

# THE CAUSES AND IMPACT OF CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ON HUMAN KINETICS AND HEALTH EDUCATION

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## **Abstract**

This paper looked at the causes and impact of conflict and conflict management of human kinetics and health education. Conflict as any disagreement between two or more persons, and it comes up when they have different interest, values, goals, and understanding. The issue of conflict is not new and had been with man since time immemorial, and it is mostly negatively viewed depending on its outcome. Conflict is divided into two categories; severe crisis and non-violent conflicts. While the traditional views all conflicts as harmful and avoidable, on the other hand the human relation see it as a natural and inevitable outcome in any organization and as such should be accepted, and the internationalist consider conflict as not only inevitable but also useful. Conflict management is an umbrella term for ways to identify and handle conflicts fairly and efficiently and also the process of limiting the positive aspects of conflict. To further throw more light on this paper, the following subheadings were highlighted; concept of conflict, features on conflict, and the philosophy of conflict, as well as causes of conflict in human kinetic and health education. Others include impact of conflict on human kinetics and health education and concept of conflict management, as well as types of conflict management. Some of the recommendations for this paper are: anticipating and identifying conflict on time, identify the sources of conflicts on time, implementing useful conflict management strategies and techniques in handling and resolving conflict in human kinetics and health education, as well as the subject discipline teachers should be trained on ways to reduce and successfully tackle the impact of conflicts among students themselves.

**Key Words:** Conflicts. Management. Human Kinetics. Health. Education.

## **Introduction**

Conflict has been existing right from human existence here on earth and it can be divided into two categories; non-violent nature and severe crisis conflicts. The concept of conflict is controversial, and psychologists have given different meanings, while some see it as a process, others see it as obstructive behaviour, and goal incompatibility by others. Nevertheless, conflict is a process, where prevention (real or otherwise) leads to disruption of desirable state of harmony and stability in an interdependent world (Chand, 2019).

Conflict is any disagreement between two or more people and groups, and it comes up when they have different interests, values, goals, and understanding. It also refers to all kinds of opposition and antagonistic interaction between or among individuals and groups. Causes of conflicts

information conflict, values conflict, interest conflict, relationship conflict and structural conflict. Characteristics of conflicts are; process, inevitable, normal part of life, perception, opposition, interdependence and interaction and it affects everyone as well as unidimensional (Smith, 2020).

There are three views on the conflicts, the traditional view, the human relations view, and the internationalist view. According to the traditional view, all conflicts are harmful and avoidable, and here, conflict is viewed negatively and associated with turbulence, agitation, destruction, irrationality, and violence. The human relations view conflict as a natural and inevitable outcome in any organization and as such should be accepted. Conflicts are bound to arise in organizations because an organization is composed of individuals having different goals, values, and perceptions. So, conflict is unavoidable and need not always to harmful, and under certain conditions, it could lead to more innovative solutions to problems. The internationalist disagreement regarded conflict as not only inevitable but also useful. They argue that if harmony, peace and cooperativeness prevail in an organization for a long time, the organization is likely to become non-responsive to innovation and change. A minimum level of conflict is required to enhance competency and make itself critical and creative Tyonote (2020).

Having discussed what conflict means, it is expedient at this juncture to know what conflict management is all about. Conflict management refers to the process of using preferred strategies to handle a conflict with goals of limiting negative impact and enhancing positive impact. The most influential theory around conflict management is based on the managerial grid developed by two management theorists, Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton. With revisions and additions, the grid is now used to describe five main conflict management strategies: integration (a win-win strategy that seeks to maximize mutual benefit by open communication), accommodation (a win-lose strategy by giving up one's own needs to satisfy the other's), domination (a lose-win strategy by maximizing one's own needs to satisfy the other's), avoidance (a lose-lose behaviour by withdrawal), and compromise (a give-and-take strategy to meet mutual needs in the middle) (Wang, 2020).

According to Wang 2020, conflict management is used in business management, marketing, communication, contexts such as in interpersonal (e.g., family, marital, and friendship), organizational e.g., macro-level, inter-team, and supervisor-subordinate), intercultural (e.g., host-guest, adaptation, and competence), and public relations (e.g., multinational companies and local residents. It also used for training in various types of contexts (e.g., healthcare, higher education, and community) and counseling.

Conflict resolution on the other hand is a way for two or more parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement among them. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional, and when a dispute arises, often the best course of action is negotiation to resolve the disagreement. Conflict resolution skills are acquired for a wide range of positions across many job sectors and this requirement is based on the fact that there is always the need among companies to reduce productivity and create a difficult environment leading to unwanted turnover in staff and reduced morale (Doyle, 2020).

In the field of education sequel to the variability and dynamism of individual cherished values, core objectives and dire needs which most times do not always go hand in hand, and conflict occurrences in schools becomes aggregately inevitable. Thus, the teacher's onus as *aloco-parentis* in managing such inevitable conflict becomes grossly unavoidable. However, for the teacher to possess the disposition to manage such conflicts effectively in schools, a clear understanding and interpretation of issue are requisite. Such an understanding is direly needed by the teacher so as to be able to address the given encumbrances which may be spotted out in the interaction among parties (Ohaka, 2017).

According to Ohaka (2017), there are paradigms for elucidating the causes of those conflict conditions that require effective management in schools, just as there is cornucopia of avenues available to the teacher through which conflict within school's environment could be managed.

Those paradigms for elucidating the causes of conflict, the impact of conflict and conflict management are what this paper seeks to examine in relation to human kinetics and health education. Human kinetics is a discipline that focuses on the comprehensive study and practice of human movement and exercise, and its impact on health and physical performance. Health education is a profession of educating people about health, and can also be defined as the principle by which individuals and groups of people learn to behave in a manner conducive to the promotion, maintenance, or restoration of health.

### **Concept of Conflict**

Conflict can be defined in many ways and can be considered as an expression of hostility, negative attitudes, antagonism, aggression, rivalry and misunderstanding. It is also associated with situations that involve contradictory or irreconcilable interests between two opposing groups. Conflict can also be viewed as any tension which is experienced when one person perceives that one's need or desires are likely to be thwarted or frustrated (Indiafreenotes, 2020).

According to Pondy (2020) the term conflict is used in four ways in the literature to describe:

- antecedent conditions of conflictual behaviour such as scarcity of resources or policy differences
- affective states of individuals involved such as stress, tension, hostility, anxiety
- cognitive state of individuals that is their perception or awareness of conflictual situation
- conflictual behaviour ranging from passive resistance to over aggression

### **Feature of Conflict**

According to Indiafreenotes (2020) the following are the features of conflict:

- it arises when two or more individuals or groups think differently
- it is caused by different perceptions that different individuals hold about the same object or goal
- it usually arises because of scarcity of resources

When people compete for scarce resources, they hold different views about how best they can utilize those resources to achieve the organizational goals.

### **Philosophy of Conflict**

Indiafreenotes (2020) highlighted the philosophy of conflict to include the following:

**Classical Approach:** In this approach management views conflict as bad and destructive for organizational performance. Conflict of opinion meant to result in anger and resentment and this creates disorder in the organization and affects its smooth functioning. Here it is believed that conflict is thus destructive as it cannot bind management and workers together;

**Human Relations Approach:** This is known as the behavioural approach to conflict. While the classical approach views that organizations should not have conflict at all, the human relationships approach assumes that conflict is unavoidable, for it is bound to happen because of differences in opinion and perception amongst individuals. As conflict cannot be avoided it should be resolved in a friendly way. Conflict thus, naturally occurs in all organizations but should be resolved for the benefits of the organization and individuals;

**Interactionist Approach:** While the human relations approach accepts that conflict is inevitable and therefore, acceptable, the interactionist approach takes a broader view of conflict. It encourages conflict in the organization as conflict promotes diverse opinions and beliefs and this promotes new ideas and easy adaptability to environmental changes. Conflicts keep the group

members lively in discussions and creative in idea generation and thus, conflict is promoted as it promotes organizational performance.

### **Causes of Conflict in Human Kinetics and Health Education**

School conflict is defined as the disagreement between individuals or groups regarding ideas, interests, principles and values within the school community, perceiving the parties their interests as excluded (Valente, Lourenco, & Nemeth, 2020). According to Isabu (2017) there are many potential causes of conflict in the school, and Mullius (2010) enumerated the causes of conflict as follows and they are also not limited to human kinetics and health education alone as a subject discipline:

**Limited Resources:** Most school resources are limited and as a result, teachers and principals struggle to have their share. The greater the limitation of resources than usually, the greater the potential for conflict;

**Poor Communication Network:** Poor communication network is highly rated as one of the main causes of conflict in schools. Some school principals who introduce innovation without first educating teachers and students will certainly meet with conflict, and should not expect genuine cooperation and participation from them. Also, when decisions are not disseminated effectively, sources of conflict can be created by teachers and students;

**Task Inter-dependence:** Where the task of a teacher is dependent upon the work of another teacher, there is potential for conflict. Also, if the work of a department i.e., human kinetic and health education, is dependent upon the output of another department, a similar situation could arise. If reward or punishment systems are perceived to be based on keeping up with performance level, then the potential for conflict is even greater;

**Overlapping Authority:** When two or more teachers or departments claim authority for the same activities or tasks, conflict is likely to occur;

**Role Conflict:** A role is the expected pattern of behaviour associated with members occupying a particular position within the structure of a school and department. In practice, the manner in which some teachers usually behave may not be consistent with their expected pattern of behaviour. Problems of role incompatibility and role ambiguity arise from inadequate or inappropriate role definition in the school system and can be a significant cause of conflict;

**Inequitable Treatment:** A teacher's perception of unjust treatment in the operating of personnel policies and practices or in reward and punishment systems can lead to tension and conflict.

### **Impact of Conflict on Human Kinetics and Health Education**

The finding that conflict has a negative impact on academic achievement in high schools is hardly surprising; less obvious are the specific mechanisms through which this effect materializes. Understanding this is an important task, considering that this is needed to design effective policies to mitigate the negative effect of conflict on education outcomes (Bruck, Maio & Miaari, 2022).

The first mechanism, show that conflict negatively affects the quality of the learning environment at school. In particular, conflict increases overcrowding in the classroom which in turn, correlates with a lower probability of passing the final exam. The effect of higher overcrowding in the classroom on the test scores is significant only for students in the lower tail of the test score distribution. This suggests that these are the students for whom the quality of the learning

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environment at school is likely to be more from the impact of the conflict-induced destruction on school infrastructures (Bruck, Maio, Maari, 2022).

The worsening of students' psychological wellbeing due to exposure to conflict-related violence is another mechanism. Direct exposure to conflict – as provided by the per-capita number of fatalities occurred in the locality of the school – has a large negative impact on the student's probability of passing the exam and this in effect is larger when the kid is young (suggesting a mechanism of self-identification). The negative effect of direct exposure for conflict events occurring shortly before the examination date – specifically, one month before – providing support for a psychological mechanism being at work (Bruck, Maio&Maari, 2022). Conflict has reduced the probability of students completing high school and of being admitted to university, and conflict events significantly hinder human capital accumulation and economic development.

Conflict results in the death or displacement of teachers, staff and students in troubled land and the quality of education also suffers due to shortages in basic necessities, such as food and water and school materials, especially in areas bordering the conflict that many experiences an influx of refugee or internally-displaced students. Several studies have examined the quantitative impact of human kinetics and health education (Smith, 2020).

According to Brookins (2019), the effects of conflict within an organizations and schools are as follows:

**Mortal Health Concerns:** Conflict with an organization and school can cause members or student to become frustrated if they feel as if there is no solution in sight, or if they feel that their opinions go unrecognized by other group members. As a result, members become stressed, which adversely affects their professional and personal lived. Among teachers and students, this may make them to have problems sleeping, loss of appetite or overeating, headaches and become unapproachable;

**Decrease in Productivity:** When a school or an organization spends much of their time dealing with conflict, members, staff and students take time away from focusing on the core goals they are tasked with achieving. Conflict causes people to focus less on the project and hand and more on gossiping about conflict or venting about frustrations. As a result, organizations and schools can lose money, donors and access to essential resources;

**Employee Turnover Impacts:** Organization and teaching staff who are increasingly frustrated with the level of conflict within an organization may decide to end their membership. This is especially detrimental when members are a part of the executive board or heads of committees and once staff begin to leave, the organization and schools have to recruit new staff and appoint acting board members;

**Conflict Escalation and Violence:** When conflict escalates without mediation, intense situations may arise between organization and school staff. It is unfortunate, but organizational and school conflicts may cause violence among members, resulting in legal problems for members and possibly the organization and school;

**Inspire Creativity to Solve Problems:** Fortunately, some organization members and school staff view conflict as an opportunity to finding creative solutions to solve problems, but conflict can inspire members to brainstorm ideas, while examining problems from various perspectives;

**Share and Respects Opinions:** As organization and school members work together to solve conflict, they are more willing to share their opinions with members. Conflict can also cause members to actively listen to each other as they work to accomplish the schools' goals;

**Improve Future Communication:** Conflict can bring group members together and help them learn more about each other. From learning each other's opinions on topics relevant to the organization's or school's growth to understanding each member's preferred communication style, and conflict within schools can give staff and students the tools necessary to easily solve conflicts in the future;

**Identify New Member:** Within organizations and schools, members actively participate in each meeting, enjoy serving on multiple committees and have an opinion on each topic the group discusses. There are also members who seemingly contribute little to the group and observe more than talk. Conflict within an organization and school can inspire typically silent members to step up and demonstrate their leadership skills by offering meaningful solutions to the problem the group is facing.

### **Concept of Conflict Management**

Conflict management is an umbrella term for the way we identify and handle conflicts fairly and efficiently. It is also the process of limiting the positive aspects of conflict. The aim of conflict management is to enhance learning and group outcomes, including effectiveness or performance in an organizational setting. Stiffler, Mckinney and Scalia (2020) opined that since conflicts in a business are a natural part of the work place, it is important that there are people who understand conflict and know how to resolve them. Conflict management is planning measures to avoid conflict when possible, and taking rapid and effective measures when it is made, therefore, conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills, and establishing a structure for management of conflict in environment (Chand, 2020).

### **Types of Conflict Management Styles**

According to Benaliel (2017) the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) used a human resource (HR) professionals around the world to formulate the types of conflict management styles and they are as follows:

**Collaborating Style:** A combination of being assertive, those who collaborate attempt to work with others to identify a solution that fully satisfies everyone's concerns. In this style, which is the opposite of avoiding, both sides can get what they want and negative feelings are minimized and outcome are important – for example, planning for integrating into one, where one wants the best of both in the newly formed department;

**Competing Style:** These who compete are assertive and uncooperative and willing to pursue one's own concerns at another person's expense. Using this style works when you do not care about the relationship but the outcome is important, such as when competing with another establishment;

**Avoiding Style:** Those who avoid conflict tend to be unassertive and uncooperative while diplomatically side stepping an issue or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation. Use this when it is safer to postpone dealing with the situation or one have as great concern about the outcome;

**Accommodating Style:** The opposite of competing, there is an element of self-sacrifice when accommodating to satisfy the other person. While it may seem generous, it could take advantage of the weak and cause resentment;

**Compromising Style:** This style aims to find an expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties in the conflict while maintaining some assertiveness and cooperativeness. This style is best to use when the outcome is not crucial and one is losing time; for example, when one

environment at school is likely to be more from the impact of the conflict-induced destruction on school infrastructures (Bruck, Maio, Maari, 2022).

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wants to make decision and move on to more important things and is willing to give a little to get the decision made.

### **Conflict Management Strategic Theory**

There are three main types of conflict management theory according to Shonk (2021) and they are as follows:

**Task Conflict:** This conflict often involves concrete issues related to employee's work assignments and can include disputes about how to divide up resources, differences of opinion on procedures and policies, and judgments and interpretation of facts. Of the three types of conflict, this particular conflict may appear to be the simplest to resolve, but it often turns out to have deeper roots and more complexity, that it appears to have deeper roots and more complexity than it appears to have at first glance. Task conflict often benefits from the intervention of an organization's or school's leaders. Serving as de facto mediators, manager/teachers can focus on identifying the deeper interests underlying party's positions;

**Relationship Conflict:** This type of conflict arises from differences in personality, style, matters of task, and even conflict styles. In organizations and schools, people who would not ordinarily meet in real life are often thrown together and must try to get along, and that is why this type of conflict can be common in organizations and schools;

**Value Conflict:** This type of conflict can arise from fundamental differences in identities and values, which can include differences in politics, religion, ethics, norms, and other deeply held beliefs. Disputes about values can arise on the context of work decisions and policies, such as whether to implement an affirmative action programme or whether to take on a client with ties to a corrupt government. Disputes involving values tend to heighten defensiveness, distrust, and alienation. Parties can feel so strongly about standing by their values that they reject trades that would satisfy other interests they might have.

### **Impact of Conflict Management on Human Kinetics and Health Education**

Conflicts are inevitable in life, in organizations, schools and everywhere one goes, and it however, does have some noteworthy advantages, and if handled correctly will resolve them amicably.

According to Omisore and Abiodun (2014) the following the steps in managing conflict:

- identifying the conflict element, emotions, behavior, and contradictions
- transformation: changing the orientation of the conflict and making the different parties aware of the elements
- solution: changing the elements allow transformation

The school-based conflict resolution programme began in New York City in 1972. Peer mediation programmes appeared by the early 1980s in San Francisco, Chicago and New York. Conflict resolution programmes in school have assist in resolving conflict issues there, students need to know how to manage and resolve conflicts if they are to become responsible members of schools and of society. Some educators believe competence in conflict resolution skills can lead to various social and academic achievement in the short run and more harmonious world in the long run (Van Slyck & Stern, 1991).

Conflict management programme should be incorporated into existing curricular areas of human kinetics and health education for the following reasons.

➤ Escalating violence in schools is a concern to educators and to the general public. It seems that many young people do not acquire the skills on peaceful conflict management on their own or from their families, therefore, there are some good reasons for thinking these skills should be taught.

➤ Students who lack conflict resolution skills often spend more time and energy in negative interactions with peers and teachers than in attaining the goals of the curriculum. Negative interactions often lead to consequences such as time-out, in-school suspension, and so on.

➤ When students resolve their disputes, educators spend less time dealing with discipline problems, leaving more time to assist students with academic pursuits.

➤ Students in their adolescent years value the opinions of their peer groups. Conflict management and peer mediation programmes capitalize on the importance of peers in the lives of typical students (Smith, 2020).

Other conflict management programme possible benefits include the following according to <https://saskschoolboard.ca>:

- less time is spent on setting students disputes
- reduces tension among students and staff
- better staff/student's relationships lead to improved school climate
- active involvement in the problem-solving process
- increases commitment to making solutions work
- provides positive modeling for solving problems
- increases student responsibility for resolving problems
- decreases adult intervention in conflicts
- encourages open communication
- teaches students positive ways to meet personal needs
- develops leadership skills
- enhances communication skills
- often results in improved academic performance
- improves self-esteem
- increases status with peers
- refines strategies to solve problems

## **Conclusion**

Conflict is the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving these goals. Conflict is very important to staff and students of human kinetics and health education at all levels. The easiest way to understand conflict is to divide theories of conflict into functional, situational and interactive. Conflict does not only come about when values or needs are actually, objectively incompatibles, or when conflict is manifested in action; it exists when one of the parties perceives it to exist. Conflict does not just crop up on its own and is caused by; limited resources, poor communication, task inter-dependence, overlapping, authority and role conflict as well as inequitable treatment. Impact of conflict on human kinetics and health education includes, negative impact on academic achievement of students, affects student learning environment, worsening students' psychological wellbeing and results in the death or displacement of teachers amongst others.

Conflict management is all about how to manage and averting of conflicts. It is also the process of limiting the negative aspect of conflict while increasing the positive aspects of conflict. The aim of conflict management is to enhance learning and group outcomes, including effectiveness or performance in an organized setting. Types of conflict management styles are, collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating, compromising, task conflict and relationship as well as value conflict. The impact of conflict management on human kinetics and health education include; training

students on how to handle conflict situations independently, reduce tension in teaching-learning situation, better staff/student relationship and encourage open communication amongst others.

### **Recommendations**

The following are the recommendations made for this paper:

1. Anticipating and identifying conflict on time is very necessary.
2. Always identify the source of the conflict on time.
3. Implement useful conflict management strategies and techniques in handling and resolving conflict in human kinetics and health education.
4. Subject discipline teachers should be trained on how to cope, reduce and successfully tackle the impact of conflict among students and themselves.
5. Introduction of conflict management as a course of study should be encouraged.
6. Students should be armed with coping mechanism to conflict-prone situations and environment.

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