

# Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Commitment: The Conceptual Framework Development

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**Abstract**— The purpose of this study is to provide a conceptual framework that identify the relationship between conflict management styles and organizational commitment in context of Yemen. In addition, this study contributes towards a contemporary issue of conflict management. It will shed light on the factors related to conflict, styles for managing conflict and their relationship with organizational commitment at the levels of individual, group and university. This study fills gap as currently there is no research conducted in Yemen on the relationship between conflict management styles and organizational commitment at the three levels.

**Keywords**— Conflict Management, Styles, Organizational Commitment, Conceptual Framework, Yemen.

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a matter of fact, conflict is considered to be a phenomenon in every organization; it is impossible to be avoided but it is possible to be managed when we diagnose the symptoms of conflict. The proper management of conflict will contribute towards the prosperity of the organization [1].

Nobody can deny the relationship between conflict and other variables, whether negative or positive that may affect the organizations at all; but if it is handled well, it will create fruitful and innovative competition among the organization's members. Accordingly, there is an urgent need that this conflict should be managed. The poor management of conflict can generate significant bad costs that will occur in terms of disappointment, discouragement, employees turn over and low productivity. In addition, such conflict will lead to lose of time and financial costs as legal suits can be incurred. It is so important to recognize the conflict and its dimension in order to manage it properly and then to improve and guide the organization in achieving its objectives ([2] & [3]).

Job commitment is a variable that is affected by conflict which is considered to be the desires, views

and positions of people towards their jobs and then toward the organization [4].

This research will examine the relationship between conflict management styles used by Sana'a university and organizational commitment at the levels of individual, group and university.

As Sana'a university is one of the most important governmental institutions in the country that renders its services for the public, conflict may affect employees and society at large in case of improper performance and commitment to work as required [5]. The human element is considered to be the mainstay for the success of organizations and for the achievement of their objectives, so it is necessary to pay more attention to this element in order to be more effective and productive. If conflict in the organization is not managed well, it will affect the employee's commitment and his performance.

Moreover, the results of conflict which are poor education and learning, will be reflected on the knowledge and culture of the students and then to their contribution in building the nation [6].

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Conflict Management Styles*

Five conflict management styles can be used by managers based on the intensity of conflicts and care for other people. These styles are avoiding, compromising, forcing, problem solving (cooperation) and accommodating.

#### A. *Avoiding Style:*

This style is also called withdrawing or ignoring style. In particular conflicts, this style is advised in taking passive roles and avoiding it all together. Cooperativeness and assertiveness are low in avoiding style. From the viewpoint of managers, it is particularly important in case of involving in situations which may stimulate further controversy or in case conflicts are naturally too

trivial and are not necessary for managers to waste time trying to resolve them [7].

In addition, this style may be appropriate when it needs too much time to deal with, or when the time/place is not suitable to discuss the problems or when people are not able to handle conflicts due to their emotions or the others can manage the conflicts better. It may also be applied in case that conflicts are so important to the parties' positions that they could be best either to leave these conflicts to them to be handled or to let events take their own course. When conflicts create frustrations and tensions to parties, conflicts are preferred to be avoided.

Some people believe that conflict is an evil and has negative effects; accordingly, those people may try to avoid conflict causing such situations.

The biggest disadvantage is that conflict is not directly handled. This style is useful to be applied in cases where there are no chances to win or in case of so cost disruption [7].

The style of avoidance conflict has possible advantages which are:

- When people faces aggressions, they may select to postpone responses until they are in more preferred positions to push back.
- Conflict avoidance is "a low stress style; in this situation the conflict is short".
- This style lets a person prepare time before acting.
- The style of avoidance conflict has disadvantages which are:
- An individual can lose his/her work or position.
- If there is no response or action by the targeted person, it can be interpreted as an agreement.
- This style may lead to negative effects on the relationship with parties that expect some actions [8].

#### B. *FORCING STYLE:*

This style is also known as the "win-lose" approach. As Webb [9] puts it, the simplest conceivable resolution is the elimination of the other party—to force opponents to flee and give up the fight—or slay them. This is a domination style where dominators have powers and authorities for enforcing their own opinions over other parties. Moreover, it is known for individuals who focuses more on personal interests than common ones. When implementing this style, employees are forced to follow managers' instructions

This style may be appropriate when there is an urgent need for taking actions, or when an unpopular solution has to be used and a deadline is near, as well as in case of small issues. It does

not take a lot of time to be implemented, but it is associated with disapproval and resistance of employees. When the environment is an open and participative, this approach is inappropriate. The strength of this style is speed and the weakness is that it creates offenses of one of the parties that didn't win anything [7].

The disadvantage of this style is that it may have negative impact on the opponent's relationships in the long term and the opponent can react in the same way, even if he used to be forceful originally.

Moreover, this style takes a lot of energy, thus it can be exhausting to some individuals [10].

#### C. *ACCOMMODATING STYLE.*

Accommodating is sometimes called "the smoothing style of conflict management". It often concentrates on resolving conflicts by meeting the needs of others instead of addressing the conflict issues themselves [11].

Individual with internal conflicts may attempt to "count his blessings" and ignore the conflicts; when there is conflict between two parties within the organization, the manager tries to calm things down by being understanding and supportive to both parties and urging them for cooperation [7].

High degrees of cooperativeness are included in this style. Managers applying this style try to reach their own objectives, goals and desired results, allowing partners to accomplish their objectives and results. It is also significant for encouraging cooperation and keeping future relations between the parties (Ipid).

This style is aimed at reducing differences and focuses on common needs. It encourages cooperation as an advantage of this style; however, it does not resolve the causes of conflicts. It is not proper to escalate problems.

#### D. *COMPROMISING STYLE.*

Compromises in conflicts are grasped through balancing the interests of parties and bargaining in give-and-take positions to come to agreeable solutions. All parties gain something and also give up something.

Compromising is a method of solving conflict through bargaining. Mayer [11] described compromising as "directed toward sharing losses and gains jointly". Steyn [12] said that it is useful when there is a balance of power between the individuals or when limited resources have to be shared, in the sense that this style requires achieving of balance between personal and common interests. All participants must change some attitudes through interventions, negotiations and voting [7].

Compromise can be identified as “bargaining or trading”. This style can be used when the conflicting parties have equal powers and goals and with same importance. Therefore, no party should impose its opinions over the other party and compromise is the one and only solution. Moreover, in case there are constraints for time, this style is also helpful. In addition, reaching a compromise might be the interest of parties in conflicts if conflicts are many faceted and sophisticated, and if there is no much time to resolve them [7].

Integrative bargaining is a type of compromise in which both parties succeed in a way. For example, the method of resolving conflicts is very popular when managements and labor unions are negotiating. In the initial stages, it is normally for unions to request more than what they desire to take while managements propose less than what they desire to give. They negotiate, bargain and finally reach to compromise, mostly when there are arbitrators or mediators [13].

This approach may be appropriate:

- When the goals and interests are equally important and there is no need to use more assertive or more involving approaches, for example forcing or collaborating.
- When issues are complex, so it is better to reach temporary agreement.
- When conflicting parties do not know each other well or the level of mutual trust is not high, so it can help to improve relationships between two sides.
- When a balance of forces is available; however, if it has a negative effect on something like a postpone in productions, etc., it has to be avoided. It causes democratic solutions, however, it may stop reaching creative solutions of the problems.

Disadvantages of using compromise include:

- The outcomes of using this style may not be satisfied to both parties (a “lose-lose” situation).
- This style doesn’t contribute to building trust in the long term.
- Monitoring and control may be required when parties want to make sure that their agreements are met ([14] & [7]).

#### E. COOPERATION STYLE:

This style include “confronting the conflict” so as to use the best solutions to the problems. This method practically proposes that differences in opinions are natural things in all organizations

which should be resolved via dialogues, discussions and respects of different views.

Generally, this style is useful for solving conflicts that arise from a semantic misunderstanding. It is not so helpful to resolve non-communicative types of conflicts like conflicts depending on differing value systems, where it may even intensify disagreements and differences. In the long run, however, it is better to handle a conflict and take this preventive measure which may decrease the probability of such conflicts appearing again [7].

A high level of assertiveness and cooperativeness characterize this style; it is commonly known as the “win-win scenario”. Both parties work together in creative manner to accomplish the objectives and desired results that benefit all involved parties. Implementation of this style can be difficult as the process of collaboration requires sincere efforts to be exerted by all parties and it may take a lot of time to reach a consensus (Ipd).

Situations where compromising may be appropriate:

- In case consensus and commitment of other parties are significant.
- In case conflicts arise in collaborative environments.
- In case there are high levels of trust.
- In case there are needs for building long-term relationships.
- In case people need to work with hard feelings.
- In case an individual is not interested to assume full responsibilities.

Compromising has some advantages such as:

- It aids to reach a win-win result.
- It enhances respect and trust among parties.
- It can build an effective collaboration in the future.
- Provides the parties with a chance to share risks and responsibilities of the results.

Compromising has some disadvantages such as:

- Contribution of all parties is needed to reach to mutually acceptable solutions.
- It takes much more time and efforts than others. A win-win solution may not worth the efforts that were spent.
- It is not practical style when time is considered as an important factor.
- Relationships can be spoiled if the trust is lost, therefore people have to select another style for resolving conflicts [13].

Table 1 summarizes the five conflict management styles and the situations where they are (in) appropriate.

TABLE 1 : CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES AND THE SITUATIONS WHERE THEY ARE (IN)APPROPRIATE

Conflict management style	Situations where appropriate	Situations where inappropriate
Cooperation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Issues are complex</li> <li>2.Synthesis of ideas is needed to come up with better solutions</li> <li>3.Commitment is needed from other parties for successful implementation</li> <li>4.Time is available for problem solving</li> <li>5.One party alone cannot solve the problem</li> <li>6.Resources possessed by different parties are needed to solve their common problems</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Task or problem is simple</li> <li>2.Immediate decision is required</li> <li>3.Other parties are unconcerned about the outcome</li> <li>4.Other parties do not have the problem-solving skills</li> </ol>
Accommodating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.You believe you may be wrong</li> <li>2.Issue is more important to the other party</li> <li>3.You are willing to give up something in exchange for something from the other party in the future</li> <li>4.You are dealing from a position of weakness</li> <li>5.Preserving relationship is important</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Issue is important to you</li> <li>2.You believe you are right</li> <li>3.The other party is wrong or unethical</li> </ol>
Forcing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Issue is trivial</li> <li>2.Speedy decision is needed</li> <li>3.Unpopular course of action is implemented</li> <li>4.Necessary to overcome assertive subordinates</li> <li>5.Unfavorable decision by the other party may be costly to you</li> <li>6.Subordinates lack expertise to make technical decisions</li> <li>7.Issue is important to you</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Issue is complex</li> <li>2.Issue is not important to you</li> <li>3.Both parties are equally powerful</li> <li>4.Decision does not have to be made quickly</li> <li>5.Subordinates possess high degree of competence</li> </ol>
Avoiding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Issue is trivial</li> <li>2.Potential dysfunctional effect of confronting the other party outweighs benefits of resolution</li> <li>3.Cooling off period is needed</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Issue is important to you</li> <li>2.It is your responsibility to make decision</li> <li>3.Parties are unwilling to defer, issue must be resolved</li> <li>4.Prompt attention is needed</li> </ol>
Compromising	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Goals of parties are mutually exclusive</li> <li>2.Parties are equally powerful</li> <li>3.Consensus cannot be reached</li> <li>4.Integrating or dominating style is not successful</li> <li>5.Temporary solution to a complex problem is needed</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.One party is more powerful</li> <li>2.Problem is complex enough needing a problem-solving approach</li> </ol>

Source: Spaho, K [13].

### III. Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Commitment

Conflict cannot be avoided in any organization; its impact on employees commitment and productivity is considered a bad result [15].

Incompatibility and disagreements among different workers that cause conflict are problematic particularly when different people from different levels use their own styles to resolve the problem (Ipid )

The relationship between organizational conflict and commitment is supported by researches such Nair (2008) who argue that involvement in conflict required you to be emotionally charged, and consequently such workers cannot be committed to the organization. Some studies on intra group conflict indicated that conflict affects the effectiveness of group, as well as it reduces common understanding and good will among group, therefore, it hinder the achievement of group tasks and be as obstacle against group to take decisions. Likewise, relationship conflict causes members to be sensitive, short tempered, distrustful, and resentful. This can have negative consequences on group commitment and outcomes [15].

It is believed that well managed conflict among workers will enhance them to be committed to their organization and continue their membership in the organization, while unresolved conflict among workers will increase their desire to leave the organization.

According to Ahmad and Marinah [16], cooperation style of conflict management plays a major role in enhancing commitment towards the organization. This conclusion was supported by Nik and Sharmin [17] who found that the use of cooperation style minimize the conflict in the organization; This style is found to be the most appropriate style to strengthen commitment among employees because it depends on Cooperation for resolving problems.

Those who use this style confront conflict directly and attempt to look for creative resolutions to the conflicts raised; They do their best to achieve their needs and the needs of others.

The application of cooperation style in managing conflicts has great opportunity for conflicts to be resolves in comparison with other styles, as both parties are willing to the solution and have the satisfaction that they are treated fairly [18].

Cooperation style can enhance commitment among employees because it would able to increase understanding between employees [19].

Green and Marks [20] mentioned that cooperation style gives team members a better understanding of the others in the team. When people and group try to solve their incompatible views through cooperation, it is considered as constructive response to conflict, however, when group members choose to compete, they avoid the conflict and they try to win the fight. According to Ayoko [15], group members who engaged in cooperative interactions had progress in solving problems. In addition, they worked more efficiently, formed a stronger relationship and had more confidence. Group members who engaged in competition were distrustful, dominating and inefficient. They avoided open and constructive discussion of ideas and differences, had negative feelings, and doubts about future collaboration.

With respect to compromising style, Dobkin and Pace [21] said that compromising style can strengthen commitment among employees because it encourages them to manage conflict by collective way.

As compromising style is characterized by willingness of the employee to give in on some demands in return for concession from the other so that, both parties are working together in cooperative method and they are not selfish in negotiation and making concession. If one party achieved its needs, the other party will concede in order to achieve the goals together. According to Green and Marks [20], compromising style gives team members a better understanding of the others in the team and as a result it enhances commitment among employees towards the organization.

Based on researchers of organizational conflict, employees who choose to resolve conflict through cooperation, compromising and accommodating styles tend to establish and foster cordial relationships among employees ([22]; [23]; [24]; [25]).

These styles are related to an effective conflict management. Many studies on cooperation, compromising and accommodating styles of managing conflict show consistent results in commitment among employees ([26]; [27]; [28]; [29]).

In contrast, other studies indicated that the use of forcing and avoiding styles is related negatively to organizational commitment ([30]; [31]).

When conflict happens at work because of disagreement, it will inspire employees to be less committed and looking for any opportunities to leave the organization.

Thus, conflict management and organizational commitment are important in assessing employees' contribution to achieve organizational outcomes.

Accordingly, when organizations use effective conflict management styles, it will result in very positive impact on commitment among employees in the organization. It is also logical that better conflict management will enhance the employees to be more committed with the organization.

#### *IV. Previous studies on Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Commitment*

##### *A. Local studies (In Yemen)*

- Study of Hamid, M. [32]

The study is conducted by the researcher to explore the impact of conflict management strategies on job satisfaction, a case of Sana'a university Academicians (Professors and lecturers).

The purpose of the study was to study the strategies used for managing conflicts and to explore the effect of conflict management on job satisfaction. The study population includes academicians at Sana'a university; the sample consists of 196 academicians (professors and assistants).

It concluded that cooperation style is the most in use at the university colleges and forcing is the least in application; there is reverse relationship between cooperation and conflict and there is positive relation between cooperation & avoiding and job satisfaction.

##### *B. Arabic Studies*

- Study of Abu-Asaker, F.A.H [33]

The study is titled " conflict management styles and their impact on Organizational Development, a case study of Ministry of Health in Gaza Strip, Palestine ".

The research aimed at identifying the five conflict management styles including forcing, problem solving (cooperation), avoiding, accommodating and compromising, their application in the Ministry of Health and the impact of these styles on organizational development.

The study was conducted on the ministry employees including different departments; Questionnaires were distributed to (475) employees of fourteen institutions belonging to the Ministry (hospital and primary care clinic) across the Gaza Strip.

Findings of this study concluded that four styles are used by the management (forcing, compromising, avoidance and accommodating) but the proportion of these styles was low while the cooperation style was not clearly used. Although that the application of cooperation style is not clear in the ministry, it is found to be positive and have the most impact on organizational development. The organizational development including its three levels is found to be either very poor or neglected. Different opinions by the sample were expressed regarding the style used for managing conflict and the same was with respect to the expected effects on organizational commitment.

The recommendations of the study suggested that there is a need to increase the awareness on the importance of organizational conflict and how to use the proper style for managing conflict, which in turn will consolidates organizational development. It recommended also that the management should pay more attention to the interests of

employees, and to consider more the human side when addressing the problems as it has positive effects at the level of individuals.

- *Study of Al-jawazneh, B.E. [34]*

The study is titled "Conflict handling Styles and Employees' Commitment at the Pharmaceutical Companies in Jordan".

It aimed at studying the effect of conflict management styles on

Commitment of employees, at the Pharmaceutical companies in Jordan. The population of the research include all 14 companies of pharmacy in Jordan which are members of the Jordanian Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers (JAPM); the participants were all managers from different managerial levels.

253 questionnaires were distributed to all managers as they have sufficient experience to response to the questionnaires.

The study concluded that styles for handling conflict have influence on commitment of at the Pharmaceutical companies in Jordan.

The impact of cooperation style on employees' commitment dimensions indicates that Pharmaceutical firms confront difficult problems that require proper alternatives for better solutions. So that, other parties should be committed for successful implementation; moreover, for managing conflict effectively through applying cooperation style, there is need for enough resources and time for solving problem ([35]; [16]; [19]). With regard to cooperation style, it is the participants belief that they may not be right whereas the matter is with more importance to the other party; they are ready to provide some concessions in return for something from the other party in the future. This is in order to maintain relationship as it is important to keep the commitment of employees.

According to this study, forcing style is possibly urgent when the issue is trivial and inferiors have no experience to take technical decisions. It may have positive effect if the needs and interests of employees are achieved particularly financial needs such as rewards and others such as status, and autonomy [36].

Avoiding style may be appropriate when confronting the other party gives greater weight to benefits of resolution. This style can be applied in this industry when there is a need to address some issues being confronted by the management, although that the individuals are committed to their work and they are aware of such conditions.

It is not in with conclusions of Jehn [37].

### C. Foreign Studies

- *Study of Balay, R. [38]*

The study is conducted by Balay [38], in Harran University, Turkey, titled "Predicting Conflict Management Based on Organizational Commitment and Selected Demographic Variables".

It aimed at investigating the relationship between different levels of organizational commitment of teachers and their different styles used for managing conflict. The study concluded that male teacher are more committed in accordance with compliance and tend to neglect conflicts more than female teachers; when teachers get older they may be more committed according to identification and internalization. It indicated also that the style used by teachers is problem solving conflict management style more than those who are younger.

The research also concluded that identification and internalization are considered as significant indicators that strategies of compromising and problem –solving are used while commitment based on compliance is considered as an important predictor of forcing style; With regard to avoiding style, it is found that identification and compliance are the important determinants of avoiding style when commitment is based on these two factors.

- *Study of Vestal, B.D. [39]*

The title of the study is "An Investigation of Preferred Conflict-Management Behaviors in Small-School Principals in Texas Education"

The aim of this research was to identify suitable conflict strategies by the management of small – school principals in Texas Education Service Center districts fifth, sixth, and seventh. In addition the study focused on the relationship between the principal and the teacher and the five styles for managing conflict including forcing, cooperation, compromise, avoiding, and accommodating.

The population of this study was public independent school districts which were located in the eastern region of Texas, each one located within Texas Educational Service Center Regions five, six, or seven.

The sample of the study were Campus principals who acted as a campus's primary leader during the 2009-10 school-year.

Results showed that gender could not predict a clear preference for any of the five possible conflict-management styles. Also, it was concluded that experience has no significant impact on the prediction of cooperation, avoiding, and accommodating. However, outcomes found that experience has a significant positive relationship to a preference for forcing behaviors; experience also had a significant negative relationship to a preference for compromising behaviors in the group of small-campus principals. Findings indicated that more experience came with an increased preference for forcing and a decreased preference for compromising behaviors.

- *Study of Ntege, F. [40]*

The study is titled "organizational conflict, psychological contract, commitment and organizational citizenship behavior: a case of Kyambogo university".

It aimed at examining the relationship between conflict in organizations and other variables including commitment, citizenship conduct and psychological contract.

This research was conducted at Kyambogo university, its sample was academicians of KYU from different colleges, administrative and other employees. 1024 employees participated in responding to the questionnaires.

The study concluded that there is no significant relation between organizational Conflict and Employee Commitment in Kyambogo University, as the findings indicated that it is not necessary that conflict affects the employees' commitment. The interviews carried out on some employees, the respondents said that in spite of the inherent conflicts, they have no impact on their commitments during their services in the university which lasted to more than twenty years. But they hoped that conflicts should be resolved in order to work in safe environment.

- *Study of Violetta, B. [41]*

The research is titled "Development of conflict management strategies to increase the organizational effectiveness in Nordic companies"

It is conducted at Reykjavik University, School of Business to explore the nature of conflict and techniques and skills used for the conflict management and resolution in the case of Icelandic companies. In addition, the research aimed at identifying the factors that superiors should use when managing conflict for the improvement of the organization's performance.

Results of this study indicated that majority of Icelandic managers apply techniques used for resolving conflict and that they are familiar with conflict resolution process but there are still conflicts between employees. They showed also that personality conflicts, intra-group and interpersonal conflicts are considered as sources for conflict situations in Icelandic organizations. Based on strategies used for managing conflicts, as were shown in this research, there were some shortcomings in the styles used by Icelandic organizations when resolving conflicts.

The study concluded that cooperation style is used by most of the managers as well as style of negotiations was famous in application by directors while the technique of third-party intervention is not popular as it is used in practice by .3% of Icelandic managers only.

- *Study of Ihidero, S.O. [42]*

The title of the study is "Examining the Relationships between Organizational Communication and Conflict

Management, and the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory". This study was conducted by Solomon Olufemi Ihidero to examine the potential threats to organization's effectiveness as a result of devastating conflicts and lack of communication between workers in organizations.

It aimed at shedding light on the need for a replication of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) model organization-wide as an effective means for strengthening communication, encouraging conflict management and enhancing positive organizational outcomes.

The study confirmed the findings in previous studies that conflict is inevitable at any workplace and could be desirable; constructive conflict should be encouraged and managed well in order to bring benefits to the organizations while destructive conflict should be discouraged and mitigated. According to the study's conclusions, poor communication is considered as an important cause of conflict and without communication and sound comprehension of issues at stake right at the inception and continuation of any cooperative venture, it is almost inevitable that conflict will evolve and possibly expand.

The study recommended that management should recognize the relationship between effective communication and conflict management. As suggested by Bakar et al [43], given the interdependent nature of relationships and communication, management must recognize that open communication is important to build a sense of trust in exchange relationships. Building trust into work relationships is essential in mitigating destructive conflict situations. Therefore, organizations should build a corporate culture and encourage an open two-way productive communication at all levels and in all groups.

- *Study of Mguqulwa, N. [44]*

The research is titled "The relationship between organizational commitment and work performance in an agricultural company".

It aimed at investigating the relationship between commitment and work production in an agricultural company in South Africa.

The research aimed also to examine the relationship between fruitful commitment and performance of work, and to know how gender, age and experience affect organizational commitment.

Questionnaires were distributed as well as the organization's verbal performance rating tool. Results of this study found no relationship between the two variables including commitment and performance while there was low positive relation between them.

The results showed also that there was no significant relationship between performance at work and organizational commitment.

Moreover, based on conclusions of Rivera [45], the study found that there was positive correlations between organizational commitment and age, gender and years of service differences.

- *Study of Kranenburg, D. G. [46]*

The title of the study is "The effect of organizational culture and leadership style on organizational commitment within SMES in Suriname, with job satisfaction as a mediator". The aim of this research was to explore the roles of leadership and culture in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), their influence on commitment of workers in the organization and the effect of job satisfaction as a mediator. Questionnaires were distributed to eight SMEs in Paramaribo.

Results showed that Transformational leadership affects directly and indirectly - when there is satisfaction with work- the organizational commitment. One of these indirect positive effects was significant with bureaucratic culture. Culture which is characterized by bureaucracy and support will affect directly organizational commitment.

The study advised that transformational leadership strategy should be implemented in SMEs to attract the commitment of staff. The study recommended also that the ideas and views of leaders should be clear and leaders should encourage abilities of workers and seek to achieve their aspirations; such practice will enhance the performance of the organization and increase its productivity.

- *Study of Dude, D. J. [47]*

The study is titled " Organizational commitment of principals: the effects of job autonomy, empowerment and distributive justice ".

This study aimed at investigating the impact of job autonomy, psychological empowerment, and distributive justice on organizational commitment. The sample of the research was collected from educational centers from different states including Kansas, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. Managers from secondary and elementary (public and private) schools participated in the survey.

School districts participated in gathering data using specialized company to collect the sample responses which includes 9,767 email addresses.

Outcomes of the research concluded that organizational commitment is affected positively by work justice, psychological empowerment and job autonomy.

As organizational commitment leads enhance the performance of the institutions, educational centers should encourage strategies that may enhance commitment.

The study recommended also that school districts should put suitable man in suitable place when recruiting principals.

## V. COMMENT ON PREVIOUS STUDIES

Based on the findings of previous studies mentioned in this research, some studies stressed on the importance of cooperation style in managing conflict such as the study of Hamid [32], Violetta [41] and Abu-Asakar [48]. Hamid [32] concluded that there is reverse relationship between cooperation and conflict and there is positive relationship between cooperation & avoiding and job satisfaction; Abu-Asakar, [48] agreed also with such outcomes that encourage cooperation style, although that the findings of his study showed that the cooperation style is not used clearly in the target institution, he recommended that the style of cooperation should be used. In contrast to these studies, according to the study of Al-Jawaznah [49], forcing style is possibly urgent and may have positive effect when the issue is trivial and subordinates have not experience to tackle problems and taking appropriate decisions provided that the needs and interests of employees are achieved. This findings are in line with the study of Vestal [39], Balay [38] and study of Ihidero [42], as the findings of Vestal indicated that more experience came with an increased preference for forcing and a decreased preference for compromising behaviors, commitment based on compliance is considered as an important predictor of forcing style [38], while the study of Ihidero [42] suggested that constructive conflict should be encouraged and managed well in order to bring benefits to the organizations while destructive conflict should be discouraged and mitigated. This suggestion is in line with The Interactionist View which urges that conflict is needed for the sake of effective performance.

In addition, Ntege [40] concluded that there is no significant relationship between organizational conflict and employee commitment in Kyambogo University, as the findings – based on the respondents - indicated that it is not necessary that conflict affects the employees' commitment; the respondents said that conflict did not affect their commitment. Such finding is in contrast with the other mentioned studies which found either positive or negative relationship between conflict management styles and commitment.

Moreover, regardless of the findings of the studies, most of researchers recommended that conflict management styles should be used depending on the situation and that there is high positive correlation between cooperation and accommodating styles and commitment, performance and citizenship. They concluded also that conflict had positive and negative effects based on the way in which is managed.

This study can be distinguished from other studies as it is the first study – at the national level – that studied the relationship between conflict management styles and organizational commitment at the three levels, individual, group and

university; most of local studies focused on conflict management styles and job satisfaction; in addition, the sample of this study was the employees of Sana'a university from different categories, directors, sectional heads and administrative officers.

The study examined the relationship between the five conflict management styles and organizational commitment including three levels individual, group and university while most of previous studies focused on organizational commitment in general. In addition, it focused on the relationship between each style and organizational commitment at the three levels.

## VI. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The model of the research adopted in this study indicates the nature of relationship between conflict management styles (Forcing, Cooperation, Compromising, Avoiding and

Accommodating) and organizational commitment (At the levels of individual, group and university).

Dependent variables (problem); Individual commitment, group commitment and university commitment which are considered as a problem in case of improper management of conflict.

Independent variables (cause); conflict management styles including forcing, cooperation, compromising, avoiding and accommodating.

Based on the research model, the following hypotheses have been formulated as in table 2

TABLE 2 : RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

<b>H1a</b>	<b>There is positive relationship between forcing style and organizational commitment at the individual level.</b>
<b>H1b</b>	There is positive relationship between forcing style and organizational commitment at the group level.
<b>H1c</b>	There is positive relationship between forcing style and organizational commitment at the university level.
<b>H2a</b>	H2a: There is positive relationship between cooperation style and organizational commitment at the individual level.
<b>H2b</b>	There is positive relationship between cooperation style and organizational commitment at the group level.
<b>H2c</b>	There is positive relationship between cooperation style and organizational commitment at the university level.
<b>H3a</b>	There is positive relationship between compromising style and organizational commitment at the individual level.
<b>H3b</b>	There is positive relationship between compromising style and organizational commitment at the group level.
<b>H3c</b>	There is positive relationship between compromising style and organizational commitment at the university level.
<b>H4a</b>	There is positive relationship between avoiding style and organizational commitment at the individual level.
<b>H4b</b>	There is positive relationship between avoiding style and organizational commitment at the group level.
<b>H4c</b>	There is positive relationship between avoiding style and organizational commitment at the university level.
<b>H5a</b>	There is positive relationship between accommodating style and organizational commitment at the individual level.
<b>H5b</b>	There is positive relationship between accommodating style and organizational commitment at the group level.
<b>H5c</b>	There is positive relationship between accommodating style and organizational commitment at the university level.

<b>IV</b>	<b>DV</b>
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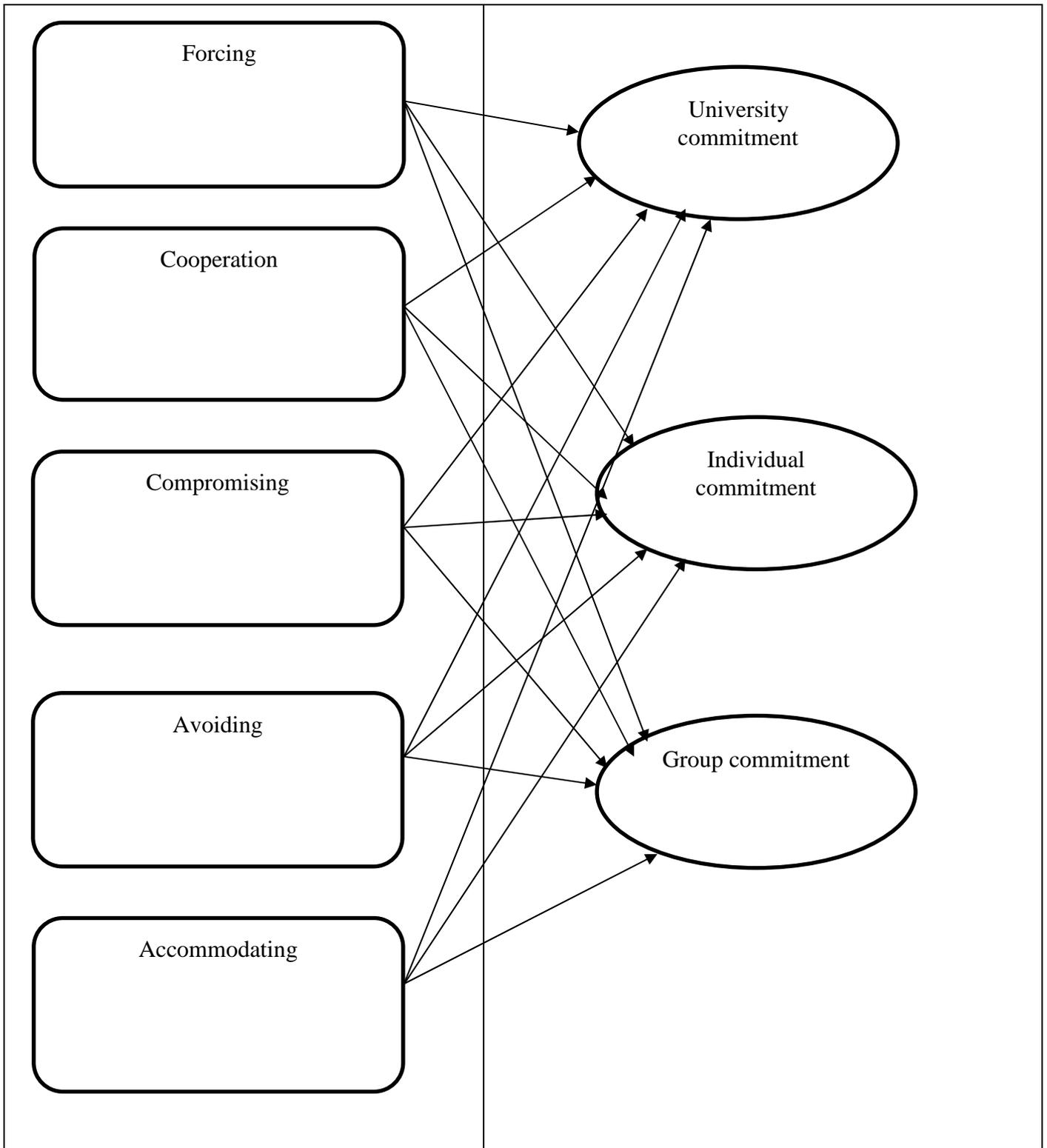


FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

## VII. DEFINITION OF THE VARIABLES

### A. Forcing

This style is also known as the “win-lose” approach. As Webb [9] puts it, “the simplest conceivable resolution is the elimination of the other party—to force opponents to flee and give up the fight—or slay them.”

### B. Accommodating

Accommodating is sometimes called the smoothing style of conflict management. It often concentrates on resolving conflicts by meeting the needs of others instead of addressing the conflict issues themselves [11].

### C. Compromising

It is a method of solving conflict through bargaining”. Mayer [11] described compromising as “directed toward sharing losses and gains jointly”.

### D. Avoiding

This style is also called withdrawing or ignoring style. In particular conflicts, this style is advised in taking passive roles and avoiding it all together [50].

### E. Cooperation

This style include “confronting the conflict” so as to use the best solutions to the problems. This method practically proposes that differences in opinions are natural things in all organizations which should be resolved via dialogues, discussions and respects of different views. [51].

### F. Organizational Commitment

The measure of strength of the employee’s identification with the goals and values of the organization [52].

According to Mowday, Steers and Porter’s [53] definition, “organizational commitment entails three factors: 1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, 2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and 3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization”.

### G. Individual Commitment

The measure of strength of the employee’s identification with the values of other individuals and peers within the organization (team commitment), and their work (job commitment) and careers (career commitment) and encourages individuals to exert extra organizational citizenship behavior as active positive contributions to colleagues and avoid engaging in harmful behaviors [54].

### H. Group (Team) Commitment

An individual’s identification and sense of cohesiveness with other members of a group [54].

## VIII. CONCLUSION

This study presented the literature review on Conflict Management Styles and Organizational Commitment. In addition this study aimed to identify the relationship between conflict management styles, used by Sana’a University, and organizational commitment at the levels of individual, group and university. For that, this study developed conceptual framework, as depicted in Figure 1. The proposed framework

of consists of six independent variables: forcing, cooperation, compromising, avoiding, accommodating, and three dependent variables; individual commitment, group commitment, and university commitment. The subsequent phase of this study will be the empirical testing of the research model.

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