CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY PRINCIPALS IN RELATION TO THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

Abstract

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The study examined the conflict resolution strategies adopted by principals in relation to their organizational climate. Data was collected by multistage random sampling technique from a sample of 250 principals of private senior secondary schools of five districts of Punjab (Moga, Ludhiana, Patiala, Ferozjpur and Jalandhar). Standardized tools for assessment of organizational climate and Conflict Management Behavior were used in this study. The data were analyzed by employing mean, SD, t ratio and r. Results show that Competition is the most preferred conflict resolution strategy adopted by both male and female school principals. It was found that organizational climate have no significant correlation with different conflict resolution strategies.

Principals under whom an individual is working should be able to explain, predict, evaluate and modify human behavior that will largely depend upon knowledge, skill and experience of the manager in handling large group of people in diverse situations.When two or more persons work together or live together, there is every possibility of the generation of conflict owing to difference of opinion, clash of interest or even misunderstanding. But the existence of conflict should not cause alarm; it is the sign, more often, of close relationship between the persons working in the institution. Zero conflict is indicative of absence of relationship among people comprising institutions.

No institution is free of conflicts. Nor should they be. In fact, it is hard to conceive of any vital, responsive institution in a dynamic society which is conflict less. Conflict is an essential element in dynamic organization and schools are no exceptions. Schools frequently appear to be centers of tension, sometimes a manifestation of problems in the community (Karen 1987). The term conflict is viewed in a variety of ways because of its confusion with those conditions which lead to situations of different conflict (Beck & Michael 1975).Because of diverse and varied definitions of conflict, attitude towards it and meanings of its role are also varied. Conflict in schools takes different forms, for example teachers seem reluctant to obey the principals, they do not seem to follow rules or accept extra work, and they do not easily get along with their principals. Principals too adopt an authoritative approach, for example they pressurize teachers for continuous involvement in the school activities. It therefore becomes common that conflict between teachers and the school principals occur frequently at any time in the school. (Gebretensay, 2002).As already stated above, conflict also arises within the institutions. It affects the work efficiency of the principals and of the staff because they are different psychologically, which comes in the way of fulfilling their range of responsibility. Since, it is an indispensable component of behavior, one should not, be afraid of it. Normal conflicts exist at every level in the institution. When this level of conflicts starts moving up, efforts are made to contain at least it reaches the highest level.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

Conflict resolution strategies refer to understanding and dealing with conflict in such a manner that it serves a function rather than a dysfunctional purpose. It is essential from the point of view of organizational health and effectiveness. Conflict are by and large (not essentially) dysfunctional. It is also known, that ineffective management of conflict such as "hard nosed" policy of punishments worsens the situations in most cases. On the other hand as revealed by many management specialists, effective management of conflict leads to outcomes that are productive and can enhance the health of the organization. Hence finding solution to them is the only path to follow.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

The term organizational climate was used for the first time by Cornell (1955) he defined organizational climates as "a delicate blending of interpretation or perception by persons in the organization of their jobs or roles in relationship to others and their interpretation of the roles of other in the organizations".Organizational climate is also referred to as the situational developments or environmental determinants which affect the human behavior. Some persons have used organizational culture and organizational climate inter changeably.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To study the conflict resolution strategies adopted by school principals.
2) To study the conflict resolution strategies adopted by school principal sperceiving favorable and unfavorable organizational climate.
3) To study the perception of organizational climate of the institution among school principals.
4) To study the relationship between dimensions of organizational climate and tendency to adopt conflict resolution strategies among school principals.

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5) To find out the difference in the tendency to adopt conflict resolution strategies preferred by principals with respect to gender.

6) To find out the difference in the tendency to adopt conflict resolution strategies in principals perceiving favorable and unfavorable organizational climate.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1) There will be no significant relationship between dimensions of organizational climate and conflict resolution strategies of male principals.

2) There will be no significant relationship between dimensions of organizational climate and conflict resolution strategies of female principals.

3) There will be no significant difference in conflict resolution strategies preferred by principals with respect to gender.

4) There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt competition (ST_1) as conflict resolution strategy in principals perceiving favorable and unfavorable organizational climate.

5) There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt collaboration (ST_2) as conflict resolution strategy in principals perceiving favorable and unfavorable organizational climate.

6) There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt compromise (ST_3) as conflict resolution strategy in principals perceiving favorable and unfavorable organizational climate.

7) There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt avoidance (ST_4) as conflict resolution strategy in principals perceiving favorable and unfavorable organizational climate.

8) There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt accommodation (ST_5) as conflict resolution strategy in principals perceiving favorable and unfavorable organizational climate.

SAMPLE

In the present study the investigator has adopted multistage random sampling technique and selected a sample of 250 senior secondary school principals of five districts of Punjab. These were Moga, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Patiala and Ferozepur.

Measures

• Conflict Management Behavior Questionnaire by Thomas and Kilmann (2007).
• Organizational Climate Scale by Sanjyot Pethe, Sushma Chaudhari and Upinder Dhar (2001).

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

• Mean, median, standard deviation, skewness,'t'- ratios andr- was calculated. Pie charts and bar diagrams were used to depict the results.

RESULTS

(A)-The findings related to objective no-1, 2 and 3 are enlisted as no 1 to 5

1. Competition is the most preferred conflict resolution strategy adopted by both male and female school principals' i.e (42%).

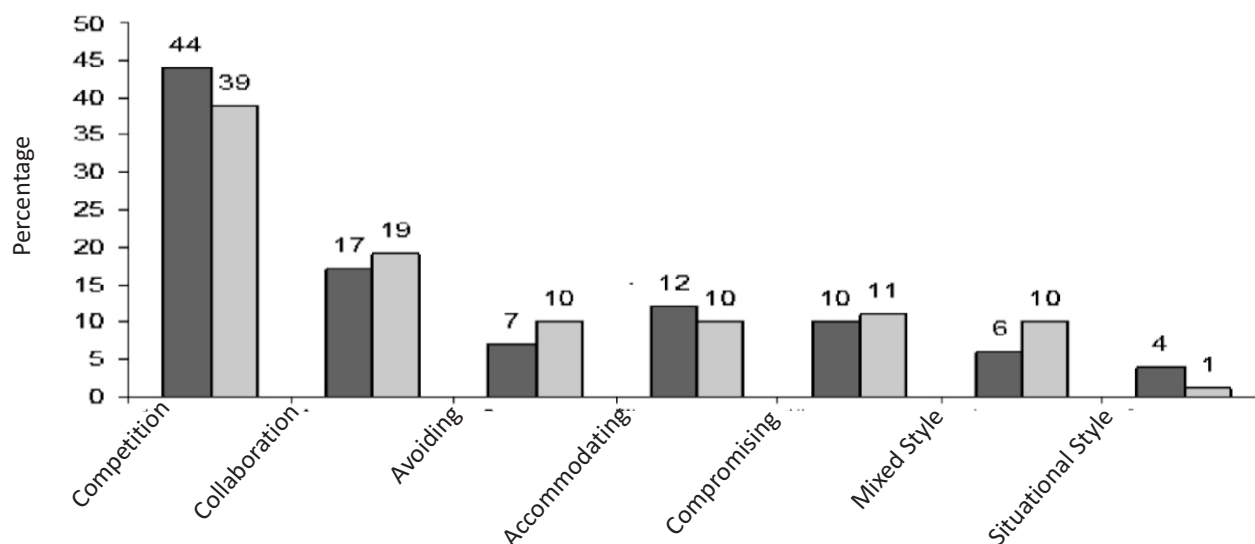| Conflict Resolution Strategies	No. of Principals using the Strategies	%of Principals using the Strategies
Competition	105	42%
Compromising	27	11%
Avoiding	20	8%
Accommodating	27	11%
Collaborating	45	18%
Mixed	19	7%
Situational	07	3%

Table-1 revealed that competition is the most frequently used strategy of conflict resolution among principals with 42% of them reporting it as their dominant conflict resolution strategy.

1.   Male school principals use competition (44%) and accommodation (12%) as the dominating strategy more then female school principals. Female principals use collaboration (19%), compromise (11%) and avoidance (10%) as the most preferred strategies as compare to male principals.

Table 2- Most dominating strategy used by male and female school principals

Conflict Resolution Strategies	No. of male principals	No. of female principals	% of male principals	% of female principals
Competition	56	49	44%	39%
Collaboration	21	24	17%	19%
Avoiding	8	1	27%	10%
Accommodating	15	12	12%	10%
Compromising	13	14	10%	11%
Mixed	7	12	6%	10%
Situational	5	2	4%	1%

Table 2- revealed that male principals use competition i.e 44% as the most dominating strategy. Collaboration, avoiding and compromising strategies are used more by female principals than male principals.

. 2- Most dominating strategy used by male and female school principals

1.Principals in favorable organizational climate prefer competition as the most dominating conflict resolution strategy e.43%

Table -3- Most dominating strategy used by school principals with perception of favorable organizational climate

Conflict Resolution Strategies	No. of male principals	%
Competition	69	43%
Collaboration	27	17%
Compromising	18	11%
Avoiding	12	8%
Accommodating	15	9%
Mixed Style	16	10%
Situational Style	3	2%

Table 3- shows that principals in favorableorganizational climate prefer competition as the most dominating conflict resolution strategy i.e. 43% of them reporting it as their dominant conflict resolution strategy.

Fig. 3- Most dominating strategy used by principals with perception of favorableorganizational climate

4.Principals in un favor able organizational climate prefer competition as the most dominating conflict resolution strategy i.e. 41%.

Table 4- Most dominating strategy used by principals with perception of unfavorableorganizational climate

Conflict Resolution Strategies	No. of male principals	%
Competition	37	41%
Collaboration	17	19%
Compromising	9	10%
Avoiding	8	9%
Accommodating	12	13%
Mixed Style	3	3%
Situational Style	4	5%

Table 4- shows that principals in unfavorableorganizational climate prefer competition as the most dominating conflict resolution strategy i.e. 41%

Table 5- Type of organizational climate perceived by the school principals

Type of Organizational Climate	N	% of OC
Favorable Oc	110	44%
Unfavorable OC	140	56%
N	250	

Table 5- It indicated that most of the school principals perceived (56%) unfavorable organizational climate.

(B)-The findings related to hypotheses no 1 concerning correlation are listed from 6 to 7

6. There were no significant relationship between dimensions of organizationalclimate and different conflict resolution strategies adopted by male principals.

7. There wereno significant relationship between dimensions of organizational climate and different conflict resolution strategies adopted by female principals.

(C)-The findings related to hypotheses no 2 to 8 concerning significance of difference between means are listed from 8 to 17

8. No significant difference was found in preference for (ST_1) competition as conflict resolution strategy among male and female principals.

9. No significant difference was found in preference for (ST_2) collaboration as conflict resolution strategy among male and female principals.

10. No significant difference was found in preference for (ST_3) compromise as conflict resolution strategy among male and female principals.

11. No significant difference was found in preference for (ST_4) avoidance as conflict resolution strategy among male and female principals.

12. No significant difference was found in preference for (ST_5) accommodation as conflict resolution strategy among male and female principals.

13. There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt competition (ST_1) as conflict resolution strategies in principals perceiving favorable and unfavorableorganizational climate.

14. There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt collaborating (ST_2) as conflict resolution strategies in principals perceivingfavorable and unfavorable organizational climate.

15. There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt compromising (ST_3) as conflict resolution

strategies in principals perceivingfavorable and unfavorableorganizational climate.

16. There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt avoiding (ST_4) as conflict resolution strategies in principals perceivingfavorable and unfavorableorganizational climate.

17. There will be no significant difference in the tendency to adopt accommodating (ST_5) as conflict resolution strategies in principals perceivingfavorable and unfavorableorganizational climate.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Principals may be trained to enhance their EQ which will help them to attain their goals. As empathy, self development and commitment are significantly correlated with collaboration so in service programs for focusing on enhancement of these dimensions of emotional intelligence would help them to achieve efficiency through collaboration. Encourage principals to accept advanced job training to improve their own emotional intelligence. Principals should not be rigid in their thinking and in ways of dealing with staff, students and their parents. Training of principals should include integration of thoughts and emotions, heart and mind for appropriate behavior at the right time. They should be taught to strike a balance between rational thoughts and emotions in order to achieve educational objectives.

CONCLUSION

Therefore we can say that organizational climate plays an important role in setting the atmosphere conducive for a particular organization. It is achieved through the interaction between the principal and teachers, between teachers and students and between the principal and students. The social interaction compels the principal, teachers and students to discuss mutually in area of planning, decision-making, problem solving and control. Itcan be concluded that the environment of the organization is most significant force in achieving the maximum educational results and in running of the institution. Organizational climate plays a significant role in promoting and achieving organizational objective including role of principal, teacher and students.

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