

## DEVELOPMENT OF SCALE TO MEASURE INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT AMONG EMPLOYEES OF AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITIES

Sunil R. Patel<sup>1</sup> M. S. Trivedi<sup>2</sup> and J. K. Patel<sup>3</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*Interpersonal conflict among employees is of vital concern for the organization. Here an effort was made to develop a scale which can measure interpersonal conflict among employees at three levels: 1. Interpersonal conflict with superiors 2. Interpersonal conflict with colleagues and 3. Interpersonal conflict with subordinates. Among the techniques available, 'scale product method' was chosen to develop the scale.*

### INTRODUCTION

Conflict exists within an organization and is endemic irrespective of whether or not it is desirable. Much of time is dealt with conflict in its various forms. 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 conflict management approaches adopted by them so that on the basis of these, effective organizational strategies can be worked out.

In the organizational context, interpersonal conflict inclusive of both- affective as well as substantive aspects of conflict is of major concern and is quiet natural among the employees. In other words, interpersonal conflict comprising task conflict (related to task or function or process) as well as relationship conflict (related to personality or emotional issues) existing among the employees is of vital concern for the organization. Since no ready made scale was available to measure such conflict, an effort was made here to develop the scale which can measure the interpersonal conflict among the employees of Agricultural universities of Gujarat and on that basis; strategies to manage such conflict can be worked out.

### METHODOLOGY

It was thought to develop a scale which can

measure interpersonal conflict among employees at three levels: 1. Interpersonal conflict with superiors 2. Interpersonal conflict with colleagues and 3. Interpersonal conflict with subordinates. Hence, it was decided to develop three separate scales.

Among the techniques available, 'scale product method' was chosen which combines the Thurston's techniques of equal appearing interval scale (1946) for selection of item and Likert's technique of summated rating (1932) for ascertaining the response on the scale as proposed by Eysenck and Crown (1949).

### Item collection

Initially, large number of statements reflecting interpersonal conflict with superiors, colleagues and subordinates were collected from relevant literature and constructed through discussion with experts and extension personnel. The statements thus selected were edited on the basis of criteria shown by Edwards (1957) and at last, 15, 16 and 16 statements for interpersonal conflict with superior, colleagues and subordinates, respectively were selected as they were found to be non-ambiguous.

### Judge's rating of attitudinal statements

Seventy slips of these statements were distributed among 70 selected experts of four Agricultural Universities of Gujarat as well as

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Extension Educationist, EEI, AAU, Anand, Email-srpatelanand@yahoo.co.in

<sup>2</sup> Extension Educationist, EEI, AAU, Anand

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Extension Educationist, Dept. of Extension Education, BACA, AAU, Anand

Extension Education Institute, Anand Agricultural University. The judges were asked to judge the degree of unfavourableness or favourableness of each statement for its inclusion in the final scale on the five point equal appearing interval continuum. Out of these experts, 50 experts returned the statement after duly recording their judgments and were considered for the analysis.

**Determination of scale values**

The scoring on five point rating scale was made by assigning score ranging from 1 (for strongly unfavourable) to 5 (for strongly favourable). Based on the judgment, the median value of the distribution for each of 30 statements was calculated by using following formula:

$$S = L + \frac{0.50 - P_b}{P_w} \times i$$

Where, S = the median or scale value of the statement

L = Lower limit of the interval in which the median falls

P<sub>b</sub> = the sum of the proportion below the interval in which the median falls.

P<sub>w</sub> = the proportion within the interval in which the median falls  
 i = the width of the interval which is assumed to be equal to 1.0 (one).

The inter-quartile range (Q = Q3 - Q1) for each statement was also worked out for determination of ambiguity involved in the statement.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

When there was a good agreement among the judges in judging the degree of unfavourableness or favourableness of a statement, Q value was observed smaller than the scale value, but when there was relatively little agreement among the judges, Q value was observed bigger than the scale value. Only those items were selected whose (median) scale value were greater than Q values. However, when a few items had the same scale values, items having lowest Q value were selected. Based on the scale (median) and Q values, 8, 9 and 9 statements were finally selected to constitute the scale to measure interpersonal conflict with superiors, colleagues and subordinates, respectively. The final format of scale was as under.

**Table 1 : Scale to measure interpersonal conflict with superiors**

Sr. No.	Statements	'S' value	'Q' value
1	Superiors are very cooperative and supportive	3.98	1.1
2	Deadlines are given without considering individual's ability to cope up	3.9	2.15
3	Superiors ignore the interpersonal aspects of work and the feelings of employees.	3.58	2.41
4	I have to work under vague directions or orders.	3.64	2.12
5	Superiors assign two or more simultaneous roles which are difficult to perform.	3.9	2.37
6	Superiors provide heavy workload to sincere employees than others.	4.23	1.77
7	Superiors are unappreciative of the work done by me.	3.68	2.76
8	I like the democratic ways in which the superiors behave with me.	4.19	1.57

**Table 2 : Scale to measure interpersonal conflict with colleagues**

Sr. No.	Statements	'S' value	'Q' value
1	Colleagues provide whole hearted cooperation for various organizational tasks.	4.19	1.68
2	Colleagues don't understand interpersonal feelings.	2.90	2.36
3	My ambitions remain unfulfilled because of blockage created by colleagues.	3.56	2.43
4	It gives me much pain when I come to know that my colleague does something against me in secret.	3.76	2.02
5	We have a lot of differences over such matters as who should do what jobs.	3.40	2.26
6	Colleagues rarely help me because they actually want me to be looked bad in the eyes of management.	2.93	2.57
7	Blind after too much aspiration, my colleague behaves in a rude manner with me.	3.08	2.24
8	Colleagues stealthily make out the way to excel.	3.30	1.80
9	We colleagues enjoy working together.	4.15	1.71

**Table 3 : Scale to measure interpersonal conflict with subordinates**

Sr. No.	Statements	'S' value	'Q' value
1	Subordinates knowingly ignore the instructions given to be followed.	3.65	2.67
2	Subordinates are ever ready to do the task as I assign.	3.94	2.01
3	Subordinates feel envy for my superior position.	3.17	2.92
4	Subordinates are unable to keep pace with the momentum as I want.	3.69	2.07
5	Subordinates are all the way helpful in attaining organizational goals.	3.92	2.06
6	Differences in opinion take the form of verbal confrontation with subordinates.	3.41	2.02
7	I feel, I will come into open conflict with my arrogant and rude subordinates.	2.95	2.33
8	I am fully satisfied with my subordinates.	4.07	2.09

**Reliability of the scale**

The reliability of these scales was also measured by employing Test-retest method which was found to be 0.8882, 0.8125 and 0.8638 in case of scale to measure interpersonal conflict with superiors, with colleagues and with subordinates, respectively.

**CONCLUSION**

The scales developed to measure extent of interpersonal conflict of employees with their superiors, colleagues and subordinates are reliable and valid. Hence the same can be used by other investigators elsewhere in the context of State Agricultural University or for other organizations with due modifications.

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