

The Impact of Personality Traits on Conflict Management Methods

Muharrem TUNA

Gazi University
Faculty of Tourism
06830 Gölbaşı, Ankara, Turkey
muharrem@gazi.edu.tr

Fatih TÜRKMEN

Karabük University
Safranbolu Faculty of Tourism
78600 Safranbolu, Karabük, Turkey
fatihurkmen@karabuk.edu.tr

Extensive Summary

Introduction

According to Hogan (2009: 28), the future of not only the families but also the transnational companies or the nation-states depend on the personality traits of the people that work within these organizations. It should be noted that the interpersonal problems in professional life may create enormous and permanent problems for the social relations of the individuals (Renner et al., 2012: 459).

Kaushal and Kwantes (2006: 580) define conflict as an important ingredient of the daily life and argue that personal, social and organizational practices will increase the conflict potential in daily lives as the world becomes a smaller place under the influence of globalization. Within this context, Rahim (1992: 16) define conflict as the incoherence between the social entities, disagreements or the process in which the coherence between the individuals face away. Consequently, interpersonal conflicts constitute one of the most important and troublesome sources of the daily life (Bolger et al., 1989: 808). This is due to the fact that the personal traits of the members of the organization is a cornerstone for the formation of the team spirit in an organization. From this point, disharmony between the personal traits of the employees may lead to monotone working life, authoritarian management styles or inter-group and interpersonal conflicts and end up with a decrease in organizational efficiency and organizational disorder (Wall, 1998: 9).

Aim

The aim of this study is to reveal the personality traits of the managers (senior, middle and junior) working at hotel enterprises (3, 4 and 5 stars) and the A group travel agencies and to find out the impact of their personality traits over the conflict management methods that they use. Based on the main hypothesis that “personality traits influence the conflict management methods”, we suggest the following hypotheses:

H₁: Personality traits have a positive impact on the integrative conflict management method.

H₂: Personality traits have a positive impact on the compromise conflict management method.

H₃: Personality traits have a positive impact on the domination conflict management method.

H₄: Personality traits have a positive impact on the avoidance conflict management method.

H₅: Personality traits have a positive impact on the accomodation conflict management method.

Universe and the Sample

The universe of this study comprises the managers of the A group travel agencies and the three, four and five star hotels operating in Turkey. The universe of the study has been stratified according to the seven regions of Turkey and cluster sampling method was used to select the tourism enterprises in order to represent each stratum. The sampling volume (245) was calculated for each tourism enterprise types (A group travel agencies, three, four and five star hotels).

Data Collection and the Survey Scales

This work used survey method to collect data. The survey comprised three parts. The first part included questions on demographic characteristics of the managers and the characteristics of the tourism enterprise. The second part included the personality trait scale that consisted of 64 expressions and 8 sub-dimensions. The third part of the survey included the conflict management method scale that comprised 28 expressions and five sub-dimensions.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study, which was conducted on the managers of tourism enterprises found that the personality traits had an impact over the selection of conflict management method.

The managers with introvert personality trait used the avoidance method and the unconfident managers avoided using the domination method. The managers who could be exploited used the avoidance, compromise, domination and accommodation methods, respectively. Altruistic managers mostly used the integrative and accommodation methods and domination method is negatively correlated with the levels of altruism. Finally, the extrovert managers used the accommodation and integrative methods in order to manage the conflicts.

The main resource for the tourism enterprises is the human capital. The managers are responsible for the effective management of human resources. Consequently, managers who can empathize with the employees may properly motivate the employees for organization continuity and success and the employee satisfaction will be reflected upon consumer satisfaction. Due to this, the behavioral traits of the tolerant and mature managers who psychologically try to complement themselves will contribute to the managerial skills of the employees and will help the organizations to have competitive advantage in times of organizational conflicts. In case these points and the suggestions that are underlined within the scope of this study are taken into consideration, the enterprises will become organizationally stronger in every terms.