ABSTRACT

In an organization productive utilization of human resources is essential as it increases the capability of the organization to respond to the fast changing business environment. In present globalized competitive scenario more and more organizations are having workforce belonging to diverse culture having heterogeneous skills and experiences. There are various benefits of team work at the same time conflict is also inevitable because every team member has their own perceptions and desires. Conflict is considered as having negative impact but there are some benefits also. This paper discusses the positive and negative impact of team conflict on goal achievement, organizational success and the importance of conflict resolution which is associated with the increase or decrease in team productivity. There are various kinds of conflicts resolution strategies which may be used by the organization depending on the person involved and as well as on the situation. Effective resolution of the conflict is essential for the success of the organization. This paper proposes a conceptual model ‘5 Factors Model for Organizational Success’ which focuses on the impact of effective resolution of the conflict as it plays vital role in the success of the organization and also increases the probability of the same team members working together in future.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Organizational Success, Team Conflict, Cohesiveness, Productivity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Increase in the globalization and competition have resulted in complex and fast changing business environment. Due to this organizations are facing new challenges like delivery of new, high standard of products and services as per the demanding needs of the consumers. Now the organizations rely more on teamwork and employees are accepted to work in teams to accomplish the organizational goals. The most successful organizations are those that can create and maintain high productivity teams. High productive teams improve the quality by encouraging innovation and it also increases employee motivation and commitment. The team helps the organizations in better problem solving, satisfying consumer demand and reacting to the challenges of globalization and
competition effectively. Teamwork is working together in a group to achieve the common goals and it is an integral tool which helps in continuous improvement of work in an organization (Banker, Field, et al., 1996). The objective of this paper is to gain better understanding about the impact of team conflict and its effective resolution for the success of organization so that people will be able to apply that in the form of interventions which will lead to effective team work.

Due to the recent developments in communication technology the geographical boundaries no longer exists as a result the number of employees belonging to diverse background and thinking has increased. Managing workforce diversity and forming productive team is a crucial task in an organization as each individual is different from another which acts as a strong base for clash of personal opinions and interests as a result conflicts occur. In the opinion of Pruitt & Carnevale (1993) conflict is present in interpersonal relations. Boulding (1963) has defined conflict as awareness by employees involved in the conflict that discrepancies or incompatible wishes or desires exist among them. Wall & Callister (1995) consider conflict as a process in which one group of people think that their interests are different or are negatively affected by the other group of people. In the opinion of Rahim (2002) conflict is an interactive process which shows incompatibility, disagreements or differences either within or among social entities.

According to Jehn (1997) there are three types of conflicts task related conflict, process related conflict and relationship related conflict. Task related conflict results from disagreement in ideas and opinions which are related to work that needs to be done in team. Process related conflict occurs due to disagreements related to task strategy and delegation of responsibilities and resources. Relationship related conflict arises from disagreement due to interpersonal incompatibilities. According to De Dreu & Van de Vliert (1997) it is due to differences in personal taste, interpersonal style or opposing values and beliefs. These disagreements are not related to work but are based on personal or social issues.

II. FUNCTIONAL & DYSFUNCTIONAL IMPACT OF CONFLICT

Conflicts can have functional or dysfunctional impact on the functioning of individuals, teams and organizations. Certain traditional studies have suggested the impact of task related conflicts as functional as it is positively associated to the ideas and innovations (West and Anderson, 1996) and prevents groupthink (Turner and Pratkanis, 1994) whereas process and relationship conflicts were considered to have negative impact and it reduces team effectiveness (Jehn,1997) but in the study done by De Dreu & Weingart (2003) it was highlighted that if the teams are performing routine tasks then the conflict will have negative impact. The kind of task plays vital role in determining the positive or negative impact of conflict on the team. Thus the task conflict can be as negative as relationship conflict.

The impact of conflict on employees can be negative or it can also acts as a realization factor for the employee to change his way of dealing conflicts. The negative impact could be increase in employee’s stress. It decreases job satisfaction, team performance, team commitment and organizational commitment. The conflicts among team members not only affect their team’s productivity but it has an adverse impact on other teams or functional units in and outside the organization as it increases confusion, tension, absenteeism and turnover. It also increases the dissatisfaction and complaints of people with whom the team interacts. Conflicts among team members displays in their passive or aggressive behavior towards each other in the form of blaming, power plays, withholding of information (Edelmann, 1993; Wall & Callister, 1995) sabotage and bullying (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). This affects the team member’s performance. It results in wastage of resources viz. time, money and people. This leads to decline in the productivity of team thus affecting organizational success adversely.
Some studies have highlighted the benefits of conflict for team performance. Conflict can be functional and plays vital role in increasing the performance of the employee (De Dreu, Harinck & Van Vianen, 1999). The diversity of team members can be beneficial for the team in terms of promoting innovation and creativity in the organization. If team members have same thinking then decision making will be very smooth and groupthink might prevail which can create hindrance in effective decision making. Curbing the conflicts can result in lack of creativity, out of the box thinking, innovation, poor decisions (De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997) and the team learning. Team learning refers to information exchange and interpretation and is important for team productivity. If conflict is not resolved then it will affect the team learning and eventually the team productivity will be adversely affected. The heterogeneity of team members may be beneficial on some factors but maintaining homogeneity on certain other factors is essential in order to maintain the team productivity.

III. RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT

Conflict resolution involves use of various methods which are applied by either or both parties to deal with a conflict (Gordon, 2003) and depends on the person as well as on the situation also. It is essential to manage conflicts so as to maintain co-operation, trust and we-feeling among the team members which helps in having positive team behavior. In order to resolve the conflict various activities are taken into consideration like problem solving, handling emotions, communication (Brett, 2001; Pondy, 1992; Putnam& Poole, 1987). Earlier researches have shown that different conflict management strategies like competing, accommodating, avoiding and compromising, collaborating affects individual and team success (Blake & Mouton, 1964; De Dreu, 1997; Morrill & Thomas, 1992; Putnam & Poole, 1987; Rahim, 1983; Ruble & Thomas, 1976).

Studies have shown that collaborating strategy is the best way to resolve a conflict whereas avoidance strategy if used then it results into increase of negative emotions among team members (Desivilya & Yagil, 2005). In Ruble and Thomas Model (1976) compromising lies between assertiveness and co-cooperativeness. Gross and Guerrero (2000) anticipated integrating style as the most helpful form of conflict management style as compared to other conflict management styles. Researchers have shown that there is no one strategy which will fit all situations.

For performing a particular task the way in which team members behave with each other while dealing problems acts as a major factor in their satisfaction with the team and also on the kind of interaction they will have in future (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Co-operation among team members helps in managing task conflict effectively among team members (De Dreu, 2006; Tjosvold, Hui & Yu, 2003). The willingness of team members to contribute proactively also largely depends on their behavioural experience with each other (Jehn, 1997). The cause of the conflict needs to be identified as early as possible and then attempts should be made to resolve the conflict at the initial level otherwise it can have an adverse impact on team and organizational performance. Lack of trust also is a significant factor for causing conflict. To overcome this communication should be open which will increase the mutual understanding. In the opinion of Tjosvold, Hui & Yu (2003) a co-operative approach in resolving conflict is beneficial for the group. Thus the conflict needs to be resolved in such a way so that it leads to maximization of positive outcomes and minimization of the negative outcomes.

Conflict is a crucial factor which needs to be resolved on time. Earlier researches have highlighted that if the team is not able to manage conflict effectively then their performance will be suffered as the team members will be focusing more on reacting to conflict behaviors rather than meeting the set performance criteria (Argyis, 1982; Edmondson, 1999). The team members should stop working as individuals rather they should work as a team. Constructive feedback should be provided to the team members. Conflict resolution is important as it helps in maintaining fairness,
resource efficiency, process effectiveness and satisfactory working relationships which ultimately reduces the negative impact of conflict (Thomas, 1992).

IV. MODEL: 5 FACTORS MODEL FOR ORGANISATIONAL SUCCESS

To ensure organizational success it is essential to resolve the conflict timely so as to avoid the deviation of team from the planned path of achieving the goal. Based on the earlier discussion the key determinant factors for organizational success have been identified in the conceptual model presented below. This conceptual model is named as 5 Factors for Organizational Success. All the five factors viz. team cohesiveness (T.Coh.), team satisfaction (T.Sat.), team effectiveness (T.Eff.), team commitment (T.Com.), team productivity (T.Pro.) are mutually interdependent and they can be considered as determining factors for organizational success. Thus the effective resolution of conflict results in strengthening of these factors. The absence of these factors results in the failure of the organization.

**Team Cohesiveness (T.Coh.):** It is a process in which the team members work together to accomplish the set goals and views themselves as a unit. Team members display feelings of mutual understanding and mutual trust. They have a shared belief in their ability to complete the assigned task. Dynamics of human behavior affects the team cohesiveness. The lack of cohesiveness in team results in Team Disintegration (T. Disint.).

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**5 Factors Model for Organizational Success**

![5 Factors Model for Organizational Success](image)

**Fig 1:** 5 Factors Model for Organizational Success
Team Satisfaction (T.Sa.): It is the experience of team members in terms of satisfaction as a part of the team. It describes whether the team members feel happy and contented as a member of the team. The team members reflect on their teamwork to determine their satisfaction level.

Team Commitment (T.Com): It depends on the processes developed by the team to increase the capability of team members to work as a unit. This leads to sincere efforts of team members towards the continuous improvement and innovation of process, product or service.

Team Effectiveness (T.Ef.): It is the result of the combination of performance of individual team member and the overall team performance as per set performance standards. Efficient use of the skills of team members increases the team effectiveness.

Team Productivity (T.Pro.): An organization is successful if its team(s) is productive thus organizations rely on team productivity to succeed in present competitive market. The team productivity shows the efforts of the team members they put together so as to accomplish the desired goals.

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The 5 Factors Model for Organizational Success shows that if the conflict is resolved timely then it increases team cohesiveness which leads to team satisfaction and this result in team commitment leading to team effectiveness which is vital for enhancing team productivity. Thus if a team is productive then the success of the organization is inevitable. The experience of team members with good team work increases the probability of forming the same team in future. It is essential that mutual understanding and cooperation should exist among the team members. If the degree of commitment is more then the productivity of the team enhances. If the degree of commitment is less then the productivity of the team declines. The friendly relationships assure that the team members will resolve the conflict issues in amicable manner so that the goals can be accomplished. It is essential to resolve conflicts by promoting cohesiveness in the team and in this the role of team members and organization is very important.

The model also highlights the consequences of not resolving the conflict. If the conflict is not resolved timely then it leads to the feeling of detachment among team members which creates dissatisfaction in the team leading to decrease in team commitment and it results in team ineffectiveness thus making the team unproductive. If the team is unproductive then the set goals can never be achieved as a result the success of organization is affected adversely. The failure of team and dissatisfaction among team members decreases the probability of forming the same team in future. The unfriendly relationships among team members results into emergence of conflicts which acts as a hindrance in achieving the desired goals.

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According to the proposed model these factors are team disintegration (T.Disint.), team dissatisfaction (T. Dissat.), lack of team commitment (LT.Com.), team ineffectiveness (T.Ineff.), and lack of team productivity (LT.Pro). All these factors are related to each other and are responsible for organizational failure. It is essential for the organization to identify the factors that adversely affect the productivity of the employees and team.
V. CONCLUSION

Conflict management is the ability to handle conflict effectively. Addressing conflict effectively is beneficial for the individual, team and organization. Team members will be satisfied and their productivity will also increase if the conflicts are effectively managed. The policies of the organizations should be well structured and the employees need to be well informed about it so as to avoid any confusion. The job roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined. Moreover the organizational culture should promote mutual respect and trust among the employees irrespective of an employees’ position in the organization. It is not possible that all the team members have the same opinion, values or beliefs. It is the difference in person’s opinion, values or beliefs resulting in conflict among team members. To overcome conflicts related to the personality issues the team members should inculcate good communication skills, co-operative problem solving and participative decision making. Once team members understand to handle the conflict they will be ready to understand and accept personal differences and resolve personal disagreements quickly which will result in increased commitment and develops teamwork for achieving their set goals. It helps in clearing misunderstandings, improving the work processes and developing conflict management skills. It leads to the development of healthy and supportive organizational culture and environment. This will increase team cohesiveness thus enhancing team productivity and ensuring success of the organization.

VI. REFERENCES