INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF EFFECTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT USING THE THOMAS-KILMANN CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT"

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Abstract :
One of the most broadly researched topic in the area of Organizational behavior is Conflict Management. It is crucial to study the impact of conflict management on performance management in organizations. As in social relations anywhere specially organizations conflict is inevitable , i.e. it is bound to happen. An effective performance management is possible when conflicts within an organization are managed effectively in such a manner that it brings efficiency and productivity to the organization. As a whole conflicts are endemic to a society. Organizations consist of units that interact , each having there complete set of defined goals. Thus organizations are living systems. Organizations need to survive on clearly defined resources and they operate in a structured environment. Therefore effective conflict management can lead to effective performance management of an organization. The researcher has used Thomas Kilmann Conflict mode instrument to investigate what approach sample in the study would use to mitigate conflict and how to survive amicably in the work environment. The purpose of conducting this research is to inquire and understand how conflict management takes place in the organizations that enhances performance management. The instrument used to conduct this research is Thomas Kilman conflict mode instrument. A sample of 150 participants will be collected from various organizations. All departments will be taken into consideration when collecting the sample. This Quantitative data collected will be run on SPSS software to understand the findings.

Key words: Conflict Management, Organizations, Performance Management, Thomas Kilman Conlict mode instrument , Big five personality test

Introduction:
In order to improve performance management of any organization, its extremely crucial to mitigate the conflicts in such a manner that it leads to effective conflict management (Robbins & Judge, 2011) Innovation and organizational development is achieved when all in the organization are on one page, hence conflict are well managed. Conflict management is not about completely eliminating conflict, but is actually done to balance conflict levels. Hence the sole purpose is not to completely outright or reject conflict but is to encourage constructive conflict. (Robbins & Judge, 2011)

According to (Combe & Carrington, 2015) in the current scenario, when managers are bound to address conflicts every day. Therefore, it is important to enhance emotional intelligence by promoting and integrating conflict management training into the business curricula. So that the future managers are well equipped with interpersonal skills to deal with conflicts (Combe & Carrington, 2015)

(Travaglione, McShane, & Olekalns, 2010) explained that, many organizations utilize developmental assessment centers. These centers provide coaching, learning and development opportunities and feedback to improve fairness and performance in the workplace. These centers foster interpersonal communication skills and a profound understanding of conflict management by teaching emotional intelligence. This leads to better organizational performance.

According to (Robbins & Judge, 2011) performance measurement is nothing easy as it needs empirical validation and conceptual models for verification. For example, when an

organization, in particular a new healthcare software company strives hard to launch a new product, so the organization asks for customer feedback, which is continuously delivered by customer service and sales to the programming team. As it was programmed, therefore this process that was automotive and iterative was updated before the planned date of release.

But the management made a mistake and eventually decided to release the product without adding enhancement to it. But this negligence actually created conflict as customers complained that their feedback was not utilized in enhancing the product, or adding more features to the product. (Robbins & Judge, 2011) External conflicts are difficult to address, therefore it is important to identify the root cause of the conflict caused within the organization, its actual cause i.e. its internal locus of control, so that the problem or conflict caused can be managed which definitely has an impact organizational performance and productivity as a conducive environment is more favorable for employee performance. (Omisore & Abiodun, 2014).

Conflict within an organization is inevitable, but combat is not the right answer to it. If conflict is managed effectively it enhances performance management with in an organization and brings catalyst to a positive change within an environment. **Invalid source specified.** Unresolved and mismanaged conflicts negatively impact work environment and performance management of an organization.

If organizations are managed in such a manner that efficiently conflict is not managed a wrong message is circulated in the work environment that inappropriate behavior is acceptable. **Invalid source specified.**

When conflicts are managed effectively it enhances and promotes collaborative decision making, regular feedback, timely resolution of conflict and open communication and positive employee morale **Invalid source specified.**

According to **Invalid source specified.** an environment that is not conducive and does not promote effective conflict management can result in a toxic work environment, inappropriate employee behavior and declined performance management. This ignites dysfunctional communication and uncongenial behavior among staff. For conflict management it is crucial to develop interpersonal skills among the staff and leaders. As without interpersonal skills dispute can arise.

One of the most predictable outcomes that occur when people work together as a group is conflict. Mangers allocate an extensive period of their work time dealing with fallouts and conflicts from people – related problems (Madalinaa, 2016). The impact of mismanagement of conflict is quite harsh as it leads to maximization of toxic energy amongst the workforce. Which further creates miscommunication and finally this causes missed opportunities. The losses pertaining to organizational conflict are difficult to calculate.

Conflict involves the interaction of contextual dynamics, physiological, psychological and cognition. In order to understand and manage conflict most conflict theories take only an economic or psychological approach. When it comes to relationships in order to establish and sustain relationships between employees communication plays a very pivotal role. Communication establishes acceptance and mutual understanding between bosses, subordinates, colleagues and people inside and outside in an organizational setting. Therefore fair and efficient relations are possible by effective communication.

According to (Madalinaa, 2016) conflict arises between individuals or within groups or when two groups have contradicting beliefs, actions, disagreement, friction or resistance with each other. (Tschannen-Moran, 2001) explained that Conflict results in an antagonistic state as when actions and opposing ideas of two different entities build an environment of discord.

(Axley, 1996) wrote in his book "Communication at Work: Management and the Communication-Intensive Organization" wrote that Conflict is classified in the following four types

- Interpersonal conflict
- Intrapersonal conflict
- Intra-group conflict
- Inter-group conflict

Interpersonal conflict: when two people are different from each other conflict may arise. This conflict between two individuals is interpersonal conflict.

Intrapersonal conflict: the conflict that can occur within an individual. Intrapersonal conflict is a psychological conflict that involves the individual's emotions, principles, values and thoughts. Actually, it is the person's mind where the experience takes place.

Intra – group conflict: occurs among individuals within a team. When there are misunderstandings and incompatibility among the individuals this leads to intra – group conflict.

Inter – group conflict: is a type of conflict that occurs due to misunderstandings that arise between different teams within an organization. One of the causes of intergroup conflict is competition amongst the teams due to which intergroup conflict occurs. However there could be other factors too which ignites conflicts. Like if there are boundaries set by a group , this creates their own identity as a team or another factor is rivalry in the resources. (Donohue & Kolt, 1992). However, (Jehn & Mannix, 2001) explained the division of conflict into three types, relationship, task and process. Relationship conflict originates from interpersonal incompatibilities, whereas disagreements of viewpoints and opinions about a particular task is associated with task analysis. And disagreements over the group's approach to the task is referred to as process conflict. Task conflict encourages diversity of opinions and it is beneficial. Whereas process conflict and relationship conflict can be harmful (Donohue & Kolt, 1992)

To avoid conflict , conflict management is an effective approach **Invalid source specified.** According to **Invalid source specified.** Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument TKI is very beneficial to assess behavior of a person in a conflict situation. Situations like incompatibility between two individuals. An individual's behavior can be understood in incompatible situations in two dimensions 1) assertiveness 2) cooperativeness. Assertiveness is the degree to which a person satisfies himself or herself in personal concerns. Cooperativeness is the degree to which a person toils to satisfy other concerns. These two behavioral dimensions can be utilized to explain five methods of conflict dealing. These are competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, accommodating **Invalid source specified.**

Competing: is a power oriented mode and on two dimensions of assertiveness and cooperativeness in the model it comes on uncooperative and assertive. A person who chooses competing style uses whatever power appropriate to win his or her position. A person who is competing often goes after or pursues his motives and concerns at the expense of other person. Therefore a person who is competing would stand up for his rights and would defend a position he believes is correct in order to win. **Invalid source specified.**

Collaborating: is another mode and on the dimension of assertiveness and cooperativeness it comes on as both cooperative and assertive. Compromising is a mode where an individual tries to fully satisfy the concerns of both parties by working with the other person to find a solution that also manages conflict. Collaborating is about finding an alternative that meets the concern of both parties. This mode is about understanding an issue in order to get firsthand knowledge about the underlying concern by getting to learn each other's insight that

forms the basis of conflict and work towards finding a creative solution to an interpersonal problem. **Invalid source specified.**

Compromising: is another mode and is in between both cooperativeness and assertiveness dimension. The sole purpose of Compromising is to find a mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. Compromising actually falls in between competing and collaborating it is actually a middle ground between the two. An issue is addressed more directly than avoiding but it is not in depth explored as collaborating. When an individual seeks a middle ground position, exchanges concessions splits the difference it is compromising mode according to Thomas Kilmann mode instrument **Invalid source specified.**

Avoiding: comes on the dimension of assertiveness and cooperativeness, as unassertive and uncooperative. Avoiding is a mode where a person does not pursue his or her own concerns or those of the other person. Avoiding as the name suggests, here the individual avoids or does not address the issue causing the conflict immediately. When an individual is avoiding he /she does not address an issue immediately but sidesteps an issue in a very diplomatic way. Such individuals often simply withdraw from a threatening situation or postpone an issue until a better time. **Invalid source specified.**

Accommodating: is the opposite of competing. It falls on the dimension at unassertive and cooperative. When accommodating the concerns of others become more important and prime. One neglects his or her own concerns to satisfy the concerns of others. Accommodating is about obeying another person's order when one prefers not to. In this mode there is an element of self-sacrifice. A person who is accommodating is self-less and believes in obeying other persons orders **Invalid source specified.**

Objective:

To investigate how does effective conflict management impact organizations performance management using Thomas Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument

a)To investigate to what extent avoidance as a conflict management strategy influences performance management in the organizations

2) To evaluate collaboration as an effective method assisted as a conflict management strategy in organization

3) To assess accommodation as an effective conflict management strategy in organization that impacts performance management

4) To determine whether compromise is an effective conflict management strategy that impacts on performance management in an organization

5) To evaluate competing as an effective conflict management strategy that impacts on performance management in an organization.

Problem Statement:

In an organization conflict can occur when people from diversified backgrounds, interests , opinions and priorities work together to achieve organizational goals. Conflict can be conveyed and expressed in multiple ways like showing noncooperation in tasks, insults anger or difference of opinion and a non-collaborative attitude. **Invalid source specified.**

When conflict are not managed effectively it has been observed that organizations can go in doldrums like Nokia. Considering the scenario in Pakistan where organizations , private and public face lots of challenges because major decisions are made without the consent of all in the organization. This leads to a non- conducive toxic work environment. Conflicts can badly hamper performance management of an organization. Therefore it is crucial to understand and investigate how does effective conflict management impact organizations performance

management using Thomas Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument. This instrument will further guide how do people manage conflict using what traits . Are they competing, collaborating, compromising, accommodating or avoiding.

Research Questions:

1) To what extent avoidance as a conflict management strategy influences performance management in the organizations?

2) Is collaboration an effective method assisted as a conflict management strategy in organization's performance management in the organization?

3) Is accommodation effective as conflict management strategy in the performance management in the organization?

4) Is compromise an effective conflict management strategy that impacts on performance management in an organization?

5) Is competing an effective conflict management strategy that impacts on performance management in an organization.

Hypothesis

1. Accommodating conflict management style impacts significantly on the effective performance management in an organization.
2. Accommodating conflict management style has a non-significant impact on effective performance management in an organization.
3. Compromising conflict management style impacts significantly on the effective performance management in an organization.
4. Compromising conflict management style has a non-significant impact on effective performance management in an organization.
5. Collaborating conflict management style impacts significantly on the effective performance management in an organization.
6. Collaborating conflict management style has a non-significant impact on effective performance management in an organization.
7. Competing management style impacts significantly on the effective performance management in an organization.
8. Competing conflict management style has a non-significant impact on effective performance management in an organization
9. Avoiding management style impacts significantly on the effective performance management in an organization.
10. Avoiding conflict management style has a non-significant impact on effective performance management in an organization

Significance of the study:

The proposed study will be of great importance and worth to the public and private sector organizations. As they will understand and identify multiple strategies for effective conflict management. This study is beneficial for the government even the parliament as it provides adequate solutions to conflicts that effect performance management, harmony and efficiency. This study will direct and channelize all how to manage conflicting situations in the workplace. This study is very important for academia and researchers for further studies.

Scope and Limitations of the study:

This proposed study will be carried out in Karachi only. The organizations operating in Karachi will be used as a sample due to convenient accessibility. However if data is collected across the country it will be of much worth and potential.

Literature Review:

In an organization it will be a very artificial unnatural view that conflict among workers does not exist as it is bound to happen or it is inevitable. Ignored mismanaged conflict impacts on declining performance in an organization. This creates a non-congenial toxic work environment **Invalid source specified.**

Open communication is a very useful method to resolve communication. To resolve conflict one of the oldest South African remedy is to talk it out **Invalid source specified.** This strategy enhances flow of new innovative ideas and boost collaborative team effort. To enhance performance management regular feedback is required to resolve and manage conflicts.**Invalid source specified.**

A toxic negative environment does not promote effective conflict management. **Invalid source specified.** Mismanaged persistent conflicts makes the environment dysfunctional and promotes inappropriate behavior amongst the staff. This makes many in the organization demotivated and performance management of the organization declines. **Invalid source specified.**

According to **Invalid source specified.** Conflicts costs multiple hindrances at work, like wasted time, lost employees, bad decision, stressed environment and definitely cost money, therefore conflict not just leads to annoyance but harms in multiple ways. Mismanaged conflicts or persistent conflicts can be extremely harmful in the healthcare industry, like patients' health and their lives can be affected.

According to **Invalid source specified.** Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument TKI is very beneficial to assess behavior of a person in a conflict situation. Situations like incompatibility between two individuals. An individual's behavior can be understood in incompatible situations in two dimensions 1) assertiveness 2) cooperativeness. Assertiveness is the degree to which a person satisfies himself or herself in personal concerns. Cooperativeness is the degree to which a person toils to satisfy other concerns. These two behavioral dimensions can be utilized to explain five methods of conflict dealing. These are competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, accommodating **Invalid source specified.**

Competing: is actually a behavioral dimension where an individual is toiling hard to win, trying to stand up for their rights, defending a particular perception or point of view. This power-oriented mode is uncooperative and assertive. When an individual imposes and pursues his or her concerns on others, using might and power game to win a particular position. This state of mind is indeed a power-oriented mode and is certainly uncooperative. (Thomas & Kilmann, 2008)

Collaborating: is a behavioral dimension where the goal is to find a solution that satisfies the concerns of both parties. The sole purpose here is to find a solution to a problem that meets the concern of both parties. Collaborating is a behavioral dimension where the purpose is to explore and learn from each other, each other's perception, their point of view and then coming to a solution that is agreed by both parties. Therefore, it is a strategy applied to find a creative and logical solution to an interpersonal problem satisfying both opponents. (Thomas & Kilmann, 2008)

Compromising is a third behavioral dimension discussed in TK Model. It refers to achieving a middle ground position through dialogue, by splitting the difference, or exchanging concessions. Compromising is a middle ground. Here the issue is not explored in depth like it is done in collaborating but is addressed directly, or neither it is avoided completely that is another strategy discussed in TK Model. (Thomas & Kilmann, 2008)

Avoiding is one of the behavioral dimensions, where an issue is dealt by diplomatically dodging an issue, postponing it to address at a better time. Avoiding is a strategy applied to

avoid a harmful, tensed situation that could provoke conflict. Avoiding is uncooperative and unassertive, as the individual avoiding has no intention to address the conflict. (Thomas & Kilmann, 2008)

Accommodating is a behavioral dimension that is about neglecting one's own concerns and adapting a behavior that is more self- sacrificing. It is cooperative and unassertive behavioral dimension, which is more inclined towards selfless generosity or charity. (Thomas & Kilmann, 2008)

According to (Webster, 2014) to manage disagreements, differences in opinions, conflict management is a very fruitful approach. Conflict occurs because there is a difference in opinion, viewpoints or difference in ideology due to get power or position. (Awan & Saeed, 2015)

(Olivier, Poitras, & Chênevert, 2009) Group conflicts and interpersonal conflicts are the organizational challenges faced by organizational leaders almost every day. Conflict can be caused by divergent roles, objectives, interests and even about execution of task. In order to manage organizational conflict, managers play a crucial role, in three specific ways, through their leadership style, intervention as it was required and directly because it involves them personally. (Forgas, Kruglanski, & Williams, 2011) explained, that a direct conflict management style is required by a leader to handle a conflict where direct involvement of the leader is required to handle interpersonal conflict. However, leaders and managers in any organization can become arbitrators and mediators too when they need to manage a conflict that is hindering the organizational efficiency and performance within teams.

Disagreements are often ignited by difference of opinion, differences in viewpoints about tasks in organizations and its relationship to the sagacity of the decision being taken. (Safi & Khairkhwa, 2024) Conflict management, can have a profound impact on organizational performance and employee performance as well, therefore formulating strategies, is crucial to reduce conflict intensity. Otherwise conflicts can range from nonexistence to highly destructive level. (Igbokwe, 2024)

(Robbins & Judge, 2011) explained that human resource can handle conflict by utilizing multiple techniques, like expansion of resources in order to achieve desired goal, applying conflict management styles (Thomas & Kilmann, 2008) , central of authority by superordinating goals and other problem – solving strategies.

(Combe & Carrington, 2015) researched and explained that to manage conflict the right kind of atmosphere is important therefore creating an environment that is conducive, congenial and problem solving is important. These researchers explained how leaders handle crisis situations by utilizing two mental models. These are Descriptive and Prescriptive mental models. When leaders emphasize and interpret their understanding of external changes during crisis its descriptive mental model. Whereas, when leaders concentrate on cause and effect it is prescriptive mental model. Nowadays modern workplaces, explain conflict as a catalyst for team cohesiveness, for better decision making and responsive organization. (Mcshane, Olekalns, & Travaglione, 2010)

Conceptual Framework:
Conflict Management Styles
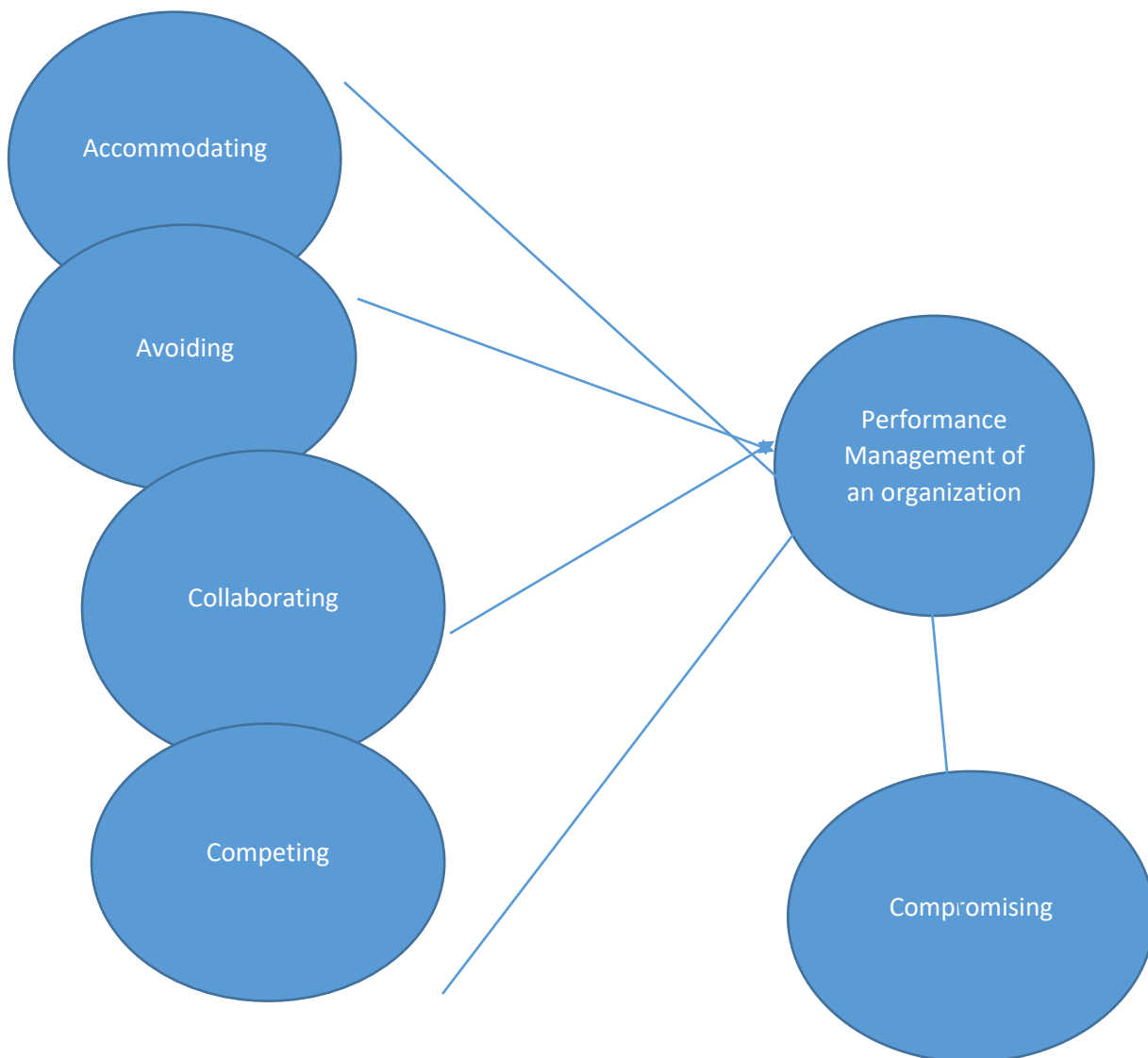
Methodology:
The proposed study would employ quantitative methodology that examines characteristic of a given event and population scientifically and systematically. The proposed study will adopt primary data by circulating Thomas Kilmann Conflict mode instrument questionnaire in various departments of five organizations. Namely Chevron, Proctor & Gambles, Unilevers, McKinsey, Shell. For data collection process the proposed questionnaire shall be used. The target sample for the study is 150 staff altogether. 30 from each organization.

The analysis contains quantitative data collected from 150 participants who completed the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) questionnaire. Each respondent's data is recorded in a single row, and each column (from Question 1 to Question 30) corresponds to a specific item in the TKI assessment. The responses are mostly numerical, usually ranging from 1 to 5, indicating the degree of agreement or preference toward different conflict-handling behaviours. However, a few data entries appear to be inconsistent, such as "3 ." or blank values, which may require cleaning before analysis.

The TKI instrument is designed to assess how individuals typically respond to conflict situations in the workplace. It categorizes conflict-handling behaviour into five distinct styles: Competing, Collaborating, Avoiding, Accommodating, and Compromising. Each of these styles reflects a different level of assertiveness and cooperativeness. For example, the Competing style is high in assertiveness but low in cooperativeness, indicating a tendency to pursue one's own concerns at the expense of others. In contrast, the Collaborating style reflects a high degree of both assertiveness and cooperativeness, aiming for mutually beneficial solutions. Each of these five conflict styles is typically measured through six questions in the 30-item questionnaire, although the mapping between specific questions and styles is not provided in this sheet.

This sheet plays a central role in your research, as it provides the foundational data needed to explore how different conflict management styles affect organizational performance. By summing the relevant question scores, you can determine each respondent's dominant conflict style. From there, you can conduct a group-level analysis to see which conflict styles are most prevalent in your sample. Furthermore, if data on organizational performance (such as productivity ratings, team success metrics, or employee satisfaction scores) is available elsewhere, you can correlate those outcomes with the conflict styles identified in this sheet. Even in the absence of explicit performance data, the behavioural patterns indicated by dominant styles—such as a preference for collaboration versus avoidance—can be analysed for their theoretical or practical implications on performance management.

Finally, it is important to note some data quality issues in the sheet. A few columns, particularly Question 25, Question 27, and Question 28, include some non-numeric or malformed entries that need to be cleaned before analysis. Additionally, Question 30 has several missing values. These irregularities may affect the accuracy of score calculations if not addressed properly. Once cleaned, this sheet can be used to calculate overall style scores, identify trends, and interpret the results in the context of effective conflict management and its contribution to organizational outcomes.

In summary, this is a critical data source for understanding how individuals approach conflict in the workplace. It offers a structured way to quantify and compare conflict-handling preferences across a sample group. Through careful analysis, this data can help illuminate how conflict management styles influence—or hinder—organizational performance management, supporting the aims of your research.

Results and Findings:

Graph and Bar Chart:
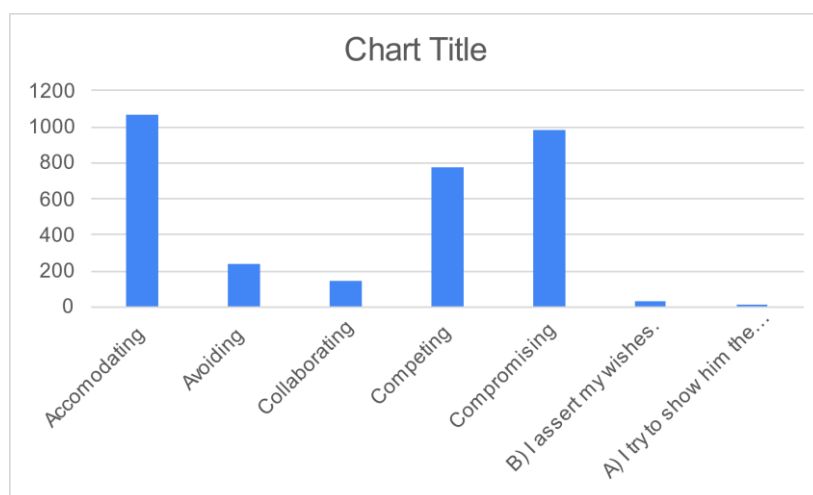
Accommodating	1068	32.88%
Avoiding	247	7.60%
Collaborating	145	4.46%
Competing	773	23.80%
Compromising	984	30.30%

This Bar chart clearly indicates that among 150 participants working in 5 multinational organizations which have a record of marked organizational performance management.

Here 32.88% of the participants selected Accommodating conflict management style. This when compared to other Conflict Management Style, is the highest percentage of behavioral dimension, selected in conflict management. Accommodating is a behavioral dimension that is about neglecting one's own concerns and adapting a behavior that is more self- sacrificing. It is cooperative and unassertive behavioral dimension, which is more inclined towards selfless generosity or charity.

However, to resolve conflict, Compromising Conflict Management style is the second most utilized and appreciated behavioral dimension adapted by organizations, exactly 30.30% of the participants selected Compromising Conflict Management Style.

Competing Conflict Management style is assertive and uncooperative. This state of mind is indeed a power-oriented mode and is certainly uncooperative. The data collected from 150 participants clearly indicates 23.80% of the participants selected this behavioral dimension to handle conflict in the organization.

Avoiding is one of the behavioral dimensions, where an issue is dealt by diplomatically dodging an issue, postponing it to address at a better time. Avoiding is a strategy applied to avoid a harmful, tensed situation that could provoke conflict. Avoiding is uncooperative and unassertive, as the individual avoiding has no intention to address the conflict. The data collected explains 7.60% of the participants select this behavioral dimension. This percentage clearly explains this strategy is not preferred by many working in the organizations which were selected to collect data.

Collaborating: is a behavioral dimension where the goal is to find a solution that satisfies the concerns of both parties. The sole purpose here is to find a solution to a problem that meets the concern of both parties. Collaborating is a behavioral dimension where the purpose is to explore and learn from each other, each other's perception, their point of view and then coming to a solution that is agreed by both parties. Therefore, it is a strategy applied to find a creative and logical solution to an interpersonal problem satisfying both opponents. But some how Collaborating Conflict Management style is least preferred i.e., 4.46% by the participants.

Conclusions:
The proposed study determines the impact of Conflict Management Styles on the performance management of an organization. Which Conflict Management Style is most preferred by the employees to resolve conflict This proposed research is the solution to incompatible situations caused in the organizations? It explains how different people handle different incompatible situations in the work environment like are they competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding and accommodating. It will further tell which method is mostly adopted by individuals in a work environment. This proposed study when conducted will be a guidance for future researchers in this field.

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