

## Students' Perception of Conflict Management Styles used by Teachers'

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### Abstract

**Background:** Conflict is healthy, common, and necessary for students' growth. However, conflict can become destructive to student learning when it becomes personal or an obstacle to learning. Both teachers and students have different backgrounds, unique views of the world, and a variety of thinking styles. Effective and constructive management of conflict can minimize its negative effects on the learning environment, students, and educators. **Method:** A descriptive survey design was selected for the present study and a total of 100 nursing students were selected via simple random sampling technique from selected nursing college of Nainital district, Uttarakhand. **Results:** The findings of the study showed that majority of the 51 (51%) belonged to B.Sc. Nursing course. Majority of 56 (56%) students experienced conflict in clinical skill learning area and most of 70 (70%) students experienced conflict with more than one teacher. Maximum 45 (45%) students perceive that teacher use integrating style when they approach to avail leave and about 35 (35%) students perceive that teacher use integrating style when they scold in the clinical areas. **Discussion:** Conflict between teachers and students is very common in educational setup. If these conflicts are not resolved effectively, it can lead serious issues which can have negative impact among the students and can directly affect their studies as well as future.

**Key words:** Conflict management styles, Nursing students, perception,

**Article History:** Submitted: 12th August, 2021, Revised: 25th August, 2021, Accepted: 06th September, 2021,  
Published: 30th September, 2021.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Humans no matter how same will always be different. The differences among two people always bring in conflict which may be of any sort. Conflict; is a term we all come across in our daily lives. Conflict can be both – within self or with others. One may face a varied number of conflicts in his/her life right from the school going age till the day he/ she breathes his/her last breathe but what is important is how he/she manages his/her conflicts. If one doesn't have good skills to handle conflict it can leave a strong impact on oneself which usually gives rise to negative feelings. A great many managers or educationist have defined conflict in many different terms. According to Phyllis Kritek, "conflict can be defined as a fight, battle, or war.[1] Interpersonal conflict can be most commonly seen in workplaces. People experience a lot of conflict in their workplaces which can sometimes be very traumatic. Even when we see educational institutions conflict arises between students and educators on various reasons like: communication problems, lack of openness, time, feedback of students about teachers due to misunderstandings between them and confusion leading to development of resentment. In addition to it ambiguous expectations between teachers and students may even develop misunderstanding and disobedience of rules and regulation in educational institution.[2] Various styles have been suggested for resolving conflicts in studies about conflict management. The most prominent example is the classification of five styles made by (Rahim, M, 2000).[3] The five styles of conflict management are: Integration,

compromising, dominating, avoiding and accommodating. Most of the research studies on conflict in nursing have been concerned with employee-centered research on the staff nurses in hospitals. Few studies in nursing have been concerned with conflict management styles or modes of conflict resolution and sources of conflict and their resolution within educational setting. It is necessary to investigate the conflict management styles used to decrease instructor-student conflict, ensure student and instructor satisfaction, and create healthy learning environments. However, this particular issue has been rarely investigated in the institutions of nursing education. It is necessary to explore conflict management styles used by nurse educators from nursing students' perspective.

### II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were to:

- identify the problems faced by students'
- determine students' perception of conflict management styles used by teachers

### III. HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H1: There will be significant relationship between students' perception of conflict management styles and selected socio-demographic variables.

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#### IV. METHOD

##### Approach & Design:

The present study aims to identify students' perception of conflict management styles used by teachers and to find relationship between students' perception of conflict management styles and selected socio – demographic variables. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, survey approach was used and cross-sectional survey design was selected.

##### Sample and Setting:

The present study was conducted in selected nursing college, Nainital district, Uttarakhand. The sample being 100 undergraduate (B.Sc. (N) 3rd year and 4th year) and diploma (GNM 2nd year and 3rd year) Nursing students studying in the selected College and School of Nursing. In this study, simple random sampling technique i.e., lottery method was used for data collection. Thus, 50 diploma and 50 undergraduate nursing students were included in the study.

##### Data Collecting Tools:

The following instruments were developed to gather necessary data for the study: Demographic Proforma and Students' perception on conflict management styles used by teachers. The Tool I was developed by the researcher to collect background information of the participants selected for the study. It consisted of information on course, academic year, class, age, gender, residence, experienced conflict, area experienced conflict, able to solve conflict experienced with teacher. The tool II consisted of 11 items. The students were supposed to provide information by putting a tick (✓) mark against the most appropriate item according to them. It was four-point likert scale measured in less important, somewhat important, important, very much important. The tool had both negative and positive questions and tool III consisted of 15 items and the students were supposed to provide information by putting a tick (✓) mark against the most appropriate item according to them. There was no right or wrong answer. Each item was associated with different conflict management styles: integrating style, compromising style, dominating style, accommodating style and avoiding style.

#### V. PROCEDURE

The data collection for the main study started after obtaining the administrative permission from the principal of the selected college, Uttarakhand. Verbal permission was obtained from the coordinators of the Undergraduate Nursing students following which written permissions was taken from the participants. As per the availability of the students the time was fixed for data collection. The researcher collected the data after seating the students in their class after which explanation about the research study was given. Informed consent from the students was taken ensuring that the details will be kept confidential and will be used only for study purpose. Followed by which questionnaires were distributed to them. Each student took about 20 minutes time to complete the tool. Participants were cooperative during the data collection period.

#### VI. RESULTS

The data was collected from 100 samples studying in selected nursing college, Uttarakhand. Frequency and percentage were computed for describing the sample characteristics. majority of the 51 (51%) belonged to B.Sc. Nursing course and maximum number of 50 (50%) students were from third year class. Maximum number of 68 (68%) students belonged to (21 to 23) years of age and most of the 92 (92%) students were females. There were equal percentage 50 (50%) of hostellers and day scholars. Majority of the 56 (56%) students experienced conflict in clinical skill learning area and most of the 70 (70%) students experienced conflict with more than one teacher. Maximum number of 63 (63%) students were able to solve conflict by themselves and is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage description of sample characteristics

| n = 100                                                |           |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Sample Characteristics                                 | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
| <b>Course</b>                                          |           |                |
| • B.Sc. Nursing                                        | 51        | 51%            |
| • GNM                                                  | 49        | 49%            |
| <b>Academic Year</b>                                   |           |                |
| • Second Year                                          | 25        | 25%            |
| • Third Year                                           | 50        | 50%            |
| • Fourth Year                                          | 25        | 25%            |
| <b>Age</b>                                             |           |                |
| • 18 – 20 years                                        | 30        | 30%            |
| • 21 – 23 years                                        | 68        | 68%            |
| • > 23 years                                           | 2         | 2%             |
| <b>Gender</b>                                          |           |                |
| • Male                                                 | 8         | 8%             |
| • Female                                               | 92        | 92%            |
| <b>Place of residence</b>                              |           |                |
| • Hostler                                              | 50        | 50%            |
| • Day Scholar                                          | 50        | 50%            |
| <b>Place where conflict experienced the most</b>       |           |                |
| • Classroom teaching                                   | 44        | 44%            |
| • Clinical Skill learning                              | 56        | 56%            |
| <b>Experienced conflict with more than one teacher</b> |           |                |
| • Yes                                                  | 30        | 30%            |
| • No                                                   | 70        | 70%            |
| <b>Able to solve conflict</b>                          |           |                |
| • Yes                                                  | 63        | 63%            |
| • No                                                   | 37        | 37%            |

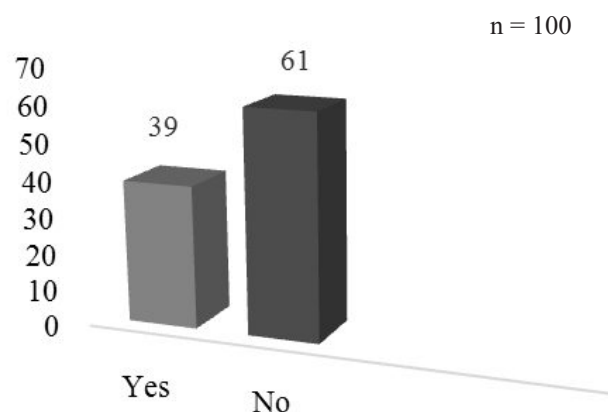


Figure 3: Bar diagram representing frequency of conflict experienced with teacher by nursing students

The data in Figure 1 reveals that the majority 61 (61%) of the students who participated in the study never experienced conflict with teacher. The areas where students experience conflict is mentioned in figure below:

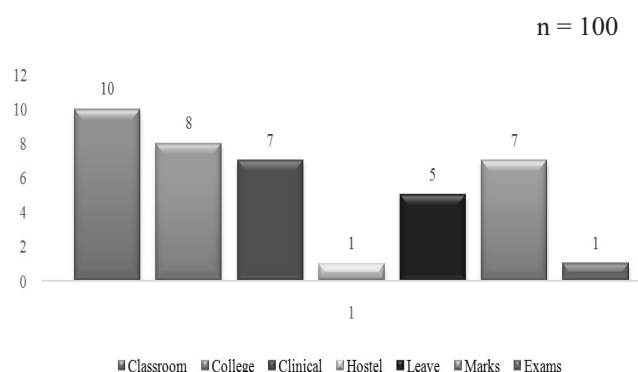


Figure 4: Bar diagram representing frequency of areas experienced conflict

Figure 3 reveals that a maximum number of 10 (10%) students experience conflict in classroom and only 1 (1%) students experience conflict during hostel and exam.

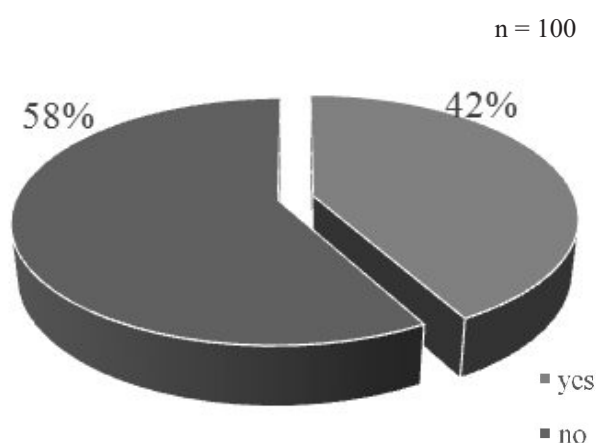


Figure 5: Pie diagram representing frequency of Nursing students experiencing conflict with more than one teacher

The above mentioned figure shows that majority of the 58 (58%) nursing students have not experienced conflict with more than one teacher. The distribution of students based on problems faced by students was measured as in terms of the Likert scale which consisted of four items in it. The aim was to identify the problems faced by them in regard to attendance, hostel related issues scolding and assignments. The item wise frequency and percentage distribution is shown in below mentioned Table 2.

Table 2 : Frequency and percentage distribution of problems faced by students

| Problems faced                                                            | Very Important<br>f (%) | Important<br>f (%) | Somewhat<br>Important<br>f (%) | Less Important<br>f (%) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Sick Leave                                                                | 56<br>(56%)             | 32<br>(32%)        | 7<br>(7%)                      | 5<br>(5%)               |
| Special leave (marriage, occasions like puja, party, external exams etc.) | 24<br>(24%)             | 45<br>(45%)        | 25<br>(25%)                    | 6<br>(6%)               |

|                                                                            |             |             |             |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Attendance in Clinical and Theory                                          | 68<br>(68%) | 27<br>(27%) | 1<br>(1%)   | 4<br>(4%)   |
| Repeated Corrections from teachers in assignments                          | 25<br>(25%) | 44<br>(44%) | 18<br>(18%) | 13<br>(13%) |
| Discipline (punctuality, uniforms, behaviour, make ups)                    | 46<br>(46%) | 44<br>(44%) | 8<br>(8%)   | 2<br>(2%)   |
| Attendance Compensation duties                                             | 22<br>(22%) | 39<br>(39%) | 14<br>(14%) | 25<br>(25%) |
| Scolding in clinical areas in front of other (e.g. patients', family etc.) | 10<br>(10%) | 18<br>(18%) | 15<br>(15%) | 57<br>(57%) |
| Number of assignments in theory and clinical areas                         | 24<br>(24%) | 48<br>(48%) | 19<br>(19%) | 9<br>(9%)   |
| Comparison of performance in theory and clinical with other students       | 9<br>(9%)   | 33<br>(33%) | 22<br>(22%) | 36<br>(36%) |
| Internal assessments evaluation                                            | 56<br>(56%) | 35<br>(35%) | 8<br>(8%)   | 1<br>(1%)   |
| Hostel Problems relating to food, accommodation, transportation etc.       | 44<br>(44%) | 04<br>(4%)  | 02<br>(2%)  | 0           |
| Hostel issues (night pass, outing, rules and regulations)                  | 25<br>(25%) | 22<br>(22%) | 2<br>(2%)   | 01<br>(1%)  |

The data distribution presented in Table 2 shows that, most of the students 56 (56%) out of 100 students face problems while taking sick leave. About 45 (45%) of the students have problems while applying for special leave. Majority of the 68 (68%) students face problems in attendance and clinical areas. Maximum number 44 (44%) have problems due to repeated corrections, 46 (46%) have problems in regard to discipline, 39 (39%) face problems due to compensation duties, about 57 (57%) find it less important to be scolded in clinical areas. About 36 (36%) students find it less important if comparison is done for performance in theory and clinical area. Most of the students 44 (44%) have problems in hostel and find it very much important.

After identifying the problems face by students, perception of students in regard to conflict managing used by teachers was prepared and is described below.

The perception towards conflict management styles used by teachers was measured by giving various problems identified in previous section to know which style was used by teacher as perceived by student. The scale contained 15 items and was further interpreted based on average of five types of styles. The item wise frequency and percentage distribution of perception is described in Table 3.

The data distribution presented in Table 3 shows that maximum number of 45 (45%) students perceive that teacher use integrating

style when they approach to avail leave, 45 (45%) students perceive that their teacher uses dominating style regarding number of

assignment in clinical areas, 35 (35%) of the students perceive that teacher use integrating style when they scold in the clinical areas

and most of 38 (38%) students perceive that their teachers use accommodating style of conflict management when they are not able to demonstrate a procedure in the clinical areas.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of students' perception on conflict management styles used by teachers

n = 100

| Statements                                                           | Integrating | Accommodating | Dominating  | Avoiding    | Compromising |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Frequency Percentage (%)                                             |             |               |             |             |              |
| Sick leave and teachers' response                                    | 52<br>(52%) | 30<br>(30%)   | 4<br>(4%)   | 9<br>(9%)   | 5<br>(5%)    |
| Problem in getting special leave                                     | 45<br>(45%) | 37<br>(37%)   | 4<br>(4%)   | 8<br>(8%)   | 6<br>(6%)    |
| Problem regarding attendance shortage                                | 30<br>(30%) | 25<br>(25%)   | 27<br>(27%) | 2<br>(2%)   | 16<br>(16%)  |
| Problem regarding repeated corrections                               | 35<br>(35%) | 47<br>(47%)   | 11<br>(11%) | 2<br>(2%)   | 5<br>(5%)    |
| Issues in regard to discipline                                       | 41<br>(41%) | 36<br>(36%)   | 10<br>(10%) | 1<br>(1%)   | 12<br>(12%)  |
| Attendance and compensation duties                                   | 27<br>(27%) | 22<br>(22%)   | 33<br>(33%) | 1<br>(1%)   | 17<br>(17%)  |
| Scolding in clinical area                                            | 35<br>(35%) | 29<br>(29%)   | 5<br>(5%)   | 10<br>(10%) | 21<br>(21%)  |
| Number of assignments                                                | 27<br>(27%) | 16<br>(16%)   | 45<br>(45%) | 8<br>(8%)   | 4<br>(4%)    |
| Problems relating to teacher evaluations                             | 23<br>(23%) | 46<br>(46%)   | 13<br>(13%) | 9<br>(9%)   | 9<br>(9%)    |
| Indiscipline in class                                                | 32<br>(32%) | 19<br>(19%)   | 12<br>(12%) | 5<br>(5%)   | 32<br>(32%)  |
| Identification of mistake in clinical area in regard to patient care | 58<br>(58%) | 5<br>(5%)     | 8<br>(8%)   | 5<br>(5%)   | 24<br>(24%)  |
| Not able to demonstrate a procedure in clinical area                 | 14<br>(14%) | 38<br>(38%)   | 15<br>(15%) | 5<br>(5%)   | 28<br>(28%)  |
| Problems regarding marks given by teacher                            | 24<br>(24%) | 50<br>(50%)   | 8<br>(8%)   | 8<br>(8%)   | 10<br>(10%)  |
| Delay in submission of assignment                                    | 26<br>(26%) | 28<br>(28%)   | 13<br>(13%) | 4<br>(4%)   | 29<br>(29%)  |

## VII. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study showed that, majority of the 51 (51%) belonged to B.Sc. Nursing course and maximum number of 50 (50%) students were from third year class. Maximum number of 68 (68%) students belonged to (21 to 23) years of age and most of the 92 (92%) students were females. Majority of the 56 (56%) students experienced conflict in clinical skill learning area and most of the 70 (70%) students experienced conflict with more than one teacher. Maximum number of 63 (63%) students were able to solve conflict by themselves. The above study is supported by descriptive study conducted in Alexandria University, Egypt to investigate nursing students' perception of conflict management styles of their nursing educators. The results revealed that out of 435, one half (50.8%) of students had less than twenty years old while, another half had between 20-22 years old. The majority (73.1%) of them were female, while, 26.6 were male. About two third of students were enrolled in third as well as in fourth academic year respectively, 23.4 of them enrolled at the second academic year. It was found that nursing students perceived that avoiding was the most frequently style used by their nursing educators for conflict management. (Hashish, 2015). In the present study maximum number of 45 (45%) students perceive that teacher use integrating style when they approach to avail leave, about 35 (35%) of the students perceive that teacher use integrating style when they scold in the clinical areas and most of 38 (38%) students perceive that their teachers use accommodating style of conflict management. The present study findings were supported by, a cross sectional study

which was conducted by Kantek, F & Gezer, N. (2008), to examine the conflict management styles used by nursing students in conflict with faculty members and the differences in use of style from the aspect of some variables. The study had 151 students in a public university nursing, School Turkey. About 63.58% of the students stated that they had experienced conflicts with a faculty member during their education. It found that integrating ( $X = 3.82$ ) and obliging style ( $X = 3.81$ ) scores were higher than the scores for the other styles.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

The people who are in any managerial levels are expected to have a great many good managerial skills and conflict management is one of the most important skills any manager should have in the armoury. As we keep stepping up on the ladder of experience, our ability to handle conflicts improves. Conflict between teachers and students is very common in educational setup. If these conflicts are not resolved effectively, it can lead serious issues which can have negative impact among the students and can directly affect their studies as well as future. Teacher plays a very crucial role in managing such conflict by using effective management styles at appropriate situations.

## IX. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to express my sincere gratitude to Principal of all the selected college of Nursing, Uttarakhand for their kindness in permitting me to conduct the study and also, all the students' for extending their co-operation without whom the study would not have been possible.

## X. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None declared

## XI. REFERENCES

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