# The Relationship Between the Conflict Management Styles of The Heads of Academic Departments and The Organizational Commitment of The Faculty Members At Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University

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**Abstract:**

The study aimed to determine the most common conflict management styles of academic leaders at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University, to identify the level of organizational commitment of faculty members, and to know the nature of the relationship between the styles of organizational conflict management of the academic department heads and the organizational commitment of faculty members at the university, and whether there are Statistically significant differences at the significance level (a ≤ 0.05) between the mean responses of the study sample members towards organizational conflict management styles and organizational commitment due to scientific rank, years of experience and gender. The degree to which academic leaders practice conflict management styles, as well as measuring the degree of organizational commitment of each faculty member. The original population from which the research sample was derived consisted of all faculty members in the faculties of the university, and the number at the date of the study was (1696), the research sample was chosen from the faculty members in an unintended way, and the tool was distributed electronically and manually to all faculty members at the university, and the examination of the responses was counted, and it was found that all of them were valid for statistical analysis, which amounted to (315) forms, which represents the number of sample members with a percentage of 19%. The study reached several results, the most important of which are: the existence of a significant effect for each of the styles (collaboration, Compromising, and Obliging/accommodating, and that there is a high degree of organizational commitment among university employees (with its various dimensions: affective, continuous, and normative), and that there is a strong direct correlation relationship between each of the organizational conflict management styles of academic department heads and the organizational commitment of faculty members at the university, the differences are not significant towards the styles of managing organizational conflict common by the heads of academic departments, as well as organizational commitment due to the variable of academic rank, the variable years of experience, and gender.

**Keywords:** Conflict Management Styles; Organizational Commitment; University Faculty Members and University Management.

## I. Introduction

Conflict is a natural phenomenon and inevitable in human life, since humans agree in some matters and differ in others, the conflict is a natural result of this difference, conflict is inevitable in personal life, in organizations, even between nations (Omisore and Abiodun, 2014), conflict cannot be avoided as long as organizations continue to use work teams. Whenever there is interaction, there is conflict, it is inevitable, it is an integral part of human life (Thakore, 2013). Abu Bakr (2015) believes that the conflict within the organization is one of the basic manifestations, as long as it deals with people, It is obvious that the conflict is formed due to their different ideas, orientations, and work conditions, as well as dilemmas, conflicts,

and ambitions that appear among them, which may generate conflict, whether negative or positive. The truth is that no organization whether service, industrial, commercial, governmental or non-governmental, public or private, profit or non-profit organization, is free from the phenomenon of conflict of its various types and tendencies, and the organizational conflict may be at the level of individuals or groups or within the group itself or between the organization and other organizations, where conflict is considered a normal phenomenon in all aspects of life (Gerami, 2009). Therefore, the conflict received wide attention from researchers, for example (Hodge et al., 2002; Robbins & De Cenzo, 2003), where most research on conflicts has been conducted in traditional organizations but this does not mean that educational institutions are free of them (Hearn & Anderson, 2002).

Higher education institutions are quite different from other organizations (Berryman-Fink, 1998), they are a mixture of departments, faculty members work much more independently and work more freely than employees of other organizations, and they have direct control over their environment (Siraj ud Din et al., 2011), yet the conflict has been a part of academic life a long time ago (Holton, 1995; Siraj ud Din et al., 2011) indicated that administrators in universities spend more than 40% of their time in conflict management, conflict is part of educational institutions due to the functional, structural, and relational characteristics of academic departments (Gmelch & Carrol, 1991). Miklas & Kleiner (2003) described educational institutions as "a perfect fertile ground for conflict", and the conflict at the level of universities is clearer, as the organizational structure of any university allows two or more of its units or different groups to share functional boundaries in achieving its specific goals. Universities also have individuals from different segments, there are students, lecturers, faculty members, administrative and technical staff, and from various clients and beneficiaries, which increases the possibility of the emergence of conflicts between these groups (Oredein & Mercy, 2014; Etim & Okey, 2013) where its main sources are communication factors, structural factors, personal factors and the limited resources of the university (Holton, 1998, Achoka, 1990, Van der Merwe, 1991) and individual differences in needs, desires, goals,

values, opinions, preferences or behaviors (Stimec & Poitras, 2009).

Encouraging academic freedom and unbridled thinking in higher education institutions can create conflict between students, between students and faculty members, between faculty members, and between faculty members and administrators. According to (Folger and Shubert, 1995) "Colleges and universities are no longer seen as quiet enclaves free from the conflicts that arise in all hierarchical organizations. Differences in goals or plans for the allocation of resources, misinterpretation or inconsistent application of institutional regulations, breaches of formal or informal contracts, power struggles, and personal antagonisms are all possible sources of conflict" (Fareo and Jajua, 2018). As a result, the number, quality, and complexity of campus conflicts increases (Volpe and Chandler, 1999). The current university context is more challenging than it was in the past, the extent of conflicts and forums to manage is far from ever before (Etim & Okey, 2013), which makes organizational conflict one of the fundamental problems in educational institutions (Cetin and Hacifazlioglu, 2004), as it can become an important tool in the development of these institutions if these institutions can manage it well, otherwise, conflict management becomes a difficult task. It can be said that conflict management is one of the most difficult tasks faced by the heads of academic departments, especially the conflict related to the confrontation with faculty members, this phenomenon may include most universities in the world at various scientific levels.

The position and function of the department head are one of the most essential components of the organizational structure in any college or university, as he bears the greatest responsibility in achieving the department's goals and managing its affairs. Therefore, the head of the academic department occupies a pivotal and very important position in university education since the academic department constitutes the organizational basis in the structure of higher education institutions. (Al-Hujaili, 2010). It was mentioned by (Saadeh, 2003) that up to (80%) of the decisions taken by the university are completed at the level of academic departments, so the department head faces many challenges that require administrative and academic skills

that qualify him to work efficiently and smoothly. However, most institutions of higher education Pay little attention to the preparation of academic department leaders, or their succession into the position (Wolverton et al., 2005).

## 2. Literature Review

- **Meaning of Conflict**

Abu Taher, & Gomes (2018) believes that conflict is a state in which two or more people appear to be incompatible, or that it occurs when individuals or groups perceive that others are preventing them from achieving their goals, Sehrawat, and Sharma (2014) indicated that Conflicts occur, whether in social or professional life, when a group or individual feels that he has been negatively affected by another individual or group, as (Montes et al., 2012) sees that conflict is an interactive process that is manifested in incompatibility, difference or dissonance. Within social entities or between them, i.e. at the level of the individual, group, organization, etc., as (Robbins, 2011) considers conflict that arises when one of the parties is certain that the other person affects him negatively or almost negatively affects him concerning the other party cares about it, while Mahmoud (2011) believes that the organizational conflict represents the differences of work stress, competition for limited resources, and the yearning of each person to achieve his interests even at the expense of the interests of others. It is carried out by a person or an entity to obstruct the achievement of the goal and interests of another party. As for Hussein et al., (2017), as it is in (Marzouk, 2011), they define conflict as a circumstance A debate in which one of the parties to the conflict is certain that there is a conflict between their interests, and each of them yearns to obtain benefits that completely contradict the other person's yearning, and this results in an inability to issue any decision due to the aggravation of conducting the comparison process and selecting the appropriate alternative from among the available alternatives. As for Rahim (2008), he sees conflict as an interactive process that appears in the event of disparity and alienation between individuals or groups in organizations and other social beings, or when one of the parties is exposed to the goals of the other party and prevents it from achieving its desires, needs and activities Interfering with that, especially when there is a desire for individuals or groups to take possession of fountains that each of them aspires to obtain to meet their own needs. Or with an entitlement to any of them linked to the altruism of one's behavior over the other during their participation in an activity or when any of their paths, values, beliefs, and skills differ greatly.

- **Types of Conflict**

There are different types of conflicts: self-conflict, the conflict between individuals, conflict within a group, the conflict between groups within the organization, and conflict between administrative levels and units within the organizational structure (Ejiogu, 1990; Mullins, 2005; Etim & Okey, 2013), the conflict exists with its different types within all organizations (Abu Taher, & Gomes, 2018). In higher education institutions (Fareo and Jajua, 2018) there are several types of conflicts, for example, students versus faculty/university administration, students versus faculty members, faculty members versus faculty members, faculty members versus department head, staff versus faculty members, etc.

Although there are many types of conflict in the academic department, two prevailing patterns are: the inability of the department head to decide to avoid facing conflict; intradepartmental bitterness, frictions, and differences of opinion make meetings bad, prevent colleagues from dealing with each another (Matz, 2011).

Fareo and Jajua, (2018) believes that there is a conflict of roles in higher education institutions since university and college systems are formed from diverse societies based on a wide range of academic disciplines and occupations. The internal life of the university or college is also affected by the various challenges, restrictions, and pressures arising from the external environment. Those external and internal pressures within the university and college systems create a so-called conflict of roles, such conflicts may lead to distrust and hostility between professionals and academics, which contributes to preventing the smooth, effective, and efficient administration in universities.

- **Views of Conflict**

Many researchers point out that the conflict can be constructive and destructive, the constructive conflict is known as the functional conflict, while the destructive conflict is defined as a dysfunctional conflict. Job conflict is defined as a challenge to ideas, beliefs, assumptions, and respect for the views of others even when the parties do not agree (Massey & Dawes, 2007). This is considered beneficial to the organization and therefore welcome, while dysfunctional conflict is harmful and thus discouraging organizations. It is believed that dysfunctional conflict increases dissatisfaction, decreases the emotional well-being of employees, and lowers organizational effectiveness (Rahim, 2008 and Guerra et al., 2005).

Hossain et al., (2018); Al Amyan (2004);Al-Muasher (2005); Al-Mikhlafi (2018) and Mullins (2005) suggests that there are three schools of thought regarding conflict perception: (1) Classical Thought, 19th (century), (2) (20th century) behavioral thought (3) Modern (interactive) contemporary Thought (21st century) These schools of thought reflected a clear contrast regarding the conflict and its role in the behavior of individuals and organizations, as each school of thought, looks at the conflict from its angle.

The Classical View (1930-1940) considered the conflict to be extremely dangerous as it was destructive and harmful to the organization. Therefore, there is no compromise with conflict, it must be suppressed and eliminated from the organization immediately, due to its negative effect on organization, therefore the leadership of the organizations should eliminate this phenomenon, or at least ignore it (Al-Muasher, 2005).

The behavioral view (1940-1970), called (The Human Relations or Contemporary View), allows for conflict to exist in the organization, so the owners of this view believe that conflict is a natural and inevitable part of organizational life. It can be controlled and has a positive impact on the organization if it is dealt with effectively and efficiently instead of suppressing it. The current situation and the administration should monitor the level of conflict and not interfere as long as it is within the permissible limits, the conflict may be positive and not necessarily always negative or destructive.

The Interactive View, according to this view, conflict is not only a positive force, but it is also necessary for the individual to function effectively (Omisore and Abiodun, 2014), sees that the introduction and development of conflict should be accepted in the organization.it believes that conflict protects the organization from becoming stagnant and indifferent. Additionally, several researchers on conflict analysis in the organization have concluded that conflict can be positive. Conflict is one of the strongest forces of human cooperation. It can be positive if it is used as a problem-solving tool. Accordingly, the organization must confront any conflicts in ways that can adapt it for the benefit of the organization when securing its goals (Al-Shamaa and Khudair, 2005). Rather, some see that conflict is not just a positive force but is also an absolute necessity based on that harmony, peace, calmness, and cooperation in a particular situation among employees expose them to become lethargic, indifferent, and unresponsive to the needs of change and innovation (De Dreu and Van Vianen, 2001).

- **Functions of Conflicts**

The contemporary view (Kirchof and Adams, 2005) also considers innovation as a mechanism for collecting multiple ideas and different viewpoints in a new and different fusion. An atmosphere of tension, and thus conflict, is fundamental to any organization committed to the development, innovation, creativity, or working with new ideas. Conflict is important for the organization and it should be encouraged, especially when the organization reaches a point where new ideas are absent, or there are many negatives among the workers in the organization, as conflict leads to progress, development, and change (Al-Muasher, 2005).

Some identify other functional consequences of conflict (Rahim, 2008) where conflict may stimulate innovation, creativity, and growth, improve organizational decision-making, and alternative solutions to a problem can be found, conflict may lead to solutions to joint problems and synergy, individuality and performance can be enhanced collective. As for Zain Al-Din (2010) he mentioned several positive aspects of the conflict: a means for the development and growth of the conflict parties, a way to solve problems creatively through consideration and joint action on many options offered, an opportunity to objectively evaluate

performance, and a mean to increase acquaintance between parties to the conflict, a way to discover our ways of thinking, doing and feeling, a way to show understanding, respect and acceptance of our ways of thinking, doing, and feeling others.

Some believe that conflicts are a double-edged sword, which has positive and negative consequences for both the employees and the organization. If conflicts are not managed effectively, they may negatively affect the organization in terms of poor performance, lack of cooperation, waste of resources, and productivity. While the conflict has a positive impact on the organization especially in building cooperation between employees, increasing productivity, encouraging innovation, and improving quality decisions when it is managed effectively (Abu Taher & Gomes, 2018).

In universities, as indicated in (Hamayun et al., 2014), several researchers such as (Eisenhardt & Schoonhoven, 1990; Amason, 1996; Nemeth, 1986; Bourgeois, 1985) indicated that conflict in universities may lead to both positive and negative outcomes.

Conflict can have positive results for academic departments in helping them identify issues, resolve issues, increase group cohesion, make alliances with other groups, and keep faculty members vigilant towards each other's interests. Conflict also helps in maximizing organizational effectiveness, development and creativity development and improving the quality of group work, and conflict within teams helps in improving financial performance, strategic planning, decision quality, and organizational development, as several researchers (Sehrawat and Sharma, 2014) see that conflicts in groups and educational institutions have a positive impact on group identity and its functional development.

The importance of conflict in institutions in general, and in academic institutions in particular - as Johanson (1987) points out (as in Alnamleh, 2007), indicates that many institutions need a balanced amount of conflict, to avoid stagnation, boredom, and routine, and maintain its growth and effectiveness.

Al-Otaibi (2009) stresses that the low degree of conflict in organizations is accompanied by a decrease in the innovations, inventions in the organization. In contrast, when there is high conflict, this distracts employees from paying sufficient attention to their work and exhausts their energies at the expense of the work itself, while conflict at an acceptable level allows the employee to rush towards conflict resolution without having any fundamental impact on the performance.

Many organizational theorists believe that in the absence of conflict, or at a very low level in the organization, it is likely to lead the organization to a state of stagnation and may lead to its failure and ineffectiveness. Accordingly, administrative leaders should intrude in two cases: reducing conflicts to the desired extent or activating conflicts and promoting them to the desired extent (Abu Asaker, 2018; Al-Maghribi, 2011).

It is quite clear that saying that the whole conflict is good or bad is not appropriate, and whether the conflict is good or bad depends on the type of conflict specifically, and it is necessary to differentiate between functional conflict and dysfunction (Omisore and Abiodun, 2014). Conflicts are neither constructive nor disruptive but how they are dealt with makes it either positive or negative, conflicts are not the problem, but the problem is when the conflict is poorly managed (Ghaffar, 2009). The problem does not lie in the conflict itself, but rather in how it is managed. The existence of an acceptable conflict within any organization will achieve a higher level of effectiveness if managed in an excellent manner (Al-Qaryouti, 2000).

- **Conflict Management**

Moran defines conflict management as a philosophy and a set of skills that help individuals and groups to better understand and deal with conflict as it arises in all aspects of their lives (Ghaffar, 2009). Purposeful conflict management in academia relies, in part, on operational perceptions of conflict and behaviors of officials/leaders. Department heads differ in their views of conflict and the strategies or patterns they use to address conflict scenarios.

The work environment and the nature of the work of department heads are complex enough. Organizational cultures, work procedures, and limited resources may impose limitations on establishing good personal relationships between the department head and department

members. The task of the department head is complex, especially in the context of conflicting organizational goals and unclear technologies. For example, department heads tasked with enforcing rules and regulations may have difficulty imposing sanctions acceptable to faculty members as this goes against faculty members' expectations of independence, thus department heads often operate in an arena of disharmony in the departments.

The academic department head's job is more difficult than most middle management jobs, especially when it comes to dealing with conflict within the department as the department head has little hierarchical authority and does not have many motivators that can be used as incentives in conflict management (Matz, 2011). Not surprisingly, department heads have identified interactions with department members as a major source of stress, more than 40 percent of department heads suffer from excessive stress due to "making decisions that affect others, resolving conflicts and group differences and assessing faculty performance" and consequently suffer from interpersonal and peer conflicts (Gmelch & Carroll, 1991). At a time of conflict, many heads of academic departments may not know how to resolve that conflict in constructive ways, and therefore a set of scientific knowledge related to conflict resolution has developed within academic institutions. Today, every successful management relies heavily on the ability to deal with conflict effectively, so current thinkers see that the most important is how to manage conflict so that the organization is largely able to deal with it effectively and direct it towards its desired purposes (Hodge, 2002). The negative and inefficient conflict managed by the department head has human, economic, and organizational costs (Skaar and Wiebelhaus-Brahm, 2013).

It is not required to deal only with conflicts to reduce the negative aspects of the conflict and to effectively deal with disruptive or aggressive behavior that hinders productivity (Sehrawat and Sharma, 2014), but rather to work on increasing its positive aspects and enhancing effectiveness or performance within the organization (Rahim 2002; Kuhn and Poole, 2000; Rahim, 2016). Conflict arises from a misunderstanding between two parties when almost everyone thinks it is right in all cases. So,

the management should choose an effective way to search for a solution to this conflict (Hossain et al., 2018).

- **Conflict Management Styles**

The method of dealing with conflicts means the way through which conflicts are communicated and confronted by choosing the appropriate method after realizing the motives of the conflicts themselves and their different dimensions (Marzouk, 2011). It is a pattern of behavior that a person tends to display when faced with a conflict. The methods of managing organizational conflict vary according to its causes, origins, and contexts, and the purpose of conflict management, whether carried out by the parties of the conflict or whether this includes the intervention of an external party is to influence the entire structure of the conflict to contain the destructive components in the conflict process (such as hostility and the use of violence) and help the parties that have incompatible goals in finding some solutions to their conflict (Thakore, 2013). The first task now for heads of academic departments is to create a healthy environment in which conflicts are managed in effective ways (Abu Taher & Gomes, 2018), not to avoid them (Bagshaw, 1998; Jarrett, 2009), and they must direct the struggle to be productive (Phillips & Cheston, 1979). In other words, contemporary department heads are called upon to resolve differences according to priorities and preferences, and to use conflict in a way that benefits their organizations (Friedman et al., 2000).

The following is an attempt to identify some theoretical frameworks related to organizational conflict management styles:

*Rahim model:* Based on the extensive work of Rahim and colleagues (eg, Rahim, 2002; Rahim, 2008; Rahim, 1983; Rahim, 2002; Rahim and Bonoma, 1979; Rahim and Magner, 1995). Five styles of conflict management are based on two main dimensions: caring for oneself and caring for others, these five different styles of conflict management are Competing/Forcing, Collaborations, Avoiding, accommodating, and compromising).

*Competing style:* Indicates high interest in oneself and low concern in others (Win-lose orientation). This style is not favored by most conflict management theorists, they consider it

an inappropriate method because it provokes frustration warns of the emergence of more conflicts (Rahim, 2002), and blocks the way for the emergence of new experiences, those who practice this style are considered less effective by their subordinates.

***Collaboration style:*** This style indicates a high concern for self and others. This pattern is also known as the problem-solving pattern. This style involves cooperation between the two parties (i.e. openness to exchange information, examination of differences to reach mutually acceptable solutions on a win-win basis).

***Avoiding Style:*** Refers to low concern for self and others and follows the lose/lose rule. This method is used when the person does not want to commit himself to something, does not cooperate, or avoids conflict entirely, as he is a withdrawn person. It can be a good technique to use if one is dealing with a difficult person or when there is no urgent need to make a decision. This style can also be used when the issue of conflict is insignificant or some other important issue needs attention (Rahim, 2002; Robbins, 2011)

***Obliging/Accommodating style:*** The style indicates low self-interest and high concern for others and follows a lose-win rule. This style is also known as accommodating, and this style is associated with trying to please the other party, submitting to its requirements, reducing the importance of differences, and focusing on commonalities to meet the interests and requirements of the other party. In this style, there is an element of self-sacrifice. It may take the form of generosity, self-denial, benevolence, or obedience to the command of another party. This style can also be used when someone finds their position wrong and wants to maintain cooperation (Rahim, 2002; Robbins, 2011).

***Compromising style:*** This style expresses moderate concern for self and others. It involves the principle of (take and give) or sharing (i.e, there are no winners or losers) in which the two sides give up something to reach a satisfactory resolution of the conflict. It could mean splitting teams, exchanging privileges, or striving for a quick halfway position and a mutually acceptable solution. It is a useful technique for temporary solutions to difficult problems and when time is very short to reach a detailed and comprehensive solution (Rahim, 2002; Robbins, 2011).

It can be said that collaborative methods (problem-solving, accommodating, and concession) are the most appropriate, effective, and highly efficient styles of conflict management (Sehrawat and Sharma, 2014). At the university level, the university administration's attitudes towards conflict were formed, as Baldridge identified the university administration's attitudes towards the conflict in three models:

***Collegial Model:*** This model assumes that conflict is an anomaly, and the owners of this trend believe that the nature of the academic community works to put conflicts aside. and harmonious.

***Bureaucratic model:*** The conflict is considered an anomaly as a result of the legalization of organizational behavior, but it preserves the possibility of its occurrence with the provision of bureaucratic sanctions that work to limit this conflict.

***The Political Model:*** It deals with conflict as a natural thing within the organization, as the social structure within the university is characterized by pluralism, cultures, and divergent interests, which indicates the possibility of addressing the causes of conflict with generosity to the method of discussion and negotiation (Kassim et al., 2018).

Accordingly, the application of purposeful conflict management styles is vital in improving and increasing the level of organizational commitment among department heads and faculty members. Furthermore, effective conflict management techniques will show how much the heads of academic departments are inclined towards maintaining a good relationship with their subordinates. The application of sound methods leads to the emergence of a positive relationship between department heads and faculty members and also increases the level of college performance (Kassim et al., 2018).

According to the important role of employees in organizations, distinguishable elements that can be observed in the advancement of the organization can be distinguished (Zeinalipoor et al., 2014). One of the main elements that can be very different is the organizational

commitment, which should be supported by the heads of academic departments.

- **Organizational Commitment**

Since the university professor is in a prestigious position, he must have the values and characteristics of a successful person, such as commitment to the college and the university in which he works, belief in its mission, and contributing to the progress of his department, college, and university, by working to follow up on the most important scientific and cultural developments that contribute to developing his capabilities and professional growth. Several studies (Rungruang, 2012) concluded that universities that belong to a long academic heritage have faculty members who possess high organizational loyalty, that such people put the university's interest above their interests, and that there is a relationship between the organizational commitment of faculty members and their teaching performance and student achievements, and conversely, academics' lack of organizational commitment creates high intentions to leave the university or college (Lawrence et al., 2012).

Maintaining professional staff for long-term employment and commitment to the organization has become one of the most worrisome issues for organizations, especially universities and colleges around the world (Loan Pham, 2016). Organizations with high organizational loyalty are characterized by higher productivity and organizational effectiveness than organizations in which employee loyalty is low (Khadija, 2015; Donald et al., 2016; Meyer et al., 2016); As a result, the turnover rate is reduced (Al-Barqi, 2017; Loan & Pham, 2016; Krishna and Marquardt, 2015), even determine the future of the organization whether it will succeed or not (Shahid & Azhar, 2013).

- **The Concept of Organizational Commitment**

There are many definitions of organizational commitment according to the multiplicity of researchers and viewpoints. Some see that there is confusion between the concepts related to commitment, some of them confuse commitment, affiliation, and commitment as synonymous. Some believe that the concept of organizational commitment means the extent to which the individual's goals are compatible with the goals of his organization, his connection with it, and his commitment to its values. According to (Antoncic and Antoncic, 2011), organizational commitment means individuals' belief in the organization's goals, acceptance of its own goals, and work for their common well-being, with an intense desire to remain in the organization. While (Steers, 1977) defines organizational commitment as the ability of an individual to agree with and relate to his organization.

The most famous model is (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Smith, 1993; Meyer & Allen, 1997) where a distinction was made between three types of organizational commitment, as mentioned in (Al-Mayouf, 2002; Rashid, 2004; Al-Barqi, 2017; Trofimov et al., 2017) as follows:

a) *Affective Commitment:* Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment to the organization and involvement in it, as it is based on the individual's positive feelings or emotions towards the organization. Feedback from supervisors, the extent of dependence on the organization so that individuals feel the organization's interest, and effective participation through a good and effective organizational environment, this type of commitment is affected by the degree of the individual's sense that the organizational environment allows him to effectively participate in the decision-making process related to work or the individual himself. According to (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997), affective commitment means the emotional bond that the individual feels towards the organization, which is characterized by identification and integration into the organization in addition to the enjoyment of being a member of the organization.

b) *Normative Commitment:* This type of commitment is also called a psychological commitment and expresses the employee's moral feeling to continue and stay in the organization without regard to the psychological aspects that could be achieved if he joined another organization. In most cases, this sense of the necessary support for the organization's employees is supported by the organization itself, with opportunities to participate in the application and completion of work procedures through active participation in defining the goals

and plans and setting the general policies of the organization. It was explained that this type of organizational commitment means that members of an organization have a very active and positive inclination towards the organization, such inclination includes understanding the goals and values of the organization, devoting themselves towards the job or work, and commitment to the organization. Normative commitment can arise when employees embrace the organization's values and support its vision (Khalili & Asmawi, 2012).

c)    *Continuous commitment:* This type of commitment is also called "Behavioral Loyalty", as it refers to the processes through which an individual becomes attached to the organization because of his past behavior. The effort and time spent by the individual within the organization make him adhere to it and its membership (Al-Ahmadi, as it is in Al-Mayouf, 2002).

According to these levels of commitment, Pepe (2010) found that if the loyalty of a faculty member falls within the level of affective commitment, he is emotionally attached to his university to a great degree, to the extent that he stays because he wants to, and if the commitment of a faculty member falls within the continuous commitment, he stays with the same university for many years because he is familiar with the costs associated with leaving, so he chooses to stay not because he wants to, but because he needs to, and if a faculty member shows normative commitment, he chooses to stay with his university, not because he wants to, but because he has to stay.

The researcher believes that there are very important factors that may have an impact on determining the organizational commitment of university faculty members, the most important of which are conflict management styles by the heads of academic departments. Based on the previous premises, and based on the relevant previous studies, the tracker of the results of many of those studies that examined the relationship between conflict management and organizational commitment can find it inconsistent, where the study in (Hadiya and Hussein, 2017), which was conducted in the College of Education at King Khalid University, concluded that the highest methods of organizational conflict were practiced by academic leaders in the College of Education, the method of accommodating, followed by the method of compromise and then the method of collaboration, while the method of using forcing and the method of avoiding were the least practiced, also the presence of statistically significant differences due to the difference in the academic rank variable in favor of the associated professors.

The study in (Abu Taher & Gomes, 2018) found a positive relationship between performance and styles of organizational conflict management, management facilitation had a positive impact on the styles of conflict management, according to the results of the study, there is a positive relationship between conflict management styles with creativity and innovation in several organizations in Bangladesh. The study in (Salem and Abu Daf, 2013), which was conducted in Palestinian universities, also found that the practice of heads of academic departments in Palestinian universities in the Gaza governorates to manage organizational conflict was high, the order of conflict management styles was as follows: Collaboration strategy, followed by accommodating strategy, Compromising strategy, and avoiding strategy

As for the study (Fareo and Jajua, 2018) on conflict management strategies in Ondo State at the Ondo State Tertiary Institutions, it concluded that the most effective conflict management strategies used are the participatory decision-making strategy. The study (Kassim et al., 2018) also indicates that many conflict management styles such as Collaboration, forcing, and compromising were of positive importance with job satisfaction. However, the dominating style and the avoiding style in conflict management were negatively related to job satisfaction. All five conflict management styles were positively related to job satisfaction among academic staff at Malaysian public universities. Also, the study of Siraj ud Din et al., (2012), which was conducted in several Pakistani universities, showed that there are statistically significant differences in the two patterns of dominating and obliging between male and female respondents. Regarding designation, significant differences were found in the styles of dominating and avoiding. While the age of the respondents also had a great influence on the compromising style.

The results of the research showed that different forms of conflicts also occurred in varying degrees in colleges and universities (Fareo and Jajua, 2018). For example, it was found that the level of conflict incidence between the student in the United Kingdom (UK) and Canadian universities was very high, Where the study of (Adeyemi, 2009; Adeyemi & Ademilua, 2012; Olaleye & Arogundade, 2013) revealed that the incidence of conflict in Nigerian colleges and universities was at high levels. Their studies also highlighted that the communication gap between management and staff is the main cause of conflict in universities. The results also showed that the level of student crisis in public universities was high. One of the main reasons for the crisis was the failure of the university authorities to meet the demands of the students. It turns out that student crises are less in private universities than in public universities. One of the important reasons given for this was the absence of student unions in private universities. The effectiveness of conflict management styles used in Nigerian universities was at a moderate level.

A study was also conducted in Egypt by (Ahmed, 2015), the results showed statistically significant differences between Minia University employees and private sector employees regarding the avoiding style and the absence of differences in other styles of conflict management and the absence of differences in organizational satisfaction and commitment. The results of the study also showed a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment in a sample of the private sector only. It also found positive relationships between conflict management styles, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, in a general sample of the university samples without the private sector. Finally, there were differences between the correlation coefficients between conflict management styles and organizational commitment in the university not in the private sector.

As for the study of Al-Minqash and Al-Anzi, (2016) on conflict management at the University of Tabuk, it concluded that organizational reasons, followed by personal reasons, are among the most important sources of organizational conflict. Deputy heads of academic departments use methods to manage

conflict, organization, arranged according to their use: compromising method, followed by accommodating, obligating, and avoiding. Also, the study of (Hussein et al., 2107) showed that the administration of Sana'a University uses the five styles of conflict management, which are in descending order, obligating, avoiding, collaboration, compromising, and accommodating; The results also indicated that four of the five conflict management styles: collaboration, compromising, and avoiding have a positive relationship with organizational commitment at the individual, group and university levels.

Also (Alzahrani, 2013) conducted a comparative study between Al-Baha University and Florida Atlantic University, and the results indicated that there were no significant differences in conflict management styles. The faculty members are Saudi and American. Moreover, there was no correlation between any of the conflict management styles, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

It is noted that many relevant studies have been devoted to a large extent for employees of the public sector or education other than universities (Mehrad, 2015); However, there is less interest in the higher education sector as a major contributor to national economic development (Kassim et al., 2018). Therefore, this study came to bridge the gap in the study of conflict management styles and organizational commitment in the context of the higher education sector among academics at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal Governmental University. Specifically, this study will examine common styles of conflict management: by heads of academic departments, among the five styles: Cooperative Style, Compromising Style, Accommodating Style, Forcing Style, and Avoiding Style with determining the level of organizational commitment for faculty members and determining the nature of the relationship between common styles of conflict management: and the organizational commitment of faculty members.

Currently, there is still little field research that examined the relationship of conflict management styles to organizational commitment, therefore the main objective of this study is to determine the common conflict management styles among academic department heads and the degree of their relationship to

organizational commitment among the faculty members at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University.

• **Study Problem**

The researcher has referred to some studies related to the subject of this study and found that several studies are confirming the importance of conducting further studies to diagnose and manage organizational conflict, such as the study of (Al Daradkha, 2011; Ghoneim, 2005; Thakore study, 2013; Al Barasi study, 2014; and Fitr and Al-Taher, 2015), and examining the nature of its relationship with organizational commitment. Since the university is represented by the academic departments as an educational organization that lives in an environment shrouded in conflicts, which requires those in charge of its management to possess the necessary skills to manage conflicts in its various methods. Hence, this study aims to identify the degree of the practice of the heads of academic departments of organizational conflict management styles and its relationship to the organizational commitment of the faculty members as well as the academic relevance provided by the frame of reference for researchers in this subject.

Based on the above discussion, the study problem crystallizes in answering the following questions:

1.     What are the most common conflict management styles among academic leaders at Imam University?
2.     What is the level of organizational commitment of faculty members?
3.     What is the nature of the relationship between the organizational conflict management styles of academic department heads and the organizational commitment of faculty members at the university?
4.     Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level (a ≤ 0.05) between the mean responses of the study sample members towards the common organizational conflict management styles by the heads of academic departments, as well as the organizational commitment attributed to scientific rank, years of experience and gender?

• **Study Significance**
1.     The results of this research are likely to encourage human resource professionals to add a new perspective to their scientific ideas, practices, and research in this field.
2.     The results of this study may benefit the heads of academic departments in providing feedback on the common methods in applying organizational conflicts. This may help them reduce the negative effects of conflicts and consequently, the level of organizational commitment of faculty members may increase, which may improve the performance in the future.
3.     The results of the study may contribute to highlighting the strengths and weaknesses in the conflict management strategies followed and their impact on organizational commitment, making it easier for decision-makers to address weaknesses and enhance the strengths of department heads
4.     Enriching scientific knowledge on the subject of conflict management and organizational commitment, since this topic did not take its supposed right to research and study
5.     It is considered one of the first studies in the Saudi environment, which examined the nature of the relationship between the conflict management styles of academic department heads and the organizational commitment of faculty members

## 3.     Definition of study terms and procedural definitions:

• **Organizational Commitment**

It means the extent to which the individual's goals are compatible with the goals of the organization, his connection with it, and his commitment to its values (Elegido, 2013). According to Antoncic and Antoncic (2011), organizational commitment means individuals' belief in the organization's goals, acceptance of its own goals, and working for their common well-being, with an intense desire to remain in the organization". Organizational commitment was defined by (Allen and Meyer 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). as "the relative strength of an individual's identification and participation in a particular organization.

The researcher defines organizational commitment procedurally as the degree of commitment of faculty members to the dimensions of organizational commitment (normative, continuous, and affective), which

can be measured through the sample responses to the study tool items.

- **Study Delimitation**

*Objective:* The objective of this study is the degree to which academic leaders practice conflict management styles and its relationship to the respondents' organizational commitment.

*Spatial boundaries:* represent the spatial boundary of this study in the faculties of Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University.

*The human boundaries:* The human limit for this study is represented in all faculty members - Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University.

*Time limit:* This study was applied in the first semester of the year 2020-2021.

## 4. Research Methodology

The research relied on the descriptive-analytical method for its relevance to the nature of this study, by developing a questionnaire to measure the degree to which academic leaders practice conflict management styles, as well as measuring the degree of organizational commitment of each faculty member.

- **Study Population and Sample**

The original population that was derived from the research sample consisted of all faculty members in the faculties of imam Abed Alrahman university, and the number at the date of the study was (1696) faculty members.

- **Research sample**

The questionnaire was distributed electronically and manually to all faculty members at the university when examining the responses, it was found that all of them were valid for statistical analysis, amounting to (315) forms, which represent the number of sample members and 19% of the original population.

- **Sample demographic variables**

Table (1) below shows the frequency and relative distribution of demographic variables.

Table (1): The frequency and relative distribution of demographic variables.

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Gender Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | 170 | 54.0 | 54.0 | 54.0 |
| Valid | Female | 145 | 46.0 | 46.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 315 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Faculty Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Human sciences | 245 | 77.8 | 77.8 | 77.8 |
| Valid | Natural Science | 70 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 315 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Years of experience Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** less than five years | 15 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| From five years to ten years | 110 | 34.9 | 34.9 | 39.7 |
| more than ten years | 190 | 60.3 | 60.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 315 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| **Academic rank** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| **Valid** Professor | 45 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 14.3 |
| Associate Professor | 40 | 12.7 | 12.7 | 27.0 |
| Assistant Professor | 230 | 73.0 | 73.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 315 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

\* The table was prepared by the researcher based on the SPSS25 program.

The researcher's depended on four demographic variables (sex - college - years of experience - scientific rank), and through table 1, it is clear that there is a close distribution for both males and females, where the percentage of males reached 54%, while the percentage of females reached 46%. While the percentage of employees of humanities faculties represented 77.8%. As for the employees of the faculties of natural sciences, the percentage of their representation in the sample was 22.2%. Regarding the variable number of years of experience, we find that 60.3% have more than 10 years of experience, and 34.9% have 5 to 10 years of experience, 73% of the respondents were assistant professors, while 12.7% were associate professors, and the proportion of professors was 14.3% from the above it is clear that there is a representation of all categories of demographic variables in the study sample.

- **Study tools and their psychometric properties**

The study tool consisted of (3) sections: the first section is the initial data of the respondents, the second section is concerned with conflict management styles, and the third section is related to organizational commitment.

The scale of *conflict management styles* was adopted after it was adapted to suit the environment of higher education and considering the opinions of arbitrators and translations contained in previous studies. The scale consists of 30 items that measure five main styles of conflict management, namely: collaboration, Compromising, Obliging/accommodating, forcing style, and Avoiding.

Also, the scale (Mayer & Smith 1993) was adopted to measure organizational commitment, it consists of the following dimensions: affective commitment (10 items), continuous commitment (5 items), and moral/normative commitment (5 items). After its items were adapted to suit the environment of higher education and considering the opinions of the arbitrators, the five-point Likert scale (from 1 to 5) was adopted.

- **Tool Reliability**

The reliability of the questionnaire was verified, and the "Alpha Cronbach" coefficient was relied upon to measure the reliability of the study tool, and the table 2 shows the reliability coefficient for each of the study's main and sub-dimensions, and the entire questionnaire.

Table (2): The reliability coefficients for each of the questionnaire's dimensions*

| Dimension | Number of items | Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient |
|---|---|---|
| **The first dimension: styles of conflict management** | | |
| 1-      collaboration | 6 | 0.971 |
| 2-      Compromising | 6 | 0.949 |
| 3-      Obliging/accommodating | 6 | 0.855 |
| 4-      forcing style | 6 | 0.724 |
| 5-      Avoiding | 6 | 0.876 |
| **Total of the first dimension** | **30** | **0.940** |
| **The second dimension: the measure of organizational commitment** | | |
| Affective commitment | 10 | 0.963 |
| Continuous commitment | 5 | 0.932 |
| Normative commitment | 5 | 0.860 |
| **Total of the second dimension** | **20** | **0.969** |
| **Total of the questionnaire** | **50** | **0.967** |

* The table was prepared by the researcher based on the SPSS25 program.

Through table 2, it is clear that the study tool is characterized by reliability, as the value of the reliability coefficient for the first study dimension (conflict management styles) was 0.940, and for the second dimension (the organizational commitment scale) 0.969, and it reached 0.967 for the entire questionnaire, which are high values that confirm that the study tool is characterized by reliability, which indicates that it measures what it was designed for, therefore has a high ability to measure the variables under study.

- **Content Validity**

The content validity or the so-called discriminant validity was calculated for the items that distinguish between the different dimensions of conflict management styles and the different dimensions of organizational commitment. As can be seen from table 3.

Table (3): Correlation coefficients for each of the items and dimensions of the questionnaire*

| Dimension | Correlation coefficient | Sig |
|---|---|---|
| The first dimension: styles of conflict management | | |
| collaboration | .834 | .000 |
| Compromising | .852 | .000 |
| Obliging/accommodating | .843 | .000 |
| forcing style | .763 | .000 |
| Avoiding | .433 | .000 |

| The second dimension: the measure of organizational commitment | | |
|---|---|---|
| Affective commitment | .911 | .000 |
| Continuous commitment | .945 | .000 |
| Normative commitment | .932 | .000 |

\* The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS25.

It is clear from table 3 that there is a strong direct correlation between each of the sub-dimensions and its dimension, where the value of the correlation coefficients was in the range of 0.763 - 0.945 except for one value of the mean correlation for the fifth dimension, which was 0.433. This indicates that there is consistency between each of the items and dimensions of the questionnaire and that the items can measure the variable for which they were developed at a level of significance of 1%.

- **Tool Correction**

The value of the weighted means and the correlation coefficients reached by the results of the study were interpreted according to the following criteria:

The following equation has been applied to determine the degree to which department heads are practicing conflict management styles: The highest value of the category - the minimum value of the category ÷ Number of categories = 5 - 1 = 4 / 5 = 0.8. 80, very low), (1.80 to less than 2.60, low), (2.60 to less than 3.40, medium), (3.40 to less than 4.20, high), (from 4.20 to 5, very high).

The following equation has also been applied to determine the level of organizational commitment for faculty members: the highest value of the category - the minimum value of the category ÷ number of categories = 5 - 1 = 4 / 5 = 0.8. Therefore, the limits of the ranges for the weighted means become as follows (from 1 to less than 1, 80, very low), (1.80 to less than 2.60, low), (2.60 to less than 3.40, medium), (3.40 to less than 4.20, high), (from 4.20 to 5, very high).

As for the criterion adopted to explain the value of the correlation coefficients, it has relied on the following classification: 0.0 to 0.10 No correlation; 0.11 to 0.25 is a weak correlation; 0.26 to less than 0.50 mean correlation; 0.51 to 0.75 high correlation; From 0.76 to 1.00 a very high correlation.

- **Statistical Analysis**

To process the information collected from the research sample through its tool, the following statistical methods were used in the phase of building the tool and analyzing the results: Relative weighted means, standard deviations, Pearson correlation coefficients, two-way test, the confidence interval for the mean (at 95% confidence) and One way analyzes of Variance (ANOVA) and test for significance of differences between two independent samples, T-test, and ANOVA for multiple comparisons, using the SPSS statistical program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

## 5.    Study Results and Discussion

The first study question: the most common conflict management styles for academic leaders at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University:

The researcher relied on four of the sub-variables to measure the variable (styles of conflict management), which are in order (collaboration, Compromising, Obliging/accommodating, forcing style, Avoiding) the weighted mean, median, mode, and standard deviation of the dimension of conflict management styles are shown in table 4.

Table (4): Weighted mean, median, mode, and standard deviation of the dimension of conflict management styles*

| The first sub-dimension | Number of items | Mean | Median | Mode | Std. Deviation | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| collaboration | 6 | 3.85 | 4.00 | 5 | 1.11 | Practiced to a high degree |
| Compromising | 6 | 3.57 | 3.83 | 4 | 1.12 | Practiced to a high degree |
| Obliging/accommodating | 6 | 3.43 | 3.50 | 4 | 0.90 | Practiced to a high degree |
| forcing | 6 | 3.28 | 3.00 | 3 | 0.77 | Practiced to a medium degree |
| Avoiding | 6 | 2.83 | 2.67 | 3 | 0.97 | Practiced to a medium degree |

* The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS25.

Table 4 shows the values of the weighted mean, the median, the mode, the standard deviation, and the trend, for each of the sub-dimensions of the first main dimension (conflict management styles) for the questionnaire. The weighted means of them were (3.85, 3.57, 3.43) respectively, which indicates that the most common conflict management styles are collaboration relying on the participation of the parties involved in the conflict and their cooperation to find appropriate solutions to the conflict, followed by the compromising style, which depends on human skills to influence the parties to reconcile them to reach intermediate solutions, then the Obliging/accommodating style. As for the forcing style, their practice was of medium frequency, with a weighted mean of (3.28, 2.83), respectively.

- **The second study question: The level of organizational commitment of faculty members:**

The level of organizational commitment was measured by relying on three dimensions, respectively (emotional organizational commitment - continuous organizational commitment - ethical organizational commitment), and table 5 shows the values of the weighted mean, standard deviation, and trend, for each of the sub-dimensions of the second main dimension (organizational commitment) of the questionnaire.

Table (5): Weighted mean, median, mode, and standard deviation of the dimension of organizational commitment (N=315) *

| The second sub-dimension | Number of items | Mean | Median | Mode | Std. Deviation | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Affective commitment | 10 | 3.97 | 4 | 5 | 1.11 | High |
| Continuous commitment | 5 | 3.88 | 4 | 5 | 1.12 | High |
| Normative commitment | 5 | 3.76 | 3.8 | 5 | 0.90 | High |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total commitment | | 3.87 | 1.12 | High |

* The table was prepared by the researcher based on the SPSS25 statistical program.

Table 5 shows the calculated values for each of the weighted mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and trend for each of the sub-dimensions of the second main dimension of the questionnaire (organizational commitment), where the weighted mean value of affective organizational commitment was 3.97, with a standard deviation of 1.11 with a "high" trend, and the mean value of the continuous organizational commitment dimension was 3.88, with a standard deviation of 1.12 with a "high" trend, and the mean value of the normative organizational commitment dimension was 3.76, with a standard deviation of 0.90 with a "high" trend, the mean value of the commitment dimension, in general, was

3.87, with a standard deviation of 1.12. Therefore, there is a high degree of organizational commitment among university employees.

● **The third study question: the nature of the relationship between the organizational conflict management styles of academic department heads and the organizational commitment of faculty members at the university?**

To examine the significance of the correlation between the organizational conflict management styles of academic department heads and the organizational commitment of faculty members at the university, the researcher presents table 6, which shows the correlation coefficient between each of the two variables.

Table (6): Correlation coefficient between conflict management and organizational commitment.

Nonparametric Correlations

| | | | Conflict management styles | Organizational commitment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Conflict management styles | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .622[**] |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | Organizational commitment | Correlation Coefficient | .622[**] | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |

* The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS25.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

By examining the correlation coefficient in table 6, we find that there is a strong direct correlation between each of the organizational conflict management styles for the heads of academic

departments and the organizational commitment of the faculty members at the university. Correlation is at a significant level of 1%.

● **The fourth study question: the significance of the differences towards the organizational conflict management styles practiced by the heads of academic departments, as well as the organizational**

***commitment, due to the academic rank, years of experience, and gender?***

The researcher relied on the t-test to examine the significance of the differences due to the gender variable, which is evident in table 7.

**Table (7): Independent Samples Test**

| | | Levine's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Conflict management styles | Equal variances assumed | .354 | .554 | .295 | 313 | .769 | .05474 | .18525 | -.31570 | .42518 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | .293 | | .771 | .05474 | .18698 | -.31973 | .42920 |
| Organizational commitment | Equal variances assumed | .084 | .773 | .303 | 313 | .763 | .06882 | .22745 | -.38599 | .52363 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | .306 | | .760 | .06882 | .22458 | -.38025 | .51790 |

\* The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the SPSS25 program.

From table 7, it is clear that the differences towards the common organizational conflict management styles by the heads of academic departments are not significant, as well as the organizational commitment attributed to the gender variable, where the test statistic value was $(sig>0.01)$, for each of the first and second questionnaire dimensions. Table 8 shows the significant differences due to the variable of scientific rank.

**Table (8): Significant differences due to the variable of scientific rank based on ANOVA test results.**

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conflict management styles | Between Groups | .217 | 2 | .109 | .200 | .819 |
| | Within Groups | 32.594 | 312 | .543 | | |
| | Total | 32.811 | 314 | | | |
| Organizational commitment | Between Groups | 1.972 | 2 | .986 | 1.246 | .295 |
| | Within Groups | 47.491 | 312 | .792 | | |
| | Total | 49.463 | 314 | | | |

From Table 8, the differences towards the common organizational conflict management styles by the heads of academic departments are not significant, as well as the organizational commitment attributed to the scientific rank variable, where the test statistic value reached (sig>0.01), for each of the first and second questionnaire dimensions. Table 9 shows the significant differences due to the variable of years of experience.

**Table (9): Significant differences due to the variable of years of experience based on ANOVA test results**

|  |  | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conflict management styles | Between Groups | .792 | 2 | .396 | .742 | .481 |
|  | Within Groups | 32.020 | 312 | .534 |  |  |
|  | Total | 32.811 | 314 |  |  |  |
| Organizational commitment | Between Groups | .396 | 2 | .198 | .242 | .786 |
|  | Within Groups | 49.067 | 312 | .818 |  |  |
|  | Total | 49.463 | 314 |  |  |  |

From Table 9, the differences towards the common organizational conflict management styles by the heads of academic departments are not significant, as well as the organizational commitment attributed to the variable years of experience, where the test statistic value was (sig>0.01), for each of the first and second questionnaire dimensions.

## 6.    Conclusion                    and Recommendations

We conclude from the study that conflict is an inevitable issue in any organization. The cost of conflict is so enormous that university leaders will do everything in their power to discover the best-negotiating technique for conflict resolution. Conflicts in universities have serious effects on the number of years students will spend in universities and the consequent financial obligations on the university and students. It also has negative effects on the image of universities abroad. Looking at the results of this study, it was concluded that the organizational conflict management styles for the heads of academic departments are critical variables in determining the nature of the correlation between those styles and the organizational commitment of faculty members at the university, knowing the nature of that relationship may provide guidelines for how the organization should enhance the organizational commitment of faculty members through the use of the best conflict management style. The best indicator of the effectiveness of department heads in faculties was the practice of collaboration, followed by compromise and satisfaction as methods for managing conflicts with faculty members.

We recommend that academic department heads focus on the important factors that influence the organizational commitment of faculty members, where conflict management styles should not be seen as a mean a rigid one-size-fits-all approach, rather, it should involve a series of concerted efforts, and a mixture of conflict management styles to create a higher level of organizational satisfaction and better management effectiveness, department heads should always explore dialogue strategy as the first step in conflict management before embarking on other options or strategies. Heads of academic departments, who tend to use force, control, and avoidance as methods of managing conflicts with faculty members, require more in-service

training. Also, long-term contracts with faculty members can be a solution for academics to focus on their academics rather than worry about their positions. The university should also make laws and regulations available to the heads of academic departments and all its employees to avoid the emergence of conflict within the system. The heads of the departments and the employees of their departments must demonstrate the spirit of tolerance to ensure the proper functioning of the departments, and the situation of minor conflicts should not be allowed to worsen the situation and turn into hot conflicts.

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