

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMUNICATION CLIMATE AND INTERPERSONAL
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES**

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ABSTRACT

Relation between different styles of interpersonal conflict management and dimensions of organizational communication climate was looked into; employing a sample of 160 bank employees. Sample included men and women employees having age range of 27 to 55 years ($M=38.07$ and $SD=1.44$) and education ranges from graduation to post graduation. Organizational Communication Climate Inventory developed by Costigan and Schmeidler (2004) and Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (1983) were administered to assess the communication climate within the organizations and different styles of handling interpersonal conflict. The correlation analysis revealed that supportive ($r = .41$; $p < .000$) and defensive ($r = .32$; $p < .001$) communication climate dimensions showed positive relationship with total scores of conflict management inventory. The results further showed that integrating ($r = .44$; $p < .001$), obliging ($r = .46$; $p < .001$) and compromising ($r = .26$; $p < .01$) styles of handling conflict has significant positive correlation with supportive communication

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climate. Dominating (r = .38; p < .01) and avoiding (r = .36, p < .01) styles of handling conflict has significant positive correlation with defensive communication climate. Findings revealed non significant differences with respect to gender on communication climate; women are found to use more "comprising" and "avoiding" styles of conflict management. On education non significant differences existed on communication climate, however less educated people were found to be compromising and obliging on styles of conflict management and highly educated people showed dominating styles of conflict management. Moreover, younger employees are found to be highly endorsed on supportive communication climate than old age employees and old age employees are also found to be more obliging.

Key words: Conflict management, Communication climate, Supportive, Defensive, Integrating, Obliging, Compromising, Dominating

INTRODUCTION

Organizational studies represent the search for order, rationality, and regulation of human behavior. Mayo's Human Relation Theory, a first great scientific experiment (Hawthorn Studies) changed the organizational trend from bureaucratization towards communication as more powerful and important in morale and productivity than working conditions (see e.g., Clark, 1985; Pace & Faules, 1989). This contemporary trend towards studying 'people' and 'morale' identified the need to identify the role of communication in organizations. Communication is deemed essential to attaining the organizations goals (see for example, Argyris, 1960; Ansari & Kapoor, 1987; Ansari & Saxena, 1994; Mehta, 1977). Literature review suggests that when communication structure is discovered, behavior will be predictable, and efficient (see for example Kilpatrick, 2000; Raja & Green, 1995; Ansari & Kapoor, 1987; Ansari & Saxena, 1994; Peterson & Pace, 1979; Siegel & Turney, 1980; Beehr, King & Daniel, 1990; Ansari, 1980; Helgesen, 1990; Bansal, 1982; Krishnan, 1984). The present study is aimed to explore the relationship of communication climate with styles of handling interpersonal conflicts in organizations (Schutz, 1958; Bansal, 1977; Siegel & Turney, 1980; Padaki, 1983; Beehr, King & Daniel, 1990).

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Empirical studies report that communication is a constant process in organizations (Ansari & Kapoor, 1987; Peterson & Pace, 1979). Organizational communication climate has an important role in organizations. The communication climate in any organization is a key determinant of its effectiveness. Organizations with supportive environments encourage worker participation, free and open exchange of information, and constructive conflict resolution. In organizations with defensive climates, employees keep things to them, make only guarded statements, and suffer from reduced morale (Costigan & Schmeidler, 2004; Raja & Green, 1995). Gibb (1961) characterized a supportive climate as one having provisionism, empathy, equality, spontaneity, problem orientation, and description and a defensive climate as having evaluation, control, strategy, neutrality, superiority, and certainty. Gibb affirmed that employees are influenced by the communication climate in the organization.

Argyris (1960) describes the factors which comprise organizational climate. In a study of organizational relationships among staff members of a bank, Argyris reported conflict faced by the employees who seek activity and independence through psychological development and the bureaucratic, formalized organizations which keep the individual in an immature state of passive dependence. Argyris suggests that it is important to find ways to manage this expected conflict and keep it within tolerable bounds. He further suggested that an interpersonal atmosphere of trust, openness, and low threat needs to be created. Without such an atmosphere, people feel they must attempt to hide conflict, which makes the problem that much more difficult to identify and deal with (as cited in Ochitwa, 1966).

According to Ansari and Kapoor (1987) organizational climate has been found to affect the use of ingratiation behavior. The climate of an organization is determined partly by leadership styles conceptualized as authoritarian and participative. It is found that the managers in participative climate encourage group decision making, team spirit, supportive relationships and high goals. The managers in an authoritarian climate are status and power oriented; demanding blind obedience and personal loyalty from their subordinates. Because ingratiation feeds the target person's vanity and need for power, the possibility of successful ingratiation is perceived by the ingratiation as more probable in such a climate. Different communication climates give rise to different sets of behaviors that has a significant contribution in conflict resolution.

One of the most direct measures of organizational climate is Peterson and Pace's (1979) communication climate inventory. The inventory consists of

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perceptions, attitudes, and expectations of organization's members that indicate to them that levels of trust, supportiveness, openness, candor, participative decision making, and concern for high performance goals exist in the organization. Bender (1977), Baugh (1978), Applbaum and Anatol (1979) administered communication climate inventory in their researches and demonstrated the fact that climate of communication in an organization is composite of evaluations, conflict resolution and reactions to that activities that take place in an organization. Communication climate in an organization is a key determinant of its effectiveness. Organizations with supportive climate encourage work participation; free an open exchange of information, and constructive conflict resolution. In organizations with defensive climates, employees keep things to them, make only guarded statements, and suffer from reduced morale (Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004).

The rationale of conducting this study is deduced by theoretical formulation of Schutz (1958), who positioned that people interact with one another in organizational setting to satisfy some degree of interpersonal needs (1) inclusion is the need to interact with other people (2) control is the need to have power and influence (3) affection is the need to have warm close personal relationships with others. At the other extreme is the situation in which a person prefers impersonal and distant rather than close relationships with other people (see for example Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004). A person's needs help to determine efforts designed to achieve goals, to secure resources and establish identity status and norms. The implication is that people want to do different things and they also want to have same things. These concepts of incompatible goals and scarce resources are signs of conflict; identified by an increase in rate of disagreement among people. People have preferred ways of handling conflict (Filly, 1975; Frost & Wilmot, 1978). Conflict occurs when different view points or beliefs about how to make decisions or divide scarce resources clash. These organizational conflicts are frequently dealt by five conflict management styles i.e., compromising, dominating, obliging, avoiding, and integrating (Rahim, 1983).

The objectives before the present research is to test the validity of this argument further employing a sample of Pakistani culture which shares many common cultural values of the Asian countries. Specifically, the present study undertakes to test the hypotheses that organizational communication climate is positively related to styles of handling interpersonal conflicts, within organizational settings. First hypothesis formulated is therefore in agreement with generally observed research finding that subordinates scoring high on

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supportive organizational communication climate will also score high on integrating style of conflict management. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that subordinates scoring high on supportive communication climate will also score high on compromising and obliging style of handling interpersonal conflict management and subordinates scoring high on defensive communication climate will score high on dominating and avoiding style of handling interpersonal conflict management. Finally, in view of the earlier research, Present study is also aimed to analyze differences due to demographic variables of gender, age and education, etc literature review suggests that there exist several differences between male and female managers on styles of handling conflict or exhibit alternative patterns of communication (as for example Witherspoon, 1997; Helgesen, 1990; Korabik, Baril, & Watson, 1993; Burrell, Buzzenal & McMillan, 1992). Therefore it is hypothesized that there exists a significance difference between men and women managers on communication and styles of handling interpersonal conflicts.

This research carries implications to objectively explore the communication patterns and resulting conflicts in organizations (Van Maanen, John, & Barley, 1985). It can be used as a valuable guide to identify the defensive patterns of communication in organization and can help to substitute them with more positive aspects of organizations. It guides managers (Siegel & Turney, 1980) and to researchers that how conflict can be resolved in a more constructive manner by creating a climate of trust, spontaneity and empathy. It will thus help to understand that when communication structure is discovered, behavior will be predictable, and efficient.

METHOD

Participants

The sample of 160 subordinates was taken from different banks of Rawalpindi and Islamabad cities of Pakistan. Subordinate is defined as an employee working under the supervision of manager of the chosen bank. The required demographic information was age, gender, education of employees.

Measures

Communication Climate Inventory

Communication climate inventory devised by Costigan and Schmiedler, (2001) was used in present study. Tests of CCI's internal reliability show coefficients

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ranging from .80 to .97, which are generally considered very satisfactory (Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004). This inventory consisted of 36 items each item scored on 5-point scale i.e. its ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The purpose of using this scale in present study is that it covers two main climates of communication i.e. defensive climate and supportive climate. Out of 36 items the odd numbered items measure the defensive climate (and even numbered items measure the supportive climate).

A defensive climate comprises of following characteristics:

1. Evaluation: The supervisor is critical and judgmental and will not accept explanations from subordinates.
2. Control: The supervisor consistently directs in an authoritarian manner and attempts to char others.
3. Strategy: The supervisor manipulates subordinates and often misinterprets or twists and distorts what is said.
4. Neutrality: The supervisor offers minimal personal support for and remains aloof from employees' personal problems and conflicts.
5. Superiority: The supervisor reminds employees who is in charge, closely oversees the work, and makes employees feel inadequate.
6. Certainty: The supervisor is dogmatic and unwilling to admit mistakes.

The individuals should foster a supportive climate, marked by the traits. Following are the subscales measuring supportive communication climate (Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004).

1. Provisionalism: The supervisor allows flexibility, experimentation and creativity
2. Empathy: The supervisor attempts to understand and listen to employee problems and respect employee feelings and values.
3. Equality: The supervisor does not try to make employees feel inferior, does not use status to control situations, and respects the position of others.
4. Spontaneity: The supervisor's communications are free of hidden motives and honest, ideas can be communicated freely.
5. Problem Orientation: The supervisor defines problems rather then giving solutions, is open to discussion about mutual problems, and does not insist on employee agreement.
6. Description: The supervisor's communications are clear, describe situations fairly and present his or her perceptions without implying the need for change.

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Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory

Conflict management styles are assessed by 28-items Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROCI-II; Rahim, 1983), which measures how organizational members handle their interpersonal conflict with superiors, subordinates and peers. ROCI-II contains five subscales including Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding and Compromising. An organizational member responds to each statement on a five-point Likert scale (1=N) never or almost never true of you, (2=R) rarely or seldom true of you, (3=S) sometimes true of you, (4=O) often true of you, (5=A) always or almost true of you. A higher score represents greater use of a conflict style. Rahim (1983) found the test retest reliability of the subscales of ROCI-II, at one week intervals, range between .60 & .83 ($p < .0001$). Further, the internal consistency reliability coefficient for each subscale as assessed with Cronbach's Alpha ranged from .72 to .76 and from .65 to .80 for managerial and collegiate samples respectively. This shows the high internal consistency of the scale. The major characteristics of the conflict management styles are as follows:

1. Integrating: This style involves high concern for self as well as the other party involved in conflict. It is concerned with collaboration between parties (i.e., openness, exchange of information, and examination of differences) to reach a solution acceptable to both parties.
2. Compromising: This style involves moderate concern for self as well as the other party involved in conflict. It is associated with give-and-take or sharing whereby both parties give up something to make a mutual acceptable decision.
3. Obliging: It involves low concern for self and high concern for the other party. An obliging person attempts to play down the differences and emphasizes commonalities to satisfy the concerns of the other party.
4. Dominating: This style involves high concern for self and low concern for the other party involved in the conflict. It has been identified with a win-lose orientation or with forcing behavior to win ones position.
5. Avoiding: This is associated with the low concern for self as well as for other party involved in conflict. It has been associated with withdrawal, passing-the-buck, sidestepping, or "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" situation.

Procedure

The employees of different organizations were approached individually; they were briefed about the nature of research being carried out. Their consent was required and after their permission and willingness, the questionnaire was handed

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over to them. It was also made clear to them that the information collected would be kept confidential and will be used only for the research purpose.

RESULTS

The data of 160 employees was analyzed on their scores of Organizational Communication Climate Inventory (CCI) and Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (POCI-II). Alpha reliability coefficients were computed. In order to test the proposed hypotheses of the study correlations between communication climate and five styles of handling interpersonal conflicts were computed, which helped in identifying significant relationship between communication climate and styles of handling conflict. The impact of demographic variables of gender, education, and age were assessed in the context of communication climate and conflict management styles.

Table 1
Alpha reliability coefficients for CCI and ROCI-II (N=160)

Scales	No of items	Alpha Coefficient
Communication Climate Inventory	36	.81
Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory	28	.79

Table 2
Inter scale correlation between CCI and ROCI-II (N=160)

Scales	No of items	r	p
Communication Climate Inventory	36	.34	.02
Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory	28		

The Alpha reliability coefficients indicate that Communication Climate Inventory and ROCI-II have high internal consistency. The relationship between Communication Climate Inventory and ROCI-II is also found to be statistically significant.

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Table 3

Correlations between Interpersonal Conflict Management and Supportive Communication Climate (N=160)

ROCI-II (subscale & total scale)	Correlation Coefficients
Integrating	.44***
Compromising	.26**
Obliging	.46***
Avoiding	.19
Dominating	.14
ROCI-II (total score)	.41***

p< .01, *p < .001

The results show that the constructive styles of conflict management including integrating, compromising, and obliging have significant positive relationship with the supportive communication climate. However, non-significant relationships had found between dysfunctional styles of conflict management including avoiding and dominating with supportive communication climate. Analysis performed on total scores of ROCI-II showed significant positive correlation with Supportive Communication Climate.

Table 4

Correlations between Interpersonal Conflict Management and Defensive Communication Climate (N=160)

ROCI-II (subscale & total scale)	Correlation Coefficients
Integrating	.05
Compromising	.03
Obliging	-.08
Avoiding	.36**
Dominating	.38**
ROCI-II (total score)	.32**

**p .01

The results show that the dysfunctional styles of conflict management including Avoiding and dominating have significant positive relationship with the defensive communication climate. Further, analysis on total scores also showed significant relationship. Integrating, compromising, and obliging style showed non-significant relationship with defensive communication climate.

Table 5

Mean standard deviation and t-values for men and women on CCI and styles of handling interpersonal conflict (N=160)

Scales	Men (n = 97)		Women (n = 63)		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Supportive Communication Climate	61.44	7.79	62.14	7.71	.462
Defensive Communication Climate	48.41	1.13	49.46	1.87	.502
Integrating	26.82	5.37	25.13	4.92	1.20
Compromising	19.51	3.13	21.95	2.26	2.14*
Obliging	20.79	3.66	20.50	3.46	.252
Avoiding	19.92	4.19	21.67	3.27	2.03*
Dominating	13.88	3.13	13.61	2.26	.376

*p < .05, df = 158

Table 5 shows that comparison of mean values indicates that women are significantly scoring high on compromising and avoiding styles of conflict management compared to men.

Table 6

Mean, standard deviation and t-values for less educated and highly educated (post graduate) on CCI and styles of handling interpersonal conflict (N=160)

Scales	Less Educated (n = 92)		Highly Educated (n = 68)		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Supportive Communication Climate	61.88	7.66	61.80	7.42	.041
Defensive Communication Climate	50.12	7.79	49.97	7.12	1.03
Integrating	25.48	5.28	26.57	5.18	.798
Compromising	14.25	2.25	13.08	2.75	1.92*
Obliging	19.68	3.42	20.31	3.52	2.12*
Avoiding	19.20	4.39	19.22	3.36	.029
Dominating	14.32	2.98	16.05	3.13	2.16*

*p < .05, df = 158

The results show that educated employees are significantly high on compromising style of conflict management whereas highly educated employees

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are scoring significantly higher on obliging, and dominating styles of conflict management.

Table 7

Mean, standard deviation and t-values for people with low age and higher age on CCI and styles of handling interpersonal conflict (N=160)

Scales	Younger Employees (n = 74)		Older Employees (n = 86)		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Supportive Communication Climate	61.88	5.17	49.55	5.17	4.56**
Defensive Communication Climate	49.32	8.15	48.26	7.84	.504
Integrating	25.55	4.58	26.84	5.93	.942
Compromising	13.32	2.82	14.34	2.63	1.42
Obliging	14.22	3.12	12.02	3.64	4.10**
Avoiding	19.73	3.73	18.53	3.82	1.21
Dominating	15.00	3.10	15.76	3.25	.932

***p* < .01, *df* = 158

The result shows that younger employees perceive organizational communication as more supportive and are more likely to use obliging style of handling interpersonal conflict as compared to old age people.

DISCUSSION

The present study was designed to explore the relationship between communication climate (supportive climate and defensive climate) and interpersonal conflict management (obliging, compromising, integrating, avoiding and dominating). Further, the impact of different demographic variables (including gender, education and age) on organizational communication climate and interpersonal conflict management were also explored. Reliability analysis of the instruments used for the present research indicates that both instruments CCI ($r = .81$, $N = 160$) and ROCI-II ($r = .79$, $N = 160$) are reliable measures of the variables under study.

It was found that there exists a positive relationship between supportive communication climate and integrating style of handling interpersonal conflict ($r = .44$ ($p < .001$)). Integrating style is considered as a constructive style of handling

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interpersonal conflicts. In this style the individual has high concern for self as well as for the other party involved in the conflict. Supportive communication climate is composed of provosionalism, empathy, spontaneity, problem orientation and description (see for example Gibb, 1961; Raja & Green, 1995; Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004). The goal of using integration is to achieve consensus (Rahim, 1986). The philosophical basis underlying consensus is that differences in thinking, feeling and behaving are best resolved by incorporating the points of views of all parties into the decisions or plans.

Cooperative effort is achieved by finding, isolating and clarifying differences and enlarging the areas of acceptability within organizational context. The use of integrating style of handling interpersonal conflict in reducing disagreement capitalizes on merger of information, logic and feeling to achieve the best collective judgment while communication climate is more favorable and supportive (Peterson & Pace, 1979; Burrell et al., 1992; Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004; Schutz, 1958). It is important to find and manage expected conflict within an organization and by creating an atmosphere of trust, openness and equality; without such an environment people tend to hide conflict which makes the problem much more different to identify and deal with (Argyris, 1960). Organizational climate is a productive of integration and integration significantly in supervisory and peer relationship (Anand, 1987). As results show that supportive communication climate comprised of quality, provisionalism, empathy, spontaneity, problem orientation and description can help managers to use the integrating style of handling interpersonal conflicts.

Further study intended to investigate that supportive communication climate is positively related with compromising style of handling interpersonal conflicts. Compromising style of conflict resolution has moderate concern for self as well for the other party involved in the conflict. The magnitude of correlation is $r = .26$ ($p < .05$). In the present study the styles of handling interpersonal conflicts with supervisors are measured, so it is expected that compromising style will likely to be frequently used style with ones superiors while perceiving communication climate as supportive. Previous researches suggested that group proceeds through four phases in the process of reaching the consensus: i.e., orientation, conflict, emergence and compromise (Griffin as cited in, Fisher, 1987). Rahim (1983) found that managers were primarily obliging with superiors, integrating with subordinates and compromising with peers. There appears to be a tendency for a congruence between personal dispositions and situational strategies (Deutsch, 1982) such that persons with given

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dispositions tend to mold their dispositions to fit the situation that they find difficult to leave or alter in such a way compromising style is used. Supportive communication climate can help to resolve conflicts through compromise or maneuvering conciliator.

It was further assumed that there exists a positive relationship between supportive communication climate and obliging style of handling interpersonal conflict. Obliging style has low concern for self and high concern for others. This style is considered as constructive style of handling interpersonal conflict. The magnitude of correlation is $r = .46$ ($p < .001$) which is higher than other styles of handling interpersonal conflicts. The person who employs obliging style is somewhat non assertive and quite cooperative, neglecting his or her own concerns in favor of others. Obliging comes from the need of affection, to have warm, close personal relationships with others (Schutz, 1985). When people view their roles as highly cooperative, they tend to show more coordination of their efforts. This reflects that subordinates perceive their supervisors as more supportive of employees and encourage peers to be supportive towards them.

The defensive communication climate has higher magnitude of correlation $r = .37$ ($p < .01$) with dominating style of conflict management. Dominating style is considered as the destructive style of conflict resolution, in which person shows high concern for self and low concern for other. Previous researches support the idea that dominating style of handling interpersonal conflict is the least desirable style used by lower and middle level managers (Bhowman, 2002). People with dominating style view their roles as highly competitive, tend to listen less to what other members say, to understand less what was actually said, become less interested in high achievement; help one another less. The superiors with dominating style have more difficulty coordinating their efforts, tend to be less efficient, less cooperative and tend to do lower quality work (Schutz, 1958; Blake & Mouton, 1970; Thomas, 1976) therefore it can be safely said that dominating style of handling interpersonal conflict gives rise to defensive communication climate. According to Schutz (1958) the domination comes from need to control i.e., need to have power and influence. Therefore it is important to find ways to manage this expected conflict and efforts should be made to keep it within tolerable bound (Argyris, 1960; Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004; Rahim, 1986).

It was assumed that there is a positive relationship between defensive communication climate and avoiding styles of handling interpersonal conflict.

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Avoiding style has low concern for self and low concern for the other party involved in the conflict. The magnitude of correlation is $r = .35$ ($p < .01$). This style is considered as a destructive style of conflict resolution which significantly correlates with the defensive communication climate. The supervisor with avoiding style of handling interpersonal conflicts minimal personal support and remains aloof from employees personal problems and conflicts (see for example Costigan & Schmiedler, 2004). According to theory X (McGregor, 1967), people reluctance for cooperation, empathy and support causes serious communication problems and gives rise to defensive communication environment.

Investigating the gender differences highlighted that there are non significant differences among men and women on supportive and interpersonal communication climate. It was hypothesizes that women have better interpersonal communication as compared to men. The previous researches postulate that women are socialized to be cooperative understanding, supportive, interpersonally sensitive and flexible (as for example Witherspoon, 1997; Helgesen, 1990; Korabik, Baril, & Watson, 1993) cultural expectations are that women will act with more supportive behavior. The findings didn't prove the stated hypotheses. It can be interpreted as the work place operates on masculine assumptions. Good managers are seen as displaying masculine oriented behavior such as competitiveness, assertiveness, aggression, and independence (Borchers, 1999) often women have to be tough in order to rise into the managerial ranks in a competitive industry. They have to change their communication style in an effort to adapt to male dominated hierarchy organizations. As a result they may become more direct and unresponsive feelings to be perceived as good managers displaying masculine oriented behavior (Wood, 1997). In concurrence with this explanation, Ashcraft and Pacanowsky (1996) found that women tried to distance themselves from the "femaleness" in the organization and instead claim to prefer male coworkers and masculine standards. It can be said that non-significant differences of men and women on supportive communication climate might be because of women's striving for these masculine standards; to be perceived as good managers.

The impact of demographic variable age was also explored. The results indicated that mean score of low age subordinates is higher than high age subordinates on supportive communication climate and obliging style of handling interpersonal conflicts. Young people show more risk taking attitude and show characteristics like creativity, novelty, flexibility, and are more motivated to accept other and all these lead to better interpersonal

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communication in younger subordinates. While older people lack these traits they have other characteristics as strictness, punctuality but are less creative and novelty which may lead to good output but not to best interpersonal communication. As with the passage of time the society our culture and attitudes and also our education style changes or better to say modified which lead to novel things also in communication. But old age subordinates are less motivated to adopt novelty and changing culture of organizations, so all these age differences brought difference in thinking style and communication style of older and younger subordinates.

The impact of education was also found, the results indicate that there is no significant difference in communication style and handling of interpersonal conflicts in higher educated and less educated subordinates. The reason might be that for better interpersonal communication personality traits are more important than education that bind people to communicate with one another in interpersonal settings. Another reason can be that sample consisted of only graduates and post graduates therefore the less difference in educational standards cause less significant differences in subordinates due to education.

The results of the present study calls for practical implications of result finding in the context of Pakistan as organizations in Pakistan are more structured more bureaucratic and lack democracy which causes serious problems in interpersonal communications and gives rise to variety of conflict situation which decreases moral and productivity in Pakistani organizations. These traditional bureaucratic organizations need to identify the gaps in communication as the study of communication is the study of organizations. So by identifying distinguishing features of supportive communication climate a trend can be set for more democratic and lattice organizations that can help organizations to maximally utilize human resources to increase productivity and morale in this changing world of competition and challenges.

The present study draws attention that research based information should be oriented towards the applicability of results. The study provides a way to look organizational communication in the context of factors that are most likely contribute to make the communication climate either supportive or defensive. It can also help managers to make use of constructive styles of handling interpersonal conflicts to make communication climate as more supportive. Likewise destructive styles of handling interpersonal conflicts can also be substituted with functional styles of handling interpersonal conflicts to avoid the

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defensive climate of organizations. In such a manner organizations can improve the human resource system of the organizations. The practical scope and action side of the research findings is needed and should be stressed upon, especially from the perspective of Pakistan.

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