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## Role of Conflict Management Styles on Managers' Self-Efficiency at Iranian Schools in Tehran Province

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### Abstract

The importance of management in different segments of the workplace and monitoring of organizational behaviors that appear from managers is supercritical and should be considered increasingly.

In some cases, the manager may be faced with different issues and difficulties in the management process, and the level of his/ her performance, and efficiency decreases; furthermore, concentrating more on various aspects of the management when the conflict happened is extremely extensive. By the way, the present research focused on the role of conflict management styles on self-efficiency amongst 259 managers (men and women) who worked at governmental schools in Tehran Province, Iran. Moreover, the researcher collected the data via two questionnaires; which comprised The Conflict Management Questionnaire, which is proposed by Izadi Yazdan Abadi, and The Self-Efficiency Scale that is developed by Sherer. The findings derived from data analyzing in SPSS Software and illustrated there is a significant relationship between conflict management styles with managers self-efficiency at school. Additionally, the styles of conflict management included five main styles such as Accommodating, Avoidance, Collaboration, Competing, and Compromising that have a meaningful relationship with Self-Efficiency. The results shown that Collaboration has a positive association with managers self-efficiency and increases its level; on the other hand, Avoidance has a negative relation with the efficiency of managers at schools. Besides, with using styles of conflict management in the correct way that obtain via knowing them perfectly, managers can improve their efficiency and achievement; correspondingly, they endeavor to cope with difficulties and issues at the workplace.

**Keyword:** Accommodating, Avoidance, Collaboration, Competing, Compromising, Conflict Management Styles, Managers, Self-efficiency, School

### 1. Introduction

Managers in different segments and societies usually attempt to find a suitable solution way to monitoring and decreasing different types of issues (Fiedler & Chemers, 1974). Therefore, these attempts can be helpful for providing a peaceful work environment for the whole members. One of these uncommon issues that can appear in many types of workplaces is the presence of conflict amongst managers. In this regard, understanding the real context of management and its key role in the workplace can be useful for those who are working in this position. Incidentally, the current examination considered the role of conflict management and applying the styles of conflict management on managers' self-efficiency at schools that assumed as one of the principal educational places in all countries and societies.

#### 1.2 Conflict Management and Role of its Styles

Management expected as one of the organizational factors that have deep antiquity. As well, it should be explored from the family as a principle and first stage; then, it will be continued to society, and the work environment (Fiedler & Chemers, 1974). Exceptionally, the management recognized as an important factor for an extensive range of social sciences that should be molded very regular; with this explanation, a manager must distinguish lots of plans and approaches in that field. As it happens, a manager should emphasize on the

main principle of management such as establishing, preparation, and precise conducting. Consequently, it has been identified as one skill and art that contained forming and leading dissimilar groups for achieving one unique purpose (Rees, 1991).

After knowing and examining the meaning and context of management, exploring and focusing on different issues that may be a manager face with them is very vital. Conflict determined as one of the main issue that should be distinguished via managers and gain comprehensive information about it. In fact, there are plentiful reasons for appearing of conflict such as income, career, authority, etc., but the main point in the conflict is a real understanding, that should be considered, thoughtfully (Rezaeian, 2016). The conflict equally expected as a disorganized structure and has been changed in during a time; in effect, the conflict appears when there is difference or disagreement. This uncommon organizational factor can be labeled as a contract between two or more groups that ensuing some types of disagreement and incompatibility. Certainly, the conflict can be appearing in any organization or work; incidentally, it can affect on feeling and views of individuals or in vast figure it has appeared in vast structure or strategy of individuals in any scheme; as well, the individuals experienced conflict and presence of issue based on their position at a work environment (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Normally, the conflict has deep meaning in every society that most of them described it as controversial, annoying one another and have a variance. The conflict similarly has an unbalanced structure and has been changed in time duration. The main opinion that should be deliberated carefully is the conflict references. This factor appears based on human activity and effects on his or her performance, and in some cases can be creating some special behavior. These behaviors frequently please an individual's obligation in every condition. But there is one negative point that should be repeating, this point is that individual for receiving or satisfying their desire maybe do any uncommon and abnormal performance that lead to numerous issues (Maslow, 1943; Harigopal, 1995). Furthermore, with the presence of conflict at the workplace, the way of facing and managing it from managers is more essential; additionally, a manager can play as instructor and protector at work (Bahmani, 2009).

Regarding conflict at the workplace, applying different styles of management to reducing, monitoring, and in most of the time solving it in several situations is supercritical. Conflict management comprised five main styles, such as Accommodating, Avoidance, Collaboration, Competing, and Compromising. Competing as one of the main styles of conflict management distinct as authorized power to solving the conflict and issues by managers at a work; in point of fact, in this style, the manager in both status attempts to decrease or solving the conflict without any noises and fights. Most of the time, managers via applying this style showing violent behaviors such as employee temporary expulsion. The competing style also has some different types that have been mentioned based on various views and studies. These types encompassed personal competition (applying official influence), coalition (creating a union with dissimilar groups for overpowering an individual via authority), and the majority (leading to majority's authority to solving conflict) (Farhangi, 2008). Another style of conflict management is accommodating that can distinguish it as smoothing behavior in front of consistency. Truthy, in this style one side of conflict efforts to satisfy other requirements although his/her benefits will be ignored (Kuzan, 1989). Based on accommodating style managers endeavour to keep work environment quiet and peaceful without any tension and negative emotion, just only to achieve both sides aim at a work (Luthans, 1992). Similarly, accommodating style has different features that can be refer to welcoming behaviour, avoiding any violence and aggression, covering or disappearing faults, confirming positive behaviour and refusing weakness, deliberating toward agreeable subjects between individuals or groups, delaying solving conflict just only to decreasing any tension, forgetting inconvenient opportunities which appeared by individuals or groups, etc. , in general, these managers attempt to cover issues and difficulties at a work (Farhangi, 2008). In Avoiding style managers try to reject or neglect conflict. The managers discard the whole aids (both side of the conflict). On the other hand, managers do not mention any clarification or stating regards their feelings and displaying themselves neutral (Robbins & Judge, 2017). In compromising style considered on benefits of both side of conflict or disagreement. The conflict condition managing in a positive way and the whole individuals or groups obtain benefits and more advantages. In fact, the parties believe to retreat for obtaining benefits for another side (each of them discards their requirements and winner or loser does not have any meaning in this management style) (Farhangi, 2008). One of the effective and most positive

management styles is collaboration which has been recognized as unification. In this style, the matter or conflict has been stated and examined deeply. As it happens, the managers let individuals express their words and feelings freely without any limitation, then the difficulties solve, and they reach a deal (Kuzan, 1998).

### **1.3 Importance of Self-Efficiency at Workplace**

According to managers performance and outcome at first should be considered to some internal and external factors that improve and develop the range of managers presentation at work. Job satisfaction assumed as one of these important organizational factors amongst managers at the workplace to improving performance and feel and makes them happy to continue and presentation at work. The presence of this factor truly determined as positive and motivational factors to decreasing and controlling fatigue and frustration at the workplace. Managers' satisfaction increases their self-efficiency and really helped to a high level of efficiency in work environment (Barghi, 2008). Based on this reason, endeavored to focus more on the critical role of self-efficiency that has been developed based on Bandura's Theory which focused on efficiency, comprehensively. Self-efficiency has deeply influence on feelings, attitudes, and individual's excitation (Bandura, 1994). In other words, self-efficiency assumed as the individual expectation of achieving success at work or valuable result (Reeve, 2004). The self-efficiency also nominated as individuals' judges toward their skills, capability, and ability. In truth, this factor assumed as one type of dealing with different conditions and environments. In general, self-efficiency referred to individuals' abilities in the specific work condition (Rychman, 1997). The principle part of individuals believes has been determined based on human performance. Truly, individuals who have a high level of self-efficiency have high expectations in the results of their performance; furthermore, they really want to become successful in their personal and social life. In this regard, Bandura (1989) explained that self-efficiency needs various experiences in coping with different issues and difficulties. Recognizing the accurate skills and coping them can reduce the negative experience that appeared based on performances. Self-efficiency doesn't appear automatically amongst individuals and needs time processing until it formed from childhood to the elderly. Based on Bandura, the self-efficiency has a considerable role in success or failure in life duration (Reeve, 2004). Self-efficiency has been changed based on age and gender, and usually men showing more self-efficiency as compared with women. Additionally, Bandura (1994), in Social Cognitive Theory, reported the important role of individuals behavior, and internal and external factors on self-efficiency

### **1.4 Role of Conflict Management Styles on Self-Efficiency at workplace**

Considering the brilliant role of management at the workplace and examining the behavior and performance of managers at work that determined as a supercritical factor. Furthermore, focusing on its imperative effect on efficiency and high level of individuals performance at work can be helpful for organizations. Conflicted managers usually show dissimilar behavior, which in some cases is not accepted from other co-workers; moreover, understanding the correct way of management and solving any type of problem or conflict, can be open the new way for increasing the level of efficiency and acceptable performance amongst managers. In this regard, there is some investigation that has done in Iran and in some different countries, which the researchers explained the role and importance of accurate management and self -efficiency.

Self-efficiency has the main role on performance and social activities of individuals, in this regard, Latifian (2001) focused on the relationship between social support and self-efficiency with study habits in both sexes, the result has shown that there is meaningful relation between efficiency, social support, and study time duration. The researcher emphasized the important role of self-efficiency that improves the level of students' outcomes.

In the study of Torabi (2004) focused on conflict management and leadership style amongst 177 managers at Lorestan Province, Iran. Based on the results, leadership style and conflict management have a direct relation with work experience and distinguishing the accurate method of management and leadership can be helpful for managers' performance and efficiency at work. Correspondingly, in 2004 Baharestan focused on conflict management styles in Yazd Province, Iran amongst managers and reported corporation and compromising

styles have a considerable role on the high level of managers performance at the workplace and the managers believed that with applying these styles can improve their skills and presentation at work environment. In the same way, Kalantari (2007) examined conflict management styles with managers personalities in Yazd Province, Iran. The findings have revealed that extrovert managers showing more corporation, agreement, and compromising. Hennessy and Lent (2008) explained that self-efficiency and conflict management have a direct association.

In the same way, Malekiha, Baghban, and Fatehizade (2009) explained that conflict management has a considerable role in job satisfaction and family satisfaction, in this case monitoring the conflict in an accurate way can be helpful in the level of individuals. Likewise, in 2014, Kavosi, Hatami Zargaran, Kharazmi, and Mir Masoudi examined the relationship between negotiation styles and conflict management strategies among hospital managers, nurses, and supervisors at hospitals in Iran. they reported applying accurate strategy or style of management in a conflict situation is very important and should be considered from the whole employees.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Participants**

The participants in the present study were managers of governmental schools in Tehran Province, Iran that was selected 259 managers<sup>1</sup> (men & women) via Morgan and Krejcie's sample size table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The Cross-Sectional method likewise was applied to collecting data. This sample was selected through cluster sampling method in different steps.

### **2.2 Instruments and Measurements**

In this research applied the Self-Efficiency Inventory proposed by Sherer (1982) and the Conflict Management Questionnaire that developed by Izadi Yazdan Abadi (1994). The self-efficiency inventory comprises 17 items and measured by 5-point Likert Scale (extremely agree=5 to extremely disagree=0). The Cronbach's coefficient alpha based on original inventory was (.86). Also, the conflict management questionnaire has 30 items that measure Accommodating, Avoidance, Collaboration, Competing, Compromising styles. This questionnaire also measured by 5-point Likert scale (always=5 to never=0). The Cronbach's coefficient alpha for conflict management styles based on original inventory for each of the items was (.65).

## **3. Results**

The current investigation considered on the role of conflict management styles on managers' self-efficiency at governmental schools in Tehran Province, Iran. For illustrating these effects among variables used multiple linear regression analysis methods and the findings demonstrated in Tables 2. But before that table, Table 1 has been shown the demographic factors.

### **3.1 Descriptive Findings**

The descriptive findings concentrate on the personal characteristics of the participants. In the current study, data distribution characterizes the information about managers' background that is being investigated in terms of central tendency.

#### **3.1.1 Personal Characteristics**

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<sup>1</sup> The total number of guidance schools' managers in 2009 at Tehran Province was 769 that based on Morgan and Krejcie's sample size table this amount shown 259.

This section emphasizes on the description of the personal characteristics of the study's participants. The personal characteristics of the current study involve age, gender, level of education, and work experience. A total of 259 managers from governmental schools in Tehran Province, Iran were comprised as participants in this study. Table 1 displays the findings obtained from the participants' background.

The results of participants' background in Table 1 indicates that most of the participants were female (52.9 %), between 31-40 years old (56.37 %), bachelor's degree holders (83.01 %), and years of employment less than 5 years (31.66 %).

**Table 1: Personal Profile of Participants (N=259)**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	137	52.9
Male	122	47.1
<b>Age</b>		
≤ 30	28	10.81
31-40	146	56.37
41-50	57	22.01
≥51	28	10.81
<b>Level of Education</b>		
Diploma	26	10.04
Bachelor's degree	215	83.01
Master's Degree or more	18	6.95
<b>Years of Employment</b>		
≤ 5	82	31.66
6-10	44	16.99
11-15	57	22.01
≥16	48	18.53

### 3.1.2 Predictors of Self-Efficiency

In this section, multiple linear regression analysis is examined to determine the role of conflict management styles on self-efficiency of managers at governmental Iranian School, Tehran Province. Table 2 shows this analysis.

**Table 2: Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis between Conflict Management Styles and Self-Efficiency**

Predictor Variables	Dependent Variable	F	$\beta$	t	p
	<b>Self-Efficiency</b>	15.03	-	-	.001
<b>Conflict Management Styles</b>					
Collaboration	-1.505		0.39	6.01	.001
Accommodating	-.637		-.08	-1.19	.236
Avoidance	2.937		-.26	-3.68	.001
Compromising	.686		-.01	0.16	.871
Competing			-.09	-1.14	.151

Note: \* $p < .01$

The results of multiple linear regression analysis to predict of self-efficiency via Accommodating, Avoidance, Collaboration, Competing, Compromising displays that Collaboration ( $\beta = .39$ ,  $t = 6.01$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and Avoidance ( $\beta = -.26$ ,  $t = -3.68$ ,  $p < .01$ ) significantly predicted managers self-efficiency. The findings illustrated among styles of conflict management, Collaboration, and Avoidance are significant proportion in self-efficiency. As a result, it can show that the dependent variable was meaningfully described by the independent variables as a group.

## 4. Discussion

According to the self-efficiency predictors amongst conflict management styles, the findings have shown that Corporation and Avoidance predicted managers' efficiency. The multiple linear regression displayed that there is a positive relationship between the Corporation and self-efficiency and there is a negative association between Avoidance and self-efficiency ( $p < .01$ ). Moreover, with increasing the level of Corporation from a manager the amount of his /her efficiency will be increased, in contrast, with applying Avoidance style the performance and his/her efficiency will be reduced, considerably. In other words, the Corporation style at the workplace can be caused by job satisfaction amongst staff (teachers and managers) and improve their relationship. Additionally, it has created success and developed the educational environment for teachers and students; also, the teachers can continue their job and responsibility with better organizational performance

and behavior. In addition, with applying corporation style the level of parents' satisfaction from a manager, teachers, and school will be raised.

## 5. Conclusion

According to the findings of the present study examining and monitoring of conflict management styles and applying them in an accurate way need a high level of manager awareness and consciousness which some of these styles such as corporation provides a high level of efficiency and performance of the manager and some of them are vice-versa. Furthermore, accurate distinguishing of these styles and using them in the correct situation is supravital and necessary from managers (there is no specific method or style to solving or decreasing conflict at a work; additionally, managers based on work condition identify which style can be actual to monitoring a situation and can play as solvent), also ministry of education in Iran and any other countries that provide suitable condition for their staff and offering some professional workshops regards management and organizational behavior that is very important for the whole staff and members.

## 6. Recommendation & Limitation

In the present research focused on school managers in Tehran Province; in this case, the researcher recommended consider to other managers also, who are working in different segments (governmental and private educational segments and various types of organizations), recognizing the effective style can be helpful for developing countries and societies strategies. Also, for the part of practical recommended offering some professional workshops for increasing and understanding managing methods and how to apply them in an accurate way.

Additionally, the current investigation only focused on role of conflict management styles on self-efficiency amongst managers at Iranian schools while these styles have different role and effect on multiple behaviors and reactions of managers that should be considered and need more time and budget undoubtedly, because the present study was cross-sectional but for receiving comprehensive information and data need apply longitudinal method that usually this method used rarely and want more support from the main segments and organization of each country or society.

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