

Factor Influencing Impact of Intergroup and Intragroup Conflict to the Organization: Concept Paper

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Abstract

Conflict occurs in different scenarios between individuals and group of people. Basically, this is due to opposing ideas and actions of different units or same units, creating an antagonistic state. However, conflict is an unavoidable part of life. In a working environment, conflict influence our actions and decision in one way or another. Intergroup and intragroup conflict is a major factor that affects the pattern of group-level movement patterns and ultimately shaped the evolution of group living and sociality. It shows the conflict that happens at any level of the group can cause a significant impact to shape the organisation. It can be a positive impact or a negative impact. However, the conflict can be very meaningful in coming up with decisions because all parties involved try to give the organisation the best solution. However, it must parallel with the spirit of harmony to avoid any unpleasant environment. This paper will provide an idea to the reader what are the impact of intergroup and intragroup conflict in terms of (1) Team Innovation (2) Freedom of Speech (3) technology evolution and as well as (4) how to manage the conflict.

Keywords: Organizational Conflict, Conflict Relationship, Conflict Resolution

Introduction

According to the research done by Carsten & Laurie (2003) most companies throughout the world use form of groups to accomplish work tasks, but one of the major challenges is dealing with group conflict. Their study shows less than 30% of groups experience widespread conflict throughout the team.

When we talk about a group is a combination of two or more interdependent individuals interacting with each other to achieve a specific task. Groups can be formal and informal groups. The formal group are two or more individuals in an organization to carry out tasks, communicate, and solve problems whereas informal group's purpose gathering to satisfy a social need or physiological needs (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2016).

To be specific, in an organisation can have two different conflicts intragroup conflict and intergroup conflict. Intragroup conflict is different from intergroup conflict, in which intergroup happens outside of the same group and intragroup happens among staff in the same department. It is difficult to say intergroup and intragroup conflict always brings a negative effect to the group because every conflict still has beneficial effects on group image and company outcomes. Every department of the organization always has conflicts with each other. Both conflicts can be positive to the department and sometimes it can be negative to the department, it is depended on how managers manage the conflicts.

Thus, this study examines how intergroup and intragroup conflict give an impact to company performance, team task performance and perceptions of team processes.

The Background of the Study

In most organizations, conflict occurs at various levels within the individuals, between the individuals in a group, and between the groups in an organization. This is due to each person having different communication styles, backgrounds or working preferences. Thus, conflicts can occur in any workplace, and important to solve them effectively to create and maintain a positive and productive work environment.

According to (Tuckman & Jensen, 2016), there are five (5) stages in team; development, forming, storming, norming and performing and if we focus on the storming stage, where conflict between the team members arises due to disagreement on how things should be done or some kind of power struggle in play, is likely to happen. The role of a leader is critical at this stage to identify issues and resolve conflict among the members.

In this research, we emphasize learning about how the conflict scenario can be created and how to help the reader manage the conflict challenges. We list examples of conflict in the workplace and provide steps and tips to help resolve or mitigate the conflict as well.

Problem Statement

Nowadays, most organizations face conflict that may give effect to company performance and productivity. For example, the research department has its view on entering the market and the marketing department also has its point to lunch the product. But the most important is, all groups have the same objective which is to give the best for the company. To avoid the performance or productivity of a group declining due to conflict, it is necessary to know and understand the root cause of differences and methods to deal with.

Basically, a conflict happens when two sides, each of which has their own view on a certain issue and persistently proves it. If it does not resolve early, it can lead to quarrels, threats and even insults or if we manage to control the conflict it will vice versa. In the initial stage this conflict is created unconsciously and without we realize, it can contribute to positive qualities like leaking additional information and presenting the views of the staff, causing you can do to find the optimal solution. However, everything will depend on how to coordinate the emerging differences.

The Gap of Research

According to Parashar & Sharma (2020) from some management writers and researchers argue that the negative side of conflict could cause losses in productivity because groups or workers would not cooperate in getting work finished on time as they would not share important information. They more focus on conflict distracts managers from their work and reduces their concentration on the job and that conflict can affect the morale of the workers.

Due to this argument, Robbins & Judge (2016) pointed out that conflict should be avoided by all possible means and when it appeared by any mistake, it should be stopped as quickly as possible by managerial.

In this study, the researcher identifies the factor influencing the impact of Intergroup and Intragroup conflict on the organization. A few studies were done in analysing the impact of conflict in the organization (Kehinde, 2014; Shabani, et. el., 2022). But our study will emphasize the creation of the conflict happen and the resolution to mitigate the negative impact. It is important to review this since conflict within the company has become a norm nowadays.

Literature Reviews

Categories of Conflict

Researchers have categorized conflict into three categories: task, relationship and process conflict. Task conflict is a type of conflict that occurs over the content and goals of the work. Relational conflict is a conflict that is based on interpersonal relationships. Process conflict is a conflict over how the work should be done.

Relationship conflict in the work setting is most likely to be dysfunctional because it increases personality clashes, and reduces mutual understanding and trust which in turn reduces the capabilities of the team to achieve its goals (Vries et. al., 2012). Due to the nature of clashes between two or more individuals, relationship conflict is the most exhausting to individuals (Halevy et. al., 2012).

Earlier research indicates task conflict correlated to group higher performance, however another study found that generalized task conflict is unrelated to group performance. It was indicated as a factor of the conflict that can create a relationship between conflict and performance (Vries et. al., 2012). One such factor is whether the conflict included the top management or at the lower management. Task conflict that occurs at the top management has a positive impact towards group performance. Meanwhile, task conflict at the lower management has a negative impact towards group performance.

Process conflicts are about delegation and roles. Conflict on roles could leave a member of the group feeling marginalized and this could quickly turn the task conflict to relationship conflict. An argument about how things should be done take the group time away from completing their task and arguments about roles and responsibilities will sometimes lead to no conclusion.

Team Innovation

Intragroup conflict and team innovation involves developing a creative solution, product, or service that is also practical and sensible (Suifan et. al., 2019). Team members may face issues while trying to positively resolve repeated conflicts. If conflicts cannot be resolved, the team's ability to work well is hindered, causing deficient performance on innovation tasks. Teams that tackle task conflict can expect positive effects on team innovation because team members' knowledge expands when they research solutions. This step leads to team innovation and at the same time, task conflict undermines team outcomes by causing cognitive overload, interpersonal conflicts, and stress among team members. Both relationship and process conflict are likely harmful to team innovation. For innovation, efficient information processing is needed without the fear or remorse created by relationship conflict, yet some studies suggest that the relationship between conflict and innovation is neither positive nor negative. Other studies have shown that innovation is

influenced by the presence as well as the level of relationship conflict, where low levels of relationship conflict cause innovative behaviours and high levels hinder innovative behaviour.

Freedom of Voice

Many organizations offer their employees the opportunity to voice out their opinions about work-related issues because of the positive consequences associated with offering such an opportunity (Vries et. al., 2012). Sometimes valuable time and money is wasted if employees are encouraged to voice their opinion while their input is not regarded, this is not necessarily true. Freedom of voice has developed to be an effective strategy to build teamwork's spirit, decision control, inclusion in the group, and respect.

However, little attention has been given to the possibility that freedom of voice may have create negative intragroup conflict effects as well. This thing happens because that manager failed to manage the conflicts very well, which manager only have the opportunity to voice out their input but not bring the suggestion to the top management. For examples, employees who feel their manager does not intend to regard their ideas, comments, and suggestions will be unmotivated to engage in voice behaviour and such feelings may cause them to display destructive, rather than constructive, organizational citizenship behaviours such as intentionally withholding ideas, information, and opinions. If employees withhold expressing their views regarding work-related issues, the organization will not be beneficial from their knowledge and useful suggestions which, sometimes could help improve the organization's performance.

Reduced voice behaviour may harm organizations in separate ways. For one, if employees do not speak up anymore, organizations cannot benefit from informational diversity which is often present within organizations (Jehn et. al., 1999). Even more important than not taking advantage of informational diversity is the possibility that reduced voice behaviour leads to increased intragroup conflict, which can be defined as the amount of tension and disagreements within a work group (Jehn, 1995). Intragroup conflict has been identified as one of the main causes of organizational malfunctioning as it may lead to decreased employee performance and satisfaction (Carsten & Laurie, 2003).

Evolution of Technology

The conflict also can be due to outside factor. One of the external factors is due to evolution of technology (Litvinova, 2002). There are some managements who reluctant to follow the current evolution by trusting the traditional way. But the external factor is forcing to dare make changes. We can take example from evolution of music industry. Nowadays most of us are used to music available to us over the internet, not so long ago in 2005 almost all music is in a form of physical media such as a disc. This has change in 2015 where digital download overcome the sales of physical media in terms of revenue and legal streaming services constitute one third of the overall music market. Sportify, a legal streaming service is one of the most successful streaming services. However, at the beginning of its establishments, music producer is sceptical of that it will erode their revenue. Sportify founder, Daniel Ek claimed that it was not their intention to disrupt the music industry but merely to assist the industry to beat piracy at its own game by providing a legal downloading service to music and making it easier and pleasant. After much conflict and negotiation between the music industry players and Sportify, the industry finally agreed. This has strengthened the bargaining power for Sportify, any record labels that exit from this agreement would lose access to a huge number of listeners who depend solely on streaming services for their music. At the same

time if any of the record label doesn't want to deal with Sportify, Sportify would lose access to its popular artist and dissatisfied customer, or listeners would switch to an alternative streaming service. This is the case with Taylor Swift who moved from Sportify to an alternative service provider for a better commission fees (Dickey, 2014). The impact of Taylor Swift is not known but it will surely be costly affairs for Sportify since the news is public. The stakes of negotiations are high, and a lot of time is spent negotiating on the table.

The Proposed of Concept Framework

To understand the study, a conceptual framework is necessary. This study aims to focus potential for factors influencing impact of intergroup and intragroup conflict to the organization. Based on the literature review of this study, the conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1.

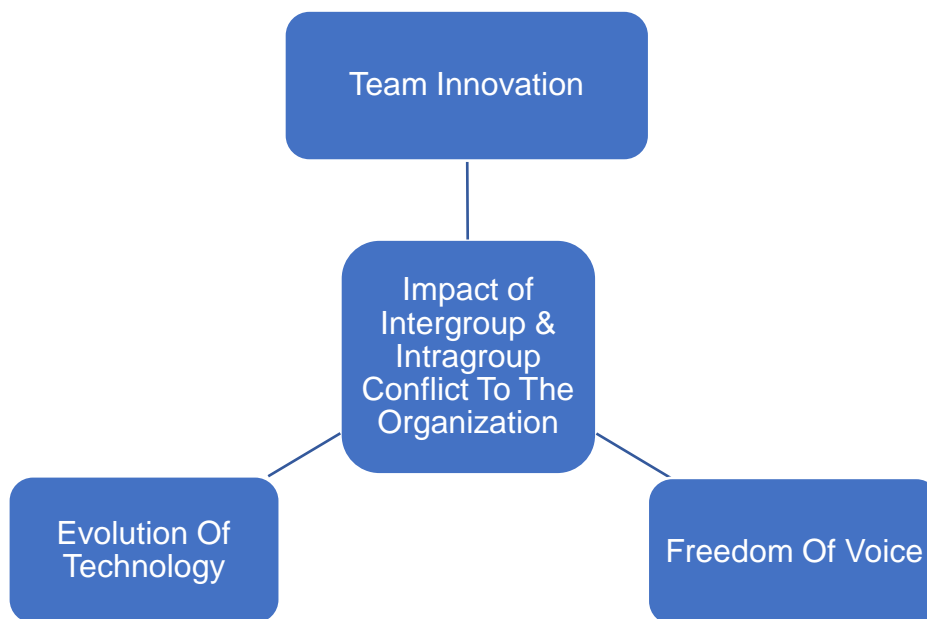


Figure 1: Factor Influencing Impact of Intergroup and Intragroup Conflict to the Organization.

Figure 1 illustrates the factors that drive the impact of intergroup and intragroup conflict to the organization. Based on figure 1, team innovation, freedom of voice and evolution of technology are the factors that impact the intergroup and intragroup conflict to the organization.

Conclusion

The impact of intergroup and intragroup conflict on an organization can be significant, and several factors can influence this impact. Intergroup conflicts refer to disagreements or tensions that arise between different groups within an organization, while intragroup conflicts refer to disputes within the same group.

The impact of intergroup and intragroup conflicts can range from negative to positive and vice versa, depending on the context and how they are managed. Some factors that influence these conflicts' impact include team innovation, freedom of voice and evaluation of technology. However, other factors, such as the type of conflict, the size and complexity of

the organization, and the management strategies employed to address the conflict, should be considered as well.

- In general, conflicts that are managed effectively can lead to positive outcomes such as increased creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills. It can encourage healthy development within the company. On the other hand, conflicts that are not managed well can lead to negative outcomes such as decreased job satisfaction, lower productivity, and higher turnover rates. It could also become an issue to the organization and jeopardize the ability to achieve the company goals and objectives. Managing conflict does put a pressure of the company resources by spending time away from its actual objectives. However, with proper planning and creativity, a company would be able to avoid and manage the conflict. Intragroup and intergroup conflict is a common thing in any organization and workplace. Therefore, it is important for organizations to recognize the potential impact of intergroup and intragroup conflicts and implement effective conflict resolution strategies to minimize negative consequences and maximize positive outcomes. Therefore, when impact of intergroup and intragroup conflict manage well, organization will face decreased productivity when employees are in conflict, it can lead to decreased productivity as people spend more time dealing with the conflict than doing their work. It is also become decreased morale whereas conflict can create a negative atmosphere in the workplace, which can lead to decreased morale and job satisfaction among employees. At the end, it will be given a negative impact to organization.

Recommendation in the managing conflicts

Since the intragroup conflict occurs within the group, the solution can be easily managed within the group and this due to the fact that they have the same objectives, this may be different for intergroup conflicts. Below are some solutions in managing conflicts in the context of intragroup conflict.

The best way to manage a conflict is to confront the issues that are causing the conflict. Say for example the conflict is due to the need for more communication of the intention of sales team in proposing a change to a product. It is not the intention of the sales team to inform R&D team that their product is lousy, but it is more towards giving the feedback on what customer wants since sales team is the closest team to the customer. A feedback session involving various groups would give a positive input to R&D team to refine further their product.

One of the causes of conflict is the differing goals for each group. Sales team objective is to increase their number of sales by spending on certain marketing and sales activities. Meanwhile the finance team objective is to manage the operational budget and return on investment. By having common goals set by the top management i.e to achieve certain profits. Both teams would have to work with each other to find what kind of marketing and sales activities that is crucial to achieve the highest number of sales and at the same time finding ways on how to reduce operational cost.

Team cohesion can be developing through team building activities. This is crucial in developing familiarity between individuals across different groups. What team building does it opens up the channel communication informally between different groups just like in an ice breaking session. This informal communication channel is handy in resolving issues of

miscommunication between the groups and would avoid small issues in becoming a much bigger issues to the organization.

The lack of understanding of what the other groups are doing can be best tackle by having a member of one group rotating to the other group. What this does is to allow the other group to understand from the other group point of view and once the member return to their originating group, they would bring along the knowledge attain. This exercise will help each group understands what the other groups roles and functions are in achieving the organization goals and objectives.

If all of the above solution fails to manage the conflicts, the organization will have the option to bring in experts from outside the organization to help manage and resolve the conflict while putting in place the process needed to overcome future conflicts. Outside third party would be able to see the conflict from an external point of view and come up with fresh a new idea that evolves through various encounters with many players in the industry. This however will involve with huge budget.

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