
AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES USED
IN ORGANISATIONS WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO SOME
ORGANISATIONS IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF THE EASTERN CAPE
PROVINCE.

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SUMMARY

We live in a society that is prone to conflict. At home and at work, conflict is very common and in most cases unavoidable. Because of this, it has become critical for managers to start evaluating the styles they use in managing conflict and to assess the implications of these styles to the benefits and costs of conflict. In order to meet this challenge, managers must understand the nature, sources and the outcome of conflict. It is by reflecting on the above, that managers may become more informed about the right conflict management approach to apply.

This research deals with an investigation into the conflict management styles used by managers in organisations. It seeks to identify the styles currently used and to establish whether there is any correlation between these styles and the conflict management styles identified in the literature survey.

The study targeted six health institutions in the Northern Region of the Eastern Cape Province. Findings from the literature study revealed two main approaches to managing conflict. These were: the Resolution and the Stimulating approaches. Five conflict management styles were identified when the resolution technique is used. These included: Collaboration, Avoidance, Accommodating, Compromise and the Dominating styles. Five approaches for stimulating functional conflict in organisations were also identified. They included the following: use of programmed conflict, manipulation of communication channels, encouraging competition among employees, encouraging the use structured debates and changing the organisational structure and culture.

A research questionnaire and personal interviews were used for collecting data. The Questionnaire sought to establish the conflict management styles currently used in organisations while the interview's aim was to probe deeper and to establish the participants' view of the factors which determine one's preferred conflict handling style and also to assess to what extent managers understand contemporary approaches to managing conflict such as conflict stimulation.

The study revealed that the conflict management styles used by managers are similar to those identified in the literature review. It also emerged that managers are not very knowledgeable about the view of managing conflict by stimulating it. This highlighted the importance for further research into managing conflict by means of the stimulation approach.

DECLARATION

I, Patrick William Bwowe, hereby declare that:

- The work of this research paper is my own.
- All sources used or referred to have been documented and recognised; and
- This research paper has not been previously submitted in full or partial fulfillment of the requirement of an equivalent or higher qualification at any other recognised education institution.

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is generally understood that whenever people come into contact with others, countless disagreements may arise. In most cases, it is the way in which people decide to respond to those disagreements that would determine whether a conflict situation might result, or not. Since the level of contact in organisations is high, there is a high probability for conflict to occur. To most managers therefore, the issue is not whether conflict will occur, but how they will effectively respond to it. Considering the fact that there are a number of views of conflict managers have to contend with, it is not therefore an easy task for them to identify the right strategies or styles to apply in order to successfully manage conflict situations.

Conflict, as defined by Hellriegel and Slocum (1997: 552), is the disposition to disagreements about goals, thoughts or emotions within or among individual teams, departments or organisations. Tosi, Rizzo and Carrel (1994: 435) note that conflict is common and has varied effects, some of which are beneficial to organisations. From the above, it is obvious that whenever there is conflict, the attainment of individual goals is blocked. This normally results in frustration to those affected and their response may be aggressive or confrontational. It is this nature of conflict and its resulting consequences that make most people look at conflict as unpleasant, counter-productive and time consuming. Conflict is not a one-dimensional concept. It comes in different guises according to the degree of seriousness and has the capacity to either disrupt or, in some cases, improve difficult situations (Barbara 1997: 169). It is because of its varied nature that managers usually find it difficult to handle conflict situations effectively.

The literature study conducted revealed as many as five different styles for managing conflict. These are the avoidance, problem solving, compromise,

competing and accommodating styles. The study also, revealed that managers have to manage conflict through stimulating techniques. Knowing when to apply any of the above styles is not an easy accomplishment.

The different views of conflict present yet another problem for managers, because they have to choose the right approach when handling conflict. Researchers of conflict mention three main views – the traditional, the human relations and the interactionist view. The traditional view, for instance, assumes that all conflict is bad and must therefore be eliminated (Robbins & Coulter 1996: 632). On the other hand, both the human relations and the interactionist view acknowledge that not all conflict is bad and therefore does not require complete elimination. Some conflict is, in fact, beneficial to organisations (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly 1996: 336). The interactionist view, which is the current theoretical perspective on conflict, goes even further suggesting that a minimum level of conflict should be encouraged. These different views on conflict make it even more challenging to managers to decide on the right approach to resolve conflict situations.

The nature and causes of conflict also have a major impact on how managers try to manage conflict in organisations. Conflict, as already stated, is not static and occurs as a process characterised by a number of phases or episodes (Kreitner & Kinicki 1997: 337; Milton 1981: 433). Understanding the conflict phases and deciding what conflict handling style to use are tasks that many managers do not find simple. This is made more difficult when it comes to trying to understand the underlying factors that cause conflict.

Most of the causes of organisational conflict stem from the interpersonal relations that take place between individuals in groups with other individuals in other groups. It is the dynamics of these intra-personal and interpersonal relations that come into play within the organisational structure, causing conflict. Thompson (1985:5) asserts that there is an intimate relationship among the intra-personal, interpersonal and inter-group conflict. The dynamics at each level are often similar to the dynamics of other levels. The assumption is that

the management style chosen by a manager is most likely to be influenced by the nature, causes and the views of conflict.

In the following section, the main problem of the research study will be outlined. The sub-problems, which will assist in resolving the main problem, will also be outlined.

1.2 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT AND THE AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

As Robbins and Coulter (1998: 631) assert, 'the ability to manage conflict is undoubtedly one of the most important interpersonal skills a manager needs'. Most managers now realise that communication and related people's skills must be at the forefront of any attempt to develop managerial and leadership expertise (Schermerhorn 2000:339). Since managers lead and manage people, interpersonal skills have become very critical. Prentice (1984: 26) asserts that because of the extremely heterogeneous nature of the labour force and the resultant imperfections in the labour market, conflict management has become a vital aspect of most of the industrial relations in South Africa. Managers need strong conflict resolutions and negotiation skills if they want to be efficient and successful. They, like everybody else, have to learn the appropriate approach to be able to respond to conflict situations effectively. They must not see conflict as a destructive force and a threat. Instead, they should harness the energy associated with it and direct it towards problem-solving and organisational improvement.

Robbins and Coulter (1996: 631), referring to a study of middle and top-level executives by the American Management Association, explain how important conflict management has become. The study revealed that the average manager spends 20 percent of his or her time dealing with conflict. In a survey by the American Management Association conducted on what topics practicing managers considered to be most important in management programs, conflict management was rated as being more important than decision making, leadership or communication skills. With most of the research emphasising the importance of conflict management, the critical issue facing managers now is the issue of how to manage it. This, therefore, makes research into conflict

management styles more critical than ever. A number of conflict management styles are discussed in a number of literature studies. Whether these styles are applied by practicing managers, or not, is a question which the researcher feels needs to be given more attention.

The main problem addressed by this research therefore, is to identify the conflict management styles currently used by managers in organisations. The research hopes to find out whether there is a correlation between the conflict styles identified in the literature study and those used by practicing managers today.

Although this study will not necessarily indicate how successfully each style is applied, it will however establish which are often used and which are rarely used. It will try to shed light on why some specific styles may be preferred to others. The research is aimed to also indicate whether there are other conflict management styles used by managers but which are not found in most literature studies. In addition, the research will try to establish whether managers use specific guidelines in deciding on their preferred style or styles. The researcher hopes that this study will help other researchers dealing with topics about effective conflict management in organisations. Future research should give attention to the problem of identifying the most successful strategy or styles, which may be used for effective conflict management in organisations. This may perhaps be accomplished by identifying those organisations that have had success in the handling of conflict and a study of the styles used by them.

1.2.1 The Sub-problems.

The following sub-problems will help the researcher to achieve the intended objective.

- **What different conflict management styles are revealed in the literature review?**
- **Are the conflict management styles used by practicing managers the same as those identified in the literature review?**
- **If not, what other styles are used?**
- **How often do managers use each of the identified styles? and**
- **Which factors determine the choice of their preferred style or styles?**

To ensure complete understanding of the research, the following key terms and concepts will be defined in the following section as the research is based on these terms. Other concepts and terms will be defined as they appear in the remaining chapters.

1.3 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following are regarded as key terms and concepts of this research:

- **Conflict**
- **Intra-personal conflict**
- **Interpersonal conflict**
- **Organisational conflict**
- **Conflict management**
- **Conflict management styles, and**
- **Different styles: avoidance, competing, compromise, collaborating and accommodating.**

1.3.1 Conflict

Conflict can occur at individual, interpersonal, group, or organisational levels. It can exist whenever people are in disagreement, opposition, or when there is some other form of difficulty. Thompson (1998: 4) defines it as “ the perception of differences of interests among people.” Monday and Premeaux (1995: 424) agree, but go further to add that such differences and antagonism or opposition between, or among persons occur, when there is competition or mutual interference among such people, or groups.

Because of the complex nature of the structural organisational environment, the potential for conflict exists, thus making conflict inevitable. Most researchers also agree that conflict in organisations can be negative or positive. It can be negative when disagreements and opposition undermine the attainment of organisational goals. It can be positive when it contributes positively to the realisation of such goals (Greenberg & Baron 1997: 384; Kreitner & Kinicki 1997: 336; Lussier 1997: 463).

1.3.2 Intra-personal Conflict

Intra-personal conflict is conflict, which occurs within a person. It occurs when a motivated need is blocked and people fail to reach their desired goals. This results in frustration, which normally triggers defense mechanisms such as aggression, withdrawal, fixation, or compromise (Luthan 1998: 300). Intra-personal conflict can exist mainly in three forms. First, the approach - approach conflict, where a person is attracted to two, or more options, but has to choose one. In avoidance-avoidance conflict, one is faced with two, or more undesirable options, but one must be chosen. The third one, known as the approach-avoidance option, requires one to consider an option with both attractive and unpleasant aspects (Thompson 1998: 5).

1.3.3 Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict occurs between two or more people. It is a result of people interacting with one another. The sources of interpersonal conflict include: personal differences, poor channels of communication, role incompatibility, competition for scarce resources and differences in perception (Monday & Premeaux 1995: 426). Interpersonal conflict can result in both inter-group and organisational conflict. As people interact with each other at their places of work, personal differences usually emerge. This is so because of the uniqueness of every individual's social background, individual traits and perceptions. This situation is also aggravated by the structural nature of most organisations. Workers are inter-dependent and this usually results in disagreements over the resources, their roles and status, differing goals and poor communication with one another.

1.3.4 Inter-group Conflict

This type of conflict occurs between different groups representing personally relevant, cultural, or political categories (Thompson 1998: 5). The nature and goals of a group usually determine inter-group conflict. Sometimes this conflict is functional, for instance, when it creates a crisis where individuals as a group must try to work hard in order to accomplish their goals. At times when it is dysfunctional, a group, or groups can try to defend group interests at all costs even if such interests may be destructive to other people.

1.3.5 Organisational Conflict

Organisational conflict per se takes the form of hierarchical, functional, line-staff and formal-informal conflict (Luthan 1998: 316). Conflict is hierarchical, for instance, when the board of directors is in conflict with top management. Functional conflict on the other hand, takes place between departments and is mostly related to scarce resources, communication breakdown and role incompatibility and different goals. Line-staff conflict usually results from the

question of who possesses authority and power. Formal-informal conflict occurs between formal and informal organisations.

1.3.6 Conflict Management

Conflict management as Hellriegel and Slocum (1996: 533) state, consists of the interventions designed to reduce conflict, or in some instances, to increase insufficient conflict. It is a process whereby managers design plans, and implement policies and procedures to ensure that conflict situations are resolved effectively. Conflict management broadens understanding of the problem, increases the resolutions and tend to work towards consensus and to seek a genuine commitment to decision making. Because there is a broader, stronger element of disagreement and discord within the conflict process, a considerable amount of mental and psychological energy is generated. The ability to divert this energy into productive achievement for both parties involved in the conflict can result in the conversion of conflict into a joint finding and problem solving solution (Prentice 1984: 26).

Cum (1993: 26) describes conflict management as the implementation of knowledge and skills of management and the unions or work representatives to prevent conflict which is detrimental to human and industrial relations and has the potential to disrupt production, or to prevent the operations of the company taking place. Based on the above assertions, conflict management therefore, is a process whereby managers in organisations decide on the appropriate measures to take in order to manage conflict situations. Whether strategies used will entail suppressing conflict or stimulating it, is usually a matter managers have to decide on by themselves.

1.3.7 Conflict Management Styles

1.3.7.1 Avoidance

When this style is used, an attempt is made to passively ignore the conflict rather than resolve it. It is characterised by a tendency in managers, to pretend

that conflict does not exist (Monday & Premeaux 1997: 430). Avoidance normally results in short-term solutions since it does not eliminate the root causes of conflict.

1.3.7.2 Dominating

Under this style, managers, or supervisors, place maximum focus on meeting their own concerns and very little on other people's concerns.

1.3.7.3 Accommodating

This style puts maximum emphasis on meeting the needs of the other party. Problems are rarely allowed to come to the surface, but the potential for conflict remains (Monday & Premeaux 1995: 431).

1.3.7.4 Collaborating

As Lussier (1997: 467) asserts, the users of this style assertively attempt to jointly resolve conflict with the best solution, agreeable to all concerned. It leads to problem-solving since it results in a win-win solution.

1.3.7.5 Compromise

When compromise is used, attempts are made to resolve conflict through assertive give-and-take concessions (Lussier 1997: 466). With compromise, there is no distinct winner or loser.

1.4 DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

The theoretical information on the subject is from the literature review sources. International and South African sources have been used. The research focussed on six health organisations within the public sector. They included six district hospitals in the Northern Region of the Eastern Cape. The hospitals used for the research were:

- Frontier Hospital and Komani Hospital, both located in Queenstown.
- Hewu Hospital, located in the Whittlesea District.
- Cofimvaba Hospital, located in the Cofimvaba District.
- Glen Grey Hospital located in the Cacadu District, and
- Cala Hospital, located in the Cala District.

The research was limited to the middle managers. The hospital management structure followed by this research was arrived at after the researcher had studied the current organisational structures used by the hospitals researched. In addition, this structure was seen to be similar to a number of other structures identified in various literature surveys. This structure is based on the demarcation given below:

- Clinical (doctors)
- Nursing administration
- Clinical (support services)
- General management

The head of each section, (for instance, of the clinical doctors section), is a middle manager.

1.5 KEY ASSUMPTIONS

The following key assumption was made:

It is assumed that conflict management styles used in private organisations can also be used in public organisations.

1.6 CONTENTS OF THE STUDY

The following is a summary of the remaining chapters making up this research:

- Chapter Two outlines the nature, sources and effects of conflict in organisations.
- Chapter Three deals with the main theoretical views on conflict. It broadly defines and describes the conflict management styles, their application and advantages.
- Chapter Four outlines the methodology of collecting the empirical data together with the structure of the questionnaire and the interviews.
- Chapter Five deals with the interpretation of data collected on the six hospitals using the questionnaire and the interviews. The findings are also discussed.
- In Chapter Six, the reasons for the research are highlighted and limitations and recommendations are given and conclusions are made.

1.7 CONCLUSION

Various studies on conflict indicate a number of conflict management styles used by managers in conflict management. In this chapter emphasis has been placed on the identification of the main problem and the objectives for the study. In addition, the researcher has outlined the sub-problem, which will be answered by the literature review, and a study conducted on the six health institutions through the means of a questionnaire and interviews.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NATURE, SOURCES AND EFFECTS OF CONFLICT IN ORGANISATIONS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

When looking at conflict management, the persons involved, the nature, sources and effects of conflict, or the desired outcome of conflict may all have an effect on the kind of styles, or strategies a manager may use in dealing with conflict situations. Choosing the best style or conflict management strategy, therefore requires one to understand what conflict is; its dynamic and interactive nature, the effects and the main factors that lead to conflict.

In this chapter, the researcher outlines the nature, causes and effects of conflict as presented by various other researchers.

2.2 NATURE OF CONFLICT

A significant body of research on conflict indicates that conflict is not static and that it can be viewed as a dynamic process. Milton (1981: 431) for instance, talks about conflict between two parties, individuals, groups or organisations as a process, which can be described and analysed in terms of a sequence of conflict episodes. Many writers and researchers agree with the above assertion. Episodes of conflict occur as part of a process that is usually explained in various phases (Kreitner & Kinicki 1997: 337; Milton 1981: 433; Tosi et al 1994: 436). What these writers mentioned above are trying to indicate by their assertions is that conflict can not be identified as a specific phenomena which starts and is perceived and felt at once. Conflict may already be there but parties may fail to perceive it, or feel it. Perhaps this may be because people fear the very mention of conflict or, they prefer to keep peace and continue to insist that there is no conflict. This conflict will gradually move through a number of stages until such time when individuals, or groups will no longer deny its presence. Nearly all the above writers agree that the conflict process may occur

in five phases. These phases are the following: the antecedent conditions, perceived conflict phase, manifest behaviour, conflict resolution or suppression and the resolution aftermath.

The first phase, which is referred to as the antecedent conditions, is characteristic of a situation that increases the likelihood of conflict. This is the period when the aspirations, or the goals of one party are blocked causing tension, anxiety and frustration. Some of the common antecedents of conflict in organisations, as revealed in the literature study, include the following:

- Incompatible personalities or value systems;
- Role ambiguities;
- Competition for limited resources;
- Overworking of employees;
- Unreasonable or unclear policies; and,
- Complex organisational structures which tend to increase the number of hierarchical layers and increased tasks (Greenberg & Baron 1997: 380; Kreitner & Kinicki 1997: 337).

The antecedent conditions cause or precede a conflict situation (Greenberg & Baron 1997: 380; Kreitner & Kinicki 1997: 337). According to Tosi et al (1994: 436), an antecedent condition may be an aggressive one and may end up causing a conflict situation. If a manager, for instance, insults his or her subordinate, this is likely to increase the likelihood of conflict. In other cases, antecedents of conflict can be subtle. In this a case, the affected party may not immediately see itself as being frustrated out-rightly, but continuing frustration to the same party will eventually lead to conflict. Take for instance, a case where an employee keeps on reminding his/her manager of a particular problem he/she experiences and the manager keeps on promising that he would attend to it but he does not. The employee will become increasingly frustrated and this will eventually lead to conflict.

Robbins (1990: 412) asserts that the parties to conflict must perceive that there is conflict. If no one is aware of it then it is generally agreed that no conflict exists. The second phase of the conflict process, is what is called the perceived

conflict phase. It is an impersonally recognised set of conditions that are harmful to all parties like perceptions and feelings such of actual, or potential disagreement, frustration, anger, fear, or anxiety. These cause people to react to a situation. As Tosi et al (1994: 437) state, perceptions are closely linked to negative feelings. Those who perceive conflict tend to develop feelings of insecurity, mistrust and of being treated unfairly and will be worrying about their ability to cope with the difficulty. The pressures felt, the uneasiness and the need to cope with the situation is a clear indication that the parties concerned now know and feel that there are disagreements which need to be resolved.

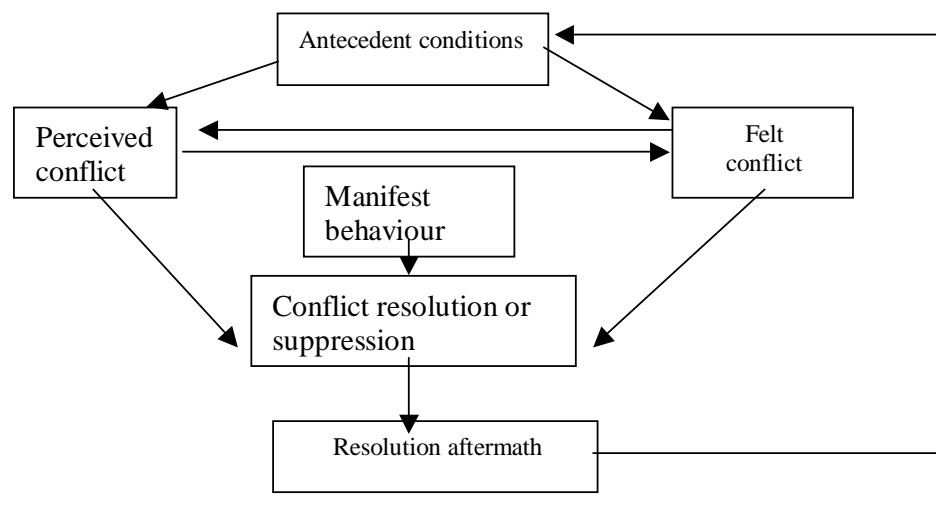
Individuals or groups will now start directing their behaviour towards forming a response to the perceived conflict. This is what is referred to as manifest behaviour. During this phase people act according to their perceptions and feelings. For instance, if one feels angry and frustrated one may either withdraw from the situation or become aggressive. In some cases where the conflict is seen as counter-productive to both parties, the parties concerned may appeal to their good will or problem solving (Tosi et al 1994: 437).

According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 328), the response to the conflict may be verbal, written, or even a physical attack. One must note however that any response to conflict during the manifest state does not mean that the parties concerned have now agreed to come together and resolve the conflict effectively. These are responses, of people who are aware of their differences and who try to act upon them. Eventually all parties, concerned will realise that there is a need for conflict resolution. It is then that conflict resolution as a phase sets in.

In the conflict resolution phase, individuals, parties and organisations involved in conflict try to either resolve or suppress the conflict. During this phase, managers can try several approaches to restructuring the situation in order to resolve the conflict between individuals or groups. The various approaches, which managers can use to resolve conflict, will be discussed in the following chapter.

The resolution aftermath is described as the consequences of the conflict resolution method employed, which will affect the future relations of the parties. The nature of such relations in most cases is determined by the strategies or styles used in managing the conflict situation. As Tosi et al (1994: 437) state, the key question is whether the parties are drawn into more cooperation or driven further apart by the conflict. Conflict resolution can at times lead to good feelings and harmony as in the case when a new policy or procedure is developed that clarifies the relationship between parties and minimizes future conflicts. For instance, nurses and doctors can agree on the rules to govern when the hospital is in a crisis such as in the case of manpower shortages, or in emergencies. In cases where conflict resolution results in poorer working relationships, hard feelings and resentment persist and these can trigger another conflict episode. In figure 2.1 below an illustration of the conflict phases discussed is given.

FIGURE 2.1: The Conflict Process



Source: adapted from Milton 1981: 433.

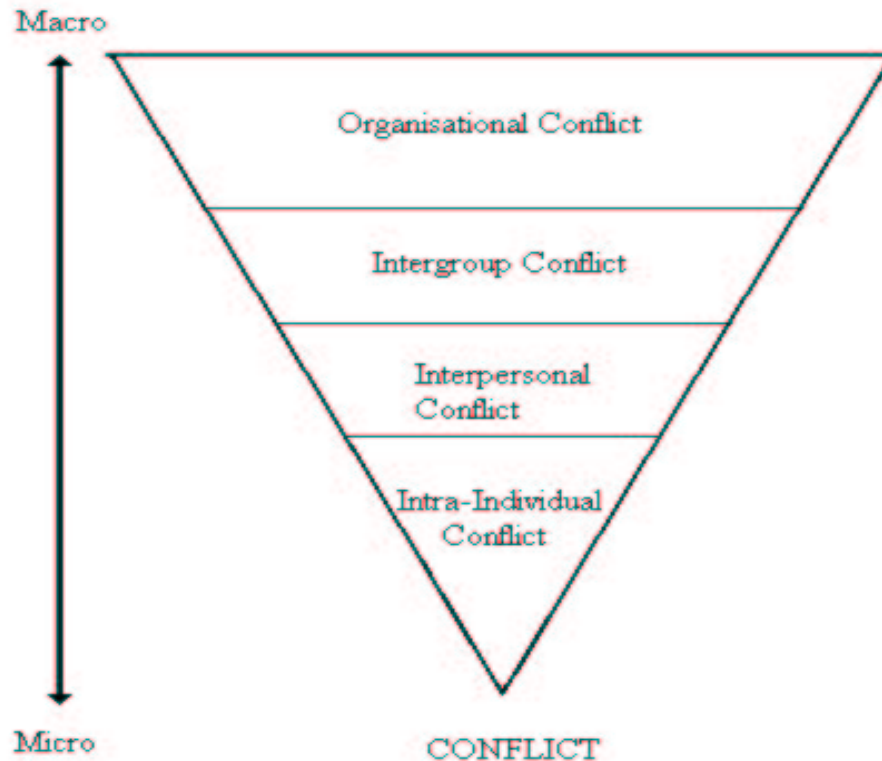
2.3 CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Greenberg and Baron (1997: 382) note that research into organisational conflict has tended to focus on the organisational causes of conflict. Recent attention has however, focussed on the possibility that in many cases costly organisational conflicts stem as much, or perhaps more, from interpersonal factors. Conflict in the work setting often stem from relations between

individuals and from personal characteristics as well as from underlying structural organisation based-factors.

According to Luthan (1998: 299), conflict can occur at the individual, interpersonal, group or organisational levels. Figure 2.2 illustrates these levels.

FIGURE 2.2 Levels of conflict in organisational behaviour



Source: Adapted from Luthan (1998: 299)

While many researchers agree that the main causes of conflict in organisations can be drawn from all the levels of conflict depicted in figure 2.2 above, (Lussier 1997: 464; Schermerhorn 2000: 340; Tosi et al 1994; 440: 425), many of them however, place a lot of emphasis on the interpersonal and inter-group causes of conflict. The intra-individual conflict becomes a concern for management once it interferes with organisational goals, or when it affects the individual employee rendering him ineffective. In addition, such conflict will take place in the setting of interpersonal and inter-group relationships such that identifying the causes of interpersonal and inter-group conflict can enable one to understand the causes of intra-individual conflict in organisations.

Tosi et al (1994: 440) classifies the causes of organisational conflict under three groups. They are the individual characteristics, situational forces and organisational structures. These three sources relate to the interpersonal, inter-group and organisational causes of conflict indicated on the previous page in figure 2.2.

In the following section, the three causes of conflict are discussed.

2.3.1 Individual Characteristics

Every individual is unique due to differences in family background, education and value systems. These factors are greatly responsible for shaping our values, attitudes and beliefs. Individual differences are usually a source of conflict whenever people interact with each other. Different values and beliefs can create tension between individuals and groups in organisations. For instance, the most common disagreements between workers and management are usually caused by differences in values, attitudes and beliefs. Tosi et al (1994: 440) state that, differences in values, attitudes and beliefs contribute to feelings about what is right and what is wrong and to the predisposition to behave positively, or negatively in reaction to an event.

When people interact, the potential for conflict is high due to differences in people's needs and personalities. People with high achievement needs may be less willing to co-operate with others. Also, there are examples in organisations where workers co-operate, or join a group to oppose management because they share similar needs. For example, junior doctors can decide to go on a strike because management has failed to attend to their interests as junior members of staff.

According to Gerber, Nel and Van Dyk (1998: 325), each person's perception of the world and of his or her environment differs from that of other people. A person acts in accordance with this perception. The way a person perceives others usually determines his/her relationship with them. When one feels threatened, one may become aggressive, or resort to confrontation, thus

increasing the potential for conflict. Tosi et al (1994: 442) state that due to perceptual differences and error in judgement, one party may blame another for a problem, and attribute the cause of the problem to the other person's motives. This is what is referred to as false attribution.

2.3.2 Situational Forces

According to Tosi et al (1994: 443), situational conditions encourage conflict when they define and affect how people interact with each other. Situational conditions include the following:

- Interdependence and need to interact;
- Need for consensus;
- Status differences and role incompatibility and
- Communication.

According to Ivancevich and Matterson (1996: 328), work interdependence occurs when two or more organisational groups depend on one another to complete a task. When people are physically separate and do not interact, conflict is less likely to develop. As the association between parties or groups increase, so does the possibility of conflict (Tosi et al 1994: 443). Quite often in organisations conflict will result where the output of one unit may be the input of another unit. For example, a doctor may ask for patients to be X-rayed and if the X-Ray Department does not do its work promptly the doctor will be frustrated because, in order to attend to his/her patient, he/she will need that X-Ray.

There are times when consensus will be needed for decisions to be made. Decisions affecting an organisation as a whole will always need support from all departments. Usually conflict occurs over quality, size, colour, or location when pressure for consensus exists. Many organisations have experienced conflict due to the failure of managers in involving employees in decision-making.

When people act in ways incongruent with their status, conflict can occur. The different status standards in organisations result in status hierarchies.

Ivancevich and Metteson (1996: 331) assert that status conflict is often created by work patterns - which group initiates the work and which group responds. They give an example of a production department, which may perceive change as an affront to its status because it implies accepting a salesperson's initiation of work.

Role incompatibility is closely related to status incongruence. For instance, when people feel that they deserve a promotion to reflect their record of accomplishments, they suffer from both role dissatisfaction and perceived status incongruence. When the responsibilities and the work jurisdictions of all workers are not specified so that no one can know what to expect from each other, conflict can occur (Robbins 1990: 423; Tosi et al 1994: 444).

Role conflict can be divided into three types. One type involves the person and the role, which tries to explain the person's input in the role to be played. The second one is intra-role conflict, which is created by contradictory expectations about how a given role should be played. In the case of intra-role conflict, the manager has to ensure that there are correct channels of communication and that the communication is clear to everybody concerned. Lastly, the inter-role conflict results from different requirements of two or more roles that must be played at the same time. This usually puts more pressure on the employee and may result in poor performance on the part of the employee. With pressure from the management for the employee to produce good results, the employee may end up being frustrated and a precedent for conflict may be created.

Failure to communicate effectively always leads to information deficiency. According to Luthan (1996: 307), information deficiency is a major source of conflict in organisations. When people fail to communicate effectively, it means that communication is not complete, because it does not result in understanding. Misinterpreted messages can lead to disagreements and increase the possibility of conflicts. Areas of concern regarding communication are reflected in factors such as semantic differences, cultural values, family background, past experiences and channels of communication. At times communication may also be ineffective because one party lacks enough information on a subject.

2.3.3 Organisational structures

Factors, which relate to organisational structures and which may lead to conflict, include the following: specialisation, differentiation, task interdependence, different goals and policies, procedures and rules.

Specialisation will occur when departments specialise in certain tasks. When specialist departments do not co-ordinate their efforts effectively and there is a lack of consensus, the potential for conflict increases.

With differentiation, departmental units like the Production, Sales or Research Departments, may each have its own responsibilities and concerns. This results in different perspectives towards structure, interpersonal relations, time management and pursued goals. The research unit, for instance, could be less formally structured while the production department could be more routine structured. (Tosi et al 1994: 445). Robbins (1990: 419) observes that, if units in organisations are highly differentiated, the tasks each does, and the sub-environment each deals with, will tend to be dissimilar. This, he goes on to say, will lead to significant internal differences among units. He cites an example of differences attributed to time horizons where people in production will lean towards short-term perspectives while laboratory researchers in the same firm will tend to have a long-term orientation.

The distinctions between line and staff departments are closely related to differentiation. Line and staff conflict results from situations in which staff personnel do not formally possess authority over line personnel (Luthan 1998: 317). The differences in authority and power tend to increase the possibility of conflict in line and staff structures. Line functionaries for instance, have line authority over their subordinates in the different departments. They do not however have authority over other employees holding staff functions. In most cases conflict will arise, as most line managers do not feel comfortable from, or listening to the opinions of the staff functionaries.

Task interdependence occurs when two or more organisational groups or units must depend on one another in order to complete their tasks. Three distinct types of task interdependence can be identified. These are: pooled, sequential and reciprocal task interdependence (Ivancevich & Matteson 1996: 328; Tosi et al 1994: 445).

In pooled interdependence, no interaction is required between groups because each group in effect performs separately. In such a case, the probability for conflict is minimal since there is less dependence on one another to complete a task. In sequential interdependence, the output of one person, or unit, becomes the input to another, so that conflict can arise where people interface (Tosi et al 1994: 445). Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 329) concur with the above observation but they go on to add that, where there is sequential interdependence, tasks are performed in a sequential fashion. They give an example of a manufacturing industry where a product must be assembled before it is painted. This, for instance, means, if there is a delay in the assembling department, that same delay will also affect the finishing department where the vehicle is to be painted.

Lastly, in reciprocal interdependence, the potential for conflict is even greater because the output of each group, or unit serves as the input to the other groups in the organisation. In a hospital for example, there is a high degree of reciprocal interdependence among the anaesthesiology staff, nursing, technicians and surgeons in a hospital operating room (Ivancevich & Metteson 1996: 328). The failure of any of the departments indicated above, to finish its tasks promptly and effectively will directly affect the output of the other departments. For instance if a patient is to undergo surgery and is not well prepared by the nursing staff, it may have a serious impact on the results of the operation. This may result in frustration on the part of surgeons and may lead to rising tension between the nursing staff and the doctors.

There are certain conditions that foster inter-group conflict because of differences in goals. The most common ones are: limited resources and the reward structures. When resources are limited and must be allocated, mutual dependence will increase and the differences in group goals will become more

apparent. According to Robbins (1990: 421), the potential for conflict is enhanced when two, or more groups or units depend on a common pool of scarce resources such as physical space, equipment, operating funds, capital budget allocation, or centralised staff services such as the typing pool.

Conflict associated with reward structures, is more prevalent in organisations where rewards are related to individual group differences. In this case, rewards are seen as independent variables although performance in a group is in reality interdependent (Ivancevich & Matteson 1996: 329). The possibility for conflict is increased in this case because individuals in the units fiercely compete for the different rewards. Lack of equity in the reward structures is another area of concern for most employees. Every employee is usually on the look out to see whether each one of them is equally rewarded or remunerated. If an organisational structure is seen as suffering from inequity, differences are likely to occur. Anxiety, tensions, and emotions may be stirred, thus increasing the likelihood of conflict.

Although policies, procedures and rules are meant to clarify responsibilities and to smoothen the interaction among people, sometimes when rigidly emphasised and over used, can lead to frustration and then increase the possibility of conflict. Tosi et al (1994: 446) agree with the above assertion when they state that, rules and procedures do not necessarily guarantee an absence of conflict. Over-regulation can cause people to feel frustrated, or even insulted and this may increase the potential of conflict. The explanation to be made from the above assertion is that in organisations where policies and rules are overemphasised, people tend to feel that they are not allowed a large degree of independence, and therefore they can not be as creative as they would want to be. In a way it is as if their aspirations are frustrated. This kind of environment is usually conducive to conflict.

2.4 EFFECTS OF CONFLICT ON ORGANISATIONS.

Depending on why it occurs and how it develops, conflict can yield beneficial as well as harmful effects to organisations (Greenberg & Baron 1997: 384). Most

writers on conflict agree on this. They see conflict as being functional on one hand and dysfunctional on the other. When conflict is dysfunctional, it will have negative consequences, and when functional, it is useful and must be encouraged (Greenberg & Baron 1997: 384; Ivancevich & Matteson 1996: 325; Robbins & Coulter 1996: 631).

Although the purpose of this study is not to examine the effects of conflict in detail, there is a need to point out that a manager's conflict management style will always be determined by the way he/she sees the resulting consequences of conflict. Conflict resolution does not only involve the persons concerned, the importance of the issue, and the emotional state of those affected but also the desired outcomes from such conflict. By understanding that conflict may be either functional or dysfunctional, managers are able to decide on the best management style or strategy to use when managing conflict. The assumption made here is that if a manager believes that all conflict will result in negative consequences, then his/her strategy will be to eliminate conflict at all costs. On the other hand, if one holds the belief that conflict can result in positive effects, then one would consider strategies aimed at maintaining that conflict, or even consider the prospect of increasing it.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In order for managers to handle conflict effectively, they need to understand the nature and causes of conflict. Most of the literature studies reviewed for this chapter have pointed out that conflict is a dynamic process. It occurs in phases or episodes and these phases are closely related and are interdependent. It is therefore the complex nature of conflict that necessitates a clear understanding of how conflict starts and how it affects the organisation. As indicated in this chapter, conflict can be classified under three main types: the intra-individual, interpersonal and inter-group conflict. Organisational conflict itself is the result of all the above plus other situational conditions that are derived from organisational structures such as staff hierarchies, reward structures and the sharing of resources.

Also outlined in this chapter, is that apart from being disruptive to organisations, conflict can also be beneficial. The main task for a manager in this case is to be able to eliminate that conflict which is harmful and put to use that, which can benefit his or her organisation.

In the following chapter, the writer identifies the different views of conflict and the main approaches to handling conflict as revealed in the literature study.

CHAPTER THREE

MANAGING CONFLICT THROUGH RESOLUTION AND STIMULATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The management of conflict in organisations is one of the major tasks facing managers today. According to Van der Walddt and Du Toit (1997: 249), the true skill of a manager lies in finding a sound balance between constructive and destructive conflict. Contemporary views on conflict tend to indicate that a certain level of conflict can be beneficial to organisations and managers no longer need to hold on to the traditional view, which advocates for the complete elimination of conflict. Managers should try to explore ways of enabling them to tap the benefits of functional conflict. Rather than trying to eliminate conflict or suppress its symptoms, a manager's task should be to manage it so that it enhances its people and the organisation.

This chapter focuses on the views of conflict and approaches to, or styles of conflict which may be applied in managing conflict. The conflict management styles used by managers are most likely to depend on their views of conflict, the nature and the degree of conflict being experienced and how well informed managers are about conflict resolution and the conflict management styles.

Two main approaches to handling conflict will be identified. These are the conflict resolution and the stimulating technique. The five conflict management styles identified in Chapters One and Two respectively, are used to resolve conflict while the stimulating technique is used in cases where conflict is seen as beneficial and therefore needs to be encouraged or introduced in a working situation.

Since contemporary research indicates that managing conflict successfully will require both resolution and stimulating strategies, the largest part of this chapter will deal with various literature studies on the resolution and stimulating strategies.

3.2 DIFFERENT VIEWS OF CONFLICT

Widely held views of conflict today indicate that conflict can be bad, good or ugly. The three main views of conflict, which have been advanced by researchers, can be used to explain the above assertion. These views are: the traditional, the human relations and the interactionist views of conflict. The bad view of conflict is advocated by the traditionalists while both the human relations and the interactionist approaches to conflict advocate for the good and functional view of conflict. The ugly view is usually associated with the interactionists who believe that if conflict is not managed effectively, it may get out of hand, thus becoming ugly.

3.2.1 The Traditional View

The traditional is the oldest view of conflict. It assumes that all conflict is bad and therefore has a negative impact on an organisation's effectiveness. It treats conflict synonymously with such terms as violence, destruction and irrationality (Robbins 1990: 414). Because conflict is seen as being harmful to organisations, management must strive to avoid it, or eliminate it completely. Managers, who subscribe to this view, usually belong to organisations characterised by unitary views of interest, conflict and power. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979: 204), such organisations regard conflict as a rare and transient phenomenon, which can be removed by appropriate managerial action. When conflict does occur, it is usually attributed to the activities of deviants and troublemakers.

Resolving conflict by elimination as advocated by the traditionalist approach, puts pressure on managers to initiate actions to reduce or eliminate it. Conflict is assumed to be a preventable problem. Managers are expected to create a working environment to prevent it. According to Tosi et al (1994: 438),

managers can do this by developing positive relationships, designing plans, and implementing policies and procedures, which can ensure mutual efforts towards common goals.

Supporters of the traditional view believe that the organisation is not designed or structured correctly or adequately. Because of this, organisations would need elaborate job analysis, streamlined authorities and responsibilities. In a way this would create an orderly environmental context with little or no conflict.

A critical argument one would raise is whether it is an easy job for managers to create such an orderly environment with little or no conflict. To subscribe to the foregoing view, is to overlook the fact that in many societies conflict has become part of life such that the idea of simply eliminating or suppressing it would be a very difficult task for managers to accomplish. It is just an assumption that all conflict is bad and therefore need to be eliminated. This has prompted a number of writers and researchers to be critical of the traditional view Bacol and associates (2002: 2) go even further to conclude that the bad view of conflict which is subscribed to by the traditionalists, is associated with a vision of organisational effectiveness that is no longer valid (or perhaps never was).

Others who have also criticised the traditional view, such as Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 324), have noted that while the suppression of conflict may remove the outward appearance of conflict, it does not contribute to resolving the underlying difficulties which led to it. Bacol and associates (2002: 2) also argue that the suppression of conflict is not only a short-term solution, but it can in the long run make conflict turn ugly. In other words conflict that has been suppressed will come back in most cases and when it does, it is usually more destructive than the first time.

According to Robbins (1990: 417), conflict elimination is not realistic in complex organisations, nor would such elimination be desirable. The goal of management is not to seek harmony and co-operation – it is the effective attainment of organisational goals. The argument raised by the above assertion is that although the suppression or elimination of conflict can contribute to an

orderly and peaceful environment in organisations, on the other hand, innovation and change may be virtually eliminated.

According to Milton (1985: 428), these organisations are devoid of creativity, stimulation of ideas, problem-solving and successful adaptation to change and survival. There are times when employees need to experience difficult situations in order to become more innovative and more constructive. Such situations can challenge the status quo and help instill new ideas among people. If conflict can to a certain extent make employees more creative, then some conflict can be tolerated in order to achieve this.

This assertion, however, has also been criticised by some other researchers who, although not completely subscribing to the traditional view, have indicated that benefits associated with constructive conflict tend to be lost in the long run (Wall, Galane & Love (1987: 44). Recent writers, have however, continued to question the idea of conflict elimination and suppression. Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 324) state that while the suppression of conflict may remove the outward visibility of conflict, it does not contribute to resolving the underlying difficulties, which led to it. In other words, it is a short-term solution to conflict situations. Ivancevich and Metteson's assertion is perhaps based on the view held by other writers who believe that conflict is inevitable and undimensional so that it may be difficult for a manager to devise any conflict strategy that can completely eliminate it. This is further reinforced by the fact that in most organisations, especially government departments, the working environment is disorderly and characterised by constant change and a need for adaptation.

Irrespective of the criticism levelled against it, the traditional view still remains one of the most important views of conflict and perhaps one that still has great impact on the conflict management styles managers may use in managing conflict. One should also not forget that traditional views of conflict strongly appeal to many managers and most people due to the fact that society has always equated conflict with violence and confrontation both of which, have often resulted in bad consequences. Because of this, it would seem rather naïve for one to expect managers to unconditionally embrace the new views on conflict and to forget the traditional view.

3.2.2 The Human Relations View

The human relations view emerged after various writers on conflict criticised the traditional view. This view dominated conflict thinking from the late 1940's through to the mid 1970's. The human relations view regards conflict as natural and inevitable. Because of this, the supporters of the human relations view accepted conflict and believed it could not be eliminated entirely. Conflict was also regarded as neither inherently bad nor good and was considered to lead to either negative or positive results (Ivancevich & Metteson 1996: 324; Robbins & Coulter 1996: 632)

The human relations view was one of the first reactions to the views of conflict held by the supporters of the traditionalist view. The fact that this view holds the notion that conflict is unavoidable and can have both negative and positive consequences is an indication of how difficult it would be to manage conflict from this point of view. The assumption to be made is that whatever policies managers may apply, conflict will always be present. On the other hand, they should also recognise that not all conflict is bad and that conflict resolution should not aim at completely eliminating or suppressing it.

The inevitability of conflict in the work environment stems from many factors. Some of these are: the managerial structures, which may contribute to poor communication; personal differences and backgrounds such as family and levels of education; multicultural differences; work interdependence and status and role incongruence.

There are a number of job stressors that would make conflict unavoidable in a working context especially in a medical institution. These may include: too little responsibility, lack of participation in decision making, lack of management support, coping with technological change and a personal space which is often invaded by other staff members, physicians and patients. By looking at all the above variables, one starts to question the notion that conflict is a rare phenomenon in organisations and that it could be resolved completely by

suppressing it. The variables mentioned above can help to reinforce the arguments of those people who subscribe to the human relations approach.

According to Tosi et al (1994: 438), it would be very frustrating for a manager to try to prevent conflict when he/she knows that conflict is inevitable. Managers are thus advised to take action aimed at anticipating conflict, accept its inevitability and devise strategies that can keep conflict within the optimum limit. The human relations view was not clear about whether conflict stimulation would form part of a manager's policy in managing conflict but opened up more research on the positive nature of conflict and how it could be harnessed for organisational improvement. Another view thus came into being. This was the interactionist view.

3.2.3 The Interactionist View

This is regarded as the current theoretical perspective on conflict. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 325), the interactionist view is the realistic view of inter-group conflict. It states that conflict is not only a positive force in organisations, but some conflict is absolutely necessary for organisations to perform effectively. It encourages conflict on the grounds that a harmonious, peaceful, tranquil and co-operative organisation may be prone to becoming static, apathetic and non-responsive to the needs of change and innovation (Robbins & Coulter 1996: 632).

The contention that conflict is functional and could constructively facilitate group decision making can be traced to Coser (1956: 8). However, Coser stressed the functional aspects but did not pay much attention to the dysfunctional aspects of social conflict. A number of other writers later agreed with his assertion by stressing the constructive nature of conflict more and the need to assess bad and functional conflict before either suppressing or stimulating conflict (Assel 1969: 573; Eisehardt & Schoonheven 1990: 509; Van de Vliet 1985). All these writers mentioned above, asserted that conflict was necessary for individuals and group or team members to avoid complacency and mistakes that could undermine the need for change, creativity, innovation and productivity.

The interactionist view does not subscribe to the notion that all conflict is positive and functional. It implies a wider role for managers in dealing with conflict than either the traditional or the human relations perspective. It advocates that managers must create an environment in which conflict is healthy but is not allowed to run to pathological extremes (Robbins 1990: 414).

Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 327) concur with Robbins when they state that every organisation has an optimal level that can be considered highly functional and can generate positive performance. They also indicate that too low levels of conflict can lead to poor performance. This results in low levels of organisational performance. Conflict strategies at this stage are aimed at resolving it or managing it until it comes back to optimal level. There are also situations when the conflict levels become too high. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 327), high levels of conflict can result in dysfunctional conflict with organisational consequences such as disruption, interference with organisational activities and chaos.

Normally it is easier for managers to identify situations of high levels of conflict and to take the necessary action to deal with the situation. It is, however, rather difficult for managers to determine the desirable levels of conflict. And, as Robbins (1990: 416) states, the whole notion of purposely increasing conflict is even more difficult to accept considering the fact that many of these managers have been brought up in a society that sees all conflict as bad. With the lack of a measuring instrument to help measure the conflict extremes, managers must rely on their own judgment concerning whether conflict levels are optimal, too high, or too low.

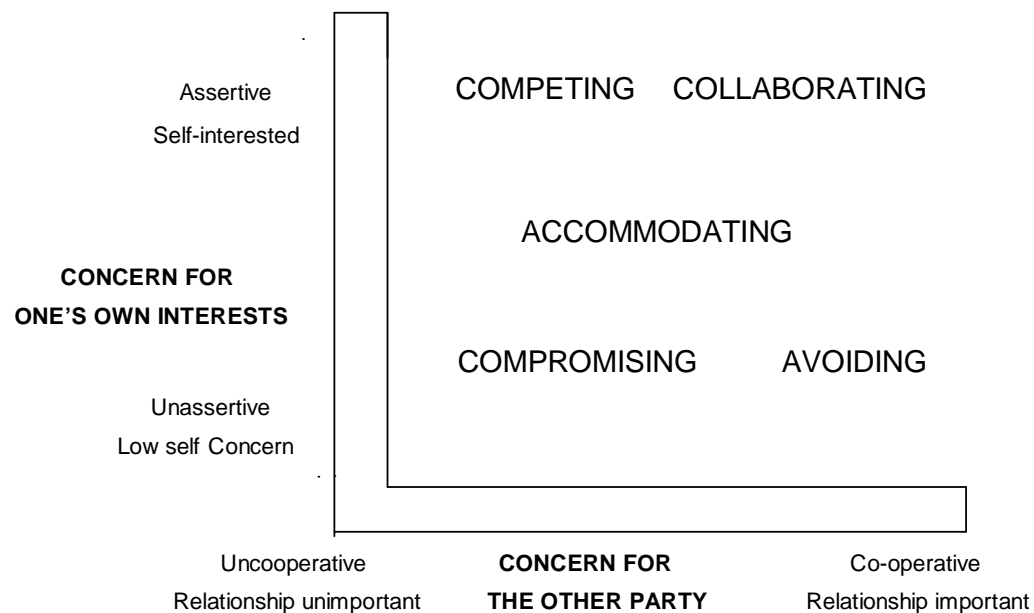
While Robbin's concerns about the interactionist view are mainly to do with the managers' abilities to determine the conflict extremes and to be able to come up with appropriate conflict management strategies, other writers have gone as far as even questioning the very basis of the arguments that support conflict stimulation as a way of managing conflict in organisations. One of the main criticisms leveled at the interactionist view is whether benefits resulting from conflict stimulation can be long lasting. Andrews (1987: VII) states that balancing short-term and long-term profitability is the central challenge of

management. Many people would therefore argue that the relative importance of conflict depends on its effectiveness over extended periods. The point to note here, is that the discussion is not whether conflict is beneficial, or not, it is rather about whether its benefits can last. In the meantime, the interactionist view will continue to be of great importance to managers in organisations.

3.3 MANAGING CONFLICT THROUGH RESOLUTION

Since conflict is an inevitable and a natural occurrence in organisations, managers need to confront the problem of managing it. One way of doing this is by using approaches aimed at resolving it. Past and current research provides five common styles of resolving conflict. Each of the styles has particular strengths and weaknesses and no one option is ideal for every situation (Robbins & Coulter 1996: 635). According to Barbara (1997: 172), strategies for managing conflict will vary according to the form of reference of an organisation's management. She indicates that managers subscribing to an organisation with a unitary philosophy will tend to suppress conflict wherever possible. Those subscribing to a pluralist organisation will tend to suppress dysfunctional conflict while encouraging functional conflict. Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 334) point out that the effectiveness of each approach will depend on the nature and condition of the conflict.

Figure 3.2 on page 33 gives an example of a framework in the form of alternative conflict management styles, which may be used in organisations.

Figure 3.1 **A Model of Personal Stylistic Reactions to Conflict**

Source: adapted from Tosi et al (1994: 447).

Each of the five styles indicated is positioned on two axis representing different concerns. The vertical axis represents a concern for one's own interests. This is explained in the degree of assertiveness or concern showed by the person in trying to assert his/her position. The horizontal axis represents a concern for the other party. It indicates to what extent one would go on co-operating with and accommodating the views of others. The effectiveness of each style used can be evaluated in terms of its capacity to tackle the content of the conflict, the relationship among the parties involved and the conditions in which the style is favourable or ideal in resolving conflict.

In the following sections, the researcher will try to describe each of the above styles and will also outline their advantages and disadvantages and the conditions, or situations, where each of these styles may be successfully or unsuccessfully applied.

3.3.1 Conflict Management Styles

3.3.1.1 Avoidance

When this style is used there is a tendency for people, or groups in conflict to withdraw from the conflict situation or remain neutral. Managers using this style are neither assertive nor co-operative. The relationship with the other party is unimportant. According to Tosi et al (1994: 447), avoidance is commonly used by people who are emotionally upset by the tensions and frustrations of conflict. This may be because they were hurt in previous conflict situations and now they seek to withdraw from those painful memories of the past. They also indicate that avoidance is used due to the belief that conflict is evil, unnecessary or undignified and people avoid it by withdrawing, or simply leaving the scene of conflict.

This style is not very effective in handling conflict. It does not tackle the problem and it creates a no win, or a lose-lose situation. Because it does not confront the root causes of conflict, its success is usually only short-term and results in conditions where unresolved conflict affects the achievement of the organisational goals.

Avoidance has one major advantage. When used, a cooling-off period is created which allows parties to (perhaps) gather more information to begin negotiations afresh or to decide there is no conflict after all (Barbara 1997: 73). There are also other cases where avoidance may be desirable or ideal in resolving conflict. According to Lussier (1997: 465) and Tosi et al (1994: 44), these are identified as follows:

- When an issue is trivial, or more important issues are pressing.
- The potential for disruption outweighs the benefits of the resolution.
- When the objective is to let people cool down and regain perspective.
- When gathering information supersedes immediate decision.
- When one perceives a chance of satisfying his own concerns.

It should be noted, however, that the decision to use avoidance is not an easy one. For instance, a manager has to make a choice between trivial and important or more pressing issues. The problem here is that what might be trivial and pressing to one person might not be to another. Ultimately, therefore, the choice to use the avoidance style will to a large extent depend on the person who is to apply it.

3.3.1.2 Accommodating

Accommodating involves minimising or suppressing real or perceived differences while focussing on the other's views of the situation. A manager using this style has more concern for the needs of the other party than his own.

According to Schermerhorn (2000: 341), a person using this style tends to be co-operative but unassertive. He/she agrees to the wishes of others, smoothing over or overlooking differences to maintain harmony. Accommodation results in a loose-win solution but a good relationship between parties is created. According to Hellrigel and Slocum (1996: 559) this relationship is created when people appeal for co-operation and try to reduce tension and stress by offering reassurance and support for the other person's views. The unfortunate thing about this style is that it allows concern for emotional aspects of conflict but does little to address the root causes of conflict.

According to Hellrigel and Slocum (1996: 561) accommodating or smoothing can be effective or desirable under the following situations:

- When you find that you are wrong and you need to allow a better argument to be heard; to learn, and to show your reasonableness.
- When the aim is to build social credits for later issues.
- When harmony and stability are especially important.
- To allow subordinates to develop from mistakes.
- When conflict is based on personalities of the individuals and can not be resolved.
- When its use is to minimise loss; when you are outmatched and losing.

Like with avoidance, the use of the accommodating style will help to resolve conflict in the short term but eventually it will emerge again and this time perhaps with more intensity. Because it requires the managers to be less assertive, it may have the problem also of undermining their authority and employees may take it for granted that the managers will always give in to their demands. At a later stage when managers may want to assert their power in some other important issues, they could be faced with opposition and a precedent for more conflict will thus be created.

3.3.1.3 Competing or dominating

The competing style involves the use of coerciveness and other forms of power to dominate other people or groups in order to pressurise them in accepting your own view of the situation. It involves being non co-operative but assertive, working against the wishes of the other party and engaging in a win-lose competition and/ or forcing through the exercise of authority (Schermerhorn 2000: 342).

According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 334), dominating tends to be a power-oriented style. In order to use it successfully, one must have sufficient power and authority to force one's resolution on the other person or group. Such an individual may hold the balance of power because he/she is higher up in an organisational hierarchy and therefore has more authority than others. He/she may have critical control over important resources such as budgets, personnel and important knowledge or be allied with powerful groups. Hellrigel and Slocum (1996: 560) state that, managers who are prone to using force may use phrases such as, "if you don't like the way things are run, get out" or, "if you can't learn to co-operate, I'm sure others can be hired who will". Managers using this style often may evoke their formal authority to threaten or actually use demotion, dismissal, and other negative evaluation and punishments in order to force their resolutions on others.

The advantage of this style is that it can lead to better organisational decisions rather than the less effective compromise, if the person using force is correct. Its main disadvantage is that, if it is over-used, and the forcer is incorrect, it can

result in hostilities and resentment towards its user. This can lead to poor human relations, employee stress and negatively affect organisational productivity (Lussier 1997: 466).

The dominating style can be appropriate and desirable when a popular course of action is needed. For instance, where there is need for a decision to be made on a cost cutting budget or the dismissal of an employee for unsatisfactory performance, a manager may force his decision on any other party concerned. In addition, the competing style may also be used when communication by others regarding proposed action is not crucial to its implementation. In other words, people will not resist doing what you want them to do when maintaining the relationship is not critical (Hellriegel & Slocum 1996: 561; Lussier 1996: 466).

3.3.1.4 Compromise

Compromise involves the willingness of all parties to concede some of their own views and to focus another's views to reach agreement. When this style is used, there is no distinct winner or loser and the resolution reached is probably not ideal for either group. According to Tosi et al (1994: 449), compromises is a give and take style based on the belief that people cannot always have their own way and have to find a middle ground all can live with. Parties or groups use conciliatory processes to resolve disputes through a process of reconciling their different interests like the needs, consensus, desires and fears that underlie and shape the positions they have adopted. This is mainly done to restore harmony rather than to decide which party is right or wrong.

It is usually a useful technique when two parties have relatively equal power and mutually exclusive goals. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 331), compromise may involve third party interventions or facilitation. This intervention may need to appeal to higher managerial authority or to submit the conflict to some form of mediation or arbitration. Starting with managers at the lowest level, the compromise style can be used between supervisors and their subordinates. Where compromise fails, the conflict is always attended to at other levels where the same process of seeking compromise may be applied. If

compromise cannot be reached between the parties concerned, then the process may involve the use of neutral parties to mediate, or arbitrate in order to reach a compromise.

With mediation, the intervener does not have the authority to dictate an agreement. Mediators may offer specific recommendations for compromise or integrative solutions. In other cases, they may guide disputants towards developing solutions themselves (Greenberg & Baron 1997: 389). Arbitration on the other hand, is a form of third party intervention in disputes in which the intervening person has the power to determine the terms of the agreement. Mediation and arbitration are commonly used to resolve labour disputes in South Africa through institutionalised bodies such as the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), and the Labour Court.

The advantage of compromise is that conflict is resolved relatively quickly and the working relationship is maintained (Lussier 1998: 467; Tosi et al 1994: 449). The disadvantage is that this technique often leads to counter productive results such as sub-optimum decisions. In other words, the decision reached is not always the best. They may not be decisions that will lead to long lasting solutions of the conflict. They are made to satisfy the immediate needs of all the parties. Also, if compromise is over used it can lead to people playing games such as asking twice as much as they need to get what they want (Lussier 1998: 467).

Compromise has a tendency to fall back on traditional approaches where the aim is to try to arrive at some legal or moral decision on the basis of consensus. This may be successful in minor disputes where there is a broader underlying consensus. When such consensus is lacking, the legal or the moral approach is just a propaganda weapon. An alternative is therefore to move to coercive bargaining or traditional power politics, which usually results in an imposed settlement, and in the long run, in very costly coercion. The argument here is that once compromise reverts to the use of coercive bargaining and forced settlements, the idea of a broader consensus is lost. In real terms the imposed settlement will not be seen as a satisfactory solution to either party. This will inevitably render such a solution a short-term solution to the problem.

According to Hellriegel & Slocum (1996: 562), the compromise style can be desirable and more effective if no agreement is reached or when the agreement enables each party to be better off, or at least not worse off than before, and when achieving a total win-win agreement is not possible because parties cannot agree with each other. Also compromise may be desirable when conflicting views, including opposing goals and interests, block agreement and also when time is short and the solution has to be temporary.

3.3.1.5 Collaborating, sometimes called problem-solving or integrating, involves working through conflict differences and solving problems so that everyone wins. It seeks to resolve conflict by placing maximum focus on both groups' concerns. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 335), successful problem solving requires that conflicting groups display a willingness to work collaboratively towards an integrative solution, which satisfies the needs of all concerned.

Problem solving can help the parties in a dispute to confront the fact that in some respects their own definition of the problem may need to be revised and they may have misunderstood the perception of the other party about the nature of the dispute. In collaborating, the two people work together to develop one display method that they both like. To do this, as Lussier (1998: 407) indicates, requires both, or simply one person to agree that the solution is the best after an explanation from the other person/ party.

According to Lussier's BCF model (1998: 468), planning and decision-making are important attributes of problem solving. The BCF model describes conflict in terms of behaviour (B), consequences (C) and feelings (F). According to the model, conflict resolution is initiated and carried out in five steps. In the first step, a plan for the BCF statement that maintains ownership of the problem is made and the problem defined. When defining the problem, the parties to the conflict are expected to show by their behaviour that they want to be part of the solution to the problem.

Step two presents the BCF statement and the agreement is reached on the conflict. At this stage, it may be difficult for parties to come to an agreement but if this style is to be successful, parties need to find a point that they can agree on. In order to do this, individuals or parties concerned need to emphasise the points on which they do agree rather than those they disagree on.

In the third step one asks for, and/ or gives alternative conflict resolutions. Normally this helps to show one's regard for the initiator of the conflict and shift focus away from the negative past to the positive future. Together the parties concerned can try to find a win-win solution. In step four, parties come agree on a resolution and develop a plan stating each party's responsibility for change.

Lastly, step five is characterised by a follow up to make sure that conflict is resolved.

The BCF model is one of the approaches managers could use in the process of problem solving. It must be remembered that people are unique and every situation is unique and so there are many ways in which people may tackle different problems. What the BCF model offers is just a framework, which would help managers if used in problem solving.

Sometimes, collaborating can use third party intervention or facilitation. The mediator or facilitator can help the parties involved in the conflict to act in response to the environment they see as best as they can and to frequently reveal self-fulfilling prophecies of self-defeating actions by each side. A mediator can also encourage people, or strive to make sure that parties differentiate between their declared policy and their action policy, so that the other party sees the difference between the two. Unlike in compromise, facilitation in problem-solving encourages parties not to have pre-set demands from which to bargain from. It just sets the conflicting parties on a course of action whereby each of the parties to the conflict must acknowledge an equal loss if the problem is not solved amicably. In other words, each individual to the conflict must feel that he/she is equally part of the problem and that any solution arrived at must be mutually acceptable.

There are many potential benefits that can be attributed to the use of problem-solving. When it is used, it tends to lead to the best solution of the conflict. Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 335) point out that when conflicting parties truly collaborate, the result may be a merger of insight, experience, knowledge and perspective, which can lead to higher quality solutions than would be obtained by any other approach. In collaboration people arrive at decisions by their own free will and due to relationship, which tend to develop as individuals or parties to the conflict mutually try to discuss the problem with each other.

Problem solving can be appropriate and more effective under the following conditions (Kreitner & Kinicki 1997: 340; Lussier 1997: 468):

- If one is dealing with important issues that require an optimal solution, compromise could result in sub-optimising and collaboration will therefore be preferable.
- When each party is strongly committed to different goals and compromise can be very costly.
- When the issues are complex and plagued by misunderstandings, people use collaboration because they see it as the only way to bring them back together. Because collaboration requires all of them to define the problem, it gives them a chance to bring out all their differences and talk about them so that misunderstandings can be resolved.
- When people are willing to place their group goals before self-interest.
- When the time is available and maintaining relationships is also important.

Although collaboration may lead to a win-win solution where everybody is expected to equally benefit, its application in practice may be difficult. The notion that successful problem-solving require people to focus on the concern of all group may not be an easy thing to achieve. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 335), the greatest obstacle to overcome, if problem solving is to succeed, is the win-lose mentality that so often characterises conflicting groups.

3.4 STIMULATING TECHNIQUES

Managing conflict through stimulation is a technique which is advocated by the interactionist view. As already indicated, this view recognises that conflict may be too low as well as too high. When it is too low, managers need to stimulate opposition to create functional conflict (Assael 1968: 573; Coser 1956: 8; Robbins 1990: 431). According to Kroon (1990: 396), the interactionist approach encourages conflict on the ground that a harmonious, happy, satisfied and co-operative business tends to stagnate and react statistically, apathetically and non-responsively to development and innovation needs. According to this approach, conflict is absolutely essential for effective performance. Consequently, managers must monitor, analyse and manage the level of conflict so that they can be able to tell at what point they may need to stimulate conflict levels.

Many writers describe various approaches, which managers can use to stimulate conflict. These are the following:

- Making use of programmed conflict.
- Bringing outside individuals in to the group.
- Altering organisational structures.
- Use of communication.
- Stimulating competition.
- Changing an organisational culture.

3.4.1 Making use of Programmed Conflict

According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 340), programmed conflict is conflict that is deliberately and systematically created even when no real differences appear to exist. It raises different views and opinions regardless of the manager's personal feelings. As Kreitner and Kinicki (1997: 338) state, the trick in using this technique is to get contributors to either defend or criticise ideas based on relevant facts rather than on political interests.

Van de Vliet (1985: 19) concurs with the above assertion and describes the conflict stimulating approach as, “escalative intervention,” which is a purposeful and systematic operation through which an outsider seeks to increase the frustration experienced by the participants in the conflict. The objective for this is to make drastic changes in existing power relations, interaction patterns and to restore a level of playing field within the system so that different viewpoints contribute to the performance of the system.

There are mainly two-programmed conflict approaches managers can use. They are the devil’s advocate and the dialectical methods.

Using the devil’s advocate method, involves assigning someone the role of a critic with the job of uncovering all possible problems regarding a particular proposal. The role of the devil’s advocate is to ensure that all opposing views are presented and taken into consideration before any decision is made. This is intended to generate critical thinking and reality among the participants.

According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 339), this technique is widely used to “bring back to life” a stagnant organisation or sub-unit. This is done through hiring or transferring an individual whose attitudes, values and backgrounds differ from those of the other group members. Robbins (1990: 433) refers to this method as heterogeneity, whereby a stagnant unit may be up shaken by adding one or more individuals whose background and values vary significantly from those held by members of the unit. The objective of managers using this method is to create diversity of opinion and viewpoints in order to reduce complacency and groupthink. If it is properly used, the devil’s advocate method can contribute to greater creativity, innovative ideas and improved group decision-making. On the other hand, the use of this method can result in time wasting and create delay in the decision making process

Managers who use the dialectical method are expected to foster a structured debate of opposing viewpoints prior to making a decision. This method allows subordinates or individuals in a group to deliberate on a proposed course of action. In doing this, the individuals can come up with a counterproposal based on different assumptions (Ivancevich & Matteson 1996: 340; Kreitner & Kinicki

1997: 338). Before a decision is taken, advocates of each position have to present and debate the merits of their proposal before key decision makers. Like the devil's advocate method, this method could greatly enhance the quality of decision-making and lead to better conflict management in organisations.

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (1997: 338), there are two major drawbacks of the dialectical method. First, "winning the debate" may overshadow the issue at hand. Also, for this method to be successful, more skill training is required than with the devil's advocate. This results in time wasting and more money spent on the training of managers.

Other researchers have aired their share of criticism of both the devil's advocate and the dialectical methods. Pace (1990: 80), for instance, stated that group members must be able to classify or differentiate conflict within the group. Differentiation is defined as the process of identifying and understanding the parameters of conflict between group members. This means that conflict must be so depersonalised that each member recognises that an attack on his or her ideology is not an attack on him/her and that there should be no personal retaliation out of frustration and anger. The main problem with this argument is the question whether people are able to put away their individual differences and perceptions in order to share consensual goals. If individuals cannot share goals it would be difficult for them to appreciate each other's criticisms.

3.4.2 Altering Organisational Structure

According to Robbins and Coulter (1996: 637), this method involves altering or creating changes in the structural variables in order to disrupt the status quo and ultimately increase conflict levels. Centralising divisions, realigning workgroups, increasing formalisation and interdependence between units are examples of this. Van der Walddt and Du Toit (1997: 248) concur with the above assertion when they state that "conflict represents energy and if it is managed and channeled correctly, it can serve as a driving force to increase productivity and render the necessary change." By trying to restructure and realigning workgroups, managers are hoping to put more pressure on employees to

become more innovative and more creative. This will contribute to enhanced decision-making.

3.4.3 Use of Communication

Managers can intelligently use communication channels in order to stimulate beneficial conflict. Information can be placed carefully in formal channels to create ambiguity, re-valuation, or confrontation. This information may be in the form of a proposed budget cut or retrenchments of some employees. The aim of such proposals is to stimulate new ideas and diversity of opinions and reduce apathy among staff. Robbins (1997: 491) states that communication can stimulate conflict by drawing attention to differences of opinion, which individuals did not previously recognise. When these differences are overtly addressed, parties are forced to confront conflict.

3.4.4 Stimulating Competition

According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 340), various techniques can be used to stimulate competition. Managers can use a variety of incentives such as awards and bonuses for outstanding performance. By encouraging competition, managers can indirectly contribute to greater individual performance and productivity. The incentives to reward those whose performance is outstanding, is aimed at putting pressure on others to start re-evaluating their performance with the aim to be more productive and also to have a chance of getting an incentive.

3.4.5 Changing the Organisation's Culture

Managers who use this technique to stimulate conflict, must create an organisational cultural environment where every individual, be the manager himself or an employee, accepts challenges and criticism. As Robbins and Coulter (1997: 636) state, managers must convey to subordinates the message supported by action, that conflict has a legitimate place in the organisation. It would be very difficult for a manager to use the stimulating techniques already identified in an organisational culture, which does not tolerate individual

criticisms. In other words, conflict stimulation can only work effectively if a manager himself is open to other peoples' criticisms and different viewpoints.

3.5 CONCLUSION

It is clearly evident from the literature review in this chapter that the views of conflict have a major impact in determining the conflict management styles used by managers in handling conflicts in organisations. In this chapter a variety of literature sources have been used to identify and discuss the views of conflict. The traditionalist view, which is one of three views in the literature study, assumes that all conflict is dysfunctional and therefore needs to be eliminated. In discussing the various assumptions of this view, the researcher has tried to indicate the main reasons why this view developed and why even today it still appeals to many managers. Criticisms of this view by various writers and researchers have also been identified and discussed.

The human relations view was one of the first views on conflict to question the assumption that all conflict is bad. In this chapter the researcher has used a number of literature studies to identify and describe the assumptions advocated by the supporters of the human relations view.

The interactionist view also assumed that not all conflict is bad and therefore does not need complete elimination. Because of this, it advocates for the management of conflict through stimulation strategies in order to identify the level of low conflict and to be able to increase it to optimum levels. By increasing conflict managers would be able to reduce apathy and complacency among employees, and to encourage a diversity of views and opinions.

In the last part of this chapter the conflict management styles, which can be used in resolving conflict, have been identified and discussed. The five resolution styles discussed, using various sources of literature studies, included the following: the avoidance, accommodating, collaborating, compromise and dominating style. Various conflict-stimulating techniques have also been identified and discussed.

In the following chapter, details of the methodology used for the research paper will be outlined. The research techniques the researcher has used such as the questionnaire and interviews will be described.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Leedy (1997: 5) describes research as a process whereby an attempt is made to systematically and with the support of data find the answer to a question, the resolution to a problem, or the understanding of a phenomenon. This process is normally referred to as the research methodology formulation. Welman and Kruger (1999: 2) state that research involves the application of methods and techniques in order to create scientifically obtained knowledge by using objective methods and procedures.

The aim of this chapter will be to describe the methods and techniques the researcher adopted in trying to resolve the problem being investigated. This included identifying the problem and sub-problems, conducting a literature study and the collection and analysis of data.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design process adopted for this study included identifying the problem and breaking it down into sub-problems. The main problem dealt with the investigation into the conflict management styles used by managers in organisations. This problem was broken into five sub-problems, or research questions. The research questions identified, include the following:

- What different conflict management styles are revealed in the literature review?
- Are the conflict management styles used by practicing managers the same as those identified in the literature review.
- If not, what other styles are used?
- How often do managers use any of the identified styles?
- Which factors determine the choice of their preferred style or styles?

Chapters Two and Three covered the theoretical aspects of the research and the information the researcher used in these chapters was collected through the literature survey. The information derived from the literature review was also used to develop the questionnaire and the questions, which were used in the personal interviews. The data that was collected using the questionnaire and the interviews were analysed and conclusions and recommendations were made.

4.3 THE SAMPLE

The research sample focussed on six health organisations within the public sector. These included six district hospitals in the Northern Region of the Eastern Cape. The hospitals used for the research were:

- Frontier and Komani, two large Hospitals located in Queenstown.
- Hewu Hospital located in the Whittlesea district.
- Comfivaba, Hospital located in the Cofimvaba district.
- Glen Grey Hospital located in Cacadu district
- Cala Hospital, located in the Cala district.

The size, complexity and the total number of employees and managerial levels were taken into account in order to give some uniformity to the sample. Another factor, which was taken into consideration was that these hospitals were within easy reach making the cost involved in carrying on a research on them within the limits of the researcher's budget.

4.4 DATA COLLECTING METHODS

The following data collecting methods were used: a questionnaire and personal interviews.

4.4.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire outlined in the form of questions the conflict management styles managers could use when managing conflict situations in their work places. It was comprised of twenty-four structured items. The questions were based on six conflict management techniques, which included the following: avoidance, accommodating, competing, collaborating, compromise and the stimulating technique. Each of the six techniques was allocated four questions. A five point ranking scale was used to determine the reaction of the respondents to the questions posed. In addition, each respondent was requested to indicate the department to which he or she belonged.

Also, during prior contacts with the hospital managers, the researcher pointed out that the purpose of the research questionnaire was purely academic and that confidentiality would be maintained at all times. In a letter, which was addressed to the hospital managers and the medical superintendents, the researcher also requested permission for a follow-up on the questionnaire in the form of personal interviews and the request was approved.

4.4.1.1 Development of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed using the most commonly used questions for determining the conflict management styles in organisations. The questions were based on two sources from the literature study – Kreitner and Kinicki (1997: 341) and Schermerhorn (2000: 510). The use of the above sources was to add more validity and reliability to the questions since most of the questions had been regularly used in various researches. The questionnaire was also subjected to scrutiny by one academic staff member from the University of the North and an independent consultant and researcher at the University of the

Transkei. The researcher's aim in involving the above-mentioned people was to add useful input from people that have a wide experience in research methodology.

The questionnaire was kept as short as possible in order to encourage response, but to still be as thorough as possible. The respondents were requested to indicate their chosen conflict management style on a five-point scale (refer to Annexure B on page 88). Answers were arranged from "rarely" indicated on the scale as 1 to "always" indicated as 5.

The departmental structure followed in the questionnaire was arrived at by using information from the literature study and prior contact made by the researcher with a number of hospital administrators in the region. This structure is indicated in Annexure B as part of the questionnaire.

4.4.2 Personal Interviews

The objective of the interviews was to give the researcher an in-depth understanding of the people involved in the research. In addition, the researcher wanted to probe more into how they perceive the appropriateness of the methods they use to resolve conflict. The researcher used structured interviews. An interview schedule containing five questions was prepared prior to the interviews. All the respondents who previously participated in answering the questionnaire took part in these interviews. The respondents were assured that, although the information gathered through these interviews may be made public, their identity would never be disclosed. The researcher also stressed that the purpose of the research was purely for academic purposes.

Below is an example of the interview schedule, which was used by the researcher.

Table 4.1 An interview schedule

NO.	QUESTIONS
1.	What type of conflict do you often handle?
2.	Why do you handle conflict in the way you do?
3	In which other ways could you handle the same situation?
4	What do you perceive as the main problem in the style (method) you would not like to use?
5	In your own opinion, do you think conflict can be of any benefit to your organisation?

4.5 CONCLUSION

The sample, which was used for this research, was determined as a representative sample of similar hospitals in the Northern Region of the Eastern Cape. The convenience of the sample in terms of proximity and the fact that the researcher had some knowledge of the hospitals was also taken into account.

The questionnaire was developed directly from the literature study. It included questions, which are usually asked in order to determine management conflict styles in organisations. The interviews were conducted in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the respondents and their justification of the methods they use to manage conflict. Over 80 percent of the expected responses were received. One major problem the researcher encountered was that some respondents expressed the fear that their identity may be disclosed. This was later settled when the researcher assured them that this would not happen.

In the following chapter a detailed analysis of the responses will be made. An interpretation, the integration of the findings with the literature, and discussion will be done.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to answer the research questions ~~ons~~, which were set as sub-problems for this study, a statistical analysis of the responses to the questionnaire will also be undertaken in this chapter. ~~t~~The recorded response obtained from the interview will also be analysed and interpreted, ~~and t~~. Together with findings obtained from the responses to the questionnaire, the researcher will be able to discuss the overall findings in relation to the research questions and the literature study.

The statistical methods to be used will include the use of percentage frequency tables, ~~and~~ bar graphs and weighting. Microsoft Excel (~~(1997)~~) was used as a tool for the organisation and analysing of data. The analysis of data was carried out according to the overall response received from the questionnaire, and the recorded responses to the interviews the researcher conducted with the same sample group. The researcher also traced the responses of different hospitals to the same variables included in the overall response and the personal interviews.

In the last part of this chapter the interpretation, discussion and integration of the findings with the literature will be dealt with.

5.2 ANALYSIS OF THE OVERALL RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The research questionnaire was sent to six hospitals in the northern region of the Eastern Cape. Four middle managers from four departments: the Doctors', Nursing administration, Support services, and the General administration were each requested to complete the questionnaire. ~~The questionnaire appears in the a~~ in Annexure B on page 89. The total response received from the total sample is summarised and presented Table 5.1 on page 54. ~~below~~ Although all the hospitals had indicated their willingness to allow the researcher to conduct

personal interviews ~~on~~ with every person ~~that~~ who had completed the questionnaire, only eighteen out of the expected ~~people~~ twenty were interviewed.

Table 5.1: Overall response

Category	Institutions	
	NO.	%%
Institutions	6	100
Institutions' response	5	83.33
Total population size	24	100
Total expected responses from departments	24	100
Total response from departments	20	83.33
Not responded	5	16.66

~~Source: Results obtained from the analysis of data.~~ The total of the individual responses received for the questionnaire was also analysed and summarised in ~~Annexure~~ Annexure D on page 93. These responses were then used to develop table 5.2 on page 55. A number of changes were made while analysing and summarising the data. For instance, the items in ~~Annexure~~ Annexure B and D on page 89 and 93 respectively were re-arranged according to the different conflict management techniques to construct table 5.2 on page 55. In the table, the conflict management styles and responses were analysed according to percentages, and ranked according to weighted totals. The total response and weighted totals were used to draw bar graphs in ~~Annexure~~ Annexure F and G on pages 100 and 101 respectively.

Table 5.2 Analysis of overall individual response based on percentages, weighting and ranking of the individual responses

RATING SCALE		Rarely	Often	Very often	Weighted total	Ranking	Percentages		
		1	2	3			1	2	3
Collaboration technique									
1	Colla – Accept	1	1	18	57	1	5%	5%	90%
2	Colla – Neutral	7	1	12	45	12	35%	5%	60%
3	Colla – Reconcile	0	5	15	55	3	0%	25%	75%
4	Colla – Open	1	3	16	53	4	5%	15%	80%
Compromise technique									
5	Comp – Negotiate	3	2	15	50	6	15%	10%	75%
6	Comp – Give & Take	4	5	11	47	9	20%	25%	55%
7	Comp – bargaining	0	4	16	56	2	0%	20%	80%
8	Comp – Combination	0	7	13	46	10	0%	35%	65%
Accommodating technique									
9	Acco – Satisfy	4	8	8	44	14	20%	40%	40%
10	Acco – Compliance	5	7	8	43	15	25%	53%	40%
11	Acco – Harmony	16	1	3	27	23	80%	20%	35%
12	Acco – Feeling	9	4	7	38	18	45%	20%	35%
Avoidance technique									
13	Avoid – Defensive	8	5	7	38	18	40%	25%	35%
14	Avoid – Withdraw	16	1	3	27	23	80%	5%	15%
15	Avoid – Discomfort	12	3	5	33	21	60%	15%	25%
16	Avoid – Controversy	10	5	5	35	20	50%	25%	25%
Stimulating technique									
17	Stim – Manipulate	13	4	3	45	12	65%	20%	15%
18	Stim – Competition	15	2	3	32	22	75%	15%	15%
19	Stim – Debate	3	5	12	49	7	15%	25%	60%
20	Stim – Conflict	3	5	12	46	10	20%	30%	50%
Dominating technique									
21	Dom – Argue	3	6	12	48	8	15%	30%	55%
22	Dom – Win	6	6	8	42	16	30%	30%	40%
23	Dom – Authority	7	5	8	41	17	35%	25%	40%
24	Dom – Logic	2	5	13	51	5	10%	25%	65%

[Variables: [Colla = Collaboration, Comp = Compromising, Dom = Dominating, Acco = Accommodating, Stim = stimulating, and Avoid = Avoidance]

The rating scale was changed from “1 to 5” to “1 to 3”, whereby, 1 and 2 merged into 1 to represent “rarely”, “often” remained at 2, and 4 and 5 merged into 3 to represent “very often”. Similar changes were also made to Annexure E on page 95, which shows the analysis of the responses to each conflict management style according to each ~~organization~~organisation. The adjustment to the scale was made because the sample was relatively small and in order to make findings more reliable, the researcher decided to narrow down the scale. It was assumed that there would be no much difference in the degree of response let say between those who said “always” and with those who said “very often”. All responses in the original data appearing in ~~Annexure~~Annexure B and D were shifted so that each question in table 5.2 on page 55 would be classified as a variable. Individual response analysis for each department of the different hospitals is indicated in Annexure H on page 102.

Findings are based on the percentages, weighted totals, and the rankings of the overall response obtained for each variable, or style. Comparative analysis based on the five organisations is also done in relation to each variable. A comparison between the different departments is also done. The interpretation and discussion ~~is-are~~ done according to the response analysis and the findings of each variable or conflict management approach.

5.3 RESPONSE CATEGORY ANALYSIS

The study compares the response from the different ~~organization~~organisation and the various departments within each organisation. These comparisons are based on the weighted totals of the responses from the different departments (refer to Annexure H on page102. Other comparisons are based on the overall response for each conflict management techniques and styles in relation to all the hospitals combined. ~~Anlysed~~Analysed data for this comparison ~~is-is~~ found in Annexure E on page 95.

5.4 ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS FROM PERSONAL INTERVIEW.

At the time when permission was sought from the hospitals involved in the research to circulate the questionnaires, a request was also made asking the heads of these organisations to allow the researcher to conduct personal interviews ~~on~~ with the same people ~~that~~ who were to complete the questionnaire. This request was accepted on condition that none of the interviews would be recorded on a tape of any sort. Because of ~~of~~ this development, ~~development~~ the researcher decided to use semi-structured interviews in order to reduce the possibility of personal bias in the interviews. Since the interviews were to be conducted with the same people who were to complete the questionnaire, the expected number ~~on~~ of interviewees was twenty-four. However, one hospital did not return the questionnaire and no interviews were held ~~at that place~~ there. Two people from one of the other hospitals also decided not to attend the interview, leaving the total number of interviewees at eighteen.

An interview schedule, used in the interviews, appears as ~~Annexure~~ Annexure C on page 92. The results of the interviews, ~~which were received,~~ were ~~recoded~~ recorded and analysed according to this schedule.

The questions appearing in the interview schedule were coded according to the following variables:

- Meaning of conflict;
- Types of conflict usually encountered at the selected organisations;
- Other conflict management style used but not identified in the literature study;
- Reasons for choosing a particular conflict handling style;
- Why some conflict handling styles were unpopular with the interviewees and,?
- Whether conflict benefit organisations or not.

Since the main aim of the interview ~~was~~ was to probe ~~more~~ deeper into the response to the questionnaire and to thus increase the significance of the research study, the results of the interviews are interpreted together with those of the questionnaire in the findings and discussion.

5.5 INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The ~~the~~ interpretation and discussion of the results are based on the overall response ~~on~~ to the questionnaire and the results of the recorded interviews. The researcher will regularly refer to the analysed data, which has been ~~sumarised~~ summarised in tables 5.2, ~~on~~ on page 55 and, to the ~~Annexure~~ Annexure C to H on page 92 and 102 respectively.

5.5.1 The Collaboration Technique

5.5.1.1 Collaboration by trying to find acceptable solutions to both parties

The ~~a~~Analysed results in table 5.2 on page 55 show that, 90 ~~percent~~ percent of the respondents on average had used the above style very often; ~~only~~ Only 10 ~~%percent~~ percent indicated that they rarely used this style. Similar results were ~~also~~ identified among the different hospitals. The analysis of the responses in annexure E on page 95 indicates that 100 ~~percent~~ percent of the respondents in Cofimvaba, Cala and ~~frontier~~ Frontier had used the above approach very often. In the remaining two hospitals, this approach ~~was~~ scored for 75 ~~percent~~ percent “very often”. These findings show that most managers in organisations try to investigate issues with their co-workers in order to arrive at a solution. ~~The Results~~ results of the analysed responses in table 5.2 on page 55 show that this approach is ranked, as number one. Hence, it is the most commonly used conflict handling style at all of the organisations investigated.

The result of the study confirms the assertions made by Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 335) that theoretically collaboration represents what may appear to be the ideal, or the best approach to conflict resolution. The study does not, however, establish whether all those who have indicated that they used the above style, used it successfully. Significant research acknowledges

that, while any collaborative approach to conflict resolution may produce the best results, it is rather difficult to implement. This deduction does not ~~however~~ provide an answer as to why the result from similar studies as this show a very high frequency usage of collaborative styles, considering the degree of difficulty that may be encountered when people use the collaborative technique. The study revealed no clear differences related to the use of the above style among the various departments at each hospital. ~~Analysis~~Analysis of the response indicated most departments at each hospital scored the above style as “very often”, which indicated that many managers, irrespective of the departments they belong to, ~~they~~ frequently investigate issues with co-workers in order to find a solution to a problem.

5.5.1.2 Collaboration involving neutral or third parties

The use of neutral parties to facilitate, or to assist conflicting parties in reaching a solution, was cited by 60 ~~percent~~percent of the respondents as a style they used very often, and 5 ~~percent~~percent indicated that they used it often. There was, however, a relatively small number of ~~those~~ respondents who indicated that they used it rarely (35 ~~percent~~percent). These findings clearly indicate that managers often use collaboration through neutral parties. Comparatively, results among the departments of each hospital show that on average the above approach is often used. In Cala, for instance, all respondents said they often used neutral parties in collaborative approaches during conflict resolution, while in Hewu, Komani and Frontier the response was equally spread among those who indicated that they used it very often (50 ~~percent~~percent) and those who rarely used this approach (50 ~~percent~~percent).

5.5.1.3 Collaboration by reconciling

According to the overall response, 75 percent of the respondents indicate that they very often use reconciliation in order to reach ~~for a win-win~~ solution. The remaining 25 ~~percent~~percent also indicate that they often use this conflict management style. According to the overall comparison among the different hospitals, the findings ~~were able to~~ indicate that, on the whole, managers tend

to reconcile differences so that a solution may be reached. An analysis of responses shows that three of the five hospitals use this approach very often. In the remaining two hospitals responses were equally spread between those who indicated that they used reconciliation very often and those who did not usually use it. The high degree of support for this conflict management style ~~would only~~ would suggest that many managers are moving away from autocratic styles of leadership to more open and participative styles. If this ~~were~~ is the case, then the study ~~would tend to confirm~~ s Hellriegel and Slocum's (1996: 562) assertion that supportive and participative managers use ~~the~~ collaborative approaches more than ~~the~~ autocratic managers do.

~~5.5.1.45.5.1.4~~ Collaboration by being open with the other party

The above variable ~~entailed~~ entails the use of collaboration by getting one's concern in the open so that mutual ground for a discussion ~~could~~ may be established. This style obtained very high scores from the respondents. 80 ~~percent~~ percent indicate that they very often try to get all concerns and issues in the open so that suspicions among parties ~~to~~ involved in the conflict situation are eliminated. 15 ~~percent~~ percent indicate that they often use this style. The comparative analysis of the response from various departments in each hospital also indicates similar results with most departments indicating that this style is frequently used. Overall, this approach was ranked number three, and results from across the different hospitals established that people use this style more than often. This is contrary to Hellriegel and Slocum's (1997: 562) assertion, that certain barriers cause collaboration to be not frequently used. The study clearly shows that managers very often use this style. If these findings are not to be taken ~~on~~ at the face value, then one would suggest that more research in this area is still needed.

~~On the overall,~~ Overall, findings revealed that ~~the~~ collaborative technique, for example, taking into account all the collaborative approaches already discussed, ~~was~~ was very frequently used by all the organisations. This was confirmed ~~with~~ in the interviews. Although no particular reference was made to the collaborative approach as a whole, most interviewees talked much about

involving their employees in finding mutually enriching and beneficial solutions to all. ~~Suggestively~~ This would imply that the collaborative technique was the approach that was referred to when these interviewees were answering the question about the factors that determined one's choice of a conflict management style.

Out of the five hospitals investigated, the study revealed very high percentages scores for the collaborative technique. Scores ranged from around 81 ~~percent~~ to 93 ~~percent~~ for "very often". It was only Komani hospital where the percentage was only ~~was~~ 56 ~~percent~~. In overall rankings ~~with~~ with all the twenty four-conflict management styles included, three of the collaborative approaches appear in the first five places. The implication of this is that collaborative styles are frequently used in resolving conflict.

Although the study did not establish whether collaborative approaches did effectively resolve conflict, the results from the interviews tended to suggest why these approaches are popular. Most of the interviewees had cited the nature of the conflict, the services they offer and the significance of resolving such conflicts. For instance, in Komani and ~~frontier~~ Frontier Hospitals it was given as an example that pronged conflict among the nursing staff, may not only affect the staff and the organisation as a whole, but may put peoples' lives in danger. The implication of this is that managers must find a way of mutually solving problems in order to avoid such consequences. The solution to this is probably the use of collaboration in resolving conflict.

5.5.2 The Compromise technique

5.5.2.1 Compromise through Negotiations

Results from the analysis of the response on average show that 75 ~~percent~~ of the respondents very often use negotiation with their co-workers in order to reach agreement. 10 percent indicated that they use this style often while 15 ~~percent~~ cited that they seldom use negotiation. With 75 ~~percent~~ of the respondents scoring this style above "often", there is

no doubt that negotiation as part of conflict resolution is very common. ~~Among the various departments, similar~~ Similar findings were obtained among the various departments with many of the respondents scoring this style “very often.” ~~On the overall negotiating~~ Overall, negotiating was rated as number two and was among the five most frequently used conflict management styles. Among the different organisations, this approach ~~was scored for~~ 75 ~~percent~~percent (very often) at Komani, Cala and Cofimvaba ~~hospital~~Hospitals. At Hewu and ~~frontier~~Frontier Hospitals the respondents were equally divided among those who indicated that they used it very often and those who either used it often or rarely.

The study identified a number of factors, which make the compromise technique a popular approach to resolving conflict. These factors were derived from the answers obtained from the interviews. While explaining why a person may opt for a particular conflict management style, nearly all the interviewees had cited factors such as the nature of the problem, the organisational policy, intensity of the problem, perceptions and the trade union influence as the main factors which may determine the type of conflict management approach a manager could use in resolving conflict. It seemed ~~that for most managers,~~ negotiation was for most managers the only way to resolve issues when you have little time and employees are ~~so much~~extremely unionised. These findings tend to support Ivancevich and Matterson's (1996: 336) assertion that compromise may represent a way of gaining temporary settlement to particularly complex and difficult issues.

~~5.5.2.~~5.5.2.2 Compromise with Give and Take

On average respondents gave the use of give and take as a way of reaching a solution through compromise. The results, ~~which were received,~~ show that 55 ~~percent~~percent very often use this approach. Another 25 ~~percent~~percent also indicate that they often used it. These findings ~~were able to indicate that many~~ managers often use compromise based on give and take. Comparison of the results for the various departments also showed the same pattern. With the exception of the support department at Cofimvaba ~~hospital~~Hospital

respondents from all other departments at the remaining four hospitals on average scored the above style “very often”. At the organisational level over 70 percent of the respondents at Cala and Frontier Hospitals cited that they very often used compromise, the remaining hospitals indicated that they used it often. Something to take note of is that although compromise does not result in long term solutions and the solution achieved may not be the most ideal one as asserted by (Ivancevich & Matterson 1996: 336), the study revealed that many managers use this style very often.

Through the interviews, the study was able to establish through the interviews the reasons why compromising approaches tend to be very popular in organisations. The findings revealed that due to the nature of the services offered by these organisations and the type of conflict they encounter, it would be wise for managers to opt for quick solutions so that conflict is not prolonged. Most of those interviewed had mentioned controversial financial issues and problems associated with leaves leave taking, especially in the nursing departments. Managers had cited the above issues as being normally critical and difficult to deal with. These findings tended to confirm what many writers say about conditions necessitating the use of the Compromising compromising approach. As (Lussier (1997: 461) asserts, compromise is appropriate to use when issues are complex and critical and there is no simple or clear solution to a problem.

5.5.2.3 ~~compromise~~ Compromise with Bargaining

The use of bargaining in South African labour relations is not uncommon, and as one would have have expected, the response received, highly favoured the use of the above style. The study revealed that as many as 65 percent of the respondents used bargaining very often in a conflict management process and 35 percent had often used the same style. In terms of overall ranking, this approach is placed at number two. According to the analysis of responses for each organisation, more than 75 percent of the respondents in each of the organisations scored this conflict management

approach as “very often.” The answers given by the respondents during the interviews, further confirmed these findings.

In trying to establish the main factors, which may determine one’s choice of a particular conflict handling style(s), many respondents had cited things like the emergence of conflict, the nature and the significance of the issues involved. Others had also indicated that deciding on any conflict handling style was personal and that it depended on each individual.

In ~~frontier~~ Frontier and Cala Hospitals, two main problems were cited. In the nursing departments of both hospitals, nurses experience problems ~~of~~ with the second and the third notches of the salary scales. Nearly all those interviewed, indicated that they used bargaining with issues related to policy, such as the third and second notches of the nurses’ salary scales and study leaves. They indicated also that negotiation on those issues at times stalled and this had necessitated the use of collective bargaining with third party intervention.

These findings tend to support the views held by ~~(~~Greenberg (1997: 388) who asserts that when compromise through negotiation fails, or, becomes deadlocked, parties may resort to bargaining with the help of mediation, or arbitration. Contrary to Lussier’s (1997: 467) views, that compromise may result in counter productive results, ~~the~~ the study revealed that many of those interviewed associated compromise with good results.

5.5.2.4 Compromise by finding fair gains and losses for both parties

Normally with most conflict people tend to be selfish and self-centered. It ~~would seem~~ is therefore difficult for one to imagine that this variable would have achieved such high scores. The findings, however, indicate that managers very often try to find fair gains and losses for themselves and of the other party. This style was scored ~~for~~ “very often” by 65 ~~percent~~ percent of the respondents and the remaining 35 percent indicated it as ~~for~~ “often”. Findings among the different organisations also showed similar results with 75 ~~percent~~ percent in Cala indicating it as ~~for~~ “very often”, while respondents from other hospitals

were equally divided between “often” and “very often.” This study tends to support Schermerhorn’s (2000: 342) view that in compromise, each party to involved in the conflict gives something of value to the other.

~~5.5.3~~5.5.3 The Accommodating Technique.

5.5.3.1 Accommodation to satisfy co-workers

Many respondents reacted positively to this variable. 40 ~~percent~~percent of the responses indicated that managers very often try to satisfy the expectations of their co-workers, while another 40 ~~percent~~percent indicated that they do it “often”. Among the various organisations similar responses were obtained. According to the analysis of responses in Annexure E, most respondents across the different organisations used this conflict management approach either “very often” or “often.”

The study shows that, irrespective of the fact that accommodation through satisfying the other’s expectations may undermine one’s authority and assertiveness, and even lead to a win—lose solution, many managers opted to use it. Responses to questions number two and three of the interview schedule indicated that most of those interviewed satisfy the expectations of ~~the~~ their subordinates in order to maintain their relationship and spend less time on problems that divided them ~~apart~~. These findings tend to confirm the views held by Ivancevich and Matteson (1996: 335) that accommodation may be used when preserving peace, and avoiding disharmony are more important than reaching a resolution that maximises a particular group’s concerns.

Response from the different departments showed similar results for all departments in the five hospitals, apart from Hewu ~~hospital~~Hospital where varied responses were received, with two of the respondents indicating that they use this style very often, while the remaining two said that they rarely use this approach. In the rest of the organisations respondents had selected the accommodating approach for “very often”.

5.5.3.25.5.3.2 Accommodation by complying with other peoples' or co-workers' suggestions

Response to this variable were very positive. 40 ~~percent~~percent cited that they very often tried to go along with the suggestion of their co-workers and 53 ~~percent~~percent often used this accommodating approach. The responses from the departments were to a certain extent similar to the overall responses. Respondents were spread between those who used the above approach very often and others, who used it often. It was only the doctor's at Cala, Hewu and ~~confimvaba~~Confimvaba Hospitals who ~~had~~ indicated that they rarely complied with co-workers' suggestions.

The reasons why this approach seemed to be unpopular at ~~cala~~Cala can be traced to the responses received in the interviews. Although not asked about the accommodating approach in particular, ~~Although not exactly asking about the accommodating approach in particular,~~ when respondents were asked what they thought was bad about the style they did not like to use, some of them cited conflict management styles, which tend to undermine one's authority. Many, in fact, indicated that styles requiring a manager ~~to go to~~ along with the demands of an employee, were not good for the stability of the organisations. This finding suggest that some respondents could not support the idea of going along with the suggestion of their co-workers, because they saw this as an encroachment ~~to on~~ on their hierarchical power.

5.5.3.35.5.3.3 Accommodation and harmony

The results for this variable clearly indicate that managers are not ready to grant other's peoples' wishes for the sake of maintaining harmony. The response showed that 80 ~~percent~~percent rarely used this approach. Most respondents clearly indicated that they rarely use this approach. According to the ranking based on weighted responses in table 5.2, this approach was one of the five least used styles. Similar results were also obtained among the various departments at each hospital.

The results from the interviews tend to support the response to the questionnaire. The study was able to show that using accommodation by agreeing to the wishes of others, is a very unpopular style and that very few managers use it. Interview responses on question two of the interview schedule about the factors which determine their choice of a particular conflict management style, many respondents indicated that by ~~by~~ giving in to the wishes of their co-workers, they would not only be exposed as weak leaders, but it would also be destructive to the entire organisation. These arguments tend to support (Lussier's (1997: 466) assertion that if accommodation is over-used, those who are accommodated tend to take advantages of the accommodator, and that the type of ~~the~~ relationship that accommodation tries to maintain, is lost. The findings may tend to suggest that managers are somehow aware of the disadvantages of this style ~~such~~ and that they normally minimise its use in conflict management.

5.5.3.45.5.3.4 Accommodation with ~~the~~by soothing ~~of~~ other peoples' feelings

Trying to resolve conflict by soothing other peoples' feelings elicited varied responses from the respondents. ~~Slightly~~ Just over 50 percent of the respondents ~~were~~ positive ~~with~~ about the soothing approach, with 35 percent ~~percent~~ saying that they had very often used this style and 20 percent ~~percent~~ indicating that they had often used it. On the other hand, nearly half of the respondents ~~(45 percent)~~ (45 percent) indicated that they had rarely used this approach. The reasons for the varied responses could ~~could~~ suggest that different conditions had (perhaps) existed which made it inevitable for managers to apply this approach in the light of particular ~~such~~ circumstances. These circumstances would have included the nature, the importance and the expected outcome of the conflict. Nearly every respondent cited similar reasons that necessitated the choice of a specific conflict management style. The most probable reason for to explain why the soothing style obtained varied responses could have resulted from factors such as the individual personality, backgrounds, and perceptions.

The accommodation technique on the whole, elicited varied responses from all organisations. The study, however, shows that managers are inclined to use of accommodation styles quite often—quite often. Combined results of all the accommodating approaches tend to indicate a 70 ~~percent~~percent response from who either use this technique often or very often. One or two approaches of the accommodating technique may have been unpopular, but, on the whole, the study shows that many managers use accommodating approaches quite often.

5.5.4 The Avoidance Technique

5.5.4.1 Avoidance by being defensive

Response to the above was positive. 35 ~~percent~~percent of the respondents selected it “very often” and 25 ~~percent~~percent “often”. These results tend to indicate that there are many managers who fear being put on the spot, or being put on the defensive. Findings from the interviews s also indicated similar views. Many of those interviewed ~~had~~ indicated in their answers that they were weary of styles that would ~~tend~~ put pressure on them. Most of the answers to a question in the schedule about what the interviewees perceived as the main problem in the style they would not like to use, confirmed ~~some~~ the above assertions.

Although these assertions were not intended specifically for the avoidance approach, ~~as a whole~~, they suggest that managers avoid certain kinds of conflict because such conflict puts s pressure on them. ~~and b~~By staying neutral or withdrawing, they can buy time until things calm down. The above assertion collaborates well with Ivancevich and Matteson's s (1996: 336) assertion that ~~that~~ avoidance can be effective and appropriate when parties use it as a temporary alternative.

5.5.4.25.5.4.2 Avoidance by withdrawing

The study revealed that this was one of the least used styles. The overall responses indicated very poor scores for the use of withdrawing as a conflict management approach. The results showed that 80 ~~%percent~~ of the respondents rarely used the withdrawing approach. Overall rankings from the five organisations as indicated in table 5.2 on page 52 shows the withdrawing approach to be the least used conflict management approach. Results from the different departments also indicated similar patterns, with most of the respondents ~~had~~ indicating that they normally do not use this style. All the respondents indicated “rarely” with the exception of Komani ~~hospital~~ Hospital where “very often” was selected twice and “often” once. Contrary to Ivancevich and Matterson's (1996: 336) assertion that people are often tempted to ~~over~~ over-use the avoidance approach, the study clearly revealed that this might not always be true especially where a manager may need to withdraw from a problem.

The response from the interviews confirmed the findings of the questionnaire. Many of those interviewed ~~had~~ cited the avoidance technique as being very unpopular, especially when a manager is seen as running away from the problem.

5.5.4.35.5.4.3 Avoiding discomfort or unpleasantness

60 ~~percent~~ percent of the respondents ~~cited~~ said that they rarely used this avoidance approach. Overall rankings placed this style among the least used approach for resolving conflict. Among the departments, however, varied responses were identified. At ~~frontier~~ Frontier Hospital, all the respondents ~~had~~ indicated that they rarely used this approach, while among the remaining organisations responses were equally spread between those who used it “rarely” and those who indicated that they used it “often”. Among the different organisations similar results were obtained with more than 70 ~~percent~~ percent of the respondents at Frontier and ~~Cofinvaba~~ Cofimvaba Hospitals indicating that they rarely used this approach. In the rest of ~~rest of the~~ other organisations,

responses were divided among those who said that they used this approach often and those that ~~had~~ rarely used it. The study indicates that on average, the above approach is unpopular.

~~5.5.4.4~~ 5.5.4.4 Avoiding controversy

The study revealed varied responses from the respondents. Respondents were equally divided on the application of this approach. ~~50~~ Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that they rarely used this style, while the remaining 50 ~~percent~~ was divided equally among those who often used this approach and those who used it very often. The study revealed that there are managers who would ~~be~~ not be willing to be drawn into controversy, or be made to take decisions on controversial issues. It also indicated that there are managers who feel that managers must never run away from problems, irrespective of the nature of the problem, or the issues to be resolved. Many respondents, though not directly relating to the above conflict approach, ~~had~~ indicated that sometimes managers might refuse to make decisions that may destroy or affect their relationship with employees. Avoidance of this nature, as Lussiel (1997: 465) indicates, may help to maintain relationship that ~~that~~ would be hurt through conflict resolution. The fact that not all the respondents declared their support for this approach would suggest that some managers do realise such relationships may not be maintained for a long time.

5.5.5 The Stimulating Technique

~~5.5.5.1~~ 5.5.5.1 Stimulating conflict through manipulating communicational channels

Respondents clearly indicated their lack of support for this variable. This was shown in their response, where 65 ~~percent~~ indicate that they rarely used this approach, and only 35 ~~percent~~ ~~had~~ used it often. One would have thought that the main reason why most respondents did not support the idea of manipulating communicational channels in order to stimulate functional conflict was because they do not believe that conflict can be good. While this

view may have been partly correct, (the main reason, which was revealed through the interviews), was that it was not mainly because they did not believe that conflict can be good, but rather that they could not imagine themselves manipulating communication channels. Most of them saw this as being unethical. One respondent from Hewu ~~hospital~~ Hospital ~~cited~~ said that it is mostly managers who gain by manipulating communication channels. One likely reasons for these findings would be that most managers do not clearly understand the notion that manipulation of conflict channels can lead to functional conflict. ~~Also~~ Also it could be suggested that many managers are perhaps still traditionally orientated to think ~~such~~ that the idea of manipulating communicational channels is another way of destroying peace and harmony ~~ingin the organization~~ organisation and thus would ~~inviting~~ invite more conflict.

~~5.5.5.25.5.5.2~~ Stimulating conflict by creating competition

Response to this variable was very negative. Results indicated that most managers did not like the idea of stimulating conflict by increased competition between departments. Seventy five ~~percent~~ percent of respondents indicated that they rarely use this approach. The remaining ~~2-25~~ percent was spread equally among those who ~~cited~~ said that they use this approach either very often, or often. According to the overall rankings, stimulating conflict by competition was ranked as one of the ~~most~~ least used style of managing conflict.

Among the departments the results indicated a similar pattern, with the exception of Cala Hospital where three of the respondents selected it ~~for~~ "very often". Irrespective of the results from Cala Hospital, the study, ~~to a great extent~~ to a great extent, indicates that, contrary to what significant research on conflict stimulation say, managers normally do not like to stimulate competition among their employees.

According to Ivancevich and Matterson (1996: 340), many managers use awards and bonuses for outstanding performance as a means of increasing competition among employee. The fact that managers are likely to use

incentives to encourage their employees but that the response indicate that they rarely stimulate conflict through competition, would only suggest that many of them do not consider that awards or bonuses to stimulate conflict through competition. In the interview it was clear that managers saw the approach of increasing competition among departments as inviting more trouble. Interviews indicated that usually when people compete, those who lose are likely to develop serious problems. The study implies that perhaps there is a need for more investigation into the use of competition as a means of deriving benefits from functional conflict.

~~5.5.5.3~~ 5.5.5.3 Stimulating conflict by calling structured debates

This conflict approach scored highly. Findings indicated that most respondents often encouraged ~~the~~ employees to participate in debates aimed at airing out their views and suggestions as long as they are constructive and beneficial to the organisation. According to the overall analysis, 60 ~~percent~~percent of the ~~responses~~respondents very often used this approach and 25 ~~percent~~percent used it often. From the answers recorded on question five of the interview schedule, the use of structured debates ~~of~~on opposing viewpoints appealed to many of interviewees. However, the interesting thing to note is that many of the interviewees hinted at encouraging different views not as a part of stimulating conflict but perhaps as a part of negotiations or collaboration. Between the departments, this approach was equally supported with respondents indicating it “often” to “very often”.

~~5.5.4.5~~ 5.5.5.4 Stimulating conflict by encouraging constructive viewpoints

According to the overall analysis of the response many respondents indicated that they use this approach very often. Overall ranking placed it among the top ten conflict management styles commonly used by managers. The ~~studies~~study tend to ~~tended to~~ support the views advanced by the interactionists, which calls for the encouragement of constructive view-points in order to reduce complacency, non-responsiveness, lack of creativity and innovative ideas (Robbins & Coultler 1998: 632). Recorded responses to question five of the

interview schedule, about ~~the~~ whether they considered some conflict being beneficial to organisations, more than 70 ~~percent~~percent of the interviewees indicated it ~~clearly~~ that they ~~did think~~thought some conflict can benefit organisations. On the other hand, the study established that, although many managers do agree that some conflict is good for organisations, they do not agree with the notion of stimulating it.

5.5.5.5.6 The Dominating Technique.

5.5.5.15.5.6.1 Dominating by arguing your case with others.

This variable received high support, with 55 ~~percent~~percent citing that they very often use the above approach while 30 percent used it often. ~~On the overall,~~ This approach overall was ranked among the first ten most frequently used styles. Among the different departments the responses indicate the same trend throughout all departments. Most of the response showed that on average this approach was often used.

The results from the interview confirmed the finding from the questionnaire. Most interviewees had indicated the need for a manager to clearly explain his position to others even if the ultimate decision-making depended on him. This would ~~tend to suggest that,~~ support for this approach is a result of the fact that, the managers feel that ~~by~~ arguing their case with others, would enable them to talk to employees and yet remain assertive.

5.5.6.2 Dominating by winning

As many as 40 ~~percent~~percent of the respondents scored this conflict management approach for “very often” and another 30 ~~percent~~percent who indicated that it was an approach they use “often.” The findings revealed that many managers are still interested in assertive conflict management styles such as one where a manager dominates and wins. The study was in agreement with Hellrigel and Slocum’s (1996: 560) assertion that dominating through wining strategies entails the use of coercive, or other forms of power to dominate

another person, or group, and ~~pressure~~ pressurise others to accept one's views of the situation. Recorded interviews tended to confirm the findings of the questionnaire about the main factors, which may determine the choice of a particular conflict handling approach. Analysis of the interviews ~~tended to~~ indirectly ~~imply~~ implies that managers resort to assertive styles in order to ensure that they achieve their goals and to eliminate time wasting in conflict resolution.

5.5.6.3 Dominating in order to assert your position through the use of hierarchical or legitimate power

This conflict management approach is similar to the one above in that it uses legitimate authority in resolving conflict. Of the total number of respondents only 35 ~~percent~~ percent indicated that they rarely used this style, ~~or approach~~. The findings ~~were able to~~ reveal that many managers would resort to the use of their hierarchical power in order to assert their positions and enforce action. Analysis between the different hospitals indicates that more than 75 ~~percent~~ percent of the responses used the above style very often. The interviews also confirmed these findings. In trying to answer a question about the reasons why a specific conflict management handling styled is chosen or preferred, they ~~had cited~~, among others, cases of when a manager may be faced with difficult issues and needs to make un-popular decisions.

Although this assertion may not suggest the use of a dominating style as such, ~~but~~ its implications, considering the high score for this approach, would mean that the nature of the conflict they handled would have been a deciding factor in the choice of the dominating approach. If this were the case, then the study ~~tend to support~~ supports Ivancevich and Matteson's (1996: 335) assertion that when managers are faced with important issues such as those dealing with money, layoffs, implementing new schedules, and enforcing unpopular policies and procedures, dominating may be the best approach.

5.5.5.45.5.6.4 Dominate by trying to show logic and benefits of your position

The findings showed that only 10 ~~percent~~percent of the total responses did not like to use this approach. In table 5.2, an analysis of the responses indicates that 65 ~~percent~~percent of the respondents used the above approach very often and another 25 ~~percent~~percent used it often. Overall ranking placed this conflict management approach among the ten most used conflict management styles. Similar patterns were identified among the different departments. ~~Analysis-~~The analysis of the results for different departments indicates that most managers used this style either very often or often. Responses from the analysis of the interviews are not conclusive to indicate the reasons why most managers indicated that they try to show logic and benefits to their position. One could only suggest that perhaps managers feel that the best way to get your way out is to explain the importance of your action and the benefits it would bring the employees, or to others

CONCLUSION

~~The-~~This chapter dealt with the analysis of the responses from the survey questionnaire and the analysis of the recorded personal interviews. The researcher used Microsoft ~~Excel program (.97)~~ to do the statistical calculations. Statistical tools used included the use of frequency percentage tables, ranking and weighting of the responses according to the order of their importance. The analysis of the responses was done on the overall data collected in the questionnaire and the interviews. Tables and bar graphs were used to present the analysed overall responses, ~~-~~ and ~~A~~ category analysis based on each ~~organization~~organisation and ~~as well as an~~ analysis of the recorded interview ~~was~~ was also done. Because of the sample being relatively small the previous scale which was used in the questionnaire was narrowed down from "1 to 5" to "1 to 3". Rankings and weighted totals were used to draw graphs, which are part of the ~~annexure~~Annexure. The integration of the findings with the literature and the discussion formed the last part of this chapter.

In the following chapter recommendations, reasons for the research, limitations and conclusions are stated.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, findings are summarised and various conclusions are made. Reasons for the research study are given and the researcher's points of views are formulated. Limitations of the study are identified and recommendations are made.

6.2 SUMMARY

6.2.1 Reasons for the Research

Most organisations are prone to conflict and yet most managers seem not to understand how such conflict can be resolved. This study was undertaken as a way of trying to find out the approaches used by managers when managing conflict. The researcher believes that this research will shed more light on the degree to which practicing managers relate to conflict management styles advanced by various studies. The study will also establish whether there are other conflict management approaches which are not yet identified. The researcher is of the opinion that studies about effective conflict management could use findings from this study to encourage further research in conflict management.

6.2.2 The Main Problem

The study mainly dealt with an investigation into the conflict management styles used in organisations. From this problem, five research questions were raised. They included the following:

- What different conflict management styles are revealed in the literature review?
- Are the conflict management styles used by practicing managers the same as those identified in the literature review?
- If not, what other conflict management styles are used?
- How often do managers use the styles identified?
- Which factors determine the choice for one's preferred conflict handling style?

6.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Significant survey by the researcher of the literature sources identified six conflict management techniques, which are normally used in organisations. They were the collaboration, compromise, accommodating, dominating, avoiding and the stimulating technique. The information from the literature survey was used to develop the questionnaire and the interview schedule. In addition, three different views of conflict were identified. These included the traditional, the human relations and the interactionist view. The research study of the literature sources also traced the nature and the main sources of conflict. Various findings were obtained after administering the questionnaire and the interviews. A summary of the key findings and conclusions are discussed in the following sections.

First, findings from the interviews established that the main factors which determine one's conflict handling style are the following: the nature of conflict, the intensity of conflict, the importance and urgency of the problem and people perceptions, based on individual factors, such as personality, family background and values.

One important conclusion to make here is that the findings are in agreement with what most literature studies have identified as the main factors, which determine

one's choice of the conflict handling style. While the above factors were cited as the main factors which determine one's preferred conflict handling style, most of those interviewed indicated that they normally have their back-up strategy irrespective of the nature, or the outcome of the conflict. The implication of the above assertion would be that even if factors such as the nature of the conflict and its outcome, may influence the choice of a conflict handling style, the ultimate decision will be made always by the person who will use that style. In other words, as Robbins and Coulter (1996: 633) assert, every person has his/her own preferred conflict handling style.

The study identified various causes of conflict in the organisations, which were investigated. The study revealed that the main causes of conflict resulted from factors such as the degree of interdependency among the work units, conflict related to resources, differing goals and organisational conflict related to procedures, rules and policy.

The study revealed that these organisations experience a great deal of interpersonal conflict due to the nature of their work. Conflict based on differing goals, such as the resource and reward related conflict, was found to be very common. The study also indicated that like in other organisations, a lot of conflict was related to procedures, rules, and organisational policy. The study, for instance, identified that hospital policies which normally applied when granting leave to employees are usually resented and this result in conflict.

These findings have significant implications on the current knowledge of conflict as they support the human relations and the interactionist views of conflict. The factors mentioned above strengthen the notion that organisations can not avoid conflict and therefore need to develop effective approaches of managing it.

The collaboration and compromise techniques were indicated as the most frequently used conflict management approaches in resolving conflict. Since the main aim of this research was not to evaluate the success of conflict management in organisations, the study could therefore not establish how effectively managers

apply both these techniques. One important conclusion derived from these findings is that managers realise the importance of collaboration and compromise in conflict resolution. The researcher's view is that if organisations were to develop proper and systematic policies on how collaboration and compromise could be used, this would go a long way in making these two conflict management approaches even more useful and more effective. This would imply designing conflict-training programs aimed at making managers understand that conflict is unavoidable, and that managers must learn to live with it.

All the conflict management styles identified in the literature were found to have been used in resolving conflict. The study revealed that avoidance, accommodating and stimulating conflict management techniques were among the least used approaches. One major conclusion to be made is that in principle, the three approaches were found to be unpopular with the people. One would suggest that the use of these conflict management approaches in most cases was determined by the nature of conflict, or conditions which prevailed, but not because such styles were the manager's preferred choice.

There were no clearly identifiable conflict approaches which differed from those advanced in the literature. The researcher found out that the difference was only in interpretation. For instance the study raised one finding about the way of resolving conflict by resorting or appealing to the way people have been brought up in their families. In the researcher's view this could not be established as a new conflict management style, but one way of collaboration or compromising by appealing to one's family upbringing.

The study was able to establish that the idea of the interactionist approach, which emphasise managing conflict through stimulation, is not yet acceptable to all managers. While many believed in conflict being functional, they could however not accept, or agree to the idea of stimulating conflict. Resolving conflict gives people a chance to re-examine themselves, and enables them to learn more about resolving problems, but problems cannot be invited because you could use them to your advantage. This is the view of most of those interviewed. According to the

researcher's view, this raises another important scenario, which needs to be investigated especially in relation to the idea of functional conflict.

The study established that the competing approach was highly favoured as one of the main conflict management techniques. The findings clearly indicated that people are prone to the use of formal authority. These findings implied that, in practice, many managers usually resort to their legitimate power to resolve problems.

These findings have one major implication, namely that resolving conflict successfully in organisations would be difficult unless the mindset of people change. Managers need to try and change themselves, but the biggest change must take place within the entire organisation. Managers must understand that the use of positional authority has some limitations and they should be encouraged to explore new forms of human resources management such as the "Ubuntu" management style, which encourages managers to feel that being a manager, does not take away the fact that, they have many human characteristics they share with others or their subordinates.

The findings about whether conflict is bad or good were not conclusive. According to the researcher's opinion people are not yet ready to accept the notion that some conflict would be good and functional. Most of those who indicated that conflict might be good and therefore functional believed that the good side of conflict is just being able to make a person aware of problems so that such a person would deal with them.

About whether conflict must be encouraged to develop, or be stimulated, most of those who were interviewed did not like the idea. The implication of the above is that in as much as the contemporary views of conflict such as the interactionist view would try to advocate for the stimulation of conflict in organisations, managers are not yet acceptable to this idea. In relation to the above, one would suggest that organisations should start building new cultures where a certain level of conflict is

encouraged. For instance, employees must be encouraged to explicitly express their opinions without hindrance and group discussions should be encouraged.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

During the research study, various limitations and shortcomings were identified. These and other areas, which may require future attention, are identified as follows:

The research was confined to mostly rural areas of the Northern Region of the Eastern Cape. This study would have to be duplicated in other areas in order to determine the general validity and reliability of the study.

In addition, on the delimitation of the topic, future research must consider enlarging the areas of investigation, or to do similar comparative studies between managers in let say rural areas, or in conflict prone areas, and those managing in industrialised and urbanised areas.

One would argue for instance that the idea of conflict stimulation might make more sense to managers of big and rich organisations than to those in rural and less urbanised areas. The assumption here is that big companies are likely to give their managers more training in new conflict management areas such as conflict stimulation. One implication here is that companies need to invest more resources in courses dealing with conflict management.

Another area of concern was the size of the sample. For instance, with only one middle manager from each of the four departments of each organisation, it was difficult for the researcher to come up with conclusive comparative conclusions among departments. It is therefore the researcher's view that in similar research, researchers must consider enlarging the sample to include more departments.

It is the opinion of the researcher that more research should be undertaken specifically on the topic of conflict stimulation. Conclusions from the study were

contradictory, with managers indicating that some conflict is good for organisations but at the same time questioning the idea of stimulating conflict as a strategy of conflict management.

The shortcomings of the questionnaire and interviews must not be underestimated. One must not ignore the fact that in both the questionnaire and the interview, respondents would not always answer honestly, and could with regard to certain questions try to impress the researcher or the interviewer. In the interview, for instance, there is likely to be a degree of personal influence of the interviewer on the nature of responses especially when one is required to illustrate, or explain some points to the interviewee.

Lastly, the fact that there was no questionnaires completed by the subordinates, and no interviews conducted with them, it becomes rather difficult to establish whether the managers used the styles they have indicated. It is the opinion of the researcher that future similar research should take into account this shortcoming by making the research study more inclusive.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Despite a number of shortcomings, which have been dealt with in the previous section, the study was able to clearly reveal the conflict management styles used in organisations. The interpretation and discussion of the findings indicated the most commonly used conflict management styles and those not often used by managers. The study has highlighted the importance for more study in conflict management by citing a number of areas, which need more attention. While significant research has been claimed to have been done in this area, the study has noted how ill informed people still are about conflict management topics such as conflict stimulation. The opinion of the researcher is that more studies on the topics of conflict management need to be done. Organisations have to put more resources in to conflict management programs.

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ANNEXURE: A LETTERS

E-mail: pbwowe@www.webmail.co.za

P.O Box 421
QUEENSTOWN
5320

10 June 2002

The Hospital Superintendent/ Manager

Dear Sir/ Madam

**REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR ORGANISATION FOR THE
MONTH OF JUNE AND AUGUST 2002**

I am currently undertaking a research at PE Technikon. This research is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master's degree in Technology (Business Administration). My research topic is: An investigation into the conflict management styles used in organisations.

I am kindly asking you permission to use employees at your institution to complete a Questionnaire and also to allow me conduct personal interviews. The interview will be a short one, taking about ten minutes of your incumbent's time. All the information obtained will be treated strictly confidential.

Yours faithfully

Patrick W. Bwowe

ANNEXURE: A

E-mail: pbwowe@www.webmai.co.za

P.O Box 421
QUEENSTOWN
5320

10 June 2002

Dear colleague

QUESTIONNAIRE ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN ORGANISATIONS

I am currently undertaking a research at PE Technikon. This research is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master's degree in Technology (Business Administration). My research topic is: An investigation into the conflict management styles used in organisations

I would appreciate it if you could please complete the accompanying Questionnaire, which will give me the necessary information about the way you handle conflict in your department. The information obtained from you, will be used solely for academic purposes and will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Thank you for your co-operation

Yours sincerely

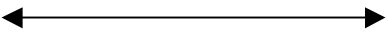
Patrick W. Bwowe (Mr.)

ANNEXURE B
QUESTIONNAIRE

<p>QUESTIONNAIRE</p> <p><i>CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES</i></p>

One person responsible for the management of any of the departments indicated should answer the following questions as accurately as possible.

The questions should be ranked according to the scale given below:

Rating scale				
1	2	3	4	5
				
Rarely	Moderately	Often	Very often	Always

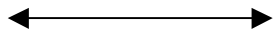
The list below includes the most commonly used questions for determining which conflict management styles managers use to resolve conflict in work situations. Think of how you would behave in conflict situations in which your wishes differ from those of one or more other persons.

Please indicate the department to which you belong by placing a cross in the appropriate box.

Clinical - Doctors	Nursing Administration	Clinical – Support services	General administration

For each of the 24 items, indicate how often you rely on that specific style by putting a cross (x) in the appropriate space.

Applicable Conflict Management Styles

NO	Conflict management styles	1	2	3	4	5
		Rarely Always 				
1	I try to investigate an issue with my co-workers to find a solution acceptable to us.					
2	I encourage the use of a third, or a neutral party to assist in reaching the solution.					
3	I try to reconcile our differences and look for a win – win solution.					
4	I try to get all concerns and issues immediately in the open.					
5	I negotiate with my co-workers so that compromise may be reached.					
6	I use give and take so that compromise can be reached.					
7	I am open to any bargaining process that leads to a compromise.					
8	I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.					
9	I try to satisfy the expectations of my co-workers.					
10	I go along with the suggestions of my co-workers.					
11	I let the wishes of others rule and overlook differences to maintain harmony.					
12	I try to soothe the other person's feelings in order to preserve our relationship.					

13	I attempt to avoid being put on the spot					
14	I sometimes withdraw from conflict situations with the hope that disagreements will eventually disappear.					
15	I try to avoid unpleasantness to myself					
16	I sometimes avoid taking positions that may create controversy.					
17	I try to manipulate communication channels in order to stimulate functional conflict.					
18	I try to stimulate conflict by creating competition between departments.					
19	I call for a structured debate of opposing viewpoints prior to making a decision.					
20	I stimulate a certain level of conflict by encouraging constructive viewpoints.					
21	I argue my case with others.					
22	I try to win my position.					
23	I do not hesitate using formal authority in order to assert my position with others.					
24	I try to show logic and benefits of my position					

ANNEXURE C**Table 4.1 An interview schedule**

NO.	QUESTIONS
1.	What kinds of conflict do you often handle?
2.	Why do you handle conflict in the way you do?
3	In which other ways would you handle the same situation?
4	What do you perceive as the main problem in the style (method) you would not like to use?
5	In your own opinion, do you think conflict can be of any benefit to your organisation?

ANNEXTURE E

CATEGORY RESPONSE ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO EACH HOSPITAL

RATING SCALE	Rarely	Often	Very often	PERCENTAGES		
	1	2	3			

CALA HOSPITAL

Collaboration technique						
1. Colla - Accept	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
2. Colla - Neutral	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
3. Colla - Reconcile	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
4. Colla - Combination	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%

Compromise technique						
5. Comp - Negotiate	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
6. Give & Take	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
7. Comp - Bargaining	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
8. Comp - Combination	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%

Accommodating technique						
9. Acco - Satisfy	0	0	2	0%	0%	50%
10. Acco - Compliance	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
11. Acco - Harmony	3	1	0	75%	25%	0%
12. Acco - Feeling	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%

Avoidance technique						
13. Avoid - Defensive	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%
14. Avoid - Withdraw	3	0	1	75%	0%	25%
15. Avoid - Discomfort	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
16. Avoid - Controversy	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%

Stimulating technique						
17. Stim - Manipulate	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
18. Stim - Competition	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
19. Stim - Debate	0	0	2	0%	0%	50%
20. Stim - conflict	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%

Dominating technique						
21. Dom - Argue	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
22. Dom - Win	1	0	3	25%	0%	75%
23. Dom - Authority	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
24. Dom - logic	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%

RATING SCALE	Rarely	Often	Very often	PERCENTAGES		
	1	2	3			

KOMANI HOSPITAL

Collaboration technique						
1. Colla - Accept	1	0	3	25%	0%	75%
2. Colla - Neutral	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%
3. Colla - Reconcile	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%
4. Colla - Combination	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%

Compromise technique						
5. Comp - Negotiate	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
6. Give & Take	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
7. Comp - Bargaining	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%
8. Comp - Combination	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%

Accommodating technique						
9. Acco - Satisfy	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
10. Acco - Compliance	1	2	1	25%	50%	25%
11. Acco - Harmony	0	3	1	0%	75%	25%
12. Acco - Feeling	1	2	1	25%	50%	25%

Avoidance technique						
13. Avoid - Defensive	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
14. Avoid - Withdraw	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
15. Avoid - Discomfort	0	0	2	0%	0%	50%
16. Avoid - Controversy	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%

Stimulating technique						
17. Stim - Manipulate	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
18. Stim - Competition	3	0	1	75%	0%	25%
19. Stim - Debate	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
20. Stim - conflict	0	3	1	0%	75%	25%

Dominating technique						
21. Dom - Argue	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
22. Dom - Win	3	1	0	75%	25%	0%
23. Dom - Authority	3	1	1	75%	25%	25%
24. Dom - logic	1	0	3	25%	0%	75%

RATING SCALE	Rarely	Often	Very often	PERCENTAGES		
	1	2	3			

CONFIMVABA HOSPITAL

Collaboration technique						
1. Colla - Accept	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
2. Colla - Neutral	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
3. Colla - Reconcile	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%
4. Colla - Combination	1	0	3	25%	0%	75%

Compromise technique						
5. Comp - Negotiate	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
6. Give & Take	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
7. Comp - Bargaining	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
8. Comp - Combination	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%

Accommodating technique						
9. Acco - Satisfy	0	3	1	0%	75%	25%
10. Acco - Compliance	1	3	0	25%	75%	0%
11. Acco - Harmony	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
12. Acco - Feeling	3	0	1	75%	0%	25%

Avoidance technique						
13. Avoid - Defensive	1	2	1	25%	50%	25%
14. Avoid - Withdraw	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
15. Avoid - Discomfort	3	0	1	75%	0%	25%
16. Avoid - Controversy	1	2	1	25%	50%	25%

Stimulating technique						
17. Stim - Manipulate	3	1	0	75%	25%	0%
18. Stim - Competition	3	1	0	75%	25%	0%
19. Stim - Debate	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
20. Stim - conflict	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%

Dominating technique						
21. Dom - Argue	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%
22. Dom - Win	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
23. Dom - Authority	3	1	0	75%	25%	0%
24. Dom - logic	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%

RATING SCALE	Rarely	Often	Very often	PERCENTAGES		
	1	2	3			

FRONTIER HOSPITAL

Collaboration technique						
1. Colla - Accept	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
2. Colla - Neutral	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%
3. Colla - Reconcile	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
4. Colla - Combination	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%

Compromise technique						
5. Comp - Negotiate	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%
6. Give & Take	1	2	2	25%	50%	50%
7. Comp - Bargaining	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
8. Comp - Combination	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%

Accommodating technique						
9. Acco - Satisfy	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
10. Acco - Compliance	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
11. Acco - Harmony	0	4	1	0%	100%	25%
12. Acco - Feeling	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%

Avoidance technique						
13. Avoid - Defensive	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
14. Avoid - Withdraw	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
15. Avoid - Discomfort	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
16. Avoid - Controversy	3	0	1	75%	0%	25%

Stimulating technique						
17. Stim - Manipulate	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
18. Stim - Competition	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
19. Stim - Debate	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%
20. Stim - conflict	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%

Dominating technique						
21. Dom - Argue	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
22. Dom - Win	3	1	0	75%	25%	0%
23. Dom - Authority	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
24. Dom - logic	1	0	1	25%	0%	25%

RATING SCALE	Rarely	Often	Very often	PERCENTAGES		
	1	2	3			

HEWU HOSPITAL

Collaboration technique						
1. Colla - Accept	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
2. Colla - Neutral	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%
3. Colla - Reconcile	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
4. Colla - Combination	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%

Compromise technique						
5. Comp - Negotiate	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%
6. Give & Take	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
7. Comp - Bargaining	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%
8. Comp - Combination	0	2	2	0%	50%	50%

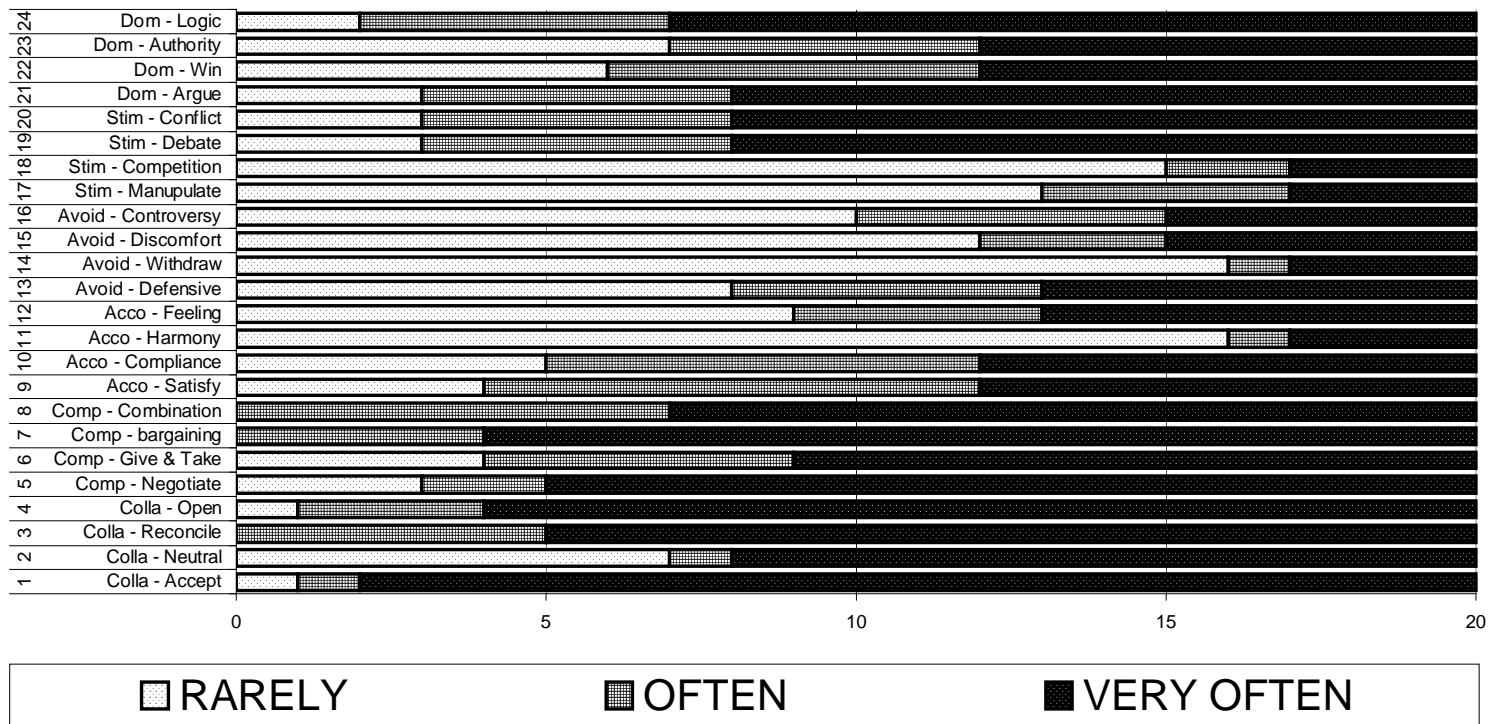
Accommodating technique						
9. Acco - Satisfy	2	0	2	50%	0%	50%
10. Acco - Compliance	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
11. Acco - Harmony	3	0	1	75%	0%	25%
12. Acco - Feeling	1	2	1	25%	50%	25%

Avoidance technique						
13. Avoid - Defensive	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
14. Avoid - Withdraw	3	0	1	75%	0%	25%
15. Avoid - Discomfort	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
16. Avoid - Controversy	2	2	0	50%	50%	0%

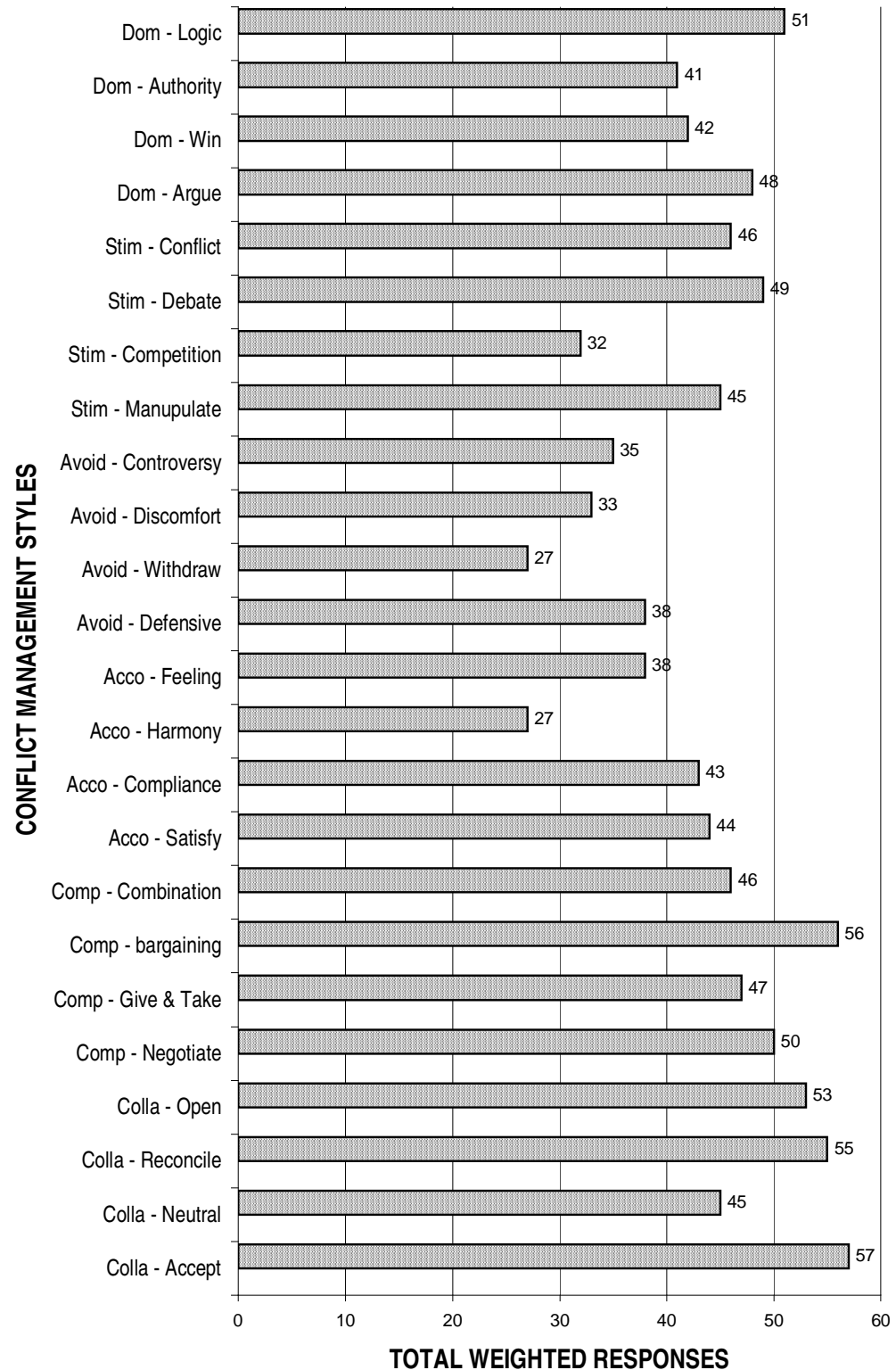
Stimulating technique						
17. Stim - Manipulate	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
18. Stim - Competition	4	0	0	100%	0%	0%
19. Stim - Debate	1	1	2	25%	25%	50%
20. Stim - conflict	1	2	1	25%	50%	25%

Dominating technique						
21. Dom - Argue	2	1	1	50%	25%	25%
22. Dom - Win	0	1	3	0%	25%	75%
23. Dom - Authority	2	1	2	50%	25%	50%
24. Dom - logic	1	2	1	25%	50%	25%

ANNEXURE F: OVERALL RESPONSES RANKED ACCORDING TO THE SCALE OF 1 - 3



ANNEXTURE G: RESPONSES RANKED ACCORDING TO WEIGHTED TOTALS



**ANNEXTURE H: CATEGORY ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENTS
FOR EACH HOSPITAL (WEIGHTED)**

SCALE: 1- 3

COLLABORATION TECHNIQUE

HEWU HOSPITAL				
DEPARTMENTS	NURSING	DOCTORS	ADMIN	SUPPORT
1. Colla – Accept	3	2	3	3
2. Colla – Neutral	1	1	2	3
3. Colla – Reconcile	2	3	3	3
4. Colla – Open	3	3	3	3
FRONTIER HOSPITAL				
1. Colla – Accept	3	3	3	3
2. Colla – Neutral	3	1	3	1
3. Colla – Reconcile	3	3	3	3
4. Colla – Open	3	3	3	3
CALA HOSPITAL				
1. Colla – Accept	3	3	3	3
2. Colla – Neutral	3	3	3	3
3. Colla – Reconcile	3	3	3	3
4. Colla – Open	3	3	3	3
COFIMVABA HOSPITAL				
1. Colla – Accept	3	3	3	3
2. Colla – Neutral	1	2	3	1
3. Colla – Reconcile	2	2	3	3
4. Colla – Open	3	1	3	3
KOMANI HOSPITAL				
1. Colla – Accept	3	3	3	1
2. Colla – Neutral	3	1	3	1
3. Colla – Reconcile	2	3	3	2
4. Colla – Open	2	3	3	2

**CATEGORY ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENTS FOR EACH
HOSPITAL (WEIGHTED)**

SCALE: 1-3 Rarely – Often –Very often

COMPROMISE TECHNIQUE

HEWU HOSPITAL				
DEPARTMENTS	NURSING	DOCTORS	ADMIN	SUPPORT
5. Comp – Negotiate	1	1	3	3
6. Comp – Give & Take	1	2	3	3
7. Comp – bargaining	3	3	3	3
8. Comp – Combination	2	3	2	3
FRONTIER HOSPITAL				
5. Comp – Negotiate	3	1	3	1
6. Comp – Give & Take	3	2	2	3
7. Comp – bargaining	3	3	2	3
8. Comp – Combination	3	3	3	3
CALA HOSPITAL				
5. Comp – Negotiate	3	3	3	2
6. Comp – Give & Take	3	3	3	3
7. Comp – bargaining	3	3	3	3
8. Comp – Combination	2	3	3	3
COFIMVABA HOSPITAL				
5. Comp – Negotiate	3	2	3	3
6. Comp – Give & Take	2	1	3	1
7. Comp – bargaining	3	2	3	3
8. Comp – Combination	2	2	3	3
KOMANI HOSPITAL				
5. Comp – Negotiate	3	2	3	3
6. Comp – Give & Take	2	1	3	1
7. Comp – bargaining	3	2	3	3
8. Comp – Combination	2	2	3	3

CATEGORY ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENTS FOR EACH HOSPITAL (WEIGHTED)

SCALE: 1- 3 Rarely – Often – Very

ACCOMMODATION

HEWU HOSPITAL				
DEPARTMENTS	NURSING	DOCTORS	ADMIN	SUPPORT
9. Acco – Satisfy	1	1	3	3
10. Acco – Compliance	3	1	3	2
11. Acco – Harmony	3	1	1	1
12. Acco – Feeling	1	2	2	3
FRONTIER HOSPITAL				
9. Acco – Satisfy	1	2	3	3
10. Acco – Compliance	3	1	3	3
11. Acco – Harmony	1	1	1	3
12. Acco – Feeling	1	1	3	3
CALA HOSPITAL				
9. Acco – Satisfy	2	3	3	2
10. Acco – Compliance	3	3	3	3
11. Acco – Harmony	2	1	1	1
12. Acco – Feeling	3	1	1	1
COFIMVABA HOSPITAL				
9. Acco – Satisfy	2	2	3	2
10. Acco – Compliance	1	1	2	2
11. Acco – Harmony	1	1	1	1
12. Acco – Feeling	3	1	1	1
KOMANI HOSPITAL				
9. Acco – Satisfy	3	2	3	1
10. Acco – Compliance	2	2	3	1
11. Acco – Harmony	2	2	3	2
12. Acco – Feeling	1	2	3	2

CATEGORY ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENTS FOR EACH HOSPITAL (WEIGHTED)

SCALE: 1- 3 Rarely – Often – Very often

AVOIDANCE TECHNIQUE

HEWU HOSPITAL				
DEPARTMENTS	NURSING	DOCTORS	ADMIN	SUPPORT
13. Avoid – Defensive	3	1	2	1
14. Avoid – Withdraw	3	1	1	1
15. Avoid – Discomfort	3	1	2	1
16. Avoid – Controversy	1	1	2	2
FRONTIER HOSPITAL				
13. Avoid – Defensive	3	1	3	2
14. Avoid – Withdraw	1	1	1	1
15. Avoid – Discomfort	1	1	1	1
16. Avoid – Controversy	1	1	3	1
CALA HOSPITAL				
13. Avoid – Defensive	3	1	1	3
14. Avoid – Withdraw	3	2	1	1
15. Avoid – Discomfort	1	3	3	1
16. Avoid – Controversy	3	1	3	1
COFIMVABA HOSPITAL				
13. Avoid – Defensive	3	2	2	1
14. Avoid – Withdraw	1	1	1	1
15. Avoid – Discomfort	1	1	1	1
16. Avoid – Controversy	2	1	3	2
KOMANI HOSPITAL				
13. Avoid – Defensive	1	2	3	1
14. Avoid – Withdraw	1	2	3	1
15. Avoid – Discomfort	1	3	3	2
16. Avoid – Controversy	1	2	3	1

**CATEGORY ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENTS FOR EACH
HOSPITAL (WEIGHTED)**

SCALE: 1- 3

STIMULATING TECHNIQUE

HEWU HOSPITAL				
DEPARTMENTS	NURSING	DOCTORS	ADMIN	SUPPORT
17. Stim – Manipulate	1	1	1	1
18. Stim – Competition	1	1	1	1
19. Stim – Debate	1	2	3	3
20. Stim – Conflict	2	1	2	3
FRONTIER HOSPITAL				
17. Stim – Manipulate	2	1	1	3
18. Stim – Competition	1	2	1	1
19. Stim – Debate	2	2	3	3
20. Stim – Conflict	1	3	3	1
CALA HOSPITAL				
17. Stim – Manipulate	1	3	1	2
18. Stim – Competition	1	3	3	2
19. Stim – Debate	3	3	3	3
20. Stim – Conflict	3	3	3	2
COFIMVABA HOSPITAL				
17. Stim – Manipulate	2	1	1	1
18. Stim – Competition	1	1	3	1
19. Stim – Debate	3	2	3	3
20. Stim – Conflict	3	1	3	3
KOMANI HOSPITAL				
17. Stim – Manipulate	2	1	3	1
18. Stim – Competition	1	1	2	1
19. Stim – Debate	2	1	3	3
20. Stim – Conflict	2	2	3	2

**CATEGORY ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENTS FOR EACH
HOSPITAL (WEIGHTED)**

SCALE: 1-3

DOMINATING TECHNIQUE

HEWU HOSPITAL				
DEPARTMENTS	NURSING	DOCTORS	ADMIN	SUPPORT
21. Dom – Argue	3	1	2	3
22. Dom – Win	3	3	3	2
23. Dom – Authority	3	1	1	3
24. Dom – Logic	2	2	1	2
FRONTIER HOSPITAL				
21. Dom – Argue	2	1	3	1
22. Dom – Win	1	1	2	1
23. Dom – Authority	3	2	1	1
24. Dom – Logic	1	3	3	3
CALA HOSPITAL				
21. Dom – Argue	3	3	3	3
22. Dom – Win	3	1	3	3
23. Dom – Authority	2	2	3	3
24. Dom – Logic	3	3	3	3
COFIMVABA HOSPITAL				
21. Dom – Argue	2	2	3	3
22. Dom – Win	1	1	1	1
23. Dom – Authority	1	1	2	1
24. Dom – Logic	3	2	2	3
KOMANI HOSPITAL				
21. Dom – Argue	1	1	3	1
22. Dom – Win	2	2	3	2
23. Dom – Authority	1	3	3	2
24. Dom – Logic	3	3	3	2

Annexure D cannot be displayed.