (1994) also suggest that conflict is driven by pressure and confusion creates stressful situations for the team and its members.

In addition Kezsbom (1992) did a study and identified conflict sources including: goal and priority definition, personality, communication (see also Twinsley 1997) politics, administrative procedures, resource allocations, scheduling, leadership, ambiguous roles/structure, costs, reward structure, technical opinions, and unresolved prior conflicts. This study showed the importance of how certain conflict sources compared to other conflict sources.

In any organization, there are many causes of conflicts; however, conflicts within an individual usually arise when a person is uncertain about what task is expected to do, if not clearly defined by the supervisor or the person in charge. Furthermore, if the tasks of individuals working as a group are not clearly defined by the management they will lead to more conflicts. Conflicts between individuals may result from role-related pressures. Conflicts would arise between individuals and groups if the goals were not specified for individuals within a group. Additionally, according to the literature, there are innumerable origins of organizational dispute and each produces its own variety of effects. In general, there are six major sources: (i) the interpersonal disagreements that arise when one person is experiencing individual stress; (ii) the problems resulting from role conflict, a condition that occurs when there is a clash over one's role in the organization; (iii) the power struggles that pit persons and groups against one another to achieve their own selfish objectives; (iv) the misunderstandings and disagreements from differentiation, i.e., the clashes that arise because people approach common problems from very different orientations; (v) the interdependence requirements for collaboration which, if not extensive and balanced between the parties, cause communication and interaction breakdowns which, in turn, if critical, lead to more intensive conflicts; and (vi) the external pressures from forces outside the enterprise that breed internal pressures as the system seeks to adapt but not to disrupt its internal order.

### **Managing Conflict:**

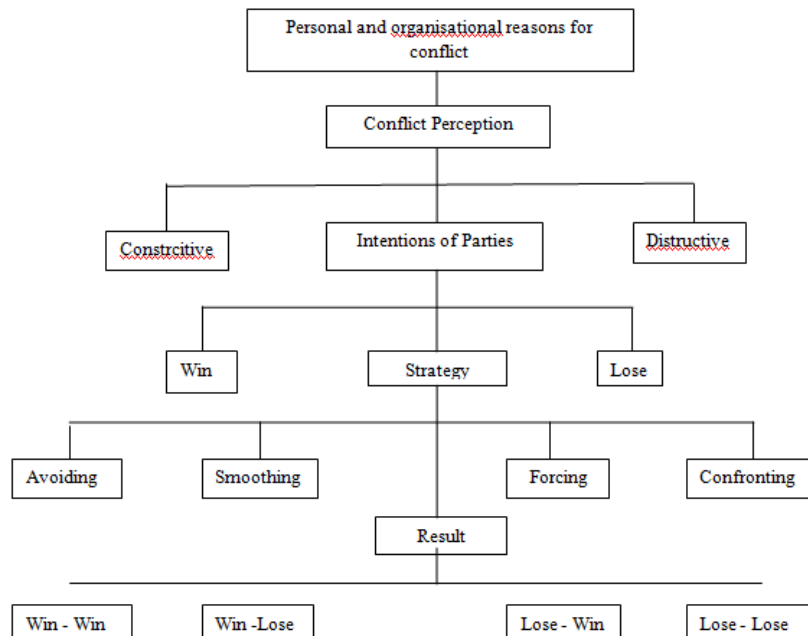
Anderson (1990) and Burton (1987) maintain that conflict management has a wide application. Burton (1987) goes on to state that the significant feature of conflict management is that it is an attempt by the status quo to manage the dispute, or to avoid escalation of the conflict. Conflict resolution refers to dealing with or

removing the cause of the conflict In this paper conflict management will refer to both strategies and approaches of containing (managing the conflict) as well as to strategies and approaches of resolving it.

Ways of managing organizational conflict are as varied as its causes, origins and contexts. The purpose of conflict management, whether undertaken by the parties in conflict or whether involving the intervention of an outside party, is to affect the entire structure of a conflict situation so as to contain the destructive components in the conflict process (e.g. hostility, use of violence) and help the parties possessing incompatible goals to find some solution to their conflict. Effective conflict management succeeds in (1) minimizing disruption stemming from the existence of a conflict, and (2) providing a solution that is satisfactory and acceptable.

All organizations, however simple or complex, possess a range of mechanisms or procedures for managing conflict. The success or effectiveness of such procedures can be gauged by the extent to which they limit conflict behaviour and the extent to which they help to achieve a satisfactory solution.

**Conflicting Resolution Model**



(Conflict Resolution Model Based on Newstrom and Davis)

Different people use different strategies for managing conflict. Usually we are not aware of how we act in conflict situations. We just do whatever seems to come naturally. But we do have a personal strategy; and because it is learned, we can always change it by learning new and more effective ways of managing conflicts. When you become engaged in a conflict, there are two major concerns individuals have to take into account:

**Achieving your personal goals** — Individuals are in conflict because individuals have a goal that conflicts with another person’s goal. Individual goal may be of high importance to him, or it may be of little importance to him.

**Keeping a good relationship with the other person** — Individuals may need to be able to interact effectively with the other person in the future. The relationship may be very important to individual or may be of little importance to him.

How important your personal goals are to you and how important the relationship is to you affects how you act in a conflict. Given these two concerns, it is possible to identify styles of managing conflict in an organisation are as follows:

**Avoiding:** The basic goal of the avoidance is to delay. Person would rather hide and ignore conflict than resolve it. This leads to the uncooperative and unassertive. Person tend to give up personal goals and display passive behavior creating lose-lose situations. Person believes it is easier to withdraw from a conflict rather than to face it. Avoiding strategy may help to maintain relationship that would be hurt by conflict resolution and very

effective way to affront conflictive situations at short term. Disadvantage may be conflict remain unresolved, overuse of the style leads to others walking all over them. Appropriate time to use this style when stakes are not high or issues is trivial, when confrontation will hurt a working relationship, when there is little chance of satisfying your wants, when disruption outweighs the benefit of conflict resolution, when gathering information is more important than an immediate decision, when others can more effectively resolve the conflict and when time constraints demand a delay.

**Smoothing:** Smoothing refers to the conciliation that occurs when one person or group is willing to yield to the other. Smoothing results from a low concern for ones group own interests combined with a high concern for the interest of other group. Smoothing conflict management style emphasis on human relationships. Individuals ignore their own goals and resolve conflict by giving in to others because they see the relationships as of the greatest importance while their own goals are of the least importance. Individuals smooth over the conflict out of fear of harming the relationship—their unassertive and cooperative behavior creates a win/lose situation want to be accepted and liked by others. Individuals think that conflict should be avoided in favor of harmony and that people cannot discuss conflicts without damaging relationships. Individuals are afraid that if the conflict continues, someone will get hurt and that would ruin the relation-ship. Advantage of Smoothing style is to maintain relationship but giving in may not be productive. Appropriate time to use this style is when maintaining the relationship outweighs other considerations, when suggestions/changes are not important to the accommodator, when time is limited or when harmony and stability are valued.

**Forcing:** It designates a situation in which one person or group attempts to acquire complete dominance. Individual do not hesitate to use aggressive behaviour to resolve conflict. Individual assume that conflict is settled by one person winning and one person losing and they want to be the winner and creating a win-lose situation. Winning gives a sense of pride and achievement. Losing gives a individual a sense of weakness, inadequacy or failure. If individual decision is correct a better decision without compromise can result. If individual decision is incorrect may bred hostility and resentment toward the person using it. This style is appropriate when quick decisive action is vital; on important issues where unpopular actions need implementing example. Cost cutting,

**Confronting:** Confronting style refers to strong cooperative and assertive behaviour. It is the win-win approach to interpersonal conflict handling. The person using confronting desire to maximize joint results. An individual who uses this style tends to see conflict as natural, helpful, and leading to a more creative solution if handled properly. Exhibit trust in others and conflict is resolve to the satisfaction of all. Confronting style is most practical to find an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised, when objective is to learn, to gain commitment by incorporating concerns into a consensus and to work through feelings that have inferred with a relationship.

**Organisation Structure based conflict resolutions:** Structure of an organisation provide fuel to create conflict situation. If conflict is not managed properly become dysfunctional or destructive. Following are the ways to manage structure based conflict:

- **Super ordinate goals:** An organizational goal that is more important to both parties in a conflict than their individual or group goal is a super ordinate goal. Goals cannot be achieved by an individual or by one group alone. The achievement of goal requires cooperation by both parties. Super ordinate goal converts a conflict between departments to friendly interactions, develops favorable attitudes and seeks to achieve solutions that are mutually satisfactory.
- **Reduce interdependence between groups:** Interdependency is one of the major causes of conflict. It is necessary to identify and clarify poorly defined and poorly arranged interdependencies through unifying workflow. This work flow can be designed either to increase the interdependencies or to eliminate them entirely. The other option could be to make the two units totally independent of one another.
- **Increase resources:** Conflict will occur whenever the wants and needs of two or more parties are greater than the some of the resources available foe allocation. This conflict can be reduced by planning ahead about the proper distribution of such resources instead of making haphazard and last minute allocations.
- **Mutual problem solving:** This is one of the most frequently used techniques for increasing collaboration. It requires the conflicting parties to come together, analyze and define the problem, understand each other's viewpoints and arrive at a rational and objective solution through mutual interactions.

- **Formal authority:** When two groups are conflicting each other, top management can use authority to resolve conflict. Management must use Management by Wondering around (MBWA) technique so management will come to know covert conflict in an organisation. The superior take up the role of an arbitrator and integrator.
- **Increase interactions:** Organisations should provide more opportunities to the employees in subunits to interact with each other. If people interact with each other not only would they develop better understanding of each other's way of functioning but also may discover common interests, problems and priorities. Appointment of Ombudsperson, Cross fertilization, merger, rules, procedures and policies also helps in resolving structure based conflict in an organization.

According to Derr, Coningency theory is one of the conceptual tools useful for managing organisational conflicts. He stated that there are three major conflict management approaches from which intervener can draw to formulate an approach appropriate for resolving dispute; Collaboration, bargaining and Power play. The appropriate use of these methods depends on the individual and organisational state. Collaboration involves people surfacing their differences and then work on the problems until they have attained mutually satisfactory solutions. This approach assumes that people will be motivated to expend the time and energy for such problem solving activity. Bargaining on the other hand assumes that neither party will emerge satisfied from the confrontation but that both through negotiation can get something they do not have at the start or more of something they need, usually by giving up something of lesser importance. One party generally wins more than the other; by the skillful use of tactical orders, he can get the maximum possible from the other side. Third approach is Power play, which differs from the other two approaches because its emphasis is on self interest. Whereas, in collaboration and bargaining the two sides come together to try to resolve their problems, when power is the dominant mode, the actions are unilateral or in coalitions acting unilaterally.

**Role of Bargaining and negotiations in resolving conflict:** It is impossible to avoid conflict in organisation therefore it is require to manage conflict so it become constructive and functional. Through bargaining and negotiations strategic conflict can be managed. The process of negotiation involves an open discussion of problem solutions and the outcome often is an exchange in which both parties work toward a mutually beneficial solutions.

There are five basic bargaining style are Conflict avoider, Accommodator, Compromiser, Problem solver and Competitor. Interactive communication depends on which bargaining style adopted by both the parties involved in conflict. Harvard negotiation project explained difference between three types of bargaining strategy:

<b>Soft Bargaining</b>	<b>Hard Bargaining</b>	<b>Principled Bargaining</b>
Both parties have friendly relation.	Both parties are competitive	Both parties are problem solver
Environment of trust.	Environment of distrust	Absence of trust and distrust
Both parties exchange offer	Both parties give threat	Both parties work towards mutual benefit.

There are two major approaches of Bargaining: distributive bargaining and integrative bargaining. Distributive bargaining is an approach in which the goals of one party are in direct conflict with the goals of other party. It is a competitive or win lose approach to negotiations. Integrative bargaining is an approach in which the parties focus on making possible to achieve their objectives. Integrative negotiation focuses on the merit of the issues and is a win-win approach. Both parties hold positive attitude, understand the needs of one another and focuses to establish long term relationship.

**The Role of Third parties in resolving conflict:** When the disputants are unable or unwilling to handle the conflict, third parties are apt to become involved and expected to assist in the conflict resolution. There are four types of third party negotiator:

- **Mediator:** Mediation is the most common form of conflict resolution. It involves an independent, impartial person helping two individuals or groups reach a solution that is acceptable to everyone. Mediation is not prescriptive. It helps the parties involved to make progress in resolving their differences. It does not make judgments or determine outcomes. Mediators do not have any formal authority. Success of mediation depends on both parties level of trust on mediator.



- **Arbitrator:** Arbitrator can employ any techniques or strategies used by a mediator. Arbitrator has option of dictating the solution of the conflict.

- **Conciliation and Consultation:** Rather than mediating or arbitrating the third party can provide conciliation (James, 1987; Robinson & Parkinson, 1985; Webb 1986) or consultation (Fisher). These both are less formal than mediation or arbitration and are more voluntary. There is evidence that consultation (Fisher, 1990) and conciliation (Blain, Goodman, Lowenberg, 1987; Trip, 1985) do help to manage conflict. Because of their non assertive nature.

**How to prevent future conflict:** Managers should develop diverse but appropriate strategies to resolve and manage conflicts as they arise before escalating to unmanageable level.

- Establish formal procedures – for dispute resolution, grievances and disciplinary issues
- Explain plans – link individual performance targets to the overall business plans so everyone feels involved.
- Listen – consultation is the key to involving employees in decision-making
- Reward fairly – pay is seldom far from people’s minds
- Work safely – think about use of computers, smoking, stress and drugs as well as noise, dust and chemicals.
- Value employees – how would most employees describe the culture within the organisation?
- Encourage initiative – think about job design and developing individuals
- Balance personal and business needs – Flexible working patterns help to improve the work-life balance of employees and the effectiveness of the business.
- Develop new skills – It is worth thinking about Invest in People (IIP) to promote training and communication.
- Build trust between employee representatives and management – do relationships add value to the organisation by working effectively to respond to change.
- Efforts should be made by the managers to occasionally stimulate conflict by encouraging divergent views and rewarding staff and unit/department for outstanding performance.
- Proper communication procedures should be put in place to resolve conflict. For instance, when any disagreements arise 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 recommendation on how to resolve the conflict.
- Efforts should be made by the management to organize seminars/workshops on organizational conflict management from time to time for the employees. This will enable employees learn about conflict and how it can be effectively managed for individual and organization effectiveness.
- Lastly, group interaction and activities should be followed up so as to ensure a degree of functionality compatible to conflicts. Positive conflicts will only be possible if particularities of the organization are analyzed.

**Conclusion:** Origination is social units divided into hierarchies and departments and individuals. Comparisons, Competition and conflicts between units and subunits always present in organisation. Conflict is omnipresent feature at each of the organisational levels. Conflict may be functional or dysfunctional consequences, it is essential for management to explore various methods and techniques of conflict management. Wide range of conflict management intervention can be utilized to deal with conflict at various organizational levels. Organizations should develop diverse but appropriate strategies to resolve and manage conflicts as they arise before escalating to unmanageable level.

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