

Review Article: Conflict Management

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Abstract

Conflict management means the planning process for avoiding conflict. There is a possibility for conflict to happen and organizing it for solving the conflict where it happens. Conflict management includes identifying and investigating the conflicts in a reasonable and predictable position, fairly and in an effective method. Simply, conflict management is the act of identifying and managing the conflict with a reasonable, fair, and efficient method. Conflict management means the right utilization of conflict solving techniques in the time of facing with conflict. In fact, conflict management means the right utilization of conflict solving methods in the time of facing them. The purpose of this study was to investigate the theoretical bases and researches, which have already been done in the field of conflict management. Generally, it can be concluded that satisfying the basic mental needs as basic feeder can predict the intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivations that in turn, will predict the positive consequences related to job, including commitment, job satisfaction, and enhanced relations. All of these human dimensions can affect the different areas of management including conflict management and selecting useful strategy.

Keywords: Strategy, Viewpoint, Improving Performance.

Introduction

Having heard the word conflict, most of the human beings visualize quarrel, fighting, or war; while these extreme conditions are just the clearest and the most obvious hostile manifestations of conflict. Conflict includes awareness (assumption, understanding, or perception), opposition, conflict, scarcity, barrier, and obstacle and is an act that is done with intention, either hidden or revealed and is a process in which a conscious effort is done by A to neutralize the B's effort, however, by blocking his/her way, which as a result, B becomes desperate in achieving his/her goal. Or that A increases his/her benefits through that (Robbins, 2009). Conflict appears for different reasons among people and groups. Differences in perception, personality, belief, politics, and alike on the one hand, and different elicitations about the goals of the individual, organization, and society on the other hand, create different conflicts in collective work environments (Rahim and Magner, 1995). Conflict among groups is a natural result of organizing (Daft, 2002). Conflict is the process of perception or feeling any kind of incompatibility inside or among the individuals, groups or organizations that leads to a hidden or revealed conflicted behavior in both sides. Conflict usually happens in the following situations: individuals or groups imagine that they have exclusive two-direction goals and values. Individuals use behaviors that are designed for defeating or overcoming the opponents. Groups face together with controversial tow-direction actions. The group tries to achieve a favorable situation compared to other group or individual (Mirkamali, 2008). Therefore,

the present research looked to investigate the theoretical bases and researches that have already been done on the field of conflict management

Results

There have been different views on conflict management.

1- Traditional View

In this view and viewpoint, conflict in community and group is always unnatural and its appearance background must be confronted generally and situations must be created that would not cause conflict. Because conflict causes exposure, indiscipline, and turbulence in the process of doing tasks and conflict and indiscipline cause collapsing the structure of the organization (Baron, 1996). This viewpoint developed in the peak time of the power of the scientific management and still has remained stable. Both the scientific school and administrative management strongly emphasized the structural organizational development in which tasks, rules and provisions, procedures and relations are specified in detail. In a way that the type of the conflict developed, these edited rules and provisions could solve the conflict in the organization. Accordingly, the existence of conflict is a sign of the management's weakness or deliberate efforts of trouble maker people (Ghorbani, 2000).

2- Human Relations View

Human relations theorists claim that conflict is a natural and incredible event in groups and organizations and it cannot be deleted. Managers are suggested to learn the life with conflict and solve it if it is possible and even believed that sometimes conflict can be useful for group's efficient performance. Human relations viewpoint was the prevailing theory from the late 1940s to the mid-1970s (Rezaeiyan, 2003).

3- Interactive View

This view looks at the tolerance and managing the conflict more beyond than the school of pluralism theory. This view emphasizes both provoking of the conflict and solving the conflict. This school of thought argues that a group or a unit which has no disagreement in it and acts very friendly, compatible, and harmonic can become indifference and apathy to the changing needs. One, who has interactionist view, always tries to provide the positive potential aspects of conflict for the organization's growth and decrease the negative aspects of the conflict. In this view it is suggested that individuals do not think about eradicating the conflict, but consider the injection of conflict-making conditions. This issue is the condition for facilitating the construction, mobility, and dynamics of the organization. So, the role of individuals in this view will include balancing conflicts at performance level (Abbaszadegan, 2005). Contrary to this view, most of the people in many organizations still do not like conflict and often try to avoid it. They insist to look at the conflict from the scientific paradigm view of 300 years ago, which was created by Newton's mechanical rules from classical physics. Based on this paradigm, conflict must be avoided, because it causes indiscipline. So, conflict is the enemy of the organizations that are managed scientifically and rationally (Tonkeh-nezhad, 2005).

Types of Conflict according to the Result

In a categorization, Robbins (1996) divides the conflicts into two categories:

1- Constructive Conflict (Functional)

Conflicts which confirm and strengthen the group's goal and improve the performance are functional. These types of conflicts have positive results for group or organization. It gives the busy people the opportunity to recognize the issues and opportunities that somehow have been forgotten and as a result, creativity and performance improve. Constructive conflict encourages the individual to overcome the satisfaction from the existing situation and make the necessary creations and changes (Seyed Javadin, 2003).

2- Destructive Conflict (Dysfunctional)

Conflicts that hinder the group's good performance are dysfunctional. Destructive conflict is created in an organization once the individual or the system is constantly repeating itself rather than progressing. In this case, conflict does not cause change and the energy that must be on its right path, remains in one spot and changes and destroys everything (Adizes, 1997).

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to investigate the theoretical bases and researches that have already been done in the field of conflict management. Generally, it can be said that selecting the best solution for facing conflict would be based on position, busy individuals, and the conflict-making issue (Dehghan Nayeri and Salehi, 2000). One of the factors in the conflict management among individuals being effective and constructive is the conflict management style which individuals use for solving conflict (Kantek and Gezer, 2009). Conflict management strategies are the individuals' response to conflict situations that are possible to change in different situations while they are continuing (Jahaniyan, 2012). Wilson and Putnam identified five ways in order to solve the conflict and in their field research, they have put these five ways in three conflict strategies which are interpreted as following: (solution-oriented strategy) which includes cooperation and compromise methods. (Non-confrontational strategy) which includes the avoidance and agreement methods. (Control strategy) which includes the competition method (Torabi et al, 2008). The non-confrontational strategy is composed of avoidance and agreement methods, the solution-oriented strategy is composed of the cooperation and compromise methods, and the control strategy is composed of the equal competition methods (Moghimi, 2007). The solution-oriented strategy is the situation that individuals show a good sense of cooperation and are determined to achieve their demands, means that the parties' strategy is "win-win". Here, both we and our rivals want to reach our demands. In such a description, we use the strategy of "the cooperation based on the trust". The non-confrontational is adopted when there is a disagreement, but it is not a very important subject and treating lightly in an ordinary subject gets credit for another subject, which is important for individuals. This strategy is used when the individual does not feel the ability to confront his/her rival in him/her or is not determined in his/her demands. The control strategy, which monitors the competitive method, is formed when two people or two groups are determined to achieve their demands and do not have the sense of cooperating with each other and compete together. The parties' strategy in the competition is "win-loss" and this strategy is often used when a fast and decisive action is needed and in order to control the correct decision, competition is created. Based on the research done by Sahafzadeh (2012) with the topic of the relationship between the maturity and conflict management styles, there is a positive significant relationship between managers' maturity and all its three components (opinion independence, sense of competency, and relation), and the amount of using the cooperation style. There is no relationship between it and other conflict management styles. Also, based on the research done by Gagne and Deci (2005), with the title of self-determination theory and job motivation, with the result that satisfying the higher level of basic mental needs, provides the field of self-determination intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. And these two have with themselves the better performance, satisfaction, and confidence, which are the tools for tendency towards cooperation and compromise style. On the other hand the more the cooperation style is used in an organization; the higher level of the maturity can be expected. Also, based on the researches done on the field of the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies, by Sharifi and Eslamiyeh (2012), Tabatabaei (2014), Rouhi (2010), Mozaffari et al (2011), and Haji Esmaeili (2011), there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies and also based on the research done about the relationship between emotional intelligence and basic psychological needs by Ghasemi (2013), the emotional intelligence components have a significant relationship with meeting basic psychological needs. It can be concluded that there was a significant relationship between these two components. According to the findings of Deci and Ryan, situations that support the opinion independence and sense of competency, facilitate this vital tendency to human growth with confidence and in return, the behavior's controlling conditions hinder this growth. Generally, it can be concluded that satisfying the basic mental needs as basic feeder can predict the intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivations that in turn, will predict the positive consequences related to job, including commitment, job satisfaction, and enhanced relations. All of these human dimensions can affect the different areas of management including conflict management and selecting a useful strategy.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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