

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT AMONG EMPLOYEES OF AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITIES OF GUJARAT

Sunil R. Patel¹, J. K. Patel² and Smt. K. U. Chandravadiya³

1 Officer on Special Duty/principal, College of Agriculture, AAU, Jabugam - 391155

2 Program Coordinator, Krushi vigyan Kendra, AAU, Arnej - 382230

3 Assistant professor, College of Agriculture, AAU, Jabugam - 391155

Email : srpatelanand@aau.in

ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out with a view to knowing the extent of interpersonal conflict among employees and its relationship with their various characteristics. Total 120 employees of three categories: upper cadre, middle cadre and lower cadre from Anand Agricultural University, Anand and Sardar Krushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, S.K.Nagar of Gujarat State were selected for the investigation. The results revealed that lower cadre employees had higher extent of overall interpersonal conflict than middle and upper cadre employees. Age, experience, annual income, attitude towards working pattern of SAU, job satisfaction and communication had negatively significant and perception of workload had positively significant correlation with the extent of interpersonal conflict.

Keywords : conflict, satisfaction, employee

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is a part of human existence and is a basic fact of life in groups and organizations. Though people spend about one third of each day at work place, the psychological hand over of the tension and conflict generated at the place of work continues even beyond the hours of work. They also face conflict in social life. This means that major portion of employee's life is spent with conflicts. These prolonged conflicts and tension adversely affect employee's mental and physical health. This, in turn, results in decreased efficiency and productivity of an employee and thereby of an organization.

In this situation, for any organization to be more effective and productive incessantly, it is of vital importance for the organization to know the extent of conflict among its employees and how it is affected by various their characteristics.

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To find out the extent of interpersonal conflict existing among employees of agricultural universities of Gujarat
- (2) To study the relationship between the extent of interpersonal conflict and profile of employees of

agricultural universities of Gujarat

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was conducted in Anand Agricultural University, Anand and Sardar Krushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, S.K.Nagar of Gujarat State. For the investigation, technical employees were taken into consideration and were broadly divided into three categories: upper cadre, middle cadre and lower cadre. From each cadre, 40 respondents were randomly selected making a total sample size of 120 respondents. As two Agricultural Universities were selected for the study; it was also decided to have equal size of sample from both the universities. Thus from each of the two universities, 20 respondents each from upper, middle and lower cadre were selected by employing random sampling techniques. Thus, in relation to universities, 60 respondents each from AAU and SDAU were randomly selected.

The extent of interpersonal conflict among employees was measured with developed and standardized scale. An interview schedule was developed in accordance with the objectives and the data were collected through personal interview. The statistical measures such as percentage, mean score, standard deviation and coefficient

of correlation were used to interpret the data. The results revealed that the proportion of the employees having low, medium and high extent of overall interpersonal conflict was almost equal i.e. one-third.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Extent of interpersonal conflict among employees

Interpersonal conflict comprising task conflict as well as relationship conflict existing among the employees is of vital concern for the organization. Hence, it was thought worthwhile to study the extent of interpersonal conflict existing among employees of Agricultural Universities of Gujarat at three levels: interpersonal conflict with their superiors, colleagues and subordinates. The results in this regard have been given in the succeeding pages.

Extent of interpersonal conflict among employees with their superiors

The information pertaining to interpersonal conflict among employees with their superiors is presented in Table: 1.

Table: 1 Distribution of respondents according to their extent of interpersonal conflict with their
n=120

Sr. No.	Extent of interpersonal conflict with superiors	Cadre of the employees			Overall
		Lower	Middle	Upper	
1	Low (below 21.761)	09 (22.50)	13 (32.50)	10 (25.00)	32 (26.67)
2	Medium (in between 21.761 and 27.223)	18 (45.00)	13 (32.50)	15 (37.50)	46 (38.33)
3	High (above 27.223)	13 (32.50)	14 (35.00)	15 (37.50)	42 (35.00)

Mean: 24.492 S.D.:2.731
Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

As it is evident from the Table: 1, middle cadre employees were found to be distributed nearly equally in the low (32.50 per cent), medium (32.50 per cent) and high (35.00 per cent) category of interpersonal conflict with superiors. In case of lower cadre, more than three-fourth (77.50 per cent) of the employees were observed to have medium to high extent of conflict with their superiors, whereas 22.50 per cent of them had low extent of interpersonal conflict with their

superiors. With regards to upper cadre, equal number of employees i.e. 37.50 per cent had medium and high extent of interpersonal conflict with their superiors and remaining 25.00 per cent of them had low extent of interpersonal conflict with their superiors.

In total, it can be stated that slightly less than three-fourth of the employees (73.33 per cent) had medium to high extent of interpersonal conflict with their superiors.

Extent of interpersonal conflict among employees with their colleagues

The data in respect of interpersonal conflict among employees with their colleagues are presented in Table: 2.

Table: 2 Distribution of respondents according to their extent of interpersonal conflict with their colleagues

n=120

Sr. No.	Extent of interpersonal conflict with colleagues	Cadre of the employees			Overall
		Lower	Middle	Upper	
1	Low (below 20.713)	06 (15.00)	15 (37.50)	18 (45.00)	39 (32.50)
2	Medium (in between 20.713 and 27.121)	19 (47.50)	16 (40.00)	14 (35.00)	49 (40.83)
3	High (above 27.121)	15 (37.50)	09 (22.50)	08 (20.00)	32 (26.67)

Mean:23.917 S.D.:3.204
Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

It is obvious from the Table: 2 that slightly less than half (47.50 per cent) of the lower cadre employees were found to have medium extent of interpersonal conflict with their colleagues followed by 37.50 per cent and 15.00 per cent of them with high and low extent of interpersonal conflict with their colleagues, respectively. In case of middle cadre, majority (77.50 per cent) of the employees were observed to have medium to low extent of interpersonal conflict with their colleagues, whereas in upper cadre, four-fifth of the employees (80.00 per cent) had low to medium extent of interpersonal conflict with their colleagues. Overall, it can be said that nearly three-fourth of the employees (73.33 per cent) had medium to low extent of interpersonal conflict with their colleagues.

Contrary to middle and upper cadre, higher extent of interpersonal conflict with their colleagues was found to be prevailing among lower cadre employees. Since the lower cadre employees were struggling for their advancement in the career, some sort of rivalry might be prevailing among them. This might be the reason for such trend of result.

Extent of interpersonal conflict among employees with their subordinates

The data in respect of interpersonal conflict among employees with their subordinates are presented in Table: 3.

Table: 3 Distribution of respondents according to their extent of interpersonal conflict with their subordinates

n=120

Sr. No.	Extent of interpersonal conflict with subordinates	Cadre of the employees			Overall
		Lower	Middle	Upper	
1	Low (below 18.214)	09 (22.50)	16 (40.00)	22 (55.00)	47 (39.17)
2	Medium (in between 18.214 and 23.436)	12 (30.00)	12 (30.00)	11 (27.50)	35 (29.17)
3	High (above 23.436)	19 (47.50)	12 (30.00)	07 (17.50)	38 (31.66)

Mean:20.825 S.D.:2.611

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

The perusal of the data depicted in Table: 3 reveals that higher number of employees from lower cadre (47.50 per cent) had high extent of interpersonal conflict with their subordinates followed by medium and low extent of interpersonal conflict observed with 30.00 per cent and 22.50 per cent of the employees, respectively. The reverse trend was observed in case of upper cadre in which 55.00 per cent of the employees were found to have low extent while 27.50 per cent and 17.50 per cent of them were found to have medium and high extent of interpersonal conflict with their subordinates, respectively. In case of middle cadre employees, two-fifth had low extent of interpersonal conflict with their subordinates, whereas equal numbers of employees i.e. 30.00 per cent each were found to be in the medium and high category of interpersonal conflict with their subordinates.

Conclusively in relation to all the cadres together,

it can be stated that more than two-third (68.34 per cent) of the employees had low to medium extent of interpersonal conflict with their subordinates.

Extent of overall conflict

The information pertaining to overall conflict level of employees is depicted in Table: 4.

Table: 4 Distribution of respondents according to their extent of overall interpersonal conflict

n=120

Sr. No.	Extent of overall interpersonal conflict	Cadre of the employees			Overall
		Lower	Middle	Upper	
1	Low (below 62.105)	10 (25.00)	14 (35.00)	15 (37.50)	39 (32.50)
2	Medium (in between 62.105 and 76.355)	10 (25.00)	15 (37.50)	16 (40.00)	41 (34.17)
3	High (above 76.355)	20 (50.00)	11 (27.50)	09 (22.50)	40 (33.33)

Mean:69.23 S.D.:7.125

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage.

The data presented in Table: 4 clearly show that half of the lower cadre employees had high extent of overall interpersonal conflict while remaining half were equally distributed in the low and medium category of overall interpersonal conflict. In case of upper and middle cadre, majority of the employees i.e. 77.50 per cent and 72.50 per cent, respectively were found with medium to low extent of overall conflict. If all the cadres are considered together, it can be concluded that the proportion of the employees having low, medium and high extent of overall interpersonal conflict was almost equal i.e. one-third.

Minute observation brings to the notice that lower cadre employees had higher extent of overall interpersonal conflict than middle and upper cadre employees. The frustration developed among lower cadre employees because of no promotion opportunities coupled with other organizational factors such as workload, salary, working pattern of the university etc. might have affected their psychological makeup adversely. Such situation might have increased their overall interpersonal conflict.

Relationship between the extent of interpersonal conflict and profile of employees of Agricultural universities of Gujarat

The interpersonal conflict felt by the employees is not independent itself, but is rather a complex process which is governed by socio-personal, psychological and

organizational attributes. It was in this context felt necessary to study the relationship between the extent of interpersonal conflict and profile of employees of Agricultural Universities of Gujarat, i.e. their socio-personal, psychological and

organizational variables. The relationship was determined and tested with the help of Karl Pearson's co-efficient of correlation, the results of which are presented in the Table: 5.

Table: 5 Relationship between the extent of interpersonal conflict and profile of employees of Agricultural Universities of Gujarat

Sr. No.	Independent variables	Co-efficient of correlation (r value)
Personal and socio-economic variables		
1	Age	-0.236**
2	Education	-0.172
3	Total experience	-0.221*
4	Annual income	-0.317**
5	Caste	-0.111
6	Training exposure	0.018
Psychological variables		
1	Attitude towards working pattern of Agricultural University	-0.432**
2	Achievement motivation	-0.066
3	Job satisfaction	-0.235**
4	Perception of workload	0.648**
5	Empathy	0.090
6	Self-confidence	-0.133
7	Self-esteem	0.010
Organizational variables		
1	Communication	-0.411**
2	Decision-making ability	-0.015
3	Co-ordination ability	-0.135

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability * Significant at 0.05 level of probability

As evident from Table 5, among personal and socio-economic variables, age, experience and annual income were found to have negative and significant correlation with extent of interpersonal conflict, while education, caste and training exposure were found to be non-significant with extent of interpersonal conflict. In case of psychological variables, attitude towards working pattern of SAU and job satisfaction with negative direction and perception of work load with positive direction had significant relationship with extent of interpersonal conflict. Achievement motivation, empathy, self-confidence and self-esteem could not establish correlation with extent of interpersonal conflict up to the level of significance. Among organizational variables, communication had negative but significant relationship with the extent of interpersonal conflict, while decision-making ability and co-ordination ability were not significantly related with the extent of interpersonal conflict.

CONCLUSION

The proportion of the employees having low, medium and high extent of overall interpersonal conflict was almost equal i.e. one-third. Further, lower cadre employees had higher extent of overall interpersonal conflict than middle and upper cadre employees. Age, experience, annual income, attitude towards working pattern of SAU, job satisfaction and communication had negatively significant and perception of workload had positively significant correlation with the extent of interpersonal conflict.

REFERENCES

Patel S. R., (2010). "Interpersonal conflict and its management among employees of agricultural universities of Gujarat". Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, AAU, Anand