

Identifying Gaps in Organizational Conflicts: A Path Forward for Research

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Abstract

Organizational Conflicts are inevitable. It is due to human nature, which contains differences of opinion, establishment of superiority and other related factors. Studying organizational conflicts is crucial for enhancing collaboration and productivity, as it helps identify and address underlying issues. This review aims to highlight the future research gaps in organizational conflicts. A systematic literature review was conducted using different databases, such as Google Scholar and Scopus. Rayyan, a powerful, cloud-based software, was employed to maximize transparency and provide an in-depth review of existing knowledge. The relevant journal articles and other contributions were considered in identifying research gaps in the existing knowledge. The search parameters were limited to data between 2009 and 2024. As a result, 151 research papers were selected that met the inclusion criteria. This review proposes key propositions for future-focused organizational conflict management. Firstly, the review ignites the need to comprehend the connection between organizational conflicts and other influential variables, e.g., employees' trust and commitment. Secondly, it is important to understand the role of Collectivism in Organizational Conflict Management. There is less empirical evidence of organizational conflicts in a Pakistani context. Thirdly, most studies on organizational conflicts are either quantitative or limited in addressing an interpretive stance. Lastly, future studies should adopt longitudinal designs to understand organizational conflicts. The review emphasized the necessity for more longitudinal studies. Future researchers can further utilize these research gaps and can enhance understanding of organizational conflicts.

Keywords: *Conflict Management, Team Performance, Organizational Conflicts*

JEL Code: D74, M19

1. Introduction

Comprehension of workplace conflicts originated from different disciplinary domains. Rahim (2023) argues that the subject area of "Organizational Conflicts" is well contributed by psychology and philosophy. Many academic disciplines widely discuss organizational conflicts, e.g., Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior (Weerarathna, 2017). Conflicts are universal. The nature of conflicts and the differences in human nature within the organizations make conflicts more inevitable. Resolving conflicts has always been a subject area of conflict management within organizations. Conflicts often create disturbance and a tendency to cause issues and disruption. In an organization of conflicts, employees are motivated, competent, and willing to enhance the organization's performance. The absence of conflicts shows

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incompetency (Umair et al., 2018). On the other side, the Covid-19 pandemic changed many organizations. It includes implementing a remote working environment, often abruptly and quickly.

Furthermore, post-COVID-19 organizational conflicts are worth studying. The studies also suggested that organizations quickened the speedy development of technologies and communication., minimizing separations and developing new conflict management techniques and remote work interactions. While some level of conflict can stimulate creativity and innovation. Unresolved conflicts can lead to decreased productivity and employee dissatisfaction (Schneider, 2023) . Despite extensive literature on conflict management strategies, significant gaps remain in understanding the contextual factors that mitigate organizational conflicts. Similarly, many studies have primarily focused on traditional corporate environments, neglecting the unique challenges faced by non-profit organizations. Conflict is often viewed negatively. It is recognized as a potential catalyst for both growths. It also includes changes within organizations. Understanding and managing organizational conflicts can enhance collaboration, problem-solving, and decision-making. However, despite the significant research in this area, organizational conflict remains a complex phenomenon, particularly in response to organizational structure changes, work environment, and technological advancements.

The motivation for this review paper lies in the evolving nature of organizational conflicts. The primary motivation for this review paper stems from several key factors:

1.1 Diverse Impact of Organizational Conflict

Organizational conflict can occur in various forms, including interpersonal, intrapersonal, and structural. These conflicts negatively and can positively affect organizational outcomes. It includes employee productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. However, this relationship between conflict types and outcomes remains inconsistent and underexplored. This paper seeks to gather diverse literature on organizational conflicts to understand better the different forms of conflict and their implications.

1.2 Changing Nature of Work and Conflict

The rise of remote work and digital communication platforms has transformed how organizational conflicts are resolved. The traditional approaches to conflict resolution may no longer be sufficient in addressing disputes, e.g., virtual teams. New research is needed to understand how technology influences conflict dynamics. It also seeks how these can be strategized to manage organizational conflicts. This review will examine how the increasing digital tools and remote work environments have altered organizations and propose new avenues for future research.

1.3 Research Gaps and Future Directions: While significant progress has been made in understanding organizational conflict, numerous gaps remain in the literature. It includes the lack of longitudinal studies examining the long-term impact of conflict. This study aims to identify and highlight these gaps, providing a foundation for future research to further our understanding of organizational conflict and its management.

1.4 Scarcity of Studies on Organizational Conflicts in Pakistan

Organizational conflict has been widely studied in Western contexts. There is a lack of research focused on Pakistan. Due to cultural, economic, and social dynamics, it can offer unique insights into organizational conflict processes and management. Many studies have been conducted on organizational conflicts. However, there are insufficient empirical findings on the interrelation of organizational conflicts and other influential variables in the Pakistani context. The influential variables are further discussed and supported by relevant literature and knowledge in later sections.

1.5 Underrepresentation of Qualitative Research

Methods such as interviews, ethnographic studies, and case studies are valuable for understanding the lived experiences of employees. The quantitative research on organizational conflict has produced valuable insights. This review aims to emphasize qualitative approaches to organizational conflict in understanding the complex nature of conflict.

2. Literature review

The definition of organization conflicts is subjective in meaning. It is due to different opinions and observations. Various researchers and authors define conflicts differently. Organizational conflicts are disagreements between parties or individuals within the organization. It increases business uncertainty and complexity (Todorova et al., 2022). It can be due to individuals' divergent backgrounds, including culture, religion, and perception. On the other hand, there is a price of unresolved conflict that has to be paid by the organization. Many academic disciplines have highlighted this. According to Rahim (2023), both philosophy and psychology contributed more to organizational conflicts. Similarly, organizational conflicts includes contains themes of social psychology, occupational psychology, and organizational behavior (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008).

2.1 Reasons for organization conflicts

As mentioned in the previous section, numerous studies have been conducted on organizational conflicts. However, few of them were originated from Asian countries. Many researchers have contributed to the subject of organizational management. It includes their analysis, findings, and contributions. Organizational conflicts can occur for various reasons. De Dreu and Gelfand (2008) listed a few reasons why organizational conflicts can occur. It includes values and beliefs, scarcity of productive resources, and other insightful facts. Similarly, Cheong and Kim (2018) mentioned factors causing conflicts, including incompatibility, arguments, and employee dissatisfaction. Communication issues, including inadequate information, structural issues such as goal incompatibility and personal factors, are among the reasons for organizational conflicts (Robbins et al., 2013). Similarly, incompatible personalities, unclear policies and job boundaries plays a vital role in raising such conflicts (Aswathappa & Reddy, 2009). Hotepo et al. (2010) applied the descriptive research method and concluded that most of the conflicts are due to insufficient of resources

(financial, physical, human, and information) affecting employee motivation and organizational performance.

Other reasons may include huge volume of work and time pressure. It may likely to lead to interpersonal conflicts. It also escalates personal and task-related conflicts and may result in affecting employees 'resources and their well-being (Ozturk & Karatepe, 2019)

2.2 Prospective/views of Organizational Conflicts

In the modern world, there is no scarcity of knowledge. However, views, protectives, and experiences may vary. After analyzing the literature, three viewpoints on organizational conflicts have existed. These are often denoted as the conventional, behavioral, and interactionist stances (Vokić & Sontor, 2009).

2.2.1 Traditional perspective

The traditional view encouraged the de-escalation of conflicts. The primary aim was to avoid the conflict. Robbins et al. (2013) mentioned the traditional view of conflicts and argued that disputes are detrimental and must be eradicated.

2.2.2 Interactionalist perspective

The researchers later viewed conflicts as a positive force and an element to increase the organization's performance.

2.2.3 Managed conflict or Human relations view

This view of conflict believes conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group. The perspective believes conflict should be accepted as it leads to further improvement and a desirable state. Instead of using three views, Kumar (2009) identified two conflicting views. It includes the classical view and the modern view. The classical view of conflict is that it is negative and bad and that it must be avoided. On the other hand, the modern view was classified into functional and dysfunctional conflicts.

2.2.4 Functional conflicts and dysfunctional conflicts

A coin has two sides. Similarly, organizational conflicts have two dimensions, e.g., Functional and dysfunctional (Shah et al., 2021). Functional conflicts generate ideas and creativity. These conflicts lead to new solutions. It energizes group members and provides learning opportunities (Opatha & Perera, 2017)

On the other hand, unclear responsibility and group disinterest are responsible for conflicts (Nwokorie, 2017). However, Robbins et al. (2013) argue that functional conflicts support collaborative goals and provide room for the improvement of the group's performance. On the same note, Kumar (2009) made a similar contribution and mentioned that functional conflicts provide a second opportunity to employees. It led them towards innovations and new directions.

The second side of the coin is dysfunctional conflicts. When the organizational goals are unrealistic, conflicts may emerge among individual staff members (Umair et al., 2018). Dysfunctional conflicts involve disagreements between individuals and groups that do not support organizational goals. It includes exceeding what is required by a

team (Dash et al., 2023). It decreases organizational performance and individual job performance. Opatha and Perera (2017) argue that dysfunctional conflicts affect employees' psychological well-being and may result in wasting resources, creating a negative environment and aggressive behaviors among employees (Shivapriya et al., 2020).

2.3 Types of Organizational Conflicts

Diverse contributors cataloged organizational conflicts in diverse ways. Jehn (1995) established twin classifications (task and relationship conflicts) as intragroup conflicts. In private organizations, task conflicts diminish the satisfaction and emotional well-being of employees, whereas relationship conflicts reduce both (satisfaction and emotional well-being) for workers in the public and private sectors (Guerra et al., 2020). Later, Rahim (2002) categorized organizational conflicts into two components e.g., intra-organizational conflicts and inter-organizational conflicts. Intra-organizational conflicts were later divided into four distinct categories: intragroup conflicts, intergroup conflicts, interpersonal conflicts, and intrapersonal conflicts. Researchers also introduced four levels of conflict. It includes conflicts occurring between groups, within groups, among individuals, and within an individual (Aswathappa & Reddy, 2009). Later, in 2009, Kumar (2009) contributed a similar classification. The below table shows different types of conflicts.

Table 1 Types of Conflicts

Intragroup Conflicts	Intragroup conflicts involve disagreements that happen within an organization, including conflicts between different departments, among employees, or between various branches of the same entity (Anwar et al., 2012). On the other hand, several other researchers contributed their understanding of intragroup conflicts. Intragroup conflicts are often not shared, uniform, or static (Shah et al., 2021). Jehn (1995) identified task and relationship conflicts as two types of Intragroup conflicts. Later, Riaz and Junaid (2013) mentioned Cognitive conflicts and substantive conflicts as alternative terms for task conflicts.
Intrapersonal Conflicts and Interpersonal Conflicts	The term "Intrapersonal" is important in conflict resolution research. Eunice et al (2014) argue that intrapersonal personal conflicts positively impact organizations. Such conflicts refer to internal struggles that individuals experience within themselves. Meanwhile, interpersonal refers to individual disagreement or dispute (de Wit et al., 2013).

Intergroup Conflicts	Conflicts between two organizational units or departments within the same institution are known as intergroup conflicts. According to Sasse et al. (2022), these intergroup conflicts can arise from shared perceptions of injustice.
Inter-Organizational Conflicts	Over the two decades, research on interpersonal conflicts has attracted much attention from researchers and practitioners. Though, there is still limited understanding of inter-organizational conflicts (Lumineau et al., 2015). This type of conflict occurs between two distinct organizations

2.4 Organizations and Covid-19 Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic has impelled and facilitated technological proliferation and communication channels. It further shortens the spans and promotes virtual work engagements (Garro-Abarca et al., 2021). Several researchers highlighted this virtual interaction of humans. Studies such as Schiller and Mandviwalla (2007) highlighted conflict management issues in virtual teams. Similarly, Gilson et al. (2015) unveiled ten themes and ten future study opportunities. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed many organizations to have fast and abrupt working methods. It includes implementing a remote working environment (Caputo et al., 2023)

Moreover, virtuality is a mediating variable between conflict and trust (Bierly et al., 2009). Researchers believe that virtual teams' performance should be considered continuous rather than a binary variable (De Guinea et al., 2012; Malhotra & Majchrzak, 2014). The COVID-19 pandemic indeed moved many traditional ways of working into virtual gatherings. However, it raised many questions about organizational performance and functionality. Garro-Abarca et al (2021) raised a few questions on whether or not the COVID-19 pandemic has created alternative processes and their related conflicts. Caputo et al. (2023) revealed many other aspects by considering the organizational conflicts of virtual teams. They documented 41 papers and identified manifestations of 5 thematic clusters, e.g., Trust, Performance, Cultural Diversity, Knowledge and Team Management. However, the research does not search for organizational-related issues in underdeveloped nations where the lack of technology and illiteracy are the leading reasons for organizational conflicts.

2.5 Organizational conflicts. A Pakistani perspective.

The issues related to organizations are not well discussed in Pakistan. Few researches highlighted the basic elements of organizational conflicts and associated variables. Umair et al. (2018) selected Pakistan's manufacturing and service sectors. They found

that undefined goals, communication barriers between employees and management and lack of resources are the most appropriate reasons for conflicts in the service sector. On the other hand, Awan and Saeed (2015) investigated the banking sector of Pakistan. Through descriptive techniques and ratio analysis, they found that conflict management strategies play an important role in improving the organization's performance. Corruption always fuels conflict. Corruption in the political and legal system encourages organizational conflicts. It includes an unprecedented bureaucratic system in underdeveloped countries such as India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. It is further explained in later sections.

3. Methodology

There are several review techniques used in research to synthesize and evaluate existing literature. Both scholars and professional bodies have contributed in this regard. Narrative review provides an overview and context but may introduce bias due to the lack of systematic searching and selection (Gough et al., 2017). Whereas, Scoping review explores the breadth of literature on a topic (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). On the other hand, Umbrella Review: summarizes the findings of multiple systematic reviews on a particular topic (McGowan et al., 2016). The use of a systematic literature review methodology allows researchers for a comprehensive, unbiased, and transparent exploration (Page et al., 2021).

This review adopts a systematic literature review strategy to analyze the existing literature. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were set to determine the eligibility of data and resources. It includes peer-reviewed journals and reputable books, reputable conference proceedings, and other credible sources. A search strategy was developed to identify the key studies. Databases such as Google Scholar and Scopus were utilized using the keywords "Conflict management, "Organization conflicts, "Organization conflicts in Pakistan," etc. It also includes manual searches of reference lists from relevant journals. The screening process contained two stages: Title of the study and abstract screening. It includes full-text assignments and reliable sources. Following the filtration process, the relevant studies and contributions were extracted. Rayyan, a powerful, cloud-based software, was employed to perform a systematic literature review to maximize transparency and provide an in-depth review of existing knowledge. The below table shows the methodological framework for conducting a systematic literature review on Organizational Conflicts using Rayyan.

Table 2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Step	Description
1. Protocol Development	Inclusion Criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peer-reviewed articles – 2. Published in the last 15 years 3. Studies should focus on organizational conflicts, addressing conflicts within organizations

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Empirical studies (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) related to organizational conflicts. 5. Studies should involve employees or organizations in a workplace or organizational setting. 6. Studies conducted in any geographical region, with particular attention to those that examine conflicts in Pakistani organizations 7. Studies that address the relationship between organizational conflicts and other influential variables <p>Exclusion Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-peer-reviewed articles 2. If a study is found in multiple databases, it should be included once.
8. Literature Search Strategy	<p>Databases: Scopus - Web of Science - Google Scholar</p> <p>Keywords: - "Organizational conflict" - "Conflict Management" - "Team Performance"</p>
9. Study Selection Process	<p>Rayyan Integration: Import search results into Rayyan for initial screening and to label and categorize studies.</p> <p>Screening: Review titles & abstracts - Conduct full-text review of selected article</p>
10. Data Extraction	Methodologies, Findings, Identified gaps and recommendation

Databases were taken to search for the most recent and existing knowledge. The initial searches on 'Conflict Management' and Organizations conflicts' brought 536498 and 560677 results, respectively.

4. Results and analysis

As mentioned earlier, the studies were sourced from three major databases e.g., Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. These data bases contribute a unique set of studies based on their indexing criteria and coverage. Rayyan was utilized as a primary tool for screening, organizing, and analyzing the studies. Its advance features allowed for efficient data management. This includes automatic deduplication and easy categorization of studies based on set inclusion and exclusion criteria. This tool helped the researcher to assess a total of 521 studies and ultimately select 151 that met the criteria for inclusion. In order to provide a clear understanding of how studies were distributed across these platforms, the below table outlines the number of studies indexed in each database, their overlap, and the methodology breakdown.

Table 3 Utilization of Data bases.

Category	Details	Count	Percentage
Total Studies Screened	Total studies reviewed across all databases	521	
Studies Indexed in Scopus and Web of Science	Studies indexed in both Scopus and Web of Science	150	28.8%
Studies Indexed in Google Scholar (overlap with Scopus and Web of Science)	Studies indexed in Google Scholar that overlap with Scopus and/or Web of Science	180	34.5%
Studies Indexed Only in Scopus	Studies indexed exclusively in Scopus	120	23.0%
Studies Indexed Only in Web of Science	Studies indexed exclusively in Web of Science	70	13.4%
Studies Indexed Only in Google Scholar	Studies indexed only in Google Scholar (not in Scopus or Web of Science)	50	9.6%
Included Studies	Studies meeting inclusion criteria (from all databases)	151	29%
Excluded Studies	Studies not meeting inclusion criteria	360	69%

The table below presents a detailed overview of the screening results across the following mentioned categories.

Table 4 Screening results

Category	Details	Count	Percentage
Total Studies Screened		521	
Included Studies	Studies meeting inclusion criteria	151	29%
Excluded Studies	Studies not meeting inclusion criteria	360	69%
Methodology			
Quantitative	Studies using quantitative methods	106	70.2%
Qualitative	Studies using qualitative methods	30	19.9%
Mixed Methods	Studies using mixed methods	15	11%
Publication Year			
2009-2015	Studies published between 2009-2015	33	22%
2016-2020	Studies published between 2016-2020	67	44%
2021-Present	Studies published from 2021 onwards	51	34%

Out of a total of 151 research articles selected for review, the following table highlights the most important and frequently cited studies. It is organized by year of publication, which explore various aspects of organizational conflicts, team dynamics, and performance management. These researches are drawn from a range of methodologies including, quantitative analysis, experimental designs, and case studies. These contributions have made significant contributions to the understanding of conflict in different organizational settings.

Table 5: Key studies on organization conflicts

Author	Year	Journal	Methodology Adopted	Findings
(Patricia Elgoibar and Pablo Ruiz-Palomino and Santiago, 2024)	2024	<i>European Management Journal</i>	Comparative Analysis	Differences in the strength of this relationship were found across family and non-family businesses. The researchers also recommended longitudinal designs for future studies.
(Caputo et al., 2023)	2023	<i>International Journal of Conflict Management</i>	Systematic Literature Review	Provided evidence from 41 papers, which resulted in the most impactful and caused the emergence of five thematic clusters: trust, performance, cultural diversity, knowledge management, and team management. The study recommended exploring the different natures of conflicts impacting organizational performance.
(Zahid & Nauman, 2023)	2023	<i>Personnel Review</i>	Survey Research / Quantitative Analysis	Results revealed that interpersonal conflicts play a role in linking workplace rudeness to engaging in negative behaviors on the job.
(Sasse et al., 2022)	2022	<i>Social justice research</i>	Experimental Design (G*Power Technique)	Utilizing the G*Power technique, the researcher conducted two experiments and provided additional

				evidence for the effectiveness of the justice-focused intervention in mitigating intergroup conflicts.
(Garro-Abarca et al., 2021)	2021	<i>Frontiers in psychology</i>	Qualitative Analysis	The research results showed the outcomes of virtual teams. It offers valuable insights that can lay the groundwork for further investigation into the integration of virtual work strategies in the post-pandemic workplace.
(Yasir & Khan, 2020)	2020	<i>Leadership, Education, Personality: An Interdisciplinary Journal</i>	Survey Research / Mediation Analysis	The results highlight several theoretical and practical implications. The research aimed to investigate the link between ethical leadership and workplace deviance by considering employees' trust as a mediator in the public sector hospitals of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK).
(Umair et al., 2018)	2018	<i>Science, Technology & Public Policy</i>	Quantitative analysis	The research utilized quantitative methods to identify the major reasons for conflicts in Pakistan's manufacturing and service sectors. Favoritism, employee clashes, trust issues, and lack of skill and experience are among the factors causing conflicts in the manufacturing sector. Clashes between employees and management, lack of resources, undefined goals, and communication barriers were among the

				reasons for conflicts in Pakistan's service sector.
(Weerathna, 2017)	2017	<i>International Journal of Human Resource Studies</i>	Quantitative analysis	The analysis shows insufficient empirical findings on the association between organizational conflicts in Sri Lankan and Asian contexts. It also includes the requirement for more longitudinal research.
(Sahrai & Javaid, 2016)	2016	<i>South Asian Studies</i>	Case Study Analysis	The results show numerous conflict management efforts through mediation, diplomacy, and negotiations between Pakistan and India, ending with new conflicts. These conflicts further created new hostilities and clashes between both neighboring states.
(Gilson et al., 2015)	2015	<i>Journal of management</i>	Literature Review & Theoretical Framework	This research organizes the last ten years of empirical work around ten main themes. Virtual teams can provide great promise to organizations. It further indicates the field richness and research opportunities for the coming decade(s).
(Riaz & Junaid, 2013)	2013	<i>SRM-IMT Journal of Business & Management Research</i>	Survey Research / Correlational Analysis	This review shows the positive and negative aspects and concludes that not all types of conflicts are bad. More comprehensive studies are needed to analyze conflict thoroughly.
(Malhotra & Majchrzak, 2014)	2014	<i>Human Relations</i>	Hierarchical Multiple Regression	The results derived from 54 geographically dispersed teams that relied on information and communication

				technologies show a positive association with team performance.
(Cheong & Kim, 2018)	2013	<i>International Journal of Public Administration</i>	Cross-Sectional Survey	The analysis was performed using hierarchical multiple regression. It showed relationship conflicts and organizational politics negatively affect organizational performance.
(Anwar et al., 2012)	2012	<i>African Journal of Business Management</i>	Empirical Research / Survey & Statistical Analysis	The research uncovers the hidden fact. It includes a person's temporary personality transformation, which helps in reducing intrapersonal conflicts. The researcher conducted cross-sectional research and declared many limitations. The study suggested that researchers should conduct longitudinal studies, which can help generalize the findings more confidently.
(De Guinea et al., 2012)	2012	<i>Information & management</i>	Meta-analysis (Surveys)	The researchers showed the negative effects of virtualness on team functioning. The results varied in the moderator's direction and strength. It indicates that it was not possible to generalize the effect. Also, the negative effect on short-term teams may be held longer than long-term ones.
(Khan et al., 2011)	2011	<i>Global journal of management and business research</i>	Quantitative Research (Surveys)	In the context of training and development, Training Design and Delivery style significantly impact

				organizational performance.
(Hotepo et al., 2010)	2010	<i>Business and Economics journal</i>	Quantitative Research (Surveys)	The Nigerian research revealed several major causes of conflict, including limited resources. The analysis also showed that conflicts negatively and positively affect organizations.
(Bierly et al., 2009)	2009	<i>Journal of Product Innovation Management,</i>	Quantitative Analysis (Surveys)	Using quantifiable measures, the research showed that managers overseeing virtual teams must recognize the dynamics of interpersonal relationships within such teams. It may not develop in the same way as those in face-to-face settings.

4.1 Propositions for Future Research

The key studies highlighted in the above table not only provide valuable insights into the dynamics of organizational conflicts and team performance but also offer important propositions for addressing research gaps. In order to proactively address these gaps, this review proposes key propositions for future-focused organizational conflict management.

4.1.1 Proposition 1: Understanding Organizational Conflicts in the Hybrid Work Era

Future research should explore how non-cognitive factors e.g., emotions, attitude, and personality traits interact to influence organizational conflict in hybrid and virtual work settings. Organizational conflicts extend beyond personal disputes and include various other factors that can impact the organization. The influential variables commonly refer to non-cognitive individual factors, including emotions, motivation, attitude and personalities. The Covid-19 pandemic opened the doors of many virtual interactions and eased many traditional functions. However, it somehow created a dark side of organizational conflicts. It is because people's behaviors and attitudes have shifted, with heightened emotions contributing to uncertainty that affects workplace behavior (Castaldelli-Maia et al., 2021)

The hybrid work environment raised many questions on how performance is measured among in office and remote employees. Gilson et al. (2015) unveiled ten themes and

ten opportunities for future studies, highlighting virtual teams and related opportunities. Similarly, Caputo et al. (2023) revealed many other aspects by considering the organizational conflicts of virtual teams and recommended exploring the different natures of conflicts that impact organizational performance differently. Zapata, Ibarra and Blancher (2024) presented an ontological stance on the Covid era by conducting surveys based on flexible schemes. They mentioned the need for organizations to recognize the variables such as employees' trust and commitment in this hybrid environment.

Moreover, there is a need for further investigation into additional potential mediating variables. It could enhance comprehension of the underlying mechanism linking ethical leadership to deviant workplace behavior (Yasir & Khan, 2020).

4.1.2 Proposition 2: Understanding the Role of Collectivism in Organizational Conflict Management

Future researches may explore how Pakistan's collectivist culture influences the use of conflict management strategies, and how these strategies affect organizational dynamics. Pakistan, as an underdeveloped country, faces significant political instability and polarization. The studies related to organizational conflicts are few in number. Studies on conflict management in Pakistan are very few in number due to numerous reasons. Pakistan shares its culture with other Asian countries. Su'udy (2009) argue that collectivism is positively associated with many influencing factors. It includes compromising, avoiding, and accommodating conflict management strategies.

Furthermore, in a collectivistic culture, employees often try to develop diplomatic relations and avoid organizational conflicts, which may stop them from going for such strategies. Umair et al. (2018) mentioned 16 reasons causing organizational conflicts in Pakistan. Communication barriers and Interference of govt. Policies were among the top reasons for creating organizational conflicts in Pakistan. Using a five-point Likert-type scale, Khan, Khan and Khan (2011) measured conflict management strategies in Pakistan through a tool consisting of 20 items. They revealed that no difference in conflict management strategies was found between lower-age and upper-age employees. It includes dissatisfaction of younger employees in compromising over conflict management strategies. Khan, Khan, and Khan (2011) also suggested incorporating many other variables, e.g., demographic, social, cultural, and psychological, to measure and develop conflict management strategies.

One reason for conflict management is the lack of economic interdependence on each other. In this globalized village, the states are economically interdependent. Pakistan and its geographical neighbors are not economically well connected. Restrictions on trade with Iran and plummeting relationships with India lead towards a lack of economic interdependence (Sahrai & Javaid, 2016). Another factor may include the research priorities in specific fields such as public health, economic development, etc., which receive greater attention and financial resources than management studies in Pakistan. Zahid & Nauman (2023) conducted research on intrapersonal conflicts in a

Pakistani context. The findings indicate that intrapersonal conflict partially mediates workplace incivility. However, the study did not take into account other influential variables., e.g., employees' trust and commitment. Future research may explore the impact of variables at the group level (Zahid & Nauman, 2023).

4.1.3 Proposition 3: Advancing Beyond Quantitative Approaches: The Need for qualitative investigations

Future research should qualitative methodologies to explore the affective variables e.g., performance, attitude and emotion that are often overlooked in quantitative studies. Several quantitative studies do not apply research methods that allow conclusions on influencing factors. Ajike et al. (2015) applied regression and descriptive analysis to represent the positivist stance and showed organizational conflicts demonstrate a beneficial relationship with organizational performance in Nigeria's financial sectors. Similarly, Longe (2015) applied descriptive and inferential techniques and showed a positive relationship among non-integrative conflicts. Using experimental methodologies or longitudinal studies may lead to better conclusions on affective variables, e.g., performance. Hence, explorative approaches are more likely to be useful in getting insights into managing organizational conflicts (Acharya et al., 2020)

Acharya, Rechberg and Dong (2020) encouraged the qualitative paradigm as an advancement since qualitative research has the power to understand practical phenomena that are now more apparent in organizations and fruitful for new academic research. Most of the studies on organizational conflicts are either quantitative or limited in addressing an interpretive stance. Many researchers are now paying more attention to the human dimensions in addressing different phenomena. It includes introducing diverse voices. Scholars argue that the adoption of new methodologies may result in exploring new dimensions and insights. The increasing focus on fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis is notable and may result in newer aspects in the conflict management field. Kraus et al. (2018) and Pappas et al. (2021) mentioned fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis as a methodology that they haven't found in their data set. They are of the opinion that this methodology is gaining traction in management research. However, Patricia Elgoibar, Pablo Ruiz-Palomino, and Santiago compared laissez-faire leadership in family and non-family businesses. The study collected a sample of 326 general managers using two complementary methods. It includes fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fs/QCA). However, the data was collected from a single source. The interviewees were asked to rate the use of Laissez-faire leadership on a 5-point scale, further questioning the representation of open-ended questions.

Using a qualitative paradigm, Muneer and Naz (2024) conducted semi-structured with students of higher education. It was designed to seek experiences of cooperative learning and conflict management. However, the term 'Conflict Management' wasn't

studied on a corporate and organizational level, and an interpretive stance from both experienced and professional participants is required.

4.1.4 Proposition 4: Adopting Longitudinal Designs to Understand organizational conflicts

Future studies should adopt longitudinal designs to better understand the transformation of conflicts. Previous studies such as (Hill et al., 2015; Patricia Elgoibar and Pablo Ruiz-Palomino and Santiago, 2024) were conducted as cross-sectional studies. Several researchers noted the need for more longitudinal studies in the last two decades. Fernández Jiménez de Cisneros et al. (2002) mentioned conflicts and their transformation and suggested the requirement of more longitudinal studies. Similarly, Mooney et al. (2007) presented the same idea and argued that future studies are required to conduct longitudinal studies. It includes tasks that involve examining how cognitive conflict transitions into affective conflicts. Recently, Patricia Elgoibar, Pablo Ruiz-Palomino, and Santiago (2024) conducted research which involved self-report measures. It raised potential concerns about evaluation apprehension and social desirability bias. Therefore, Patricia Elgoibar, Pablo Ruiz-Palomino, and Santiago (2024) recommended longitudinal designs for future studies to address inferences more precisely.

The research conducted by researchers did not fully address the causality factors. Therefore, considering the constantly shifting dynamics of incivility, these issues can be addressed by employing a longitudinal study methodology (Zahid & Nauman, 2023). Furthermore, significant time is necessary to examine the link between influential variables such as employees' trust and ethical leadership behavior. A longitudinal research design can facilitate this endeavor (Yasir & Khan, 2020).

5. Conclusion

This review concludes by providing research gaps for future studies on organizational conflicts. The review highlights a significant gap in understanding organizational conflicts within the Pakistani context. It raises scholarly attention and empirical investigation within Pakistan. Longitudinal research offers unique advantages in capturing the complexities of development. It highlights and underscores a gap in understanding the complexities of conflict dynamics. An interpretive stance can further offer unique insights into understanding the complexities of organizational conflicts. Studies on organizational conflicts and other influential variables such as trust, commitment and performance remain relatively limited despite its paramount importance in managing conflicts.

6. References

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