Conflict Levels in Indian IT and Manufacturing Sectors: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

The present study highlights the conflict management levels in Indian manufacturing and Information Technology (IT) sectors. Nearly 110 samples from different organizations of manufacturing and IT have been collected using convenient sampling technique. Standardised scale on Organisational Conflict developed by Dhar U. and Dhar S. [2003] has been used which consists of twenty items on a four point scale. The study has shown that miscommunication at organizational level has been a reason for conflict in manufacturing organizations whereas intrinsic motivation at organizational as well as individual level has been found a reason for conflict in IT sector. The study bears implications for HR managers to develop policies and conflict management strategies so as to deal with the situations constructively at a particular level of conflict.

Keywords : Organisational Conflict, Individual Level, Organizational Level, Group Level, Communication, India

1. Introduction

Conflict can occur between people in all types of human relationships and in all societal settings. The absence of conflict usually means the absence of meaningful interaction as there is wide potential difference among people. Conflict by itself is neither good nor bad. When individuals, groups, organizations and nations come in contact with one another to attain their objectives, their relationships may become incompatible or inconsistent. This incompatibility may be due to short supply of resources or differences in attitudes, values, beliefs and skills of individuals. As conflict was recognized as an important social concept, the next move was to investigate about the organizational conflict. Conflict is definitely one of the major organizational phenomena. Pondy [1967] observed that organizations do not admit conflict provides poor guidance in dealing with problems of organizational efficiency, stability, governance and change but are related to symptom, cause or effect to each of these problems. As observed by Baron [1990] that organizational conflict is an important topic for both managers and for scientists who are interested in understanding the nature of organizational behaviour and organizational processes.

Conflict is defined as an incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other [Fisher, 1990]. The conflict starts when there is disagreement over certain goals and objectives in the organizations. The conflict can be constructive as well as destructive de-

pending on the manner in which it is handled [Deutsch and Coleman, 2000]

The term "conflict" has no single clear meaning. There is a confusion created by scholars in different streams who are interested in studying conflict. According to Fink [1968], Tedeschi, Schlenker and Bonoma [1973] and Thomas [1976, 1992] who show a conceptual sympathy for, but little consensual endorsement of any generally accepted definition of conflict. Fink [1968] in his classic review, has described tremendous variations in conflict definitions. He discovered a variety of general definitions that attempt to be all-inclusive. Thus conflict is an interactive state in which the behaviors or goals of an individual are to some degree incompatible with the behaviors or goals of some other individual or individuals.

Conflict is present in interpersonal relations [Pruitt and Carnevale, 1993], in intragroup and intergroup relations [Jehn, 1995], in strategic decision-making [Amason, 1996] and other organizational episodes. It is inevitable and cannot be neglected in organisations. Conflict is a phenomenon that may give rise to both functional and dysfunctional effects on individuals, groups and organizations. Early theorists considered conflict as a negative phenomenon as it broke personal and professional relationships, reduced organisational effectiveness and created tension among individuals and in between groups. Managers of today and employees still view conflict as negative and something to be avoided or resolved as soon as possible [Stone, 1995]. Certain level of conflict is essential to increase performance. Performance increases with con-

flict up to a certain level, then declines if conflict increases further or remains unresolved. Unfortunately, conflict in organizations is not always tolerated and rarely encouraged. Managers from for-profit and not-for-profit organizations view the effects of conflict differently. Perception of high conflict is associated with high quality for managers of not-for-profit organizations but with low quality for managers of for-profit organizations.

The causes which mainly are responsible for conflict to escalate include organizational factors as well as interpersonal factors. The organizational factors are those which arise in organisational settings and include organizational change, diverse employee groups and competition between groups, operational disagreements and unusual workloads. The interpersonal factors include personality clash, status differences, goal differences, miscommunication, lack of common understanding, opportunities not recognized properly, efforts not recognized, no proper performance appraisal system and so on.

2. Literature Review

Mukhtar et al. [2011] in their paper have studied the role on HRM in organizational conflict and impact on organisational performance. This study was carried out in public sector universities of Pakistan. The data was collected from 371 respondents of different public sector universities using questionnaire survey method. The authors have taken into considerations the HRM practices which include recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal

and role of unions and studied their effect on organizational conflict. Human resources have shown to be an important factor in organizational effectiveness. The survival of organizations depends upon how effectively firms manage their human resources and implements human resource practices on a worldwide scale [Ryan et al., 1999; Erez, 1994; House, 1995; Triandis, 1994]. The importance of human resource management as a contributor to organizational success has been suggested by many studies in business and management [Poole and Glenville, 1996]. Conflict management is an important part played by a supervisor to keep conflict at the constructive level, which sometimes takes more than 25% of his or her time [Mintzberg, 1975; Thomas and Schmidt, 1976]. In some more studies, researchers have found that managers spend more than 18% of their time on employee conflict, a figure that has nearly doubled since mid-1980s [Hignite, Margavio, and Chin, 2002]. The conflict has been studied in functional and dysfunctional aspects. The instruments used to measure the HRM practices; conflict levels and the organisational effectiveness were all standardized and validated before the analysis was done. Correlation and regression analysis were performed to find out the results using SPSS 15.0 version. The results have shown that age group and position have a significant but negative relationship with organizational effectiveness. The study found a significant relation between functional conflict and organizational effectiveness. Among the HRM practices, performance appraisal has shown significant but negative relationship with

organizational effectiveness. The findings of this study are in line with the findings of other researchers in the manufacturing and business context [Byars and Rue, 1994; Poole and Glenville, 1996, Pfeffer, 1998]. Therefore, this study found that HRM practices in not- for-profit organizations are also positively related to organizational effectiveness. The final conclusion of the study was that to alleviate the problem of conflict in the organizations, importance of conflict should be highlighted as it is more difficult and complex phenomenon. For managers and administrators, HRM practices are extremely important in moderating the dysfunctional conflict into functional conflict and in enhancing the organizational effectiveness. Therefore, HRM practices can play a vital role in higher education as well as in the other business sector organizations in enhancing the organizational effectiveness.

Conflict is an unpleasant fact in any organization as long as people compete for jobs, resources, power, recognition and security. Organizational conflict is regarded as a dispute that occurs when interests, goals or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible with each other. Hotepo et al. [2010] in their paper have studied the effect of conflict on organizational performance in Nigeria. The study was conducted with the help of questionnaire survey on 96 managers in airlines, transport and insurance companies. The effects of conflict are negative as well as positive. It is positive when it encourages creativity, old aspects are replaced by new ones, the clarification of points of view and the development of human capabilities to handle interpersonal differences. Conflict is negative when it resists changing, develops chaos in organization or interpersonal relations, fosters distrust, or creates a chasm of misunderstanding. The authors have divided conflict on two segments : vertical and horizontal. In vertical conflict individuals in lower organizational level seek to avoid conflicts with higher hierarchical levels [Brewer et al., 2002]. The horizontal conflict occurs between individuals of the same level, such as managers in the same organization. The authors' concluded that employees fairness is important in the resolution of organizational conflicts. The authors added that the perceived and distributive fairness significantly enhances job satisfaction, positive organizational commitment and satisfaction with outcome of conflicts. The causes of conflict have been divided into six major segments : the interpersonal disagreements, the problems resulting from role conflict, the power struggles that pit persons and groups against one another to achieve their own selfish objectives, the misunderstandings and disagreements from differentiation, the interdependence requirements for collaboration and the external pressures from forces outside the enterprise that breed internal pressures as the system seeks to adapt but not to disrupt its internal order. The mostly used means of managing conflicts in Nigerian organizations are collaboration, bargaining and avoidance. The study has come out with some implications for the organizations like proper communication channels should be used and workshops and seminars should be conducted on how to manage the conflicts constructively.

3. Study Purpose and Rationale

Though there is a large number of antecedents to conflict management, yet only a few have been investigated its effect on other variables empirically. In addition, most of the research on conflict management deals either with strategies used to manage conflicts, styles of conflict management and the conflict at national and political level. The organizational conflict levels have not been studied in depth related to conflict at organizational, personal and group levels. Looking at the organisational set ups in Indian manufacturing and IT sectors where conflict has shown a rise due to number of factors, it becomes important to determine what drives conflict to rise and the causes behind it. Thus, we have sufficient motivation to extend the conflict management at various levels in organizational set ups. The focus, here, is on majorly three levels which are obtained after factor analysis of the scale. In conflict management, communication is recognized as the instrument through which influence is exercised [Simon, 1976]. There is no assumption of a "best way" to handle conflict. Future research may extend to consideration of conflicts at a particular level.

4. Method

4.1 Participants

The study involved 110 respondents from manufacturing as well as IT sectors of India in total. Nearly 175 respondents from various manufacturing and IT sectors were approached using a convenient sampling method. The respondents included employees from different levels in the company such as entry level, lower level of management, middle level of management and top level of management. The measuring instrument for data collection from the employees was in the form of questionnaires which consists of close-ended questions. The usable responses were only 110. The responses were also collected by taking some training sessions on the study variables. Participants had different educational levels : diploma holders (18.5 percent), graduates (67 percent) and post-graduates (14.5 percent). Work experience ranged from 1 year to 28 years and the average age was 32.9 years.

4.2 Instrument

Organisational conflict was measured with the 20-item Organisational Conflict Scale (OCS) developed by Dhar U. and Dhar S. [2003]. All 20 items were rated on a 4-point frequency-based scale (1 = Almost never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often and 4 = Almost always). Some sample items of this measure are "Promotion policy has always been a reason for disagreement amongst the employees of our organization; "Compensation paid is not proportionate to the efforts made by an employee." The authors have recommended the use of the total score on the OCS as an indicator of conflict level for practical purposes because of highly related items. The overall scale also showed high reliability of 0.87 and validity as 0.91.

4.3 Data Analysis

In item development and analysis of the Organizational Conflict Scale, factor analysis using an orthogonal varimax rotation revealed a three factor structure, as determined by the scree test for number of factors [Cattell, 1966]. Principal component analysis was used to reduce the data. Before applying the factor analysis, it was tested that factor analysis was appropriate to apply on this data, using statistical tests like Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The first one is a measurement of sampling adequacy, where a value greater than 0.5 is desirable [Hair et al., 2001]. The KMO of the present data is 0.771. The second one is used for testing the appropriateness of factor analysis showing variables are uncorrelated in the population [Malhotra, 2005]. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO = 0.771) indicates that the patterns of correlations are condensed. Bartlett's test of sphericity with approximated chi square value 532.740 which is significant shows that the factor analysis is appropriate. A total of twenty variables regarding conflict management were subjected to principal component analysis with varimax rotation by using the factors with eigen value more than one being retained. Harman [1976] indicated that factors with loading score greater 0.29 at the 0.05 level were significant, but in this study the factors having been loading greater than 0.5 were considered and included to define the factor and hence four items whose factor loadings were less than 0.5 were dropped. Three factors were extracted assuming eigen value criterion more than one (ranging from 1.374 to

5.160 and explaining 25.798 per cent of variance. They are (a) Individual conflict (b) Organisational conflict and (c) Group conflict. <Table 1> gives eigen values of three factors that are extracted and variance explained by each factor and the cumulative percentage of variance explained. The internal consistency revealed alpha coefficients for all the three levels i.e individual level, organizational level and group level are above 0.75 [Putnam and Wilson, 1982]. For scoring purposes, the three factors identified through factor analysis as levels of conflict management are represented as factors of the OCS. At the individual level, conflict begins "when one party perceives that the other has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something that he or she cares about" [Thomas, 1992]. Individual level conflict interaction is crucial because it ultimately changes the whole social environment [Bush and Folger 2005]. According to Rahim [1986] intergroup conflict refers to disagreements, differences, or incompatibilities between the members or their representatives of two or more groups. At the organizational level, the conflict can be either inter-organizational or intra-organizational. According to Roloff [1987], organisational conflict occurs when employees who are engaged in activities of the organization that is incompatible with those of colleagues, with their network or unaffiliated individuals who utilize the services or products of the organisation. Though conflicts can lead to enhanced corporate control yet they can increase creativity and innovation. Attention should be given to the opportunities that emerge from intra- and inter-organizational conflict and not to the destructive

part of conflict. Sample items from each of the factors are included in the following OCS :

4.3.1 Individual Level

Intelligent and meritorious people are seen as a threat.

One is always exposed to the risk of penalty even if the task clarity is lacking.

Employee development is generally hampered.

4.3.2 Group Level

Some people purposely tend to block the opportunities for others.

People are forced to undertake unrelated tasks to prevent them in furthering their interests.

Job descriptions have often been found overlapping, hence disappointing the people performing various roles.

4.3.3 Organizational Level

Promotion policy has always been a reason for disagreement among the employees of organisation.

Superiors are not necessarily more capable, effective and efficient in comparison to their subordinates.

Open and effective communication between people working in this organisation cannot be generalized.

5. Results

A majority of respondents were males (90.9 percent). The respondents were in their 20s (41.8 per cent) or 30s (33.6 per cent). Others were in their 40s (22.7 per cent) or 50s+(0.18 per cent). Mostly all of the respondents in the age group of 20s were from IT sector. All the respondents of manufacturing organisations were males.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

As seen in <Table 2>, the means and standard deviations of all the three factors of conflict scale are given gender wise.

There is much difference in means of male (14.97) and female (17.0) in case of group level conflict and hence it can be assumed that the conflict due to gender does not have any significant difference when conflict is group conflict. Here its is important to note that group conflict is group conflict we mean those situations in which large numbers of employees in an organization may share perceived deprivations, frustrations, or dissatisfactions and develop consensus on issues in opposition to consensus on another level in the hierarchy within a group and hence it is not based on gender.

〈Table 1〉 Principal Component Analysis

Factors	F1	F2	F3
Eigen Values	5.160	1.605	1.374
Percentage of total variance explained	25.798	8.027	6.868
Cumulative percentage of variance explained	25.798	33.825	40.693

〈Table 2〉 Descriptive Statistics Gender Wise

Factors		Mean	S.D
F1	Male	15.2	.398
	Female	16.0	1.257
F2	Male	14.97	.362
	Female	17.0	1.145
F3	Male	12.07	.269
	Female	13.0	.850

<Table 3> shows the means and standard deviations of all the three factors of conflict scale are given industry wise (Manufacturing and IT sector).As there is little difference in means of all the three conflict levels industry wise but in case of factor 2 (F2) which is again group conflict, there is a wide difference (14.04 and 17.10) and hence group conflict varies industry wise.

<Table 3> Descriptive Statistics Industry Wise

Factors		Mean	S.D
F1	Mfg.	14.47	3.20
	IT	16.62	4.77
F2	Mfg.	14.04	3.33
	IT	17.10	3.38
F3	Mfg.	11.85	2.48
	IT	12.67	2.97

The F value has shown in <Table 4> shows that all the three factors are not significant (p > .05) and hence there is no difference in all the three conflict levels based on gender when independent t-test was carried out.

<Table 4> Independent t-test

Factors	Mean square	F	Sig.
FI	6.11	.387	.535
F2	37.46	2.86	.094
F3	7.86	1.08	.299

As can be seen in <Table 5>, the F value is significant for both the cases i.e Individual conflict (F1) where p < .05 and F value is 7.99 and group conflict (F2) where p < .05 and F value is 21.15 and hence there is significant difference in conflict levels in both manufacturing and IT sector at individual and group level. Independent

t-test and multivariate analysis was applied using SPSS 17.0 to find out the results. In case of organisational conflict, the F value is not significant (p > .05).

<Table 5> Independent t-test

Factors	Mean square	F	Sig.
FI	118.05	7.99	.006
F2	237.90	21.15	.000
F3	17.02	2.38	.126

6. Discussion

Organizational conflicts are unavoidable and studies have shown that about 20 percent of employee time is spent on managing conflicts [Rahim, 2000]. Thus, managing conflicts is of interest to both practitioners and researchers [Callanan 2006; Gupta 2010]. There is no wonder that organizational conflict management is gaining increasing attention not from top managers and policymakers across major organizations but also from non-profit organizations as well. Organizations have changed their view towards conflict management during the past 25 years [Lipsky and Seeber 2006]. Organizations are adopting strategic approaches to deal with conflicts. Our study has shown that there is no significant difference in all the three conflict levels based on gender which is quite surprising but a study done by Galea and Loosemore [2006] on employees working in construction industries have shown that males dominated over females in interpersonal as well as organizational levels of conflict are considered. Construction is well known as a male domi-

nated industry with a strong masculine culture [Gale, 1994; Sommerville et al., 1993; Dainty et al., 2000; Fielden et al., 2000; Agapiou, 2002; Chandra and Loosemore, 2003].Their study have shown that the construction industry is well known for its high levels of inter-personal and inter organisational conflict [Gardiner et al., 1992; Fenn et al., 1997; Emmitt, 2003]. When males are considered as dominating factors in organisations like construction ones it has been found that the poor communication is cited as a cause of conflict in the construction industry [Brandt and Murphy, 2000]. In our study there were many causes responsible for conflict in organisations which are broadly classified under three factors. Communication has been one of the main items under organisational conflict. Communication has also been shown as a reason for organisational conflict. For example, in western cultures, Coates [2004] points out that young boys tend to play in large groups which is arranged hierarchically and thus learn to communicate in direct and confrontational language. Again a study conducted by Pilkingont [1992] of Australian work place meetings, the same continues into adulthood where male communicate styles and are thus characterised by interruption and verbal sparring where there is a focus on an logical exchange of views, distinct speaker roles, getting in fast, actively fending off any interruptions, using high pitch volume and repetition to dominate along with strong verbal signals to lay claim to the floor and silence any potential competitors. In a study conducted by Thompson et al. [2001] who found that women are less likely to use an informal

style of language, or jargon of a particular group. Women are less eager to engage in conflict than men, have fewer conflict episodes as a result and use a much more indirect and less physical form of engagement as compared to men. An explanation could be that communication is based on the gender and hence the organisations are more prone to have conflicts when there are large number of male employees in the organisation Importantly, Sheldon [1999] also argues that in a conflict situation, women tend to try to maintain interpersonal relationships and ally themselves with each other, often in opposition to others girls who are not present. They also employ more indirect psychological modes of engagement than men and their discourse is typically collaborative, levelled at creating and maintaining relationships and criticising and arguing in indirect ways which is in contrast with the males.

Furthermore the conflicts in organisations which arise because of interactions between males and females or males and males and vice versa tend to either rise or slow down the conflict as the gender plays a role. According to Byrne [2004] and De Klerk [2004] men are more prone to aggression in a conflict, more willing to engage in conflict, more forceful in pursuing their own agenda and less willing to compromise and hence when there a large number of male employees in organisations there are better and more chances of having conflicts. According to Dual Concern Model which is based on managing of conflicts at individual level also has shown that communication dominates related to conflict in organisations. Several researchers

[e.g., Guetzkow and Gyr, 1954; Pinkley, 1990; Jehn, 1997; Amason, 1996] have suggested that there are two dimensions that are relevant for managing conflict : disagreements relating to substantive issues and disagreements relating to affective issues [Jehn, 1997].

The substantive dimension refers to disagreements relating to tasks, policies, and other organizational issues [Rahim, 2002]. The affective dimension refers to issues that "are generally caused by the negative reactions of organizational members (e.g. personal attacks of group members, racial disharmony).

Regarding the nature of industries, our study has shown that there is significant difference between the levels of conflict i.e at individual and group levels. According to an old study which was conducted by Panday and Pathak in 1972 where they have shown that the most conflict prone industrial sector in India is manufacturing sector like rubber and rubber products, non-metallic mineral products, and metal products. It was found in the study that the frequency ratios have been consistently high in the case of five industries, namely metal products, leather and leather products, non-metallic mineral products, rubber and rubber products, and tobacco. The reasons for the conflicts as found out by the authors in that study was that unions were playing no role in solving the conflicts and also the avenues were not available t that time to overcome the conflicting situations.

Manufacturing sector is considered the most important business revenue in India. The literature shows that the lack of harmony between the strategies developed by the organisations

lead to inter functional conflict, which, in turn, results in less-than-optimal business performance [Hayes and Wheelwright, 1984]. The conflicts in manufacturing organisations arise because of many reasons. Walton and Dutton [1969] proposed that conflict will be managed best where the consideration devoted to interface management corresponds to the degree of differentiation between departments" and that, as differentiation between departments increases and the interface management techniques become more elaborate and complicated. Although conflict refers to a negative meaning in general, it can be a good opportunity for organizational success if and only if it is well managed considering the manufacturing sector where conflicts arise more than other sectors. In manufacturing organisations conflict is considered as dysfunctional conflict as it hinders group performance. This is in line with Shapiro [1997] who in his study found conflict between manufacturing and marketing departments are not only an example of dysfunctional conflict but also an example of horizontal conflict, as it occurs between individual departments at the same level [Kwahk and Kim, 1998].The manufacturing organisations are supposed to manufacture goods at a minimum cost with minimum of wastages and hence the personnel involved in the process vary in terms of skills, knowledge, education etc. which in turn can create gaps and leads to conflicting situations. This is also in line with a study conducted by Shapiro [1977] who reported that the manufacturing people are evaluated on running a smooth operation at minimum cost which in turn differ in

terms of orientation and experience and hence the conflict can arise. According to a study conducted by Omurgonulsen and Surucu [2008] in Turkish manufacturing firms (named as automotive, aeronautical, defense, non-alcoholic beverage and food manufacturing sectors) on 46 employees it was found that quality was the priority which was considered first in case of manufacturing sector and the best way to solve the issue was to consider informal communication. So it was concluded that miscommunication is the reason for conflicts to arise in manufacturing sectors too. In a study of Gorse [2003] many of the members in a manufacturing organisation stated that conflict emerged because of a lack of understand of both the task and other members. One person stated that conflict emerged as the group members developed a better understand of others and the problem. Communication was the main aspect which should be taken into consideration when there is any conflicting situation. Problems develop because difficulties were experienced in understanding the task and problem, misunderstanding of what the group was trying to achieve or that conflict developed when an opinion or idea was put forward in an ambiguous way.

The researches have also shown that within short group experiences people can have different perceptions of conflict and the effectiveness of the different management strategies used. So it is the way the conflict is handled in an organisation. Conflict can occur at any level but the way it is managed constructively is important. Conflict has become inseparable part and parcel of our lives. Conflict is experienced as we experi-ence joy or sorrow in our day to day life. It is a natural fact of our personal and professional existence. It is an unavoidable component of human activity [Brahnam et al., 2005] that may be viewed as a situation in which the concerns of two or more individuals appear to be incompatible [Darling and Fogliasso, 1999]. It occurs when individuals or groups perceive that others are preventing them from attaining their goals [Antonioni, 1998].

In case of IT industries where the employees are working late hours also face conflicting situations. As IT workers are being increasingly stretched by extensive projects and aggressive timelines, they also face many problems based on organisational set up. While extended work demands are not the exclusive domain of IT professionals the evidence indicates that workers in the IT sector are experiencing longer work hours, more work-life conflict and higher indices of burnout than their co-workers in other functional areas [McGee, 2003]. According to CIO Research Reports, 2001 it was found that 58.3% of IT workers do not feel they have an appropriate balance between their work lives and their personal lives. As the It workers are more stressed and loaded with heavy work they sometimes feel burnout and fatigued. The increasing demands of today's work climate are creating turmoil within the lives of IT professionals. It also suggests that learning to manage this conflict is an important challenge facing managers and HR directors aiming to retain valuable IT workers.

The literature has documented various consequences of work-life conflict, including de-

creased levels of job satisfaction [Bruck et al., 2002; Kossek and Ozeki, 1998; Parasuraman and Simmers, 2001; Rice et al., 1992], career dissatisfaction [Parasuraman and Simmers, 2001] and increased turnover intentions [Boyar et al., 2003; Greenhaus et al., 2001]. Research has also shown that IT profession has demonstrated that role conflict is associated with lower levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment [Goldstein and Rockhart, 1984; Guimaraes and Igbaria, 1992; Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992], as well as greater turnover intentions [Baroudi, 1985; King et al., 2005; Moore, 2000]. The main reason for conflict in IT industries have been the individual as well as organisational factors which include intrinsic motivation and organisational loyalty which affect the work life balance. According to Igbaria et al. [1994] who found IT employees with high job involvement demonstrated more boundary-spanning activities and higher levels of role stress, but also demonstrated higher levels of commitment to the organization.

6.1 Conclusion and future implication

The present study was undertaken to find out the conflict levels in manufacturing as well as IT industries in India. It was found that the conflict can arise at any level and can create a lot of problems to the individuals as well as to the organisations if not properly resolved. The strategies discussed in this article are meant to guide organizations as they attempt to provide members of their IT workforce with more balance between their professional and personal lives. It is important to note, however, that these suggestions may not fit every organization and each HR manager should ensure that these policies mesh with his or her particular setting. The main reason of conflict in the manufacturing sector was found to be communication gap and in case of It sector it was found out to be intrinsic motivation and organisational policies which are a cause for conflict.

In summary, the above analysis reveals the key messages for practitioners managing IT personnel and manufacturing employees. First, work-life conflict matters. The research has consistently demonstrated that work-life conflict is a real phenomenon that has serious consequences for both individuals and organizations. Second, work-life conflict among IT workers matters. The statistics on burnout clearly indicate that IT workers experience both time and strain based conflict and that this conflict has implications for the satisfaction and commitment of IT workers. Among the manufacturing employees the communication part should not be kept aside but proper channels should be used to fill in the gaps and reduce the conflicts.

This study carries certain significant implications for managers and practitioners. Based on the findings of present study the policy makers and HR managers should take proper actions while dealing with conflicts. Firstly they should find out the level at which conflict is occurring and then decide the best possible ways to deal with the situations. Communicating through proper channels and increasing the motivation levels of employees can help to reduce the stress levels and conflict to escalate. Promotional policies open and effective communication, more

stress on innovation and creative thinking, effective performance appraisal system, recognition of merit and worth of employees should be considered which will help to reduce the conflicting situations. The HR managers should carefully consider the level of control and ownership they can provide their IT workers in an effort to curtail the effects of work-life conflict.

The present study carries certain limitations. Firstly, the study is confined to only two sectors as manufacturing and IT sector in India. It can be extended to other sectors also so as to get more clear picture and the reasons for conflict in other organisations. Secondly, data collected is based on self reports, thus raising the concerns for common method variance. Additionally, the study included only conflict levels in the organisations as other conflict dimensions like types of conflict, reason of conflict can be taken for further study. In the future, this study could be extended to investigate the role of the other variables with a large sample size and more organisations.

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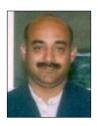
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