

# Differences among the three views of Organizational Conflict

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**Abstract:** An organization comprises of different individuals, teams, and groups. Every person has a different personality, opinion, values, perceptions, and views. Organizational conflict is a result different opinion, views, and values. Organizational conflict does not necessarily mean violence and fights. Conflict is part of organization. Organizational conflict is present everywhere, from top-level management to small informal business. This article addresses the differences between the three views on organizational conflicts.

**Keywords:** organizational conflicts, Traditional view, Human Relations view, Interactionist view

## INTRODUCTION

Every organization or project team is prone to have conflicts among the members. Just like the change, conflict is inevitable in any organization. Since an organization is composed of people having diverse qualifications and backgrounds, it is practically impossible to meet the goals, without having conflicts among the team members [1]. It is up to the project managers to identify the conflicts. The project managers need to analyze and evaluate what the positive or negative impacts these conflicts will have on the performance. For this the project managers need to know about the different views of conflicts that exist. Based on this knowledge they can deal with the conflicts in a much better way.

There are three different views of conflicts in organizations. These views have evolved over years. Researchers have been working on these views for decades. Followings are the three views of conflicts in organizations:

1. Traditional View
2. Human Relations View (Managed View)
3. Interactionist View

Let us discuss these in detail.

### Traditional View

The traditional view of conflicts has been around since late nineteenth century. According to this view, the conflicts are always bad for an organization [2]. It always leads to failure and always has a negative impact on the performance of an organization. According to this view, a

conflict is synonymous to violence, destruction and irrationality.

According to the traditional view, a conflict must always be avoided at all costs. The manager should try to reduce, suppress or eliminate it. The manager is allowed to take authoritative approach to rid the organization of conflicts. The problem with this view is that the root cause of the conflict is left undetermined [3].

### Human Relations View

Human Relations view is also referred to as managed view. While the traditional view relates the conflicts with destruction and a negative impact and tries to ensure the removal of conflict, the human relations view acknowledges the existence of conflict in an organization. According to this view, in an organization, conflict is inevitable and natural. A conflict has the potential to have a positive impact on the performance of an organization [2]. A conflict cannot be totally eradicated and there are times when this conflict may even benefit an organization.

The managers should accept the conflict and should try to manage it effectively instead of suppressing or totally eliminating it [4]. They should not allow the conflict to increase more than a certain level and they should also not leave the conflict unresolved. This may lead toward the decrease in performance.

### Interactionist View

The third view which is also the latest view on conflict is called the interactionist view. According to this view, a conflict is mandatory for an organization's better performance. According to Andersen (2009), a conflict helps an organization to cope with changes in a better way [5]. This view encourages the conflicts based on the rationale that if there is no conflict in an organization, it may become stagnant, lethargic and non-responsive to needs for change and improvement [2].

## CONCLUSION

The above-discussed views present the perspectives on organizational conflict. The traditional view holds that any type of organizational conflict is negative, harmful, and should be avoided. The human relations view proposes that organizational conflict should be accepted since it is an inevitable part and may improve the performance of a group. Lastly, the interactionist view holds that a minimum level of organizational conflict is beneficial for both organizations and its groups. Organizational conflict makes individuals and groups effective, self-critical, adaptable, responsive, and flexible to change.

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