

THE NATURE OF CONFLICT WITHIN AN ENGINEERING COMPANY IN
THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

Title: The Nature of Conflict within an Engineering Company in the North West Province.

Key words: *Engineering Company, conflict, conflict management, conflict theories, conflict handling, conflict types, functional and dysfunctional conflict, conflict styles, conflict strategies, and conflict models.*

There is a need to determine the real reasons for conflict in the South African context, because it seems that the transformation process brought forth a reduction in work opportunities, workers losing their jobs, an increase in workplace violence, increasing dissatisfaction amongst workers, more strikes occurring, affirmative action, discrimination, recruitment of workers without the appropriate skills, corruption, workers who are too lazy to work, and professionals going overseas, etcetera.

Personnel in the companies must be adequately informed about the nature of conflict, the causes of conflict, the types of conflict and the management of conflict, because conflict is increasing and it must be managed correctly otherwise it will be destructive and inhibit the functioning of a company.

The objectives of the research study are as follows:

- a) To determine how conflict dynamics are conceptualised in literature through the application of industrial sociological theories, organizational principles and general management theories.
- b) To determine the main sources of conflict within the Engineering Company.
- c) To determine if personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels in the Engineering Company are influenced differently by conflict.
- d) To determine if there is a significant difference between the personnel in the Engineering Company in the manner in which they handle conflict with their superior and subordinates.

The research study consists of a theoretical and an empirical framework. Chapter 1 covers the introduction, problem statement, the method and purpose of the research, and the description of relevant terms.

In Chapter 2, the philosophies of Georg Friedrich Hegel and Immanuel Kant, and the theories of Karl Marx and Max Weber are used to serve as a basis on which the study can be built.

In Chapter 3, the nature of conflict is discussed in terms of the following types of conflict: interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, and intragroup conflict. The management of the different types of conflict is also discussed.

Chapter 4 covers the empirical data of the research, and the empirical research results of the study. The most important results of this study and recommendations are given in Chapter 5.

All references in the text and bibliography were done according to the Harvard Style. Internet references do not have page numbers.

OPSOMMING

Titel: The Nature of Conflict within an Engineering Company in the North West Province.

Slutelwoorde: *Engineering Company, conflict, conflict management, conflict theories, conflict handling, conflict types, functional and dysfunctional conflict, conflict styles, conflict strategies and conflict models.*

Dit is noodsaaklik om te bepaal wat die werklike redes is vir die ontstaan van konflik in Suid-Afrika. Dit kom voor asof die transformasieproses die volgende meebring het: vermindering in werksgeleentheid, mense wat hulle werk verloor, vermeerdering in werksverwante geweld, toenemende ontevredenheid by werkers, toenemende stakings, regstellende aksie, diskriminasie, werwing van werkers met nie-toepaslike kwalifikasies, korrupsie, werkers wat te lui is om te werk en professionele mense wat verhuis na oorsese lande, ensovoorts.

Personeel in maatskappye moet goed ingelig word aangaande die aard van konflik, die oorsake van konflik, die tipes konflik en die bestuur van konflik, omdat konflik toeneem en dit reg bestuur moet word sodat daar nie groot skade vir maatskappye aangerig word nie.

Die volgende is oogmerke van die navorsingstudie:

- a) Om te bepaal hoe konflik in die literatuur weergegee word deur die toepassing van bedryfsosiologiese teorieë, organisatoriese beginsels, en teorieë oor die bestuur van konflik.
- b) Om die hoofoorsake van konflik in 'n ingenieursmaatskappy te bepaal.
- c) Om te bepaal of personeel op die horisontale en vertikale vlakke van die ingenieursmaatskappy verskillend deur konflik beïnvloed word.
- d) Om te bepaal of daar 'n merkbare verskil is tussen die personeel in die ingenieursmaatskappy en die wyse waarop hulle konflik met hul hoof en ondergeskiktes hanteer.

Die navorsingstudie bestaan uit 'n teoretiese en empiriese raamwerk. In Hoofstuk 1 word die inleiding, probleemstelling, die metode en doel van die navorsing asook die beskrywing van relevante terme bespreek.

In Hoofstuk 2 word die filosofieë van Georg Friedrich Hegel en Immanuel Kant, asook die teorieë van Karl Marx and Max Weber bespreek. Dit dien as basis waarop die navorsingstudie kan voortbou.

In Hoofstuk 3 word die aard van konflik bespreek na aanleiding van die tipes konflik wat bestaan. Daar bestaan interpersoonlike konflik, intrapersoonlike konflik, intergroep konflik en intragroup konflik. Die bestuur van die verskillende tipes konflik word ook bespreek.

In Hoofstuk 4 word die empiriese data en navorsingsresultate van die navorsingstudie bespreek. In Hoofstuk 5 word die resultate van die navorsingstudie bespreek en voorstelle en aanbeveling vir verdere navorsing word ook gegee.

Alle verwysings in die teks en die bibliografie is volgens die Harvard Styl uitgevoer.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT	1
1.2 OBJECTIVES.....	6
1.3 EXPLANATION OF CENTRAL CONCEPTS.....	7
1.3.1 Company.....	7
1.3.2 Conflict.....	8
1.3.3 Management.....	9
1.4 RESEARCH METHODS.....	10
1.4.1 Literature and Source Analysis	10
1.4.2 Empirical Research.....	12
1.4.2.1 Survey Design	12
1.4.2.2 Questionnaire and Research Participants	12
1.4.2.3 Data Analysis.....	12
1.5 AN OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS.....	13
CHAPTER 2: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES.....	15
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	15
2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	16
2.2.1 The Background of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831).....	16
2.2.2 The Philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel	17
2.2.3 The Background of Karl Marx (1818-1883).....	19
2.2.4 Marx's Theory of Conflict.....	20
2.2.5 The Background of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)	27
2.2.6 The Philosophies of Immanuel Kant	28

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

2.2.7 The Background of Max Weber (1864-1920).....	29
2.2.8 Weber's Theory of Power.....	30
2.3 PREREQUISITES FOR CONFLICT.....	34
2.3.1 Marx's Prerequisites for Conflict.....	35
2.3.2 Weber's Prerequisites for Conflict.....	37
2.4 ASSUMPTIONS OF CONFLICT.....	38
2.4.1 Assumptions of the Conflict Paradigm	38
2.4.1.1 Human Nature.....	38
2.4.1.2 The Nature of Society	38
2.4.1.3 The Nature of Science.....	39
2.4.2 Assumptions of the Pluralist Paradigm	40
2.4.2.1 Human Nature.....	40
2.4.2.2 The Nature of Society	40
2.4.2.3 The Nature of Science.....	41
2.5 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS.....	42
2.5.1 A Comparison between Weber and Marx.....	42
2.5.2 A Comparison of the different Views of Conflict.....	43
2.6 APPLICATION OF MARX'S AND WEBER'S THEORIES ON CONFLICT.....	43
2.7 SUMMARY	45
CHAPTER 3: THE NATURE OF CONFLICT.....	47
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	47
3.2 THE "NEW" ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL	47
3.2.1 A "networked" Company	48

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

3.2.2 A "flat" Company	48
3.2.3 A "flexible" Company	48
3.2.4 A "diverse" Company	49
3.2.5 A "global" Company	49
3.3 DIFFERENT VIEWS OF CONFLICT	49
3.3.1 The Traditional View	50
3.3.2 The Behavioural View	50
3.3.3 The Interactionist View	50
3.4 CONFLICT IN GENERAL	50
3.4.1 Social Power	51
3.4.2 Sources of Conflict	52
3.4.3 Antecedents of Conflict.....	54
3.4.4 Teamwork Tactics to prevent Conflict	55
3.4.5 Functional and Dysfunctional Conflict	59
3.4.5.1 The Intensity of Conflict.....	59
3.4.6 The Conflict Process Model of Robbins.....	60
3.4.6.1 The first Stage: Potential Opposition or Incompatibility.....	60
3.4.6.2 The second Stage: Cognition and Personalisation	61
3.4.6.3 The third Stage: Intentions	61
3.4.6.4 The fourth stage: Behaviour	62
3.4.6.5 The fifth Stage: Outcomes.....	63
3.4.7 Techniques for stimulating Functional Conflict	63
3.4.7.1 Devil's Advocacy	63
3.4.7.2 Dialectic Method	65
3.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONFLICT.....	67
3.5.1 Interpersonal Conflict	67
3.5.2 Interpersonal Conflict Model.....	68
3.5.2.1 Traits of the Sanguine (Greek for blood).....	70
3.5.2.2 Sanguine Traits that might cause interpersonal Conflict	70

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

3.5.2.3 Traits of the Choleric (Greek for yellow bile).....	71
3.5.2.4 Choleric Traits that might cause interpersonal Conflict.....	72
3.5.2.5 Traits of the Melancholy (Greek for black bile)	72
3.5.2.6 Melancholy Traits that might cause interpersonal Conflict	73
3.5.2.7 Traits of the Phlegmatic (Greek for phlegm.....	73
3.5.2.8 Phlegmatic Traits that might cause interpersonal Conflict.....	73
3.5.3 Managing interpersonal Conflict.....	74
3.5.3.1 Guidelines for resolving personality Conflict.....	74
3.5.3.2 Guidelines for resolving interpersonal Conflict in general.....	75
3.5.3.3 Blake and Mouton's Managerial/Leadership Grid for handling Conflict	76
3.5.3.4 Third Party Intervention Techniques.....	81
3.5.3.5 Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).....	83
3.5.4 Intrapersonal Conflict	84
3.5.4.1 Role Conflict.....	85
3.5.4.2 Role Ambiguity.....	86
3.5.4.3 Role Overload.....	86
3.5.5 Managing intrapersonal Conflict	87
3.5.6 Intergroup Conflict.....	88
3.5.7 Managing intergroup Conflict.....	89
3.5.7.1 Guidelines for resolving intergroup Conflict	89
3.5.7.2 Thomas-Kilmann's Two-dimensional Model of ways to handle Conflict.	89
3.5.8 Intragroup Conflict.....	91
3.5.9 Managing intragroup Conflict.....	93
3.5.9.1 Guidelines for resolving intragroup Conflict.....	93
3.5.9.2 Rahim's Conflict Handling Model.....	94
 3.6 SUMMARY	 96
 CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	 98
 4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	 98

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

4.2 THE OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH.....	99
4.2.1 General Objective	99
4.2.2 Specific Objectives	99
4.2.2.1 Theoretical Objective.....	99
4.2.2.2 Empirical Objectives	99
4.3 HYPOTHESES	99
4.3.1 General Hypothesis.....	99
4.3.2 Statistical Hypotheses	100
4.4 THE MEASURING BATTERY.....	100
4.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS	102
4.6 THE RESEARCH GROUP AND RESEARCH METHOD	102
4.7 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL RESULTS OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT	103
4.7.1 Sex, Age and Home Language	104
4.7.2 Qualifications, Years of Service, and Job-levels	104
4.8 THE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	104
4.8.1 Validity.....	106
4.8.1.1 Face Validity of the Questionnaire.....	107
4.8.1.2 Construct Validity of the Questionnaire.....	107
4.9 SECTION B AND SECTION C: THE MAJOR SOURCES AND INFLUENCE OF CONFLICT.....	108
4.9.1 Section B: The major Sources of Conflict.....	108
4.9.2 Section C: Influence of Conflict on the Personnel	110

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

4.10 SECTION D AND SECTION E: THE DETERMINATION OF VARIANCE-ANALYSIS BETWEEN VARIOUS VARIABLES AND THE TESTING OF THE HYPOTHESES.....	111
4.10.1 Determining the Variance-analysis	112
4.10.2 Hypothesis 1: The different Sexes handle Conflict differently	112
4.10.3 Hypothesis 2: The different Age Groups handle Conflict differently	113
4.10.4 Hypothesis 3: Personnel with different Qualifications handle Conflict differently	114
4.10.5 Hypothesis 4: Personnel with different Home Languages handle Conflict differently	116
4.10.6 Hypothesis 5: Personnel who served different official Years handle Conflict differently	117
4.10.7 Hypothesis 6: Personnel in different Job-levels handle Conflict differently	118
4.11 SUMMARY	128
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	132
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	132
5.2 THEORETICAL ORIENTATION.....	134
5.3 THE NATURE OF CONFLICT WITHIN AN ENGINEERING COMPANY.....	135
5.4 FINDINGS IN THE LITERATURE STUDY.....	136
5.5 FINDINGS IN THE EMPIRICAL STUDY	141
5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	146

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY	147
5.8 FURTHER RESEARCH.....	147
5.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY	148
ANNEXURE A.....	151
BIBLIOGRAPHY	162

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: The Intensity of Conflict.....	59
Figure 3.2: The Conflict Process.....	60
Figure 3.3(a): Technique One for stimulating Functional Conflict	64
Figure 3.3(b): Technique Two for stimulating Functional Conflict.....	66
Figure 3.4: Interpersonal Conflict Model.....	70
Figure 3.5: Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid	78
Figure 3.6: Third Party Intervention Options for handling Conflict	82
Figure 3.7: Thomas-Kilmann's Model of Modes to handle Conflict.....	90
Figure 3.8: Rahim's Conflict Handling Model.....	94

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Teamwork Tactics.....	58
Table 4.1 The Structure of the Questionnaire.....	101
Table 4.2 Biographical Information of Respondents.....	103
Table 4.3 Cronbach's Coefficient of the Main Constructs of the Questionnaire.....	106
Table 4.4 Factor Analysis and Percentage Variance of the Variables of the conflict-evaluating Questionnaire.....	108

LIST OF TABLES (Continued)

Table 4.5 Factors seen as the major Sources of Conflict.....	109
Table 4.6 The Influence Conflict has on the Personnel.....	111
Table 4.7 Sexes as independent Variable.....	113
Table 4.8 Age as independent Variable.....	114
Table 4.9 Qualifications as independent Variable.....	115
Table 4.10 Home Language as independent Variable.....	116
Table 4.11 Years of Service as independent Variable.....	117
Table 4.12(a) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	118
Table 4.12(b) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	119
Table 4.12(c) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	120
Table 4.12(d) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	121
Table 4.12(e) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	122
Table 4.12(f) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	123
Table 4.12(g) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	124
Table 4.12(h) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	125
Table 4.12(i) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	126
Table 4.12(j) Job-levels as independent Variable.....	127

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Conflict occurred throughout human history and is therefore inevitable in any society. International Legislation can cause conflict in different societies, because it wants to force itself down on different countries (Wilkens, 2002).

After the political transformation in South Africa in 1994, conflict has increased. This conflict is manifested in labour unrest, strikes, mass actions, violence, bad relations in the workplace, language clashes, culture clashes, and racial conflict. Aspects such as affirmative action, transformation, redistribution of resources, misunderstandings between employees of different races and cultures, greater workloads for fewer employees that are responsible for the increase in unemployment, and the difference between language and culture that causes communication problems are elements that are responsible for producing conflict (Havenga, 2002:169; Havenga, 2004:264).

A global economy with increased cross-cultural issues, more electronic interaction, more virtual and self-managed teams, increasing worker diversity, and constant change cause conflict as inevitable to occur in an Engineering Company, therefore it is important to deal with personality conflict, intergroup conflict and cross-cultural conflict (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:485-493).

Conflict management in an Engineering Company is the diagnosis of, and the intervention in effective and substantive conflicts at interpersonal level, intragroup level, and intergroup level. It also includes the different ways or styles to handle these conflicts (Rahim, 2002:206).

Conflict can be functional or dysfunctional. Functional conflict is in the interest of an Engineering Company, and dysfunctional conflict threatens the interests of an Engineering Company. Managers can anticipate conflict by knowing the antecedents of conflict (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:487).

The antecedents of conflict may include unresolved conflicts, unmet expectations, decision-making by consensus, collective decision-making, unreasonable deadlines, unclear policies, complexity of an Engineering Company, interdependent tasks, inadequate communication, intergroup competition, competition for limited resources, unclear job boundaries, and incompatible value systems (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:487).

Conflict can have positive as well as negative outcomes depending on the nature and the intensity of the conflict. Engineering Companies which have too little conflict may experience missed deadlines, indecision, lack of creativity, and apathy. Engineering Companies which have too much conflict, experience low turnover, lack of teamwork, dissatisfaction, and lack of performance (Kreitner & Kinicki 2004:487). Positive conflict management strategies are therefore important to ensure that a company will have positive outcomes.

According to McCown, Driscoll and Roop, (quoted by Meyer, Mabaso & Lancaster, 2004:192), the following conflict resolution steps can be used to handle conflict in different problem-solving situations: participants must define the problem together; a lot of possible solutions should be developed without evaluating the merit of it; the solutions should then be evaluated to determine those that will work and those that won't; decide on the solution that will work best; plan and implement the decision, and lastly evaluate the outcome of the plan.

According to Cherrington (quoted by Kruger, Smit & Le Roux, 2000:237-238), intergroup conflict exists because of task-interdependence, unreconciled goals, threats, and group-identity. Intergroup conflict can be managed by ignoring the conflict, by separating the two groups, by a manager ordering the two groups to stop the conflict, by reconciling the two groups through a democratic process, by emphasizing that which the two groups have in common, or by letting a third party become both groups' enemy.

According to Crawley (quoted by Meyer, Mabaso & Lancaster, 2004:191), conflict handling is a learning opportunity and the persons involved in managing the conflict must be aware of what is happening around them and how the workers feel about the situation so that the conflict will have a positive outcome.

Marx is seen as one of the greatest supporters of conflict. Marx included the following in his concept of conflict, namely opposing classes who have opposing interests, antagonisms, revolution, and war (Havenga, 2002:21;44).

According to Braverman (quoted by Cronjé 2002:24), neo-Marxists emphasize that societies are torn by conflict and struggle between economic classes. They believe social progress will occur if capitalists's power are diminished.

Max Weber viewed society as a struggle for power. He talked about economic power, prestige power, and pure power. The class struggle for economic power, the status group struggle for prestige power, and the party struggle for pure power. This struggle for power may produce conflict (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50-53).

There is a need to determine the real reasons for conflict in an Engineering Company, because it seems that the transformation process brought forth a reduction in work opportunities, workers losing their jobs, an increase in workplace violence, increased dissatisfaction amongst workers, more strikes occurring, affirmative action, and professionals going overseas, etcetera.

Affirmative action brought about increasing conflict in politics, culture, language, and social levels. Affirmative action and institutional change normally elicits opposition which results in emotional reactions and eventually conflict (Nell, 2000:42;59).

By looking at behavioural processes, change management, scarce resources, affirmative action programmes, and institutional change within the public and private sector, it can be deduced that conflict is increasing (Crawley, 1995:35).

The Reserve Bank in South Africa indicated that productivity increased from 1991-1992. The efficiency of management is now very low. The world competitive report of 1996 indicated that firms of South Africa ranked 46th out of 49 countries in terms of the efficiency of management, but concerning remuneration of senior management, they were 6th on the list. Business firms do not address management efficiency, nor do they increase the productivity of workers by giving them training, but they try to short cut proposals made by the Government. Companies refused to pay 4 percent of their wage bill for the training of

workers. The companies wanted to compromise: they agreed to pay 1 percent of their total wage bill for the training of workers, and they continuously refused that benefits such as overtime, housing, cars, etc., be counted in a total wage bill (Mkholo, 1998).

Between 1996 and 1998 more factories were supposed to be built with more employment opportunities, but the opposite happened. The companies took every opportunity they could to invest their money outside South Africa in order to find cheaper labour. Fewer people have been employed than in the past and retrenchment is very visible in South Africa. This influenced the economy negatively. The mining industry, the metal and electronics industry, the clothing and textile industry, and shoe industries are all experiencing job losses (Mkholo, 1998).

The business sector pressurises the Government to meet their demands so that they can create more jobs and build more factories. But the businesses do not carry out what they promised to do (Mkholo, 1998).

Affirmative action must not just focus on replacing a few rich white people by a few black people, but it must also focus on the 70 percent unemployed, poor, and homeless people (Mkholo, 1998). But if we look at the situation today, a black elite was created and the poor people became poorer. They are not better off.

According to the Freedom Front Plus, the Government must end their affirmative action programme, because it is difficult for white matriculants to find their first job after they have completed school (News24.com, 2004).

Because of affirmative action, many young South Africans and professionals go overseas to find work. Withdrawal influences South Africa's economy negatively, because the highly trained doctors, nurses, engineers and scientists, and the intellectual wealth go overseas to find work. Without the intellectual wealth, it will take so much longer to generate the economic growth required to deal with poverty, disease, and underdevelopment (Schoeman, 2003).

In the case of labour disputes definite procedures are in place in terms of prescribed rules of the Labour Law (Act 66 of 1995) to handle conflict on that level. However, this does not contain all the forms and nature of conflict that can manifest itself in a company. From literature sources it became evident that little is known about the way conflict impacts the activities of the public and private sector as well as policies, and the way in which it should be managed. This necessitates the need that a scientific research study should be conducted into the nature, extent, control and management of conflict in the public or private sector (Havenga, 2004:4).

Studies in literature mainly focused on conflicts at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup levels and the styles used to handle these conflicts (De Church & Marks, 2001; Moberg, 2002; Gross & Guerrero, 2000; Tidd & Friedman, 2002; Alper, Tjosvold & Law, 2000; Bell & Ford, 1999; Imazi & Ohbuchi, 2002). Further research can be done in this field in order to gain more knowledge of conflict.

The question that can be put forward is whether the impact of a new government system, social groups, scarcity of resources, incompetent workers and management, and other factors, contribute to the escalation of conflict between individuals and/or groups. To answer this question, scientific investigation is needed in order to gain new knowledge and to find solutions for problems resulting from conflict (Havenga, 2004:5).

There are limited resources available in the public and private sector, and previously disadvantaged people has an increased demand for services. This generates conflict. There is also conflict between personnel on the horizontal level of a company, and personnel on the vertical level of a company. It is necessary that groups and leaders must have the appropriate knowledge with regard to the characteristics and impact of group processes, the influence of group processes on an individual's behaviour, and the influence it has in contributing to conflict (Crawley, 1995:35).

The Problem Statement reveals that conflict exists as an external and an internal element within a company, and little knowledge exists concerning the origin, handling, and consequences of conflict.

The following research questions emerge from the Problem Statement:

- a) How is conflict dynamics conceptualized in literature?
- b) What are the main sources of conflict within an Engineering Company?
- c) What influence does conflict have on personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels of an Engineering Company?
- d) Is there a significant difference between the personnel in an Engineering Company in the way how they handle conflict with their superior and subordinates?

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this study is to establish through a theoretical and empirical analysis what the nature, causes and handling styles of conflict are within an Engineering Company. In order to justify and establish acceptance of the project the following objectives will have to be achieved:

- a) To determine how conflict dynamics are conceptualized in literature through the application of industrial sociological theories, organizational principles, and general management theories.
- b) To determine the main sources of conflict within an Engineering Company.
- c) To determine if personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels in the Engineering Company are influenced differently by conflict.
- d) To determine if there is a significant difference between the personnel in the Engineering Company in the way in which they handle conflict with their superior and subordinates by means of the following hypotheses:

General Hypothesis: There exists a significant difference in the handling of conflict by the personnel of the Engineering Company.

Statistical Hypotheses:

- ◆ **Hypothesis 1:** The different sexes handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 2:** The different age groups handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 3:** Personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently.

- ◆ **Hypothesis 4:** Personnel who speak different home languages, handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 5:** Personnel who served different official years, handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 6:** Personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently.

The objective is to prove in Chapter 4, the empirical chapter, if Hypotheses 1 to 6 are true or not. In Hypothesis 1, it will be determined if it is true or not that men and women handle conflict differently. In Hypothesis 2, it will be determined if it is true or not that a young age group and an old age group handle conflict differently. In Hypothesis 3, it will be determined if it is true or not that personnel who do not have a long service record at the Engineering Company and personnel who served long at the company, handle conflict differently. In Hypothesis 4, it will be determined if it is true or not that personnel who speak Western languages, and personnel who speak African languages, handle conflict differently. In Hypothesis 5, it will be determined if it is true or not that personnel who have different qualifications, handle conflict differently. In Hypothesis 6, it will be determined if it is true or not that personnel of job-level 1 to job-level 5 handle conflict differently. In Chapter 5 a more in depth discussion will be given about the findings regarding the hypotheses.

1.3 EXPLANATION OF CENTRAL CONCEPTS

1.3.1 Company

A company is a legal entity that is formed for the purpose of conducting business that is separate from its owners, the shareholders. Despite changes in (or deaths among), its owners in a company continues to exist. A company can hold assets; it can sue, and it can be sued. Company Law, as laid down by legislative acts over the years also govern companies. Such laws state for example, the duties of company directors, auditing and accounting requirements, and the rights of shareholders (Encarta Encyclopedia, 2005).

Most owners of companies have limited liability; in other words, they are liable for a company's debts only up to the value of their shareholdings. There are different categories of companies in different countries and they have different names. The main difference between companies is that there are public companies and private companies. Public companies have the right to sell their shares to the general public (through a stock exchange); private

companies on the other hand, do not have the right to sell shares to or raise money from the general public. In general, private companies tend to be smaller than public companies (Encarta Encyclopedia, 2005).

1.3.2 Conflict

The following definitions will give a clearer picture of what *conflict* is:

Interpersonal conflict occurs between two or more people. It can arise from differences in perceptions, values, attitudes and personalities (Nelson & Quick, 2005:287). According to Wood et al. (2003:508), intrapersonal conflict occurs within the individual as a result of actual or perceived pressures from incompatible goals or expectations. Intergroup conflict, is conflict between work groups, teams and departments (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:491). Intragroup conflict is experienced within groups or teams (Ratzburg, 1999). Cultural conflict may originate from a difference in racial, ethnic and gender perspectives, or different styles of communication (Diversity Resources, 2005).

Conflict can be one of the following: two groups that oppose each other resulting in a clash between them; two feelings that take place simultaneously but are incompatible, resulting in opposition; conflict in war when military forces oppose each other in war; opposition between different persons, ideas or interests; dates or events that are incompatible; to argue or disagree about something important; to go against rules and laws (WordNet, 2005).

Conflict is when two parties oppose one another (WikiPedia, 2005). Conflict is when there is a clash of opposite impulses, for example struggle, fight, or collision (Vtheatre.net, 2004).

Conflict occurs when there is contradictory expectations, objectives or goals between individuals or groups. Conflict also takes place when opposing parties compete over limited resources (MLAN, 2004).

Conflict is when two parties hold different views that are incompatible (Owens, 2004:427).

Conflict is when two or more people, or groups disagree, oppose or struggle with one another (Gordon, 2002:554)

Conflict takes place when two opposing forces or characters in a narrative poem, play, novel, or short story, struggle with each other. There exists internal and external conflict and it may take the following forms: person in opposition with another, person in opposition with society, person in opposition with nature, “two elements or ideas struggling for mastery within a person, person in opposition with the supernatural” (Thinkquest, 1998).

1.3.3 Management

Now we have a better understanding of conflict, but conflict must also be managed. Therefore I will discuss a few definitions of *management*.

Management is when certain individuals are responsible for setting and/or achieving the objectives of a company (Internal Audit, 1995).

Management entails the setting of objectives, strategic planning, the management of resources, deploying the human and financial assets needed to achieve objectives, measuring results, recording facts, storing facts, and the storing of information. Supervisors and managers are not the only ones that must fulfil management functions, but everyone in a company has some kind of responsibility to manage or report something because it is part of their job description (Stuhlman, 2004).

Management includes the following, for example warnings, change in land usage, restriction to site access, monitored natural attenuation, isolation of contaminants from human and ecological receptors, interim remediation, phased remediation, partial remediation, full remediation (residential, park, farm, commercial, industrial), postponement of action till activity stops, etc. For better understanding, management includes risk management (TBCS, 2002).

Management is when resources such as labour, materials and capital is effectively used in order to achieve objectives with maximum efficiency (IAPMC, 2002).

Management is when goals are to be achieved through the use of leading, planning, organizing, and controlling of group members (Beech & Chadwick, 2005).

Management is a process to complete certain activities with and through other persons. Management is also a process that includes five management functions, namely planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling that utilizes material, human, financial, and other resources to achieve goals (Anon, 2005).

1.4 RESEARCH METHODS

In the first few chapters exploratory and descriptive research methods will be used. The *what* question (exploratory research), and the *how* and *who* questions (descriptive research), will also be applied.

1.4.1 Literature and Source Analysis

According to Neumann (2003:66), the dichotomy between theory and research is an artificial one. Theory is very valuable and necessary in order to conduct good research. Researchers who do not make use of theory when conducting their research, rarely conduct top-quality research and frequently find themselves in quandary. Another thing that is important is that empirical reality must be linked with theory, otherwise researchers are in for incomprehensible speculation and conjecture.

Firstly, the objective will be to obtain a theoretical basis from which to proceed with this research project. Philosophies of Hegel and Kant about conflict, will be described to serve as background information, but it will not be discussed in detail. However, the theories of Marx and Weber will be discussed in more detail and compared in order to ascertain how conflict, power, exploitation, struggle, in-equality and alienation are interpreted.

The Conflict Theory of Karl Marx will be discussed in Chapter 2, because in today's modern age, Karl Marx's theories still inform the principal stream of knowledge and research in the area of social stratification (Lopreato & Hazelrigg, 1972). The theories of Marx are important for this study, because he is considered as chief contributor to the theories of conflict.

Max Weber's Theory of Power will be discussed in Chapter 2, because Weber shared some of Marx's key assumptions of conflict, and also his core concern with the nature of capitalism

(Cuff *et al.*, 1998:38). Weber's Theory of Power is important to this study, because it can influence our understanding of power that may cause conflict.

Hegel argued that conflict exists when individuals pursue their own interests. Opposing interests lead to conflict, and through this conflict people learn to make a compromise in order to live together and achieve their personal ends in such a way that allows for the mutual respect of the ends of others (Kain, 1998:388).

According to Kant, there are two forces that form history and which are at the same time a conflict of interests and morality. The conflict of interests are interplayed by an unsocial side, and a social side of human nature. The unsocial side leads to conflict and war, and the social side of human nature leads to an understanding of how important it is to cooperate with other people in order to fulfil their needs (Kain, 385-386).

Karl Marx viewed society as a struggle between two major classes, namely the *bourgeoisie* (owners) and the *proletariat* (workers). This produce conflict (Havenga, 2002:21).

Max Weber viewed society as a struggle for power, and this may result in conflict. Weber viewed the struggle for power as follows: The class struggles for economic power, the status group struggles for prestige power, and the party struggles for pure power (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50).

Various books, journals and other literature will be studied in order to explain the nature, causes, and reasons for conflict. Different conflict handling styles used in an Engineering Company will be discussed and verified empirically. Initial electronic research will be done to determine if enough literature exists on the subject and related subjects.

An Inmagic-search will take place with the following keywords: *Engineering Company, conflict, conflict management, conflict theories, conflict handling, conflict types, functional and dysfunctional conflict, conflict styles, conflict strategies, and conflict models.*

The following databases will be used to determine the availability of literature sources:

- ◆ Catalogues of libraries of the North-West University and other Universities
- The Joint Catalogues for Dissertations
- ◆ Nexus (HSRC)
- ◆ Ebscohost
- ◆ African Digital Library (ADL)
- ◆ Repertorium of South African Journals

1.4.2 Empirical Research

1.4.2.1 Survey Design

Scientific theories and analyses will form the basis in the first three chapters. An empirical analysis will then be conducted by means of a questionnaire that will focus on the causes, types, and consequences of conflict and what that holds in store for an Engineering Company.

1.4.2.2 Questionnaire and Research Participants

This specific Engineering Company in the North West Province has a total of 450 personnel and a sample of 160 personnel was drawn to participate in the questionnaire. The 160 respondents that were chosen, consisted of workers and personnel of the company that are represented by job-levels 1 to 5.

The questionnaire will be structured to include socio-demographic questions relevant to the study (Section A), two self-developed sections (Sections B and C) to measure the sources and influences of conflict respectively and two sections (Sections D and E) making use of standardized 28-item Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROC-II) to measure the conflict-handling styles of the personnel. The self-developed section with the structured questions and the ROC-II will make use of the 3-point and 4-point Likert-Scale, respectively (Rahim, 1983:368-376).

Section D and Section E were standardized and based on the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROC-II). Repeated feedback from respondents together with an iterative process were used to compile the ROC-II. The iterative process consisted out of six successive exploratory factor analysis of data from various sets of items. Five different samples were used by Rahim & Magner to perform confirmatory factor analysis. This factor analysis provided support for the convergent and discriminate validities of the ROC-II and the invariance of the five-factor model across referent roles and organisational levels. The referent roles consist out of superiors, subordinates and peers, and the organizational levels consist out of top, middle, lower and non-management levels (Rahim & Magner, 1995:122-132; Rahim, Magner & Shapiro, 2000:18).

A national sample of 1219 managers were used to compile the 28 items for the final instrument. The following were done in this analysis: through principal factoring with iteration, the initial factors were derived, the varimax rotation method was used to reach the terminal solution. Eight factors were extracted and the selection of an item was based on factor loading 0,40 and Eigenvalue $> 1,00$. According to the above criteria, the five factors with 28 items were selected. More than 89 % of the total variance in the data are explained by the five factors (Rahim, 1983:368-376).

1.4.2.3 Data Analysis

All statistical analyses will be done with the following statistical techniques, namely the Cronbach-Alpha Coefficient, variance-analysis, factor loadings, varimax rotation method, and the principle components extraction method.

1.5 AN OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem Statement

This Chapter covers the introduction, problem statement, the method and purpose of the research, and the description of relevant terms.

Chapter 2: Sociological Theories of Karl Marx and Max Weber

In Chapter 2, the theories of Karl Marx and Max Weber are used to serve as a basis upon which the study can be built.

Chapter 3: The Nature of Conflict within an Engineering Company and the Management thereof

The nature of conflict is discussed in terms of the types of conflict which consist of interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, and intragroup conflict. The management of the different types of conflict is also discussed.

Chapter 4: An Empirical Analysis and Research Results

Chapter 4 covers the empirical data of the research and the results of the empirical study are given.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The most important results of this study, as well as recommendations are given in this Chapter.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx, Bruno Bauer, Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Feuerbach were members of a philosophical and political movement, namely Hegelianism (Hegelianism originated from the philosophies of Hegel). Feuerbach was the leader of the group (Levine, 2002:220).

The Hegelians (followers of Hegel), used philosophy to built their theories. In this way they tried to understand people's experience of the world. Philosophy existed in ancient Greece in the fourth century BC and culminated in the work of Immanuel Kant. Hegel and other Hegelians were not in favour of Kant's philosophy, so they turned to classical German philosophy (Levine, 2002:220). According to MacIntyre (2002:193), Hegel's philosophy was an attempt to show that history is at the core of philosophy, because philosophy clarifies and articulates the same concepts which are implicit in ordinary thought and practice.

The Conflict Theory of Karl Marx will now be discussed, because in today's modern age, Karl Marx's theories still inform the principal stream of knowledge and research in the area of social stratification (Lopreato & Hazelrigg, 1972).

It is important to understand the Conflict Theory of Marx, because it had a great influence on many countries of the world where Communism was or still is prevalent.

For Karl Marx, conflict is a struggle between different classes in a society. In his day and age he described society as a capitalist society, existing out of two major classes, namely the *bourgeoisie* (those who own property), and the *proletariat* (those who have to labour for wages). (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:234).

Weber was a Neo-Kantian (a follower of Kantian thought). Neo-Kantians were philosophers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who followed the teachings of Immanuel Kant. Kant saw human beings as existing only partly in the world of natural causality, and partly in a realm of freedom, governed by moral rules rather than causes. This meant that

human beings could not entirely be understood by natural science, and that the study of their moral and spiritual life would have to be pursued by other means (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:38).

Max Weber's Theory of Power will be discussed, because Weber shared some of Marx's key assumptions of conflict, and also his core concern with the nature of capitalism (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:38). Weber's Theory of Power is important, because it can influence our understanding of power that may cause conflict.

Max Weber viewed society as a struggle for power that may produce conflict. There is economic power, prestige power and pure power, and it falls within three different groupings, namely classes, status groups, and parties (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50-53).

The backgrounds and philosophies of Hegel and Kant are discussed, because philosophies have been the origin of many forthcoming theories. Marx's theories were influenced by the philosophies of Hegel, and Weber's theories were again influenced by the philosophies of Kant.

2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1 The Background of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831)

Hegel was the oldest of three children and went to a German School at the age of three. When he was five years old, he went to a Latin School and at the age of seven he went to the Stuttgart Gymnasium (Grammar School), until he was eighteen. Georg Ludwig and Maria Magdalena were his parents (Froeb, 2005).

Hegel collected notes on notes on classical authors, passages from newspapers, treatises on philology (the science of language), histories of literature, arithmetic (the science of numbers), geometry (mathematics concerned with the relations of points, lines, surfaces and solids), applied mathematics, physics, morals, psychology and education from the standard works of the period. In these notes he absorbed and integrated raw materials for further elaboration, yet he was not merely passive in these student writings, but he also wrote essays expressing admiration of the Classical World (Froeb, 2005).

At the age of eighteen, he went to Stift Theological Seminary in Tübingen. Soon afterwards, he found that the traditional theology, as it was taught in Tübingen, did not interest him very much. He was more interested in studying the Classics. When he was a Magister student in Theology in 1793, Johannes Brodhag helped him to get work in Berne where he taught the children of Captain Karl Friedrich von Steiger, and he also made use of their private library on their wine farm (Froeb, 2005).

Hegel struggled a great deal with the theology of his contemporaries. He sought spiritual freedom - neither from rational moralizing like Kant, nor from, speculative syntheses like Fichte and Schelling. He found his universal remedy in the concrete life of humanity (Froeb, 2005).

In 1797, Hegel obtained a tutoring position in Frankfurt with the family of Herr Johann Noe Gogel. In 1801, he qualified for the position of Privatdozent at Jena. Hegel was the rector of the Aegidien-Gymnasium in Nürnberg, from 1808 to 1816. In 1811 he married Maria Helena Susanna von Tucher. From 1820 he lived in Am Kupfergraben 4a, Berlin (*Woodblock Print of 1870 - Stadtarchiv Stuttgart*) until 1831 when he died (Froeb, 2005).

2.2.2 The Philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Hegel was an idealist, because he reasoned that the development of thought or ideas would give a true understanding of the nature of history and of the existence of humanity (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:13).

Hegel saw human history as a single, unified, rational and organized progress. Progress comes through struggle, conflict and discontinuity. Conflict occurs orderly, creating oppositions (fighting), and overcoming them (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:11). Conflict that brings progress, can be viewed in terms of today's functional conflict. (See Chapter 3, point 3.4.5), where functional conflict is viewed as positive for a company, because it helps a company to progress by finding solutions in overcoming obstacles.

Hegel argued that human beings would be totally free when they are free from inhibiting circumstances. To reach total freedom, human beings must grow into their full potential and that means that the end of history will be achieved. Progressing towards the end of

something, is termed the teleological conception. History is directed towards an end result or it is directed towards a literal end. Hegel wanted to achieve an understanding of humanity's nature as being historically and progressively developed, consisting in self-understanding (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:11-12). Conflict is therefore a very important aspect of human history, because conflict is necessary for human beings to develop progressively.

Human beings must grow or develop in their intellectual life through their mind or spirit. The mind or the spirit is the mind of humanity, as manifested in particular peoples and periods, and not the mind of individual thinkers. The end of history will be achieved when humanity comes to the point where it has complete knowledge to understand its own nature fully, and where humanity has developed its full potential which means that there can be no further development whatsoever. The development of history is a development of thought, and logic is an essential process of thought (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:11-12).

Hegel kept Socrates' Discussion Model in mind and based his logic likened to the Model. According to the Model, disagreement which starts the conflict between oppositions, produces the beginning of discussion. In his logical thought, he made absolute distinctions between irreconcilable opposites. Thus, something false could not change into something that is true, but seeming opposites can be reconciled and combined into a new unity. Hegel's logic is termed dialectical logic (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:13-14).

Hegel argued that conflict exists when individuals pursue their own interests. Opposing interests lead to conflict, and through this conflict, people learn to make a compromise in order to find a solution for the conflict so that they can each achieve their personal ends with respect for one another (Kain, 1998:388). Hegel's contribution to the problem that is outlined in Chapter 1, is that the main sources of conflict materialize when people have opposing interests that are in conflict with one another. Although each one pursues his own interests, the seeming opposite views can be reconciled and combined into a new unity. Thus, conflict can be handled by making compromises. (See Chapter 3, Figures 3.7-3.8), where compromising is appropriate to use: when temporary settlements to complex issues must be achieved, when there is time pressure and solutions must be reached, when collaboration or competition fails to be a success and when parties have opposite goals or have equal power.

2.2.3 The Background of Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Karl Marx was born in 1818 in Trier, Germany, and died 14 March 1883 (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:226).

Marx studied philosophy at the University of Berlin and submitted a doctoral thesis on Greek philosophies after his father died. When Marx was blacklisted by the Ministry of Education because he was very radical in his beliefs, he decided to study journalism. In 1842 he became the editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*. At the same time he also met Friedrich Engels (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:224).

Engels was the son of a wealthy German manufacturer and he experienced the exploitation of the textile employees in his father's mills. Engels became aware of how important Marx's work was, and for many years thereafter Engels financed his friend's work. In 1869 Engels made enough money out of his business and he paid all Marx's debts from the profits he made (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:224).

In 1844 Marx helped establish a Journal in Paris: the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* where he also began working on the *Paris Manuscripts*. The Prussian Government arrested Marx on a charge of *high treason*. Marx and his wife Jenny, daughter of Baron von Westphalen, then moved to Brussels and lived in exile for three years (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:224).

In 1847 Marx and Engels went to London to participate in the Second Congress of the Communist League. In April 1848, they participated in the German Revolution at Cologne. In 1849, Marx and his family took refuge in London where they lived for the rest of their lives. In 1851 Marx became the correspondent of the *New-York Daily Tribune*, and from 1864 to 1872 he was involved in the International Working Men's Association. Marx died in 1883 of illness and of the longing for his favourite daughter and wife who died before him (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:224-226).

2.2.4 Marx's Theory of Conflict

Karl Marx's theory of conflict is important to this study, because he is considered as having a great impact on conflict theories. His theory will give a greater understanding of what conflict is all about. The sources of conflict as seen by him, were used in the questionnaire in the empirical Chapter 4. The impact that the last mentioned had on the study, was that there might be other sources of conflict in the Engineering Company that were not mentioned in the questionnaire.

The Roman censors used the word *classis*, because they wanted to put the population into different tax groups to make their task easier. On the one hand were the *assidui*, and on the other hand were the *proletarii* whose only possessions were their offspring (Dahrendorf, 1959:3).

In the eighteenth century Ferguson and Miller used the word *class* to distinguish social strata. In modern day's terms, rank or wealth. In the nineteenth century Adam Smith used the terms *poor* or *labouring class*. Ricardo and Ure termed the following two classes, namely the *class of capitalists* and the *labouring class*. Saint-Simon and Fourier used the following two classes, namely the *rich class* and the *poor class* and Engels and Marx talked about the *bourgeoisie* and the *proletariat* (Dahrendorf, 1959:4).

According to Ashley and Orenstein (1995:234), Marx saw the following stages of society that followed one another sequentially with the exception of Asiatic societies:

- a) Preclass systems: It is a system where a minimal division of labour and property is owned to benefit the community. The earliest clans or tribes had this social company.
- b) Asiatic societies: This type of societies have powerful, despotic leaders, but it seems like local communities are economically self-sufficient.
- c) Ancient societies: The societies developed around large cities, where land became private property and slaves were used to make a few people rich.
- d) Feudal societies: The Feudal societies developed after the Roman Empire had fallen. Here serfs worked on the land for the aristocracy.
- e) Capitalist societies: Two major classes can be identified, namely the *bourgeoisie* (those who own property) and the *proletariat* (those who have to labour for wages).

The history of all societies, is the history of class struggles (Laski, 1948:125): in other words, classes in conflict with each other. In Marx's time there were two major classes, namely the *bourgeoisie* and the *proletariat*.

“The separate individuals form a class only in so far as they have to carry on a common battle against another class; otherwise they are on hostile terms with each other as competitors” (Marx & Engels, 1930:48-49). In other words, a class is formed when individuals have common interests that is in conflict with the interests of another class (intergroup conflict); otherwise they may experience conflict between each other (intragroup conflict) as competitors. See Chapter 3 (points 3.5.6 and 3.5.8), where intergroup conflict is described as conflict between two parties and intragroup conflict is described as conflict between individuals in a group.

The economic base of a society exists out of *forces of production (proletariat)* and *social relations of production (bourgeoisie)*. The *forces of production* comprise of three subdivisions: Firstly, *labour power*: a human's capabilities to perform useful work. Secondly, *the means of production*: tools such as machines, nuclear power, steam power, water power and so on. Thirdly, *the raw materials of production*: such as uranium, iron-ore and coal (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:235). The *forces of production (proletariat)* are represented by the wealth potential of a society and the *relations of production (bourgeoisie)* are represented by those that control the wealth (Lopreato & Hazelrigg, 1972:17). In the concept of *relations of production*, the labour power of some people, belongs to those that control the wealth. For example, in the capitalist society the employers own the labour power of the employee during employment hours. The employees are part of an economic system of production and consumption (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:235).

Marx viewed conflict as a struggle between different classes, for example the *proletariat* feels oppressed by the *bourgeoisie*, and oppression breeds latent or intrapersonal conflict (conflict within oneself), that leads to manifest conflict (conflict that is acted out). Conflict can manifest into interpersonal conflict (conflict between individuals of the *proletariat* and the *bourgeoisie*), intergroup conflict (conflict between the two classes, namely the *proletariat* and the *bourgeoisie*), and intragroup conflict (conflict between individuals of the same class). See Chapter 3 (points 3.5.1 and 3.5.4), where interpersonal conflict is described as conflict between two individuals.

In the capitalist society, other classes also exist, for example the *petite bourgeoisie* (small business owners) and the *lumpenproletariat* (people who haven't got a steady job). The *bourgeoisie* and the *proletariat* would grow and displace classes that are more traditional and subsidiary (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:235-236). As the *bourgeoisie* and the *proletariat* grow, so does the potential for conflict between the classes, increase.

Marx's philosophy was that freedom can be reached by the human mind, as well as by an understanding of itself, and by comprehending its dependence on a constraining, natural objective and real universe. Marx did not follow idealism like Hegel, because idealism stated the following: if people believed their consciousness to be self-determining, they would inevitably reach an incomplete and a false understanding of themselves (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:236).

According to Marx, (quoted by Ryzanskaya & Dobb, 1971:20), his view with regard to materialism entails the following: In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely *relations of production*, appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material *forces of production*. The totality of these *relations of production* constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure, and to which corresponds definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness.

The root of social progress was the development of *productive forces*. Such development entailed that employees were compelled to express themselves in new forms by changing their modes of self-understanding (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:236).

The development of technology can enhance the possibility of human freedom and it can also increase human self-determination. If people were to attain a full understanding of their position in the world in a society with a subsistence economy (an economy where a surplus of goods is not produced in order to trade, but where just enough goods are produced for people to survive), they would have no alternative but to acknowledge their miserable conditions of

existence. but in societies with advanced technology, there is a chance for people to humanize the world (Ashley & Orenstein. 1995:236-237).

The capitalist enterprise can be successful in competing for profit through investment, better technology, and the minimization of production costs. As the wealth of the capitalists increase, so does the polarization increase between the owners and the producers. In one process (*proletarianization*), competition to the extreme may have a degenerate effect on the wealth of the owners, and the result is poorer and weaker capitalists. The capital is then in the hands of just a few people. In another process (*pauperization*), production cost is minimized by not increasing or by depressing the wages of employees, and by charging the employees the cost of innovation and investment. These two processes produce conflict (intergroup conflict), that will lead to the fall of the *bourgeoisie*. (Lopreato & Hazelrigg, 1972:18). See Chapter 3 (point 3.5.6), where intergroup conflict is viewed as conflict between different groups.

In the above paragraph it can be seen that the changes in the economic structure of society, are followed by social changes in a society, with or without the resistance from the interests of the ruling party (Lopreato & Hazelrigg, 1972:18).

Capitalist society is a dehumanized society which alienate men. Dehumanization of society may produce intrapersonal conflict which may manifest into rebellion or revolution (forms of conflict). Marx saw the *principle of movement* to be a characteristic of man where mankind is seen to move to ever greater stages of self-fulfilment, self-awareness and creativity. In order for mankind to progress to greater stages of self-fulfilment, self-awareness and creativity, functional conflict (conflict that has benefits), is necessary to change the dehumanized and alienated situation of the workers (Lopreato & Hazelrigg, 1972:12). See Chapter 3 (point 3.4.5), where functional conflict is described as being positive for a company, because it can be used in a positive way to find solutions and keep individuals productive.

Private ownership of *forces of production* makes workers lose their own freedom by only becoming a working object through labour which results in alienation (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:237). Workers who feel alienated become dissatisfied and frustrated. The only solution to their frustrations is to fight for their rights by striving to overthrow the current social order. According to Marx. (quoted by Bottomore & Rubel, 1974:178), the same way in which an

employee feels related to an alien object, will result in the employee's related feelings to the product of his labour. The more the employee produces, the less he belongs to himself. The less the employee belongs to himself, the poorer his inner life becomes, and the result is alienation. See Chapter 3 (point 3.2.2), where lack of involvement of employees may breed alienation that may lead to frustration, aggression and conflict.

According to Marx, (quoted by Bottomore & Rubel, 1974:177), the following constitutes the alienation of labour: the work is physically unpleasant, mentally unrewarding, and spiritually numbing. Physically unpleasant, mentally unrewarding, and spiritually numbing work, may produce latent or intrapersonal conflict, (conflict within oneself, because the individual is not satisfied with the current conditions). See Chapter 3 (point 3.5.4), where intrapersonal conflict is described as occurring within the individual as a result of actual or perceived pressures from incompatible goals or expectations.

In the first place, alienation entailed that in the capitalist society the *bourgeoisie* had the freedom to be artistically creative and they had intellectual stimulation, while the *proletariat* was subjected to very bad conditions. Secondly, alienation entailed that people underestimated their own efforts and did not realise that it is not another source that is responsible for controlling their own destiny, for example religion. Thirdly, alienation entailed that people accepted their bad circumstances, because it had been controlled by economic laws (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:19). When workers get dissatisfied with their current bad conditions, they become conscious that it is not another source that is responsible for controlling their own destiny. This consciousness leads workers not to accept their current bad circumstances, and it manifests into intergroup conflict, (conflict between different groups or classes). See Chapter 3 (point 3.5.6), where intergroup conflict is described as conflict between work groups, teams and departments.

In a competitive work milieu where power is forced down on employees, and where dominance is prevalent, it gives rise to dehumanized practices. These practices have the consequence of employees being fleeced. The employees become alienated by feeling animosity, isolated, alone, deprived, meaningless and powerless (Cockeram, 1995:9). Workers who experience these conflicting feelings, may want to resist the power the elite has over them and it may produce conflict, resulting in rebellion. The elite are often less aware of their power than they are of the resistance of the people to their power. The elite try to blur

the line between themselves and the masses in order to deal with the resistance, but the people are aware of their powerlessness and they don't like it at all. Social conflict begins to develop, because of the tension between the two parties. The party who benefits the most, will want to preserve the social order, but those who feel deprived, will want to change the social order. The resulting conflict may lead to significant change in the current social order (Cronjé, 2002:26).

Class domination is applied by a minority of the population, and they can only impose their will on the majority if class domination is deemed as natural, and where the minority doesn't see the capitalist regulation of production as having a historically limited mode of self-production (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:237).

Marx believed the *proletariat*, or the working class, could change the capitalist society in a progressively social way. He believed the biggest obstacle that prevented progressive social change, was that the dominant classes prevented the working class from attaining true *class consciousness* (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:237-238).

The conflict concept was developed to help enhance the understanding of control and progress of social change in a time of great political and institutional confusion (Curra, 1994:39). Concepts such as class-antagonism, class-war, rebellion, revolutions, war and civil war are freely used by Marx, but he seldom uses the concept of conflict. He doesn't explicitly say what he understands under the concept of conflict. Conflict is to Marx a concept that contains for example class-antagonism, class-war, rebellion, revolutions, war and civil war, but the essential characteristic is antagonism between two parties. Conflict is seen by Marx as covert and overt, latent or manifest. Manifest conflict is not necessarily violent, but it has a tendency towards violence (Jordaan, 1993:18-19).

Competition is an impersonal process, while conflict is disruptive and personal. Conflict emphasizes the differences between two parties and de-emphasizes what the two parties have in common. There is continuous competition between two parties for scarce resources and this can lead to conflict (Greyling, 2000:18-19). It is accepted that conflict is dominant in all processes of society, and that the oppressed class will rebel and overthrow the current social rules and order (Havenga, 2002:21).

Marx saw the history of societies as a continuous struggle between different classes. He therefore saw the negative side of the world, and he wanted to change the way things were. He saw how the labouring class was oppressed, and he wanted to reach equality by doing away with a society consisting out of different classes.

The relation of Marx's theory to the research questions of the problem statement in Chapter 1 may be summarised as follows See also the empirical Chapter 4 (points 4.9.1, 4.9.2) and (points 4.10.2-4.10.7) for the relation of the research questions to the empirical findings:

The answer to research question (a), is as follows: According to Marx, conflict is the result of two classes opposing one another, because one class is oppressed and wants to change things, and the other class benefits from the way things are and wants to preserve the situation as it is.

Marx can be applied to research question (b) as follows: According to Marx, the main sources or prerequisites of conflict are conflict, (conflict would beget greater conflict); class consciousness. (the *proletariat* wanted to change their current situation and the only way was by means of violence); alienation does not provide upward social mobility, (upward social mobility can help workers to move out of their bad conditions); and destitution, (when workers experience deprivation, because of economic degeneration over time). See Chapter 4 (point 4.9.1), where the empirical results revealed that the sources of conflict according to Marx that were used in the questionnaire, were not prevalent in this particular Engineering Company. Therefore there may be other sources of conflict present in the Company that were not mentioned in the questionnaire.

As seen by Marx, the research question (c) can be answered as follows: According to Marx, conflict may influence people differently, because some workers may become conscious of the current social order, and want to change things with rebellious behaviour, and some workers may accept their current bad conditions, because the *bourgeoisie* prevented them from attaining true class-consciousness. See Chapter 4 (point 4.9.2), where the empirical results revealed that the influences of conflict according to Blake and Mouton, that were used in the questionnaire were not prevalent in this particular Engineering Company. Because the influences of conflict in table 4.6 were not experienced by most personnel in the sample size, it can be deduced that there are a moderate level of conflict in the Engineering Company.

Research question (d) can be answered as follows: The solution for conflict, or the way to handle conflict according to Marx, is a classless, communist society. See Chapter 4 (points 4.10.2-4.10.7), where the following conflict styles to handle conflict are discussed according to the empirical results, namely integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising. In Chapter 3 (point 3.5.9.2), the different styles are described as follows: Integrating: Parties confront the issue at hand and identify the problem together, generate and weigh alternative solutions and select a solution. Obliging: Differences are played down and commonalities are emphasized. Dominating: There is a high concern for self and a low concern for others, resulting in win-lose tactics. Avoiding: It includes either passive withdrawal from an issue, or active suppression of an issue. Compromising: There is a moderate concern for self and also for others.

2.2.5 The Background of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Kant was born in 1724 in Königsberg, East Prussia, (now Kaliningrad, Russia). He was the eldest son of Anna Regina Kant, née Reuter, (1697-1737) and Johann Georg Kant (1683-1746), (Schönfeld, 2003).

At the age of six, he went to the *Hospitalschule*, a grammar school at the local clinic, whose teacher was a Pietist candidate in theology. Kant continued his education at the *Collegium Fridericianum* from 1732 until 1740. Pietism aimed at purifying the Lutheran faith by stripping it of dogma and detail (Schönfeld, 2003).

In 1740 he went to university where Knutzen, his advisor, influenced him to think about natural philosophy. In 1744, he started writing on natural philosophy to determine the properties of force. In 1747, he completed his first publication known as the *Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces*. He did not complete his degree, because it was not possible for a Pietist advisor to accept the content of his publication. Kant reasoned that either God is creative force, or God created creative force (Schönfeld, 2003).

In the following years he was a teacher for the following people's children: In 1748 until 1751, he taught the sons of Pastor Andersch, in the French settlement Judtschen. In 1751 until 1753, he taught the sons of Knight von Hülsen at his Arnsberg estate. In 1753 until 1754, he worked as a tutor for Count Keyserlingk. From 1754 until 1755 he wrote two tracts, one

book, a Master's Thesis and a dissertation. His Master's Thesis was about the structure of fire and his dissertation was titled the *New Elucidation of the First Principles of Metaphysical Cognition* (Schönfeld, 2003).

In 1771 he examined his convictions to determine which of the previous claims held up and which did not. It resulted in his greatest work, the *Critique of Pure Reason* and was published in 1781 (Schönfeld, 2003).

2.2.6 The Philosophies of Immanuel Kant

Kant's moral philosophy: Kant argued that moral requirements are based on a standard of rationality, namely the *Categorical Imperative*. The *Categorical Imperative* is the fundamental principle of morality, and it implies that a "rational will" must be regarded as autonomous, in the sense of being the author of the law that binds it. He viewed that people must be seen as equally worthy and they must also be equally respected (Johnson, 2004).

Kain's interpretation of Kant is as follows: There are two forces which form history - the conflict of interests, and morality (Kain, 1998:385). The conflict of interests are interplayed by an unsocial side and a social side of human nature. The unsocial side leads to conflict and war, and the social side of human nature leads to an understanding of how important it is to co-operate with other people in order to fulfil their needs. These two aspects of human nature, together with humanity's social propensity, eventually leads to peace and justice (Kain, 1998:386). The second historical force, namely morality, is based on the categorical imperative. It shows that we cannot universalize conflict and point to justice and peace. Conflict leads to the same end which morality wants to gain (Kain, 1998:387).

Both conflict and morality are necessary to find a solution towards peace because human corruption means morality is not enough. Together with conflict, however, it may drive people towards peace, though it is not the same thing as morality. It is not enough when peace and justice is the right outcome, because we must believe in the above values by putting them into practice for the right reason (Kain, 1998:387).

Kant's contribution to the problem that is outlined in Chapter 1, is that the main source of conflict is "the conflict of interests", and the way in which conflict should be handled, should

be of such a nature that conflict in itself may drive people to find a solution so that there will be peace.

2.2.7 The Background of Max Weber (1864-1920)

Max Weber was born in 1864 in Erfurt, Germany, and he died in 1920. His family members were mainly entrepreneurs, scholars and politicians. His father was a workaholic (Ritzer, 2003:133).

He went to school in Berlin, and developed an interest in philosophy, literature and ancient, as well as medieval history. After school, he studied at different universities. He studied philosophy, law and economic history. He gained popularity, because his seminars and lectures were excellent. When he studied law at the University of Humboldt, he gained even more popularity and in 1893 he was appointed as lecturer. In 1894, he was also appointed a position in economics and finance at Freiburg (Ritzer, 2003:133).

In 1897, he married Marianne Schnitger. Weber's father mistreated his mother and as a result, he started taking over their household affairs. After his father's death, his thoughts focused on people living in the new world of secularism, urbanism and capitalism. In 1904, he went to America and travelled to the East, South and Midwest of the country. He gained appreciation for the energy, self-reliance and distrust of authority in this country (Ritzer, 2003:133).

His Christian mother and her sister influenced him, and he became very interested in the different churches. When he was a little child, they taught him the following values: moral values, dignity and meaning must be guided by ethical standards, and because every person is unique, he is worthy of respect. In his later days, his wife reaffirmed these values (Ritzer, 2003:134).

On the other hand, his father had taught him to avoid *naïve idealism*, to confront the world in an amoral way, and to avoid self-sacrifice. Weber opposed these lessons his father had taught him, and followed in his mother's footsteps. He fought very passionately on behalf of ethics to be maintained, and scolded all who lacked a rigorous sense of justice and social responsibility (Ritzer, 2003:134).

2.2.8 Weber's Theory of Power

Max Weber's theory of power is important to this study, because his theory will give a greater understanding of what power is all about and how it contributes to conflict. Power as a source in bringing conflict, were used in the questionnaire in the empirical Chapter 4. The impact that the last mentioned had on the study, was that there might be other sources of conflict in the Engineering Company that were not mentioned in the questionnaire.

Weber viewed society as a struggle for power. Social life is about inequality which can take many forms. Inequality may not always be economic. Economic inequality is important, but it is just one form of inequality. The basis for the organization of groups is inequality, and groups struggle with each other over inequalities. Stratification is the key element in Weber's view of society (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50). The struggle for power, or the struggle over inequalities, can lead to different parties being involved in conflict with each other, (intergroup conflict). See Chapter 3 (point 3.4.1), about the two types of power, namely socialized power and personalized power.

Stratification may be defined as follows: Inequalities can be seen occurring in three dimensions, which are all forms of power. Weber views power as the capacity to get what one wants. Economic power, prestige power, and pure power are the three dimensions of power (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50).

The three dimensions of power form the basis for the existence of different forms of groupings, namely the class, the status group, and the party. The struggle over power occurs among, and between these three groups (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50). The struggle over power among members of the same group can be termed intrapersonal conflict, and the struggle over power between the different groups can be termed intragroup conflict. The class struggles for economic power, (conflict over economic power among members of the same group and between members of the other groups), the status group struggles for prestige power, (conflict over prestige power among members of the same group and between members of the different groups), and the party struggles for pure power, (conflict over pure power among members of the same group and between members of the other groups). See Chapter 3 (point 3.4.1), about the seven bases of power.

Weber sees class as a position in the process of economic production and its relationship to a market. A class exists out of a grouping of individuals who has something in common, because they can be identified by a common characteristic they share. The number of classes we can draw, depends on the criteria we follow (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50-51).

The number of classes can be reduced to two, namely those who sell their labour power and those who buy it. By identifying the broad kinds of labour power sold, namely skilled or unskilled, manual or non-manual, the number of categories increases. By making use of the criterion of the distinguishing of a specific kind of labour power, a large number of classes will be identified, for example the capacity to fix plumbing, to repair electronic wiring, to lay bricks, or to dig ditches (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:51).

Members from a class often reacts in the same way, because they have a similar background, but they are not aware of one another's response. Classes are differentiated by inequalities (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:51).

A status group exists out of a grouping of individuals who sees each other as equals, but looks down on other social groups. Status groups are differentiated by prestige. A status group does not include those who are not equal to them. A status group is defined in terms of consumption, and not in terms of production (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:51).

A person's lifestyle determines if he is another's equal, for example the lifestyle of an educated person forms the basis for mutual acknowledgement. A status group is eventually dependent on economic inequality, and is in conflict in order to fund their expensive lifestyle. A status group is in conflict over prestige power; therefore the status groups restrict the operation of the market to preserve their identity. In a severe case of a status group in India, certain jobs are just available by means of inheritance and is not open for just anyone. A status group thrives on long-term social stability and when social change occurs very rapidly, social class will have greater prominence (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:52).

A party is a self-conscious organization that struggles for power (is in conflict over power), and wants to maximise it by working out its objectives. Power is the main reason why a party exists, and it includes all associations associated with it, for example political parties, religious organizations, leisure organizations, and factions in business (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:52).

Power is characterised by achieving results, even when there is resistance. But those who have the power, experience little resistance. There is legitimate power that is characterised by charismatic domination, traditional domination, and rational-legal domination (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:53). However, power can lead to conflict, because other people may resist it. See Chapter 3 (point 3.4.1), about the seven bases of power: Reward power is used to get compliance from others by promising rewards, Coercive power is used to get compliance from others by using threats. Legitimate power is used to get compliance from others through formal authority, Expert power is used to get compliance from others through knowledge, Referent power is used to get compliance from others by having a charismatic character, Connection power is when someone can associate with influential people and Information power is when people wait for a leader to tell them what to do.

A charismatic leader comes to power because of his personality but he will be constantly tested to see if he can lead. The leader can make things happen, but if he can't make it happen, it will be a setback to his authority. When a leader is seen as a failure, or when he dies, the movement will either stop to exist or it will be transformed. The basis of authority changes either into tradition, or it changes into rational-legal power. Rational-legal power is when someone is elected to hold a position (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:53). See Chapter 3 (point 3.4.1), about the seven bases of power, namely Reward power, Coercive power, Legitimate power, Expert power, Referent power, Connection power and Information power.

Traditional authority is when someone inherits a position, for example a prince that becomes a king. Rational-legal authority is the most efficient form of a large-scale administrative structure, namely the bureaucracy. A bureaucracy is a company structure characterized by regularized procedure, division of responsibility, hierarchy, and impersonal relationships (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:54-55). See Chapter 3 (point 3.2.3), about bureaucracy.

Weber views the market as the exchange between a buyer and a seller, and competition between sellers as well as between buyers, (competition for scarce resources that may lead to conflict). In open and closed relationships, market actors may open up the market under certain conditions, and close it down under other conditions (Swedberg, 1999).

Economic life is the result of a *struggle*. The market price is the result of an "interest struggle" (conflict between the two actors who end up doing the exchange), and also a

“competitive struggle” (conflict between those who compete with one another to do the selling and the buying). (Swedberg, 1999). See Chapter 3 (point 3.5.1), where interpersonal conflict is discussed more thoroughly.

Weber discusses three major forms of capitalism, for example rational capitalism, political capitalism, and traditional commercial capitalism. The characteristics of *rational capitalism* is its methodical spirit and the number of rational institutions, for example a calculable legal order, a predictable political system, science and accounting. *Political capitalism* ensures making a profit by contacts in the political arena. Examples of *political capitalism* includes colonialism and imperialism, weapon industries, subsidies to the agricultural sector, etc. *Traditional commercial capitalism* existed for thousands of years and it focuses on small businesses (Swedberg, 1999).

Weber prefers to speak of “modes of capitalistic orientation of profit-making” rather than of “capitalism”. Weber added an economic dimension to his analysis of authority, by looking at how each of the three major types of authority is financed, and how they affect the chances for rational capitalism to emerge (Swedberg, 1999).

A bureaucracy is financed through taxes and goes very well with rational capitalism. Charismatic authority is financed through donations or by booty, (plunder gained especially in war or by piracy). Charismatic authority threatens especially rational types of economic systems. Traditional authority, for example the patrimonial type, is financed by the ruler himself. Traditional authority can coexist with traditional and political capitalism (Swedberg, 1999). See Chapter 3 (point 3.2.3), about bureaucracy.

The relation of the research questions and the problem statement of Chapter 1 to Weber, may be summarised as follows. See also the empirical Chapter 4 (points 4.9.1, 4.9.2) and (points 4.10.2-4.10.7) for the relation of the research questions to the empirical findings:

Research question (a) can be answered as follows: The question of how conflict is conceptualised in literature can be seen in the light of Weber’s theory of power that the class struggles for economic power, the status group struggles for prestige power, and the party struggles for pure power.

Research question (b) can be answered as follows: The main sources or prerequisites of conflict according to Weber are, power (power is the means to get what one wants despite resistance to it and the struggle for power leads to conflict); role ambiguity (politicians have scientific advisors, but because there is an unclear role distinction it can lead to interpersonal conflict); competition (conflict between those who compete with one another to do the selling and the buying), and conflict over incompatible values. See Chapter 4 (point 4.9.1), where the empirical results revealed that power according to Weber, that were used in the questionnaire were not prevalent in this particular Engineering Company. Therefore there may be other sources of conflict present in the Company that were not mentioned in the questionnaire.

The answer to research question (c) is as follows: Members of Weber's three groupings, namely class, status group, and party, may be influenced differently by the conflict, because the class may experience conflict in the form of economic inequalities, the status group may experience conflict in the form of prestige inequalities, and the party may experience conflict in the form of the struggle for pure power. See Chapter 3 (point 3.5.3.3) and Chapter 4 (point 4.9.2), where the empirical results revealed that the influences of conflict according to Blake and Mouton, that were used in the questionnaire were not prevalent in this particular Engineering Company.

Research question (d) can be answered as follows: According to many pluralists including Weber, tyranny comes to an end when people dissolve their social contracts. See Chapter 3 (point 3.5.9.2) and the empirical Chapter 4 (points 4.10.2-4.10.7), for a more thorough discussion on the handling of conflict by means of integrating, avoiding, dominating, obliging and compromising. Next the prerequisites or sources for conflict will be discussed, compared and evaluated mainly according to the two theorists, Marx and Weber.

2.3 PREREQUISITES FOR CONFLICT

The below prerequisites or sources of conflict are assumptions that were compiled from the theories of Marx and Weber and the following literature sources were used: (Jordaan, 1993; Vorhies, 1991; Yildirim, 1979; De Kock, 1984; Cuff *et al.*, 1998). One of the research questions of the problem statement of the study is about the sources of conflict. The below paragraphs can partially answer the question.

2.3.1 Marx's Prerequisites for Conflict

Refer to Chapter 3 (point 3.4.2) and Chapter 4 (point 4.9.1) and Chapter 5 (point 5.5) objective (d) for sources of conflict. In the empirical Chapter 4, some of the below sources of conflict were used in the questionnaire.

- ◆ Conflict: Marx and also most of the modern conflict theorists said that conflict would beget greater conflict (Jordaan, 1993:44). When there is conflict, it is a source for more conflict to develop.
- ◆ Class-consciousness: The *bourgeoisie* and the *proletariat* stood in opposition to each other, because the *proletariat* wanted to enhance their situation while the *bourgeoisie* wanted to keep the situation as it was (Vorhies, 1991:19-20). When the *proletariat* or working class got conscious of their current bad circumstances, their consciousness served as a source for conflict, because they wanted to fight for change.
- ◆ Lack of upward social mobility: Upward social mobility can help people to move out of their bad conditions, but when there is a lack of upward social mobility the only alternative is violence (Jordaan, 1993:32). When the working class is suppressed to stay in their bad conditions, because there is no way provided for them to improve themselves, the lack of upward social mobility may serve as a source for conflict, because violence is the only alternative for changing their circumstances.
- ◆ Destitution: The term *relative deprivity* is used to describe poverty which exists out of the economic degeneration of a group over time, and the economic degeneration of a group relative towards another group's economic situation (Yildirim, 1979:50-55). When the working class degenerates economically over time, they become destitute. Thus, in order to progress forward, the only means will be conflict. Therefore, destitution may serve as a source for conflict.
- ◆ Absence of security: Employees are not sure till when they still will have work, because they can be replaced at any time (Yildirim, 1979:52). People need job security to ensure making a living, because it is difficult to find a new job. Therefore they will fight for job security.
- ◆ Unemployment: Mechanization increased productivity and therefore the work force was downsized, and there wasn't any opportunity for employees to find new work (Jordaan,

1993:33). Conflict may result, because opportunities were not foreseen for employees to find new work.

- ◆ Competition: Competition for work between the different employees, may lead to conflict between them (De Kock, 1984:51). Work is scarce, therefore competition for work will serve as a source for conflict.
- ◆ Organization of political factions: Individual conflict leads to retrenchment, and in turn it also leads to the development of Unions that would negotiate better working conditions and higher pay (Yildirim, 1979:61). Therefore, individual conflict frequently leads to the organization of political factions in the form of Unions that fight for the rights of the workers. This in turn is a source of conflict on a larger scale.
- ◆ Incomplete democracy: A government who rules with absolute autocracy, oppresses any signs of revolt, but a total democratic government has almost no signs of conflict. Thus, in a government where there is not absolute democracy, the conditions are rife for conflict to occur (Jordaan, 1993:44).
- ◆ National unity: Ethnic groups strive to take control over their own lives and this can lead to conflict (Jordaan, 1993:35). Striving for independence leads to national unity, that in turn leads to conflict, because the people have a common goal, namely to fight for freedom.
- ◆ Alienation: Alienation occurs when a person gets isolated from his or her family, the society, and other people because of the extent and the content of the work. This can produce conflict (De Kock, 1984:76).
- ◆ Communication: The development of communication technology can help employees to communicate better and bring the *bourgeoisie* to a downfall (Vorhies, 1991:73-75). Better communication between employees can encourage them to confront the *bourgeoisie* in order to overthrow them.
- ◆ Scarce resources: Continuous competition occurs between parties for scarce resources and this can lead to conflict (Greyling, 2000:18-19).
- ◆ Technology: It leads to the degeneration of work skills (Cockeram, 1995:63). Mechanization leads to workers needing less skills to do the work. According to Marx, (quoted by Parsons *et al.*, 1965:533), this process can lead to Unions becoming the main change-agents to be responsible for the existence of conflict between workers and their managers. Today, in many companies, workers are downsized, because of being replaced by machinery that do their jobs.

2.3.2 Weber's Prerequisites for Conflict

Refer to Chapter 3 (point 3.4.2), Chapter 4 (point 4.9.1) and Chapter 5 (point 5.5) objective (d) for sources of conflict. In the empirical Chapter 4, power were used as a source of conflict in the questionnaire.

- ◆ Power: Power is the means to get what one wants despite resistance. The struggle for power leads to conflict. There are three different forms of power, namely economic power, prestige power, and pure power. The class struggles for economic power, the status group struggles for prestige power, and the party struggles for pure power. Parties can be prevalent in specific social groups: they can try to win power for a specific group, for example a socialist party might try to win power for the working class (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50-53).
- ◆ Role ambiguity: Politicians have scientific advisors, but because there is not a clear role distinction it can lead to role ambiguity, for example they might intrude on a political leader's decision-making issues and reduce it to a mere technical choice, and political issues that sounds like science, might be wrongly interpreted, and not clearly expressed (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:41). Role ambiguity is a form of intrapersonal conflict, and it entails that a person does not know what is expected of him or her.
- ◆ Forcing: It is when someone wants to impose his action on another person. Resistance may give rise to conflict (Weber, 1978:3).
- ◆ Competition: Where there is competition, opportunities for exchange between a pluralist of parties come to the fore, and a market comes into existence (Weber, 1978:635). There may be conflict between the buyers, because they compete to buy certain products, and there may be conflict between the sellers, because they compete to sell their products.
- ◆ Politics: It is a struggle between different values and leads to conflict (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:41).
- ◆ Science: People must choose their own value system. They musn't let Science decide for them which leaders they must choose, what they must fight for, and what gods they must serve. Such choices may bring conflict within and between individuals (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:41).
- ◆ Society: Inequality is the basis for the organising of groups. Because of inequalities there is a struggle (conflict), in society (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50).

- ◆ Economics: Economic life is interpreted as the result of a struggle. for example market price is the result of a struggle between two actors who end up doing the exchange, and also competition between those who want to buy and sell (Swedberg, 1999).

2.4 ASSUMPTIONS OF CONFLICT

In the following paragraphs a compilation of assumptions that relates the closest to the description of conflict, will be looked at. Karl Marx was a conflict theorist and Max Weber was a pluralist theorist. That is why we will have a look at the assumptions of the conflict paradigm, and the assumptions of the pluralist paradigm. Perdue (1986:304-305; 168-170), were used as a framework, because he compiled these assumptions.

2.4.1 Assumptions of the Conflict Paradigm

2.4.1.1 Human Nature

Marx viewed a human being as intelligent, rational, and sensitive. These characteristics can get distorted if the social rules of a community is not properly designed. It will then result in people wanting to focus on advancing their own interests at the cost of others, and may result into conflict over opposing interests (Perdue,1986:304-305).

2.4.1.2 The Nature of Society

Conflict theorists view society as being a structural reality, and an institutional state that emerges according to historical laws. That reality is sometimes correctly interpreted by people, and sometimes it is incorrectly interpreted. Social institutions are responsible for forming the attitudes and behaviour of people in a society. Behaviour and attitudes may differ and opposing behaviour and attitudes may then be in conflict (Perdue,1986:304-305).

Conflict theorists say that any society can be considered human only to the extent that its institutions facilitate co-operation, sharing, and the common interest. The nature of such institutions is dynamic rather than static. The basic world, as well as the social world, is characterized by change that is unstable (change that is unstable may produce conflict), rather

than by change that is stable. Change in the social world does not occur accidentally, but exists in a decent order and occur uniformly and regularly (Perdue,1986:304-305).

The social nature of human existence is not prevalent in a society where there is a big difference in wealth, power, and status. Big differences in wealth, power and status may lead to people having opposing interests. The opposition may lead to intergroup conflict (two classes or groups that is in conflict) (Perdue,1986:304-305).

Inherent conflict (both overt and covert, recognized and unrecognized, latent or manifest), between and among groups with opposing interests can be seen in a society consisting of inequalities. Manifest conflict is not necessarily violent, but it has a tendency towards violence (Perdue,1986:304-305).

2.4.1.3 The Nature of Science

As humans are objective beings living in a real social universe, the philosophy of materialism is the basis for human science. In other words, thought, will, and feeling can only be explained in terms of a material social reality. The pluralists have a view of multiple social realities, but the conflict theorists have a view of multiple *perceptions* of structural reality (Perdue,1986:304-305).

Human science exists so that the relational properties of social order can be understood. Institutions, companies, classes, etc. cannot be studied in isolation. Societies must be studied holistically, because societies are *wholes* that are interrelated (Perdue,1986:304-305).

Conflict theories are macrosociological in form. Abstraction is the basis for explanations. Given the constancy of change, the reality of contradiction, and the fact that social phenomena are frequently both "cause and effect", conflict theories will often reflect the use of dialectic logic (Perdue,1986:304-305).

2.4.2 Assumptions of the Pluralist Paradigm

2.4.2.1 Human Nature

According to Rousseau, *freedom* and a socio-political system is important for pluralist theory. For many pluralist thinkers, this freedom is primarily individual and personal rather than collective, for example freedom of speech (Perdue,1986:168-170).

The nature of a human being reflects an abiding dualism, because it is sociable and self-assertive (Perdue,1986:168-170).

2.4.2.2 The Nature of Society

Society is a state of consciousness that is based on the shared ideas and meanings of its members (Perdue,1986:168-170).

According to Freund (quoted by Perdue, 1986:118), the basis of a society is reciprocity, in the sense of orientation to others. The relationship is reciprocal if each member of a group behaves according to what they think others are doing.

Reciprocal relationships, symbols, and conceptions of self must be understood in the context of a bigger picture. For example, human beings do not recreate culture from scratch every time they interact. Customs and ideas enhance the understanding of the bigger picture. Max Weber said that Protestant ideals were important in understanding the motivation for entrepreneurial behaviour (Perdue,1986:168-170).

The broader aspects of a society, for example the state, religion, education, the economy, and the family, is a *company of roles* that are interpreted and shaped by human action (Perdue,1986:168-170).

According to the pluralist view, members of most groups will share the most important interests that keep a society together, but they may disagree on customs and the choice of life-style (Perdue,1986:168-170).

The pluralist view of society is interest groups opposing each another continuously, and also the clashing of different cultures. Opposition and clashes may produce conflict (Perdue,1986:168-170).

In society there is an abiding dualism (twofold); an *antagonistic co-operation*. At one level we see the rise and fall of competing interests, and a battle of companies. At another level, there is a general commitment to those born of the social contract. One faction does not have total and continuous control. It is checked by counterbalancing companies and the sovereign right of people to dissolve their contracts if the state persists in the unjust support of one group over another. Therefore, pluralists see society as a *balance of power*, where tyranny comes to an end by means of a social contract. According to Wikipedia (2005), the social contract is "an agreement among the members of an organized society, or between the governed and the government defining and limiting the rights and duties of each other."

2.4.2.3 The Nature of Science

The pluralists view idealism as the basis for human science. They reason that relationships develop because a person is able to think, to create a world of ideas, and to attach meaning to human conduct (Perdue,1986:168-170).

The nomothetic approach to history is that there is a general law or laws underlying all revolutions. The idiographic approach to history can be seen in one unique case such as the Chinese Revolution. Weber rejected both the nomothetic and idiographic approach to history (Perdue,1986:168-170).

Weber followed the contingency approach of history because he argued that phenomena are not unique, but representative of such general analytic categories. Hence, the understanding of a specific phenomenon (such as the Chinese Revolution), is possible only if referred to the larger classification (such as all revolutions). The contingency approach to history implies that events in history are a matter of the coming together of independent causal chains which have previously developed without connection (Perdue,1986:168-170).

2.5 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

2.5.1 A Comparison between Weber and Marx

Weber: Class and economic power is one example of power (Kirby, 1999:61).

Marx: All forms of power have economic origins (Kirby, 1999:61).

Weber: “Social class is an example of unequal power relations in society”. There exists four different social classes, namely the working class, the *petty bourgeoisie* (small business owners), white-collar workers and technicians, and lastly those who own property and are highly educated (Kirby, 1999:64).

Marx: Social class is the predominant form of inequality (Kirby, 1999:64).

Weber: Weber talks of a multitude of classes. Weber did not see class and social class as having the same meaning. He interpreted it differently. Depending on the criteria drawn, there can be as many or as few classes in a society as one likes (Kirby, 1999:64; Cuff *et al.*, 1998:51).

Marx: There exists two predominant classes - those who labour for wages, namely the *proletariat*, and those who own property, namely the *bourgeoisie*. There are other classes also, namely the *petite bourgeoisie* (small business owners), and the *lumpenproletariat* (people who haven't got a steady job), (Kirby, 1999:64; Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:235- 236).

Weber: Those that own property and those who own nothing, is the fundamental determinant of a class, but there exists different types of property owners (Kirby, 1999:64).

Marx: The fundamental determinant of a class is those that own and those that do not own, (Kirby, 1999:64).

Weber: Weber talked of three kinds of capitalism, namely rational capitalism, political capitalism, and traditional commercial capitalism (Swedberg, 1999).

Marx: He talked about the Capitalist society of his time consisting of the *bourgeoisie*, and the *proletariat* (Ashley & Orenstein, 1995:234).

2.5.2 A Comparison of the different Views of Conflict

Karl Marx was a conflict theorist and was influenced by the philosophies of George Hegel. Philosophies were used to built theories. Max Weber was influenced by the philosophies of Immanuel Kant. Here are the different views of conflict according to these four individuals:

George Hegel: Hegel argued that conflict exists when individuals pursue their own interests. Opposing interests lead to conflict, and through this conflict people learn to make a compromise in order to live together and achieve their personal ends in such a way that allows for the mutual respect of the ends of others (Kain, 1998:388).

Karl Marx: Karl Marx viewed society as a struggle between different classes and this may produce conflict. In his time there were two classes. namely the *bourgeoisie* (owners) and the *proletariat* (workers). The two classes opposed one another, because the workers were oppressed and wanted to change things, but the owners did not want to change things (Havenga, 2002:21).

Immanuel Kant: There are two forces which form history: the conflict of interests and morality. The Conflict of interests are interplayed by an unsocial side and a social side of human nature. The unsocial side leads to conflict and war, and the social side of human nature leads to an understanding of how important it is to co-operate with other people in order to fulfil their needs (Kain, 385-386).

Max Weber: Max Weber viewed Society as a Struggle for power, and this may produce conflict. Weber viewed the struggle for power as follows: The class struggles for economic power, the status group struggles for prestige power, and the party struggles for pure power (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50).

2.6 APPLICATION OF MARX'S AND WEBER'S THEORIES ON CONFLICT

Taking into consideration the theories and prerequisites of Hegel, Marx, Kant, and Weber, it seems to be necessary, interesting, and helpful to do an empirical research study about conflict in an Engineering Company. However, only Marx's Conflict Theory will be applied in the empirical research study.

Today there still seems to be a tendency to classify society into two classes, namely the *bourgeoisie* and the *proletariat*. Subordinates are subjected to polarization because of the manipulative and dominant *bourgeoisie* (Ritzer, 1992:48-49). The polarization that leads to the creation of these two big classes, may bring increasing conflict (Turner, 1991:188). This polarization can also take place in an Engineering Company.

There exists competition between different workers and also between different managers for scarce resources. The struggle for money, power and prestige, lead to forms of dominance and force (Turner, 1991:188). This competition for scarce resources in an Engineering Company may give way to increasing conflict.

An increase in collective awareness that takes place between subordinates may influence them to ask themselves about the issue of the disproportionate distribution of scarce resources. This issue may result in conflict in an Engineering Company.

The intensity of conflict may determine how big the change in the structure will be, and it may also determine how the redistribution of scarce resources will take place.

The process of rationalisation and centralisation limits an individual's freedom and attributes to the alienation of the middle class (Kinloch, 1977:230). This process may also give rise to conflict in an Engineering Company.

Manipulative and scientific management techniques contribute to the fact that the worker gets alienated from his work, himself, and other people (Ritzer, 1992:311). This kind of situation may also be prevalent in an Engineering Company and it may result in conflict.

Technology leads to the degeneration of work (Cockeram, 1995:63). Mechanization leads to workers needing less skills to do the work. According to Marx (quoted by Parsons *et al.*, 1965:533), this process can lead to Unions becoming the main change-agents to be responsible for the existence of conflict between workers and their managers. Today, in many companies, workers are downsized because of their replacement by machinery that do their jobs.

2.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter we focused on conflict. For Karl Marx the struggle between opposing classes produces conflict, but for Weber, a struggle for power produces conflict. Conflict is an inherent characteristic of social behaviour, and it plays an important role in social change.

The philosophies of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Immanuel Kant were discussed, because theories are built on philosophy. Marx was influenced by Hegel, and Weber was influenced by Kant, although Weber also focused on the nature of capitalism and he also agreed with some of Marx's key assumptions. However, he did not agree with Marx's methodology and his view of history.

Hegel was a historian and Marx followed the German Historical School. Kant was an ahistorian and Weber also followed the German Historical School, but only halfheartedly. In reality he was quite positive about the analytical economics of the British and Austrian type. Marx was a conflict theorist and Weber was a pluralist theorist.

Hegel saw human history as a single, unified, rational and organised progress. Progress comes through struggle, conflict, and discontinuity. Conflict occurs orderly, creating oppositions and overcoming them.

Kant wanted to explain the most basic conditions of conflict by using his critical philosophy. His critical philosophy implies the following: Human reason is limited, because it cannot overstep the boundaries that is placed there by a system of rules to which it must adhere.

Karl Marx's conception of conflict includes classes, class-struggle, class-antagonism, class-war, rebellion, revolutions, war, and civil war. He sees revolution as the highest form of manifestation of the struggle between classes. Those who own property, namely the *bourgeoisie*, oppress the working class, namely the *proletariat*. The property owners want to preserve the social order, and the working class wants to change the social order.

Marx is considered as one of the greatest supporters of conflict. Conflict is dominant in all processes of society, and the oppressed class will eventually rebel and overthrow the oppressors.

Marx foresaw the following conditions for conflict to develop: Conflict, class-consciousness, lack of upward social mobility, destitution, absence of security, unemployment, competition, political organisation, incomplete democracy, national unity, alienation, and communication. The concept of conflict was developed so that people could understand the process of control and the progress of social change in a time when there were political and institutional confusion.

Max Weber viewed the struggle for power as follows: The struggle for economic power is evident within a class. The struggle for prestige power is evident within a status group, and the struggle for pure power is evident within a party. A class exists of a grouping of individuals who have something in common because they can be identified by a common characteristic they share. A status group exists of a grouping of individuals who see each other as equals, but look down on other social groups. A party is a self-conscious organization that struggles for power and wants to maximise it by working out its objectives.

Lastly, a comparative analysis was also made between Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Immanuel Kant, and Max Weber and the practical application of the different theories with regard to this study were looked at.

In Chapter 3 a literature study will be done about the nature of conflict in companies and organizations, and ways to manage the conflict. I will discuss management techniques, tactics, different types of conflict, like interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, and intragroup conflict, and models. I will discuss the Conflict Process Model of Robbins, Thomas-Kilmann's Two-dimensional Conflict Model that describes ways to handle conflict, the Conflict Handling Model of Rahim, and Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid for handling conflict.

CHAPTER 3

THE NATURE OF CONFLICT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 the theories of conflict of Marx and Weber were discussed and the philosophies that influenced their theories. In this Chapter, models and literature studies of the nature of conflict in an organization and ways to manage it, will be discussed.

The “New” Organizational Model, will also be discussed, because companies are continuously changing and it is therefore important to take note of the characteristics of today's companies, before discussing conflict.

Secondly, the background of conflict will be discussed, by looking at the different views of the different schools of conflict. Then conflict in general will be discussed.

Lastly conflict will be looked at in more detail by discussing different types of conflict and ways to manage these various types, e.g. interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict and intragroup conflict.

Before the “New” Organizational Model is discussed, the following are important: The Engineering Company where research was done, has 450 personnel with job-levels 5 to 1. Job-level 1 is the highest job-level and job-level 5 is the lowest. This Engineering Company does engineering work for gold mines.

3.2 THE “NEW” ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

According to Moss Kanter (quoted by Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1, 22), the nature of the work of managers is changing so much that hierarchy is fading away and the distinctions of title, task, department and company are blurring. In the “New” Organizational Model the organization is defined by five interacting features, namely “networked”, “flat”, “flexible”, “diverse” and “global” (Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1, 13). The following paragraphs explain the five features, and is of great importance before conflict will be discussed in more detail. See (point 1.3.1).

3.2.1 A “networked” Company

To understand what a “networked” company is, it is important to look at the following aspects that define a networked company (Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1, 13):

In a “networked” company teams are very important, because in teamwork - in other words people working and interacting together - a company will go from strength to strength. Teams are formed when people in different departments come together and communicate with each other. Upward and downward communication is done efficiently in this manner (Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1, 13). In view of the above, upward communication (communication from the lowest job-level to the highest job-level) and downward communication (communication from the highest job-level to the lowest job-level) are very important, because without clear communication misunderstanding and conflict may readily occur. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about communication according to Marx.

3.2.2 A “flat” Company

In the 21st century companies are much leaner and flatter, (several layers of the organizational structure have been removed), for example companies like IBM and Toyota removed several layers of middle management, therefore reducing their workforce. By doing this, productivity have improved. In a “flat” company, workers at the front of the company, (workers at the lowest job-levels), can also make decisions (Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1, 14). It is good to involve workers at all job-levels, and to allow them to make certain decisions, because lack of involvement may breed alienation that may lead to frustration, aggression and conflict. See Chapter 2 (page 24), about alienation according to Marx.

3.2.3 A “flexible” Company

It is difficult for most companies to rely on structures, routines and rigid rules of the “old” organizational models, like the bureaucracy and formal organizations. Nowadays, companies respond better and faster to the needs of stakeholders, customers and workers (Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1, 14). To rely only on structures, routines and rigid rules, may cause slower actions and slower progress. This in turn, may also produce frustrations that may lead to conflict. A balance of structure, routines, rules and standards, however, are also important so that there

will be order in the company. Without order there definitely will be chaos and conflict. See Chapter 2 (page 32), about bureaucracy according to Weber.

3.2.4 A “diverse” Company

Companies that are diversified in nature, benefit from the following (Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1, 15):

The workforce becomes even more diverse (greater ethnic diversity, more women, more international scope), and with such diverse workers, greater innovation and creative approaches are achieved to solve problems. In diversity, but in a spirit of unity despite the diversity, there are better ideas and skills to handle conflict. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about National unity according to Marx.

3.2.5 A “global” Company

In a “global” company its counterparts, (individual companies in different countries), interact more efficiently with each other than companies that are international. International companies are those companies that have little interdependence across their counterparts, (individual companies), in other countries (Ancona *et al.*, 2005:M1.15). Truly, better interaction will produce fewer misunderstanding and much less conflict. Problems will be identified much quicker and actions to cope or counteract, will be carried out much sooner. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about communication according to Marx.

3.3 DIFFERENT VIEWS OF CONFLICT

Different views of conflict are discussed in order to show how differently conflict is, and was, managed. These views are important to the discussion, because it gives background detail on how conflict was managed, and how it may be managed in our present day.

Different views of conflict existed in the following years: The traditional view existed from 1930-1940, the behavioural view existed from 1949-1975, and the interactionist view originated in 1976, and still exists today (Robbins, 2003:396). The different beliefs and reactions to conflict according to the different views are now going to be discussed.

3.3.1 The Traditional View

Managers believed that it was not necessary for conflict to occur, because conflict could do much harm. Should conflict arise, it was seen as personal failure, and therefore they feared conflict. The managers would try to stop conflict immediately by removing all evidence thereof, also including the people that were responsible (Plunkett *et al.*, 2005:506).

3.3.2 The Behavioural View

These managers believed that conflict would be present on a regular basis and that conflict could be positive, but that it was more likely for conflict to be harmful. They also believed that conflict might have good or positive outcomes, but that it was, however, more likely that conflict would have negative outcomes. The managers therefore tried to resolve, or eliminate conflict immediately. They acted immediately and implemented solutions that resolved the conflict (Plunkett *et al.*, 2005:506).

3.3.3 The Interactionist View

These managers believe that conflict is inevitable, but necessary for a company's health. Conflict is neither inherently good nor bad. Dysfunctional conflict inhibits a company to achieve its objectives, but functional conflict is in the interest of a company, because it can support the objectives of a company. Therefore, managers will try to manage conflict in such a way as to maximize the positive and minimize the negative (Plunkett *et al.*, 2005:506).

3.4 CONFLICT IN GENERAL

Under conflict in general, social power, sources of power, antecedents of conflict, teamwork tactics to prevent conflict, functional and dysfunctional conflict, the Conflict Process Model of Robbins, and techniques to stimulate functional conflict, will be discussed. In Chapter 2 it was seen that Max Weber viewed society as a struggle for power which may lead to conflict. Therefore I think it fit to discuss the views on *power* shortly.

3.4.1 Social Power

The struggle for power may produce conflict. There are two types of power, namely socialized power and personalized power. Some people in an organization may struggle for socialized power, so that they can help others and some people in the organization may struggle for personalized power, in order to help themselves (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:564). There are seven bases of power, namely reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, expert power, referent power, connection power, and information power (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:565; Hersey *et al.*, 1996:243-244). These seven bases of power will now be looked at. See Chapter 2 (point 2.2.8), about power according to Weber.

Reward power: Some managers and or workers in a company may use reward power by promising rewards and thereby getting compliance from others (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:565). Reward power may reinforce good behaviour, because people will try to continuously improve their behaviour when the manager wants them to improve their work in order to get a reward. Improvement in worker's behaviour and productivity will surely reduce previous bad behaviour that usually would have led to conflict.

Coercive power: Some individuals in the company may use coercive power by threatening others with punishment in order to get compliance (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:565). Coercive power, (using threats of punishment for bad behaviour), might reduce conflict, but reward power will be more effective, because people will most likely respond better to rewards offered, and may resent punishment.

Legitimate power: Other individuals may use legitimate power in order to obtain compliance through formal authority (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:565). Legitimate power is necessary to serve as a structure in an organisation. Without structure there will not be order, and without order there will be conflict.

Expert power: Some managers in the company may use expert power in order to obtain compliance through the knowledge or information they have (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:565). A manager with expert power can obtain compliance from workers and therefore manage conflict well, because the manager has expert knowledge and information how to obtain compliance and how to manage conflict.

Referent power: When an individual has a charismatic personality or is attractive, he can obtain compliance from others. Role models, for example, have this type of power over others, because they identify themselves with the role model (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:565). A person with referent power can serve as a role model in how to display behaviour that will not lead to conflict, because others will want to identify themselves with the role model and follow he's lead.

Connection power: When a manager associates with influential people or organizations, he has some kind of connection power (Hersey *et al.*, 2001:210). He uses this power to gain compliance from the workers, because the workers will try to avoid punishment, or gain rewards through the powerful connection that exists (Hersey *et al.*, 1996:243). A manager who has connection power can manage conflict well, because the workers will try hard to obey him/her.

Information power: Workers wait for the manager to give them information when they have to maintain or improve performance. With this power, managers can influence workers who are willing and have abilities (Hersey *et al.*, 1996:243-244). A manager can use information power to see that things are done orderly in the organization. Where there is order, conflict will also be under control.

Sources of conflict will be discussed next, because it is important to know and understand what causes conflict so that in our understanding of the nature of conflict, some workable solutions might come up.

3.4.2 Sources of Conflict

Firstly, it is important to know what the sources of conflict are. (what causes conflict, what sources are responsible for the origination of conflict). before conflict itself will be discussed in more detail. After discussing the origination of conflict, the nature of conflict will be discussed. Sources of conflict can also be interpreted as prerequisites for conflict. In Chapter 2 the prerequisites for conflict according to Marx and Weber were discussed.

Common causes of conflict are differences in personalities, interests, values, expectations, goals, perceptions, culture, education, deficient information, ambiguity, competition over

scarce resources, and group interdependence (Osland *et al.*, 2001:246). Ambiguity, a struggle between different values or interests, are prerequisites for conflict in Max Weber's model. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.2), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Weber.

Organizational Conflict: This type of conflict usually originates from a difference in what the organizational culture expects how workers should do things, and what the mission and value statements of the organization, expects of workers how they are supposed to do things (Diversity Resources, 2005).

Vertical Conflict: It takes place between hierarchical levels when supervisors and subordinates disagree over performance results, deadlines, goals and resources (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:314). A struggle over scarce resources between two classes is one of Marx's prerequisites for conflict. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Marx.

Horizontal Conflict: It takes place at the same hierarchical level between persons or groups over scarce resources, interpersonal factors and goal incompatibilities (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:314). A struggle over scarce resources is a prerequisite for conflict in Marx's model. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Marx.

Line-staff Conflict: It occurs when there is disagreement over authority and control over personnel selection and termination practices. Line-staff conflict is also a variation of horizontal conflict (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:314).

Interest-Based Conflict: This type of conflict originates from clashes between different functions, departments and units, because the opposing parties have different styles, priorities and needs, for example different departments may clash over a deadline they must meet (Diversity Resources, 2005). Marx also viewed conflict as a struggle between two classes. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Marx.

Informational Conflict: It originates from communication channels that are not efficiently designed. For example, workers may be uncertain how to implement new regulations, groups must interpret information themselves, and managers or supervisors withhold information to maintain their power and influence over others (Diversity Resources, 2005). Max Weber's

viewpoint of the struggle for power may also be applied here. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.2), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Weber.

Cultural Conflict: Cultural conflict may originate from a difference in racial, ethnic and gender perspectives, or different styles of communication (Diversity Resources, 2005). Inadequate communication is a prerequisite for conflict in Marx's model. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Marx.

Competition: With regard to rewards associated with performance, competition may produce conflict, as well as competition over scarce resources, like materials, equipment, personnel, and money (Plunkett *et al.*, 2005:506-507). Marx and Weber also talked about competition as a prerequisite for conflict. See Chapter 2 (points 2.3.1-2.3.2), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Marx and Weber.

Communication: Breakdowns in communication may result in misunderstandings. Sometimes a receiver do not listen very well and misunderstands the sender. The result is disagreement about goals, roles, or intentions (Plunkett *et al.*, 2005:506-508). Karl Marx said that better communication technology could help the suppressed class in their fight for freedom. See Chapter 2 (point 2.3.1), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Marx.

Under 3.4.3 the antecedents of conflict will be discussed, because it is important for a manager to know more about the antecedents of conflict, in order to anticipate warning signs of conflict.

3.4.3 Antecedents of Conflict

The following antecedents can help a manager to anticipate conflict, before a situation gets out of hand (Filley, 1975:9-12; Fortado 1992:288-303): Also see Chapter 2 (points 2.3.1 and 2.3.2), about the prerequisites of conflict according to Marx and Weber.

- ◆ Conflicts that are suppressed or unresolved.
- ◆ Employees whose expectations are unrealistic.
- ◆ When consensus is used to make decisions.

- ◆ Too many participants in the decision-making process can increase the potential for conflict to erupt.
- ◆ When deadlines are unreasonable, or when time limits cause pressure.
- ◆ When rules, standards, and or policies are unreasonable or unclear.
- ◆ When the hierarchical structure of an organization or company becomes too complex.
- ◆ When different people must work interdependently on assignments.
- ◆ When communication is not clear.
- ◆ Competition between different groups.
- ◆ Competition for limited resources.
- ◆ When job boundaries are unclear or overlap.
- ◆ Incompatible personalities or value systems.

Next teamwork tactics to prevent conflict will be discussed, because in most modern companies teams exist that are comprised out of individuals across departments.

3.4.4 Teamwork Tactics to Prevent Conflict

Table 3.1 is about tactics that can be used by teams in a company so that problems can be handled more efficiently. Conflict can be minimized or prevented if teams follow the criteria in this table.

Table 3.1 is a very helpful tool for teams in a company to prevent conflict effectively:

Just by following the seven steps, namely “Whose problem is it?”, “Do I have time to involve others?”, “Do I have the competency to make the decision/s?”, “Is synergy possible?”, “What is the impact on the rest of the team?”, “Do I need involvement and commitment of others?” and, “Is there development potential for others?”, it may serve as guidelines in difficult situations when teams do not know what to do.

There are seven steps in the table and each step has its own criteria. The criteria in step one can be interpreted in the following manner (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254):

- ◆ 1/0 means that one person in the team must handle the problem.
- ◆ 1/1 means that one person or two persons must handle the problem.
- ◆ 1/all (1/some also) means that all team members must handle the problem.

The criteria in step two can be interpreted as follows (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254):

- ◆ 1/0 means that one person must handle the problem, because time is too short to involve someone else.
- ◆ 1/1 means that there is just enough time to involve one person in handling the problem.
- ◆ 1/all (1/some) means that there is enough time available to involve several team members to handle the problem.

Step three ascertains if a supervisor has the competency to make a decision and the criteria can be interpreted as follows (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254):

- ◆ 1/0 means that a supervisor can make a decision on his own.
- ◆ 1/1 means that the supervisor involves someone else to help with the decision-making.
- ◆ 1/all (1/some) means that every member of the team must help with the decision-making.

In step four it is asked if synergy is possible and the criteria is as follows (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254):

- ◆ 1/0 means that if no members can contribute in studying or reviewing a problem, then synergy is not possible.
- ◆ 1/1 means that just one person can contribute in studying or reviewing the problem.
- ◆ 1/all (1/some) means that all members can contribute in studying or reviewing the problem.

In step five we look at what the impact on the rest of the team is and the criteria may be interpreted as follows (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254):

- ◆ a 1/0 action means that when action must be taken to solve a problem and the problem has a low impact on the rest of the team, no action need be taken to solve the problem.
- ◆ a 1/1 action means that when action must be taken to solve the problem and the problem has a low impact on the rest of the team, one person in the team must solve the problem.
- ◆ 1/all (1/some) means that the problem has a high impact on all team members and they must all solve the problem together as a team.

Step six is about the question of a person in need of involvement and commitment from others. Here are the criteria (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254):

- ◆ 1/0 means that if no one is involved in the decision-making process, then no action must be taken.
- ◆ 1/1 means that if one person is affected by the decision-making, then a face to face discussion is needed.
- ◆ 1/all (1/some) means that when the decision-making affects the whole team, then all the team members should discuss the pros and cons.

Step seven is about the development potential for others. The criteria is interpreted as follows (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254):

- ◆ 1/0 means that no action should be taken when a problem has no development implications.
- ◆ 1/1 means that it is possible to take action when a problem has development implications for one person.
- ◆ 1/all (1/some) means that "yes", action must be taken when a problem has development implications for all team members.

<p>1. Criteria 1/0 if: mine; 1/1 if: his or hers or both of us; 1/all if (1/some also): ours</p>	<p>Whose problem is it?: When a person says that he can handle the problem, then the problem calls for a 1/0 action. If the person can't handle the problem then the problem calls for a 1/1 action. If every person in the team need to have a part in handling the problem, then it calls for a 1/all action.</p>
<p>2. Criteria 1/0 if: unavailable; 1/1 if: available; 1/all if (1/some also): available</p>	<p>Do I have time to involve others?: If time is too short to involve somebody else, then it calls for a 1/0 action. If it is good to consult others, but there is just enough time available to consult one person, then it calls for a 1/1 action. If there is enough time to involve several people, then it calls for a 1/some or a 1/all action.</p>
<p>3. Criteria 1/0 if: full; 1/1 if: low; 1/all if (1/some also): insufficient</p>	<p>Do I have the competency to make the decision?: If a supervisor has enough experience to carry out sound judgment then it is done in a 1/0 action. If supervisor doesn't have enough experience with a problem, then it calls for a 1/1 action where another person is needed to help out. If everyone in the team is needed for sound judgment, then a 1/all action must be taken.</p>
<p>4. Criteria 1/0 if: not possible; 1/1 if: possible; 1/all if (1/some also): possible</p>	<p>Is synergy possible?: When all members in the team are needed to contribute in studying or reviewing a problem, the leader hears each one's opinions. If synergy can't be reached, then it calls for a 1/0 action and if just one member can make a contribution, then it calls for a 1/1 action.</p>
<p>5. Criteria 1/0 if: low; 1/1 if: low; 1/all if (1/some also): high</p>	<p>What is the impact on the rest of the team?: If the action has no team implications beyond one member alone, unless he or she does not solve the problem, a 1/0 action should be taken. If it has far reaching operational significance, then all team members should understand the issues.</p>
<p>6. Criteria 1/0 if: no significance; 1/1 if: helpful-essential; 1/all if (1/some also): necessary-essential</p>	<p>Do I need involvement and commitment of others?: It is necessary to understand the problem and its solution so that those who must implement the decision will accept it. If others aren't involved, then a 1/0 action is good. If it affects one person, then discussion in a 1/1 way is good. When the action affects the team, the pros and cons should be discussed.</p>
<p>7. Criteria 1/0 if: none; 1/1 if: possible; 1/all if (1/some also): yes</p>	<p>Is there development potential for others?: The participation of team members to analyze managerial issues help them to gain knowledge and improve judgment in dealing with future problems like these. A 1/0 action should be taken when a problem has no management development implications. A 1/1 action is good when a problem has management development implications for just one person. A 1/all action is good when a problem has management implications for all team members.</p>

Table 3.1: Teamwork Tactics (Blake *et al.*, 1991:250-254). Adapted version.

Next, functional and dysfunctional conflict will be discussed, because most modern companies follow the interactionist view of conflict.

3.4.5 Functional and Dysfunctional Conflict

Conflict may be functional or dysfunctional. Functional conflict may serve the interests of an organization and dysfunctional conflict may threaten the interests of an organization (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:487).

Functional and dysfunctional conflict describe the intensity of conflict. In the past, conflict was not viewed as functional, so the intensity of conflict could therefore not be described or measured. It is also important to apply theoretical insight to one of the research questions. "What level of intensity does personnel in the organization experience with regard to conflict?"

3.4.5.1 The Intensity of Conflict

Figure 3.1 shows that conflict at a moderate intensity is necessary for a company to have a positive outcome.

Figure 3.1 can be interpreted as follows: When there is too little conflict in an organization, the outcome may be neutral or negative/dysfunctional, because it will lead to apathy, lack of creativity, indecision and missed deadlines. When there is too much conflict in an organization, the outcome will also be negative/dysfunctional, because it will lead to political infighting, dissatisfaction, lack of teamwork and low turnover (Osland *et al.*, 2001:247).

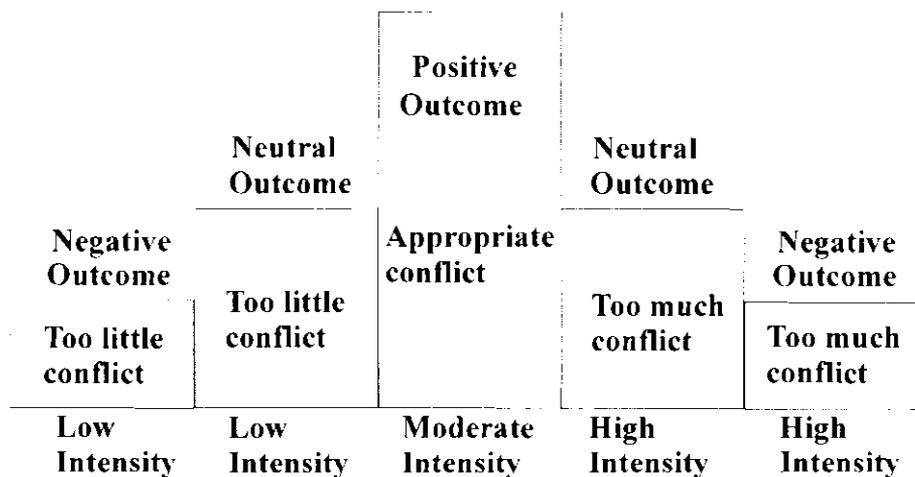


Figure 3.1: The Intensity of Conflict (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:312). Adapted version.

The Conflict Process Model of Robbins will be discussed now to get an overview of the process of conflict, the types of conflict, and ways to manage it.

3.4.6 The Conflict Process Model of Robbins

The Conflict Process Model of Robbins is important, because we need a general overview of the conflict process first, before the essence of conflict can be discussed in more detail.

Robbins studied the process of conflict and divided it into five stages. This short discussion of the conflict process aims to enlighten a manager or supervisor about the sources of conflict (stage 1); when the sources of conflict may lead to serious conflict (stage 2); different intentions persons may have that is explained by using the different modes of conflict of the Thomas-Kilmann Model (stage3); conflicting behaviour and ways to manage it (stage 4); and the outcomes of the conflict process, dysfunctional or functional (stage 5).

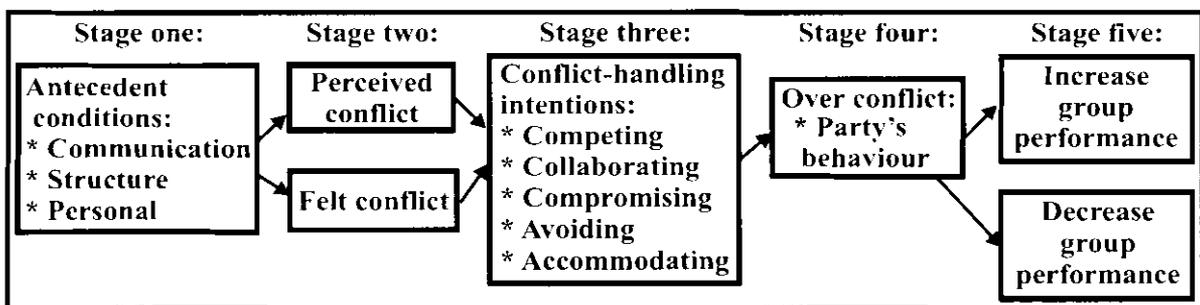


Figure 3.2: The Conflict Process (Robbins, 2005:424).

3.4.6.1 The First Stage in Figure 3.2: Potential Opposition or Incompatibility

Conditions/causes/sources of conflict (Robbins, 2005:424-426):

Communication: Semantic differences and misunderstandings may create opportunities for conflict. Poor communication is not the only source for conflicts. Semantic differences arise because of differences in training, selective perception, and insufficient information about others (Robbins, 2005:424-426).

Structure (degree of group interdependence; reward systems; leadership style; member-goal compatibility; specialisation degree of group members): The larger a group, the more specialised activities become, which may lead to conflict. Conflict is more likely to develop when group members are young. Increase in ambiguity leads to the likely increase in conflict development. Individuals and groups sometimes have different goals and this can lead to conflict. A close leadership style or a too participative leadership style may increase the potential for conflict. Group interdependence may also increase the potential for conflict (Robbins, 2005:424-426).

Personal Variables: Differences between individual value systems and personality characteristics may cause conflict. Highly authoritarian individuals with low self-esteem may cause conflict to develop (Robbins, 2005:424-426).

3.4.6.2 The Second Stage in Figure 3.2: Cognition and Personalisation

The conditions/sources/causes of conflict can only lead to conflict if different parties are affected by it and are aware of the conflict. In this stage the different parties decide what the conflict entails (Robbins, 2005:426-427).

3.4.6.3 The Third Stage in Figure 3.2: Intentions

Intentions intervene between people's perceptions and emotions and their overt behaviour. These intentions are decisions to act in a given way. This stage is important, because you have to infer the other's intent in order to know how to respond to his behaviour. Conflicts are often escalated because one party attributes the wrong intentions to the other (Thomas, 2002:5).

The following is the conflict modes of the Thomas-Kilmann Model that is used to describe the intentions of the third stage (Robbins, 2005:428-429):

Competing is assertive and unco-operative. A person pursues his own concerns at the cost of another. Here a person uses whatever power he can to retain his position. for example he may use his ability to argue, his rank, or economic sanctions (Robbins, 2005:428-429).

Accommodating is unassertive and co-operative. A person may want to satisfy another's concerns above his own, for example yielding to somebody else's point of view (Robbins, 2005:428-429).

Avoiding is unassertive and unco-operative. A person may not immediately pursue another's concerns or his own concerns. He avoids conflict diplomatically (Robbins, 2005:428-429).

Collaborating is both assertive and co-operative. A person tries to work with another so that both will find a solution that will satisfy their concerns (Robbins, 2005:428-429).

Compromising is intermediate in both assertiveness and co-operation. People try to find a solution that will mutually benefit both parties. Compromising might include seeking a middle ground, exchanging concessions, and splitting the differences (Robbins, 2005:428-429).

3.4.6.4 The Fourth Stage in Figure 3.2: Behaviour

This stage includes the reactions, actions and statements made by the conflicting parties. These conflict behaviours are usually overt attempts to implement each party's intentions. As a result of unskilled enactment, overt behaviours often deviate from the original intentions (Robbins, 2005:429).

Techniques to manage conflict during the fourth stage (Robbins, 2005:430):

- ◆ Meetings to solve problems between conflicting parties.
 - ◆ Every person's co-operation is needed to set goals.
 - ◆ Expanding the resources which create the conflict.
 - ◆ Avoiding or withdrawing the conflict.
 - ◆ Playing down differences while emphasising common interest.
 - ◆ Compromising.
 - ◆ Using formal authority to solve the conflict.
 - ◆ People must get training to alter their attitudes and behaviour.
 - ◆ By altering the structural variables.
-

3.4.6.5 The Fifth Stage in Figure 3.2: Outcomes

The outcomes of conflict may be functional or dysfunctional. Functional conflict is in the interest of a company, because it may improve performance. Dysfunctional conflict, however, is detrimental for a company (Robbins, 2005:430).

In the fifth stage of Robbins's Conflict Process Model, the outcomes may be functional or dysfunctional. Therefore some techniques to stimulate functional conflict that serves the interests of the company will be discussed.

3.4.7 Techniques for stimulating Functional Conflict

It is important to discuss techniques for stimulating functional conflict, because knowledge of the kind of techniques and how to use them, is helpful to an organization so that it may benefit from the conflict.

Programmed Conflict: Different opinions are encouraged without wanting to protect the management's personal feelings (Kreitner, 2004:496).

Groups or committees may sometimes be so pre-occupied in procedures that they accomplish nothing significantly. If functional conflict is carefully managed, it can help the participants to be inspired. Managers can thus make use of programmed conflict. There are two programmed conflict techniques, namely devil's advocacy and dialectic method, to help stimulate functional conflict (Kreitner, 2004:496-497).

3.4.7.1 Devil's Advocacy, a Technique for stimulating Functional Conflict

Devil's Advocacy: According to Ivancevich *et al.* (2005:371), devil's advocacy is "a form of programmed conflict in which someone or some group is assigned the role of critic, whose job it is to uncover all possible problems with a particular proposal".

This technique originally existed in the Roman Catholic Church where it was necessary to evaluate someone on the grounds of a good record to determine if the person was worthy to be canonized. To evaluate a person, someone was given the role of critique (Kreitner, 2004:497).

A Devil's Advocate Programme:

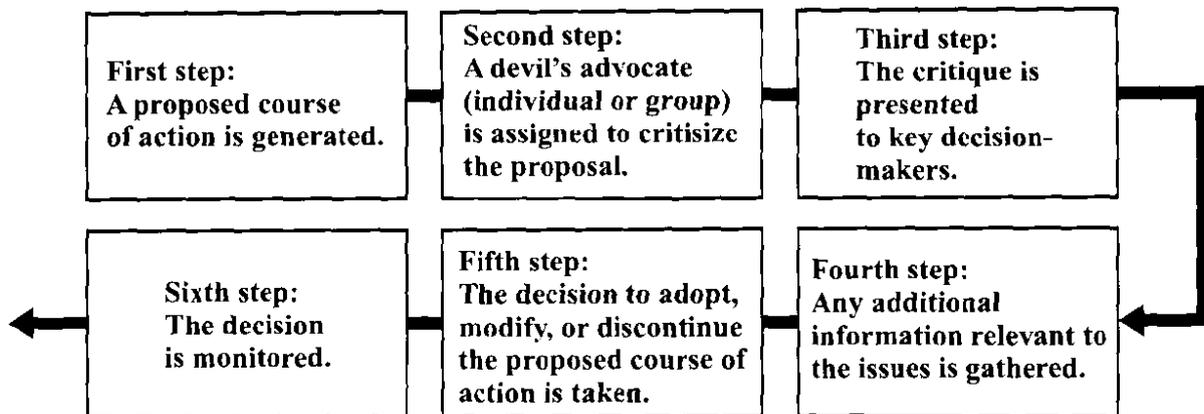


Figure 3.3(a): Technique One for stimulating Functional Conflict (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73). Adapted version.

The interpretation of Figure 3.3(a), A devil's Advocate Programme, is as follows:

First step: A proposed course of action is generated: When conflict is present, team members discuss the situation and out of the discussion, a proposed course of action is generated (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Second step: A devil's advocate is assigned to criticize the proposal: Team members, or one team member, may give their opinions on the proposed course of action and say what they think (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Third step: The critique is presented to key decision-makers: Team members must compile their opinions on the proposed course of action, and give it to the important persons involved in the decision-making (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Fourth step: Any additional information relevant to the issues is gathered: The key decision-makers will also search for other information that will apply to the current issues (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Fifth step: The decision to adopt, modify, or discontinue the proposed course of action, is taken: The key decision-makers decide whether they must carry out the proposed course of action, adapt the action, or not to take action (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Sixth step: The decision is monitored: When a decision is made, the decision will continuously be checked in order to see how things are going (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

In Figure 3.3(a) the following can be deduced:

In Step 1 when there is conflict, a solution must be found. In Step 2 the solutions are criticized. In Step 3 important decision-makers must look at the critique. In Step 4 any additional information that may help with decision-making is gathered. In Step 5 it is decided what to do regarding the action to be taken. In Step 6 the decision is monitored in order to see how the solution to the conflict progresses.

3.4.7.2 Dialectic Method, a Technique for stimulating Functional Conflict

Dialectic Method: In order to increase understanding of an issue, a debate of opposing viewpoints must be fostered (Kreitner, 2004:497).

The Dialectic Method originally existed in the dialectic school of philosophy in ancient Greece. More training is necessary to use the dialectic method than using the devil's advocacy technique. The dialectic method may lose focus on the issue at hand, because it concentrates on winning the debate (Kreitner, 2004:497).

The Dialectic Decision Method:

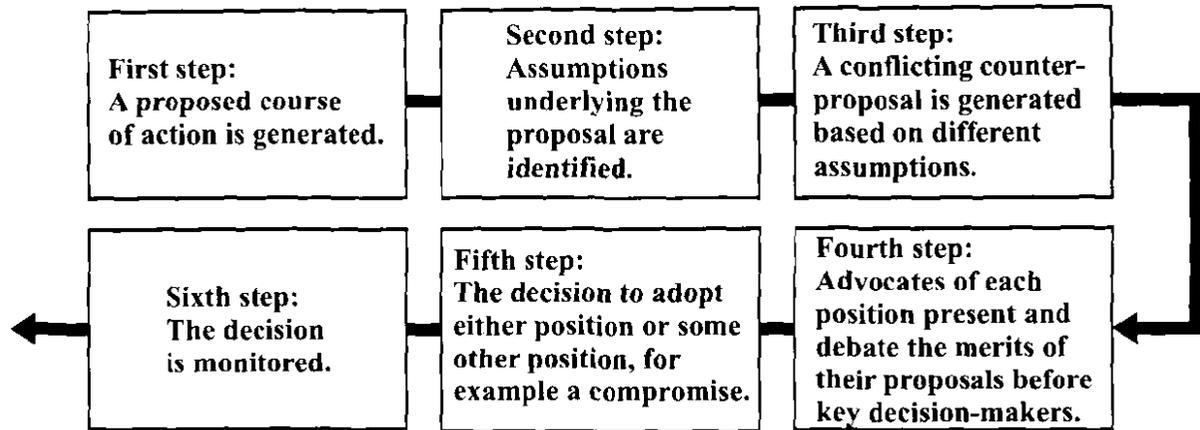


Figure 3.3(b): Technique Two for stimulating Functional Conflict (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73). Adapted version.

The interpretation of Figure 3.3(b), The Dialectic Decision Method, is as follows:

First step: A proposed course of action is generated: When conflict is present, team members discuss the situation and out of the discussion, a proposed course of action is generated (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Second step: Assumptions underlying the proposal are identified: The team members must assume, (must accept the assumptions of the underlying proposal to be true for the sake of argument), (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Third step: A conflicting counter-proposal is generated, based on different assumptions: Team members must generate a counter-proposed course of action that is based on assumptions, different from the assumptions of the first proposed course of action (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Fourth step: Advocates of each position present and debate the merits of their proposals before key decision-makers: Here are now two teams. The first team represents the first proposed course of action, and the second team represents the counter-proposed course of action (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Fifth step: The decision to adopt either position, or some other position, e.g. a compromise, is taken: Key decision-makers must decide which proposed course of action they must carry out, if they should carry out another course of action, or if they should make a compromise between the two proposed courses of action (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

Sixth step: The decision is monitored: When a decision is made, the decision will continuously be checked in order to see how things are going (Cosier & Schwenk, 1990:72-73).

In Figure 3.3(b) the following can be deduced:

In Step 1 when there is conflict, a solution must be found. In Step 2 solutions are assumed regarding the conflict. In Step 3 counter assumptions about the conflict are formed. In Step 4 advocates of the different parties debate their views on the conflict situation. In Step 5 it is decided what to do regarding the action to be taken. In Step 6 the decision is monitored in order to see how the solution to the conflict progresses.

Different types of conflict that may be prevalent in an organization and the management of each conflict type, will now be discussed. The different types of conflict are important, because it gives a clear analysis of what theory says about the nature of conflict within an organization.

3.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONFLICT

The following types of conflict, namely interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict and intragroup conflict, will therefore be looked at, because it may give insight into the characteristics of conflict in an organization, how to identify the conflict type in an organization, and hints or ways to manage it.

3.5.1 Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict is one of the conflict types that occurs the most in companies. Some interpersonal conflict situations, for example personality conflict, may lead to lawsuits. There are numerous definitions of interpersonal conflict, but I will present only three for discussion:

Interpersonal conflict: It is conflict that occurs between two or more people. It can arise from differences in perceptions, values, attitudes and personalities (Nelson & Quick, 2005:287).

Interpersonal conflict: Conflict is "a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has frustrated, or is about to frustrate, one or more of their concerns". It commonly occurs between two or more people (Pierce *et al.*, 2002:553).

Personality conflict: It occurs when someone disagrees or personally dislikes another, resulting in interpersonal opposition (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:490).

The origins of personality conflict (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:490):

Workplace incivility: Personality conflicts may occur when one person do something insignificant over and over again that irritates another person, or as stated in a previous definition, when two persons disagree with each other (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:490).

The following is an example: A worker at an organization interrupts a co-worker and a manager by tapping the manager on his back, because he disagrees with the manager. The manager gets irritated by being tapped on the back and he is also irritated because the worker disagrees with him. This situation and other situations alike may cause conflict.

3.5.2 Interpersonal Conflict Model

We can take the theories of Hippocrates (400 BC) of the four basic temperaments, namely the Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholy and Phlegmatic, and built a model of interpersonal conflict.

Temperaments may vary according to degrees. There exists twelve blends of the four basic temperaments. A person may also be 60 percent sanguine and 40 percent melancholy. Some persons may also be a blend of two to four of the basic temperaments, for example a person may be 50 percent sanguine, 30 percent choleric, 15 percent melancholy and 5 percent phlegmatic. It is not possible to determine ratios of a person's temperament, but a person's basic or predominant temperament type can be determined. Figure 3.4 will focus on the four basic temperament types, and the twelve blends of the four basic temperaments will only be mentioned shortly.

Figure 3.4 can be explained as follows (LaHaye, 1977:13):

There are four basic temperament types, namely the Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholy and Phlegmatic. There also exists twelve blends of the four basic temperaments that are discussed below.

- ◆ SanChlor: It is when a person has a temperament blend that exists out of the Sanguine temperament and the Choleric temperament. The San is mentioned before the Chlor, because the person has a bigger percentage of the Sanguine temperament than he has of the Choleric temperament.
 - ◆ SanMel: In this blend the person has Sanguine and Melancholy traits, but he is more of a Sanguine than a Melancholy.
 - ◆ SanPhleg: Here the extrovert Sanguine also has a percentage of Phlegmatic introvert traits, but he is more of an extrovert than an introvert.
 - ◆ ChlorSan: The ChlorSan is more Choleric than Sanguine.
 - ◆ ChlorMel: Here the person is more of a Choleric extrovert than a Melancholy introvert.
 - ◆ ChlorPhleg: Any temperament blend can exist out of different percentages of the two temperament types, for example a person may be 75% Choleric and 25% Phlegmatic.
 - ◆ MelSan: The Melancholy Sanguine is an introvert with Sanguine traits.
 - ◆ MelChlor: The Melancholy Choleric has Melancholy traits together with some Choleric traits.
 - ◆ MelPhleg: This temperament blend is a mixture of both introvert temperaments, namely the Melancholy and the Phlegmatic.
 - ◆ PhlegSan: This person is a Phlegmatic introvert with extrovert traits.
 - ◆ PhlegChlor: The Phlegmatic person also has traits of the Choleric temperament.
 - ◆ PhlegMel: This is a mixture of the two introvert temperaments, but the person is more of a Phlegmatic than a Melancholy.
-

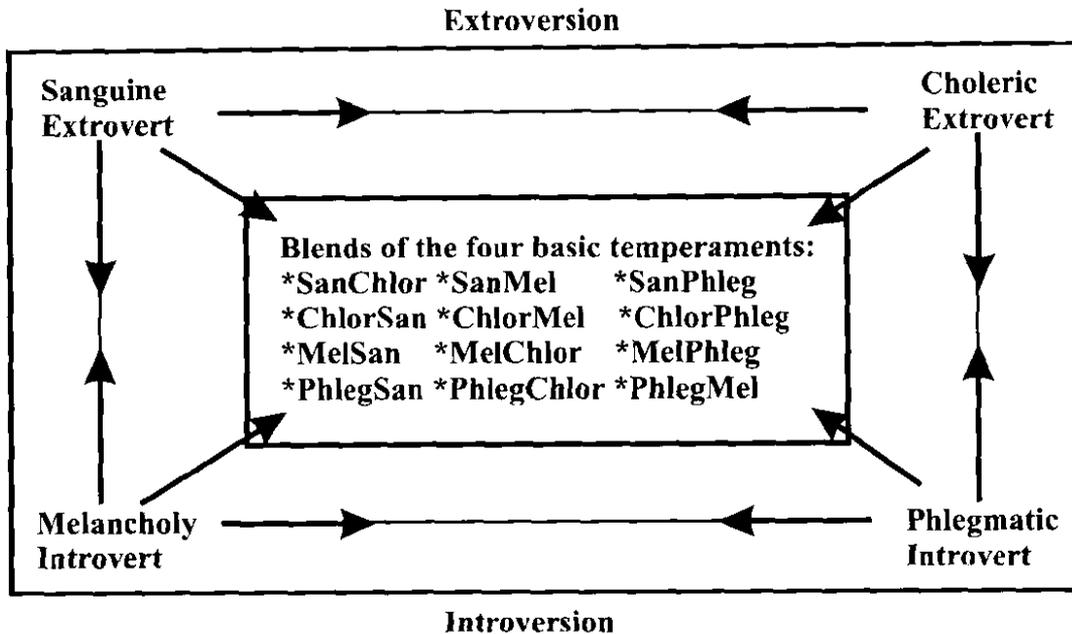


Figure 3.4: Interpersonal Conflict Model based on (LaHaye, 1972:10-42; LaHaye, 1977:13-48).

3.5.2.1 Traits of the Sanguine (Greek for blood)

He is friendly; talkative; not a very good listener; is everyone's best friend; wants to be the centre of attention; is loud; acts on impulse and thinks later; wants to please others; after he is punished he can easily change into a cheerful mood; enjoys life; lives in the present and easily forgets the past; enjoys being around people; is a giver; responds to other's needs; is impractical and disorganized; is weak-willed and undisciplined (he starts something, but never finishes it); can dominate a conversation; gets discouraged easily and feels sorry for himself; his warm nature can produce spontaneous anger and he readily apologizes and says he is sorry; forms his decisions by predominant feelings rather than by reflective thoughts; is an extrovert and occasionally a good leader (LaHaye, 1972:24-25).

3.5.2.2 Sanguine traits that might cause interpersonal conflict (LaHaye, 1972:24-25):

Talkative and not a very good listener: The Sanguine might miss what another person is saying, or he might not listen to a conversation but wants to overrule it. The other person may become very frustrated and it may lead to anger and personality clashes (LaHaye, 1972:24-25).

Acts on impulse and think later: He might do something rash and not think about the problematic consequences that may affect another person negatively. This might produce personality conflict (LaHaye, 1972:24-25).

Impractical and disorganized: It might irritate a person who is practical and organized and it might produce interpersonal conflict, because such a person may find it difficult to work with him (LaHaye, 1972:24-25).

Starts something and never finishes it: A person who has put his heart into a project might get upset with him and it might produce interpersonal opposition (LaHaye, 1972:24-25).

Easily gets discouraged and feels sorry for himself: When there is too much work pressure, another person might not respond well to a Sanguine getting discouraged and feeling sorry for himself. This resentment may produce conflict (LaHaye, 1972:24-25).

Because the warm nature of a Sanguine can produce spontaneous anger, another person might respond back with anger and it might produce interpersonal opposition (LaHaye, 1972:24-25).

3.5.2.3 Traits of the Choleric (Greek for yellow bile)

He has strong determination for succeeding; details bore him - so he is not an analyst, but he can easily appraise a situation and diagnose the most practical solution; his forceful will tends to dominate a group; he is a good judge of people and is quick and bold in emergencies; he will leave a secure position for the challenge of the unknown; he becomes angry and holds a grudge against those who have wronged him; he can run over other's feelings and do anything to succeed; his ability to be decisive also produces an impetuous tendency that causes him to get into trouble and launch programs that he later regrets; he finds it difficult to apologize; he is proud and stubborn; independence and self-confidence makes him self-sufficient; when he had been successful, he becomes proud and domineering and other people think they can never please him; he is not always concerned about pleasing people; he will say what he thinks; his speech is blunt and sarcastic, and he has a strong will; he quickly recognizes opportunities (he is an opportunist); he may work towards a goal without seeing the potential

obstacles in his way; he does not sympathize or express compassion naturally; he uses people; he is an extrovert and a strong leader (LaHaye, 1972:26-27).

3.5.2.4 Choleric traits that might cause interpersonal conflict (LaHaye, 1972:26-27):

The Choleric's strong will to succeed might produce personality conflict, because he will use a person and walk over his feelings in order to attain his objectives (LaHaye, 1972:26-27).

Another person might not like the domination of a Choleric, because he might resent to do exactly what he is told. This resentment might produce hostility, anger and eventually conflict (LaHaye, 1972:26-27).

The Choleric might clash with another person who has wronged him, although it might not have been intentional (LaHaye, 1972:26-27).

Because the Choleric is proud, stubborn and finds it difficult to apologize to others, the interpersonal conflict might be left unresolved (LaHaye, 1972:26-27).

The Choleric is sarcastic and does not sympathize with others. Another person might view him as cold and unfeeling, and this might lead to resentment and interpersonal opposition (LaHaye, 1972:26-27).

3.5.2.5 Traits of the Melancholy (Greek for black bile)

He has appreciation for life's true values; he has a brilliant mind; he is creative and a deep thinker; his sensitive nature is affected by what his attitude towards others is, or what he thinks other's attitudes towards him are; he blames others when he makes mistakes; he is a perfectionist and cannot handle criticism; he has high standards of acceptability and it is often higher than he or any other person can maintain; he can analyze a project in detail and highlight the potential problems; he is a faithful and dependable friend; he is self-sacrificing; he is reserved; he rarely volunteers his opinion or ideas; he is pessimistic; he is revengeful; he can become suspicious and think others talk negatively about him; sometimes he feels gloomy or depressed; he is an introvert, but his mood swings may let him act more like an extrovert at times (LaHaye, 1972:27-29).

3.5.2.6 Melancholy traits that might cause interpersonal conflict (LaHaye, 1972:27-29):

Another person might get angry when he is blamed for mistakes he did not do, and he might personally attack the Melancholy (LaHaye, 1972:27-29).

When the standards of acceptability is too high, a person might become frustrated and hostile (LaHaye, 1972:27-29).

Because the Melancholy is revengeful, he might not easily forgive someone and therefore there might always be hostility that will breed potential conflict (LaHaye, 1972:27-29).

Because the Melancholy might become suspicious and think that another person talks negatively about him, it might cause misunderstandings and conflict (LaHaye, 1972:27-29).

3.5.2.7 Traits of the Phlegmatic (Greek for phlegm)

He is quiet and calm; he is easy-going; he is not too expressive; he is a spectator of life; he may be selfish; he is slow and lazy; he is stubborn; he is indecisive; he may tease others; in his teen years he is uninvolved with his peer group and activities; he has a dry sense of humour; it is easy for him to listen; he is a faithful and dependable friend; he is analytical and can find a practical way to reach an objective with the least amount of effort; his best work is done under pressure; his work is neat and efficient; although he is not a perfectionist he has a high standard of accuracy and precision; he is an introvert (LaHaye, 1972:29-30).

3.5.2.8 Phlegmatic traits that might cause interpersonal conflict (LaHaye, 1972:29-30):

The selfishness of a Phlegmatic might produce resentment in another person. When there is resentment, it might manifest in interpersonal clashes (LaHaye, 1972:29-30).

Because the Phlegmatic is not too expressive, it might cause misunderstandings. Misunderstandings might lead to misinterpretations. Misinterpretations might cause interpersonal conflict, because of unclear communication (LaHaye, 1972:29-30).

Another person might get frustrated and irritated when a Phlegmatic teases him. Small irritations might produce personality conflict (LaHaye, 1972:29-30).

A Phlegmatic is indecisive, slow, lazy and stubborn and it might work on an impatient person's nerves. Interpersonal conflict might be inevitable (LaHaye, 1972:29-30).

In short, this interpersonal conflict model is about the four basic temperament types of Hippocrates, namely the two extrovert temperaments Sanguine and Choleric, and the two introvert temperament types, the Melancholy and Phlegmatic. We have discussed each temperament's positive and negative traits and also which trait of each temperament might cause interpersonal conflict.

3.5.3 Managing Interpersonal Conflict

In this section, different guidelines to manage interpersonal conflict, a model to manage conflict (Blake and Mouton's leadership grid), and techniques to manage conflict, will be discussed.

3.5.3.1 Guidelines for resolving Personality Conflict

The following guidelines can be used to manage conflict when workers have a personality clash (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:491-492):

- ◆ One worker must communicate directly with the other worker and emphasize problem-solving to resolve the conflict.
 - Co-workers must not be dragged into the conflict.
 - The workers must get help from supervisors or human resource specialists if dysfunctional conflict is still prevalent.
 - ◆ Workplace etiquette-training and behaviour-shaping may help.
-

The following guidelines may be helpful for third-party observers of a personality conflict (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:491-492):

- ◆ A third-party observer must not choose sides when two other workers have a personality conflict.
- ◆ A third-party observer must make a suggestion that the two workers in conflict must deal with the situation in a positive and constructive way.
- ◆ If dysfunctional conflict is still there, the problems must be directed to the workers' supervisors.

Guidelines for managers when their employees are having personality clashes (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:491-492):

- ◆ The manager must investigate and document the conflict.
- ◆ He must take corrective action when it is appropriate.
- ◆ He must attempt informal dispute resolution if it is necessary.
- Difficult conflict must be referred to human resource specialists or counsellors.

3.5.3.2 Guidelines for resolving Interpersonal Conflict in general

According to Blake *et al.* (1991:255-256) when a manager is in conflict with a worker or a worker is in conflict with another worker, the following actions can be taken:

- The manager must influence the worker's manner of thinking in a way that he will not feel personally attacked.
 - ◆ The manager must take nothing for granted while listening to the worker's ideas and feelings. The supervisor must be frank in answering questions in order to avoid suspicions related to his position. The supervisor must ask questions so that the answers will provide a true understanding of the worker's attitudes.
 - ◆ When a manager and a worker has reached a shared understanding of the worker's needs, basic values and assumptions, then the worker can think of different courses of action to be taken.
-

- ◆ Investigate motives, causes and reasons that may give the worker a different perspective on the issue.
- ◆ The manager must test his and the worker's objectivity by using logic, data and counter-arguments.
- ◆ The manager must help the worker to explore the operational consequences of his preferred solution.
- ◆ The worker must help the supervisor to explore the supervisor's preferred solution. The manager must try to get an agreement in the discussion by staying persistent. The discussion must be concluded unilaterally when no resolution has been found.
- ◆ The manager must make sure that the outcome is deliberated in an open way. The outcome must not be predetermined, so that the worker can influence the outcome.
- ◆ The problem must be constantly redefined so that its solution will be made self-evident.

3.5.3.3 Blake and Mouton's Managerial/Leadership Grid for handling Conflict

Next, the conflict component of the Leadership Grid will be discussed, because this model became very popular during the sixties and have helped many organizations and companies in their organizational development process.

The Leadership Grid of Blake and Mouton is used, because it explains interpersonal conflict in terms of different leadership styles that have different conflict handling styles, and how each leadership style can improve their conflict handling style.

The Leadership Grid of Blake and Mouton is also of importance, because managers can see what their leadership style is and follow guidelines to improve on how they handle conflict. According to the problem statement, conflict exists as an external and internal element in a company. The grid addresses conflict internally, because it is about managers in a company who have different conflict handling styles.

The Grid has a conceptual frame of reference for guiding the organization development process through various conditions, like team building, interface conflict solving, ideal strategic corporate modelling, tactical implementation of the model, and stabilization (Yaeger, *et al.*, 1999).

According to the Illustrated Oxford Dictionary (1998:422), “interface” means that someone is interacting with another person. Interface conflict is synonymous with interpersonal conflict.

On the Grid, the horizontal axis represents concern for production and the vertical axis represents concern for people, and it is plotted on a two-dimensional plane (Blake *et al.*, 1989:7).

People with a concern for production focus on getting the job done. Other people are seen as a means to an end. Therefore meetings with other people are very brief (Syque, 2004).

People with a concern for other people, believes happy people will be motivated to do their work and they will think intelligently about the work. They believe that without close attention, people will get distracted, work slowly, and act inefficiently. With a minimum guidance they will plan, monitor and improve much of what they are doing (Syque, 2004).

Here follows a basic description of the five leadership styles and their conflict handling styles in Figure 3.5 (Syque, 2004):

The 9,1 leadership style has a high concern for production and a low concern for people, and its conflict handling style is suppression/forcing of conflict (Syque, 2004).

The 1,9 leadership style has a high concern for people and a low concern for production, and its conflict handling style smooths differences (Syque, 2004).

The 5,5 leadership style has a moderate concern for production and people, and its conflict handling style seeks a compromise (Syque, 2004).

The 1,1 leadership style has a low concern for production and people, and its conflict handling style is to stay neutral/withdraw/avoid conflict (Syque, 2004).

The 9,9 leadership style has a high concern for production and for people, and its conflict handling style is to confront the differences (Syque, 2004).

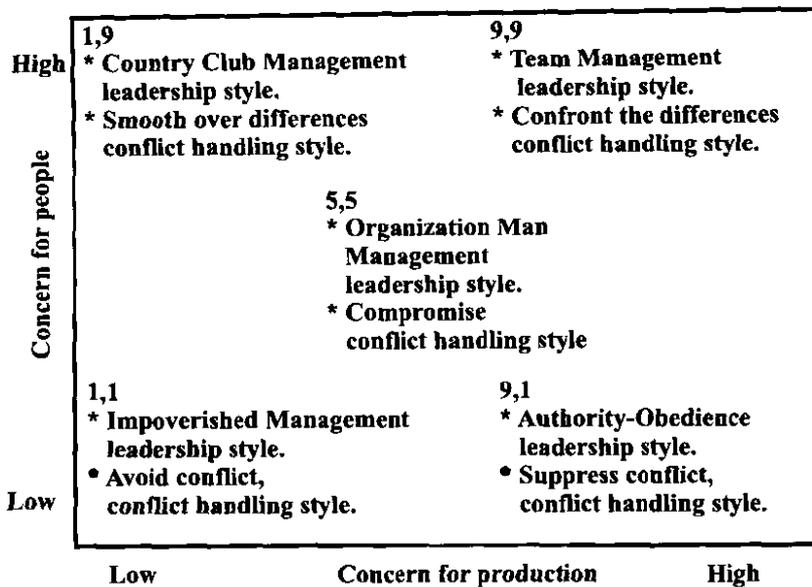


Figure 3.5: Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1989:46-54). Adapted version.

Preventing conflict under the 9,1 leadership style: The manager tries very hard to foresee that there will not be conflict. He tries to give very clear instructions so that there will be no misunderstandings and the worker must do what he is told. The supervisor views conflict as a win/lose situation and he likes to win (Blake & Mouton, 1985:21; Cornerly & Tripathi, 2004).

Handling conflict under the 9,1 leadership style: When conflict arises, the supervisor suppresses it by forcing his views on others. By forcing his views on others, he uses power to resolve differences. Suppression may produce lack of confidence in other workers and counter-attacks by the workers (Blake & Mouton, 1985:21-22; Vallejos, 2005).

Change suggestions for the 9,1 leadership style: The supervisor must take heed not to fight just to win an argument. He must listen to other's viewpoints before deciding that they are wrong. Suppressing the differences just causes resentment (Blake & Mouton, 1985:34).

Mental and physical health implications for the 9,1 leadership style: People may experience adverse stress that in turn may cause fatigue and depression, distrust and suspicion, hostility, negative feelings, suicide, migraine and heart attack. Depression may lead to passivity, isolation or alienation (Blake & Mouton, 1978:30-31). See Chapter 4 (point 4.9.2).

Preventing conflict under the 1,9 leadership style: This type of supervisor wants people to accept him, by staying in close contact with them. Conflict is avoided by not putting pressure on the worker. The supervisor avoids conflict in this way by smoothing over differences, but it may ensue in a loss of production and commitment on the part of the worker. The supervisor keeps his ideas to himself and he worries that workers can't deal with conflict without doing damage to a relationship (Blake & Mouton, 1985:37-38; Cornerly & Tripathi, 2004).

Handling conflict under the 1,9 leadership style: The supervisor may try to smooth the differences when conflict arises, for example the supervisor may show the worker how good things are compared to other things or problems. The supervisor may generalize so that everyone will agree. Smoothing over differences may preserve harmony and goodwill (Blake & Mouton, 1985:39; Vallejos, 2005).

Mental and physical health implications for the 1,9 leadership style: May experience hypochondria (abnormal anxiety about one's health; morbid depression without cause), asthma, inflammatory bowel disease, hypertension and diabetes (Blake & Mouton, 1978:50-52). See Chapter 4 (point 4.9.2), about the health problems.

Change suggestions for the 1,9 leadership style: The supervisor must realize that smoothing over differences is seen by others as weakness. Differences can be examined without feeling rejected. When others disagree, the supervisor must restate his position, and ask others to explain their reservations (Blake & Mouton, 1985:49).

Prevent conflict under the 1,1 leadership style: The supervisor stays neutral in the face of conflict and is uninvolved. The supervisor seldom participates in group decision-making. He is neither assertive nor co-operative and believes it is difficult to resolve conflict. It is easier for the supervisor to withdraw physically or psychologically from the conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1985:51; Cornerly & Tripathi, 2004).

Handling conflict under the 1,1 leadership style: When conflict cannot be avoided, the supervisor may say that each of them face different circumstances, and that there is a solution for each of them; the supervisor may not take a certain position in the matter so that no one will be offended; the supervisor may say that everything will work out. The supervisor

ignores issues, but it doesn't resolve the conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1985:53-54; Vallejos, 2005).

Mental and physical health implications for the 1,1 leadership style: May experience premature death, tuberculosis and cancer (Blake & Mouton, 1978:68-69). See Chapter 4 point (4.9.2), about the health problems.

Change suggestions for the 1,1 leadership style: The supervisor must explore and resolve his differences when workers disagree. It is more important to reach an agreement than avoiding agreement. Workers may disagree, because the supervisor has not made his convictions clear so that other can understand his position (Blake & Mouton, 1985:64).

Prevent conflict under the 5,5 leadership style: The supervisor is moderately assertive and cooperative. He is flexible and adaptive and it seems as if he can't make up his mind. He may establish routine to feel safe and secure. He holds rules, regulations, traditions and rituals of the company. Rules diminish disagreements, because they reduce the necessity for people to act at their individual discretion. People makes progress by moving forward step by step (Blake & Mouton, 1985:66-67; Cornerly & Tripathi, 2004).

Handling conflict under the 5,5 leadership style: When the supervisor cannot avoid conflict, he will *split the difference*, for example he may compromise by letting the two workers in conflict find a middle ground, or he may let the two workers exchange concessions to arrive at a solution, or he may use voting (Blake & Mouton, 1985:68-69; Vallejos, 2005).

Mental and physical health implications for the 5,5 leadership style: May experience anxiety, worry and peptic ulcers (Blake & Mouton, 1978:87). See Chapter 4 (point 4.9.2), about the health problems.

Change suggestions for the 5,5 leadership style: A supervisor can explore disagreement in an open way and it can lead to innovation. Hostility in disagreement can be reduced by asking background information about the doubts and reservations an employee may have. With openness and frankness the best conclusion can be drawn (Blake & Mouton, 1985:79).

Prevent conflict under the 9,9 leadership style: The supervisor will avoid conflict by using empirical data as the basis of solving problems and making decisions. Dogma is replaced by data, evasion is replaced by evidence and trust, and confidence are reinforced by tested competence. Facts and not personalities, are used to determine the course of action he will take. He will not give up until he finds a solution that will achieve the goal and resolve negative feelings (Blake & Mouton, 1985:83-84; Cornerly & Tripathi, 2004).

Handling conflict under the 9,9 leadership style: Sometimes facts are not enough to avoid conflict, because the problem is not one of fact. The problem may lie in two persons having differences where they don't listen, where they argue, where they think stereotypically, etc. The supervisor may try to get directly to the cause of the problem by letting the two workers reveal their reactions of frustration. When this kind of behaviour is achieved, the conditions are right to solve problems that surface. Collaboration to solve conflict is used where each worker acknowledges his ability and expertise with respect and mutual understanding. Each worker collaborates to arrive at an agreement (Blake & Mouton, 1985:84-86; Vallejos, 2005).

According to Blake *et al.* (1989:117; 1978:111) the 9,9 leadership style is the ideal style for handling conflict, and there are no mental and physical health problems associated with this leadership style.

Sometimes leaders, managers, or workers may find themselves in a conflict triangle. So next intervention techniques which a third party can use when he is caught up in a conflict triangle will be discussed.

3.5.3.4 Third Party Intervention Techniques

Third party intervention techniques or Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), can be used when managers or workers find themselves in a conflict triangle. The third party intervention techniques can be read in Figure 3.6. However, first it is necessary to look at a definition of a conflict triangle.

A conflict triangle is when two parties, who are in conflict with each other, involve a third person rather than dealing directly with the problem (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:500).

The following three paragraphs should give more clarity on Figure 3.6 (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501):

There is a variety of options for those who find themselves in a conflict triangle. In detriangling (numbers 1 and 2 in Figure 3.6), the third party channels the energy of the two conflicting parties, in a direct and positive manner towards each other (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501).

In options one and two (numbers 1 and 2 in Figure 3.6), a person avoids becoming part of a third party coalition and this is called detriangling. In options three to eight (numbers 3 to 8 in Figure 3.6), it can lead to more triangling with the result of political and ethical implications (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501).

When the third person stays in the detriangling mode, there will be a low risk of dysfunctional conflict, but when the third person moves to numbers 3 and onwards, there is a high risk for conflict to be dysfunctional (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501).

Detriangling
(least political; low
risk of dysfunctional
conflict)

More triangling
(most political; high
risk of dysfunctional
conflict)

1. Reroute complaints by coaching the sender to find ways to constructively bring up the matter with the receiver. Do not carry messages for the sender.
2. Facilitate a meeting with the sender and receiver to coach them to speak directly and constructively with each other.
3. Transmit verbatim messages with the sender's name included and coach the receiver on constructive ways to discuss the message with the sender.
4. Carry the message verbatim but protect the sender's name.
5. Soften the message to protect the sender.
6. Add your spin to the message to protect the sender.
7. Do nothing. The participants will triangle in someone else.
8. Do nothing and spread the gossip. You will triangle in others.

Figure 3.6: Third Party Intervention Options for handling Conflict (Ruzich, 1999:134).

In Figure 3.6 the following can be deduced: In step 1 it is best for the third party to say nothing that will triangle him further in the conflict, but he must try to guide the sender to focus the conflict on the receiver. In step 2 the third party must coach the sender and receiver how to speak in a positive and open manner with each other so that conflict will be functional. In step 3 the third party must coach the receiver to discuss the message with the

sender in a positive and functional manner. In step 4 the name of the sender must be protected in order to inhibit further conflict. In step 5 the message must be kept in soft terms, because words must be chosen carefully to inhibit conflict. In step 6 the third party can add something to the message to protect the sender. In step 7 the third party must keep silent so that the sender and receiver may triangle in someone else. In step 8, when the third party does nothing, but spread the gossip, he will triangle in others.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), can also be used to help managers or workers who are caught up in a conflict triangle.

3.5.3.5 Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), are alternative techniques except the techniques discussed in Figure 3.6, that can be used when managers or workers are caught in a conflict triangle. The following definition explains (ADR):

Alternative Dispute Resolution: It is used to resolve conflicts informally and lawsuits are avoided in this manner (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501).

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2004:501-502) the following techniques are used in the (ADR) Alternative Dispute Resolution:

Facilitation: A third party can informally urge the two parties in conflict to deal directly, positively, and constructively with each other (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501-502).

Conciliation: When the two parties who are in conflict do not want to meet face to face, a neutral third party can be the communication medium. This technique aims at seeking a middle ground and also a constructive solution (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501-502).

Peer review: A panel consisting of co-workers is selected and they establish an informal meeting to listen to both sides of the conflicting parties (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501-502).

Ombudsman: A trusted co-worker listens to what the conflicting parties have to say and tries to arrange a solution (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501-502).

Mediation: A mediator wants the conflicting parties to explore and choose an acceptable solution (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501-502).

Arbitration: Arbitrators are trained in relevant laws and case precedents. The decisions of an arbitrator are legally based (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:501-502).

Intrapersonal Conflict will now be discussed seeing that it can help a manager or worker to identify the type of role conflict they are experiencing. When they experience conflict within themselves, there are guidelines that they might follow to find ways in which to manage this type of conflict.

3.5.4 Intrapersonal Conflict

Intrapersonal conflict comprises of role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload. The different role types are going to be discussed. Here follows two definitions to get a clearer picture of what intrapersonal conflict means.

Intrapersonal Conflict: According to Rahim (1992:41), intrapersonal conflict occurs when a person wants to do two or more activities.

According to Wood *et al.* (2003:508), intrapersonal conflict occurs within the individual as a result of actual or perceived pressures from incompatible goals or expectations.

Intrapersonal goal conflict comprises of three basic types (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004:227-228):

Approach-approach conflict where a worker must choose between two choices which may both have a positive outcome (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004:227-228).

Avoidance-avoidance conflict where a worker must choose between two or more alternatives which may both have a negative outcome (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004:227-228).

Approach-avoidance conflict where a worker must choose if he must do something which will have both positive and negative outcomes. Much intrapersonal conflict is based on some type of role conflict or role ambiguity (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004:227-228).

The three basic types of intrapersonal goal conflict will not be discussed in detail, because the three different role types that collectively describes intrapersonal conflict will now be discussed.

3.5.4.1 Role Conflict

Role Conflict: It happens when a person is not able to respond to conflicting role expectations (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2003:200).

The following are types of role conflict (Moorhead & Griffin, 2005:229-230):

- ◆ Interrole conflict: When a person tries to act out two or more contradictory roles.
- ◆ Intrarole conflict: When different people in the same role gives a person contradictory messages.
- ◆ Intrasender conflict: When a worker receives contradictory messages from the same manager.
- ◆ Person-role conflict: It occurs when a role is not congruent with a person's moral and ethic values.

The following are origins of role conflict (Kruger *et al.*, 2000:195):

- ◆ Unreasonable job expectations and time limits: When a worker must attend a meeting, but must also complete a project in limited time.
 - Job description: When a manager is held responsible for the finalising of research projects, but it is also expected of him to do research.
 - ◆ Multiple role expectations: A worker must choose between his work or giving attention to his family.
 - ◆ Conflict between the interests of the group and the organization.
 - ◆ Conflict concerning a person's moral and ethic values.
-

Example: A supervisor at an organization must finalise research projects in limited time, present the results of the research projects, and also his own research results before people at a meeting. This is too time-consuming for him to give any attention to his family. It is against his values not to be able to spend time with his family.

3.5.4.2 Role Ambiguity

Role Ambiguity: A person experiences role ambiguity when he doesn't know what is expected of him, for example inadequate job descriptions, vague instructions from a manager, or unclear cues from co-workers (Moorhead & Griffin, 2005:228).

The following are origins of role ambiguity (Kruger *et al.*, 2000:196-197):

- ◆ The complexity of modern organizations or companies may lead to the overlapping of roles.
- ◆ The fast changing pace of technology and the change outside an organization or company.
- ◆ When there exists a good downward communication structure, but lacks good upward communication.
- ◆ When a worker is not sure where the boundaries of his authority is of the application of rules and punishment when rules are broken.
- ◆ When objectives are unclear.

The following is an example: An organization may grow and expand to the extent that there may not be efficient bureaucracy. Thus, there may not be an efficient structure that is characterized by division of responsibility and regularized procedure. This can result in overlapping roles, because workers will not know what is expected of them. In Chapter 2 we also discussed Max Weber's bureaucracy.

3.5.4.3 Role Overload

Role Overload: "Occurs when too much work is expected of the individual" (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2003:200).

Take note of the following types of role overload (Kruger *et al.*, 2000:199):

- ◆ Quantitative role overload: When a worker experiences that the work keep on increasing and he still has to complete it in a certain time, he will experience conflict from within.
- ◆ Qualitative role overload: When workers feel they haven't got the necessary skills to do a certain work project, they experience inner conflict.
- ◆ Quantitative role underload: When there is too little work available for the workers to do, they become bored and experience inner conflict.
- ◆ Qualitative role underload: When workers must do routine tasks over and over again without being cognitively stimulated by the work, they may experience inner conflict.

The following is an example: A worker that struggles to have socialized power, may want to increase his colleagues's status by helping them to get promotion. This may lead his attention astray from fulfilling his own responsibilities and he experiences role overload.

3.5.5 Managing Intrapersonal Conflict

According to Kruger *et al.*(2000:200), intrapersonal conflict can be managed in the following ways:

- ◆ According to Muchinsky (Kruger *et al.*, 2000:200), role conflict can be diminished by asking workers to lower their high expectations and standards.
- ◆ Role problems can be prevented by letting the workers in the company assimilate their interests with one other.
- ◆ Role conflict and role ambiguity can be prevented by management, by clearly defining the roles in a company.
- ◆ Role conflict can be diminished by eliminating contradictory expectations.
- ◆ A worker that is given a new role in a company, frequently experiences role problems. Enough time must be given to the worker to get used to the expectations the new role demands.
- ◆ The situation in which a worker finds role problems can be restructured in order to make it easier for a worker to choose between alternative decisions.

Next, intergroup conflict will be discussed, because groups or teams are the cornerstone of a company.

3.5.6 Intergroup Conflict

It is important to look at intergroup conflict, because most modern companies exist out of groups or teams. Teams are comprised of individuals from different departments. In order for a company to function progressively, a manager must know what intergroup conflict entails and how to manage it. Here are two definitions of intergroup conflict and a short discussion thereof.

Intergroup Conflict: It is conflict between work groups, teams and departments (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:491).

According to Cherrington (quoted by Kruger *et al.*, 2000:237), intergroup conflict exists because of task-interdependence, unreconciled goals, threats and group-identity.

Enough group cohesiveness can help the group to function effectively, but too much group cohesiveness can instill groupthink. With groupthink the in-group is unwilling to realistically view alternatives (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004:491).

According to Labianca *et al.* (1998), increased group cohesiveness may produce the following:

- ◆ The in-group members may see themselves as a collection of unique individuals, while they stereotype other group members and say that they are *all alike*.
- ◆ In-group members think positively of themselves and say they are morally correct, while they think negatively of other group members as being immoral.
- ◆ The in-group members think of outsiders as being a threat.
- ◆ Members of in-groups have a distorted view of reality, because they exaggerate the differences between their group and other groups.

Example: If groupthink were to exist in an organization, and the in-group think they are morally correct, they view the other group as a threat and exaggerate the differences between them and the other group. Dysfunctional conflict may arise. If dysfunctional conflict arise, it may however be turned into functional conflict if the conflicting situation can open the in-group's eyes and make them realize that individuals are unique, have different spheres of knowledge, different skills, and different ideas that may help with the problems they themselves experience.

The following topic that will now be discussed, is how to manage intergroup conflict.

3.5.7 Managing Intergroup Conflict

Regarding the management of intergroup conflict, the following will be discussed: guidelines for resolving intergroup conflict, and the Thomas-Kilmann Two-dimensional Model of ways to handle intergroup conflict.

3.5.7.1 Guidelines for resolving Intergroup Conflict

According to Cherrington (quoted by Kruger *et al.*, 2000:237-238), intergroup conflict can be managed in the following ways:

- ◆ By ignoring the conflict.
- ◆ By separating the two groups who are in conflict.
- ◆ By a manager that says the groups must stop the conflict.
- ◆ By reconciling the two groups through a democratic process.
- ◆ By emphasizing the things which the two groups have in common.
- ◆ By letting a third party become both groups' enemy.

3.5.7.2 Thomas-Kilmann's Two-dimensional Model of Ways to handle Conflict

Robbins also used the Thomas-Kilmann Two-dimensional Model. He applied this Model to his Conflict Process Model to describe interpersonal conflict. Bowditch and Buono on the

other hand, applied the Thomas Kilmann Two-dimensional Model to the management of intergroup conflict.

The Co-operative dimension is the willingness to satisfy the other group's concerns and the Assertiveness dimension is the willingness to satisfy a group's own concerns. The two dimensions are used to describe five different conflict handling modes (Bowditch & Buono, 2005:184).

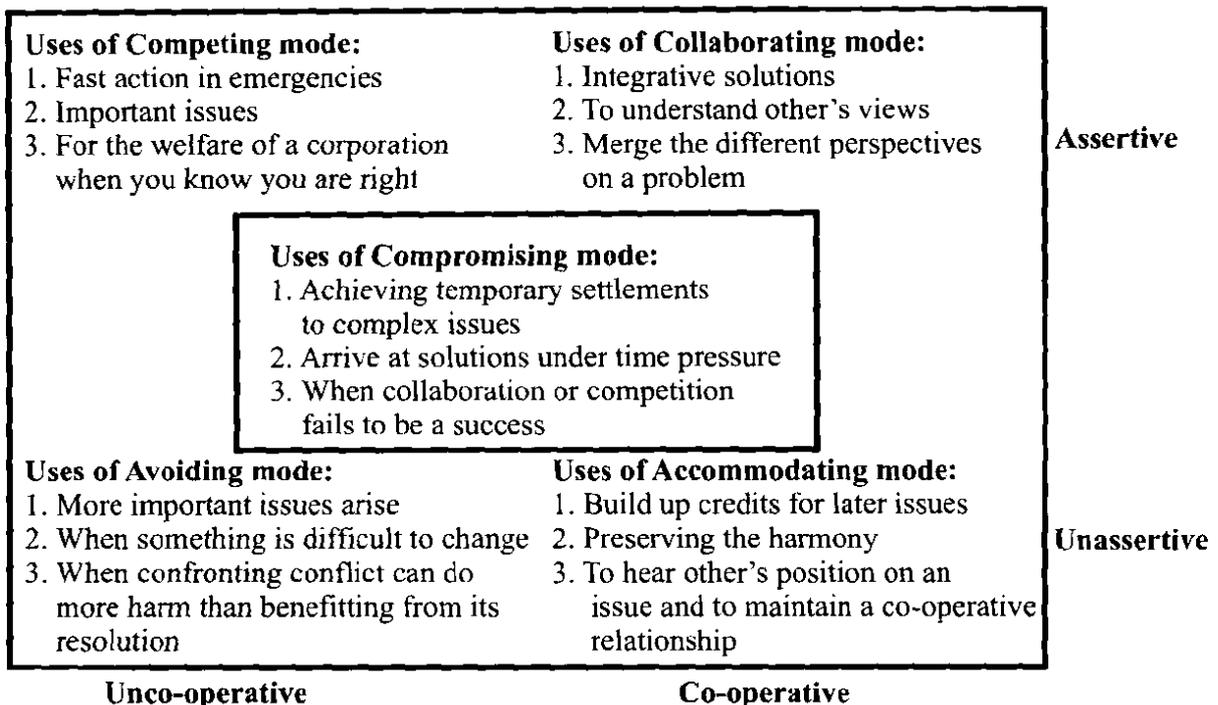


Figure 3.7: Thomas-Kilmann's Two-dimensional Model of Modes to handle Conflict (Thomas, 2002:1-5). Adapted version.

Avoiding: It is unassertive and unco-operative. Both groups sidestep the issue by postponing the conflict or deciding to ignore it (Bowditch & Buono, 2005:184). Avoiding can be effective in some situations. It may buy time to get information for a long-term solution. It may be appropriate when more important matters need to be addressed (Ivancevich, *et al.*, 2005:368). See Figure 3.7.

Competing: It is assertive and unco-operative. Both groups want to reach their own goals at the expense of the other through the means of arguing, using authority, or threat (forcing) (Bowditch & Buono, 2005:185). See Figure 3.7.

Accommodating: It is unassertive and co-operative. It occurs when one group wants to satisfy the other group's concerns above its own concerns or goals (Bowditch & Buono, 2005:185). See Figure 3.7.

Compromising: It is intermediate in both assertiveness and co-operation. Groups try to find a solution that will mutually benefit both by seeking a middle ground. Both groups will win some and lose some (Bowditch & Buono, 2005:185). See Figure 3.7.

Problem Solving/Collaborating/Integrating: It is both assertive and co-operative. Both groups work together so that both of their concerns will be satisfied. This satisfaction includes the following: Both agree to confront the conflict, both groups identify their concerns, both groups try to find alternative solutions to arrive at a point of mutual satisfaction (Bowditch & Buono, 2005:185). Problems can also be solved by collaborating or integrating (Ivancevich, *et al.*, 2005:367). See Figure 3.7.

A team must be healthy to ensure the health of a company. Therefore intragroup conflict will be discussed as well.

3.5.8 Intragroup Conflict

Intragroup Conflict is important, because conflict between members in a team inhibits a company to overcome certain obstacles. Here are two definitions of intragroup conflict and a short discussion will follow thereafter.

Intragroup Conflict: It is when conflict is experienced within groups or teams (Nelson & Quick, 2005:287).

Intragroup Conflict: When group members have interpersonal problems, are angry with one another, or experience personality clashes, they work less effectively and produce suboptimal products (Ratzburg, 1999).

Conflict is inevitable and so there is always a possibility for conflict to arise when different team members interact with each other (Ratzburg, 1999).

When different members of the same group experience interpersonal incompatibilities, it can result in relationship conflict. Members in a group may experience annoyance, animosity and tension amongst themselves. When members in a group dislike others, or are disliked by others, they may experience uneasiness, strain and frustration that may let them decide to completely withdraw from the group (Ratzburg, 1999).

Relationship conflict produces threat and anxiety and it limits group members' cognitive functioning in processing complex information, and thus influences individual performance negatively. The members in the group may want to find a solution to the personal conflicts, or they may try to ignore the conflict, and this may influence the productivity of the group negatively (Ratzburg, 1999).

- ◆ Group members find it difficult to assess new information provided by other members when there is relationship conflict present.
- ◆ Interpersonal conflict between members in the same group makes them less receptive to the ideas of other members.
- ◆ Valuable time is wasted, because instead of working together on a task or project, the members of the group use the time to discuss, resolve or ignore the conflicts (Ratzburg, 1999).

Task-related conflicts may produce antagonism, tension and unhappiness among group members. In the future they may not want to work together anymore. An individual may in some cases become frustrated and dissatisfied with any form of disagreement and questioning. In groups where there are high levels of consensus about task issues, members are more satisfied to stay in the group. In groups where there are high levels of disagreement, it may result in frustration and dissatisfaction. The relationship between conflict and performance is influenced by the type of task a group performs. Whether task conflict is beneficial, depends on the type of task the group performs. Task conflict may have a positive outcome when it is related to group performance in non-routine tasks (Ratzburg, 1999).

It is generally considered that cognitive conflict may benefit team creativity, but it may bring an increase in task conflict where the performance of groups and individuals degenerate. When members experience high levels of conflict, they can become overwhelmed with the amount of conflicting information and lose sight of the original goal of the discussion. Discussions of task strategy are not necessary when a task is simple, because there is standard operating procedures in place which members can follow. When routine tasks are performed by a group, disagreement over the contents of the task can influence the functioning of the group negatively. Because members must increasingly interact and depend on one another, it may lead to intensified conflict. Task interdependence increases the intensity of interaction and therefore it may lead to the development of conflict (Ratzburg, 1999).

Example: In an organizational setting, when the members of a group do not depend on each other to complete the work they are doing, and they also do not work closely together, it may produce interpersonal problems that may lead to conflict.

Different ways how to manage intragroup conflict will now be discussed.

3.5.9 Managing Intragroup Conflict

With regard to the management of intragroup conflict, guidelines for resolving intragroup conflict will be discussed, as well as referring to Rahim's Conflict Handling Model.

3.5.9.1 Guidelines for resolving Intragroup Conflict

The 4,3,2,1 method for resolving intragroup conflict: Each person in the team must choose and write out the 4, 3, 2 or 1 out of the 4,3,2,1 method. The parties exchange their positions they chose on the 4,3,2,1 method and they must then examine each element of each position, and exchange their findings. This activity is completed when the majority have changed into a 4 position. It is not necessary to engage in more formal steps of conflict resolution when members work together effectively. But for close examination of how people solve conflicts when they get sound results, they must use the 4, 3, 2, 1 method. The problem is broken down into parts, and then members have to discuss how much agreement or disagreement is present for each component (Blake *et al.*, 1991:258).

4 – “I agree with the statement as written.”

3 – “I agree with this statement as rewritten in the following way.”

2 – “I wish to ask the following questions for clarification of the meaning of this part of the statement.”

1 – “I disagree with this part of the statement for the following reasons” (Blake *et al.*, 1991:258).

3.5.9.2 Rahim's Conflict Handling Model

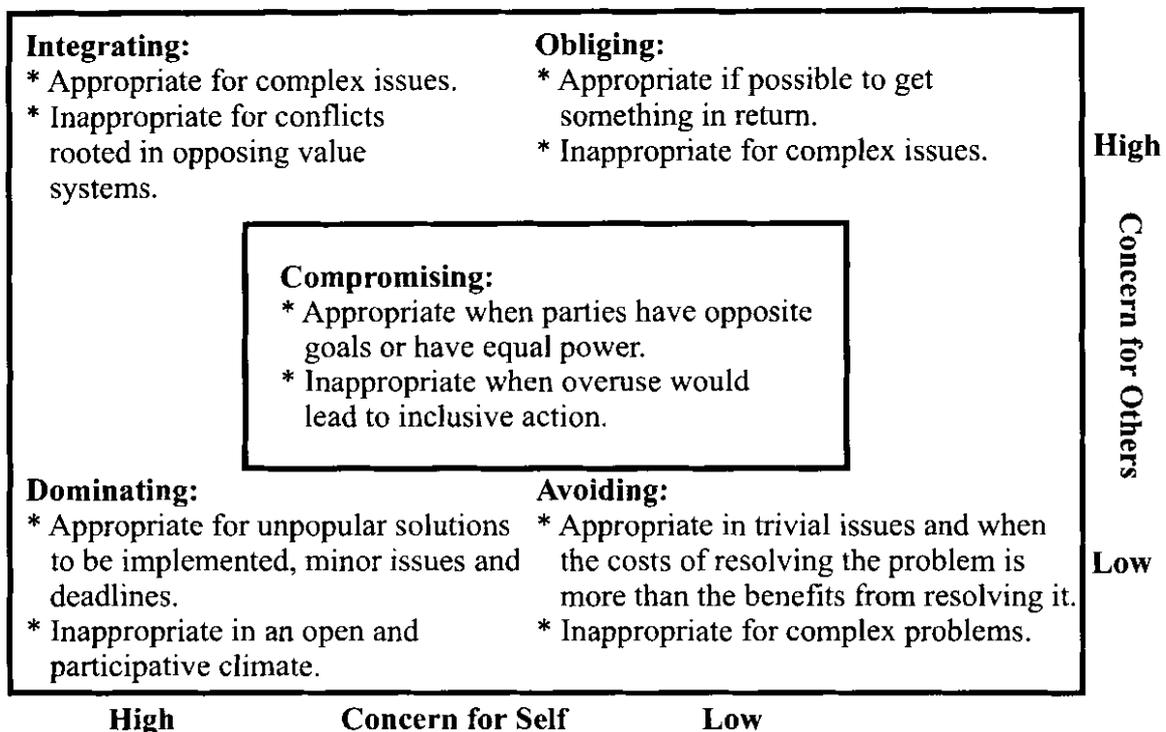


Figure 3.8: Rahim's Conflict Handling Model (Rahim, 2002:217, 219). Adapted version.

Because intrapersonal conflict is interpersonal conflict between members in a group as can be deduced from the definitions, and because the Rahim Model is very similar to Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid, Rahim's Model will be applied to the management of intragroup conflict.

Rahim plotted five conflict handling styles on a 2x2 Grid. The horizontal axis represents high to low concern for self and the vertical axis represents low to high concern for others (Rahim, 2002:11).

Integrating: Parties confront the issue at hand and identify the problem together, generate and weigh alternative solutions and select a solution. Integrating is appropriate for complex issues that may contribute to misunderstandings. But, this style is inappropriate for resolving conflicts that are rooted in opposing value systems. Its main strength is its long lasting impact, because it deals with the underlying problem rather than with the symptoms. The main weakness is that it is very time-consuming (Rahim, 2002:218). See Figure 3.8.

Obliging: Differences are played down and commonalities are emphasized. It may be appropriate when it is possible to eventually get something in return. It is inappropriate for complex problems. Its main strength is to encourage co-operation. Its main weakness is that it fails to confront the underlying problem (Rahim, 2002:218-219). See Figure 3.8.

Dominating: There is a high concern for self and a low concern for others, resulting in win-lose tactics. It is appropriate to use the dominating style when a deadline is near, when the issue is minor, and when an unpopular solution must be implemented. It is however, inappropriate in an open and participative climate. Its main strength is its speed. Its main weakness is that it causes resentment (Rahim, 2002:220). See Figure 3.8.

Avoiding: It includes either passive withdrawal from an issue, or active suppression of an issue. It is appropriate to use it in trivial issues, or when the cost of confrontation outweighs the benefits of resolving the conflict. It is inappropriate to use it in complex problems. Its main strength is that it buys time in ambiguous situations. Its main weakness is that it provides a temporary fix that sidestep the underlying problem (Rahim, 2002:220). Figure 3.8.

Compromising: There is a moderate concern for self and also for others. This style is appropriate when groups have opposite goals or possess equal power. It is inappropriate when overuse would lead to inclusive action. Its main strength is that no one loses in a democratic process. Its main weakness is that it is a temporary fix that can stifle creative problem solving (Rahim, 2002:220-221). See Figure 3.8.

Rahim's integrating style is similar to the Team Management Leadership Style where different information about a problem is integrated. The Obliging style is similar to the Country Club Management Leadership Style where the leader handles conflict by smoothing over differences. The Dominating style is similar to the Authority-Obedience Leadership

Style where conflict is suppressed. The Avoiding style is similar to the Impoverished Management Leadership Style where conflict is avoided. Lastly the Compromising style is similar to the Organization Man Management Leadership Style where conflict is handled by compromising.

3.6 SUMMARY

The following were discussed: the two types of power, namely socialized power and personalized power; the seven bases of power, namely reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, expert power, referent power, connection power, and information power; the sources of conflict, conflict antecedents, teamwork tactics to prevent conflict, functional conflict (in the interest of a company), and dysfunctional conflict (negative for the functioning of a company); the Conflict Process Model of Robbins; and techniques to stimulate functional conflict.

Some people in an organization may struggle for socialized power, so that they can help others and some people in the organization may struggle for personalized power, in order to help themselves.

The seven power bases includes the following: Reward power: Some managers and or workers in a company may use reward power by promising rewards and thereby getting compliance from others. Coercive power: Some individuals in the company may use coercive power by threatening others with punishment in order to get compliance. Legitimate power: Other individuals may use legitimate power in order to obtain compliance through formal authority. Expert power: Some managers in the company may use expert power in order to obtain compliance through the knowledge or information they have. Referent power: When an individual has a charismatic personality or is attractive, he can obtain compliance from others. Role models, for example, have this type of power over others, because they identify themselves with the role model. Connection power: When a manager associates with influential people or organizations, he has some kind of connection power. Information power: Workers wait for the manager to give them information when they have to maintain or improve performance. With this power, managers can influence workers who are willing and have abilities.

Sources of conflict may include the following: differences in personalities, interests, values, expectations, goals, perceptions, culture, education, deficient information, ambiguity, competition over scarce resources, and group interdependence. Conflict antecedents are signs that make a person capable of anticipating for conflict. These signs may include unresolved conflicts, too high expectations, too many participants in the decision-making process etcetera. There are also teamwork tactics that can be used to prevent conflict from happening. The seven steps of Blake and Mouton are some guidelines that can be used as teamwork tactics.

Conflict can also be functional or dysfunctional. A moderate level of conflict is considered as functional, because too much conflict or too little conflict can be harmful for a Company. When there is too much conflict it may give rise to political infighting, dissatisfaction, lack of teamwork and low turnover. When there is too little conflict it may give rise to apathy, lack of creativity, indecision and missed deadlines. There are different Models and techniques that can be used in managing conflict effectively so that conflict will be functional for a Company.

After this, interpersonal conflict, management of interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, management of intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, management of intergroup conflict, intragroup conflict, and management of intragroup conflict were discussed.

Interpersonal conflict is when there is personality clashes and conflict between managers and workers on the one hand, and between peers on the other hand. Intrapersonal conflict is when an individual is experiencing incompatible goals or expectations, or when a worker wants to do more than one activity at a time. Intergroup conflict is when different teams, groups or departments fight, and intragroup conflict is when group members experience personality clashes or interpersonal problems.

In Chapter 4, the empirical section, the method of sampling, and the manner in which information was collected, will be discussed. The biographic information of the research group, as well as the questionnaire, will also be scrutinised. The results of the descriptive analysis, the regressive and explorative analyses, will be reported, and it will be determined if the objectives and hypotheses are supported by the empirical findings.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapters 2 and 3 we discussed the theoretical principles of the subject of the research. In these Chapters we looked at the philosophies of Friedrich Hegel and Immanuel Kant, and the views of Marx and Weber about conflict. Then the sources and the nature of conflict were discussed and applied to the theories of Marx and Weber. The company were discussed in short in Chapter 1, and the characteristics of the “New” Organizational Model were discussed in Chapter 3.

The theoretical objective in Chapter 2 was to determine how conflict dynamics are conceptualized from theory. Specific sociological views and general management were also discussed.

An empirical investigation was done to make this research meaningful in order to confirm the hypotheses as well as to reach the objectives. The empirical investigation was done according to conflict within an organization. Findings were evaluated and where possible, explained according to the theoretical standpoints.

According to Kruger (1999:92), the explanation of any field of study must be based on observation and analysis. The resolution of a problem must therefore be based on a scientific method.

In this Chapter the following will be discussed: Firstly, the objective of the research; secondly, the hypotheses; thirdly, the measuring battery; fourthly, the statistical analysis; fifthly, the research group and research method; sixthly, the biographical results of the measuring instrument; seventhly, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire; eighthly, the determination of variance analysis between different variables, and the test of the hypotheses; lastly, the discussion of the general findings.

4.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

4.2.1 General Objective

The primary goal of this study is to establish through a theoretical and empirical analysis what the nature, causes and handling styles of conflict are within an organization.

4.2.2 Specific Objectives

4.2.2.1 Theoretical Objective

- ◆ To determine how conflict dynamics are conceptualized in literature through the application of industrial sociological theories, organizational principles, and general management theories.

4.2.2.2 Empirical Objectives

- ◆ To determine the main sources of conflict within an Engineering Company.
- ◆ To determine if the personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels in the Engineering Company are influenced differently by conflict.
- ◆ To determine by means of hypotheses if there are significant differences between the personnel in the Engineering Company on how they handle conflict with their superiors and subordinates.

4.3 HYPOTHESES

4.3.1 General Hypothesis

There exists a significant difference in the handling of conflict by the personnel of the Engineering Company.

4.3.2 Statistical Hypotheses

- ◆ **Hypothesis 1:** The different sexes handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 2:** The different age groups handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 3:** Personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 4:** Personnel who speak different home languages, handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 5:** Personnel who served different official years, handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 6:** Personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently.

4.4 THE MEASURING BATTERY

The measuring instrument is a questionnaire that evaluates conflict (Annexure A), and it consists of five sections. Section A is all about the biographical information of the participants.

Section B consists of 10 questions, and section C consists of 7 questions. The questions were compiled by means of information relating to the literature study. The questions were compiled from relevant information with regard to the objectives of the study.

Section D as well as section E is a standardized questionnaire that was developed by means of the Roc-II method. The Roc-II method was developed by Alfred Rahim in 1983 to measure the differences in conflict handling in an organization (Rahim, 1983). The questionnaire measures five conflict handling styles, namely Integrating/Collaborating, Obliging/Smoothing, Dominating/Forcing, Avoiding and Compromising. (See Chapter 3 about Rahim's conflict handling styles).

The Roc-II (Sub_D and Sub_E) measures how an individual in an organization handles conflict with his or her superiors and subordinates. The five conflict handling styles were incorporated in 4 sections (See table 4.1). The conflict handling styles were verified or checked through responses on various statements. The statements were selected by means of a repetitive factor and item analysis. The responses on the statements were indicated on a 4-point Likert Scale, namely: 4 Disagree, 3 Undecided, 2 Agree, 1 Strongly agree.

The construct validity of the questionnaire was determined by means of the application of factor analysis with regards to the items mentioned.

Questionnaire-subject	Items in questionnaire
Section A Biographical information	A1; A2; A3; A4; A5; A7
Section B Factors contributing to conflict	bb1; bb3; bb4; bb5; bb6; bb7; bb8; bb9; bb10
Section C Influence of conflict on workers	cc1; cc2; cc3; cc4; cc5; cc6; cc7
Section D (Standardized) Conflict with Superiors	
Sub_1d Integrating	D1; D4; D6; D15; D28
Sub_2d Avoiding	D7; D22; D23
Sub_3d Dominating	D10; D11; D24; D27
Sub_4d Obliging	D2; D12; D13; D16; D17; D25
Sub_5d Compromising	D9; D20; D21; D26
Section E (Standardized) Conflict with Subordinates	
Sub_1e Integrating	E1; E4; E6; E15; E28
Sub_2e Avoiding	E7; E22; E23
Sub_3e Dominating	E10; E11; E24; E27
Sub_4e Obliging	E2; E12; E13; E16; E17; E25
Sub_5e Compromising	E9; E20; E21; E26

Table 4.1 The Structure of the Questionnaire

4.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The standardized sections and applicable questions of the questionnaire were planned and applied by specialists of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus at the Statistical Consultation Services. The data was processed by means of the S.A.S.- program (SAS Institute, 2005) into percentage and frequency tables.

Conbrach's Alpha Coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The validity of the main constructs were determined by means of factor analysis and the varimax rotation method.

4.6 THE RESEARCH GROUP AND RESEARCH METHOD

The research group consists of a stratified statistical sample of the workers from the lowest job- level (job-level 5) to the highest job-level (job-level 1) in the Engineering Company in the North West Province.

The sample represents a population consisting of different sexes and races. The Engineering Company has a population of 450 workers and a sample of 160 workers ($N = 160$) was drawn. This sample represents 35,56% of the total population in the company. The questionnaire was confidential to protect the workers, because of the information they disclosed.

A total of 154 out of 160 questionnaires were received back, thus with regards to the questionnaire, 96,25% workers responded. According to (Hair, *et al.*, 1995:103-105) the sample size is sufficient to use in multivariate statistical techniques in order to analyse data.

4.7 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL RESULTS OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Criteria	Category	N	Percentage
1. Sex	a) Male	137	89,54%
	b) Female	16	10,46%
		Total: 153	
2. Age	a) 20-35	119	77,27%
	b) 36-60	35	22,73%
		Total: 154	
3. Qualification	a) Grade 10/lower	67	43,51%
	b) Grade 11	14	9,09%
	c) Grade 12	70	45,45%
	d) Other qualifications	0	0,00%
		Total: 151	
4. Home Language	a) Western languages	54	35,06%
	b) African languages	100	64,94%
		Total: 154	
5. Years of Service	a) 1-4	92	59,74%
	b) 5-15	62	40,26%
		Total: 154	
6. Job-level	a) 1	6	3,90%
	b) 2	13	8,44%
	c) 3	38	24,68%
	d) 4	70	45,45%
	e) 5	27	17,53%
		Total: 154	

Table 4.2 Biographical Information of Respondents

4.7.1 Sex, Age and Home Language

The 154 respondents consist of 137 (89,54%) males, and 16 (10,46%) females. There are 119 respondents (77,27%) that ranges from twenty years to 35 years of age, and 35 respondents (22,73%) are between 36 and 60 years of age. There are 54 respondents (35,06%) that speak English or Afrikaans and 100 of the respondents (64,94%) speak other languages like Tswana, Sotho, Xhosa and Zulu.

4.7.2 Qualifications, Years of Service, and Job-level

There are 67 respondents (43,51%) that have grade 10 or lower, 14 respondents (9,09%) have grade 11, and 70 respondents (45,45%) have grade 12.

There are 92 respondents (59,74%) who have worked for the company for 1-4 years, and 62 respondents (40,26%) have worked for 5-15 years.

4.8 THE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The reliability of the questionnaire was determined by means of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of a measuring instrument is calculated in order to indicate the consistency of the test items, and how much they all measure the same attribute (Malan, 2001:63). The questionnaire has also been used by Havenga and other researchers in other countries.

The questionnaire is divided into ten constructs on which the validity of the instruments was determined. The main constructs (variables), imply the following:

Sub_1d Integrating/Superior; Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior; Sub_3d Dominating/Superior; Sub_4d Obliging/Superior; Sub_5d Compromising/Superior; Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates; Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates; Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates; Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates; Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinates.

The content validity of the ten main constructs was determined by means of a factor analysis where the varimax rotation method was used. Each of the ten main constructs has various

dimensions and it can thus be anticipated that more than one factor per construct could be obtained.

Because most of the questionnaire (section D and E) are standardized, it is unnecessary to repeat a more comprehensive study on this subject. Conflict is a very comprehensive subject, and that is why section B and C was incorporated in order to look at various aspects regarding the respondents' experiences of conflict. The choice of the items in section D was done by means of the literature study.

According to Smit (1991:39), the validity of the content is based on the homogeneity of the test-items, and it is determined by the analysis of the internal consistency of the performance of the test-items.

When it is not possible to have repetitive measurements of a test, the information that is obtained from a single application of the test must be used. In this regard, usable information can be obtained from the scores that individuals got on the items, or other components of the measuring instrument. According to (Kruger, 1999:87), the above applies, because the validity indicates the extent of scores that was obtained from the test. This can be generalized towards the scores that could have been obtained by the repetitive application of the test.

Item homogeneity indicates the extent to which scores, that is obtained from a single item of a test, could be generalized to scores that is obtained from other items in the test. Internal consistency coefficients are guidelines of item homogeneity, and can be determined by the dividing method and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (Anastasi, 1988:132).

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient is a guideline for item homogeneity or internal consistency, and it is algebraic equal to the average of the dividing coefficient. It can also be calculated by means of the Guttman-formula on all possible divisions of the test (Malan, 2001:63).

Table 4.3 gives an indication of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient regarding the main constructs for the evaluation of conflict:

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	0,72
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	0,58
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	0,70
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	0,77
Sub_5d Compromising/Superior	0,70
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	0,70
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	0,58
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	0,65
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	0,79
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinates	0,74

Table 4.3 Cronbach's Coefficient of the Main Constructs of the Questionnaire

According to Hair *et al.* (1998:118), the reliability for the Alpha Coefficient is acceptable at 0,70, but in the exploratory research that was used in this study, it is acceptable at 0,60. In table 4.3 it is clear that all the constructs of the conflict-evaluating questionnaire indicate a valid Alpha Coefficient, except the following two constructs: the Avoiding conflict handling style namely Sub_2d and Sub_2e have low scores. Sub_4e has a high score and it means that conflict with subordinates are obliged; in other words, the differences are smoothed over. The Alpha Coefficients ranged from 0,58 to 0,79.

4.8.1 Validity

Validity is used to see if the test measures what it is supposed to measure. This validity is determined through the correlation between measuring the performance in a test, and an independent and objective criterion of the behaviour that must be measured. This is the validity coefficient of a test (Smit, 1991:52; Kruger, 1999:88).

4.8.1.1 Face Validity of the Questionnaire

The face validity is the extent to which the test is applicable for the objective for which the test is used, based on subjective evaluation. Any technically trained person can evaluate the test and determine if the items in the test, and the content of the items are applicable for the objective for which the test is used (Kruger, 1999:88).

4.8.1.2 Construct Validity of the Questionnaire

According to Smit (1991:53), the construct validity of a test is the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure.

When evaluating conflict, it is difficult to find a usable criterion that can act as an independent and objective guideline. Construct validity is therefore an alternative method that can be used to know more about the inherent attributes that explain the variance of the statements with regards to the constructs of the questionnaire.

Factor analysis in table 4.4 is used to determine the construct validity. It is a statistical procedure for identifying psychological attributes that is directed to the analysis of interrelations of data, and the study of internal consistency of a test (Smit, 1991:75).

According to Smit (1991:105), factor analysis in table 4.4 is a statistical technique that is used to determine the minimum constructs (factors), that will explain the intercorrelations between tests, the factor loadings, and the communality. The Principle Components Method and the Varimax-method were used to determine the construct validity.

Variables	Factors	Variance	Min. Communality	Max. Communality
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	1 Factor	47,52%	0,34	0,58
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	1 Factor	54,68%	0,40	0,68
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	1 Factor	53,00%	0,42	0,60
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	1 Factor	47,74%	0,25	0,60
Sub_5d Compromising/Superior	1 Factor	53,46%	0,33	0,63
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	1 Factor	45,84%	0,30	0,54
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	1 Factor	54,89%	0,43	0,71
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	1 Factor	49,54%	0,36	0,63
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	1 Factor	48,53%	0,39	0,62
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinates	1 Factor	56,18%	0,34	0,58

Table 4.4 Factor Analysis and Percentage Variance of the Variables of the conflict-evaluating Questionnaire

4.9 SECTION B AND SECTION C: THE MAJOR SOURCES AND INFLUENCES OF CONFLICT

4.9.1 Section B: The main Sources of Conflict

In table 4.5 the following are prevalent: Most of the personnel of the sample size said that the following sources of conflict were not prevalent: Affirmative Action Programme: 94,16%; Racial differences: 85,06%; Implementation of new management techniques: 93,51%; Availability of resources: 94,16%; Dismissals of workers: 92,21%; Implementation of new technology: 96,75%; Extent and contents of work: 90,91%; Uneven distribution of scarce resources: 90,91%; Misuse of power by superiors: 89,61%.

The following are some sources of conflict in Karl Marx's Model that apply to table 4.5 (Look under point 2.3.1 in Chapter 2): Class-consciousness: (in table 4.5 Affirmative Action Programme and racial differences); unemployment: (in table 4.5 dismissals of workers); incomplete democracy: (in table 4.5 misuse of power by superiors); alienation: (in table 4.5 the extent and contents of work); scarce resources: (in table 4.5 availability of resources and uneven distribution of scarce resources), and technology: (in table 4.5 implementation of new technology and implementation of new management techniques). The following apply to Weber's Model of Power: (in table 4.5 misuse of power by superiors).

Because most of the personnel in the sample size said that the above sources of conflict according to Karl Marx and Weber (see table 4.5), were not prevalent in the organization, it can be deduced that Marx and Weber's sources of conflict do not apply here.

Because the sources of conflict in table 4.5 were not experienced by most personnel in the sample size, it can be deduced that there may be other sources of conflict present in the organization that were not mentioned in the questionnaire.

Sources	Frequency		Percentage
	Yes (1)	No (3)	
Affirmative Action Programme (bb1)	Yes (1)	8	5.19%
	Unsure (2)	1	0.65%
	No (3)	145	94.16%
Racial differences (bb3)	Yes (1)	15	9.74%
	Unsure (2)	8	5.19%
	No (3)	131	85.06%
Implementation of new management techniques (bb4)	Yes (1)	1	0.65%
	Unsure (2)	9	5.84%
	No (3)	144	93.51%
Availability of resources (bb5)	Yes (1)	4	2.60%
	Unsure (2)	5	3.25%
	No (3)	145	94.16%
Dismissals of workers (bb6)	Yes (1)	2	1.30%
	Unsure (2)	10	6.49%
	No (3)	142	92.21%
Implementation of new technology (bb7)	Yes (1)	3	1.95%
	Unsure (2)	2	1.30%
	No (3)	149	96.75%
Extent and contents of work (bb8)	Yes (1)	4	2.60%
	Unsure (2)	10	6.49%
	No (3)	140	90.91%
Uneven distribution of scarce resources (bb9)	Yes (1)	4	2.60%
	Unsure (2)	10	6.49%
	No (3)	140	90.91%
Misuse of power by superiors (bb10)	Yes (1)	3	1.95%
	Unsure (2)	13	8.44%
	No (3)	138	89.61%

Table 4.5 Factors seen as the main Sources of Conflict

4.9.2 Section C: Influence of Conflict on the Personnel

In table 4.6 the following are prevalent: Most of the personnel of the sample size said that conflict did not have the following influences on them: Not possible to perform: 96,08%; Become hostile toward colleagues: 88,96%; Decline co-operation: 92.81%; Develop stress: 88,24%; Consider a job change: 91,56%; Alienate myself from other staff members: 90,91%; Develop physical health problems: 93,51%.

The following are some influences of conflict in Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid that apply to table 4.6. (Look under point 3.5.3.3 in Chapter 3): Fatigue and depression: (in table 4.6 not possible to perform); hostility: (in table 4.6 becoming hostile toward colleagues); anxiety and worry: (in table 4.6 decline co-operation); stress: (in table 4.6 develop stress); negative feelings: (in table 4.6 consider a job change); and morbid depression: (in table 4.6 alienate oneself from other staff members); develop physical health problems (in table 4.6 for example in point 3.5.3.3). In Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid the following health symptoms apply: heart attack, asthma, inflammatory bowel-disease, hypertension, diabetes, tuberculosis, cancer, and peptic ulcers.

Because most of the personnel in the sample size indicated that the above influences of conflict according to Blake and Mouton (see table 4.6), were not prevalent in the organization, it can be deduced that Blake and Mouton's mental and physical health problems do not apply here.

Because the influences of conflict in table 4.6 were not experienced by most personnel in the sample size, it can be deduced that there are a moderate level of conflict in the organization. However, if the balance is not maintained between too little and too much conflict, it may produce dysfunctional conflict (conflict that is harmful for an organization). Too little conflict may produce apathy, lack of creativity, indecision and missed deadlines. When there is too much conflict in the organization it may produce conflict-related health problems as described in Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid (see point 3.5.3.3). Too much health problems may lead to the inefficient management of conflict, because in Chapter 3 under point 3.4.5.1, it was shown that too much conflict is harmful for an organization.

Influence	Frequency		Percentage
	Yes (1)	No (3)	
Not possible to perform (cc1)	Yes (1)	3	1.96%
	Unsure (2)	3	1.96%
	No (3)	147	96.08%
Become hostile toward colleagues (cc2)	Yes (1)	4	2.60%
	Unsure (2)	13	8.44%
	No (3)	137	88.96%
Decline co-operation (cc3)	Yes (1)	2	1.31%
	Unsure (2)	9	5.88%
	No (3)	142	92.81%
Develop stress (cc4)	Yes (1)	10	6.54%
	Unsure (2)	8	5.23%
	No (3)	135	88.24%
Consider a job change (cc5)	Yes (1)	3	1.95%
	Unsure (2)	10	6.49%
	No (3)	141	91.56%
Alienate oneself from other staff members (cc6)	Yes (1)	7	4.55%
	Unsure (2)	7	4.55%
	No (3)	140	90.91%
Develop physical health problems (cc7)	Yes (1)	3	1.95%
	Unsure (2)	7	4.55%
	No (3)	144	93.51%

Table 4.6 The Influence Conflict has on the Personnel

4.10 SECTION D AND SECTION E: THE DETERMINATION OF VARIANCE ANALYSIS BETWEEN VARIOUS VARIABLES AND THE TESTING OF THE HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses were tested by means of the variance analysis. The various analysis is set out as follows:

Sub_1d Integrating/Superior;

Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior;

Sub_3d Dominating/Superior;

Sub_4d Obliging/Superior;

Sub_5d Compromising/Superior;

Sub_1e Integrating/ Subordinates;

Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates;
 Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates;
 Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates;
 Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinates.

These variables are presented in table 4.2 with regards to sex, age, home language, years of service, qualifications, and job-levels.

4.10.1 Determining the Variance Analysis

According to Kruger (1999:92), where there are statistical differences between variables and biographical data, the practical significance is determined by means of the d value.

$d = \frac{\text{variances between averages (means)}}{\sqrt{\text{MSE}}}$
 MSE is the mean square error of analysis of variance

$d = 0,2$ small effect;

$d = 0,5$ medium effect;

$d \geq 0,8$ large effect (practical significant)

4.10.2 Hypothesis 1: The different Sexes handle Conflict differently

In table 4.7 the following can be deduced: There is not any practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) how the two sexes handle conflict, because the difference is too small. The lower the mean, the more applicable is the conflict handling style: Group 2 uses the Integrating, Avoiding, and Obliging styles a little more with regard to the superior than Group 1. Group 1 uses the Dominating and Compromising styles a little more with regard to the superior than Group 2. Group 2 uses the Integrating, Avoiding, and Dominating styles a little more with regard to the superior and subordinates, than Group 1. Group 1 uses the Obliging and Compromising styles with regard to the superior and subordinates a little more than Group 2. Hypothesis 1 can in this case be rejected, because the difference is too small to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$). So, (Group 1: male and Group 2: female) handle conflict about the same. See point 3.5.9.2 in Chapter 3 for the different conflict handling styles.

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Group 1	137	2.37	0.50	0.09
	Group 2	16	2.33	0.30	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Group 1	137	2.45	0.56	0.06
	Group 2	16	2.42	0.59	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Group 1	137	2.43	0.49	0.18
	Group 2	16	2.52	0.39	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Group 1	137	2.42	0.52	0.14
	Group 2	16	2.35	0.42	
Sub_5d Compromising/Superior	Group 1	137	2.44	0.52	0.21
	Group 2	16	2.56	0.56	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Group 1	137	2.41	0.43	0.14
	Group 2	16	2.35	0.46	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Group 1	137	2.48	0.49	0.09
	Group 2	16	2.42	0.66	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Group 1	137	2.52	0.52	0.04
	Group 2	16	2.50	0.56	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Group 1	137	2.47	0.49	0.09
	Group 2	16	2.51	0.50	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Group 1	137	2.50	0.57	0.14
	Group 2	16	2.58	0.48	

Table 4.7 Determination of Variance-analysis: Sexes as independent Variable

4.10.3 Hypothesis 2: The different Age Groups handle Conflict differently

In table 4.8 it can be deduced that there is too little difference in the way the young age group (Group 1: < 20-35 years), and the older age group (Group 2: 36-60), handle conflict, because there is no practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) (see point 3.5.9.2). The lower the mean, the more applicable the conflict handling style: Group 2 uses the Integrating, Avoiding, Dominating styles a little more with regard to the superior, than Group 1. Group 1 uses the Obliging and Compromising styles a little more with regard to the superior, than Group 2. Group 2 uses the Integrating, Obliging, Dominating and Compromising styles a little more with regard to the subordinates, than Group 2. Group 1 and Group 2 use the Avoiding style the same extent. Because the difference is too small to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$), hypothesis 2 which says that different age groups handle conflict differently, can be rejected.

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Group 1	119	2.36	0.49	0.02
	Group 2	35	2.35	0.48	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Group 1	119	2.45	0.59	0.01
	Group 2	35	2.44	0.43	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Group 1	119	2.45	0.51	0.16
	Group 2	35	2.37	0.34	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Group 1	119	2.41	0.53	0.04
	Group 2	35	2.43	0.45	
Sub_5d Compromising/Superior	Group 1	119	2.45	0.57	0.03
	Group 2	35	2.46	0.35	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Group 1	119	2.42	0.47	0.13
	Group 2	35	2.36	0.28	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Group 1	119	2.47	0.54	0.00
	Group 2	35	2.47	0.35	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Group 1	119	2.52	0.56	0.01
	Group 2	35	2.51	0.37	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Group 1	119	2.48	0.53	0.13
	Group 2	35	2.42	0.31	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Group 1	119	2.51	0.59	0.06
	Group 2	35	2.48	0.43	

Table 4.8 Determination of Variance-analysis: Age as independent Variable

4.10.4 Hypothesis 3: Personnel with different Qualifications handle Conflict differently

In table 4.9 the difference in how the 3 groups handle conflict is too small to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$); therefore hypothesis 3 that says personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently can be rejected. See point 3.5.9.2 about the different conflict handling styles. Group 1 has grade 10, Group 2 grade 11, and Group 3 grade 12. Conflict handling with regard to the superior: Group 3 uses the Integrating style a little more than the other two groups, Group 2 uses the Avoiding, Dominating, Obliging and Compromising styles a little more than the other two groups. Conflict handling with regard to the subordinates: Group 3 uses the Avoiding and Compromising styles a little more than the other two groups, Group 2 uses the Integrating, Dominating and Compromising styles a little more than the other two groups.

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value	d-value	d-value
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Group 1	67	2.45	0.51	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.43	0.76	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.28	0.36	0.04	0.34	0.19
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Group 1	67	2.54	0.58	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.26	0.63	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.40	0.51	0.44	0.23	0.23
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Group 1	67	2.50	0.49	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.36	0.46	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.39	0.45	0.30	0.24	0.06
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Group 1	67	2.50	0.59	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.29	0.54	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.36	0.42	0.36	0.24	0.13
Sub_5d Compromising/Superior	Group 1	67	2.58	0.55	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.30	0.52	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.36	0.47	0.51	0.40	0.11
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Group 1	67	2.47	0.47	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.25	0.38	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.39	0.40	0.47	0.18	0.33
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Group 1	67	2.55	0.55	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.43	0.58	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.39	0.40	0.21	0.30	0.07
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Group 1	67	2.61	0.53	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.39	0.60	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.46	0.45	0.36	0.28	0.11
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Group 1	67	2.57	0.48	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.33	0.45	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.41	0.48	0.49	0.33	0.16
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Group 1	67	2.60	0.58	N1,	N1,	N2,
	Group 2	14	2.52	0.61	N2	N3	N3
	Group 3	70	2.41	0.47	0.14	0.33	0.18

Table 4.9 Determination of Variance-analysis: Qualifications as independent Variable

4.10.5 Hypothesis 4: Personnel with different Home Languages handle Conflict differently

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Group 1	54	2.36	0.50	0.01
	Group 2	100	2.36	0.47	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Group 1	54	2.46	0.59	0.04
	Group 2	100	2.44	0.55	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Group 1	54	2.39	0.52	0.14
	Group 2	100	2.46	0.45	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Group 1	54	2.41	0.53	0.02
	Group 2	100	2.42	0.51	
Sub_5d Compromising/Superior	Group 1	54	2.41	0.58	0.11
	Group 2	100	2.47	0.49	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Group 1	54	2.34	0.47	0.20
	Group 2	100	2.44	0.41	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Group 1	54	2.46	0.57	0.02
	Group 2	100	2.47	0.47	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Group 1	54	2.48	0.58	0.10
	Group 2	100	2.54	0.49	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Group 1	54	2.44	0.53	0.08
	Group 2	100	2.48	0.47	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Group 1	54	2.47	0.60	0.09
	Group 2	100	2.53	0.53	

Table 4.10 Determination of Variance-analysis: Home Language as independent Variable

In table 4.10 it can be deduced that the difference in how the different home language groups, namely Group 1 (The Western languages group), and Group 2 (The African languages group), handle conflict, is too small in order to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$). The lower the mean, the more applicable the conflict handling style: The two groups use the Integrating style with regard to the superior to the same extent, but Group 1 uses the Integrating style a little more with regard to the subordinates. Group 2 uses the Avoiding style a little more with regard to the superior, but group 1 uses the Avoiding style a little more with regard to the subordinates. Group 1 uses the Dominating, Obliging and Compromising styles a little more than Group 2. Different groups who speak different home languages do not handle conflict differently, because there is no practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) in how the two language groups use the five conflict handling styles (see point 3.5.9.2). Therefore hypothesis 4 can be rejected.

4.10.6 Hypothesis 5: Personnel who served different official Years handle Conflict differently

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
	Group 1	Group 2			
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Group 1	92	2.29	0.42	0.35
	Group 2	62	2.47	0.54	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Group 1	92	2.39	0.60	0.24
	Group 2	62	2.53	0.49	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Group 1	92	2.39	0.48	0.23
	Group 2	62	2.50	0.47	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Group 1	92	2.35	0.51	0.30
	Group 2	62	2.50	0.51	
Sub_5d Compromising/Superior	Group 1	92	2.41	0.55	0.16
	Group 2	62	2.50	0.49	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Group 1	92	2.38	0.49	0.11
	Group 2	62	2.44	0.34	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Group 1	92	2.43	0.54	0.18
	Group 2	62	2.53	0.44	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Group 1	92	2.48	0.56	0.15
	Group 2	62	2.57	0.46	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Group 1	92	2.45	0.52	0.10
	Group 2	62	2.50	0.43	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Group 1	92	2.46	0.57	0.22
	Group 2	62	2.58	0.53	

Table 4.11 Determination of Variance-analysis: Years of Service as independent Variable

In table 4.11 it can be deduced that there is too little difference between personnel who served different official years and how they handle conflict in order to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$). The lower the mean, the more applicable the conflict handling style: Group 1 (1-4 years of service) uses all five conflict handling styles a little more than Group 2 (5-15 years of service). Hypothesis 5 is rejected, because the difference in personnel handling the conflict is too small to be of practical significance (see point 3.5.9.2). So, in conclusion personnel who served different official years in this company do not handle conflict differently.

4.10.7 Hypothesis 6: Personnel in different Job-levels handle Conflict differently

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	2.33	0.86	0.12
	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.47	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	2.33	0.86	0.07
	Job-level 3	38	2.39	0.48	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	2.33	0.86	0.02
	Job-level 4	70	2.35	0.44	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	2.33	0.86	0.09
	Job-level 5	27	2.41	0.50	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.47	0.35
	Job-level 3	38	2.39	0.48	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.47	0.27
	Job-level 4	70	2.35	0.44	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.47	0.36
	Job-level 5	27	2.41	0.50	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2.39	0.48	0.08
	Job-level 4	70	2.35	0.44	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 3	92	2.39	0.48	0.03
	Job-level 5	27	2.41	0.50	
Sub_1d Integrating/Superior	Job-level 4	70	2.35	0.44	0.11
	Job-level 5	27	2.41	0.50	

Table 4.12(a) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-level as independent Variable

In table 4.12(a) there is not any practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) between the five job-levels in the way in which they use the integrating conflict handling style with their superior. The lower the mean or average, the more acceptable the respondents were to the particular conflict handling style. In this Engineering Company, job-level 1 is the highest job-level and job-level 5 is the lowest job-level.

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.78</u>	0.34	<u>0.52</u>
	Job-level 2	13	<u>2.21</u>	0.82	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.78</u>	0.34	<u>1.39</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2.47</u>	0.50	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.78</u>	0.34	<u>1.46</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2.51</u>	0.50	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.78</u>	0.34	<u>1.22</u>
	Job-level 5	27	<u>2.49</u>	0.59	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.21	0.82	0.32
	Job-level 3	38	2.47	0.50	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.21	0.82	0.38
	Job-level 4	70	2.51	0.50	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.21	0.82	0.35
	Job-level 5	27	2.49	0.59	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2.47	0.50	0.09
	Job-level 4	70	2.51	0.50	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2.47	0.50	0.04
	Job-level 5	27	2.49	0.59	
Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior	Job-level 4	70	2.51	0.50	0.03
	Job-level 5	27	2.49	0.59	

Table 4.12(b) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior: A medium effect ($d = 0,50$) is displayed. Job-level 1 avoid conflict more with their superior than job-level 2. The means are (1,78) and (2,21) respectively.

Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior: A large and practical significant effect is displayed ($d \geq 0,80$). Job-level 1 avoid conflict more than job-level 3. The means are respectively (1,78) and (2,47).

Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior: A large and practical significant effect is displayed ($d \geq 0,80$). Job-level 1 avoid conflict more than job-level 4. The means are respectively (1,78) and (2,51).

Sub_2d Avoiding/Superior: A large and practical significant effect is displayed ($d \geq 0,80$). Job-level 1 avoid conflict more than job-level 5. The means are respectively (1,78) and (2,49).

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	2,08	0,63	0,27
	Job-level 2	13	2,25	0,50	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>2,08</u>	0,63	<u>0,67</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2,50</u>	0,50	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>2,08</u>	0,63	<u>0,66</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2,50</u>	0,46	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 1	6	2,08	0,63	0,43
	Job-level 5	27	2,35	0,40	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 2	13	<u>2,25</u>	0,50	<u>0,50</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2,50</u>	0,50	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2,25	0,50	0,49
	Job-level 4	70	2,50	0,46	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2,25	0,50	0,20
	Job-level 5	27	2,35	0,40	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2,50	0,50	0,01
	Job-level 4	70	2,50	0,46	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2,50	0,50	0,30
	Job-level 5	27	2,35	0,40	
Sub_3d Dominating/Superior	Job-level 4	70	2,50	0,46	0,32
	Job-level 5	27	2,35	0,40	

Table 4.12(c) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_3d Dominating/Superior: A medium effect ($d = 0,50$) is displayed. Personnel in job-level 1 use the dominating conflict handling style more with their superior than personnel in job-level 3. The means for job-level 1 and 3 are (2,08) and (2,50) respectively.

Sub_3d Dominating/Superior: Personnel in job-level 1 use the dominating conflict handling style more with their superior than personnel in job-level 4. The means for job-level 1 and 4 are (2,08) and (2,50) respectively. The variance is a medium effect ($d = 0,50$).

Sub_3d Dominating/Superior: Personnel in job-level 2 use the dominating conflict handling style more with their superior than personnel in job-level 3. The means are respectively (2,25) and (2,50) The variance is a medium effect ($d = 0,50$).

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 1	6	2.07	0.59	0.30
	Job-level 2	13	2.25	0.46	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.07</u>	0.59	<u>0.65</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2.45</u>	0.53	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.07</u>	0.59	<u>0.65</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2.45</u>	0.50	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.07</u>	0.59	<u>0.62</u>
	Job-level 5	27	<u>2.43</u>	0.52	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.25	0.46	0.38
	Job-level 3	38	2.45	0.53	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.25	0.46	0.41
	Job-level 4	70	2.45	0.50	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 2	13	2.43	0.54	0.35
	Job-level 5	27	2.43	0.52	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2.45	0.53	0.00
	Job-level 4	70	2.45	0.50	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2.45	0.53	0.03
	Job-level 5	27	2.43	0.52	
Sub_4d Obliging/Superior	Job-level 4	70	2.45	0.50	0.04
	Job-level 5	27	2.43	0.52	

Table 4.12(d) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_4d Obliging/Superior: Personnel in job-level 1 use the obliging conflict handling style more than personnel in job-level 3. The means are respectively (2,07) and (2,45) for job-level 1 and job-level 3. The variance is a medium effect ($d = 0,50$).

Sub_4d Obliging/Superior: Personnel in job-level 1 use the obliging conflict handling style more than personnel in job-level 4. The means are respectively (2,07) and (2,45) for job-level 1 and job-level 4. The variance is a medium effect ($d = 0,50$).

Sub_4d Obliging/Superior: Personnel in job-level 1 use the obliging conflict handling style more than personnel in job-level 5. The means are respectively (2,07) and (2,43) for job-level 1 and job-level 5. The variance is a medium effect ($d = 0,50$).

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_5d	Job-level 1	6	<u>1,96</u>	0,49	<u>0,56</u>
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 2	13	<u>2,28</u>	0,58	
Sub_5d	Job-level 1	6	<u>1,96</u>	0,49	<u>1,03</u>
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 3	38	<u>2,49</u>	0,52	
Sub_5d	Job-level 1	6	<u>1,96</u>	0,49	<u>0,97</u>
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 4	70	<u>2,47</u>	0,53	
Sub_5d	Job-level 1	6	1,96	0,49	0,19
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 5	27	2,54	0,47	
Sub_5d	Job-level 2	13	2,28	0,58	0,36
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 3	38	2,49	0,52	
Sub_5d	Job-level 2	13	2,28	0,58	0,32
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 4	70	2,47	0,53	
Sub_5d	Job-level 2	13	2,28	0,58	0,44
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 5	27	2,54	0,47	
Sub_5d	Job-level 3	38	2,49	0,52	0,05
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 4	70	2,47	0,53	
Sub_5d	Job-level 3	38	2,49	0,52	0,08
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 5	27	2,54	0,47	
Sub_5d	Job-level 4	70	2,47	0,53	0,13
Compromising/Superior	Job-level 5	27	2,54	0,47	

Table 4.12(e) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_5d Compromising/Superior: Job-level 1 use compromise more than job-level 2. The means are respectively (1,96) and (2,28) for job-level 1 and job-level 2. The variance is a medium effect ($d = 0,50$).

Sub_5d Compromising/Superior: Between job-level 1 and 3 there is a large effect ($d \geq 0,80$) and it is of practical significance. Job-level 1 use the compromise conflict handling style more than job-level 3. The means are respectively (1,96) and (2,49) for job-level 1 and job-level 4.

Sub_5d Compromising/Superior: Between job-level 1 and 4 there is a large effect ($d \geq 0,80$) and it is practical significant. Job-level 1 use the compromise conflict handling style more than job-level 4. The means are respectively (1,96) and (2,47) for job-level 1 and job-level 4.

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	2.20	0.36	0.06
	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.49	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.20</u>	0.36	<u>0.58</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2.41</u>	0.35	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.20</u>	0.36	<u>0.55</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2.47</u>	0.49	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	2.20	0.36	0.45
	Job-level 5	27	2.37	0.38	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.49	0.37
	Job-level 3	38	2.41	0.35	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.49	0.48
	Job-level 4	70	2.47	0.49	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.23	0.49	0.29
	Job-level 5	27	2.37	0.38	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.41	0.35	0.12
	Job-level 4	70	2.47	0.49	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.41	0.35	0.10
	Job-level 5	27	2.37	0.38	
Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates	Job-level 4	70	2.47	0.49	0.20
	Job-level 5	27	2.37	0.38	

Table 4.12(f) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates: Personnel in job-level 1 use the integrating conflict handling style more with their subordinates than personnel in job-level 3. A medium effect is displayed ($d = 0,50$) and the means are respectively (2,20) and (2,41) for job-levels 1 and 3.

Sub_1e Integrating/Subordinates: A medium effect is displayed ($d = 0,50$) and personnel in job-level 1 use the integrating conflict handling style more than personnel in job-level 4. The means for job-level 1 and 4 are respectively (2,20) and (2,47).

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	2.22	0.27	0.23
	Job-level 2	13	2.36	0.60	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	2.22	0.27	0.49
	Job-level 3	38	2.41	0.39	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.22</u>	0.27	<u>0.58</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2.52</u>	0.51	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.22</u>	0.27	<u>0.50</u>
	Job-level 5	27	<u>2.52</u>	0.61	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.36	0.60	0.09
	Job-level 3	38	2.41	0.39	
Sub_2e AvoidingSubordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.36	0.60	0.27
	Job-level 4	70	2.52	0.51	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.36	0.60	0.27
	Job-level 5	27	2.52	0.61	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.41	0.39	0.21
	Job-level 4	70	2.52	0.51	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.41	0.39	0.19
	Job-level 5	27	2.52	0.61	
Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates	Job-level 4	70	2.52	0.51	0.01
	Job-level 5	27	2.52	0.61	

Table 4.12(g) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates: Personnel in job-level 1 avoid conflict more with their subordinates than personnel in job-level 4. The means are (2,22) and (2,52) respectively and a medium effect is displayed ($d = 0,50$).

Sub_2e Avoiding/Subordinates: Personnel in job-level 1 avoid conflict more with their subordinates than personnel in job-level 5. The means are (2,22) and (2,52) respectively and a medium effect is displayed ($d = 0,50$).

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.00</u>	0.63	<u>0.74</u>
	Job-level 2	13	<u>2.48</u>	0.65	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.00</u>	0.63	<u>0.81</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2.51</u>	0.40	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.00</u>	0.63	<u>0.85</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2.54</u>	0.52	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.00</u>	0.63	<u>0.95</u>
	Job-level 5	27	<u>2.60</u>	0.56	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.48	0.65	0.05
	Job-level 3	38	2.51	0.40	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.48	0.65	0.09
	Job-level 4	70	2.54	0.52	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.48	0.65	0.19
	Job-level 5	70	2.60	0.56	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.51	0.40	0.05
	Job-level 4	70	2.54	0.52	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.51	0.40	0.16
	Job-level 5	27	2.60	0.56	
Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates	Job-level 4	70	2.54	0.52	0.11
	Job-level 5	27	2.60	0.56	

Table 4.12(h) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates: A medium effect ($d = 0,50$) is displayed. Job-level 1 dominate their subordinates more than job-level 2. The means are respectively (2,00) and (2,48).

Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates: A large effect ($d \geq 0,80$) is displayed. Job-level 1 dominate their subordinates more than job-level 3. The means are respectively (2,00) and (2,51).

Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates: A large effect ($d \geq 0,80$) is displayed and it is of practical significance. Job-level 1 dominate their subordinates more than job-level 4. The means are respectively (2,00) and (2,54).

Sub_3e Dominating/Subordinates: A large effect ($d \geq 0,80$) is displayed and it is of practical significance. Personnel in job-level 1 dominate their subordinates more than personnel in job-level 5. The means for job-level 1 and 5 are respectively (2,00) and (2,60).

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.93</u>	0.33	<u>0.79</u>
	Job-level 2	13	<u>2.36</u>	0.54	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.93</u>	0.33	<u>1.27</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2.44</u>	0.40	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.93</u>	0.33	<u>1.23</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2.54</u>	0.50	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 1	6	<u>1.93</u>	0.33	<u>1.14</u>
	Job-level 5	27	<u>2.51</u>	0.51	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.36	0.54	0.14
	Job-level 3	38	2.44	0.40	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.36	0.54	0.33
	Job-level 4	70	2.54	0.50	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 2	13	2.36	0.54	0.28
	Job-level 5	27	2.51	0.51	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.44	0.40	0.20
	Job-level 4	70	2.54	0.50	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 3	38	2.44	0.40	0.15
	Job-level 5	27	2.51	0.51	
Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates	Job-level 4	70	2.54	0.50	0.05
	Job-level 5	27	2.51	0.51	

Table 4.12(i) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates: Job-level 1 use the obliging style more than job-level 2. A medium effect is displayed ($d = 0,50$) and the means are respectively (1,93) and (2,36).

Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates: Job-level 1 use the obliging style more than job-level 3. A large effect is displayed ($d \geq 0,80$). The means are respectively (1,93) and (2,44).

Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates: Job-level 1 use the obliging style more than job-level 4. A large effect is displayed ($d \geq 0,80$) and it is practical significant. The means are respectively (1,93) and (2,54).

Sub_4e Obliging/Subordinates: Personnel in job-level 1 use the obliging conflict handling style more with their subordinates than personnel in job-level 5. A large effect is displayed ($d \geq 0,80$) and it is of practical significance. The means for job-level 1 and 5 are respectively (1,93) and (2,51).

Variable	N		Mean	Std. Dev.	d-value
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 1	6	2.08	0.68	0.47
	Job-level 2	13	2.40	0.60	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.08</u>	0.68	<u>0.59</u>
	Job-level 3	38	<u>2.49</u>	0.44	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.08</u>	0.68	<u>0.75</u>
	Job-level 4	70	<u>2.60</u>	0.60	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 1	6	<u>2.08</u>	0.68	<u>0.53</u>
	Job-level 5	27	<u>2.44</u>	0.51	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 2	13	2.40	0.60	0.14
	Job-level 3	38	2.49	0.44	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 2	13	2.40	0.60	0.32
	Job-level 4	70	2.60	0.60	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 2	13	2.40	0.60	0.07
	Job-level 5	27	2.44	0.51	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 3	38	2.49	0.44	0.18
	Job-level 4	70	2.60	0.60	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 3	38	2.49	0.44	0.08
	Job-level 5	27	2.44	0.51	
Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinate	Job-level 4	70	2.60	0.60	0.25
	Job-level 5	27	2.44	0.51	

Table 4.12(j) Determination of Variance-analysis: Job-levels as independent Variable

Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinates: Personnel in job-level 1 compromise more than personnel in job-level 3. The means are respectively (2,08) and (2,49) for job-level 1 and 3. A medium effect ($d = 0,50$) is displayed.

Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinates: Job-level 1 compromise more than personnel in job-level 4. The means are respectively (2,08) and (2,60). A medium effect ($d = 0,50$) is displayed.

Sub_5e Compromising/Subordinates: Job-level 1 compromise more than job-level 5. The means are respectively (2,08) and (2,44). A medium effect ($d = 0,50$) is displayed.

In tables 4.12(b)-4.12(j) it can be deduced that there is a practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) in the way in which the different job-levels handle conflict; therefore Hypothesis 6 can be accepted.

4.11 SUMMARY

The conflict questionnaire consists out of five Sections. Section A is about the biographical data of the respondents, Section B is about the sources of conflict in the Engineering Company, Section C is about the influences of conflict on the personnel, Section D is how personnel handle conflict with their superior, and Section E is how personnel handle conflict with their subordinates.

The objectives of the research posed the following research questions:

- a) How are conflict dynamics conceptualized in literature?
- b) What are the main sources of conflict within the Engineering Company?
- c) What influence does conflict have on personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels of the Engineering Company?
- d) Is there a significant difference between personnel in the Engineering Company in how they handle conflict with their superior and subordinates?

Question (d) of the research questions posed the following hypotheses and it was the objective to determine if these hypotheses were true:

- ◆ **Hypothesis 1:** The different sexes handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 2:** The different age groups handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 3:** Personnel who served different official years handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 4:** Personnel who speak different home languages handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 5:** Personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 6:** Personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently.

Research question (a), **How are conflict dynamics conceptualized in literature?**, was answered in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. In Chapter 2 the following aspects of importance were discussed: Hegel's philosophies on conflict, Kant's philosophies on conflict, Marx's theories on conflict, Weber's theories on power and how it relates to conflict, the sources of conflict according to Marx and Weber, and the assumptions of conflict. In Chapter 3 the following aspects that are of importance were discussed: types of power, bases of power, sources of conflict, conflict antecedents, teamwork tactics to prevent conflict, functional conflict, dysfunctional conflict, the Conflict Process Model of Robbins, techniques to stimulate functional conflict, interpersonal conflict, management of interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, management of intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, management of intergroup conflict, intragroup conflict, and management of intragroup conflict.

Research question (b), **What are the main sources of conflict within the Engineering Company?**, was answered in this empirical chapter, namely Chapter 4. Section B in this chapter was used to determine the major sources of conflict. None of the proposed sources of conflict in the questionnaire were prevalent in the company.

Section B: Because the sources of conflict in table 4.5 were not experienced by most personnel in the sample size, it can be deduced that there are little conflict in the organization. In Chapter 3 under point 3.4.5.1, it was said that when there are too little conflict in an organization it may produce apathy, lack of creativity, indecision and missed deadlines that may again lead to dysfunctional conflict (conflict that is harmful for an organization). Too much conflict may also lead to dysfunctional conflict. The organization must try to manage conflict in such a way that a balance will be achieved between too much conflict and too little conflict. Then there will be appropriate levels of conflict that may have positive outcomes for the organization.

Section C was used to answer research question (c), What influence does conflict have on personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels of the Engineering Company? None of the proposed influences of conflict in Section C of the questionnaire were found in the company.

Section C: Because the influences of conflict in table 4.6 were not experienced by most personnel in the sample size, it can be deduced that there are little conflict in the organization. Too little conflict may not produce the health problems in table 4.6, but it may produce dysfunctional conflict. When there is too much conflict in the organization, it may produce conflict related health problems as described in Blake and Mouton's leadership Grid (see point 3.5.3.3). Too much health problems may lead to the inefficient management of conflict, because in Chapter 3 under point 3.4.5.1, it was said that too much conflict is harmful for an organization.

The biographical data of Section A were used together with the data of Section D and Section E to determine if the following hypotheses under research question (d) were true:

- ◆ **Hypothesis 1:** The different sexes handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 2:** The different age groups handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 3:** Personnel who served different official years handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 4:** Personnel who speak different home languages handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 5:** Personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 6:** Personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently.

Hypotheses 1 to 5 were found to be untrue according to the statistics (see Tables 4.7-4.11), and only Hypothesis 6 was found to be true (see Tables 4.12(a)-4.12(j)). So, different sexes do not handle conflict differently, different age groups do not handle conflict differently, personnel who served different years at the company do not handle conflict differently, personnel who speak different home languages do not handle conflict differently, and personnel with different qualifications do not handle conflict differently. Only personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently. Therefore it can be deduced that in this particular Engineering Company demographics do not play a role in different personnel handling conflict differently.

The following biographical information is worth mentioning:

- 89,54% of the respondents were male, and 10,46% were female.

- 77,27% of the respondents were of the age group (<20-35), and 22,73% were of the age group (36-60).
- 43,51% of the respondents have standard 8 or lower, 9,09% have standard 9, and 45,45% have standard 10.
- 35,06% of the respondents' home languages are English or Afrikaans, and 64,94% of the respondents speak Tswana, Sotho, Xhosa or Zulu.
- 59,74% of the respondents served between 1-4 years at the company, and 40,26% served for 5-15 years at the company.
- Regarding the respondents, job-level 1 consisted of 3,90%, job-level 2 consisted of 8,44%, job-level 3 consisted of 24,68%, job-level 4 consisted of 45,45% and job-level 5 consisted of 17,53%.

In this study it was found that different demographic characteristics do not play a role in personnel handling conflict differently. The empirical findings in this chapter contribute to the meaningfulness of the study and it gives rise to the necessity of further research on this subject. An analysis of research findings in the literature and empirical study is given in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Because conflict increased in the past decades on the macro-level (conflict between nations, political groupings, race, cultures, etcetera), and on the micro-level (between family members, within communities, within companies, and between individuals), it is necessary to find solutions and guidelines according to which conflict can be managed successfully (Havenga, 2002:169).

After the political transformation in South Africa in 1994, conflict has increased. This conflict is manifested in labour unrest, strikes, mass actions, violence, bad relations in the workplace, language clashes, culture clashes, and racial conflict. Aspects such as affirmative action, transformation, and redistribution of resources are elements that are responsible for producing conflict (Havenga, 2002:169).

It is important to note that the apartheid-ideology was not solely responsible for the divided social order, but there are also a variety of factors and ideologies that contributed to the present social and political changes that are taking place in the economical, educational, social, cultural and jurisdiction areas (Havenga, 2002:169).

In the past decade it became evident that strikes, racial unrest, dehumanizing of work, intimidation, and violence were not solely responsible for a political undertone. Tensions that developed in the world such as wars, terrorism, HIV/AIDS, and globalisation were responsible for bringing an imbalance between developing and developed countries. This imbalance had a negative impact on South Africa. This conflict that is evident on the macro-level brought forth conflict on the micro-level, and by implication companies (Havenga, 2002:169).

These changes that take place on the micro-level (between family members, within communities, within companies, and between individuals), and macro-level (conflict between

nations, political groupings, race, cultures, etcetera), and the conflict it brings, are also investigated in the enterprise environment (Havenga, 2002:170).

In the past few decades researchers viewed conflict as a dynamic, sensitive process in environments and labour negotiations. Present research regarding the conflict process also focuses frequently on communication between individuals and groups. Besides this, observation and annotations of the conflict process are also important in the research about this subject (Farmer & Roth, 1998:6).

As can be established so far, studies in literature were mainly concerned with conflicts on the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup and intergroup levels and the styles used to handle these conflicts. Thus, further research can be done about conflict in an Engineering Company (De Church & Marks, 2001; Moberg, 2002; Gross & Guerrero, 2000; Tidd & Friedman, 2002; Alper, Tjosvold & Law, 2000; Bell & Ford, 1999; Imazi & Ohbuchi, 2002).

Because conflict and the management thereof are so important in companies, the objective of this research was to determine the nature of conflict within an Engineering Company and how it is managed. In order to reach this objective, a literature and empirical study was conducted about the different aspects of conflict. It included the following:

- ◆ An explanation of key terms.
- ◆ The philosophies of Friedrich Hegel and Immanuel Kant, and the theories of Karl Marx and Max Weber were used as theoretical basis for this study.
- ◆ Conflict within the business-environment within an Engineering Company as subject.
- ◆ The conflict management process and sources of organization conflict.
- ◆ Support and amplification of the literature study by means of empirical techniques. The different elements of conflict and the management thereof within an Engineering Company were inspected by means of a questionnaire.

5.2 THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Recent and authoritative sources were used in Chapter 2 to investigate relevant theoretical aspects about conflict according to the literature. The objective was to develop a theoretical framework that can be used in the handling of the research material. The terms *company*, *conflict*, and *management* were explained in Chapter 1.

There are many theories of conflict, but the focus fell on the theories of Karl Marx and Max Weber. The determinants, sources, or prerequisites of conflict as viewed by both theorists, were discussed. The following aspects were mentioned as prerequisites for conflict namely, power, authority, mobility, scarce resources, competition, and class differences.

Max Weber's theory was used together with Karl Marx's theory, because it is important to look at the different approaches of conflict that resulted from the philosophies of Hegel and Kant. Marx was a Hegelian, whereas Weber was a neo-Kantian. The Hegelians rejected the Kantian philosophies. Marx viewed conflict as a struggle between classes, whereas Weber viewed conflict as a struggle for power.

From the literature study, it can be seen that the models of Marx and Weber have differences, but also some similarities. The theory of Marx does not have a solution for all conflict, but supply a basis for a sociological theory of conflict. Weber's theory provide aspects to conflict that does not exist in Marx's theory for example, role ambiguity, struggle between different values, struggle over inequalities or power, struggle between those that want to sell and those that want to buy. In preceding chapters, reference were made to Marx's and Weber's theories where necessary.

The application of the theories of conflict in the study were shortly discussed in Chapter 2. Aspects such as competition, class struggle, scarce resources, scientific management techniques, technology, struggle over power or inequalities, for example the struggle for prestige power, the struggle for economic power, and the struggle for pure power, were discussed.

5.3 THE NATURE OF CONFLICT WITHIN AN ENGINEERING COMPANY

In Chapter 3 we discussed the characteristics of today's companies. According to the "New" Organizational Model, modern day companies are recognized by five characteristics, namely "networked", "flat", "flexible", "diverse," and "global". Then we discussed the different views of conflict in history, namely the traditional view, behavioural view, and the interactionist view. The traditionalists view conflict in a total negative light, the behaviouralists say that conflict is not totally negative, and the interactionists view conflict in a positive light.

Next we discussed conflict in general. We looked at two types of power, namely socialized power and personalized power, and the five bases of power namely, reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, expert power, and referent power. Then we discussed sources of conflict, conflict antecedents, teamwork tactics to prevent conflict, functional conflict (in the interest of a company), and dysfunctional conflict (negative for the functioning of a company), the Conflict Process Model of Robbins, and techniques to stimulate functional conflict.

After this we looked at interpersonal conflict, the management of interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, the management of intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, the management of intergroup conflict, intragroup conflict, and the management of intragroup conflict.

Interpersonal conflict is when there is personality clashes and conflict between managers and workers on the one hand, and between peers on the other hand. Intrapersonal conflict is when an individual is experiencing incompatible goals or expectations, or when a worker wants to do more than one activity at a time. Intergroup conflict is when different teams, groups or departments fight, and intragroup conflict is when group members experience personality clashes or interpersonal problems. In Chapter 3 reference is made to the empirical study in Chapters 4 and 5.

5.4 FINDINGS IN THE LITERATURE STUDY

In Chapter 1 (see page 6) the main objective of this study was to establish through a theoretical and empirical analysis what the nature, causes and handling styles of conflict were within an Engineering Company. The main objective was partially fulfilled through the secondary objective (a), because conflict was described according to relevant industrial sociological theories in the literature.

Objective (a) in Chapter 1 (on page 6), was to determine how conflict dynamics were conceptualized in literature through the application of industrial sociological theories, organizational principles, and general management theories. This objective was achieved in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, because relevant industrial sociological theories and industrial sociological models were discussed.

In Chapter 2 (see pages 35-36), Karl Marx saw the following as the main sources of conflict and it can also be applied to an Engineering Company:

- Conflict,
- Class-consciousness,
- Lack of upward social mobility,
- Destitution,
- Absence of security,
- Unemployment,
- Competition,
- Political organization,
- Incomplete democracy,
- National unity,
- Alienation,
- Communication,
- Scarce resources.

In Chapter 2 (see pages 37-38), Max Weber saw the following as main sources of conflict that can also be applied to an Engineering Company. The Theory of Power of Weber was described in Chapter 2 (point 2.2.8), and the misuse of power was used as a source of conflict in the questionnaire:

- Power,
- Role ambiguity,
- Domination,
- Competition,
- Value systems.

Power is the means to get what one wants despite resistance to it. The struggle for power leads to conflict. Role ambiguity is a form of intrapersonal conflict, and it entails that a person does not know what is expected of him or her. Domination is when an someone wants to impose his action an another resulting in resistance to it. Competition is when there arise opportunities of exchange between a pluralist of parties, and a market comes into existence (Weber, 1978:635). There may be conflict between the buyers, because they compete to buy certain products and there may be conflict between the sellers because they compete to sell their products. A struggle between different values can also lead to conflict. It can be seen clearly that Marx and Weber had different views as to what kind of sources could lead to conflict.

In Chapter 2 (see page 43), it was mentioned that Marx was a Hegelian, because he followed the philosophies of Hegel as basis to his theories and Weber was a neo-Kantian, because he based his theories on Kant's philosophies. In the below four paragraphs we see how the two philosophers' and two theorists' definition of conflict differ.

In Chapter 2 (on page 43), Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel argued that conflict exists when individuals (in an Engineering Company) pursue their own interests. Opposing interests (in an Engineering Company) leads to conflict, and through this conflict people learn to make a compromise in order to live together and achieve their personal ends in such a way that allows for the mutual respect of the ends of others (Kain, 1998:388).

In Chapter 2 (on page 43), Karl Marx viewed society as a struggle between different classes that might produce conflict. In his time there were two classes, namely the *bourgeoisie* (owners), and the *proletariat* (workers). The two classes opposed one another, because the workers were oppressed and wanted to change things, but the owners did not want to change things (Havenga, 2002:21). In an Engineering Company workers might strike, because their interests are not met, but the interests of their superiors are met.

In Chapter 2 (page 43), according to Immanuel Kant, there are two forces which form history which are the conflict of interests and morality. The conflict of interests are interplayed by an unsocial side and a social side of human nature. The unsocial side leads to conflict and war, and the social side of human nature leads to an understanding of how important it is to cooperate with other people in order to fulfil their needs (Kain, 385-386). So, according to human nature there will always be conflict. Therefore conflict in an Engineering Company may be seen as inevitable to occur.

In Chapter 2 (page 43), Max Weber viewed society as a struggle for power that might produce conflict. Weber viewed the struggle for power as follows: The class struggles for economic power, the status group struggles for prestige power, and the party struggles for pure power (Cuff *et al.*, 1998:50). In the economic level of the Engineering Company, different classes of workers may struggle for economic power for themselves as well as for the Company. If a Company does economically well, then the different classes of workers will also do economically well. On the social level of the Engineering Company, workers may struggle to have prestige power and on the political level of the Engineering Company different parties may struggle to have pure power.

In Chapter 3 (on pages 50-67) conflict in general was discussed and it comprised of the following: Two types of power, namely socialized power and personalized power, and the seven bases of power namely reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, expert power, referent power, and connection power. Then the sources of conflict, conflict antecedents, teamwork tactics to prevent conflict, functional conflict (in the interest of a company), and dysfunctional conflict (negative for the functioning of a company), the Conflict Process Model of Robbins, and techniques to stimulate functional conflict were discussed.

Refer to Chapter 3 (pages 50-52) where Socialized power is described as the struggle for power to help others and personalized power is described as the struggle for power to help oneself. Weber's struggle for power can be applied here and in the below seven bases of power, because his theory gives a further dimension of the concept of power.

Refer to Chapter 3 (pages 50-52), to get a clearer picture of the following seven bases of power: Reward power: Some managers in the Engineering Company may use reward power by promising rewards and thereby getting compliance from others. Coercive power: Some managers in the Engineering Company may use coercive power by threatening others with punishment in order to get compliance. Legitimate power: Some managers in the Engineering Company may use legitimate power in order to obtain compliance through formal authority. Expert power: Some persons in the Engineering Company may use expert power in order to obtain compliance through the knowledge or information they have. Referent power: Some persons in the Engineering Company may use referent power to obtain compliance through charisma or personal attraction. Connection power: The sixth power base is called connection power where a manager in the Engineering Company has connections with other people and the manager uses this power to gain compliance. Information power: Workers in the Engineering Company wait for the manager to give them information when they have to maintain or improve performance.

In Chapter 3 (on pages 52-54) the sources of conflict were also discussed. Marx's prerequisites of conflict in Chapter 2 apply in the below sources of conflict in Chapter 3, because it has similarities:

In Chapter 3 (on pages 52-54), Vertical conflict is described as follows: It takes place between hierarchical levels the Engineering Company when supervisors and subordinates disagree over performance results, deadlines, goals and resources (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:314). A struggle over scarce resources is applicable in Marx's Model.

Refer to Chapter 3 (on pages 52-54), where Horizontal conflict is described as follows: It takes place at the same hierarchical level between persons or groups in the Engineering Company over scarce resources, interpersonal factors and goal incompatibilities (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:314). A struggle over scarce resources is applicable in Marx's Model.

Interest-Based conflict is described in Chapter 3 (pages 52-54), in the following way: Interest-based conflict originates from clashes between different factions, departments and units in the Engineering Company, because the opposing parties have different styles, priorities and needs, for example different departments may clash over a deadline they have to meet (Diversity Resources, 2005). Marx also viewed conflict as a struggle between two classes.

Refer to Chapter 3 (see pages 52-54), where Cultural conflict may originate in the Engineering Company from a difference in racial, ethnic and gender perspectives, or different styles of communicating (Diversity Resources, 2005). Communication was a prerequisite for conflict in Marx's Model.

See Chapter 3 (pages 52-54), where Competition is viewed as follows: Competition over rewards associated with performance can produce conflict as well as competition over scarce resources like materials, equipment, personnel and money (Plunkett *et al.*, 2005:506-507). Marx also talked about competition as a prerequisite for conflict.

In Chapter 3 (pages 52-54), Communication as a source of conflict is used as follows: Breakdowns in communication in the Engineering Company may result in misunderstandings. Sometimes a receiver do not listen very good and misunderstands the sender. The result is disagreement about goals, roles or intentions (Plunkett *et al.*, 2005:506-508). Karl Marx said that better communication technology could help the suppressed class in their fight for freedom.

In Chapter 3 (pages 52-54), common causes of conflict in the Engineering Company are competition, interests, values and ambiguity (Osland *et al.*, 2001:246). Ambiguity and a struggle between different values or interests are prerequisites for conflict in Max Weber's Model.

Refer to Chapter 3 (pages 52-54), where Informational conflict is described as follows: It originates from communication channels that are not efficiently designed, for example workers in the Engineering Company may be uncertain how to implement new regulations, groups in the Company must interpret information themselves, and workers in the Company

withhold information to maintain their power and influence over others (Diversity Resources Inc, 2005). Max Weber's viewpoint of the struggle for power also applies here.

The following conflict types and how to manage them were also discussed in Chapter 3 (pages 67-96), because it is important for employees and managers to recognize and know the type of conflict and how to deal with it effectively: interpersonal conflict, management of interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, management of intrapersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, management of intergroup conflict, intragroup conflict, and the management of intragroup conflict.

See Chapter 3 (pages 67-96), where the following conflict types are discussed in more detail: Interpersonal conflict: It is when there is personality clashes and conflict in the Engineering Company between managers and workers on the one hand, and between peers on the other hand. Intrapersonal conflict: It is when an individual in the Engineering Company is experiencing incompatible goals or expectations, or when a worker in the Company wants to do more than one activity at a time. Intergroup conflict: It is when different teams, groups or departments in the Engineering Company fight. Intragroup conflict's definition has the same meaning as interpersonal conflict. Intragroup conflict is when group members in the Engineering Company experience personality clashes or interpersonal problems.

5.5 FINDINGS IN THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

In Chapter 1 (see page 6) the main objective of this study was to establish through a theoretical and empirical analysis what the nature, causes and handling styles of conflict were within an Engineering Company. The main objective was partially fulfilled through the secondary objectives (b)-(d), because through the questionnaire the empirical results were used to answer these secondary objectives in order to reach the main objective.

Secondary Objectives:

Refer to Chapter 3 (pages 6-7), where the objectives of this study are discussed: Objective (b) was to determine the main sources of conflict within an Engineering Company. Objective (c) was to determine if personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels in the Engineering Company were influenced differently by conflict. Objective (d) was to determine if there was

a significant difference between the personnel in the Engineering Company in the way in which they handle conflict with their superior and subordinates by means of the following hypotheses:

General Hypothesis: There exists a significant difference in the handling of conflict by the personnel of the engineering company.

Statistical Hypotheses:

- ◆ **Hypothesis 1:** The different sexes handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 2:** The different age groups handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 3:** Personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 4:** Personnel who speak different home languages, handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 5:** Personnel who served different official years, handle conflict differently.
- ◆ **Hypothesis 6:** Personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently.

A total of 154 out of 160 questionnaires were received back. So, regarding the questionnaire, 96.25% workers in the Engineering Company responded. According to (Hair, *et al.*, 1995:103-105) the sample size is sufficient to use in multivariate statistical techniques in order to analyse data.

The questionnaire consists of five sections, namely Section A describing the biographical data, Section B describing the sources or prerequisites for conflict, Section C describing the results and influences conflict may have on mental and physical health, Section D describing ways how personnel handle conflict with their superior, and Section E describing how personnel handle conflict with their subordinates.

Objective (b) was determined by means of the questionnaire. In the questionnaire the main sources of conflict in the Engineering Company according to Marx and Weber in Chapter 2 (on pages 35-38) included the following: Affirmative action programme, racial differences, implementation of new management techniques, availability of resources, dismissals of workers, implementation of new technology, extent and contents of work, uneven distribution of scarce resources between departments, and misuse of power by superiors. See also the empirical Chapter 4 (point 4.9.1) for a more thorough discussion.

None of the above-mentioned sources of conflict were found to be prevalent in the Engineering Company, so the sources of conflict according to Marx and Weber do not apply here. See the empirical Chapter 4 (points 4.9.1), for a more thorough discussion. Objective (b) was therefore not achieved.

Objective (c) was also determined by means of the questionnaire. The following results and influences conflict may have on mental and physical health on the personnel in the Engineering Company were mentioned in the questionnaire: Not possible to perform, becoming hostile toward colleagues, decline cooperation, develop stress, consider a job change, alienate oneself, develop physical health problems. See Chapter 3 (pages 78-81) and the empirical Chapter 4 (pages 110-111), for a more thorough discussion.

None of the above influences of conflict were found in the Engineering Company, so the influences of conflict according to Blake and Mouton were not applicable here. See Chapter 3 (pages 78-81) and the empirical Chapter 4 (pages 110-111), for a more thorough discussion.

Objective (c) was therefore not achieved.

Objective (d) was determined as follows: In the questionnaire, the biographical data of Section A were used in conjunction with the data of Section D and E to determine if the following hypotheses were true:

- Hypothesis 1: The different sexes handle conflict differently
- Hypothesis 2: The different age groups handle conflict differently
- Hypothesis 3: Personnel who served different official years handle conflict differently
- Hypothesis 4: Personnel who speak different home languages handle conflict differently
- Hypotheses 5: Personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently
- Hypothesis 6: Personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently.

According to the statistics in the empirical Chapter 4, the following were found:

With regard to Hypothesis 1: The different sexes did not handle conflict differently:

In table 4.7 the following were found: There was not any practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) how the two sexes handle conflict, because the difference was too small. The lower the

mean, the more applicable the conflict handling style: Group 2 used the Integrating, Avoiding and Obliging styles a little more with the superior than Group 1. Group 1 used the Dominating and Compromising styles a little more with the superior than Group 2. Group 2 used the Integrating, Avoiding and Dominating styles a little more than Group 1. Group 1 used the Obliging and Compromising styles a little more than Group 2. Hypothesis 1 that different sexes handle conflict differently was rejected, because the difference was too small to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$). So, (Group 1: male and Group 2: female) handle conflict about the same. See point 3.5.9.2 in Chapter 3 for the different conflict handling styles.

With regard to Hypothesis 2: The different age groups did not handle conflict differently:

In table 4.8 it was found that there was too little difference how the young age group (Group 1: 20-35 years), and the older age group (Group 2: 36-60), handle conflict, because there was no practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) how the two groups used the different conflict handling styles (see point 3.5.9.2). The lower the mean, the more applicable was the conflict handling style: Group 2 used the Integrating, Avoiding, Dominating styles a little more with the superior than Group 1. Group 1 used the Obliging and Compromising styles a little more with the superior than Group 2. Group 2 used the Integrating, Obliging, Dominating and Compromising styles a little more with the subordinates than Group 2. Group 1 and Group 2 used the Avoiding style the same. Because the difference was too small to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$), Hypothesis 2 which said that different age groups handled conflict differently was rejected.

Hypothesis 3 was rejected, because personnel who served different official years did not handle conflict differently:

In table 4.9 the difference how the 3 groups handled conflict was too small to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$), therefore the hypothesis that said personnel with different qualifications handled conflict differently was rejected. See point 3.5.9.2 about the different conflict handling styles. Group 1 has standard 8, Group 2 standard 9, and Group 3 standard 10.

With regard to Hypothesis 4: The personnel who speak different home languages did not handle conflict differently:

In table 4.10 it was found that the difference between the different home language groups, namely Group 1 (The Western languages group), and Group 2 (The African languages group), in the manner they handled conflict was too small in order to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$). The lower the mean the more applicable was the conflict handling style: The 2 groups used the Integrating style with the superior the same, but Group 1 used the Integrating style a little more with the subordinates. Group 2 used the Avoiding style a little more with the superior, but Group 1 used the Avoiding style a little more with the subordinates. Group 1 used the Dominating, Obliging and Compromising styles a little more than Group 2. Different groups who speak different home languages do not handle conflict differently, because there was no practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) in the manner in which the two different language groups used the different conflict handling styles (see point 3.5.9.2). Therefore Hypothesis 4 was rejected.

With regard to Hypothesis 5: The personnel with different qualifications did not handle conflict differently:

In table 4.11 it was found that there was too little difference between personnel who served different official years and the manner in which they handled conflict in order to be of practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$). The lower the mean, the more applicable was the conflict handling style. Group 1 (1-4 years of service) used all five conflict handling styles a little more than Group 2 (5-15 years of service). Because there was no real practical significance ($d \geq 0,8$), in the manner different personnel who served different official years, used the different conflict handling styles (see point 3.5.9.2), Hypothesis 5 was rejected.

With regard to Hypothesis 6: The personnel in different job-levels handled conflict differently:

In tables 4.12(b) - 4.12(j) it was found that there was a practical significant difference ($d \geq 0,8$) in how the different job-levels handled conflict; therefore Hypothesis 6 was accepted.

The conclusion can then be made that different demographic characteristics did not play a role in personnel handling conflict differently. In general all the respondents handled conflict in about the same manner.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The various personnel in the Engineering Company should get sufficient training on the different types of conflict that exist, and guidelines to follow in order to manage or deal with each type of conflict.

The personnel must also learn about the different sources of conflict and how to anticipate and handle conflict before the situation gets worse.

The personnel must also learn to identify dysfunctional and functional conflict. They must learn how to use or manage functional conflict in such a manner that the company will benefit from it. Otherwise, if functional conflict is not handled correctly it might turn into dysfunctional conflict. They must learn how to manage dysfunctional conflict so that it will not cause further damage to the company.

Personnel in the company should know what is expected of them, and their roles must be clearly defined so that there will not be role ambiguity that might cause further conflict.

Role overload might lead to burnout, depression and conflicting reactions. The Human Resource Department must find a solution for personnel to work together efficiently as teams. Then there will not be role overload.

It is very important that the various personnel learn about personality conflict, because in the past it resulted in law suits in many companies. The personnel must learn the facts about the various personality temperaments, and learn to understand each other more clearly and work together efficiently.

Healthy management principles is important in order to limit the occurrence of conflict. It is recommended that company regulations with regards to the handling and management of conflict must be formulated and acted out.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

It is important to take note that the empirical research was done within one Engineering Company and that the results cannot be generalized. The results can therefore not be applied to all engineering companies in South Africa.

Not all sources or causes of conflict and the handling or management of it could be given in the research study, because the study could not contain such a vast amount of information.

The sources of conflict according to Marx and Weber were not applicable in this Engineering Company. If such sources were not prevalent in the company, there must have been other sources of conflict that were not mentioned in the questionnaire.

The influences of conflict in the questionnaire were not prevalent in the company. The questionnaire was limited to just a few influences conflict could have on the personnel.

The workers were very busy working in the mines, so they could have just answered the questionnaires to get it over with.

Aside from the limitations of the study, the objectives were answered by means of the empirical findings. Regarding the statistics, most of the questions in all of the questionnaires that were received, were answered. Not one of the questionnaires that were returned were discarded. All the questionnaires that were returned were useful.

5.8 FURTHER RESEARCH

- Further research can be done on a wider scale in engineering companies.
- A comparative study between different engineering companies can be done.
- Research can be done on how each leadership style handle conflict, and how managers can improve on handling conflict more effectively.
- The sources and influences of conflict can be more closely investigated in different engineering companies.
- In different engineering companies the following comparisons can be made:

- a) A comparison on how women in different engineering companies handle conflict.
- b) A comparison on how men in different engineering companies handle conflict.
- c) A comparison on how the same age groups in different engineering companies handle conflict.
- d) A comparison on how the same home language groups in different engineering companies handle conflict.
- e) A comparison on how the same qualification groups in different engineering companies handle conflict.
- f) A comparison on how personnel who served the same official years in different engineering companies handle conflict.

5.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY

The main objective of this research was to investigate the nature of conflict in an Engineering Company in the North West Province. To achieve the main objective, the following objectives were set:

- a) To determine how conflict dynamics are conceptualized in literature through the application of industrial sociological theories, organizational principles, and general management theories.
- b) To determine the main sources of conflict within an Engineering Company.
- c) To determine if personnel on the horizontal and vertical levels in the Engineering Company are influenced differently by conflict.
- d) To determine if there is a significant difference between the personnel in the Engineering Company in the way in which they handle conflict with their superior/s and subordinates by means of the following hypotheses:

General Hypothesis: There exists a significant difference in the handling of conflict by the personnel of the Engineering Company.

Statistical Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The different sexes handle conflict differently.

Hypothesis 2: The different age groups handle conflict differently.

Hypothesis 3: Personnel who served different official years handle conflict differently.

Hypothesis 4: Personnel who speak different home languages handle conflict differently.

Hypothesis 5: Personnel with different qualifications handle conflict differently.

Hypothesis 6: Personnel in different job-levels handle conflict differently.

Objective (a): The knowledge gained in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, contributed to the understanding of the nature of conflict in an organization and ways to manage it successfully.

Objective (b): In Chapter 2, philosophies and theories of conflict were discussed. Aspects in Chapter 2 were taken, and where possible, applied to Rahim's Questionnaire in the empirical Chapter 4. The sources of conflict, according to Karl Marx, were applied to Section B in the Questionnaire. According to the statistics, it was found that Karl Marx's sources of conflict were not prevalent in this particular Engineering Company. Objective (b) was not reached in this regard, because the sources of conflict that exist in this specific Engineering Company could not be determined by this particular section in the Questionnaire. However, it was possible to deduce the sources of conflict in this company by means of Sections A, D and E which were constructed to determine the hypotheses of objective (d). The conclusion can be drawn that it is best to apply modern theories of the sources of conflict to the Questionnaire. There may also be other sources of conflict which were not mentioned, and need to be investigated. Further investigation may in turn lead to discovering other sources of conflict.

Objective (c): In Chapter 3, one of the topics discussed, was the mental and physical health problems related to conflict according to Blake and Mouton's Model. These health problems were applied to Section C in Rahim's Conflict Questionnaire in Chapter 4. According to the statistics it was found that none of these health problems were prevalent in this particular Engineering Company. Although objective (c) was not reached, the main objective was reached, because the following about the nature of conflict in this company could be deduced: According to Chapter 3, the conclusion could be drawn, that there is actually only a moderate level of conflict in this Engineering Company, because the health problems of Blake and Mouton do not apply here. It seems to be a healthy Company. Therefore, the Company manages its functional conflict well. Too little or too much conflict may, however, lead to various negative outcomes, problems, or health issues. These findings can lead to the necessity of future studies of how companies can maintain a balance between too little and too much conflict.

Objective (d): Although Hypotheses 1-5 were found to be untrue, and only Hypothesis 6 true, the main objective was reached. The nature of conflict in this Company can be described as follows: Because it was found that different job-levels do handle conflict differently (Hypothesis 6), it can be deduced that there has to be traces of conflict in the different departments. The following sources of conflict, according to Chapter 3, may be prevalent in this Company: vertical conflict, horizontal conflict, and interest-based conflict.

Vertical Conflict takes place between hierarchical levels when supervisors and subordinates disagree over performance results, deadlines, goals and resources (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:314). A struggle over scarce resources between two classes is one of Marx's sources of conflict.

Horizontal Conflict takes place at the same hierarchical level between persons or groups over scarce resources, interpersonal factors, and goal incompatibilities (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2004:314). A struggle over scarce resources is a source of conflict in Marx's model.

Interest-Based Conflict originates from clashes between different functions, departments and units, because the opposing parties have different styles, priorities and needs, for example different departments may clash over a deadline they have to meet (Diversity Resources, 2005). Marx also viewed conflict as a struggle between two classes and that conflict is a source for further conflict.

Because demographic characteristics did not play a role in determining how personnel differ in the way they handle conflict, it is necessary to do further research on this subject.

ANNEXURE A**VERTROULIK**

Vraelys voltooi te word deur werknemers van 'n Ingenieursmaatskappy.

DOEL

Om data te verkry oor konflik, omvang en aard daarvan binne 'n Ingenieursmaatskappy, die data te verwerk en dan aanbevelings te maak rakende die bestuur van konflik.

BEANTWOORDING VAN VRAE

Die vraeboog kan in u eie tyd ingevul word en behoort nie langer as 20 minute te neem om te voltooi nie. U moet die vrae sonder die hulp van ander persone en objektief en eerlik beantwoord.

KONFIDENSIALITEIT

Alle inligting wat verstrekkend word, is vertroulik en konfidensieel en sal onder geen omstandighede u werk en posisie in gedrang bring nie. Die inligting is slegs ter insae van die navorser.

DATUM EN PLEK VAN INHANDIGING VAN VOLTOOIDE VRAEBOË

Die voltooide vraelys moet asseblief voor 12 Augustus 2005 in die bussie wat in u afdeling beskikbaar gestel sal word deur die Menslike Hulpbron-departement van die maatskappy, geplaas word.

CONFIDENTIAL

Questionnaire to be completed by employees of an Engineering Company.

OBJECTIVE

To gather data on conflict, its nature and extent thereof within an Engineering Company, process the data and then make recommendations on how it should be managed if deemed necessary.

ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS

The questionnaire can be completed in your own time and should not take longer than 20 minutes to complete. Answer the questions objectively and honestly without the assistance of anyone else.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information supplied will be treated as private and confidential and will under no circumstances place your work or position in danger. The information is only for perusal of the researcher.

DATE AND PLACE FOR HANDING IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The completed questionnaire must be placed in the appropriate box that will be supplied by the Human Resource Department of the Company, before 12 August 2005.

**AFDELING A: BIOGRAFIESE BESONDERHEDE /
SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1. Geslag / *Sex*

1	Manlik/ <i>Male</i>	
2	Vroulik/ <i>Female</i>	

2. Ouderdom / *Age*

1	20-35	
2	36-60	

3. Hoogste kwalifikasie behaal / *Highest qualification achieved.*

1	Grade 10/lower	
2	Grade 11	
3	Grade 12	
4	Other Qualifications	

4. Wat is u huistaal? / *Your home language ?*

1	Western language	
2	African language	

5. Hoeveel jaar werk u al by die Maatskappy? / *For how many years have you been working for the Company ?*

1	1-4	
2	5-15	

6. In watter departement is u werksaam? / *In which department are you employed?*

7. In watter posvlak is u? / *What is your job-level?*

Posvlak..../ *Job-level....*

1	2	3	4	5

AFDELING B/ SECTION B:

Dui asseblief vervolgens aan, op 'n skaal van 1 tot 3, watter van die volgende bydra tot konflik in die Maatskappy / *Please indicate, on a scale of 1 to 3 which of the following contribute to conflict in the company.*

	Yes	Unsure	No
1. Regstellende aksieprogram / <i>affirmative action programme</i>	1.	2.	3.
2. Kultuurverskille / <i>Cultural differences</i>	1.	2.	3.
3. Rasseverskille / <i>Racial differences</i>	1.	2.	3.
4. Toepassing van nuwe bestuurstegnieke / <i>Implementation of new management techniques</i>	1.	2.	3.
5. Beskikbaarheid van hulpbronne (toerusting, finansies, ens.) / <i>Availability of resources (equipment, finances, ect.)</i>	1.	2.	3.
6. Rasionalisering/ aflegging van werknemers / <i>Rationalisation/ dismissals of workers</i>	1.	2.	3.
7. Toepassing van nuwe tegnologie (meganisasie, outomatisasie en rekenarisering) / <i>Implementation of new technology (mechanization, automatisisation and computerising)</i>	1.	2.	3.
8. Omvang en inhoud van werk / <i>Extent and contents of work</i>	1.	2.	3.
9. Oneweredige verspreiding van skaars hulpbronne tussen afdelings / <i>Uneven distribution of scarce resources between departments</i>	1.	2.	3.
10. Magsmisbruik deur meerderes (seniors) / <i>Misuse of power by superiors</i>	1.	2.	3.

AFDELING C/ SECTION C:

Indien u konflik in u werk ervaar, watter invloed het dit op u? Dui aan op 'n skaal van 1 tot 3
 / If you experience conflict in your work what influence does it have on you? Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 3.

No	Yes Unsure		
1. Nie in staat om te presteer nie / <i>Not possible to perform</i>	1.	2.	3.
2. Raak vyandig teenoor kollegas / <i>Become hostile toward colleagues</i>	1.	2.	3.
3. Weier samewerking / <i>Decline cooperation</i>	1.	2.	3.
4. Ontwikkel stres / <i>Develop stress</i>	1.	2.	3.
5. Oorweeg verandering van werk / <i>Consider a job change</i>	1.	2.	3.
6. Vervreem myself van ander personeel / <i>Alienate myself from other staff- members</i>	1.	2.	3.
7. Ontwikkel fisiese gesondheidsprobleme / <i>Develop physical health problems</i>	1.	2.	3.

AFDELING D/ SECTION D:

U mag onverenigbaarhede, misverstande of verskille d.i. (konflik), met u hoof hê. Plaas elkeen van die volgende stellings in rangorde om aan te dui **hoe u konflik met u HOOF hanteer**. Merk u reaksie in die toepaslike vakkies op u antwoordbladsy met 'n (X). Daar is geen regte of verkeerde antwoord nie. Die reaksie wat mees kenmerkend van u gedrag is wanneer u in 'n situasie van konflik met u hoof verkeer, is die beste antwoord.

*You may have incompatibilities, disagreements, or differences (i.e., conflict) with your boss. Rank each of the following statements to indicate **how you handle conflict with your BOSS (Superior)**. Mark your responses in the appropriate boxes on your answer sheet with an (X). There are no right or wrong answers. The response which is most characteristic of your behaviour in a situation of conflict with your boss, is the best answer.*

4. Stem nie saam / *Disagree*
 3. Besluitloos / *Undecided*
 2. Stem saam / *Agree*
 1. Stem ten volle saam / *Strongly agree*

STELLINGS / STATEMENTS

1. Ek probeer om 'n probleem wat ek met my hoof het, te ondersoek en 'n aanvaarbare oplossing vir ons albei te vind. / *I try to investigate an issue with my boss to find a solution acceptable to both of us.*
2. Oor die algemeen probeer ek om aan die behoeftes van my hoof te voldoen. / *I generally try to satisfy the needs of my boss.*
3. Ek probeer keer dat ek in die kollig geplaas word (being put on the spot) en probeer om konflik met my hoof vir myself te hou. / *I attempt to avoid being "put on the spot" and keep conflict with my boss to myself*
4. Ek probeer om my idees met die van my hoof sinvol te integreer om gesamentlik tot 'n besluit te kom. / *I try to integrate my ideas with those of my boss to jointly come up with a decision.*
5. Ek werk saam met my hoof om 'n oplossing te vind wat ons verwagtinge bevredig. / *I try to work with my boss to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations.*

1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4

AFDELING E/SECTION E

U mag onverenigbaarhede, misverstande of verskille d.i. (konflik), met u hoof hê. Plaas elkeen van die volgende stellings in rangorde om aan te dui **hoe u konflik met u WERKERS hanteer**. Merk u reaksie in die toepaslike vakkies op u antwoordbladsy met 'n (X). Daar is geen regte of verkeerde antwoord nie. Die reaksie wat mees kenmerkend van u gedrag is wanneer u in 'n situasie van konflik met u hoof verkeer, is die beste antwoord.

*You may have incompatibilities, disagreements, or differences (i.e., conflict) with your boss. Rank each of the following statements to indicate **how you handle conflict with your WORKERS**. Mark your responses in the appropriate boxes on your answer sheet with an (X). There are no right or wrong answers. The response which is most characteristic of your behaviour in a situation of conflict with your boss, is the best answer.*

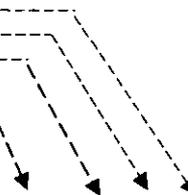
4. Stem nie saam / *Disagree*
 3. Besluitloos / *Undecided*
 2. Stem saam / *Agree*
 1. Stem ten volle saam / *Strongly agree*

STELLINGS / STATEMENTS

1. Ek probeer om 'n probleem wat ek met my werkers het, te ondersoek en 'n aanvaarbare oplossing vir ons albei te vind. / *I try to investigate an issue with my workers to find a solution acceptable to both of us.*
2. Oor die algemeen probeer ek om aan die behoeftes van my werkers te voldoen. / *I generally try to satisfy the needs of my workers.*
3. Ek probeer keer dat ek in die kollig geplaas word (being put on the spot) en probeer om konflik met my werkers vir myself te hou. / *I attempt to avoid being "put on the spot" and keep conflict with my workers to myself.*
4. Ek probeer om my idees met die van my werkers sinvol te integreer om gesamentlik tot 'n besluit te kom. / *I try to integrate my ideas with those of my workers to jointly come up with a decision.*
5. Ek werk saam met my werkers om 'n oplossing te vind wat ons verwagtinge bevredig. / *I try to work with my workers to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations.*

1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4

4. Stem nie saam / *Disagree*
 3. Besluitloos / *Undecided*
 2. Stem saam / *Agree*
 1. Stem ten volle saam / *Strongly agree*



20. Ek gebruik “gee en neem” sodat ‘n kompromie bereik kan word. /
I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be reached.
21. Ek staan normaalweg vas in die navolging van my kant van die saak. /
I am generally firm in pursuing my side of the issue.
22. Ek probeer om al die bekommernisse na vore te bring sodat probleemsake op
 die beste manier opgelos kan word. / *I try to bring all concerns out in the open
 so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.*
23. Ek werk saam met my werkers om oplossings te vind wat vir ons almal
 aanvaarbaar is. / *I collaborate with my workers to come up with decisions
 acceptable to all of us.*
24. Ek probeer om aan die verwagtinge van my werkers te voldoen. / *I try to satisfy
 the expectations of my workers.*
25. Somtyds gebruik ek my mag om ‘n mededingende situasie te wen. / *I sometimes
 use my power to win a competitive situation.*
26. Ek probeer om my verskille met my werkers vir myself te hou om sodoende
 kwade gevoelens te vermy. / *I try to keep my disagreement with my workers to
 myself in order to avoid hard feelings.*
27. Ek probeer om ongemaklike gesprekke met my werkers te vermy. / *I try to
 avoid unpleasant exchanges with my workers.*
28. Ek probeer om saam met my werkers te werk aan die behoorlike begrip van ‘n
 probleem. / *I try to work with my workers for a proper understanding of a
 problem.*

1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4

Dankie vir u samewerking. / Thank you for your cooperation.

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