

## **Organizational Conflict And Management: A Research in Public Organizations**

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### **Extensive Summary**

#### **Introduction**

In present world, despite the reduction of the human factor in many business lines by the influence of industrialization, the basic workforce of the organizations constitute people. Even in most organizations, the human factor is an important dimension of the workforce. There are conflicts arising from differences among individuals in every environment where human beings exist. In other words, it is inevitable that conflicts exist as natural consequences of differences in individual values, beliefs, past experiences, personalities, goals and perceptions. With this situation, the individual may encounter in every environment throughout life, and most of the time may be encountered in organizations that have established social relations with others (Öztaş, 2005). These conflicts must be managed effectively in the direction of organizational goals (Yıldızoğlu, 2013:1). Conflicts at various levels in the working environment and their management constitute one of the issues that take managers' time and energy considerably (Tokat, 1999). Because managers are responsible for the effective management of conflicts (Yıldızoğlu, 2013:1). Due to organizational conflicts, managers are deprived of the ability to use effectively and efficiently in the direction of existing organizational and scientific potential organizational goals (Güzel, 2010:1). However, with a good conflict management strategy, positive results can be obtained from conflicts (Çağlayan, 2006:3).

#### **Conceptual Framework**

The concept of conflict is defined in different disciplines and sciences, in different forms by different authors. In general, conflict is the struggle within the boundaries between competition and eliminating rivals (Ataman, 2002). According to Kazimoto (2013), workplace conflict is defined as the existence of disagreement that arises when different individuals or groups are disenfranchised in their goal, interests or values and attempting to achieve each other's goals in an organization (Longe, 2015:83). Schramm-

Nielsen (2002) describes the conflict as a state of serious disagreement and controversy about something that is perceived as important by at least one of the parties (Ojo and Abolade, 2008:65). Briefly, conflict can be defined as the disagreement arising from various sources between two or more persons or groups (Koçel, 2014:758).

There can be many reasons and factors for perceiving a conflict in organizations. Knowing the causes of the conflicts is definitely a big prelude for all organizations so that conflicts can be understood, managed, resolved and used for the benefit of the organization (Öztaş, 2005). Because the cause of the conflict is the road map to the solution of the conflict (Sendur, 2006: 7).

The causes of conflict can be examined by dividing three groups as individual factors, structural (organizational) factors and communication problems.

**Individual Factors:** Individual factors include personality differences, goal differences, status and power differences, and perception and interpretation differences.

**Structural Factors:** Organizational factors include organizational size, functional dependency, uncertainty of authority and responsibilities, effect of organizational change, competition for scarce resources, differences in management styles, differences due to work division, differences due to crisis periods, organizational power struggle, innovation and so on.

**Communication problems:** Communication problems include difficulties in understanding, inadequate information exchange, non-listening problems, and communication channel disorders. Any kind of factor that prevents healthy communication can be included in this group.

The inevitability of the conflict makes the managers use various strategies to deal with conflict situations (Inandı and others, 2013:277). Conflict management includes efforts to orient conflicts in ways that increase the productivity of social and formal structures within the organization (Topaloglu and Avcı, 2008: 77).

One of the most important tasks of managers in organizations is to resolve, direct and manage conflicts among staff or groups in a way that contributes to organizational goals (Koçel, 2014: 770). In this phase, the conflicts must be managed in such a way as not to cause damage to the system and operation (Topaloglu and Avcı, 2008: 77).

There are many conflict management strategies, but the conflict management strategies in the research are as follows.

**Collaborating:** Collaborating is a method that is used when the level of consideration of both the self and the counterpart is high (Koçak ve Chairman, 2013: 213). In the approach of collaborating, the manager brings together the conflicting parties, finds the reasons of the conflict, discusses the problem in detail and prepares a suitable environment for solving the conflict (Yıldızoğlu, 2013: 33).

**Accommodating:** The style of accommodating focuses on individual goals as well as others' needs (Gross ve Guerrero, 2000: 208). This is done by submitting to the other party's requests (Koçak and Chairman, 2013: 213).

**Competing:** In competing strategy, conflicting parties tend to show a high interest for themselves and a low interest for the other party. This strategy can be described as

win-lose orientation or challenging behaviors exhibited by the conflict in order to be profitable (Rahimi, 1992: 11).

**Avoiding:** Avoiding is that the conflicting groups should not face each other as much as possible and should not explain each other's feelings and thoughts to each other (Çağlayan, 2006:100). This method can occur with the tendency not to encounter problems and adverse situations (Koçak and President, 2013: 213).

**Compromising:** Compromising is the process of resolving and managing the conflict by finding a common path for the parties (Gürer and Others, 2014: 444). This method is applicable if both parties are entitled to the views and opinions of the other party other than their opinions and opinions.

### **Purpose and Method of the Study**

The research has two main objectives. The first, to investigate the personnel of the public institutions to be selected from Ankara which conflict management strategies are preferred in case of organizational conflict. Secondly, the analysis of the impact of the demographic characteristics of the personnel who prefer conflict management strategy to the choice of conflict management strategy.

Survey was applied as data collection method. The survey consists of two parts. In the first part demographic characteristics including title, duration of study, age, gender, education status, marital status, partner's working status and number of children were asked. In the second part of the survey, Form A and Form C from Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II were used.

### **Findings of the Study and Conclusion**

A total of 496 people were interviewed in 9 different public institutions and 423 people were returned. 29 of the returned surveys were excluded from the sample with the reason of incomplete filling. The remaining 394 surveys were conducted.

In this study, the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire (cronbach alpha) was found to be 0.906. This value indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire is quite high.

In analyzes based on demographic characteristics, there is a significant difference between occupational experience and age and competing strategy in the case of conflicts where staff live with each other. But there is a significant difference between occupational experience and age, and the strategies of accommodating and competing ion in the case of conflict with the manager of the staff. In the analyzes made by the answers given to the survey statements (Form A and Form C from Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II ), it has been seen that the staff often use the strategy of collaborating and rarely use the strategy of competing in situations of conflict with each other and their managers. According to these results, it can be said that the demographic characteristics cause changes in the conflict management strategy preferred by the personnel participating in the survey. We can say that the impact of demographic characteristics on staff is important.