
1. Introduction

Conflict = a process between two individuals that arises when one party feels obstructed or irritated by the other.

→ Negative influence on well-being.

Leader’s Third Party Conflict Management = how the leader reacts to conflicts between two or more employees under his supervision;

1.1. Types of conflict & stress

Relationship conflict: when parties disagree about personal issues, not work-related.

→ most (negative) influence on person’s well-being

Task conflicts: when parties disagree about the task begin performed.

Process conflicts: about logistics and delegation.

Workplace conflict = stressor → long-lasting effect on individuals AND organisation.

1.2 Leader’s third party conflict management behaviours

Leaders: usually involved party because of their responsibility <-> Missing formal definition of this role.

Behavioural tendency: moving toward, against or away from others.

→ Linked with third party conflict; problem solving, forcing or avoiding.

Problem-Solving: searching for the underlying concerns of the parties and seeking to come to a solution that addresses all parties’ concerns.

Forcing: when the leader imposes on the disputants the solution that he prefers.

Avoiding: when the leader doesn’t want to get involved.

Hypothesis 1: Relationship, Task and Process conflict between employees are positively correlated with employee’s feelings of conflict stress, and these relationships are affected by employee’s perceptions of leader’s problem-solving behaviour. These positive correlations between conflict and stress diminish when leaders employ problem-solving.

Hypothesis 2: Relationship, Task and Process conflict between employees are positively correlated with employee’s conflict stress and these relationships are affected by employee’s perception of leader’s forcing behaviour. Thus, the positive relationships between conflict and stress intensify when employees perceive their leader is using forcing behaviour.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship, Task and Process conflict between employees are positively correlated with employee’s conflict stress and these relationships are affected by employee’s perception of leader’s avoiding behaviour. Thus, the positive relationships between conflict and stress will become stronger when employees perceive their leader uses avoiding behaviour.

2. Method
2.1 Data Sample

2.2 Measures
→ Conflict Types
→ Conflict Stress
→ Third-Party Conflict Management behaviours: perceptions!!
→ Control Variables

2.3 Analyses
First: entered control variables
Second: analyzed predictor variables
Third: Added interaction terms

3. Results

3.1 Hypothesis 1

Relationship, Task and process conflict are all significant & have main effects. Positive correlation with conflict stress.
Problem-solving was only significant in relationship conflict.

3.2 Hypothesis 2

Forcing had a significant impact on stress for each type.

3.2 Hypothesis 3

Marginally significant effect. Task conflict in particular will cause more stress because of avoiding behaviour.

4. Discussion

Leader’s conflict management → amplifying or buffering effect.

Forcing? Increase stress for all three.
→ Direct expression of power: increases tension and negative emotions.
→ Sometimes needed when time is limited and solution is significant.

Avoiding? Amplify stress if task-oriented conflict.
→ Responsibility of the leader to solve conflict? Avoiding means avoiding leader in general?

Problem-Solving? Decrease stress if relationship conflict.
→ Because of attention to different viewpoints? Enhances feeling of Control?
4.1 Limitations and future research

Conflict stress as short term? ↔ research denies this.
Perceptions instead of actual behaviour?
Stress as a consequence or antecedent?
Power Distance subjective to culture?
Gender?