Exploring the Influence of Conflict Management on Organizational Behavior Transformation

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of conflict management on organizational behavior transformation. This applied research uses a descriptive-correlation method for data collection, focusing on managers and senior experts from active export companies. A sample of 70 participants was selected for the study. Data were collected through a researcher-made questionnaire, whose validity was confirmed by experts and reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha. Demographic data and relationships between variables were analyzed using structural equation modeling in LISREL software. The results show that all conflict management strategies—competition, cooperation, avoidance, and compromise—significantly affect organizational behavior changes. Notably, the cooperation strategy emerged as the most influential approach in organizational behavior change.

Keywords: Organizational behavior, Conflict management, Management, Managers

Introduction

In today's fast-paced world, organizational change and adaptability are essential for sustained success. Managers must ensure that their systems and strategies evolve in response to environmental shifts. Organizational change is crucial for improving effectiveness, fostering growth, and enhancing overall organizational performance [1].

The term "change" encompasses various meanings, including transformation, development, innovation, and revolution, reflecting its dynamic and multifaceted nature [2-5]. In the ever-evolving landscape of today's business world, embracing change is fundamental for an organization's survival. Only organizations that can adapt to these changes will thrive in the long run [6]. The readiness of employees to adopt and accept change is a crucial factor in determining how effectively an organization can evolve. It reflects both cognitive and emotional preparedness to engage with specific plans aimed at improving the current situation [7-9].

Human capital has become a central focus for leadership and management research, as it is seen as an organization's most valuable asset and a competitive advantage. The presence of positive organizational behavior, built on cooperation and empathy, is a critical factor in organizational success across various sectors, including production, management, and education [10, 11]. However, the growing complexity of organizations and the diversity of individuals' thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions make conflict an inevitable part of organizational life. Differences in viewpoints and attitudes, as well as power dynamics, often give rise to conflict in collaborative environments [12-14]. Importantly, the existence of conflict does not inherently imply negative outcomes; when managed properly, conflict can be constructive and beneficial for the organization,

influencing positive organizational behavior [15]. Effective conflict management strategies can help mitigate destructive aspects while enhancing the positive impact of conflict on organizational behavior.

One key trait of successful leaders is their ability to select and implement appropriate conflict management strategies within their organizations [16-19]. Managing conflict does not simply preserve organizational harmony; rather, it equips leaders with the tools to address emerging challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and develop effective solutions [20-22]. Conflict management refers to the techniques that managers use to navigate and resolve conflicts, ultimately guiding them toward organizational and individual development goals. These strategies represent specific behaviors and actions taken by managers when dealing with conflict [23, 24].

Given the significant role of conflict in organizational dynamics, this study aims to explore how conflict management influences organizational behavior. The primary research question guiding this study is: Do effective conflict management strategies influence organizational behavior change?

Materials and Methods

This research is applied in nature and follows a descriptive-correlation method for data collection. The statistical population of the study consists of managers and experts from export companies, totaling over 200 individuals. Using Cochran's formula, with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 9%, the size of the sample was determined to be 70 participants. The sampling technique employed in this study was simple random sampling.

Data collection was conducted in two phases. To review the existing literature on the topic, written materials such as books, articles, and specialized journals were consulted. To gather the necessary data and assess the variables, a researcher-made survey was utilized. The validity of the survey was confirmed by subject matter experts. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of over 0.70, indicating that the instrument had adequate reliability.

For the analysis of demographic data, descriptive statistics were used, and to explore the relationships between the variables, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed using LISREL software.

Results and Discussion

The results show that 31.4% (N = 22) of the participants in this study are women, while 68.6% (N = 48) are men.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by age.

Age range	N	%
34-41 years	17	24.3
42-48 years	42	60.0
49-55 years	11	15.7
Total	70	100

According to the data presented in **Table 1**, the majority of respondents (60%) fall within the age range of 42 to 48 years.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by educational level.

Education level	N	%
Bachelor's	17	24.3
Master's	32	45.7
PhD	21	30.0
Total	70	100

Bartlett's test was conducted to verify the adequacy of the sample size. The results indicated that the KMO value is 0.836 and the significance level (Sig.) is 0.001. Since the KMO value exceeds 0.6, it confirms that the sample size is adequate for generalizing the findings to the broader population.

To assess the influence of each conflict management strategy on organizational behavior change, a second-order factor analysis was performed. The factor loadings for the dimensions are provided in **Table 3**.

As shown in **Table 2**, the largest group of respondents (45.7%) hold a Master's degree (MSc).

Table 3. The value of the factor load and strategies

Dimensions	Competitive	Cooperation	Avoidance	Compromise
Factor load	0.84	0.98	0.85	0.95
T-value	9.16	6.47	6.15	7.13

Based on the factor loadings, the cooperation strategy is identified as the most influential factor in driving organizational behavior change, followed by the avoidance, compromise, and competition strategies. Additionally, the T value exceeds 1.96, indicating that the model parameters and their paths are statistically significant. The results of the goodness of fit test are shown in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Factor analysis goodness of fit indices.

Fitness indicators	RMSEA	Chi- square/df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	NNFI	CFI	IFI
Amounts	0.57	2.51	0.81	0.82	0.91	0.91	0.92	0.92
Interpretation	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

The goodness of fit test evaluates the suitability of the data set. According to **Table 5**, the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio is 2.51, and the RMSEA is 0.57. Other fit indicators also support the model's appropriateness. Therefore, the measurement model is considered suitable based on these fit indicators, and all the factors discussed can be integrated into the model. Additionally, the model applies to the broader population.

Following the factor analysis, the impact of the factors on organizational behavior change was assessed using a one-sample t-test, with the results presented in **Table 5**.

Table 5. One-sample t-test results.

Factor	Hypothetical mean	t statistic	Significance level	Results
Competitive	3	12.48	0.001	It affects changing organizational behavior.
Cooperation	3	14.44	0.001	It impacts organizational behavior change.
Avoidance	3	12.87	0.001	It affects organizational behavior change.
Compromise	3	29.72	0.001	It impacts changing organizational behavior.

This study aimed to examine how conflict management strategies influence organizational behavior change. The results indicated that all conflict management strategies—competition, cooperation, avoidance, and compromise—significantly affect organizational behavior change, with the cooperation strategy standing out as the most effective.

Organizations are dynamic systems with forces that either promote or resist change. When driving forces outweigh the resisting ones, organizational change occurs. However, any effort to challenge an individual's established views and behaviors will likely be met with resistance, creating conflict. Since conflict can hinder change, managers must adopt effective conflict management strategies.

Various conflict resolution strategies, including competition, cooperation, avoidance, and compromise, have distinct uses in organizational settings [25-27]. For less important or less contentious issues, avoidance or compromise strategies may be employed. On the other hand, cooperation is essential for achieving mutually beneficial solutions, as both parties work collaboratively toward a win-win outcome [28]. In situations where decisive action is needed, the competition strategy may be utilized to quickly resolve issues [29].

This study confirms that the cooperation strategy is the most impactful in changing organizational behavior, followed by compromise, avoidance, and competition strategies. Effective cooperation helps maintain healthy relationships and ensures that solutions have a long-lasting impact on the organization's success. Understanding and applying conflict management strategies is vital for managers. Without this knowledge, managers may struggle to address and resolve conflicts, potentially stalling organizational growth and negatively affecting behavior. By mastering conflict management, organizations can reduce interpersonal conflicts and create a positive environment that fosters organizational improvement.

In line with Appelbaum *et al.* [30], who explored generational conflicts in the workplace, understanding and addressing generational differences can help organizations mitigate potential conflicts and enhance collaboration. Adjusting HR strategies to accommodate these differences can help retain top talent. Additionally, Tefera and Hunsaker [31] noted that organizational citizenship behaviors, especially in challenging times like economic stress or change management, are crucial in maintaining an organization's effectiveness.

While the study's methodology was robust, it did have limitations, including potential biases in the responses collected through questionnaires. For future research, it would be beneficial to examine the role of knowledge management and organizational learning in influencing organizational behavior change as mediating factors.

Conclusion

This research aimed to explore the influence of conflict management on transforming organizational behavior. The results suggest that all conflict management strategies—competition, cooperation, avoidance, and compromise—play a significant

role in driving changes in organizational behavior. Among these, the cooperation strategy emerged as the most influential in facilitating positive organizational change.

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