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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## The role of the organizational conflict management in job satisfaction Empirical study on workers in the Jordanian free zones.

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### Abstract

This study dealt with the organizational conflict management and its role in job satisfaction, empirical study on workers in the Jordanian free zones, the importance of this study is represented by its offers to find practical solutions in enhancing job satisfaction for workers in various organizations, from the view of rationalized organizational conflict, management where managers can recognize the forms and methods of personal and organizational conflicts management and its impact on job satisfaction. The study concluded with the following results; the conflict levels within the Jordanian free zones are low, and that the causes of organizational conflict are weak, and don't not lead to a conflict among workers, and there is a medium usage of organizational conflict management strategies. The study recommended with the following: develop the awareness of managers and employees to the concept of organizational conflict, participate the superiors with subordinates in decision-making, and train employees and develop their abilities.

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### Introduction:-

The conflict phenomenon is one of the phenomenons that sticks to the organizations and their workers, it is a normal phenomenon that must be dealt with in the right scientific way (Alsawalha, 2016). because of the nature of the individuals, the organizations must call for evolution and change because stability is not a normal state, therefore, the conflicts often are combined with the changes in most of the common relationships, therefore, the organization management supposed to be aiming for keeping the conflict in its desired range, and if the conflict reached a higher limit than the desired, the management should step to minimize its impact to the desired limit where its under control by the management, the organizational conflict will take a part in accomplishing a large rate of satisfaction by the workers. There are lots of researches and studies in the job satisfaction subject and that because the dominant belief that the more satisfaction the more productiveness expected from the organization and that is the secret for the interest in job satisfaction. therefore, interest in job satisfaction is considered a central concern in case we want to increase the work level in regard of capableness and productiveness, but to keep in mind that job satisfaction is a tactic not a goal by because it solves a lot of problems and obstacles that face both organizations and individuals.

### Research Importance:-

The importance of the study comes as it provides an important diagnostic view and functional solution for our real problems generally in different work fields, that the managers can benefit from it in knowing the types and way of managing existing personnel and organizational conflicts, and its effect on job satisfaction, in order to increase the effectiveness of the organization.

### Research hypothesis:-

H<sub>1</sub>: there is a statistically significant relationship at the level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the levels of organizational conflict and the job satisfaction.

II: there is a statistically significant relationship at the level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the reasons of the organizational conflict and the job satisfaction.

III: there is a statistically significant relationship at the level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the strategies used in managing the organizational conflict and the job satisfaction.

## Literature Review:-

### Organizational conflict:-

Nowadays, the interest in organizational conflict management has been increased as a reason in enlarging the effectiveness of the organization and overcoming the problems and achieving its goal which was planned efficiently, this reason pushed to say that the organizations will live in the future with lots of advantages of the conflict if it was invested in the right way (Anderson et al., 2011), it will take a part in increasing the effectiveness of the organization and its ability in overcoming its disadvantages matters. If there was not a relationship between conflict, performance, and creativity, there would not be a conflict at all and the performance will suffer from weakness, but under the controlled and limited conflict situation, it is possible to develop the motivation in taking the first step towards creativity in the individuals at the same time the high level of the conflict that described as violent or non-cooperated or as a carelessness that negatively effects performance and creativity (Wu, M., Chang, C.-C., & Zhuang, W.-L. (2010)). Greenberg and Baron, 2004, have given two reasons for organizational conflicts and they are linked to each other, they are: vagueness of the authority, lack of clarity of the authority. Wu, M mentioned that the conflict is "intended action from one side to effect negatively on the other side, in a way that affects also on that party abilities and on achieving goals (Wu, M., Chang, C.-C., & Zhuang, W.-L. (2010)). the conflict is as : a process where two sides or more realize that there is a quarrel or a disagreement between them for various reasons, which reflect their behaviors and the way they interact with each other (Adomi EE, Anie SO (2005). the conflict is as : The reactions that are done by the individuals in the organizations as a result of stimulus or facing environmental or individual factors to adapt by functional abilities Balay R (2007). Even though, there is a contrast in understanding the definition of the organizational conflict, there are basic points or characteristics of the conflict, which are:

- 1-the conflict is behaviorist phenomenon that shows up when there is a clash of interests between people.
- 2- the conflict could accrue on all levels starting from the individual up to the society.
- 3- the conflict could be ideational or materialistic.
- 4-the conflict may be caused by problems of the individuals or by nature of the system.

The conflict is also could be one of the goals that the organization management aims to achieve and make it in real frame, that is because the positive conflict leads to enhancing the organization, and the individuals skills in decision making starting from the critical point of the problems of the conflict subject, crossing by the theories and their analyzing, and then reaching the perfect solution for the problem according to previously defined steps and arrangements, the conflict leads to increase the level of social participation, and also increases the numbers of associations and professional commitment of the individuals towards the organization and to the goals that must be achieved (Jehn KA 1994)..the reasons of the conflict are: (Jehn KA 1994)

1-Personal differences: it is normal for the individuals to be different than each other and these differences could be in their direction, values, and expectations which makes that a reason of the conflict that are hard to solve especially when it comes to values and traditions, learning, social and physiological situations, Personal differences between the individuals are considered as one of the main reasons of the conflict, it can also be said that most of the conflicts between the individuals are caused by the differences between the ideological and social values, the more they stick to their values the more conflicts are possible to happen between them. Mostly, the individuals see the surroundings as a positive thing and that lead to achieving their goals and ambitions and vice versa, when it is positive the lean to accept its outcome, but when they realize that it is negative and does not achieve their goals and ambitions they reject them, from here the conflict is created.

2-Information: individuals take their information from various resources one of them is referring to other people which causes a conflict, or the people who are responsible for the information does not want to give them and provide the others with, or keep the information confidential which leads to distort it or hide it if needed.

Explaining the information may lead to a conflict when there is differences in explaining the information which refers to the individual differences, therefore, their awareness of the information may be the reason of the differences in the explanations.

3-Contradiction of goals: contradiction happens within the work environment which leads to a conflict, this contradiction is caused by the competition between individuals in performing the work goals, the performance of an individual or a group could be an obstacle that face the performance of another individual or group especially when this performance depends on another individual or group work.

4-Environmental Factors: this type of conflicts often face the managers, so when they put future plans for the management concerning , they inter into conflict with the needs to consider the requirement of internal and external environment of work, when they try to achieve their needs of human and financial power and other needs that they need to let the work go as it supposed to, also the managers are stick to the internal and the external environment demands that prevent them from achieving what their job needs, a conflict happens between them and the eternal and external power and the point of view varies from each other in the ability to get what they need.

Robbins explained that even though, there is differences between the opinions of the interested people in the conflict subject and its reasons, there is an agreement that the conflict is caused by nature of the individuals and their variations and the nature of the information and decisions that they take based on the type of environment that they work in, whether internal or external,( Robbins, S. P., A. Odendaal, and G. Roodt. 2003)

#### **Organizational conflict management strategies:-**

##### **- Collaborative Strategy:**

It means that the individual works collaboratively with the other party to find a solution that meets the needs of parties, and cares for each other's concerns. This strategy called "profit strategy". It characterizes by a great attention to individual and performance within the organization (Stroh, L. K. 2002). This strategy has no loss of one of the parties because of the other gain. Collaboration is the most appropriate tool to manage organizational conflict when the parties do not suffer from the pressures of lake of time, and want a beneficial solution to everyone, with the consideration of the importance of shared interests. Manager can, as a treatment of conflict that broke out among subordinates, especially when it touches their tendency to collaboration, encourage them and asking them to sit down to determine the nature of the conflict, including the reasons, and reach by themselves to the appropriate solutions (De Dreu, C. K. W., F. Harinck, and A. E. M. Van Vianen. 1999).

##### **- Avoiding Strategy:**

It means not to face the conflict, and is characterized by a less interest and to other parties. According to this strategy, the interests of all parties are not considered and not followed. So, less attention to individuals and production. This strategy is representing as a non-collaborative and non-strict, and often translated by postponement of the conflict (Deutsch, M., and P. T. Coleman. 2000) . With regard to the behaviour of manager, it neglect or ignore the conflict situations and evades responsibility and withdraws from the conflict in the hope that the situation improves by itself over time, as an attempt to have calmness situation and prevent the spread of the anger, it may be appropriate to use avoiding strategy in the following cases:

- A. In a situation where conflict is not important.
- B. If the parties in conflict are able to resolve conflict effectively.
- C. If the risks of treating conflict is bigger than gains.

##### **- Competing Strategy:**

It means there is no cooperation and no strictness. This strategy is translated in "win-loose" situation according to this strategy the manager tries to force the conflicted parties to comply with their point of view (Dijkstra, M. T. M. 2006) . The conflict parties often see the negative relationship between their goals and the manager's goals or one of the parties' goals, which can negatively affect the achievement of the goal of the other party. because the situation includes wining and losing. sees that this strategy often do not solve the conflict but it puts pressure and burry it under ground or ashes . The competition may be used in these situations (Folger, J. P. 1993):

- 1- When there is a need to be strict and make fast decision, and when the conflict based on the individual or group desire to exploit the others.
- 2- If you want to apply the procedures that is not desirable for some people.

- **Compermissing strategy**

The strategy in which the individual is trying to partly compromise and satisfy the desires of parties in conflict. It is characterized as much as medium firmness and cooperation (Dahrendorf, R. 1976). The manager also follows the give and take policy in cooperation with the parties in conflict to reach to a common ground and partial solutions to satisfy them. The main advantage that it allows the existence of most of the conflicts solution and do not produce a winner and loser. It can be used to reach the temporary settlement of the outstanding issues and urgent solutions in a case of lack of time. (Dahrendorf R. 1976.) confirms that the effectiveness of this strategy depends on the equality of the parties' powers in conflict. Existence of strong and weak parties leads to strong opposition of the proposed solutions, and thus the inefficiency of this strategy

- **Accommodating Strategy:**

The manager acts as if he /she thinks that the conflict go away over time, and calls the parties in conflict to cooperate, in trying to reduce stress. This method encourages parties to hide their feelings, so its effectiveness is small in dealing with many problems. You can use this method if the conflict based on the difference of personal characteristics of the parties in conflict (Folger, J. P. 1993):.

**Job satisfaction:-**

The importance of job satisfaction is in dealing with feelings of employees about the internal effects in the work or the external effects in the materialistic environment (Arvey, R. D., Bouchard, T. J., Segal, N. L., & Abraham, L. M. 1989). There is no doubt that the achievement of a high level of job satisfaction is important for the organization, due to the obvious effects on the level of ambition, productivity and performance (Sawalha, 2016). We mean by job satisfaction the individual's feelings about work, and the satisfaction arises from the individual's perception of the difference between what job was offered and what should be provided (Sawalha, 2016). The concept of job satisfaction is multi-faceted dimensions, It is influenced by factors, some of them is related to the work itself and the others related to the work group and work environment (Ashworth, S. D., Higgs, C., Schneider, B., Shepherd, W., & Carr, L. S. 1995, May). It is wrong to believe that if the individual satisfaction has increased above a particular aspect of work, is not necessarily satisfied with the rest of the aspects of the job and its dimensions. Where you might find someone satisfied with the relationship with colleagues and is not satisfied with the salary, work conditions, or others. Job satisfaction is a relative issue rather than absolute, since there is no maximum or minimum for it. The feeling of satisfaction is the result of the interaction between what the individual wants and what he/she actually gets in a certain position. (Jackson, T. (2002). It was found from the many studies in the field of job satisfaction that the high professional satisfaction of the employees often increases productivity, reduces labor turnover, reduces absenteeism, raises the morale of the employees and makes the life better for individuals. (Locke, E. A. (1976)

(Locke, E. A. (1976) illustrated the importance of job satisfaction, which identified a number of reasons to pay attention to job satisfaction. They are as follows:

- The rise in degree of job satisfaction leads to a rise in degree of ambition among workers in different organizations.
- The rise in level of job satisfaction leads to a decline in the workers' absence in various professional organizations.
- The individual with a high degree of job satisfaction is more satisfied with their leisure time, especially with his/her family, as well as more satisfied with his /here life in general.
- The employees who are most satisfied in their work, are less likely to face work accidents.
- There is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and productivity at the work, the higher degree of job satisfaction led to increasing in production .

(Wiley, J. W. (1996) has indicated to the most important factors that lead to job satisfaction. They are as follows: 1/ Salary, 2/ Upgrade, 3/ Security, 4/ Respect and appreciation, 5/ Working groups, 6/ Type of supervision, 7/ the available freedom in the work, 8/ Bonuses, allowances and rewards.

**Relationship between job satisfaction and performance:-**

This relationship can be determined as defined by (Wiley, J. W. (1996) in three main directions as follows:

The first direction: indicates that the high satisfaction leads to increased performance.

The second direction: the performance leads to satisfaction.

The third direction: the satisfaction is a result of the fair remuneration, which is considered as a result of achieving a specific performance, thus, there is no correlation between satisfaction and performance. The relationship between

job satisfaction and rates of attendance at work and other factors: Some studies suggest that the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity are uncertain with a high degree, but some studies indicate that high job satisfaction leads to a high rate of work attendance, that is, the greater the individual job satisfaction, the less absenteeism and increased attendance rate, although frequent transfer from one job to another and the large number of complaints are the result of job dissatisfaction (alsawalhah, 2016). Accordingly, it can be said that even in case of uncertainty, there is a direct relationship between job satisfaction and productivity, job satisfaction has an impact on other elements such as absenteeism, lack of social problems, which is reflected in one way or another on the productivity of the individual, as well as it helps in building a better society with an optimistic view and love of life (alsawalhah, 2016).

### Hypothesis Testing:-

**Hypothesis I: There is a statistically significant relationship at the level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the levels of organizational conflict and the job satisfaction:-**

To test the relationship between levels of organizational conflict and the job satisfaction, it has been used Pearson correlation and the results are shown in the following table, which shows that the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient equals to -0.212 and the value of the significance level equals to 0.000 which is less than 0.05, indicating acceptance of the hypothesis: there is a statistically significant relationship at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  between the organizational conflicts and levels of job satisfaction, which is an inverse relationship.

**Table (1) Pearson correlation coefficients between the levels of organizational conflict and job satisfaction**

variable	Statistics	result
job satisfaction	-Pearson correlation coefficient	0.212-
	The level of significant	0.000
	Sample Size	280

**R tabulated value at 0.05 level and the degree of freedom of "278" is 0.113**

**Hypothesis II: There is a statistically significant relationship at the level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between reasons of organizational conflict and job satisfaction.**

To test the relationship between the causes of organizational conflict and job satisfaction, it has been used Pearson correlation and the results are shown in the following table, which shows that the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient equals to (-0.240) and the value of the significance level equal to 0.000 which is less than 0.05, indicating acceptance of the hypothesis: there is a statistically significant relationship at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  between the reasons of organizational conflict and job satisfaction, which is an inverse relationship.

**Table (2) Pearson correlation coefficients between the levels of organizational conflict and job satisfaction**

variable	Statistics	Result
job satisfaction	-Pearson correlation coefficient	-0.240
	The level of significant	0.000
	Sample Size	280

**R tabulated value at 0.05 level and the degree of freedom of "278" is 0.113.**

**Hypothesis III: There is a statistically significant relationship at the level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the strategies used in managing organizational conflict and job satisfaction.**

To test the relationship between the strategies used in the management of organizational conflict and job satisfaction, Pearson correlation was used and test results are shown in the following table, which shows that the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient equals to (0.610) and the value of the significance level equals to 0.000 which is less than 0.05, indicating acceptance of the hypothesis: There is statistically significant relationship at the level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  between the strategies used in managing the organizational conflict and the job satisfaction.

**Table ( 3)Pearson correlation coefficients between the strategies used in the management of organizational conflict and job satisfaction .**

variable	Statistics	result
job satisfaction	-Pearson correlation coefficient	0.610
	The level of significant	0.000
	Sample Size	280

**R tabulated value at 0.05 level and the degree of freedom of "278" is 0.113.**

### **Results:-**

1. The organizational conflict levels in the Jordanian free zones are low.
2. The causes of organizational conflict are weak; and do not lead to a conflict among workers.
3. There is a medium usage of organizational conflict management strategies.
4. There is a job satisfaction among workers
5. The sample of the study showed that there is a lack of incentives.
6. The organizational conflict management has statistically significant impact on job satisfaction, according to the views of employees.
7. There is a statistically significant relationship at the level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  between organizational conflict management and job satisfaction which is an inverse relationship.
8. There is a statistically significant relationship at the level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  between causes of organizational conflict management and job satisfaction , which is an inverse relationship.
9. There is statistically significant relationship at the level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  between organizational conflicts management strategies and job satisfaction , which is a direct correlation.

### **Recommendations:-**

1. Develop awareness of managers and employees to the concept of organizational conflict in the various organizations and the importance of highlighting its positive aspects and face disadvantages in order to achieve maximum possible efficiency and effectiveness.
2. The need to increase staff awareness and deepen their understanding of the importance of organizational conflict management; and introduce to them the situations and circumstances in which they must use the appropriate strategy to deal with, by conducting training courses concerning this phenomenon in the related course programs, in order to take advantage of the phenomenon of organizational conflict in increasing the effectiveness of the organization.
3. The need to maintain a certain level of organizational conflict, because organizational conflict phenomenon is a humanitarian natural phenomenon, existing in every organization.
4. Promoting the use of the cooperation strategy as a strategy which has benefits to everyone.
5. Enhancing the use of Accommodating Strategy as it helps to consolidate the personal relations among workers.
6. Working to increase incentives allocations for workers, in order to increase the level of their job satisfaction enhancing.
7. The need for participation of managers with their subordinates in decision-making, in order to apply the best of those decisions.
8. The need for giving more attention to the training of personnel, for its significant impact on increasing the efficiency of workers and further enhancing the job satisfaction.

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