

An Empirical Study On The Impact Of Demography On Conflict Management Styles Of Academicians In Mangalore B-Schools

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Abstract:- *In a world that has developed beyond comprehension and has become one that is flooded with competition, tensions prevail due to diverse reasons. Differences due to experience and demography often exit at the work place. 'Conflict' has become a routine force to be reckoned with. A conflict-free organization has never existed and never will. What is interesting to observe is the manner in which individuals from different backgrounds handle conflict. Conflict management styles are known to vary due to diverse industrial and organizational set-ups. Besides, handling conflict depends on socio-cultural diversity and a varying demographic profile of individuals. Against this backdrop the authors were keen to study how the demographic response variables such as age, gender, qualification, experience and marital status had an impact on the manner in which academicians managed conflict at their work place.*

RECENT literature reveals that there exists numerous ways to respond to conflict situation with varying demographic background. Behavioral scientists, Thomas and Kilmann (1975), have identified five styles of responding to conflict - competition, collaboration, compromise, avoidance, and accommodation. Hence, major focus of the research is to identify the various conflict management styles adopted by academicians to address conflict and to study the impact of the demographic response variables while adopting conflict management styles. Primary data included responses from 79 academicians in leading Business Schools of Mangalore City. Data was collected through personal interview using a structured questionnaire. The centre of deliberation was based on analyzing various conflict management styles of academicians in Mangalore Business Schools and the impact of the demographic response variable in handling conflict at the work place. This paper assumes significance in highly academic driven world where academicians converge from diverse demographic profiles Conflict is an integral part of everyday life & handling conflict strategically in a learning environment will promote a healthy and conducive atmosphere for growth in the in the years to come.

Keywords:- *Conflict, Conflict Management Styles, Academician, Competition, Collaboration, Compromise, Avoidance, Accommodation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Conflict has been in existence for as long as man has inhabited the earth. Due to the unique characteristics of human being, it is natural for differences & disagreements to emerge for various reasons. Conflict is unavoidable in any organization/institution since an organization/institution is primarily constituted by a diverse mindset of individuals.

The academic environment though set apart from other types of institutions is not free from conflict. The teaching fraternity is independent and operates in direct control of its environment. Conflict is unavoidable in the institutions of higher education due to encouragement of academic freedom and unbridled thinking. Conflict can occur between students versus faculty, faculty versus faculty, faculty versus administrators and students versus students (Holton, 1995). The teaching environment in B-schools today is a lot more demanding and competitive. It therefore becomes inevitable for a conflict to arise especially in the midst of academicians with strong personalities and different philosophies. This eventually forms a breeding ground for conflict among academicians in management schools (Miklas and Kleiner, 2003). Among the academia, conflict arises due to inequitable workload distribution, power games, differences in cultural values, skewed gender support, favoritism, lack of commitment, mentoring and academic focus. As long as it is managed effectively, conflict can enhance personal and professional growth. However, if conflict is not handled effectively, the results can be detrimental.

Conflict Management, is the capacity to handle conflict situations productively; conflict management refers to the styles applied by either or both parties to deal with a conflict (Gordon, 2003). Conflict Management Styles (CMSs) have been explained as “specific behavioral prototypes that individuals choose to take up when coping with conflict” (De Dreu and Weingart, 2003). Conflict in an academic circle is considered as legitimate, inevitable, and even a positive indicator in the context of management. Organizational conflict in educational systems by no means diminishes the quality of education. When conflicts are handled effectively, it encourages creative solutions, leads to unity and promotes *out of the box* solutions. However, the manners in which conflicts are handled vary from individual to individual, situation to situation and institution to institution.

Conflicts are usually managed by adopting any one of the five conflict management styles:-

1) **Competing:** It is adopted by a leader who intervenes only if his/her need is satisfied. However, the needs of the other involved are by and large ignored; 2) **Collaborating:** The leader seeks a creative solution to a problem, thus resulting in a win-win situation of all involved; 3) **Compromising:** It satisfies the needs of both parties since the leader meets the others half the way in resolving the conflict; 4) **Avoiding:** When the leader deliberately ignores/withdraws from the conflict rather than facing it, thereby disregarding his own interest and the interests of others involved; 5) **Accommodating:** When the leader does not insist on his/her position, and accepts the viewpoints of others involved in addressing the issue.

II. FIVE STAGES OF RESOLVING CONFLICT:

Conflicts are unavoidable and may erupt at any time causing temporary disharmony in an academic environment. The Thomas-Kilmann (1975) model identifies five conflict styles: (1) avoidance, (2) competition, (3) accommodation, (4) compromise, and (5) collaboration. The model of conflict management styles initially presented by Blake and Mouton (1964) and further developed by Kilmann and Thomas (1975) and Rahim (1983) identifies the following five conflict-handling styles (Rahim, 1992; Rahim and Magner, 1995). Handling conflict can range from adopting an aggressive style such as competing on one hand to a passive style of compromising on the other. The first step in managing conflict would be to understand the various conflict handling styles. Thomas-Kilmann model describes conflict styles along two dimensions: assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness attempts to satisfy one’s own concerns, while cooperativeness attempts to satisfy the concerns of others. In the academic circle, with specific reference to post graduate management institutions, every academician is considered a leader in his/her own right. Managing conflicts effectively leads to stronger relationships among participants and more creative solutions to problems. The purpose of the present research is to throw light on how academicians adopt various styles for handling conflict.

Competing style represents high concern for self (high assertiveness) and low concern for others (low cooperation) classically exhibiting a win-lose situation. The underlying assumptions in this approach are that there is fixed pool of resources to draw from and a gain for one ultimately results in loss for the other. A competing style is characterized by arguing, debating, using power/influence. A competitive approach may seem beneficial in the short run but may be detrimental to the institution.

Collaborating style represents high concern for self and others (high assertiveness coupled with high cooperation) and is identified as a win-win situation. Collaborating is characterized by listening to the other party, openness, exchanging information, thinking creatively, discussing areas of agreement and goals, and looking for alternatives ensuring that all parties reach an amicable solution. It ensures that the problem is resolved without reservation or sacrifice. A collaborative approach will be beneficial to both the institution and the parties involved.

Compromising style represents intermediate concern for self and others (moderate assertiveness and moderate cooperation). Compromising refers to “giving up something in order to gain something.” Compromising is characterized by negotiating, finding a middle ground, split the difference to reach a mutually acceptable decision where both parties make concessions. This technique can be adopted and prove beneficial only in the short run where time constraint exists.

Accommodating style represents low concern for self (low assertiveness) and high concern for others (high cooperation) and identified as a lose-win situation. Accommodating style seeks to put the other before one self. Accommodating style is characterized by foregoing one’s desires, selflessness and sacrifice, ability to yield and obeying others. This technique can be adopted as long as one is ready to be a martyr and keeps no tally of the number of times he/she has accommodated someone.

Avoiding style represents low concern for self and others (low assertiveness and low cooperation) and identified as a lose-lose situation. By avoiding the conflict, one pretends that it never occurred or it does not

exist. Avoidance style is characterized by postponing an issue until better time, or simply withdrawal, side stepping of issues and ability to leave issues unresolved. This technique can be adopted for issues which are trivial and insignificant.

Researchers in the past have identified that conflict is traditionally resolved by adopting one of the five styles mentioned above. This paper focuses on identifying the impact of the demographic factors and its significance on conflict handling styles adopted by academicians and explores the possibility of the existence of other factors that influences the satisfaction level of academicians with respect to managerial norms & policies including employee compensation, training & development, work flexibility, fringe benefits, working conditions and avenues for growth & promotion.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers are keenly interested in how conflicts are handled in an environment that has drastically changed and in a scenario where the work environment dynamically differs from the past few decades. Tensions have been escalating at the work place and stress levels have reached an all time high surpassing the boundaries of demography and psychographs. In this context a study on how conflict is managed in various dimensions has proved vital. The present empirical analysis addresses the issue of how conflict is managed by adopting various conflict management styles in an educational hub like Mangalore (Karnataka State, India).

Mukhtar Uzma (2012), focused on the level of conflict which varied based on the kind of employees that an organization hires. Organizational sources of conflict included unclear jurisdictions, communication barriers, degree of interdependence workers have from one another, the degree to which consensus is required and unresolved prior conflict. The researcher concluded that the most popular conflict management styles adopted collectively by academia, banking sector and industrial sectors were 'compromising' and 'avoiding'. Sidhu Singh Navpreet (2013), studied conflict management styles adopted by the staff at various levels in a famous textile manufacturing unit in Bathinda, Punjab (India). He concluded that resignation style and compromise style were the principal styles being used by workers and executives respectively, while, the proportions for negotiation styles were quite low. Munevver & Ozge (2004), highlights the fact that whether or not conflict benefits academics and colleges depends on two factors: first one is the intensity of the conflict and the other is the way conflict is managed. According to Kaur Sandeep & Laxmi M (2013), conflict handling styles of school teachers revealed that, experience (greater than five years of experience and less than five years of experience) had no significant role to play in the manner in which conflict was handled and the most adopted strategy of the school teachers was diffusion and compromise.

Rashid Sobia (2012) stated that conflict handling styles depended on how one sees *one-self* and how one sees *others* in the conflict and as such a solution could range between integrating style (where one has high concern for self and others) and avoiding style (where one has low concern for self and others). Friedmen *et al.*, (2000), concluded that the organizational environment and level of conflict or alternatively stress in an organization depended largely on the way in which the conflicts were handled, whereas, Mehta (2012), identified role stagnation to be the highest contributor to stress followed by role erosion and that B-school teachers resolve disputes by adopting two extreme management handling styles namely competing style and avoiding style.

Kim Lian Lee (2008), examined the relationship between conflict handling styles and subordinates satisfaction with supervision. The findings revealed that the subordinates were more satisfied with their superiors' supervision through their exercise of integrating, compromising, and obliging styles. On the other hand, subordinates who perceived their superiors as primarily utilizing dominating and avoiding style viewed them as incompetent in supervision and thus lowering their level of job satisfaction.

Hearn & Anderson (2002) stated that though most of the research on conflict had been conducted in traditional organizational setups, one could not conclude that educational institutions were totally free from conflicts. In fact Miklas & Kleiner (2003), termed educational institutions as perfect breeding grounds for conflict. These views also synchronized with those of Folger and Shubert (1995), who opined almost two decades ago that colleges and universities were no longer seen as quiet enclaves free from the conflicts that arise in all hierarchical organizations. Differences in goals or plans for the allocation of resources, misinterpretation or inconsistent application of institutional regulations, breaches of formal or informal contracts, power struggles and personal antagonisms were all possible sources of conflict.

Schermerhorn & Chappell (2000) concluded that in terms of interpersonal styles, people respond to conflict management in different ways. These ways shift between the degree of cooperativeness and the degree

of assertiveness. Ghaffar (2005) focused on the causes of conflict and concluded that the agreements and disagreements among individuals and groups were the primary source for conflict. He identified the following conflict management strategies - mediation, negotiation, avoidance, collaborating and so on.

Anand S Godse & Nutankumar S Thingujam (2009) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution styles over and above personality. The study revealed that emotional intelligence and emotional control were found to be negatively and significantly correlated with avoiding style of conflict resolution. Further, the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution styles was found to be significant over and above personality. This echoes the findings of the study of Jordan and Troth (2004), regarding EI's link with integrating and avoiding styles of conflict resolution.

IV. VALIDATING THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A conflict style is defined as a definite response or behavior that people use when addressing the issues relating to conflict. One of the most widely recognized models of conflict styles was developed by Kilmann and Thomas (1975) based on the work of Blake and Mouton (1964) and forms the basis for the questionnaire in the present study. The research instrument was administered to academicians in five leading B-Schools in Mangalore city (Karnataka State, India) where all the teaching faculty members from the five B-schools were included for the purpose of data collection.

Several studies have been made in the past covering various sectors and professions. Management education today in an educational hub like Mangalore, is rapidly gaining ground as an esteemed profession of its own and hence the need for understanding the conflict management techniques adopted by the academicians of this sector is of prime importance. This study not only seeks to identify the various styles adopted by management faculty in handling conflict, but also throws light on the impact of demography in the approach of academicians while handling conflict.

The research instrument consists of two parts. The first part seeks to identify the demographics (gender, marital status, total tenure in work life, tenure in teaching, designation) of the respondents. The second part focused on identifying the behaviour of the respondents towards various issues relating to conflict. All data used in the study consisted of responses to questionnaire items. The present research instrument was partially imported from Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) by Rahim (1983) which is, together with the Conflict Mode Instrument of Thomas and Kilmann (1974) one of the two world's best-known instruments (Van de Vliert and Kabanoff, 1990). The present research instrument adopted is a self-scoring instrument designed to measure an individual's preference for addressing conflict based on five different conflict-handling styles within an organizational set-up. However, the present research instrument was modified to bifurcate the double barreled questions to ensure clarity in addressing the responses relating to conflict management resulting in 35 different statements, instead of the standard 25 different statements (Rahim and N. R. Magner, 1995) on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 'strongly agree' (5) to 'strongly disagree' (1) where the higher score represents greater use of a particular conflict style.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Significance of the study:

The field of Management is dynamic in nature. Management education has become a major profession that attracts considerable attention across the world. Today, there is a lot of competition which in turn has given birth to many problems in the society; 'conflict' being one of them. Conflict may be considered as an expression of hostility, negative attitude, aggression, rivalry and misunderstanding. It is worth repeating here that a conflict-free organization has never existed and never will exist. The alarming rate, at which Conflict is increasing in the management education today, warrants a focused research in finding out alternative remedies of resolving conflict. Understanding of the styles of handling conflict and adopting the appropriate one will enable the management to better achieve their objective in maintaining organizational harmony and good unity. Thus, the focus of research will be to identify various conflict handling styles used by management faculty and the variation in the mode of handling conflict styles with respect to their demography. The study was carried out in a cosmopolitan city namely Mangalore, which is known for its diverse social and organizational culture. It will be interesting to find out how the Mangalore B-School academicians respond to different conflict handling styles, as social behavior is normally implanted and entrenched in a given society.

1.5.2 Objectives of the Study:

The delineation of the research question is to find out the various modes of conflict handling styles employed by management faculties among five leading B-Schools in Mangalore city in order to address *conflict*. The study also seeks to explore the impact of the demography of academicians in adopting conflict handling styles. The research seeks to identify the existence of other factors that influence the satisfaction level of academicians with respect to managerial norms & policies which include employee compensation, training & development, work flexibility, fringe benefits, working conditions and avenues for growth & promotion. Finally the ultimate objective is to recommend to the top management the appropriate strategies to be implemented in order to maintain organizational harmony that promotes growth and unity.

1.5.3 Scope of the Research:

The foundation of the present research rests upon the interaction among major items in the instrument used for the purpose of the study. The primary data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire where cross-sectional data of respondents from five leading B-Schools in Mangalore city were used to address conflict by adopting various styles.

1.5.3 Research Design:

The present study is an exploratory research design within which multiple cross sectional designs would be used to assess whether there is any significant difference among management faculties having less than three years and more than three years of academic experience while adopting the five conflict handling styles (Kilmann and Thomas (1975, 1977)).

1.5.4 Sampling Design:

The present study was confined to five leading B-Schools in Mangalore city (Karnataka State, India). Sampling units comprised of all the faculties in the five chosen B-Schools with a total sample size of 79 respondents. This questionnaire was applied to 19 academicians at a pilot study. For the basis of obtaining more reliable data, the study was followed by face-to-face interviews. The questionnaire was given its final shape after having incorporated the academicians' comments on the topic. It was assumed that the items in the questionnaire were appropriate to test academicians' conflict management styles.

1.5.5 Limitations and Implications for Future Research

The present study included academicians from only five B-schools in Mangalore city. Therefore the results cannot be generalized due to this fact. The study focused primarily on various demographic factors for identifying its impact on handling conflict through various modes. The study also included face validity, content validity and construct validity. Thus, there is wide scope for future research to incorporate other types of research validation. Although the feedback related the direct behaviour of the respondents to a conflict situation, there exists a high possibility that the respondents might actually reveal an ideal response rather than their actual behaviour to a given context.

VI. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

1.6.1 SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The demographic details of respondents are in Table-1 below.

Table-1: Demographic Details

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Gender		
Male	41	51.9
Female	38	48.1
Age		
20-25 years	5	6.3
25-30 years	16	20.3
30-35 years	22	27.8
35-40 years	12	15.2

40-45 years	8	10.1
45-50 years	5	6.3
>50 years	11	13.9
Experience in Teaching		
Less than 3 years	31	39.2
More than 3 years	48	60.8
Marital Status		
Single	24	30.4
Married	55	69.6
Designation		
Professor	18	22.8
Associate Professor	7	8.9
Assistant Professor	24	30.4
Lecturer	30	38.0

(Source: Primary data)

It can be seen from the above table that out of 79 faculty respondents of Mangalore B-Schools, 51.9% of them are male respondents and the remaining are female respondents. Regarding the age group, maximum respondents belong to the age group of 30-35 years. Likewise, 69.6% of respondents are married and about 38% of respondents belong to the category of lecturers followed by 30.4 % who were assistant professors. An important aspect to be noted in the experience in teaching category is that 60.8% of respondents have teaching experience more than 3 years while remaining have less than three years of teaching experience.

1.6.2 ANALYSIS ON FIVE STYLES OF HANDLING CONFLICT

The mean and standard deviation as per the data collected from the respondents were analyzed under the different headings of five modes of conflict handling styles which are represented in Table-2.

Table-2 Analysis On Five Styles Of Handling Conflict

Style	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Competing (n=79; m=5)	4.02	0.83	.728
Collaborating (n=79; m=5)	4.23	0.71	.719
Compromising (n=79; m=5)	3.45	1.02	.619
Avoiding (n=79; m=5)	3.27	1.16	.698
Accommodating (n=79; m=5)	3.74	0.86	.625

*n=total sample size=79 & m=number of items used to define the style.

The key to managing conflict well is choosing and executing the strategy that best fits the situation. It is observed from Table-2 that the mean rating of “Collaborating style” is the highest with 4.23 and has the lowest standard deviation of 0.71. Thus it is found that the most preferred style among management faculties to address conflict is collaborating style followed by competing style and the least preferred style is the ‘Avoiding’. Collaborating with colleagues at the work place promotes creative problem-solving, which is a way of fostering mutual respect and rapport. However, many conflict situations are too trivial to justify the time it takes to collaborate or to settle. It is commonly understood that the collaborating style of handling conflict is desired to define or redefine a problem and to formulate effective alternatives. Thus the collaborating approach to handling conflict is commonly seen among B-School faculty members in Mangalore. According to the behavioral scientists Thomas and Kilmann (1975), based on their 25 items research instrument, where five items each defined a particular conflict management style, the internal reliability of items verified through Cronbach’s alpha indicate that all the values generated exceed 0.60 thus satisfying the basic criteria for further statistical analysis.

1.6.3 INTERNAL CONSISTENCY OR RELIABILITY:

Internal consistency or reliability defines the consistency of the results delivered in a test, ensuring that various items under assessment of conflict management issues are measured correctly and reliably by respondents on a five point Likert scale. This is analyzed statistically through Cronbach's coefficient alpha of reliability Alpha (α) which is depicted below.

TABLE - 3 (A): RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT- CRONBACH α

	(A) For 25 items {Adapted from ROCI-II by Rahim (1983)}	(B) For 35 items {Bifurcating double-barreled items from ROCI-II by Rahim (1983)}	For 45 items {Summary of items appearing in column (A) & (B)}
Cronbach's α	0.754	0.797	0.822

As the Cronbach's α in the above Table -3(a) are all greater than 0.70, we can statistically conclude that there is a consistency or inter-reliability in measuring various items of conflict management. In a sense, the result ensures that the responses are not too varied across time in a summated scale.

Table 3 (B): Reliability Coefficient- Cronbach α

	Competing [n=79;m=9]	Collaborating [n=79;m=11]	Compromising [n=79;m=5]	Avoiding [n=79;m=7]	Accommodating [n=79;m=13]
Cronbach's α	0.820	0.745	0.729	0.798	0.792

*n=total sample size=79 & m=number of items used to define the style.

Testing the reliability through Cronbach's α for the original research instrument for 25 items as referred in Table -2, the researchers have developed a more comprehensive instrument of 35 items for the present research by bifurcating selected items (as quoted in validating of research instrument). Since the Cronbach's α thus generated in the above Table -3(b) are all greater than 0.70 for the revised research instrument, we can statistically conclude that there is a much greater consistency/inter-reliability among various items for defining a particular style of conflict management. Hence, the revised research instrument was considered more reliable/consistent for further statistical analysis than the original research instrument.

1.6.4 COMPARISON OF DIFFERENT CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES BASED ON DEMOGRAPHIC RESPONSE VARIABLES.

**Table-4 a: TEST FOR t-TEST SIGNIFICANCE:
 RESPONSE VARIABLE - EXPERIENCE.**

H₀: There is no significant difference among management faculties having experience less than three years and more than three years while adopting the five conflict handling styles

H₁: There is significant difference among management faculties having experience less than three years and more than three years while adopting the five conflict handling styles.

Conflict Handling Style	Experience	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-test p-value	Significance
Competing	Less than 3 years	31	3.9677	.54430	.52	Non-Significant
	More than 3 years	48	4.0542	.60598		
Collaborating	Less than 3 years	31	4.2710	.43374	.46	Non-Significant
	More than 3 years	48	4.2000	.41667		
Compromising	Less than 3 years	31	3.5677	.69301	.19	Non-Significant
	More than 3 years	48	3.3750	.61142		

	years					
Avoiding	Less than 3 years	31	3.1419	.82007	.25	Non-Significant
	More than 3 years	48	3.3500	.75569		
Accommodating	Less than 3 years	31	3.8710	.45475	.09	Non-Significant
	More than 3 years	48	3.6542	.60176		

From Table-4a, we observe that the t-test p-values are all insignificant at 5% level of significance. Hence null hypothesis is accepted and thus we conclude that there is no significant difference among management faculties having experience less than three years and more than three years while adopting the five conflict handling styles for addressing conflict. This is a common trend in the academic circle where the academicians normally voice out their opinion when conflicts arise and conflict handling styles do not greatly differ as in the case of an industrial set up where there are clear-cut lines of power/hierarchy (Mukhtar Uzma, 2012). Teaching faculty, being more social and integrate, do not necessarily wait to get older to become wiser and hence even the less experienced academicians do not differ from their older counterparts in adopting similar conflict handling styles.

**Table 4 b: TEST FOR t-TEST SIGNIFICANCE:
RESPONSE VARIABLE - AGE.**

H₀: There is no significant difference among management faculties having age less than 35 years and more than 35 years while adopting the five conflict handling styles.

H₁: There is significant difference among management faculties having age less than 35 years and more than 35 years while adopting the five conflict handling styles.

Conflict Handling Style	Age	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-test p-value	Significance
Competing	Less than 35 yrs	44	3.9864	.57125	0.56	Non-Significant
	More than 35 yrs	35	4.0629	.59759		
Collaborating	Less than 35 yrs	44	4.2591	.44945	0.46	Non-Significant
	More than 35 yrs	35	4.1886	.38788		
Compromising	Less than 35 yrs	44	3.4864	.60448	0.58	Non-Significant
	More than 35 yrs	35	3.4057	.70375		
Avoiding	Less than 35 yrs	44	3.1591	.79484	0.03*	Significant
	More than 35 yrs	35	3.4057	.75691		
Accommodating	Less than 35 yrs	43	3.8279	.44632	0.02*	Significant
	More than 35 yrs	36	3.6333	.65465		

**Significant vales at 5% level of significance (l.o.s)*

From Table-4b, we observe that t-test p-values of competing style, collaborating style & compromising style are all insignificant at 5% level of significance. Hence null hypothesis is accepted and thus we conclude that there is no significant difference among management faculties having age less than 35 years and more than 35 years while adopting these styles. But, the p-values of avoiding & accommodating styles are less than 5% l.o.s hence, we reject null hypothesis in this case and infer that there is significant difference among management faculties having age less than 35 years and more than 35 years while adopting avoiding style, & accommodating styles for addressing conflict.

It is not uncommon in academic circles that junior faculty fall into the category of avoiding/accommodating either by choice or force. This is because of lack of experience at the work environment and the problem of adaptability to the work culture.

**Table 4 c: TEST FOR T-TEST SIGNIFICANCE:
RESPONSE VARIABLE - GENDER**

H₀: There is no significant difference among male and female management faculties while adopting the five conflict handling styles.

H₁: There is significant difference among male and female management faculties while adopting the five conflict handling styles.

Conflict Handling Style	Experience	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-test p-value	Significance
Competing	Male	41	4.0244	.64062	0.98	Non-Significant
	Female	38	4.0158	.51650		
Collaborating	Male	41	4.2244	.42236	0.40	Non-Significant
	Female	38	4.2316	.42750		
Compromising	Male	41	3.4098	.66476	0.56	Non-Significant
	Female	38	3.4947	.63371		
Avoiding	Male	41	3.2000	.91652	0.42	Non-Significant
	Female	38	3.3421	.61144		
Accommodating	Male	41	3.7122	.56930	0.65	Non-Significant
	Female	38	3.7684	.54728		

From above Table 4c, we observe that all the t-test p-values are all insignificant at 5% level of significance. Hence null hypothesis is accepted and thus we conclude that there is no significant difference among male and female management faculties while adopting the five conflict handling styles for addressing conflict. Gender remains an issue by and large in the non-academic sector, where there exists a politics and power games for career development unlike the academic sector where, designation determines the role irrespective of gender.

**Table 4 d: TEST FOR T-TEST SIGNIFICANCE:
RESPONSE VARIABLE – MARITAL STATUS.**

H₀: There is no significant difference among married and unmarried management faculties while adopting the five conflict handling styles.

H₁: There is significant difference among married and unmarried management faculties while adopting the five conflict handling styles.

Conflict Handling Style	Marital Status	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-test p-value	Significance
Competing	Single	24	3.9250	.51689	0.33	Non-Significant
	Married	55	4.0618	.60599		
Collaborating	Single	24	4.2083	.48087	0.78	Non-Significant
	Married	55	4.2364	.39831		
Compromising	Single	24	3.6667	.64516	0.04*	Significant
	Married	55	3.3564	.63092		
Avoiding	Single	24	3.0917	.81503	0.18	Non-Significant
	Married	55	3.3455	.76348		
Accommodating	Single	24	3.9000	.43339	0.03*	Significant
	Married	55	3.6691	.59157		

**Significant vales at 5% I.o.s*

From above Table-4d, we observe that t-test p-values of competing style, collaborating style and avoiding style are all insignificant at 5% level of significance. Hence null hypothesis is accepted and thus we conclude that there is no significant difference irrespective of marital status among management

faculties while adopting these conflict handling styles for addressing conflict. But we observe that the p-value of compromising style and accommodating style is less than 0.05, hence in this case we reject null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference among married and unmarried academicians while adopting compromising and accommodating style for addressing conflict. This may be due to the diverse roles played by married employees, the ability to multi-task and handle stress when compared to their non-married counter parts.

1.6.5 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS:

Dependent variable: Satisfaction with the Managerial Norms & Policies of Management (Y)

Independent Variables: All five Conflict Handling Styles [(Competition(X₁), Collaboration(X₂), Compromise(X₃), Avoidance(X₄), Accommodation(X₅)]

Table 5 a: Model Summary

Correlation Coefficient (r)	Coefficient of Determination (R ²)	Adjusted R Square (Adj R ²)
.740	.548	.517

From the above table, r = 0.740, indicates that there is fairly high degree of positive correlation between dependent and independent variables. Also, from the value of R²=0.548, we can infer that about 54.8% of the total variation in academicians satisfaction with the Managerial Norms & Policies is due to the various ways in which the academicians handle conflict using five styles whereas, remaining 45.2% is due to other factors such as obliging nature and integrating characteristics of academicians coupled with their maturity levels and negotiation capacity in their work environment. Further, the other factor from the organization perspective could be management rewards & recognition. The above, when holistically implemented along with five conflict handling styles in the work environment of academicians will result in greater satisfaction with respect to managerial norms & polices which include employee compensation, training & development, work flexibility, fringe benefits, working conditions and avenues for growth & promotion. Finally from the value of adj R² = 0.517, this implies independent variables in the model account for 52% variance in the dependent variable.

Table 5 b: ANOVA Table

H₀: None of the independent variables are significant predictors of the dependent variable.

H₁: At least one independent variable is a significant predictor of the dependent variable.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8.698	5	1.740	17.698	.000*
Residual	7.176	73	.098		
Total	15.873	78			

We observe that value of Significance 0.00 < 0.05, Hence we Reject H₀ and conclude that there is at least one independent variable which is a significant predictor of the dependent variable. Hence the model is a good fit.

Table 5 c: REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Predicted Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Co linearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.588	.429	1.372	.174		
Competing	.032	.015	2.138	.036 *	.681	1.469
Collaborating	.054	.021	2.613	.011 **	.662	1.510
Compromising	.016	.017	.938	.351	.406	2.462
Avoiding	.033	.010	3.205	.002*	.798	1.254
Accommodating	.059	.018	3.367	.001*	.550	1.819

* Values are Significant at 5% l.o.s

** Values are Significant at 10% l.o.s

Dependent variable: Satisfaction with the Managerial Norms & Policies of Management (Y)

Independent Variables: All five Conflict Handling Styles [(Competition(X_1), Collaboration(X_2), Compromise(X_3), Avoidance(X_4), Accommodation(X_5)]

Regression Model: With reference to above table, Regression Model is defined as:

$$Y = 0.588 + 0.032X_1 + 0.054X_2 + 0.016X_3 + 0.033X_4 + 0.059X_5$$

Testing for Significance:

H_0 : There is no relationship between Dependent & Independent variables

(Satisfaction with the Managerial Norms & Policies of Management is not related to its five styles of Handling Conflict)

H_1 : There is relationship between Dependent & Independent variables

(Satisfaction with the Managerial Norms & Policies of Management is related to its five styles of Handling Conflict)

If we take l.o.s as 10%, then p-values of four independent variables such as Competing, Collaborating, Avoiding, Accommodating are less than 0.10, thus we Reject H_0 and conclude that academicians satisfaction with the managerial norms & policies of management is related to its four styles of handling conflict such as competing, collaborating, avoiding and accommodating whereas, in the case of compromising it is insignificant and hence we accept null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between level of satisfaction and compromising mode of handling conflict. This may be due to the fact that academicians who compromise on various issues at the work place may not be doing so intentionally but out of force or fear which ultimately reduces the level of satisfaction with management.

Interpretation of Co linearity: (To Test for Multicollinearity)

Co linearity (or Multicollinearity) is the undesirable situation where the correlations among the independent variables are strong. Formally, Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) measures how much the variance of the estimated coefficients is increased over the case of no correlation among the independent variables. A value of VIF higher than five (or Tolerance less than 0.2) indicates the presence of Multicollinearity. From the above table, all the values of VIF are all less than five and also all tolerance values are more than 0.2, thus we can conclude that presence of Multicollinearity is not detected in the model.

VII. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study interestingly revealed that the conflict management style adopted in Mangalore B-Schools did not differ significantly due to years of teaching experience (less than three years and more than three years) and gender. However, other demographic factors like age, designation and marital status created a significant impact on the five styles of handling conflict. Therefore, in a given organization setup like academia, demography plays a vital role while handling conflict. The conflict management style that was predominant among the teaching faculty in the B-Schools located at Mangalore was collaborating style followed by competing style. This is not surprising since the tendency among management faculty is by and large that of integration. It is not common to see B-School faculty members either totally compromising or avoiding a conflict situation. Behavioral scientists also suggest that a collaborating or problem-solving style is most appropriate for managing conflict (Blake and Mouton, 1964; Likert and Likert, 1976). Thus management of various B-Schools should therefore give priority for training the faculty members in handling conflicts through collaboration. If the management exposes the teaching fraternity to training programs, counseling sessions, seminars and workshops on the pros of adopting collaborative style of managing conflict, it is certain to go a long way in preserving integrity among faculty fraternity and strengthening institutional harmony for effective educational management in the years to come. Satisfying academicians with respect to managerial norms & policies which include employee compensation, training & development, work flexibility, fringe benefits, working conditions and avenues for growth & promotion is no simple task and hence the management must seek ways to promote a healthy environment thereby ensuring that conflicts are professionally handled at the workplace. The four styles of handling conflict such as competing, collaborating, avoiding and accommodating had a significant impact on level of satisfaction; whereas, in the case of compromising mode of handling conflict the outcome was insignificant. Thus management must focus on programmes that train academicians to handle conflict appropriately as demanded by the situation and not just surrender either out of fear or force.

A satisfied employee is the *delight* of any organization. Employees should be capable of handling conflict and still exist in harmony, despite the demographic profiles that impact a work environment. This in

turn will create a differential advantage for the organization not only to thrust forward despite immense competition but also to create a value driven society in these turbulent times.

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