

# The Relationship between Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Effectiveness: A Case Study of Herat Municipality

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## Abstract

The general aim of this study is to “examining the relationship between conflict management styles and effectiveness in Herat Municipality in Afghanistan”. The methodology of the research is Descriptive – correlation, and it is practical in terms of aim. The method of sampling in this research is simple random sampling and the sample size is 140 (Female, N= 21 and Male, N= 119) employees of the Herat Municipality. The data gathering tools are the standard questionnaire of conflict management styles and a standard questionnaire of organizational effectiveness. For analyzing data SPSS 22 software is used. According to the results of this study, it can be seen that managers in conflict management in the Herat Municipality use more cooperation and reconciliation strategies. Compromise style also has many effects. The use of these styles signifies the constructive use of conflict. While the use of avoidance style does not affect conflict management, on the other hand, the use of competition style in conflict management has the opposite effect. Since there has been no research on this subject in Afghanistan so far, this research is a novel and new research in this regard that can provide the reader with new information about the topic, especially in Herat province. On the other hand, this research is the beginning of more research in this field for other researchers.

**Keywords:** Conflict Management, Organizational Effectiveness, Cooperative style, competition style, avoidance style, Compromise style, Conciliation style.

## Introduction

Conflict is everywhere. No two people are exactly alike, so individual differences are not unexpected. These differences can be due to conflicting values or any other factor that ultimately leads to conflict. Conflict is inevitable, but conflicts can be minimized or eliminated. Individuals, groups and organizations have unlimited needs and different values, but have limited resources. It is precisely this heterogeneity that leads to conflict. Conflict is not a problem in itself, but if not managed properly, it can be a problem. One of the main obstacles to achieving the goals of an organization is the existence of contradictions among individuals. Conflict is considered as a necessary and integral part of organizational life, which often comes about because of organizational characteristics. (Moghaddam, 2008).

Conflict is the difference between achieving the goals of the organization; today, workers are the main asset of organizations and their competitive advantage. The co-operation between these important resources is one of the most significant factors for success in all organizations. Conflict can promote creativity and innovation and change, or it may lead to waste and analysis of the organization's energy and resources. Therefore, the ability to manage conflicts in organizations is one of the most essential skills of managers that today's managers require it. Conflict is defined as one of the components of an organization that consists of elements of constructive conflict (functional), Non-constructive conflict, and balanced conflict (Nargesi, 2011).

## Statement of the Problem

To be effective, each organization must first and foremost be able to adapt to changing the environment in critical situations and to use its best resources to deal with any problem. The organization must be able to successfully deal with external threats, direct its forces to the main goal of the organization and constantly grow it with the preservation of its survival capabilities and, in other words, have organizational health.

(Sufi, 2012). It is hoped that we will achieve general insights into this research and provide practitioners with practical solutions. This research seeks to find that the managers of the municipality of Herat Province have what kind of conflicting management styles? What methods and styles are used to resolve conflicts and problems between themselves and employees? Which style will increase the effectiveness of the organization? Therefore, the researcher tries to identify and introduce the best styles by investigating “the relationship between conflict management styles and the organizational effectiveness of the Herat Municipality”.

### **Need and Scope**

Undoubtedly, managers perform a decisive role in increasing the effectiveness of municipalities, and "conflict management" in such organizations is of paramount importance. The existence of a relaxed environment with organizational health is one of the requirements of organizations. Experts believe that managers often use five styles (competition, cooperation, compromise, accommodating, and avoiding). The investigating of the researches carried out in this regard states that each conflict management style is in a useful and constructive position (Afshar, 2011).

In this research, the researcher tries to investigate the way conflict is managed among managers and the organizational effectiveness of employees, and the difference in conflict resolution styles among them is evaluated. Since, to date, there has been no this topic, Therefore, in this research, researcher decided to investigate the "relationship between conflict management styles and organizational effectiveness from the viewpoint of managers and employees of this organization to identify the role of conflict management styles on the effectiveness of the organization". Which by use of the results of this research, the researcher provide an appropriate solution to resolve conflicts in this organization?

### **Research Objectives**

1. To identify the relationship between conflict management styles and organizational effectiveness in Herat Municipality.
2. Identify the relationship between the cooperative style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat Municipality.
3. Identify the relationship between competition style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat Municipality.
4. Identify the relationship between avoidance style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat Municipality.
5. Identify the relationship between Compromise style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat Municipality.
6. Identify the relationship between Conciliation style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat Municipality.

### **Hypotheses**

H1: There is a relationship between conflict management styles and organizational effectiveness in the Herat Municipality.

H2: There is a relationship between the cooperative style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in the Herat Municipality.

H3: There is a relationship between competition style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in the Herat Municipality.

H4: There is a relationship between the avoidance style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in the Herat Municipality.

H5: There is a relationship between the Compromise style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in the Herat Municipality.

H6; There is a relationship between the Conciliation style of conflict management and organizational effectiveness in the Herat municipality.

## **Concept of Conflict**

The concept of conflict is one of the most controversial concepts. Psychologists and sociologists have provided various definitions of this concept. The conflict has been defined in some sources as a form of obstructive behavior and in others as conflicting goals. This concept can also be defined in another way: "Conflict is a process that results in a particular type of perception (whether real or unreal) that disrupts the desired balance and stability in an interdependent world."

Conflict is a natural occurrence and an inevitable phenomenon in individual and organizational life, and it arises for various reasons and in various forms. Due to the frequency and importance of this phenomenon in the individual, group and organizational life, the term conflict has been interpreted in different ways (Fayyazi, 2009).

In this section, briefly, the most important definitions given are:

According to Greenberg and Baron, the conflict is a process in which one side feels that the other party is doing activities that prevent him from achieving his interests and goals.

Daft also believes that conflict is a kind of behavior among organizational groups that they think that other groups are preventing them from reaching their goals and objectives (Daft2007).

## **Conflict Management Styles**

### **Cooperation Style**

The first style is the style of cooperation. This style is the opposite of the avoidance style. Here, cooperation involves trying to work with other people to find a solution that can achieve both individuals' goals. And consider the interests of the other side. The main feature of this style, therefore, is the participatory one. By using this style, the demands of both sides of the conflict are met. Choosing this style helps people work together so that everyone wins. Using this style, people are looking for solutions that fit their interests and maintain good and effective communications (Razaian, 2012)

### **Competitive Style**

The second is a competitive style, in which one pursues his goals and interests without regard to others. The characteristic of this method is that it is primarily non-cooperative and secondarily the power of the circuit. One uses whatever power seems to be appropriate to win in a particular situation. Choosing this style means that one party prioritizes its interests and desires over the other. Using such a style creates a win-lose situation (Gholizadah, 2010)

### **Avoidance Style**

The third style is the avoidance style. In this style, the individual pursues neither his interests nor his goals, nor the interests and goals of others, and is more likely to avoid or postpone or withdraw from the conflict situation. People who choose this style do not engage in conflict. They neither pay attention to their wishes nor pay attention to the wishes of others. Their motto is, "You make the decision, and exempt me (Robbins, 2012).

### **Compromise Style**

The fourth style is the style of compromise. This style is the opposite of the style of competition. The individual ignores his or her interests and goals to fulfill the goals and satisfy the needs of others. An important feature of this method is dedication, but it is still participatory. People who choose this style go beyond their desires and allow others to achieve their desires. Many people believe that having a good friendship is more important than anything else (Ashkan, 2004).

### **Conciliation Style**

The final style is the style of conciliation. The purpose of the conciliation is to find some acceptable measures and solutions for both parties to realize the relative interests and goals of both parties. In other words, this style of intuition is a style of competition and a style of compromise and is relatively participatory. Here, the parties agree to drop some of their positions and give the opponent some points. People use this style when they are not looking for all their wants and interests, which is enough to satisfy some of their needs. In this method, flexibility, exchange, and negotiation have a special place (Heidari, 2010).

## Literature Review

**Yi Feng Chen et al. (2005)**, concluded in a study entitled "Conflict Management for Effective Leader Relations in China" on the staff of Chinese companies with Japanese and American executives that the use of conflict resolution management strategy (cooperation and compromise ) In the above mentioned staff, the relationship between them is stronger and more productive than other strategies (competition, avoidance).

**Maurice Rothschild et al. (2006)**, in his research, "The Teachers' Conflict Management Techniques, The Role of Dependency and Classroom Management Effectiveness", stated that solversion strategy has a positive and significant relationship with the effectiveness of classroom management and years of continuous teaching.

**Postoma et al. (2006)**, in a study entitled "Conflict Sustainability Styles between Partners at the Level of American and Mexican Cultures", concluded that the use of conflict styles is a cultural phenomenon that varies from culture to culture.

**Hensel et al. (2006)**, in his research, entitled "Conflict Management as a Separate Subject", it was concluded that knowing individuals of the negative consequences of conflict would reduce organizational conflict and there was a significant relationship between conflict and organizational effectiveness.

**Strong limb (2007)**, in a study entitled "Investigating the Relationship between Conflict Management Styles and the Effectiveness of Girls' Secondary Schools in Mashhad District 4" concluded that the use of conflict management styles is dependent on the different situations of individuals which have need to be used from Various conflicts management styles.

**Dar gahi (2007)**, in a study entitled "Conflict Management and its Strategies," it showed that conflicts in organizations can have positive or destructive results, so that strategies and styles can be used to counteract them, and the most commonly used strategy is to Relationship to conflict management is a collaborative and collaborative approach based on trust.

**Reich and colleagues (2007)** in a study entitled "Realistic and Ideal Styles of Conflict and Job Depression in the Health Insurance Organization" concluded that compromise and avoidance had the greatest application and use among the 176 employees surveyed. Their research shows that depression and occupational fatigue are not related to conflict style.

## Research Gap

Since no specific research has been conducted on the different types of conflict management styles and their effects on the organization in Afghanistan, researcher would like to examine the implications of this issue and will generalize the results of this research.

## Research Methodology

**Sample:** The statistical population of this research is the employees of the Herat Municipality. In the present study, a total of 140 employees of this department were the population of the study and all 140 employees (Female, N= 19; Male, N= 119) were taken as the sample of the study.

**Questionnaire:** The data gathering tools are the standard questionnaire of conflict management styles and a standard questionnaire of organizational effectiveness. For analyzing data SPSS 22 software is used

## Inferential Statistics Data Analysis

### First sub hypothesis

*Study of the relationship between Cooperation Style and Organizational Effectiveness*

The Pearson correlation coefficient between these variables is presented in the table as below:

**Table 1: Pearson Correlations between Cooperation Style and Organizational Effectiveness**

		<b>Cooperation Style</b>	<b>Organizational Effectiveness</b>
Cooperation Style	Pearson Correlation	1	.647**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	140	140
Organizational Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.647**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	140	140

**\*\*.** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

According to the results in Table (1), the  $r = 0.647$ ,  $\alpha = 0.01$ ,  $\text{sig} = 0.000$  and  $n = 140$ . So the research hypothesis was confirmed and the null hypothesis was rejected. It indicates that there is a positive and strong relationship between Cooperation Style and Organizational Effectiveness.

### **Second sub hypothesis**

*Study of relationship between Competition Style and Organizational Effectiveness*

The Pearson correlation coefficient between these variables is presented in the table as below:

**Table 2: Pearson Correlations between Competition Style and Organizational Effectiveness**

		<b>Competition Style</b>	<b>Organizational Effectiveness</b>
Competition Style	Pearson Correlation	1	-.405**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.04
	N	140	140
Organizational Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	-.405**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.04	
	N	140	140

**\*\*.** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

According to the table, it can be seen that the significance level obtained for the Pearson correlation coefficient test of the second sub-hypothesis of the research is less than 0.05, thus confirming with 95% confidence the null hypothesis and the main hypothesis. The relationship is meaningful. Also, according to this table, the intensity of correlation between the two variables of competition style and organizational effectiveness is -0.405 which indicates the inverse relationship between the two variables.

### **Third sub hypothesis**

*Study of relationship between Avoidance Style and Organizational Effectiveness*

The Pearson correlation coefficient between these variables is presented in the table as below:

**Table 3: Pearson Correlations between Avoidance Style and Organizational Effectiveness**

		Avoidance Style	Organizational Effectiveness
<b>Avoidance Style</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	-.261**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.198
	N	140	140
<b>Organizational Effectiveness</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.261**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.198	
	N	140	140

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the results in Table (3), the  $r = -.261$ ,  $\alpha = 0.01$ ,  $sig = .198$  and  $n = 140$ . So the research hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted. It indicates that there is no relationship between Avoidance Style and Organizational Effectiveness.

**Fourth sub hypothesis**

*Study of relationship between Compromise Style and Organizational Effectiveness*

The Pearson correlation coefficient between these variables is presented in the table as below:

**Table 4: Pearson Correlations between Compromise Style and Organizational Effectiveness**

		Compromise Style	Organizational Effectiveness
<b>Compromise Style</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.652**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	140	140
<b>Organizational Effectiveness</b>	Pearson Correlation	.652**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	140	140

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the results in Table (4), the  $r = 0.652$ ,  $\alpha = 0.01$ ,  $sig = 0.000$  and  $n = 140$ . So the research hypothesis is confirmed and the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is a positive and strong relationship between Compromise Style and Organizational Effectiveness.

**Fifth sub hypothesis**

*Study of relationship between Conciliation Style and Organizational Effectiveness*

The Pearson correlation coefficient between these variables is presented in the table as below:



**Table 5: Pearson Correlations between Conciliation Style and Organizational Effectiveness**

		Conciliation Style	Organizational Effectiveness
<b>Conciliation Style</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.539**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	140	140
<b>Organizational Effectiveness</b>	Pearson Correlation	.539**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	140	140

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the results in Table (5), the  $r = 0.539$ ,  $\alpha = 0.01$ ,  $\text{sig} = 0.000$  and  $n = 140$ . So, the research hypothesis is confirmed and the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is a positive and strong relationship between Conciliation Style and Organizational Effectiveness.

### Main hypothesis

*Study of relationship between Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Effectiveness*

The Pearson correlation coefficient between these variables is presented in the table as below:

**Table 6: Pearson Correlations between Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Effectiveness**

		Conflict Management Styles	Organizational Effectiveness
<b>Conflict Management Style</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.794**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	140	140
<b>Organizational Effectiveness</b>	Pearson Correlation	.794**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	140	140

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the results in Table (6), the  $r = 0.794$ ,  $\alpha = 0.01$ ,  $\text{sig} = 0.000$  and  $n = 140$ . So the research hypothesis was confirmed and the null hypothesis was rejected. It indicates that “there is a positive and strong relationship between Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Effectiveness”.

### Finding and Suggestions

According to the analysis of the data, in this Part first, the findings of the research will be discussed and then based on the findings, some suggestions are made:

*There is a positive and significant relationship between cooperation style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat municipality.*

Therefore, it is suggested to take constructive steps by creating a supportive atmosphere for the creation of new ideas and consultation, promoting a dynamic group culture, effective use of people in decision-making culture, and avoiding mere traditionalism. In addition, managers try to listen to the conversations of the employees of the organization and look for a solution that will bring the opinions of both sides.

*There is a positive and significant relationship between reconciliation style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat municipality.*

Therefore, it is suggested that when things are not important to the manager but important to the other person, when the manager fails, when the ongoing competition is detrimental and the manager knows he will not win, and when coordination and consistency are of particular importance. Yes, use this style.

*There is a positive and significant relationship between reconciliation style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat municipality.*

Therefore, it is suggested that managers become more familiar with the basics of communication science and strengthen subordinate communication structures through the use of various forms of communication such as verbal, written, individual, and group. On the other hand, considering the results and results of the research and the fact that cooperation and reconciliation style has had the greatest impact on organizational effectiveness, it is suggested that managers increase collective participation and teamwork. In addition, managers try to negotiate with staff and solve some problems by getting some points and getting some points.

*There is an inverse relationship between competition style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat municipality.*

Therefore, it is suggested that despite the inherent characteristics and personality traits, to enhance the abilities, scientific level and insight of individuals, holding scientific conferences and seminars (in-service training) such as crisis management, conflict management can be a good way forward. Accurate identification of critical and conflicting intra-organizational situations through the management system can also be effective in this regard. Also, managers should not simply try to impose their demands on the other in conflicts and conflicts and pay attention to the other's views.

*There is no relationship between avoidance style in conflict management and organizational effectiveness in Herat municipality.*

Therefore, it is suggested that managers participate in group and group partnerships through sporting activities, sightseeing and pilgrimage to encourage group decisions.

## **Conclusion**

According to the results of this study, it can be seen that successful managers in conflict management in the Herat Municipality use more cooperation and reconciliation strategies. Compromise style also has many effects. The use of these styles signifies the constructive use of conflict. While the use of avoidance style does not affect conflict management, on the other hand, the use of competition style in conflict management has the opposite effect.

Examination of the results of this research and previous researches shows that using conflict management styles in different conditions has different effectiveness, and each conflict management style has high effectiveness in low conditions and low effectiveness in inappropriate conditions. The existence of a conflict in today's organizations is inevitable and can have a positive or negative function and should be dealt with realistically.

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