The Level Of Conflict Management For Public Schools' Principals In The Province Of Irbid And Its Relationship With Job Performance From Their Point Of View

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Abstract

This study aimed at revealing the relationship between conflict management and job performance for public schools' principals in the province of Irbid from their point of view. The study sample consisted of (220) principles of public schools in Irbid; (145) of them were males and the other (75) were females, and they were chosen randomly. (200) of them responded which is the final sample number. To achieve the aims of the study and collect data, the first instrument which consists of (17) clauses to measure conflict level and the second instrument which has (13) clauses to measure the level of job performance for school principals were designed. After the data had been analyzed, the study findings showed the following:
- The level of conflict management for public schools' principles in Irbid was high, as the dimension's overall mean was (3.71) with a deviation of (0.241).
- The level of job performance for public schools' principals in Irbid from their point of view was high, as the dimension's overall mean was (3.76) with a mean of (0.690).
- The presence of a positive statistically significant correlation between the variable of conflict management and job performance level for school principals in Irbid, as the coefficient between variables was (0.320).

Keywords: Conflict Management, Performance, Job Performance, School Principles.

Introduction

Schools, according to modern trends, are considered social institutions where humans constitute the basic element, as they express these institutions' identity and their effectiveness level. Usually, this basic element faces organizational conflicts which may affect the academic and job performance of school principals. Henceforth, they must possess conflict management methods that would enhance the level of their job performance to reach the required quality levels.

In modern organizations, the phenomenon of conflict is considered one of the greatest obstacles. When appropriate strategies are not employed, the time and efforts of the management will be wasted, and the efforts of workers will be distracted. Consequently, goals would become farther, and the morale of workers would fall in such organizations. (Isa, 2009).

Conflict is considered a natural phenomenon in the life of organizations, societies, individuals, and groups. It is one of the aspects of social communication which happens between individuals such as cooperation, competition, imitation, appeasement, and simulation. Considering that the nature of individuals and institutions requires development and change, conflicts usually accompany occurring changes in most prevailing relations (Daradkeh, 2011).

(Daradkeh, 2011) defines conflict management as complete conflict diagnosis and interference in terms of measuring its size and determining its

sources, reasons, effectiveness, and tackling methods.

(Abo-Naser, 2012) mentions that conflict management strategies vary within organizations. To understand these strategies, we have to undertake what is known as conflict management models. People in charge spend about 26% of their time managing conflicts and trying to find appropriate solutions. There are five methods of conflict management within an organization that can be followed by administrators to practice administrative methods in tackling organizational conflict:

Competing: is when one party tries to achieve their interest through their position without considering the interest of the other party. This strategy can be used when they want to make quick decisions, when changes occur or when the level of confidence falls.

Leniency: is when one party tries to achieve the interest of the other party without considering their interest.

Avoiding: is the withdrawal from conflict and ignoring personal interest as well as the interest of the other party.

Solidarity: is when one party tries to achieve their interest as well as the interest of the other party.

Compromising: is when both parties tend towards firmness and cooperation. Henceforth, both of them would gain and lose, and it is used at an early stage of conflict.

(Alqaryuty, 2008) mentions several strategies that can be used to solve internal conflict at an individual level:
-   A strategy where everyone involved in the conflict fails. What distinguishes this strategy is that it keeps the original causes of a conflict, and it does not achieve the aims or the true desires of anyone.
-   A strategy where one party fails while the other gains. This strategy is distinguished by fulfilling the desires of one party on the account of others with a possibility of conflict repetition in the future.

-   A strategy where everyone wins; conflicts are solved considering common interest.

(Alqaryuty, 2008) mentioned multiple strategies to solve the conflict at an organizational level characterized by the strategy of avoiding which involves segregation between the conflict parties, neglecting, limited interaction, and de-escalation strategy which aims at saving money. This would allow emotions to calm down between conflicting parties through compromising and mitigation. Furthermore, we have the strategy of using force through the interference of the organization management and the confronting strategy where the sources of the conflict are determined and debated by exchanging points of view. Job performance is the result of three factors: motivation, ability, and environment. Each one of these factors does not affect performance independently. Rather, each one affects through its interaction with the other ones. Any dysfunction in these factors would lead to weakness in performance. (Abo-Baker & Ahmad, 2020).

Problem Statement

Theoretical literature has illustrated the significance of conflict management in the effectiveness of educational institutions and its impact on varying organizational variables. It has also illustrated the significance of conflict management in the effectiveness of job performance for school principals. This presented a strong motivation to the study of the correlation between variables to determine the impact of conflict management on job performance for public schools' principals in Irbid and its level. Henceforth, the current study aims at revealing the correlation between conflict management and job performance for school principals from their points of view.

Research Questions:

The present study seeks to give answers to the following research questions:
-   What is the level of conflict management for school principals in Irbid province from their point of view?
-   What is the level of professional performance for school principals in Irbid from their point of view?

- Is there a statistically significant correlation at level (α =0.05) between conflict management level and job performance level for school principals?

Significance of the Study

The current study aims at revealing to what extent principals use conflict management methods and their impact on their performance. The significance of the current study is highlighted by its themes that are emphasized on conflict management between public schools' principals in the province of Irbid and its correlation with the level of job performance from their points of view, as**:**
- It is expected to add significant findings in the field of higher education to offer feedback regarding conflict management methods.
- Its significance comes from the category it approaches which represents an elitist category that influences society.
- It may provide academic leaders at universities with theoretical concepts and practical results regarding the significance of conflict management in achieving the effectiveness of job performance to aid them in reaching high levels of conflict management among school principals. This would reflect positively on their performance and universities in general.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was limited to public schools' principles in the province of Irbid in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the scholastic year 2019/2020.

Definition of Operational Terms.

The present study included many terms, which can be defined as follows:

Conflict management "technically": (Abu Sanina & Albayati, 2014) and (Albalbisi, 2003) defined it as the effort done to tackle conflict using one of the conflict management strategies to carry the conflict to an acceptable degree.

Conflict management "procedurally": methods and procedures used by school principals to approach disputed situations among them measured by the questionnaire of conflict management.

Job performance "procedurally": defined performance as the interaction of the employee's attitude which is determined by the interaction of their effort and ability (Bajaber, 2017).
(Alhawamdeh & Alfahdawi 2022) defined job performance as a set of administrative attitudes which express the process of task performance by the employee, their responsibility, abiding by the administrative aspects, and responding to them effectively.

Job performance "procedurally": is the functional tasks assigned to school principals in the province of Irbid that they practice to the fullest extent to achieve job targets. It is measured by the job performance questionnaire prepared for this aim.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides some literature concerning the topic of the present study:
It has currently become important to find a method to confront conflicts ideally, so they can be invested to serve the organization and fulfill its goals. To deal with organizational conflicts, we have to understand the conflict and determine its types, levels, reasons, and management methods. This will be discussed, so let us determine the tackling methods within the administrative organization without negative effects (Makri, 2021). As a result of the increased level of complexity of life and its development and the presence of administrative organizations that have humans as their main axis expressing emotional life in organizations depends on the interaction among individuals. This interaction can lead workers to agree in some situations and disagree in others. These agreements and disagreements lead to organizational conflicts which are considered problematic for the leaders of the organization in their everyday work. Most organizations perceive conflict as harmful to the organization and behave to be refused and resisted and it does not achieve the balance between individual values and organizational values where individuals work. Conflict, also, does not contribute to achieving organizational effectiveness unless these conflicts are

considered natural phenomena that managements accept rather than refuse as well as managing and employing them to benefit from their results (Jalal & Ma'dan, 2020).

Boulding defines organizational conflict as a competitive situation where conflicting parties recognize the contradiction of obtaining future positions and where each party wants to rank first which contradicts the desires of the other party. Stoner and Freeman define conflict as the disagreement between two or more members or two groups within the organization. This can result from the presence of mutual reliance between them in work activities or from a difference in their positions, aims, values, or perceptions.

We typically find confusion between the terms of conflict and competing. This is because a conflict is directed at another party including behavior and an attempt to obstruct their aims and activities. To understand the nature of organizational conflicts within organizations and educational institutions, we have to know the reasons and sources of such conflicts. One reason is attributed to communication channels among individuals. Conflicts occur as a result of a disruption or malfunction -like activities carried out by individuals as well as the competition over limited resources and positions (Atir & Sa'doun, 2020).

Conflict Levels:
Educational literature related to the concept of conflict illustrates multiple levels of conflicts that may emerge from conflicts themselves. The following explains these levels:

Interpersonal conflict:
Such a conflict is formed within the individual and is considered a norm in our lives (Shafait, Yuming & Sahibzada, 2021).

Individual Conflict:
Happens between two individuals or parties due to their adherence to their points of view.

Group Conflict:
This type of conflict occurs when an individual confronts the tradition of the collective and resists them. This comes from the fact the collective has a significant and effective impact on individuals.

Role Conflict:
Role conflict refers to a specific set of integrated and related activities done by an individual who makes an effort to do them.

In general, a conflict results in positive as well as negative consequences. To illustrate, conflicts sometimes show hidden capacities that do not typically appear in normal situations. On the other hand, they push people to the extremes in prioritizing their interests over the greater good of the organization. Furthermore, time and effort are wasted and the morale of workers falls which results in an overall decrease in efficiency and effectiveness. Given the significance of conflict in organizations, several researchers in the management field suggested strategies and varying methods to tackle conflict which can be followed by managers and administrators to solve a conflict (YIldIz, 2021).

Previous Studies:

(**Hadzic, Fark 2021)' the study titled: Ethnoreligious political dispute, conflict management, leadership, and civic inclusion: The Balkans and Globally**.
This study undertakes the concepts of ethnoreligious identity, politics of dispute, leadership, conflict management, and civic development. The study hopes to open opportunities for establishing radically different interethnic relations.

(Song, Sohn & Kim 2021)'s study titled: Decision-making framework for the proactive policy conflict management: The case of new airport projects in South Korea.
The study above presents a new decision-making framework based on scientific criteria. This framework consists of the diagnosis of conflict structure and feedback to be employed on new airport projects in South Korea. It concluded that a structural diagnosis of conflict and decision-making based on the framework is needed. The introduced framework is thought to be scalable for scientific progress on infrastructure policy conflict management.

-**Lamoure and Chellali's (Lamouri & Chellali, 2021)'s study titled: The ROCI-II Model in**

The Management of Regulatory Conflict Between Reality and Application.

The study aimed at applying the RAHIM model ROCI-II in Medea University organizational conflict management considering both data and theory. The study found that there had been a statistically significant difference at the significance level (a<=0.05) attributed to the variables of gender, scientific qualification, and years of experience. It also found that the style of dominance is dominant in organizational conflict management at Medea University.

- **Alghamdi (Alghamdi, 2020)'s a study titled: Strategies for managing organizational conflict by academic female leaders and their relationship to job alienation among administrative employees at Al-Baha University.**

The study aimed at revealing to what extent the strategies for organizational conflict management were practiced by female academic leaders and their relationship to job alienation. The study concluded that the degree of practicing these strategies was moderate with compromising strategy ranking first. There are statistically significant differences in avoidance strategy attributed to the variable scientific qualification. Finally, it found that there was a positive correlation between obligation and job alienation.

(Abo-Bakr & Ahmed's (2020)'s a study titled: Organizational conflict management and their Relationship with job well-being and research self-efficacy of Minia University staff members.

The study aimed at revealing the relationship between organizational conflict management styles and job well-being as well as to research the self-efficacy of Mini University Staff. The study found that was a positive statistically significant correlation between the styles of collaboration, accommodation, compromise, and both job well-being and research self-efficacy. On the other hand, there was a negatively significant correlation between the remaining styles and job well-being as research self-efficacy. The study suggested several future studies.

(Torre & Randall)'s study titled: A new conflict model to address complex situations and promote personal harmony.

The study introduces a new model based on OD to help in approaching complex conflicts. It perceives conflict as a means of self-development. It also recognizes resulting emotions and feelings which would help in addressing deeper sources of conflict. People involved stated that such a model helped them address the origin of conflicts and experience self-growth.

(Lbloushi, Sameera 2019)'s titled: Organizational conflict on the performance of school leaders in general education in the province of Jumoum from their point of view.

The study sought to identify the organizational conflict in the performance of school leaders in general education in Jumoum province from their point of view. The findings showed that the organizational conflict had a high impact on their performance in the field of study and moderate in the fields of competition and courtesy. The study recommended the provision of deep training in dealing with organizational conflict among female leaders.

In light of this study and questions that have been answered, a descriptive approach based on describing study variables represented by conflict management and job performance in public schools in Irbid and the correlation between them was used. This approach is considered the most appropriate one for this study, as it presents precise descriptions of topics to be discussed through data collection and describes the method used in research. It also assists in data organization and finding the correlation connecting main variables in the study as well as statistical differences for personal and demographic variables to reach precise data.

Population and Sample

The study community consisted of 1025 Irbid public schools principals in the scholastic year (2019/2020). The sample consisted of 200 school principals in Irbid; (145) males and (75) females), and they were chosen randomly.

Research Instrument.

To achieve the aims of the study, the researcher developed two instruments following theoretical literature and previous studies related to this topic.

First instrument: Conflict management.

Seeking to develop an instrument appropriate for measuring the level of conflict management for school principals in Irbid, the researcher followed the following steps and procedures:

1- Several measurements and questionnaires prepared by related researchers and studies were collected to benefit from such as (Abo-Naser, 2010)'s study, (Sadiq, 2000)' study, (Duez, 2012)'s study, and the study of (Din, et al., 2010).

2- Determining the nature of the fields that should be included by any instrument in measuring conflict management for school principals in Irbid.

3- An initial form of conflict management scale was reached. It consisted of 17 clauses. Clear meaning, correct language, and simple expression were taken into account when these clauses were prepared and distributed in their three main fields.

Validity and reliability of the Instrument

Validity

To verify the validity of the conflict management questionnaire. It was presented to 10 referees experienced and specialized in educational management, measurement, and assessment. The researchers edited what 80% of referees agreed on. The Conflict Management questionnaire included 17 clauses in its final form. The observations of the referees in terms of deletion, blending and editing are considered a sufficient indicator of validity.

Reliability

The reliability of the instrument was verified by applying it to an exploratory sample of 25 individuals from outside of the study sample with a time interval of two weeks. Two methods were used to extract reliability:

In the (test-retest) method, then the Pearson coefficient was calculated to calculate the correlation of reliability. The Pearson coefficient was (0.90) The internal integration method used the Cronbach Alpha equation. The correlation of reliability was (0.88).

Second instrument (Job performance):

Seeking to develop an instrument appropriate for measuring the level of job performance for school principals in Irbid, the researchers followed the following steps and procedures:

1- Several measurements and questionnaires prepared by related researchers and studies were collected to benefit from such as (Enaya 2010)'s study, (Shaheen 2010)'s study, (Laguador& Agena,2013)'s study and (Ashagar,2017)'s study.

2- Determining the nature of the fields that should be included by any instrument in measuring job performance for school principals in Irbid.

3- An initial form of job performance scale was reached. It consisted of 15 clauses. Clear meaning, correct language, and simple expression were taken into account when these clauses were prepared and distributed in their two main fields.

Validity

To verify the validity of a job performance questionnaire. It was presented to 10 referees experienced and specialized in educational management, measurement, and assessment. The researchers edited what 80% of referees agreed on. The job performance questionnaire included 13 clauses in its final form. The observations of the referees in terms of deletion, blending and editing are considered a sufficient indicator of validity.

Reliability

The reliability of the instrument was verified by applying it to an exploratory sample of 25 individuals from outside of the study sample with a time interval of two weeks. Two methods were used to extract reliability:

In the (test-retest) method, then the Pearson coefficient was calculated to calculate the correlation of reliability. The Pearson coefficient was (0.89) The internal integration method used the Cronbach Alpha equation. The correlation of reliability was (0.86).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section illustrates the findings obtained from the present study. These findings are presented based on the research questions that guide the present research.

Study findings were collected and presented according to study questions according to the following:

First question findings: 'What is the level of conflict management for public school principals from their points of view?"

To answer the question above, means and deviations for conflict management levels for school principals were extracted. Table (1) illustrates that.

Table (1) Means and deviations of conflict management clauses for school principals in Irbid from their point of view in descending order according to means.

Level	Deviation	Mean	Clauses	Clause number	Rank
High	.925	3.88	I am Patient when having a difference with another colleague	8	1
High	.779	3.86	I Support the opinion of the majority even if I disagree with them	16	2
High	.744	3.84	I Illustrate agreement points between conflicting parties	14	3
High	.857	3.82	I am Eager to solve my colleagues' conflicts	3	4
high	.864	3.79	I Try to de-escalate the intensity of the conflict as much as possible	17	5
high	.876	3.78	I Avoid being involved in job conflicts with my colleagues	10	6
high	.809	3.78	I Avoid hurting the feelings of others	11	7
high	.809	3.78	I Respect other people's points of view if I disagree with them	15	8
high	.810	3.76	I Converse with school principals to reach a common perception of academic school-related issues	1	9
high	.936	3.72	I Cooperate with school principals to find an integrated solution that dissatisfies conflicting parties	2	10
high	.653	3.72	I Ignore some wrongs done by school principals	6	11
high	.679	3.72	I Avoid interference in controversial issues with colleagues	9	12
high	.761	3.71	I Bring points of view closer to each other when a conflict occurs	13	13

Level	Deviation	Mean	Clause	Clause number	Rank
high	.827	3.70	I am an initiator in helping my colleagues solve problems that face at school	12	14
moderate	.816	3.59	I Give up my opinion if it contradicts the opinion of the majority of school principals	5	15
moderate	.940	3.40	I Hold open debates among conflicting parties	4	16
moderate	.857	3.20	I Cooperate with school principals in making appropriate decisions regarding school	7	17
high	.241	3.71	Overall class management		

Table (1) illustrates that the conflict management level from the point of view of school principals in the province of Irbid was high, as the overall mean was (3.71) with a deviation of (0.241). Means varied between (3.20-3.88). Clause (8) "I am Patient when having a difference with another colleague ranked first, as it had the highest mean (3.88) and a deviation of (0.925). It also came with a high level. On the other hand, clause (7) "I Cooperate with school principals in making appropriate decisions regarding school" ranked last, as it had a mean of (3.20), a deviation of (0857), and a moderate level.

This can be attributed to the fact that school principals undertook training programs in management and leadership. Consequently, they can behave reasonably and have comprehension and communication skills and show reliability and good intentions. The increased level of conflict management can be attributed to laws and regulations, consulting higher management when an individual cannot refer to these regulations. School principals may have compromising skills which are considered a common method to manage conflicts as well as force, complainant, and avoidance when they deal with their colleagues. These results go along with the study of (Din, et al,2010) and disagree with the study (Abo-Naser, 2012).

Second question findings and discussion: "What is the level of job performance for public schools' principals in the province of Irbid from their point of view?

To answer the question above, means and deviations for Job performance levels for school principals were extracted. Table (2) illustrates that.

Table (2) Means and deviations of job performance clauses for school principals in Irbid from their point of view in descending order according to means.

Level	Deviation	Mean	Clause	Clause number	Rank
high	.907	3.93	I have the specialized knowledge necessary to achieve quality job performance	3	.1
high	.857	3.83	I benefit from my colleague's expertise to better my job performance	4	.2
high	.886	3.83	I make the maximum effort to do my job tasks	7	.3
high	.921	3.82	I have the motivation for academic work	13	.4

high	.865	3.81	I possess the necessary teaching skills to achieve quality job performance	2	.5
high	.852	3.78	I attend workshops to develop my job performance	5	.6
high	.885	3.78	I can make decisions regarding the tasks assigned to me	9	.7
high	.910	3.77	My job performance corresponds with quality standards	1	.8
high	.871	3.75	I do my job tasks according to school policy	12	.9
high	.886	3.72	I work after working hours if it is necessary	10	.10
high	.923	3.68	I am serious about job performance	6	.11
Moderate	.907	3.61	I arrange the activation of the educational process with my colleagues	11	.12
Moderate	.879	3.54	I make use of the resources offered to achieve academic excellence	8	.13
high	**.690**	**3.76**	Overall job performance		

Table (2) illustrates that the level of job performance for school principals in the province of Irbid from their points of view was high, as it came with an overall mean of (3.76) and an overall deviation of (0.690). Means varied between (3.54 - 3.93). Clause 3 "I have the specialized knowledge necessary to achieve the quality of job performance" ranked first, as it had the highest mean (3.93) and a deviation of (0.907). It also came with a high level. On the other hand, clause 8 "I make use of available resources to achieve academic excellence" ranked last with a mean of (3.54) and a deviation of (0.879). It had a moderate level.

This result can be explained according to job commitment, loyalty to the university where they work, the effects of teaching morals, and the high level of accountability and self-oversight for school principals in Irbid province. This result may be attributed to the fact that school principals do the assigned task in educational fields according to available capacities offered by schools and supplies in classrooms, labs, and other school facilities. Moreover, this may be attributed to the fact that schools are the authority that assigns tasks to people as well as assigning management units to do such a role. This goes along with the study (Laguagor & agena,2013) and disagrees with the study (Shaheen, 2010).

Third question findings and discussion: "is there a statistically significant correlation at level (α =0.05) between conflict management and job performance levels for public schools' principals in the province of Irbid"?

To answer the question above, the Pearson coefficient between the variable of conflict management and job performance level for school principals in Irbid was extracted. Table (3) illustrates that.

Table (3) Pearson coefficient between the variable of conflict management and job performance level for public schools' principals in the province of Irbid

Professional performance	coefficient	Variable

0.320**	Coefficient R	Conflict Management
.0000	Statistical significance	
200	Number	

*Statistically significant at the significance level (0.05).
** Statistically significant at the significance level (0.01).

Table (3) illustrates the presence of a positive statistically significant correlation between the variable of conflict management and job performance level for school principals in the province of Irbid, as the coefficient between the variables was (0.320**) with a statistical significance of (.000) which is a statistically significant coefficient at level (□ = 0.05) which indicates that the higher the level of conflict management is for school principals the better job performance is and vice versa. It also indicates that environments where conflicts are positively managed and where conflicts are at their lowest limits produce an ideal environment for job performance for school principals.

Recommendations:
In light of the study findings, the researcher presents a set of recommendations:
- Developing the system of promotions and incentives for school principals in universities to maintain their sense of security and job performance and to consider competing and creativity and support among them and fulfill their needs and desires.
- Seeking to better job performance in schools through applying the principles of comprehensive quality management.
- Conducting more future studies on the variables of this study and their relationship with other variables.

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