RESEARCH PAPER

Demographic Variables as Factors of Conflicts Faced by Teachers During Online Teaching at University Level

¹Asadullah*, ²Dr. Sidra Kiran and ³Dr. Uzma Batool

1. Ph. D Scholar, Institute of Education and Research, Muslim Youth University Islamabad, Pakistan
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Alhamd Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Alhamd Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan

| ***Corresponding Author** | asadlakho642@gmail.com |

ABSTRACT

Unsolved dispute and long term conflicts create a situation which cannot be handled appropriately. To keep peaceful in every facet of life disputes and conflicts should be resolved at its early stages and specially in higher educational institutions. Keeping in view the background of the study, researcher investigated "Demographic variables as factors of conflicts faced by teachers during online teaching at university level" and the objectives were; to investigate conflict faced by teachers during online teaching with respect to age, and to investigate the conflict faced by teachers during online teaching with respect to gender. Researcher used quantitative approach and Survey technique was used to collect the data. Population of this study was teaching staff of Private universities of Islamabad and random sampling technique was used. Results show that, teachers of the age of 51-65 and 65 & above have faced same conflict. In second objective, female teachers faced Substantive Conflict and male teachers faced Affective Conflict. It is recommended that efforts should be made by relevant authorities to eliminate the reasons of conflicts for quality education.

| **KEYWORDS** | Conflict Management Strategies, Online Teaching, University Level |

Introduction

Conflict is a natural process of everyday life. It arises from negative thoughts in the mind and dominating one's interest in any form. However, the conflict management style is a tool for resolving conflicts at any level or in any aspect of life in the university. Conflict management styles improve teacher performance. Peace of mind and contentment of spirit improves performance and helps build good future relationships between colleagues and peers (Farooqi et al., 2015).

According to Rahim and Bonama (1979), there are five ways of peacemaking to resolve conflicts, which are; Staying away, awesome, due, adding and trading off style. This strategy can help resolve conflicts better than retaliation and conflict-for-conflict conflict (Kiran & Kayani. 2019).

Conflicts are faced at every step of life. Conflict management styles adopted by teachers, especially in the educational field, certainly enhance the relationship between students and teachers. Conflict management is also important for children with disabilities because their problems are more delicate than normal children. Online education of children with disabilities equally requires a good conflict management

strategy/style to get them out of the previous challenging state of mind (Kayani & Kiran., 2019).

Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon that every human being has to face on a regular basis in any workplace, i.e. educational institution, job, business and social life. These experiences make people more difficult to deal with such situations, and cause increased tolerance. However, in order to deal with these situations in daily life and live in society, everyone must learn to manage these conflicts well. Conflict management can be solved in different ways through the learned past experience of the scholars. Your own experience will definitely help in some situations. According to Chakwora (2014), some conflicts, called functional conflicts, are considered positive, as the same enhance performance and highlight weaknesses. However, dysfunctional conflict is that which interact between groups that harms organization or create hurdles in the achievement of goals or objectives (Kiran et al., 2019).

According to study, most conciliatory and integrative conflict management strategies were used by the conflict managers of the selected educational institutions. However, the conflict management style used during online teaching and learning processes can be careful and varied, due to the nature of the stakeholders' dealings. Some timed response in short form by teachers can cause great anxiety and on the other hand long statement without physical cues may not satisfy the respondent due to misunderstanding and facial expressions (Kiran & Kayani., 2020).

Integrating style, Obliging style, Dominating style, Avoiding style, Compromising style are some of the conflict management styles, discussed in detail by Farooqui et al., (2015). All management styles define solutions in different ways. Some are useful to afford the requirement of conflict managers, some tend to be useful to the conflict person and some are useful to the organization (Farooqi et al., 2015).

One of the various conflicts teachers face is organizational politics. The effects of organizational politics not only create differences in categories of students but also affect the performance of teachers. Conflict management of politics by teachers can be dealt with by avoiding involvement in these activities. All decisions can be made purely on merit. Organizational politics has a significant influence and relationship with the performance of university teachers. Universities play an undeniable role in the grooming of society. They not only shape the way society thinks but also create a visionary and imaginative innovator (Ahmed, S., Farooqi, M. T. K., & Iqbal, A., 2020).

Literature Review

Conflicts

During the discussion it was found that conflicts run as a cycle and its effects are triggered. Later these effects may recur which in turn increase. After cycling, the conflict process enters different perspectives. When conflict continue, rise or fall down, the disputants do their best to manage and manage it. Generally, conflict definition is a procedure under which one party recognize that its benefit are being adversely affected by another party (Kiran, 2021).

Aguba, (2009) refers to conflict as a effort or contest. At the time, staff and executive have well-suited, contradictory or conflicting views on issues, which can lead to conflict. He said, it is impossible to search industrialized culture exclusive of industrial

conflicts and stressing. Japan, known as the mecca of industrial harmony, also faces the elements of industrial conflicts in one or another form.

In summary, organizational conflicts present a three-layered landscape, including Organization, conflict and conflict management. Conflict management is a continuous process. Aim is to allow and restrain numerous voices and explanations in institution, which reverberate with crucial conversation studies.

Types of Conflicts

Affective Conflict

This conflict is referred to as "psychological conflict (Ross & Ross, 1989) relationship conflict Jehn (1997a) and emotional" emotional conflict Pelled et al., (1999) interpersonal conflict (Eisenhardt et al., 1997). In this conflict, two involved parties have interpersonal issues mainly based on anger, frustration, and other negative feelings (Kiran, 2021).

Substantive Conflict

This conflict transpire when the parties involved have disagreements over opinions and ideas related to the task. Jehn (1997b) define this conflict as "disagreements among group members' ideas and opinions about the task being performed, such as disagreement regarding an organization's current strategic position or determining the correct data to include in a report". The difference between affective conflict and substantive conflict is the first one is related to emotion while the other one involved business related issues (Kiran, 2021).

Institutionalized Conflict

When explicit rules are followed in an organization the institutionalized conflicts occur, whereas not following proper rules and regulations may result in non-institutionalized conflict (Kiran, 2021).

Realistic Conflict

Non-realistic conflict is a natural consequence when a party releases tension, ignorance, hostility, error and so on. Whereas, a realistic conflict occurs when there are goal oriented and rationale disagreements such as tasks, goals, values and means and ends (Kiran, 2021).

Conflict Management Styles

In a study by Enver, et al., (2009) discussed in detail, 5 conflict management styles with reference of other scholars;

Integrating style

High concern for both i.e. self & others is characterized by sharing information openly, resolving disputing beneficially, and making each effort to reach a resolution which could be mutually satisfactory (Rahim, 1992).

Obliging Style

This style is considered as less concern for self one and more concern for opponent. focuses on defending and maintaining interaction rather than reaching termination that satisfy the persons own concerns. In a situation where other party is right and dispute is very vital to the opponent party. This is more sensible to use a dutiful approach. When a party is in weak position and it is believed that abandoning the conflict will lead to much favorable results and solution. In this situation it is suitable to practice this approach (Rahim, 2002).

Dominating style

The label as "competition" is recognized as a win-lose strategy. This style is appropriate to ignore the requirements and hope of opponent party and self one interests, through power tactics, when matters of conflict engage usual matters or need a quick judgment (Rahim, 2002).

Avoiding style

This style provide results with some concern for self one or those of others. At the time, when issue in dispute is significant and needs immediate decision-making duty, withdrawing from the dispute may have detrimental consequences for all parties (Rahim, 2002).

Compromising style

It reflects a reasonable concern for a persons self interests and a reasonable concern for other persons interests. Results which can be mutually agreed upon by both parties, is a desired approach for resolving conflict. It makes sense to use this approach when, both side parties have same power position and cannot reach consensus. The main position in use of this approach is that, it fails in identifying actual, difficult troubles (Rahim, 2002).

Conflicts defined by researchers

According to Kreisberg (1973), conflict as "a relationship between two or more persons who think that their objectives are conflicting". Other view of conflict is that, conflict may be not be discouraged but, "the goal of entity should be to manage rather than get rid of conflict" (Huber, 1986). inappropriateness of ambition is a prerequisite for conflict, the conflicting positions between conflicting groups. Conflict situations also arise in case of an chance for an obstacle in the goal. Conflict can take different shape and evident itself at various stages.

There are many features, which include intrapersonal, interpersonal and social, by which, conflict has been researched. A personal dispute occurs due to difference of opinion with one. Conflict has been researched by psychologists and personality theorists. Interpersonal conflict directs to conflicts that occur between peoples. Previous researchers in the relevant topics state that, reasons of conflict at the level of international are war and peace. Interpersonal conflicts plays significant role in valuable direction (Northouse, 2012).

Conflict Management

According to Rabie (1994), who is also a supporter of conflict management, arguing, "conflict can never be eradicated; it can only be handled to reduce its negative effects, reduce its strength and humanely can be done to make possible its constructive role in improvement. Conflict management & resolution is not a usual function of the organization but is frequently present & managed. Community is aware of this truth when dealing with conflict. Hence, conflict management styles, concern for achieving some ones' goals and other person's own goals. Conflict management is over and over again overlooked as an important aspect of the researcher as well as school principal. Conflict management is a philosophy and a set of skills that persons and groups understand, accept and as a result, schools try to deal conflicts whenever they arise.

An examination of conflicts in various institutions shows, they decisively or adversely influence the achievement of organizational objectives. Now and again struggle can encourage cooperation, promote objective success in any establishment if properly handled. Then again, clashes between staff, understudies, foundation experts and groups, if not monitored closely, can go to loss of life, destruction of property and distraction of routine academic practices. Existence of any such foundation, therefore, depends to a large extent on the growth of improved methods of conflict resolution (Aja, 2012).

Conflict Management Strategies

An integrative style is characterized by high concern for self & others, sharing information openly, resolving differences fruitfully, and making each effort to reach a result that is equally acceptable (Rahim, 1992). This approach is much desirable because it is more probable to result in a win-win resolution, especially in a circumstances recognized with long-term dependence on other party. (Aycan et al., 2000; Pruitt and Carnevale, 1993). Furthermore, this integrative style also reduces the intensity of job conflict and relationship conflict (Friedman et al., 2000).

The obliging strategy, with less worry for self and more concern for others, focuses on defending and maintaining affairs rather than reaching a conclusion that satisfies the one's own concerns. When the opponent party is correct and the issue in dispute is very significant to the other party. This is more sensible to use a dutiful approach. When a position of a party is weak and it assumed that abandoning conflict will lead to more valuable outcomes, it is appropriate to use this approach (Rahim, 2002).

Dominating strategy, is the label of "competition" is recognized as a strategy of win-lose. Ignoring the requirements and hope of the other party and pursuing one's own benefit by power strategy is appropriate when the conflict issues involve usual matters or need urgent making of decision. (Rahim, 2002).

Avoiding management strategy give results from having small concern for either interest of self or other one's. At the time, when issue of conflict is significant and needs taking on the responsibility of speedy making of decision, withdrawing out of conflict could cause injurious results for the party (Rahim, 2002).

Compromising strategy reflects a modest concern for some one's self interests & modest concern for other's benefit. Outcome which is mutually acceptable for both sides is a desirable strategy to solve conflict. When both parties have equivalent control and consent cannot be finalized. This illustrates reason to use this strategy. Important point in using this strategy was to generates failure in identifying real, difficult problems (Rahim, 2002).

Material and Methods

Quantitative research approach was adopted in this study. Data was collected from the targeted population through a questionnaire. After obtaining data, it was entered in the SPSS to evaluate the results. Results from a representative of the population and from that sample; the researcher presented the findings as being representative of the population.

Research Design

Quantitative research approach was adopted. Survey technique was used to collect the data.

Population

The population of this research was teaching staff of Private universities of Islamabad which was 694.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Random sampling technique was used. Sample was 20% of the total population for current study, which was 139.

Research Instrument

Researcher used a questionnaire as a tool to measure four conflict types. Tool comprises twenty questions. Farooqi Organizational Conflict Inventory (FOCI) was used to achieve objectives of the study to identify conflict management styles adopted by teachers during online teaching based on items under five conflict management styles on five point Likert scale.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Age (Years) of respondents

Sr. No.	Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent
1	21-35	98	56.3
2	26-50	63	36.2
3	51-65	12	6.9
4	65 Above	1	.6
	Total	174	100.0

Table 1 showed the age wise detail of respondents. There were 98 respondents between age group of 21-35 years, 63 between the age group of 26-50 years, 12 between the age group of 51-65 years and 1 respondent of the age of 65 years & Above.

Table 2
Gender of respondents

Sr. No.	Gender	Frequency	Percent
1	Male	96	55.18
2	Female	78	44.82
	Total	174	100

Table showed gender wise state of respondents. There were 96 male respondents and 78 female respondents in the research.

Table 3
Conflicts faced by teachers – Age wise response by respondents

Sr. No.	Age (Years)		Type of Conflict Faced			
			Affective Conflict	Substantive Conflict	Institutionalized Conflict	Realistic Conflict
1	21-35	*f*	98	98	98	98
		%	56.6	56.2	56.5	58.2
		Mean	2.36	2.50	2.47	2.53
		SD	1.18	1.10	1.11	1.12
2	36-50	*f*	63	63	63	63
		%	35.4	35.1	34	35
		Mean	2.30	2.42	2.31	2.36
		SD	0.99	0.99	1.10	1.06
3	51-65	*f*	12	12	12	12
		%	7.8	8	8.6	6.3
		Mean	2.66	2.91	3.08	2.25
		SD	1.37	1.31	1.16	0.965
4	65 Above	*f*	1	1	1	1
		%	0.2	0.7	0.9	0.5
		Mean	1.00	3.00	4.00	2.00
		SD	.	.	.	.
5	Total	*f*	174	174	174	174
		%	100	100	100.0	100
		Mean	2.35	2.50	2.47	2.44
		SD	1.13	1.07	1.12	1.08

Table 3 showed the response of types of conflicts faced by teachers during online, teaching, age wise, by the means of Frequency, percentage, mean and Std. Deviation.

Table 4
Conflicts faced by teachers – Gender wise response by respondents

Sr. No.	Gender		Type of Conflict Faced			
			Affective Conflict	Substantive Conflict	Institutionalized Conflict	Realistic Conflict
1	Female	*f*	96	96	96	96
		%	53.4	55.3	54.2	53.8
		Mean	2.28	2.51	2.42	2.38
		SD	1.12	1.07	1.17	1.02
2	Male	*f*	78	78	78	78
		%	46.6	44.7	45.8	46.2
		Mean	2.44	2.50	2.52	2.52
		SD	1.14	1.09	1.06	1.15
3	Total	*f*	174	174	174	174
		%	100	100	100	100
		Mean	2.35	2.50	2.47	2.44
		Std. Deviation	1.13	1.07	1.12	1.08

Table 4 showed the response of types of conflicts faced by teachers during online, teaching, gender wise, by the means of Frequency, percentage, mean and Std. Deviation.

Conclusion

Basing on the overall results of conflicts faced by teachers with respect to age, for age bracket 21-35 Years, Realistic Conflict was faced, which was 58.2 % (M= 2.53, S.D = 1.12). After that, for age bracket 36-50 Years, Affective Conflict was faced, which was 35.4 % (M= 2.30, S.D = 0.99). At third place, for age bracket 51-65 Years, Institutionalized Conflict was faced, which was 8.6 % (M= 3.08, S.D = 1.16). In the last, for age bracket 65 & Above Years, Institutionalized Conflict was faced, which was 0.9 % (M= 4.00).

While keeping in view the second objective, conflicts faced by teachers with respect to gender, it has been concluded that, female teachers faced Substantive Conflict, which was 55.3 %   (M= 2.51, S.D = 1.07). After that, Male teachers faced Affective Conflict, which was 46.6 % (M= 2.44, S.D = 1.14).

Keeping in view the summarised results of overall research without any age brackets and gender differences, it has been concluded that most of the teaching staff faced Substantive Conflict (M = 2.50, S.D = 1.07). After that Institutionalized conflict was faced (M = 2.47, S.D = 1.12). After that, Realistic Conflict was faced (M = 2.44, S.D = 1.08) and in the last Affective conflict for which mean and SD value is (M = 2.35, S.D = 1.13).

Age Bracket 21-35 Years - Realistic Conflict (58.2 %) - (Realistic conflict occurs when there are goal oriented and rationale disagreements such as tasks, goals, values and means and ends)

Age bracket 36-50 Years - Affective Conflict (35.4 %) - (Affective conflict is referred as, two involved parties have interpersonal issues mainly based on anger, frustration, and other negative feelings)

Age bracket 51-65 yearas (8.6 %) and 65 & above years - Institutionalized Conflict was faced, (Institutionalized Conflict is faced when explicit rules are followed in an organization the institutionalized conflicts occur)

While keeping in view the second objective, conflicts faced by teachers with respect to gender, it has been concluded that, female teachers faced Substantive Conflict, which was 55.3 %   (M= 2.51, S.D = 1.07). After that, Male teachers faced Affective Conflict, which was 46.6 % (M= 2.44, S.D = 1.14).

Recommendations

After analyzing the response by the respondents, data and results, it has been found that, different age category teachers face different type of conflicts. However, teachers of the age factor of 51-65 and 65 & above have faced same conflict, i.e. institutionalized conflict, therefore, measures related to the conflict should be ensured by authorities concerned at all level.

After analyzing the response by the respondents, data and results, it has been found that, both male and female teachers faced Substantive Conflict, therefore, necessary preventive and suggestion solvable measures may be taken by the all concerned.

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