RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL HEAD MASTERS IN RELATION TO THEIR TEACHERS JOB-SATISFACTION IN VILLUPURAM DISTRICT"

Vijayalakshmi, M.

Assistant Professor, Sri Rangapoopathi College of Education, Aalampoondi, Gingee, Viluppuram NH-66, Chengam Tiruvannamalai, Gingee - Tindivanam Rd, Gingee, Tamil Nadu 604151

ABSTRACT

Interventionist efforts towards preventing the escalation and negative effects, especially violent ones, of ongoing conflicts. Rarely are conflicts completely resolved. More often, they are reduced, downgraded, or contained. Such developments can be followed by a reorientation of the issue, reconstitution of the divisions among conflicting parties, or even by a re-emergence of past issues or grievances. Conflict management when actively conducted is, therefore, a constant process.

INTRODUCTION

A variety of techniques have been identified and employed in conflict management efforts. The following are the most prominent: First, conflicting parties are brought together to establish a mutual agreement. Second, governments or third parties to the strife may directly intervene to introduce or impose a decision. Third, new initiatives, programmes, or institutional structures (for example, elections) are implemented to address the conflict in question. Fourth, contending parties are compelled or coerced to utilise previously established means of resolution or containment. Fifth, government or another third party may use coercion to eliminate or instill fear among one or all those engaged in a given conflict, leading to subsidence. Conflict management should not be viewed as a simple, linear or structured process. Those assuming or charged with such a task must usually overcome an intensely chaotic situation. Conflicts are frequently managed directly by the society in which they occur. When not possible or when conflicts become national in scope, government normally assumes the task, provided it is not a party to the conflict. In cases where a government is unable or unwilling to intervene, international organizations increasingly assume the role of conflict manager. The anticipation of conflict that seeks to redress causal grievances to avoid the escalation of violent forms of conflict engagement or to curtail the re-occurrence of violent exchanges or some combination of these elements. The term 'conflict prevention' can be misleading, because theoretically none of the aforementioned aspects aspire to 'prevent' conflict as such. Instead, the aim is often to resolve a conflict at hand or more typically to prevent escalation or violent manifestations. Although at times referred to as 'preventive diplomacy' and 'crisis prevention', such activities usually involve maintaining the status quo due to potential threats associated with crises or the anticipated outcomes from engaging in a dispute. Conflict prevention, however, recognises that in order to avoid the catastrophes associated with strife, particularly violent upheaval, change is usually necessary, for example, through new institutions, revitalised processes, or the sharing of power. In any case, conflict prevention as an approach relies heavily on accurate analysis of any latent or minor disputes in the

hopes of identifying appropriate strategies for resolution or intervention. Such efforts are collectively categorised as 'early warning systems', which vary in complexity and approach. They may include fact-finding missions, consultations, inspections, report mechanisms, and monitoring. The predictive nature of conflict prevention raises several issues, particularly regarding the timing of intervention and the possibility of precipitating pre-emptive action by parties beyond the conflict. Humanitarian and moral concerns are often insufficient for initiating effective conflict prevention efforts, even in the face of egregiously violent circumstances. As a result, numerous arguments are put forth on behalf of conflict prevention, for example, geo-strategic concerns, security interests, cost-benefit analyses, and refugee issues. Despite the increasing technical capacity and human ability to identify deadly conflicts before they erupt, as well as the likelihood of extreme costs in life, social cohesion, and regional instability, conflict prevention remains in the realm of theory more than practice. Conflict prevention has predominantly been viewed as the task, if not the responsibility, of international organisations or nation-states neutral to the given conflict. It, however, does not necessarily rely nor should it depend solely on external parties. The most effective method of conflict prevention, although not described as such, is accountable governance, whereby citizens and groups have access to effective avenues and mechanisms for resolving the range of disputes and conflicts that ordinarily arise within societies. Such access not only involves governmental structures, but also requires the cooperation of civil societies and business communities. This is particularly true in settings where violent conflict has already occurred and conflict prevention focuses on inhibiting recurrences, for example through some form of reconciliation.

THE FIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

The Five Conflict Management Styles We all adopt different types of conflict management styles, which vary with the conflict at hand and the person it involves. Knowing the 5 different types of conflict management styles can help people in becoming more aware of how they deal with conflict, and if this is a good strategy to address the noted issue. It's important to note that each style has its pros and cons.

THE COMPETING STYLE

The Competing Style of conflict management can be described as placing high emphasis on the goal, at the detriment of the relationship you have with the individual involved. "It's my way or the highway!" The goal is asserted aggressively, and the use of authority, position, as well as pressure tactics such as threats, force of persuasion is common. This style allows quick response to a situation and you are responsible for the decision taken. The cons include increased stress leading to health problems as well as decreased trust and morale. It also puts others in a flight or fight position. The real issue is often disguised. The power in this style of conflict management comes from a position of strength.

THE AVOIDING STYLE

The Avoiding Style of conflict management occurs when someone places little emphasis on their goal as well as on the relationship with the individual involved. "No way! Let's not

make a big deal out of this!" The individual may deny the problem, avoids decisions and confrontations. They may also deflect responsibilities and blame other people. Assertiveness is low. The power in this style of conflict management comes from silence and lack of cooperation. This style may work well when a situation is unimportant, or when there is a risk of harm. It is also good if you need to time to think things over. The cons may involve disputes can grow and explode, as well as issues may go underground and start involving other people. Very little is accomplished.

THE ACCOMMODATING STYLE

The Accommodating Style of conflict management can be described as placing low emphasis on the goal, but high emphasis on the relationship with the person involved. "OK, whatever you say. We'll do it your way!" Someone adopting this style can be described as protective and 'soft' on relationships. They set aside their needs for the other person and will yield to the other point of view. They are highly cooperative and can be described as a 'yes' person. They want to build good faith and relationships for the future. The other person may learn from the experience and the risk is low. However, the risk includes a lack of healthy confrontations, and the person may feel taken advantage of. This may also frustrate others who want to collaborate. The power in this style of conflict management comes from relationships and approval of others.

THE COMPROMISING STYLE

The Compromising Style is characterized by moderate emphasis on both the goal and the relationship with the person involved. "OK, I'll meet you half way!" the individual may listen and understand both sides, and introduces many issues so everyone gets a share. They split the difference and everyone loses and wins. The power in this style of conflict management comes from moderation and reasonableness. This style is good for quick solution or when time is a factor. However, both parties may feel that they lost, and does not deal with the underlying issues.

THE COLLABORATING STYLE

The Collaborating Style occurs when someone places high emphasis on both the goal and the relationship involved. There is high assertiveness. "Let's do it our way! This is what I prefer... What do you want?" They listen and communicate with others to understand needs and values. They use information and resources most effectively, and ongoing problem solving is required. Trust and balance are also important. Satisfaction with the work and commitment to the solution is imperative to all. The risk with this style includes fatigue, and use of too much time, no solution in sight and distraction from other tasks. The power comes from openness, clarity and cooperation.

TEACHERS JOB SATISFACTION

Teachers Job satisfaction is one of the most important and heavily researched areas of inquiry in the field of industrial-organizational psychology. Although a concise and consistent definition of job satisfaction is not available (Bonner, Hayes & Pryor, 2010:805), there appears to be a high level of agreement among scholars in respect of its meaning (Okpara, 2006:225).

Job satisfaction refers to a person's affective relation to his or her working role.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

As human beings, teachers have also their needs, wants, ambitions and aspirations, like and dislikes, besides goals for achievement. When their ambitions are not fulfilled, they tend to be frustrated. This leads to dissatisfaction in their profession or vocation. If the dissatisfied teachers do not do their work properly, the students and the society suffer ultimately. Also, it expresses the extent of match between teacher's expectations and aspirations and the rewards the job provides and the values it creates and gets cherished. In fact, these values become important organizing themes in the behaviors of individuals. As a Headmaster is the role models to the teachers are molders of future generations, their Conflict management of higher secondary school Headmasters in relation to their Teachers job-satisfaction in Villupuram District are vital. In this juncture, the present study intends to correlate the Conflict management of higher secondary school Headmasters in relation to their Teachers job satisfaction in Villupuram District.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The teacher holds the most important place in the process of education. So, there exists a greatest need for the teacher to be effective. This area of teacher effectiveness draws a keen interest of educationists and researchers. The Conflict management has been studied in relation to various teacher related variables. There may be many others factors also which may have a definite impact on teacher effectiveness. The school organizational climate can be one of those factors. The concept of organizational climate has been growing fast and it is often the determining factor of the success and failure of the school. So, this study will be useful to identify the prevailing school climate in the Government secondary schools of Villupuram district and their effect on teacher effectiveness. It will be helpful in determining which type of school environment is most conducive for teacher effectiveness. Since it is said, what the main spring is to watch, or the engine to the steamship, the headmaster is to the school. The administrative behaviour of the 10 school head influences the overall climate of the school. Conversely, school heads in different type of school climate may exhibit different type of administrative behaviour. The school head is responsible for taking the whole school with him. So, he must have a great influence on teacher conflict management. In this study the administrative behaviour will be studied on the basis of self perception by the school heads specifying the four vital components i.e. Planning, Organization, Communication and Decision making. The difference in administrative behaviour across different school organizational climate and its effect on teacher Conflict management that this study may bring forward can be of great importance and far reaching implications to improve the overall school practices.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For the present study the investigator selected the research statement of the problem entitled "A Study on Conflict Management of higher secondary school Head masters in Relation to their Teachers Job-satisfaction in Villupuram District".

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

- Experimental Variables
- Conflict Management – Independent
- Teachers Job-satisfaction – Dependent
- Bio-institutional Variables
- Gender (Male/Female)
- Management Types of the school (Government/ Private)
- Locality (Rural / Urban)
- Experience (0-10 years/ 11-20 years/ 21 years and above

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the Conflict Management of higher secondary school Headmasters.
- To find out the Conflict Management of higher secondary school Headmasters. with respect to their,
- Gender (Male/Female)
- Management Types of the school (Government/ Private)
- c.Locality (Rural / Urban)
- d.Experience (0-10 years/ 11-20 years/ 21 years and above)
- To find out the degree of Teachers job-satisfaction.
- To find out the Teachers job satisfaction with respect to their,
- Gender (Male/Female)
- Management Types of the school(Government/ Private)
- Locality (Rural / Urban)
- Experience (0-10 years/ 11-20 years/ 21 years and above)
- To find out whether there is any relationship between Conflict Management of Higher secondary school Headmasters and Teachers job-satisfaction

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- Conflict Management of higher secondary school Headmasters is vary
- There is no significant difference between Conflict Management of higher secondary school Headmasters with respect to their,
- Gender (Male/Female)
- Management Types of the school (Government/ Private)
- Locality (Rural /Urban)
- Experience (0-10 years/ 11-20 years/ 21 years and above)
- There exists a high degree of Teachers job-satisfaction.
- There is no significant difference between Teachers job satisfaction with respect to their,
- Gender (Male/Female)
- Management Types of the school (Government/ Private)
- Locality (Rural /Urban).
- Experience (0-10 years/ 11-20 years/ 21 years and above)
- There is no significant relationship between the Conflict Management of higher secondary school Headmasters and teacher's job-satisfaction.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Gardiner and Simmons (2012) defined conflict as "any divergence of interests, objectives or priorities between individual, groups, or organizations or nonconformity to requirements of a task; activity or process". Duncan (1975) opined that conflict implies some types of hostility and perhaps some desires to do harm which may be considered an extreme

case of competition. Conflict is different from competition, although competition may result in conflict. Some believe that conflicts may occur without any specific reference to competition, as it could occur as a result of breakdown in the mechanism of decision-making. DeCenzo (1997) has this to say:

Whenever two people come together, there are bound to be disagreements at time. That's natural. However, sometimes these differences can grow to enormous proportions where they become detrimental to the involved parties and the organization. When that occurs conflict is present. A critical analysis of the definition of conflict as "the struggle over resources or ideas, between two or more parties caused by the perceptions of the contending parties that both or all cannot have what they desire", buttresses the idea of conflict as originating from competition. This is in line with Sisk and Williams' (1981) definition of conflict as the process which begins when one party perceives that one or more of its concerns have been or are about to be frustrated by another party. From various points of view, the definition of conflict connotes that a trace of competition cannot be totally ruled out. To some, conflict is synonymous with violence, but to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 1995) conflict is not necessarily synonymous with 'violence' and that conflict occurs not only in situations of violence but conflicts inevitably occur between people over ideas, values, positions and perspectives on a range of issues. In the opinion of Kerzner (1998) conflicts can occur with anyone and over anything. Seville's statement on violence and human nature (as cited by UNICEF, 1995) nevertheless stated that it is not part of human nature to be violent and that violence is a learned response to conflict and if violence can be learned, other responses are possible and can be learned as well.

Thamhain and Wilemon (1974) in their attempt to define conflict provided both sides of the coin – the negative and the positive side of it. They stated: Conflict is defined as the behaviour of an individual, a group, or an organisation which impedes or restricts (at least temporarily) another party from attaining its desired goals. Although conflict may impede the attainment of one's goals, the consequences may be beneficial if they produce new information which, in turn, enhances the decision-making, lengthy delays over issues which do not importantly affect the outcome of the project, or a disintegration of the team's efforts. No matter how hard one tries to define the term, one is prone to agree with Sisk and Williams (1981) that, "conflict is one of those phenomena that are experienced by everyone but that can be defined completely and accurately by no one". Several types of conflicts are identified in literature, including intra-personal, intra-group, inter-personal, inter-groups, etc. According to DeCenzo (1997) organisational conflicts can take the following forms: horizontal conflict, vertical conflict, and role confusion/conflict. From literature, sources of conflicts can be classified into three, namely, competition for scarce resources, drives for autonomy, and goals divergence as a result of differences in opinion. According to Ivancevich (1996) four factors are known to contribute to conflicts. They are: work interdependence, differences in goals, differences in perceptions, and increased demand for specialists. Five stages of conflict were identified by Pondy (1969). These are: latent conflict, perceived conflict, felt conflict, manifest conflict, and conflict aftermath. Conflicts have both positive and negative

effects on an organization depending on the management and its final outcome. To Studies on teachers job-satisfaction Schonfeld (2000) did, "an updated look at depressive symptoms and job-satisfaction in first-year women teachers". The report updated a longitudinal study (Schonfeld, 1992) of the affect of working conditions in newly appointed women teachers. Among the 184 teachers, work environment measures were more highly correlated with future depressive symptoms, self-esteem, job-satisfaction and motivation to teach than with pre-employment counterparts of the outcomes. Serious problem with depressive symptoms and job-satisfaction among teachers exposed to the most adverse work environments were found.

Ward and Sloane (2000) considered, "job-satisfaction in the academic lab our market drawing upon a particularly detailed data set of 900 academics from five traditional Scottish University's. Results shows that reports of overall job-satisfaction do not vary widely by gender. Comparison salary was found to be an important factor or academics overall job-satisfaction. Halse and Baumgart (2000) conducted, "Cross cultural perspectives of teachers: a study in three countries". This paper reported on the first page of a research on the intercultural understanding of teachers in Australia, Japan, and Thailand. Three scales were considered change through intervention, symbolic inner self, and independent through and action and the data reveal some similarities but also some striking differences in perceptions across countries. Oshagbemi (2000) conducted, "A study on gender differences in the job-satisfaction of university teachers". The results indicated that gender does not affect the job-satisfaction of university teachers directly. Overall, female academics at higher ranks namely, senior lecturers, readers and professors, were more satisfied with their job-satisfaction than male academics of comparable ranks.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

TOOLS USED IN THIS PRESENT STUDY

The data necessary for carrying out research must be collected with the aid of special instruments or devices. The successful research depends on proper selection of tools. The researcher may employ tools either singly or in combinations to achieve it a result. The general information required is also collected for analysis (Appendix). For the present study the following two standardized tools were used.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT INVENTORY (TVI)

To find out the value pattern of teachers, the Conflict Management Inventory (CMI) constructed and standardized by M.N. Arora and A.Sunil singh (1999) was used. Copy of the tool is given in Appendix.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTORY

The inventory In the form of a re-usable booklet, consists of 25 questions each followed by plausible answers (one answer corresponding to one Conflict management). It is a forced choice type of instrument. The respondent is required to arrange all the alternatives in order of his preference. A separate Answer Sheet has been provided.

TEACHERS JOB-SATISFACTION SCALE (TJSS)

For finding the job-satisfaction of teachers, the Teachers job-satisfaction Scale (TJSS) Constructed and standardized by Amar Singh and T.R.Sharma was used. Copy of the tool is given in Appendix.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTORY

The scale to seek to segregate the teachers according to their degree of job-satisfaction. There are 82 statements in the scale. Each statement has five alternatives from which the respondent has to choose any one that candidly expresses his response and encircle the same. Table 3.1 shows the scores and the corresponding degrees of Teachers job-satisfaction among teachers.

Table Showing Scores And The Corresponding Degrees Of Teachers Job-Satisfaction

Scores	Degree of Satisfaction
74 or above	Extremely satisfied
63-73	Very satisfied
56-62	Moderately satisfied
48-55	Not Satisfied
47 or below	Extremely dissatisfied

ADMINISTRATION OF THE TOOL

Detailed directions for filling answers for both the tools are given along with the tools. Even then, a brief instruction was given to the teachers of the sample and the test was administered. There was no time limit for answering both the tools. The respondents took 25 to 40 minutes for answering both the tools.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The present study consists of 200 higher secondary school Headmasters and teachers as subjects and they are selected by random sampling technique. The total sample comprises of 114 male teacher and 86 female teachers working in various Government and private schools of Villupuram District.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

After taking permission from the headmaster/headmistress of the higher secondary schools, the teacher distributed the booklet containing both the tools as well as the general information blank to the teachers and the instructions for answering are briefed to them. When the teachers have completed answering both the tools, the whole booklet was collected back. Two weeks were taken to collect the data from the twelve schools taken for the study.

SCORING PROCEDURE

A CONFLICT MANAGEMENT INVENTORY (CMI)

Scoring keys were used for Conflict management Inventory, one for each of the Conflict management. The procedure of scoring is given below.

Step I: Key 'T' is placed on the answer-sheet and it is checked that whether it is placed properly, using the 'check' marks.

Step II: 1' are counted and multiplied by 6, 2's are counted and multiplied by 5, 3's are counted and multiplied by 4, 4's are counted multiplied by 3, 5's are counted and multiplied by 2,6's are counted and multiplied by 1.

Step III: All the numbers are added up and total is written in the box 'Sample procedure is repeated for keys.

Step IV: To verify, it is checked whether the grand total of all the scores is 525

B TEACHERS JOB-SATISFACTION SCALE (TJSS)

The scale has both positive and negative statements. Items 4, 13, 20, 21, 21, 27 and 28 are negative and all others are positive. The positive statements are assigned scores 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0 for the five alternatives and the negative ones are assigned scores 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4. The total scores for each subject is found out to get the measures of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE DATA

Mean and standard deviation of sub-samples in their conflict management of higher secondary school headmasters

Variables		Conflict management of higher secondary school headmasters		
		N	Mean	S.D.
Whole Sample		200	52.39	15.42
Gender	**Male**	114	55.35	16.94
	Female	86	53.71	15.13
Type of the School Management	**Government**	100	56.23	14.39
	Private	100	55.96	15.19
Locality	**Rural**	100	57.19	16.12
	Urban	100	56.01	14.26
Years of Experience	**0-10**	58	56.30	15.39
	11-20	80	59.79	16.48
	≥21	62	52.58	16.67

Mean Standard Deviation And Frequencies For Various Sub-Samples In Their Higher Secondary School Teachers Job-Satisfaction

Variables		Teachers Job satisfaction		
		N	Mean	S.D.
Whole Sample		200	43.69	10.36
Gender	Male	114	47.25	11.49
	Female	86	46.76	13.37
Type of the School Management	Government	100	45.69	14.01
	Private	100	44.13	12.07
Locality	Rural	100	45.48	11.01
	Urban	100	46.32	13.42
Years of Experience	0-11	58	46.67	15.33
	11-20	80	45.33	17.28
	≥21	62	46.55	16.11

Table shows that the mean score of Conflict management of higher secondary school headmasters is 52.39 (S.D. 15.42). Therefore, the Conflict management of higher secondary school headmasters are 'strongly agree' with their Conflict management when the whole sample is considered.

Table shows that the mean score of teacher's job-satisfaction of higher secondary school teachers is 43.69 (S.D. 10.36). Therefore, the teachers are 'very satisfied' with their job when the whole sample is considered.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the study findings, this study made the conclusions that the conflicts management of higher secondary school headmasters had brought about serious or adverse and far reaching effects in the management and well being of schools.

The headmasters' organizational skills that influenced high academic achievement of students in higher secondary schools included skills in curriculum based establishment, quality improvement measures and teamwork. The results of a school were determined by the application of these skills. The headmasters' involvement in academic activities such as checking of teachers' and students' work, helping in eradicating cheating among students in examinations, internal classroom supervision and monitoring students' discipline contribute towards the academic performance of a school.

These include:

- Poor performance
- Strikes in schools
- Low enrollments of students
- High turnover of head teachers that led to instability in the affected schools
- Frequent transfers of teachers from the affected schools.

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