# THE EFFECT OF WORKPLACE CONFLICT TYPES ON EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING: EXAMINING THE MECHANISM AND THE ROLE OF MODERATORS

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### **Certificate**

CONFLICT TYPES ON EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING: EXAMINING THE MECHANISM AND THE ROLE OF MODERATORS", submitted to the Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy under the Faculty of Social Science is the record of bona fide research carried out by Mr. Vijay Kuriakose, under my supervision and guidance at the School of Management Studies, Cochin University of Science and Technology. This work did not form part of any dissertation submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or any other similar title or recognition from this or any other institution. All the relevant corrections and modifications suggested by experts during the pre-synopsis seminar and recommended by the Doctoral Committee are incorporated in the thesis. Also certified that this thesis was verified for plagiarism using the CUSAT facility and found satisfactory.

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Kochi- 22

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Date: 18-02-2019

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### Abstract

The present study building on Affective Events Theory examined the relationship between different types of conflict at work and employee well-being. The study also examined the role of negative affect state as a mechanism through which different types of conflict influences employee well-being and also examined the moderating role of perceived social support at work and individual's conflict management styles in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state. Drawing from various empirical evidence the study postulated an inverse relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being and a positive relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state. The study also postulated an inverse relationship between negative affect state and employee well-being. Further, it was predicted that negative affect state mediates the relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being. The study also postulated that perceived social support at work and active conflict management styles such as forcing and problem-solving conflict management styles negatively moderates and passive conflict management styles such as yielding and avoiding positively moderates the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state.

To test the proposed relationships responses were collected through self-administered questionnaires from IT engineers and 554 usable responses were used for final analysis. After validating the measurement model the hypothesised direct and mediating relationships were tested through Structural Equation Modeling, and the proposed moderating hypotheses were examined using Process Macros.

The results indicated that irrespective of types conflicts are detrimental for employee well-being and increase negative affect state. The study also found support for the mediating role of negative affect state and moderating role of perceived social support, passive conflict management styles and problem-solving conflict management style as

hypothesised. However, the study did not find support for the moderating role of perceived social support at work in the relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state. The data also failed to support the moderating role of forcing conflict management style in the relationship between task, process conflict and negative affect state. However, contrary to the expectation it was found that forcing conflict management style strengthens the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state.

The findings of the study extended our understanding about the effect of workplace conflict on well-being and provide valuable insights for practice. The findings of the study, contributions, implications and limitations of the study are discussed in the final chapter.

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### Abbreviations

AET - Affective Events Theory

AG - Avoiding

AIC - Akaike Information Criterion

AMOS - Analysis of Moment Structure

AVE - Average Variance Extracted

CFA - Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFI - Comparative Fit Index

CLF - Common Latent Factor

CR - Composite Reliability

EFA - Exploratory Factor Analysis

EWB - Employee Well-being

FG - Forcing

IT - Information Technology

KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

LLCI - Lower Level of Confidence Interval

MANOVA - Multivariate Analysis of Variance

MH - Mental Health

MLE - Maximum Likelihood Estimate

NA - Negative Affect

NASSCOM - National Association of Software and Services

Companies

PA - Positive Affect

PC - Process Conflict

PH - Physical Health

PNFI - Parsimonious Normed Fit Index

PS - Problem-solving

PSS - Perceived Social Support

RC - Relationship Conflict

RMSEA - Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

SD - Standard Deviation

SE - Standard Error

SEM - Structural Equation Modeling

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

SRMR - Standardized Root Mean Square Residual

TC - Task Conflict

ULCI - Upper Level of Confidence Interval

WHO - World Health Organisation

YG - Yielding

### Chapter 1

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This chapter provides a brief overview of the background of the study, research gaps identified from the literature review, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, research methodology followed, and limitations of the study and ends with the chapter - wise distribution of the thesis.

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Being happy is one of the important needs of the individual and happiness and well-being is a highly valued goal in all societies (Diener, 2000). Individual's workplace is a major source of happiness and satisfaction for employees, as positive and harmonious interpersonal relationships at work enhance positive and enthusiastic feelings such as self-worth, self-esteem and social inclusion. Despite this enjoyment that individuals derive from their work environment, workplaces are also sources of distress and strain to the individuals. Various social stressors like interpersonal conflicts have been found to have severe adverse consequences for individuals, organisations and society (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012).

The impact of workplace stressors on various individual-level outcomes such as employee health and well-being has received a wide range of attention across different disciplines. Various national and

international organisations such as 'United States National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health' and 'European Agency for Safety and Health' at Work recognised occupational stress as the major workplace hazard adversely affecting employee's psychological and physiological health. Stressors which have gained a wide range of attention in the domain of occupational stress are workload and role stressors (Bruke- Lee & Spector, 2006). Along with such stressors, researchers have started giving attention to various workplace stressors emanating from employees social environment. One such major stressor emanating from employee's social environment and social interactions at the workplace is interpersonal conflict among employees (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018).

Conflicts are ubiquitous to all social life; and organisations are associative social systems where employees interact with each other to achieve the individual goals as well as the goals of the organisation (Blau & Scott, 1962; Etzioni, 1964; Ilies, Johnson, Judge, & Keeney, 2011; Simon, 1976). Interpersonal interactions among employees are fundamental to such organised activities at the workplace (March & Simon, 1958). Researches state that due to the complex nature and interdependencies among employees in modern organisations, conflicts have become a common phenomenon in organisations (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018; Meier, Semmer, & Gross, 2013; Sonnentag, Unger, & Nägel, 2013; Volmer, 2015).

Pondy (1992) based on his extensive research stated that organisations are conflict-ridden and this conflict-ridden nature of modern organisations are likely to increase in the coming future due to the diverse

nature of modern workforce (Shaukat, Yousaf, & Sanders, 2017). The diversity of the workforce is always related to increased conflicts in organisations (Fiol, 1994; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Conflict is likely to occur as a result of differences in interests, values and ideas and poses a threat to interpersonal harmony among employees. Hence, conflicts are a reality which is unavoidable at the workplace (Ma, Yang, Wang & Li, 2017) and conflict at the workplace is considered as an important phenomenon having various effects on individuals, groups and organisations (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008; De Wit, Greer,& Jehn, 2012). To a large extent success of any organisation, whether it is small or large, depends on harmonious functioning of its human resources, and consequences of conflict at work will have deleterious effects on individuals as well as on organisations (Shaukat et al., 2017).

De Dreu and Gelfland (2008) stated that conflicts are on the rise more than ever before due to high workload, work demands, role conflict, job insecurity and misunderstandings among employees. Individuals in an organisational structure inherently will have tensions related to personal autonomy, goals of the organisation as well as those of co-workers (Pondy, 1992). In organisational settings employees are placed in different hierarchies where they are exposed to differences, related to authority and power (Jaffee, 2001). Such differences lead to conflict in organisations and manifest in different levels such as, between employees (interpersonal conflict); between employees within a group (intra-group conflict); between

groups (inter-group conflict) and between organisations (inter-organisational conflict) (Todorova, Bear, & Weingart, 2014).

In organisations, employees coexist and are interdependent and actively engage in social interactions. The nature of such interpersonal interactions influences individual level outcomes as well as organisational level outcomes (Ilies et al., 2011). Different from other life domains, individuals have little control over whom they interact with in the workplace (Davis, 2009). Individuals in organisations interact with customers, co-workers and their supervisors (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018) and dissimilarities among them over values, goals and interests are likely to result in conflict among employees in organisations.

Prevalence of interpersonal conflict across different cultures and occupations has been seen in various empirical studies. Interpersonal conflict is not a rarely occurring phenomenon; it occurs for at least 50 percent of the work days (Hahn, 2000) and is detrimental to 26 percent of the workforce (De Raeve, Jansen, Van den Brandt, Vasse, & Kant, 2009). In a study among Finnish employees, 50 percent of them have reported as having conflicts with their co-workers, and 60 percent of them had conflicts with their supervisors (Appelberg, Romanov, Heikkila, Honkasalo, & Koskenvuo, 1996). In a study conducted by the Swedish Work Environment Authority, 26 percent of the participants had a conflict with their supervisors, and 60 percent had conflicts with their co-workers (Work Environment Statistics, 2012). In a survey conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel

Development (2008) among more than 5000 employees from United States, Brazil, and 8 European countries, employees attributed workplace conflict as the primary reason for project failure.

In another study conducted by Varhama and Bjorkqvist (2004) among 1961 municipal employees, it was found that 27 percent of employees had reported that they had experienced extreme workplace conflict, 16 percent had reported being bullied by their co-workers, and 37 percent as having experienced interpersonal conflict at work. Similarly, Dierdorff and Ellington (2008) in a study among 1367 employees from 126 industries, found that approximately 15 percent experienced instances of interpersonal conflict at the workplace at least once in a month. Interpersonal conflict is an encompassing phenomenon in all levels of management from bottom levels to top management levels (Hmieleski & Ensley, 2007).

Keenan and Newton (1985), using Stress Incident Report collected stressful incidents at workplace among engineers for one month and found that 74 percent of the stressful incidents at the workplace are social in nature, and interpersonal conflict is the most frequently cited source of stress. In a study conducted by Narayanan, Menon and Spector (1999a) among clerical, academic and sales employees, interpersonal conflict is reported as the most stressful incident.

Smith and Sulsky (1995), in a study among American employees from different occupations in three different organisations, found that 25 percent of employees reported that interpersonal conflict is the most distressing stressor.

In a study among American employees it was found that 85 percent of employees experienced workplace conflict and among that, 29 percent reported as having frequent experiences of conflict (Hayes, 2008). In a cross-cultural study by Narayanan, Menon and Spector (1999 b), among American and Indian clerical employees, it was found that interpersonal conflict is the third most cited source of stress among American employees and the fourth most cited source among Indian employees.

Also, in a survey conducted among Canadian employees, interpersonal conflict is ranked as the third important stressor at their workplace (Williams, 2003). Interpersonal conflict is considered as the most upsetting and troubling daily stressor for employees (e.g., Beach, Martin, Blum, & Roman, 1993; Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Schilling, 1989; Farrell, 1999; Keenan & Newton, 1985; Leiter, 2005; Smith & Sulsky, 1995).

Interpersonal conflict can adversely impact everyday organisational functioning. In an earlier study by Thomas and Schmidt (1976), it was found that management approximately spends one-fifth of their productive time dealing with workplace conflicts. Recent studies have found that managers spend 25 percent to 60 percent of their productive time dealing with workplace conflict (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2011; Kohlrieser, 2007), which undoubtedly points out that conflicts are towering day by day in organisations. In a survey of CPP Inc, it was found that an employee spends approximately 2.8 hours in a week to deal with conflict. 33 percent of employees reported that conflict at workplace results in employee firing and quitting. Interpersonal conflict

between employees is reported as the major reason for absenteeism among 25 percent of the employees in a study conducted by CPP.

Conflict is an inevitable part of business life (Shetach, 2012). Conflict at work- a social phenomenon in the organisation, is a subject of research interest for practitioners and researchers alike due to its prevalence in the organisation and its association with a wide range of organisational and individual level outcomes. Cloke and Goldsmith (2011), stated that conflict at workplace results in poor morale, lower productivity, increases rumours, gossips, turnover intention, stress-related illness and grievances. In this context, the study addresses the most upsetting and troublesome problem experienced by the employees that is, workplace conflict or interpersonal among employees in organisations.

#### 1.2 RESEARCH GAPS IDENTIFIED

After an extensive literature review, the following gaps in the workplace conflict literature were noticed:

- a) Researches in the conflict domain have given more importance to performance related outcomes and have given scarce attention to soft outcomes such as employee health and well-being.
- b) Studies which have addressed the relationship between workplace conflict and well-being used a general measure of conflict and hence the differential effect of different types of conflict such as task, relationship and process conflicts are not known much.

- Process conflicts have been neglected from research considering it as similar to task conflict.
- d) Researches about workplace conflict followed a rational approach towards workplace conflict, and affect-related variables got scarce attention.
- e) Lastly, research overly focused on the direct relationship between conflict and its outcomes and overlooked the role of potential mediators and moderators.

Hence, this study tries to fill the gaps mentioned above in the conflict literature by examining the relationship between major types of conflict at workplace and well-being and examines the role of potential mediators and moderators.

## 1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Researches in the workplace conflict have well established the detrimental effect of workplace conflict on employee well-being and such conclusions were based on a general measure of conflict. Researches in the domain of workplace conflict have stated that conflicts at workplace occurs over task related issues, process related issues and relationship related issues and termed as task conflict, process conflict and relationship conflict respectively. Though there is this tripartite classification of workplace conflict, researches in the conflict domain overlooked this classification. Solansky, Singh, and Huang (2014) suggest that unless we decouple conflicts into three, we cannot understand the differential impact of different types of conflict on employee well-being and we would continue to have inconsistent

results. A major limitation of the conflict research is that most of the studies conducted on workplace conflict have investigated its direct impact on individuals' work behaviors (Jehn, 1995; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012), except for a few studies (Bear, Weingart, & Todorova 2014; Kacmar Bachrach, Harris & Noble, 2012; Zhang & Zhang, 2012). Thus the quest for an explanatory mechanism in the direct links between workplace conflict types and work outcomes remains underexplored in this realm of research.

Further, the role of various situational and dispositional moderators in the conflict-outcome relationships has so far been overlooked in the workplace conflict literature. These lack of understanding creates difficulties for academicians and practitioners alike for designing interventions to manage conflict. To address this problem, the present study poses the following research questions:

- 1. Generally, workplace conflict is considered as an adverse work event detrimental to employee well-being, the present study investigates does this assumption holds for task, relationship and process conflicts also or not?
- 2. Generally, conflict is considered as a negative work event resulting in negative affect state; the present study investigates does this assumption holds for task, relationship and process conflicts also or not?
- 3. Does negative affect state mediates the relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being?

- 4. Does individuals' conflict management style influences the effect of workplace conflict types on employee well-being?
- 5. Generally, social support at work has been found to mitigate the adverse effect of various workplace events; the study enquires whether this assumption holds true for all types of conflicts also or not?

#### 1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

## 1.4.1 Major Objective of the study

➤ To understand the effect of different types of workplace conflict, such as task, relationship, and process conflicts, on employee well-being and the study also examines the mechanism linking different types of conflict and employee well-being. Further, the study also seeks to identify the influence of situational and dispositional moderators in the proposed relationships.

## 1.4.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

- ➤ To understand the effect of task, relationship and process conflicts on employee well-being.
- ➤ To understand the effect of task, relationship and process conflicts on negative affect state.
- ➤ To understand the effect of negative affect state on employee wellbeing.
- > To ascertain the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between different types of conflicts and negative affect

state.

➤ To ascertain the moderating role of perceived social support and individual's conflict management styles in the relationship between different types of conflicts and negative affect state.

#### 1.5 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research hypotheses were proposed. From hypotheses 1 to 3 the study has predicted that task conflict, relationship conflict and process conflicts are negatively related to employee well-being. From hypotheses 4 to 6 the study has predicted a positive relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict and negative affect state. In hypothesis 7 the study has hypothesised an inverse relationship between negative affect state and employee well-being.

Hypotheses 8 to 10 has predicted the mediating hypotheses. The study has predicted that negative affect state mediates the relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict, and employee well-being. From hypotheses 11 to 25 the study has predicted the moderating role of perceived social support at work, passive conflict management styles and active conflict management styles. In hypotheses 11, 12 and 13, it has been predicted that perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict and negative affect state.

From hypotheses 14 to 19 the study has hypothesised the moderating role of passive conflict management styles such as avoiding and yielding in the relationship between different types of conflicts and negative affect state. Specifically, in hypotheses 14, 15 and 16, it has been predicted that avoiding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict and negative affect state. In hypotheses 17, 18 and 19, it has been posulated that yielding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict and negative affect state.

From hypotheses 20 to 25 the study has hypothesised the moderating role of active conflict management styles such as forcing and problem-solving. Precisely, in hypotheses 20, 21 and 22, it has been predicted that forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict and negative affect state. In hypotheses 23, 24 and 25, it has been postulated that problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict and negative affect state (Individual hypotheses are stated in chapter 2 and chapter 3).

#### 1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Although conflict might be functional for organisations such as better individual achievement, better group decision making, enhancing effective change, better learning and productivity (De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997), there are empirical shreds of evidences of adverse effects of workplace conflict on various physiological, psychological level outcomes and employee well-being. (Bruk-Lee & Spector, 2006; De Dreu, Van Dierendonck & Dijkstra 2004). However, to enhance employee well-being, which in turn positively influences various organisational and individual level outcomes, more research differentiating conflict into different types and examining its effect on employee well-being are needed. More precisely, considering the detrimental effect of conflict on employee health and well-being and being a major risk factor emanating from the work environment, it is vital to understand the various antecedents, moderators and mediators influencing this relationship.

The study seeks to understand the effect of major types of workplace conflicts such as task conflict, relationship conflict and process conflict on employee well-being. Unless researchers classify conflicts into different types, our understanding about the effects of different types of conflict remain unknown and continue to have inconsistent results. Another paucity in the conflict literature is the various mechanisms through which different types of conflict influences on employee well-being remains unexamined. Thus the quest for explanatory mechanisms linking different types of conflict and well-being remains unexamined in this realm of research. Though conflict is a reality experienced by every employee and is hard to avoid, the effect of conflict varies from individual to individual. This signals to the

possibility of various moderators influencing the conflict- outcome relationship and the role of such moderators has far been overlooked.

Since, conflicts are inevitable (De Dreu, 2011), likely to increase (Shaukat et al., 2017) and it is difficult to find conflict-free organisations (Pfeffer, 1997; Pondy, 1967), the findings of the study will have theoretical and practical significances. Since the study also examines the mechanism through which different types of conflict influence employee well-being, the findings of the study will extend the existing theoretical understanding. Further, the study also examines the role of potential moderators that could strengthen or weaken the relationships in the proposed model. This understanding will help managers and practitioners in the organisational context to develop various intervention strategies which will eventually help organisations, individuals and managers to mitigate and manage the detrimental effect of different types of conflict on employee well-being. In brief, by developing an integrated model, examining the direct and indirect effects of different types of conflict on employee well-being and by examining the role of various situational and dispositional moderators, the findings of the study will have theoretical and practical relevance in creating a happy workplace and a healthy workforce.

## 1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is descriptive and analytical. Initially, a preliminary study was conducted with a purpose to understand the occurrence of different types of conflict in different service sectors. The data was collected from IT, Banking, Tourism and Health sectors. The study found support for the

occurrence of interpersonal conflict among employees. Though the preliminary study reflects the support for the occurrences of interpersonal conflict among employees in IT, Banking, Tourism and Health sectors, IT sector reported more episodes of interpersonal conflict. In addition, a survey study among Indian software engineers revealed that majority of the engineers, more specifically 73 percent of the engineers, experience conflict every day (Thoti, Saufi & Rathod, 2013). Hence, the researcher selected the IT sector for the final study.

After the conceptual model was developed, the researcher identified the various existing scales to measure the constructs in the study, the scales were adapted to meet the requirements of the study, and a questionnaire was developed. The proposed model was tested among software engineers working in large Information Technology firms operating in Kerala. After the questionnaire was developed, a pilot study was conducted among software engineers. The researcher distributed 200 questionnaires and received back 160 questionnaires. 15 questionnaires were removed, as these questionnaires were found incomplete. Using the responses collected for the pilot study, an exploratory factor analysis was performed which ensured the unidimensionality of the constructs. The researcher examined the reliability and correlations between the variables and the relationships were as expected which provided support to proceed with the final study.

Later in the final study, as part of the survey and data collection process, the study distributed a total of 1000 questionnaires. From this list,

we received 620 filled questionnaires back on or before the specified time. In this, 66 questionnaires were later removed from the analysis as it was found incomplete during the initial screening. Hence, 554 responses were used for final analysis. Thus the average response rate was 55.4 %. To examine the psychometric properties of the scales a confirmatory factor analysis was performed. After examining various indices, the study ensured the discriminant, and convergent validity and the measurement model and the structural model were validated. In the second stage, the study proceeded with the test of hypotheses. To test the postulated direct and mediating relationships, the study relied on Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). To test the hypothesised moderating relationships the study relied on Process Macros developed by Hayes.

#### 1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are the significant limitations of the study. The cross-sectional nature of the study limits the causal conclusions of the findings of the study. The study relied on self-report responses which may lead to the problem of common method bias. The study overlooked the effect of conflict with supervisor and conflict with co-workers on employee well-being. The data was collected from only one industry which may limit the generalizability of the findings of the study to other job settings.

#### 1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

The entire thesis is organised in five chapters.

## Chapter-1

Chapter one provides a brief introduction about the present study in which research gaps, research question, objectives of the study, hypotheses of the study, significance of the study, research methodology and limitations of the study are stated.

## Chapter-2

In chapter two a summary of the literature review is provided and also explains the fundamental theory on which the researcher relied for the study. Chapter two also explains the hypotheses development and ends with the summary of the conceptual model developed.

## Chapter-3

Chapter three provides an overview of the methodological approaches used in the study. The chapter also explains the research design, theoretical and operational definitions of the study, scope of the study, sampling process, scales used for the study and ends with the overview of the data analysis process.

## Chapter-4

Chapter four provides the data analysis summary, in which details of the pre-test, pilot study, and the final study are explained. The chapter provides the results of exploratory factor analysis, measurement model validation and structural model validation and the results of various hypotheses testing.

## **Chapter-5**

In chapter five the findings of the study, discussion related to various hypotheses testing, theoretical and managerial implications of the study are provided. The chapter ends with limitations of the study and also provides directions for future research.



## **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

This chapter provides a summary of the existing understanding of workplace conflict. Further, the chapter provides a brief overview of research gaps identified, study variables, theoretical framework, hypotheses development and ends with the proposed conceptual model for the study.

#### 2.1 WORKPLACE CONFLICT

Conflict at work is a significant phenomenon in organisational life and is inherent to organisations (Shaukat et al., 2017). There are ample number of research evidences which have established the detrimental effect of negative social exchanges between employees such as interpersonal conflict on their well-being and social functioning (Bolger et al., 1989; De Dreu et al., 2004; Dijkstra, Beersma, & Cornelissen, 2012; Dijkstra, De Dreu, Evers, & van Dierendonck, 2009; De Dreu & Beersma, 2005; Frone, 2000; Spector & Bruk-Lee, 2008; Volmer, 2015; Volmer, Niessen, Binnewies, & Sonnentag, 2012) especially in the workplace situations. Generally, social stressors such as conflicts at work, are often related to adverse individual level and organisational outcomes. Research evidence indicates that interpersonal stressors at workplace such as conflicts among employees result in deleterious outcomes to the individual such as withdrawal and depression (Frone, 2000; Rook, 2001; Spector & Bruk-lee,

2008), increases negative affect and strain (Bolger et al., 1989; Frone, 2000; Ilies et al., 2011; Rook, 2001), impairs physical health and increases psychological symptoms (Romanov, Appelberg, Honkasalo, & Koskenvuo, 1996). Interpersonal conflict is considered as a significant issue for people across culture, age, and context and it is a common upsetting stressor for employees at the workplace.

#### 2.2 DEFINITIONS OF WORKPLACE CONFLICT

Though research about the conflict at work has aged more than 80 years, an overarching definition of the construct is still lacking. Pondy (1967) based on his seminal work provided a conceptual model of organisational conflict. He suggested to focus on four aspects to correctly understand the concept of organisational conflict such as 1) antecedent conditions, 2) cognitive states, 3) affective states, and 4) conflictual behaviour. Considering these four elements as vital elements of workplace conflict, various definitions of workplace conflict have emerged focussing on either all four elements or combining these elements (Barki & Hartwick, 2004). Various definitions of conflict at work in the organisational conflict literature are provided in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1 Definitions of Workplace Conflict** 

<b>Author</b> and	Definition of Workplace Conflict	Core
Year		Emphasis
Mack and	Conflict at work indicates the joint presence	Cognition,
Snyder (1957)	of differences among employees which can be	behaviour
	either mutually exclusive or mutually	
	discordant values and interference which can	
	be mutually opposed actions, as well as	
	behaviours that hurt, frustrate, or try to control	
	other parties.	
Fink (1968)	Conflict is defined as a social situation or	Emotion,
	process in which two or more individuals are	behaviour
	linked by at least one form of hostile	
	psychological relation or at least one form of	
	an antagonistic interaction.	
Abel (1982)	Conflict is defined as inconsistent claims over	Interest
	resources.	
Hocker and	Conflict is defined as a struggle among at least	Cognition,
Wilmot (1985)	two or more interdependent individuals who	interest,
	perceive discordant goals, and obstruction	behaviour
	from the other individuals in realising their	
	objectives.	
Thomas (1992)	Conflict is defined as the process that arises	Interest,
	when one individual perceives that the other	emotion
	individual has deleteriously affected, or is	
	about to affect, its interests deleteriously.	
Wall and	Conflict refers to a process in which one party	
Callister (1995)	recognises that his/her interests are	Interest,
	deleteriously affected by another party.	emotion
Barki and	Conflict refers to a dynamic process that	Cognition,
Hartwick (2004)	occurs among mutually dependent parties as	behaviour,

	they experience deleterious emotional	emotion,
	reactions to perceived differences and	process
	interference with the accomplishment of their	
	goals.	
Tjosvold (2006)	Conflict refers to discordant activities where	Behaviour
	one individual's actions are interfering or	
	obstructing another individual's actions.	
Bendersky and	Conflict is different cognitions about	Cognition,
Hays (2012)	perspectives and interpersonal incompatibility.	emotion,
		behaviour
De Wit et al.	Conflict is the process emerging from	Cognition,
(2012)	perceived incompatibilities or differences	emotion,
	among group members.	behaviour
De Jong et al.	Workplace conflict refers to disagreements	Interest,
(2013)	among employees over the allocation of	cognition,
	resources, decision making, personal style,	emotion
	and values.	
Loughry and	Conflict is about incompatibilities and	Cognition,
Amason (2014)	disputes.	emotion,
		behaviour
Anicich, Fast,	Workplace conflict is generally theorised as	Cognition,
Halevy and	interpersonal friction due to conflicting	emotion,
Galinsky (2015)	viewpoints, opinions, or personal dislikes	behaviour
	among employees.	
Hu, Chen, Gu &	Conflict is defined as the perceived	Cognition,
Huang,(2017)	incompatibilities among individuals, over	emotion,
	discrepant views or interpersonal mismatches.	behaviour

Though there is a wide range of definitions of workplace conflict emphasising on different dimensions of conflict, the definition of workplace conflict covering all dimensions was given by De Dreu and Gelfland (2008).

In general, they defined workplace conflict as "a process that begins when an individual or group perceives differences and opposition between itself and another individual or group about interests and resources, beliefs, values, or practices that matter to them" (p. 6).

Though the research about conflict at the workplace is interdisciplinary nature, scholars across different disciplines converge on the following three conclusions about workplace conflict (Deutsch, 1973):

- Workplace conflict is a reality at the work environment.
- Conflicts have mixed motives competitive as well as cooperative motives.
- Conflicts can be productive when managed properly but become destructive when ignored or managed improperly.

#### 2.3 SOURCES OF WORKPLACE CONFLICT

Workplace conflict occurs among employees over different factors. The following section provides a brief overview of the different factors or sources resulting in workplace conflict.

According to Alswalim (2000), organisational level factors, as well as individual level factors, can result in conflict among employees. In his study, he identified the major factors that result in conflict in organisations. Those factors are individual differences (personality differences), role ambiguity, role incompatibility and unfair treatment at the workplace by supervisors and management. According to Swailem (2000), the significant factors that result in conflict in organisations are individual differences, role

incompatibility among employees, unfair treatment and role ambiguity. Another set of factors resulting in conflict in organisations were added by Davis and Newstorm (2002). They have broadened and extended the factors causing conflict in organisations. According to them, the factors causing conflict in organisations are; organisational change, lack of trust among employees, differences in values and perceptions, threat to status and personality clashes among employees. According to Luthans (2002), individual differences, work stress, lack of communication and role incompatibility are the significant factors resulting in conflict in organisations.

In a study by Abdolmotalleb (2003), he identified the major factors resulting in organisational conflict. Such factors are lack of resources, lack of communication and role ambiguity. Assaf (2004), stated that major factors causing conflict in the organisations are lack of communication, personality differences, and unfair treatment. Hellriegal and Slocum (2004), stated that role incompatibility, role ambiguity, and individual differences result in conflict in organisations. Maher (2004) based on his study provided an extensive list of factors that result in conflict in the organisations. Such factors are lack of communication and trust, organisational change, lack of resources, role ambiguity and threat to status, work stress, role incompatibility, and individual differences. Wilson (2004) stated that conflict occurs in the workplace due to the following reasons, such as value incongruence, organisational changes, miscommunications, and prejudices among employees.

According to Mullins (2007), individual differences, organisational change, lack of resources, unfair treatment, and role incompatibility are the major factors resulting in conflict in organisations and in the year 2007 he added age gap also as a factor resulting in conflict in organisations. According to Al-Otaibi (2006), four major factors cause conflicts among employees in organisations. They are limited resources to achieve the goals, competency deficiency, problems in defining responsibilities, and goal contradiction. Al-otaibi has explored and identified the topic giving more attention to the goals of the organisation. His study provided a different set of factors that result in conflict.

Adomie and Anie (2006), in a study among Nigerian university employees, found that the major factors that result in organisational conflict are personality differences and cultural differences. Newstorm (2007), based on his research work in organisational conflict added one more factor that results in conflict in organisations. He stated that incivility among employees results in conflict in organisations. Luthans (2008) in his book about organisational behaviour have identified more factors and concluded following factors as the major contributors of conflict in organisations. They are environmental stress, individual differences, information deficiency, and role incompatibility. Brooks (2009) attribute individual differences among employees are the most important factor resulting in conflict in organisations. The above studies provide an overview of different factors that result in conflicts among employees in organisations. Table 2.2

summarises the significant factors causing conflict among employees at the workplace.

**Table 2.2 Main Factors Causing Conflict at the Workplace** 

Factors	Authors
Individual differences	Adomi and Anie (2006); Assaf (2004);
	Brooks 2009; Hellriegel and Slocum (2004);
	Luthans (2008); Maher (2004); Mullins
	(2007); Newstrom (2007); Davis and
	Newstrom (2002); Swailem (2000).
Unfair treatment	Assaf (2004); Mullins (2007); Swailem
	(2000).
Role ambiguity	Al-Otaibi (2006); Hellriegel and Slocum
	(2004); Maher (2004); Swailem (2000).
Role incompatibility	Hellriegel and Slocum (2004); Maher
	(2004); Swailem (2000).
Organisational change	Luthans (2008); Davis and Newstrom
	(2002); Newstrom (2007); Maher (2004).
Threats to status	Davis and Newstrom (2002); Newstrom
	(2007); Maher (2004).
Lack of trust	Davis and Newstrom (2002); Newstrom
	(2007)
Incivility	Newstrom (2007)
Limitation of resources	Al-Otaibi (2006); Maher (2004); Mullins
	(2007).
Contradiction of goals	Al-Otaibi (2006)
Information deficiency	Assaf (2004); Luthans (2008); Maher (2004).
Environmental stress	Assaf (2004); Luthans (2002, 2008).

Source: Compiled by the author

These factors resulting in conflict in the organisation can be broadly grouped under two categories: a) organisational factors and b) individual factors. This categorisation is presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Organisational and Individual Level Factors Causing Conflict at the Workplace

Organisational Factors	Individual Factors
Role ambiguity	Individual differences
Role incompatibility	Threat to status
Work Stress	Lack of trust
Lack of communications	Incivility
Organisational change	Unfair treatment
Limited resources	

Source: Compiled by the author

#### 2.4 LEVELS OF WORKPLACE CONFLICT

Workplace conflict in organisations can manifest in various forms. It occurs among individuals, within or among groups, and even within an individual (Rainey, 2003). Experts and authors in the domain of organisational conflict have stated that organisational conflict can take place in the following forms such as intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict, inter-group conflict and inter-organisational conflict (Wood et al., 2010; Luthans, 2008). Intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict, and intergroup conflict are conflicts occurring within the organisation and are termed as internal conflict whereas inter-organisational conflict is external and is

termed as *external conflict* (Hempel, Zhang & Tjosvold, 2009; Abdolmotalleb, 2003). The following section provides a brief overview of the different types of organisational conflict in detail.

## 2.4.1 Intrapersonal Conflict

As the prefix intra denotes, this type of conflict occurs within the individual. Major reasons for intra-personal conflict are incompatible goals and frustration (Wood et al., 2010, Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 1994). Schermerhorn et al., (1994) stated that intrapersonal conflict could take place within the individual due to real or perceived pressures over incompatible expectations and aims. The following section explains intrapersonal conflict due to frustration and intrapersonal conflict due to incompatible goals.

## a) Intrapersonal conflict due to frustration

When different factors obstruct an individual's goal accomplishment, employees experience frustration (Luthans, 2008). As a result, employees behave in a defensive way such as justifying their actions, aggressive behaviour, and withdrawal (Elmagri, 2002). Luthans (2008) stated that frustration negatively affects employee morale and reduces work satisfaction.

## b) Intrapersonal conflict due to incompatible goals

Such conflict is related to the individual's goals and objectives. In this case, individuals will have two or more goals which are mutually incompatible. To achieve one goal the individual will have to leave the other goals. Conflict due to incompatible goals takes place over three types of goals such as positively conflicting goals, negatively conflicting goals and conflict over whether to achieve or not to achieve the goals (Luthans, 2008; Maher, 2004).

Individuals experience intrapersonal conflict both in work and non-work domains. Nelson and Quick (2006) suggested that intrapersonal conflict can be resolved by proper self-analysis and careful diagnosis of the situation. Though intra-personal conflict is a reality, the present study focusses on interpersonal conflict among employees.

## 2.4.2 Intergroup Conflict

In addition to interpersonal conflict occupational psychologists have started giving attention to inter-group conflict (Luthans, 2008). Intergroup conflict occurs between groups in the organisation over resource allocation, and lack of coordination between the groups.

#### 2.4.3 Inter-Organisational Conflict

Organisations deal with many bodies in the external environment. Thus conflicts are not limited to only between internal parties (such as intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict and intergroup conflict), but they may also occur between an organisation and its external environment. Therefore, some authors (such as Abdolmotalleb, 2003 and Hempel et al., 2009) labelled inter-organisational conflict as "external conflict". Altira (2008) points out that inter-organisational conflict may arise as a result of the limited availability of markets for investment, the sizes of these markets, the nature of the structures of supply and demand, and prices.

#### 2.4.4 Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflicts which also include intra-group conflict are unavoidable in organisational life (Jehn & Rispens, 2008) and widely studied in organisational sciences (Sliter, Pui, Sliter, & Jex, 2011). Luthans (2008) stated that interpersonal conflict takes place among two or more individuals at the workplace due to disagreements and incompatible goals. When employees in organisations work together to achieve their goals as well as to achieve the broader performance goals of the organisation, they often face challenges while interacting with others (Martinez-corts, Demerouti, Bakker, & Boz, 2015). De Dreu and Beersma (2005), stated that conflict at the workplace takes place over dissimilarities and opposition among employees regarding values, beliefs and interests which they consider important. Various organisational factors and individual factors result in interpersonal conflict (Elsayed-Elkhouly, 1996). Interpersonal conflict among employees is the most frequent and commonly occurring phenomenon in the organisation (Dijkstra et al., 2012; Frone, 2000; Meier et al., 2013; Liu, Li, Fan & Nauta, 2015).

Researchers have started giving attention to the phenomenon of workplace interpersonal conflict for some time. Though researchers have started given wide range of attention to the phenomenon of workplace conflict, there is no consensus among researchers about the effect of workplace conflict. Conflict at the workplace in the beginning when it got the attention of the organisational researchers, it was generally considered detrimental to organisations (e.g., Brett, 1984; Schmidt & Kochan, 1972).

However, later researchers have proposed that workplace conflict can be beneficial for organisations. Despite this mixed evidences, a large body of researches surrounding workplace conflict suggests that conflicts are detrimental and the beneficial effects of conflicts are limited to under very narrow situations (De Dreu, 2006). Thus the majority of accumulated evidence surrounding workplace conflict suggests that interpersonal conflict among employees at the workplace are detrimental for organisations and the beneficial effects of conflicts at work are limited to exceptional situations.

## 2.5 OUTCOMES OF INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT AT WORK AMONG EMPLOYEES

Considering conflict at work as an adverse work event obstructing individual goal accomplishment, researches have established the various detrimental outcomes of interpersonal conflict. Researchers have classified such deleterious outcomes of interpersonal conflict at work into organisational level outcomes and individual level outcomes. The following sections discuss the outcomes of workplace conflict.

## 2.5.1 Organisational Level Outcomes of Interpersonal Conflict at Work.

Since modern organizations depend heavily on teams to achieve the goals of the organizations (Behfar, Peterson, Mannix, & Trochim, 2008; Jehn, Greer, Levine, & Szulanski, 2008; Martínez-Moreno, González-Navarro, Zornoza, & Ripoll, 2009) which require cooperation, interaction and interdependence among employees to achieve work productivity (Spector & Jex, 1998; Tjosvold, 1998); conflict among employees are considered as a major hindrance for employees to work collectively to

achieve the goals of the organization. This lack of cooperation (Spector & Jex, 1998) among employees inhibits the performance, and interpersonal conflict among employees is a significant performance obstacle which hinders cooperation and accomplishment of task (Jehn, 1995). Thus conflicts at work are generally troublesome for employees and unavoidable as interactions with people having diverse ideas and opinions are difficult to avoid in organisations (Sonnentag et al., 2013). Moreover, interpersonal conflict at work which is a major performance constraint and is difficult to avoid reduces the productivity and adversely affects the organisations.

Interpersonal conflict at work is considered as the most critical work stressor and from an organisational perspective the largest reducible cost (Dana, 1999) if properly managed. Research studies have established that interpersonal conflict at work reduces productivity and performance and increases absenteeism (Tjosvold, 1998). It is also a significant predictor of employee's intention to quit and turnover intentions (Cortina, Magley, Williams & Langhout, 2001; Frone, 2000; Spector & Jex, 1998) which have important deleterious effects on organisations. Further, other detrimental outcomes of interpersonal conflict at work such as diminished job satisfaction, job burnout, and lowered motivation also indirectly influence employee turnover intention. The detrimental effect of interpersonal conflict at work on job satisfaction negatively influences organisational commitment and job performance (Fu & Deshpande, 2014) and motivation of the employees (Gaki, Kontodimopoulos & Niakas, 2013) which will adversely affect the entire organisation itself.

In a longitudinal study among 15000 employees found that interpersonal conflict at work increases work disability among employees, and this relationship was found stronger for women employees (Appelberg et al.,1996). Thus various research evidence suggests that lowered productivity, impaired perfromance, increased absenteeism and turn over intentions associated with interpersonal conflict at work results in high cost for organisations.

Empirical evidence suggests that interpersonal conflict is considered as the most prominent social stressors, which creates social problems and harm social relationships which in turn increases organisational costs and lowers productivity of the employees (Wright, 2012). Bruk- Lee, and Spector (2006), stated that interpersonal conflict at work could lead to costly counterproductive work behaviour in organisations. Counterproductive work behaviour is a type of retaliatory behaviour which is contrary to the broader organisational goals targeting co-workers or supervisors or targeting the entire organisation itself (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Such retaliatory behaviours of employees reduce the organisational effectiveness by reducing productivity as well as the morale of the employees. Further research suggests that enduring, unresolved and prolonged conflicts can lead to extreme adverse outcomes of interpersonal conflict at work such as workplace violence, aggression and workplace bullying (Barling, Dupre, & Kelloway, 2009; Goldstein, 1994; Nolan, Shope, Citrome, & Volavka, 2009; Pearson, Anderson & Wegner, 2001. Such workplace aggression, violence and bullying among employees results in psychological anxiety and various

negative affective states for not only to those who are exposed but also other employees who witness such aggressive behaviours (Herschcovis & Barling, 2006; Salin, 2003) which in turn reduces the productivity and adversely affect the overall working environment and adversely affect the overall organisational effectiveness. Various research evidence has established the detrimental effect of interpersonal conflict on team satisfaction and effectiveness of the team (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), and reduces social cohesion among employees in teams, and adversely affect the entire team functioning (Van Vianen & De Dreu, 2001).

## 2.5.2 Employee Level Outcomes of Interpersonal Conflict at Work

In general, conflict regardless of the environment where it occurs is considered as an adverse event detrimental for individuals (Rook, 2001). At the workplace, social interactions are inevitable in interpersonal relationships and an essential part of everyone's job (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018). Hence, it is logical to assume that social interactions at the workplace have a vital role in influencing various individual-level outcomes. Though employees try to maintain positive interpersonal relationships at the workplace, negative interpersonal interactions such as interpersonal conflicts are unavoidable (Ilies et al., 2011). Various researches suggest that such negative interpersonal interactions such as interpersonal conflict adversely influences various individual-level outcomes.

According to Leka, Cox, and Zwetsloot (2008), negative interpersonal relationships at work such as interpersonal conflict at work is considered as one of ten various sources of hazard at work. Interpersonal

conflict at work exerts a stronger influence on employees' affective experiences at work and is likely to increase negative mood within the individual (Nixon, Mazzola, Bauer, Krueger, & Spector, 2011). There is empirical evidence for a positive association between interpersonal conflict at work and negative affect state (Ilies et al., 2011; Volmer, 2015). Previous research established that interpersonal conflict and negative interpersonal relationships at work result in similar physical problems as similar as physical stressors (e.g., noise, poor working conditions) or organisational ones create (e.g., workload; Hauge, Skogstad & Einarsen, 2010). There is empirical evidence for negative interpersonal interactions to be considered as severe work stressors, and workplace conflicts as significant predictors of psychological strain for employees (Dijkstra et al., 2011).

Considering the importance of social relationships, which is considered as the lifeblood of organisations (Ren & Gray, 2009) and central to the lives of the employees at work, conflicts at work are distressing for employees (Sonnentag et al., 2013). For example, many employees have reported that co-workers constitute a significant source of social support at work (AbuAlRub, 2004; Beach et al., 1993) and such supportive relationships at work are the major reason to continue in a particular job after the first year of employment (Robinson, Murrels & Smith, 2005). Further, supportive and positive relationships with supervisors have various positive outcomes for individuals as well as for organisations such as increased job satisfaction, lowered work stress and improved safety outcomes (Parker, Axtel & Turner, 2001). Thus interpersonal conflict at

work is considered as a major threat for positive inter-personal relationships at work and reduces the various benefits associated with such positive interpersonal relationships.

There are empirical evidence for the deleterious effect of interpersonal conflict at work on employee health and well-being (De Dreu et al., 2004; De Raeve et al., 2009; Spector & Bruk-Lee, 2008). Various literature evidence established that employees exposed to interpersonal conflict reported high depressive and withdrawal symptoms (Bruke- Lee & Spector, 2006; Frone, 2000; Inoue & Kawakami, 2010). Interpersonal conflict at work elicits depressive thoughts within the individual and employees tend to avoid others from their working and social environment (Bergmann, & Volkema, 1989; Cosier, Dalton & Taylor, 1991; De dreu& Beersma, 2005; Frone, 2000). Interpersonal conflict increases negative mood, negative affect (Ilies et al., 2011; Meier et al., 2013), rumination, sleep problems and alcohol intake (Dana & Griffin, 1999; Pennebaker, 1982) among employees. Further interpersonal conflict at work was found to be associated with severe psychological problems such as suicidal behaviours and psychosis in extreme cases. The adverse effect of interpersonal conflict can long last too. In a study by Romanov et al. (1996) it was established that employees exposed to frequent interpersonal conflict at work reported increased indoctor-diagnosed psychic morbidity a year later. Previous researches established that employees experiencing workplace conflict reported more strain symptoms (De Dreu et al., 2004), depression (Spector & Jex, 1998), somatic complaints (Frone, 2000), emotional exhaustion and

burn out (Shaukat et al., 2017). Thus various research evidence establishes that interpersonal conflict at work has profound adverse effects on the mental health of the employees.

These adverse effects of interpersonal conflict at work not only affect the psychological health of the employees but also diminish the physical health and social functioning (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001). It was found that workplace conflict is positively related to adverse health symptoms such as flu and headache (Spector & Jex, 1998). In a study conducted in Netherlands among a sample of 12000 working adults from 45 different organisations, it was found that increased exposure to interpersonal conflict at work significantly predicted fatigue, decreased physiological health and increases time need for recovery (De Raeve et al., 2009).

About the effect of interpersonal conflict on the social functioning of the employees, interpersonal conflict at work have been found to result in various negative attitudes and broods further conflict and results in extreme forms such as threats, confrontation, and aggression (Morril & Thomas, 1992; Sternberg & Dobson, 1987). Research evidence suggests that interpersonal conflict both in work and non-work domain results in loneliness among individuals which adversely affect their social functioning (Wright, 2012). Further interpersonal conflict at work can escalate to a spiral, and interactions among employees can become intensive and result in severe conflict and eventually turn to aggressive or violent behaviours (e.g., Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Wall & Callister, 1995). In brief, empirical

evidence establishes that interpersonal conflict at work adversely impacts the physical, psychological health as well as the social functioning of the employees.

#### 2.6 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Interpersonal conflicts at work are a threat to employee well-being as well as for organisational effectiveness. Organisational outcomes of interpersonal conflict at work are disconcerting due to the various costs associated with lower productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover and associated adverse social problems in organisations. Also, considering the adverse effect of interpersonal conflict on employee outcomes related to social functioning, physical health, and psychological health of employees, the repercussions of interpersonal conflict cannot be overlooked for organisations as well as managers. The research evidence substantiates the fact that the detrimental effects of interpersonal conflict at work can no longer be questioned.

# 2.7 RESEARCH GAPS IDENTIFIED FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Though various research studies have very well established that interpersonal conflicts at work are deleterious for employees as well as for organisations, the following insights from the literature cannot be overlooked.

Firstly, the various empirical evidences which established that interpersonal conflicts at work are deleterious for employees as well as for organizations were based on a general measure of conflict, which masks the effect of different types of conflict such as task, relationship and process conflicts on various levels of outcomes (Shaukat et al., 2017; Sonnentag et al., 2013). Recent research studies call for more empirical studies differentiating interpersonal conflict into different types to understand its effect on various levels of outcomes (Solansky et al., 2014). The review of the literature indicated that the researches in the conflict literature neglected process conflict as a distinct type of conflict, considering it as similar to task conflict (Behfar, Mannix, Peterson, & Trochim, 2011). Secondly, researches in the workplace conflict domain have given more attention to performance related outcomes, and limited attention has been given to how different types of conflicts influence employee well-being (Sonnentag et al., 2013). Thirdly, from the literature review, it was identified that research studies in the conflict domain have examined the direct impact of conflict on various levels of outcomes and overlooked the possible explanatory mechanisms linking conflicts and its outcomes (Shaukat et al., 2017). Though affect states of the individual have been found to mediate the relationship between workplace events and various individual-level outcomes, affect related variables got limited attention in the conflict literature (Montes, Rodriguez, & Serrano, 2012). Fourthly, research suggests that though conflict is a reality experienced by every employee, the relationship between conflict and wellbeing is moderate to the best. This indicates the possibility of different situational and dispositional moderators influencing the effect of conflict on well-being (De Dreu & Beersma, 2005). Research suggests that various individual and organisational level factors influence the outcomes of conflicts at the workplace (Gilin Oore, Leiter, & LeBlanc, 2015). Various empirical evidence suggests that an individual's conflict management styles have been found to moderate the relationship between conflict and its effect on various levels of outcomes. However the studies examining the influence of individual's conflict management style on individual level strain and employee health and well-being are scarce (De Dreu et al., 2004; Dijkstra, Van Dierendonck, & Evers, 2005; De Dreu & Beersma, 2005; Spector & Bruk-Lee, 2008).

Thus to fill these gaps in the workplace conflict literature, the present study attempts to understand the effect of different types of conflicts such as task, relationship and process conflicts on employee well-being. Further, the study examines the role of negative affect state as a potential mediator linking conflict types and employee well-being. The study also examines the moderating role of individual's conflict management styles and perceived social support at work in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state. The following section provides a brief description of various variables in the present study.

#### 2.8 TYPES OF INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Considering conflict among employees as an important event at the workplace, the extant literature initially categorised conflict into two types (De Dreu & Weingart 2003; Meier et al. 2013; Simons & Peterson 2000; Yang & Mossholder 2004), and later into three (Behfar et al., 2011; Jehn et al., 2008; Martínez-Moreno et al., 2009). Conflicts at workplace are manifested as disagreements over task issues, relationship issues, and

process related issues and are termed as task conflict, relationship conflict and process conflict respectively (Jehn et al., 2008).

Task conflict takes place among employees over disagreements and differing viewpoints over the goals of the task (Jehn, 1995). Relationship conflict takes place among employees due to personality differences and personal disliking (Jehn,1995). Process conflict takes place among employees over logistical and delegation issues (Greer & Jehn, 2007). Process conflicts are related to disagreements about how to accomplish the task, who is responsible for doing a particular job and how things are to be delegated among employees (Behfar et al., 2011). When employees disagree with the amount of work to be done and whose responsibility is to do a particular job they are experiencing process conflict (Karn & Cowling, 2008). The following section provides a brief overview of different types of conflicts at the workplace.

#### 2.8.1 Task Conflict

Task conflict at work has gained the most scholarly attention in the workplace conflict literature (De Wit et al., 2012). The effect of task conflict on various levels of outcomes is the most vigorous and contested debate in the conflict literature. Task conflict has been labelled differently in conflict literature as cognitive conflict, substantive conflict and realistic conflict (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Task conflicts are defined as disagreements among employees, concerning the content of their decisions and dissimilarities in ideas, viewpoints, and opinions about the goal of the task being performed (Jehn, 1995; Simons & Peterson, 2000). Task conflict arises

from disagreements related to task-based values, interests, and needs (Lê & Jarzabkowski, 2015). To cite, task conflicts are disagreements related to an organisation's current hiring strategies or the appropriate information to be included in an annual report (Jehn et al., 2008). Task conflicts involve differences among employees about the content and outcomes of the task being performed (Janssen, Van De Vliert, & Veenstra, 1999; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). Employees consider task conflict as work-related and describe it as "work conflict," "task problems" and work disagreements" (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). For example in an organisation when employees in a project have different views about the product type to be developed after marketing research, they are experiencing task conflict.

Previous researches indicate that task conflict at work is not only frequent but also very hard to manage (Spell, Bezrukova, Haar, & Spell, 2011). The core disagreement related to task conflict is focussed on task to do (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Giebels and Jannsen (2005) stated that task conflicts are unrelated to relationship issues and related to work-related disagreements. Task conflicts may encourage the exchange of ideas and enhance decision quality (Jehn & Mannix, 2001). Extant literature states that a moderate level of task conflict increases team performance (Jehn, 1995; Jehn, Chadwick & Thatcher, 1997; Jehn, Northcraft & Neale, 1999; Jehn & Mannix, 2001) because task conflict improves information sharing, assessment of available alternatives and mutual give and take among employees (Amason & Schweiger, 1994; Cosier & Rose, 1977; Mitroff,

Baraba & Kilmann, 1977; Schweiger, Sandberg & Rechner, 1989; Van de Vliert, 1997).

## 2.8.2 Relationship Conflict

Relationship conflict is the second most commonly studied type of conflict in the conflict literature (De Wit et al., 2012). When employees work together, they may like or dislike each other for various reasons such as personal issues, differences over political views, beliefs, and values (De dreu & Van Vianen, 2001). Such liking or disliking among employees influences the effectiveness of groups and organisations. Relationship conflicts which are also labelled in conflict literature as emotional conflict or affective conflict are differences and disagreements among employees related to personal and social issues that are not linked to task and work (Jehn & Chatman, 2000; Jehn et al., 2008). It refers to socio-emotional disputes among employees (Amason, 1996; Jehn, 1995). Relationship conflict occurs over, personality differences and feelings of disliking among employees (Jehn, 1995). Examples of relationship conflict among employees are conflicts over hobbies, political views, social events and gossips (Jehn, 1997). Such conflicts over personal issues are generally associated with experience of animosity and hatred among employees (Meier et al., 2013). Relationship conflicts which are unrelated to task threaten one's feelings of self-worth and personal identity and evoke negative emotions (Pelled, 1996). Relationship conflict which is person oriented hinders harmonious interpersonal relationships, diminishes satisfaction and reduces focus on the task (Jehn, 1995; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Relationship conflict hints

disrespect, interpersonal tension, and rejection which threatens the goal of maintaining positive relationships (Meier et al., 2013).

#### 2.8.3 Process Conflict

Another type of conflict which gained attention in the organisational conflict research is process conflict (Jehn, 1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn et al.,1999; Thatcher, Jehn & Chadwick,1998). Though there were hints of process conflict in the conflict literature (e.g., Kelley & Thibaut, 1969), researchers started giving attention to process conflict as a separate construct different from task conflict recently (Behfar et al., 2011; Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Process conflicts are related to disagreements among employees about assignment and allocation of resources and duties (Jehn, 1997) and indicate how effectively two major types of coordination activities such as- how to manage logistical achievement of the task (task strategy) and decisions about how to coordinate human resources in accomplishing the task are managed at workplace (Benne & Sheats, 1948; Hackman & Morris, 1975; Homans, 1950; Kabanoff, 1991; Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001). Issues related to process conflicts are related to the accomplishment of a task, resource allocation, role of employees in a task and various work arrangements (Jehn et al., 2008).

Process conflict takes place due to disagreements among employees about the allocation of resources and duties (Greer, Jehn, & Mannix, 2008; Jehn, 1995, 1997). The core issues contributing to the process conflict at the workplace are related to the logistical accomplishment of the task and the coordination of people to complete the task (Benne & Sheats, 1948;

Hackman & Morris, 1975; Homans, 1950; Kabanoff, 1991; Marks et al., 2001). Process conflicts over task strategies like work distribution, timely completion and scheduling of work are a perennial feature of modern-day workplaces (Blount & Janicik, 2000; Gevers, Rutte, & Van Eerde, 2006; Janicik & Bartel, 2003). Pelz and Andrews (1966), stated that process conflicts are related to how to accomplish a task and not related to the content of the task. More specifically, it deals with strategies about approaching a task. For example, when employees disagree about the allocation of resources, duties and how to schedule tasks they are experiencing process conflict. When four researchers in a group have differences of opinion about data interpretation and meaning of results, they are experiencing task conflict. However, when there is disagreement about who should write the report and who will make the final presentation, they are experiencing process conflict (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003).

Process conflict is labelled in previous organisational research as administrative conflict and distributive conflict. Jehn (1997) after careful examination of various factors which result in administrative conflict and distributive conflict and labelled such conflicts as process conflict. Jehn conflict conflicts "how (1997)defined process as about accomplishments should proceed in a work unit, who is responsible for what and how things should be delegated". Though process conflict is similar to task conflict in work-related matters, employees distinguish between task conflict and process conflict, as task conflict deals with goal or content of the task whereas process conflict deals with planning and task delegation (Weingart, 1992). Hence the fundamental question related to process conflict is, how should we do it? (Behfar, Peterson, Mannix, & Trochim, 2002). At the team level process conflict is considered more detrimental than other types of conflict. De Wit et al. (2012) found that process conflicts are most detrimental to team performance.

This detrimental effect of process conflict on performance could be due to the following reasons: Firstly, issues related to process conflict are related to feelings of equity and justice and hence strongly related to negative emotions (Greer & Jehn, 2007) and negative affect (Kerwin & Doherty, 2012). Secondly, issues related to process conflict are often related to the allocation of resources and responsibilities, which are considered vital for task accomplishment (Greer, Caruso & Jehn, 2011). Finally, issues related to process conflicts are not transparent and what individuals perceive as the real issue may not be the real issue (Greer et al., 2011).

#### **2.9 AFFECT**

Though affect and emotions influence various individual-level perceptions and outcomes, the topics of emotions and affect largely remained under-researched in occupational psychology until the publication of the classic article by Pekrun and Frese (1992). Ever since the publication of their article, the topics of emotion and affect have gained wide attention of researchers in the field of management and occupational psychology. Following this, various journals (e.g., Ashkanasy, 2004; Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000; Fox, 2002; Humphrey, 2002; Weiss, 2002) and edited books (e.g., Ashkanasy, Härtel, & Zerbe, 2000; Ashkanasy, Zerbe, & Härtel;

2002, 2005; Fineman, 1993, 2000; Lord, Klimoski, & Kanfer, 2002; Payne & Cooper, 2001; Härtel, Zerbe, & Ashkanasy, 2005) have published wide range of articles about the role of affect and emotions in organisational settings. This shift in research towards affect and emotions made Barsade, Brief, Spataro and Greenberg (2003), to make a declaration that an "affective revolution" is underway in the study of organisational behaviour.

In organisational research, the concept of affect is growing steadily, and a shift from cognitive approach to affective approach has highlighted the significance of affect-related variables in organisational behaviour (Barsade et al., 2003). In general, the term *affect* is an umbrella term indicating a wide range of emotions, dispositions and moods (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). The term affect refers to an individual's mental state involving evaluative feelings (Parkinson, Totterdell, Briner & Reynolds, 1996). Various theoretical models such as Affective Events Theory emphasises the significance of research focussing on the within the individual effect of various workplace events (Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005; Weiss & Beal, 2005; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). In organisational research, the model suggested by Watson, Clark and Tellegan (1988), has got wide range of scholarly attention. The construct of affect consists of two independent orthogonal dimensions namely positive affect and negative affect (Watson et al., 1988).

According to Watson et al. (1988), high positive affect (PA) is "a state of high energy, full concentration, and pleasurable engagement, whereas low PA is characterised by sadness and lethargy" (p. 1063). The

same authors describe negative affect (NA) as "a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasurable engagement that subsumes a variety of aversive mood states, including anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness, whereas low NA is a state of calmness and serenity" (p. 1063). Positive affect refers to a state of mind characterised by enthusiasm, joy, and excited whereas negative affect refers to the adverse state of mind characterised by being resentful, nervous and anxious. The construct of affect can be treated as a trait as well as a state. Affect as a state refers to changes in individuals' moods and emotions due to external events and can be considered as event generated, whereas affect as a trait is a stable tendency of the individuals to experience stable affective experiences across different situations (Isen, 1999). State affect involves moods and emotions whereas trait affect is considered as a stable personality characteristic (Volmer, 2015). Though there is this dual classification of affect into state and trait, empirical findings indicate that both trait and state affect create parallel effects without major differences.

## 2.9.1 Influence of Positive Affect and Negative Affect

Affect has been found to influence several intrapersonal, individual and organisational processes (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Barsade & Knight, 2015; Elfenbein, 2007; George & Brief, 1992; Weiss, Nicholas, & Daus, 1999). Studies have established how affect, feelings and emotions influence the cognition processes through which information is entered into memory, later processed and retrieved for future uses (Forgas, 1998; Isen, 2002). Various empirical studies have examined the relationship between

various work events, affect states and individual level variables such as job satisfaction (Fisher, 2002; Fuller et al., 2003; Mignonac & Herrbach, 2004; Wegge, Van Dick, Fisher, Wecking & Moltzen, 2006; Weiss et al., 1999), organisational commitment (Fisher, 2002; Mignonac & Herrbach, 2004), and organisational citizenship behaviour (Miner, Glomb, & Hulin, 2005; Totterdell & Holman, 2003).

There are various empirical shreds of evidence linking individuals' affect – both positive affect and negative affect- and performance. When individuals experience positive moods, they respond positively to various problem-solving situations such as the "candle problem" (Duncker, 1945), the Remote Associates Test (Mednick, Mednick & Mednick, 1964), in integrative bargaining circumstances and anagram tasks (Erez & Isen, 2002). Experience of positive affect is generally linked to positive outcomes at work (Judge & Kammeyer-Muellar, 2008). Contrary to the beneficial role of positive affect, negative affect is likely to inhibit individuals' cognitive functioning which hinders recall of information (Ellies, Moore, Varner, & Ottaway, 1997), reduce knowledge comprehension (Ellies, Varner, Becker & Ottaway,1995) and disrupts working memory (Shackman et al., 2006). This positive relationship between positive affect and performance and negative relationship between negative affect and performance was established by Fredrickson and Branigan, (2005). In their studies, it was found that positive affect expanded whereas negative affect narrowed thought action repertories. Longitudinal studies have shown that experience of positive affect increases

time spent on various social activities by individuals (e.g., Clark & Watson, 1988; Watson, 2000).

Individuals' affect state has been found to influence their information processing also. Research established that experience of positive mood, and negative mood leads individuals to process the information differently. Positive moods produce quick, efficient, and flexible processing of information (Isen, 2000, 2001). Positive affect states and moods expand the selection of thoughts and actions come to an individual's mind and increase the number of actions and ideas (Frederickson, 2001) whereas negative affect and mood limits individuals' focus and cognition process and narrows thought-action repertoires (Frederickson, 2001) and adversely affect the allocation of cognitive resources (Beal et al., 2005).

Individuals' affect states influence individual behaviours or reactions to various situations also. Affect influences decision making (Isen & Labroo, 2003), evaluations and judgments (e.g., performance appraisals, ratings of job applicants; Cropanzano & Wright, 1999), job satisfaction (Weiss, 2002) and performance on many cognitive tasks (Staw & Barsade, 1993). Affect also influences various organisational behaviours such as willingness to exhibit citizenship behaviour (George & Brief, 1996; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997), cooperation among members of the group (Beersma et al., 2003) workplace aggression (Griffin & O'Leary-Kelly, 2004), and several aspects of cognition in various organisational episodes (Staw, Sutton, & Pelled, 1994). It has also been found to influence various strategies individuals adopt to cope with the stressful situation (Carver & Scheier,

2001). In general, experience of positive affect is linked to improved thinking and increases creativity and flexibility and thoroughness in decision making (Isen, 2000).

Carnvale and Isen (1986) initiated research about the role of individuals' affect in the conflict literature. In general positive affect is related to cooperative strategies (e.g. Baron, 1990; Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Forgas, 1998; Isen, Daubman, and Nowicki, 1987; Kramer, Newton & Pommerenke, 1993) whereas negative affect is related to uncooperative and competitive behaviours (e.g. Allred, Mallozzi, Matsui & Raia, 1997; Baron, Fortin, Frei, Hauver & Shack, 1990; Forgas, 1998; Pillutla & Murnighan, 1996). Positive affect encourages the adoption of better coping strategies to cope with stress, whereas negative affect tends to encourage preferences for less effective strategies, such as avoidance, denial, or reliance on alcohol and other drugs. Effective coping strategies have important implications for personal health (Cohen, Doyle, Turner, Alper, & Skoner, 2003).

In the context of conflict negotiation also individuals' affect states are found to influence negotiation outcomes. Individuals, when they experience positive affect, they tend to make more concessions (Baron,1990), engage in problem-solving behaviour (Isen et al.,1987) and exhibit cooperative negotiation strategies (Forgas,1998) and enhance self-confidence and self-reported performance rating (Kramer et al., 1993), whereas individual with negative affect tend to reduce offers (Baron et al.,1990), exhibit competitive strategies (Forgas, 1998), decrease the desire for further interaction (Allred et al., 1997) and reduce joint gains (Allred et al., 1997). In a study by Rhoades,

Arnold and Clifford (2001), they examined the role of both trait affect and state affect on employees motivation and behaviour in workplace conflict context and established that individual's with positive affect tend to adopt problem-solving conflict management styles whereas individuals with high negative affect tend to be competitive and uncooperative with high concern for self.

The influence of affect on work-related outcomes and employee health and well-being has been established in various studies. Generally, positive affect is positively related to physical health as it encourages individuals to practice healthy practices. Positive affect reduces individual's blood pressure, heart rate, epinephrine and nor epinephrine contents in blood level (Vázquez, Hervás, Rahona, & Gómez, 2009). It also enhances immune function which contributes to physical health (McCarthy, Wetzel, Sliker, Eisenstein & Rogers, 2001). In stress literature also various studies have established the beneficial role of positive affect. Positive affect enables individuals' psychological responses to return to a normal state following stressful events (Frederickson & Levenson, 1998; Frederickson, 2001). Both trait and state positive affect influences various work-related outcomes such as job satisfaction and pro-social organisational behaviour (Borman, Penner, Allen & Motowidlo, 2001).

Generally, both state negative affect and trait negative affect are found detrimental to individual level outcomes and organisational level outcomes. Negative affect is persistently related to stress and various somatic symptoms (Watson & Pennebaker, 1989). Self-reported negative affectivity

such as hostility and anger is positively related to various workplace deviance in several studies (Lee & Allen, 2002; Judge, Illies & Scott, 2006). Glomb (2002), in a study established that negative discrete emotions are positively related to various work deviance behaviours. Also, momentary hostility experienced by employees explained a large portion of the withinindividual variance in workplace deviance (Judge et al., 2006). Hardy, Woods and Wall (2003) in a three-year longitudinal study among healthcare workers, found that experience of negative moods are positively related to employee absence from work. In another study by LeBreton, Binning, Adomo and Melcher (2004) established that negative affect at work increases withdrawal behaviours among employees. Chen and Spector (1991) in their studies established that negative affect influences the relationship between work-related job demand and various work-related and individual work outcomes such as psychological symptoms, absence from work and increases the number of doctor visits. The moderating role of negative affect in the relationship between work stressors and sleep quality was established in a study among college students (Fortunato & Harsh, 2006).

Various studies have established the mediating role of negative affect state. In a study, Greer and Jehn (2007) established that negative affect state mediates the relationship between process conflict at work and performance. In another study by Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2002), it was found that negative affect state mediates the relationship between workplace bullying and psychological and psychosomatic complaints. Another study by Glaso, Vie, Holmdal, and Einarsen (2011) put forth the mediating role of positive

affect and negative affect in the relationship between workplace bullying and various levels of outcomes such as job satisfaction and intention to leave the organisation. In a study conducted among university students, the mediating role of positive affect and negative affect was established in the relationship between situational motivation and performance (Gillet, Vallerand, Lafreniere, & Bureau 2013). The mediating role of positive affect and negative affect in the relationship between dimensions of satisfaction and motivation established in experience sampling was an study (Vandercammen, Hofmans, & Theuns, 2014).

#### 2.10 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES (CMS)

Conflicts are unavoidable in interpersonal relations, social interactions and no society, no couple, group or organisations are conflict-free (Rahim, 1986). Since individuals have to handle conflict in various domains of life, conflict handling skills are vital both in work life and personal life (Montes et al., 2012). In human relations, the concept of management of conflict is widely acknowledged as a vital component in the development process both in business as well as in industry (Arrington, 1987).

Researchers have widely examined about the ways to manage workplace conflict which resulted in an array of studies on conflict management (Ma, Lee & Yu, 2008; Ma et al., 2017; Thompson, 1990; Tjosvold, 2006; Van de Vliert, 1997; Yang, Cheng & Chuang, 2015). When individuals experience conflict at work-place, they try to remove the discomfort and uneasiness and engage in conflict management (Van de

Vliert, 1997). Such behavioural pattern, an individual adopts to cope up with conflict is termed as conflict management, conflict resolution styles or conflict handling styles (Moberg, 2001; Sweeney & Carruthers, 1996). Though such behavioural patterns or conflict management styles are situationally adaptive (Ayub, AlQurashi, AlYafi & Jehn, 2017), empirical evidence suggests that individuals have their own preferred conflict management style that is generally consistent and stable across various situations (Cupach & Canary, 1997; Leung & Iwawaki, 1988).

Ruble and Thomas (1976), defined conflict management style as an individual's general and consistent approach towards other party and particularly to the conflict issue, which is exhibited in observable behaviours. involves individual's behavioural responses perceived incompatibilities and disagreements among individuals (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010). How an individual behaves in a particular conflict situation is shaped by various factors such as individual's culture, family background, personality and various life experiences (Campbell, Gleason, Adams & Malcolm, 2003). Hence it is logical to assume that individuals behave differently in conflict situations and one's common response when experiencing conflict is his or her common way of dealing conflict or his or her dominant conflict style (Barsky, 2014).

Researches in the domain of conflict management have come up with different models of conflict management styles based on various parameters. Follet (1942), identified a few conflict management styles of the individuals and termed as avoidance, suppression, integration, domination, and

compromise. Later Deutsch (1949), suggested a dichotomy with cooperation and competition as two parameters. However, the first conceptual framework of individual's conflict management styles was developed by Blake and Mouton (1964), and their classifications were based on concern for production and concern for people. Hall (1969), classified conflict management styles of the individual on the basis of achievement of relationship or personal goals. Thomas' (1976) model of conflict management style was on the basis of range of cooperativeness and assertiveness exhibited by the individuals. Pruitt (1983), classified conflict management styles on the basis of concern about others' outcomes and self-outcomes and finally Rahim (1983), classified conflict management styles of the individuals based on concern for self and concern for others. Table 2.4 summarises the various conflict management styles suggested by various researchers:

**Table 2.4 Various Models of Conflict Management Styles** 

Table 2.4 various Models of Connect Management Styles		
Model and Year	Parameters	Conflict Handling Styles
Blake and Mouton (1964)	Concern for production and concern for people.	Problem-solving, forcing, smoothening, compromising and withdrawing
Hall (1969)	Concern for relationship achievement and concern for personal values/goals	Accommodating, competing and collaborating
Rahim and Bonama (1979)	Concern for self and concern for others	Avoiding, obliging, integrating, dominating and compromising
Thomas (1979)	Intention to cooperate and intention to assertive (Range)	Avoiding, obliging, integrating, dominating and compromising.

Pruitt (1983)	Concern about own outcome and concern about other party's outcome	Problem-solving, contending, inaction and contending
Tjosvold (1989)	The attitude of individuals and their interaction towards conflict episode	Competing and cooperating style
Desivilya & Yagil (2005)	Engagement- Avoidance Constructive -Destructive	Avoiding, obliging, compromising, dominating and integrating

Source: Alok, 2014

Though there are different models of conflict management styles, researches in the workplace conflict converged to a four-way taxonomy of conflict management styles. This four-way taxonomy includes two active (forcing and problem-solving) and two passive (avoiding and yielding) styles of conflict management (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1992).

# **2.10.1 Forcing Conflict Management Style**

Forcing conflict management style is similar to competing style which exhibits high concern for self and low concern for others (Ayub et al., 2017; Parmer, 2018; Saeed, Almas, Haq & Niazi, 2014; Yeung et al., 2015). Forcing conflict management style is characterised by a rigid stance to achieve an individual's needs without any concern of others' needs (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010). Individuals with high forcing style generally tend to dominate others to attain their desire at the expense of others using various tactics (De Dreu et al., 2004; Rahim, 2002) and they would be fast to initiate for themselves in conflicting situations and show less respect for other's

needs, desire, and expectations (Parmer, 2018). Other labels of forcing conflict management style include competing, dominating and asserting (Barki & Hartwick, 2001). Forcing conflict management style is characterised by threats, persuasion, physical or verbal force, and specific demands (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Forcing style is found effective during emergencies and when the individual is confident that he or she is right. Forcing style is the most aggressive style which forcefully tries to defeat the other party in conflict (Cai & Fink, 2002). Forcing style is considered as assertive and uncooperative (Saeed et al., 2014).

### 2.10.2 Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style

Problem-solving conflict management style is characterised by high concern for self and high concern for others (Ayub et al., 2017; Parmer, 2018; Saeed et al., 2014; Yeung et al., 2015). This style is intended to solve the problem and is solution oriented (Rahim, 2000). Individuals with problem-solving conflict management style are cooperative as well as assertive (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974) and try to attain the objectives of both the parties (De Dreu et al., 2004). They are willing to collaborate to achieve a solution which is acceptable for both and benefit both of them and demonstrate a problem-solving conflict management style (Barki & Hartwick, 2001). Problem-solving conflict management style is exhibited by mutual sharing of information, showing concern, and demarking important and unimportant issues to achieve an amicable solution (De Dreu et al., 2004; Rahim, 2002). Barki and Hartwick (2001), label problem-solving conflict management style also as integrating, collaborating and cooperating.

It involves a cooperative effort to reach a mutual solution by being receptive to other party's needs and being open-minded to the other party (Parmer, 2018). The problem-solving style is the most effective and preferred style in the workplace as it gives a win-win situation and occupies the interest of both the parties (Lee, 2003; Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; Rognes & Schei, 2010). Considering the beneficial outcomes for both the parties problem-solving conflict management style is considered as the best style to mitigate the detrimental effects of conflicts (Dijkstra et al., 2011; Shih & Susanto, 2010).

## 2.10.3 Avoiding Conflict Management Style

Avoiding conflict management style is characterised by indifference to conflict situation or withdrawing from the conflict situation. Avoiding conflict management style is characterised by low concern for self and low concern for others (Ayub et al., 2017, Parmer, 2018; Yeung et al., 2015). Individuals with avoiding conflict management styles are neither cooperative nor assertive for his own needs as well as for the needs of others (Saeed et al., 2014; Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). They usually take a passive stance and tries to reduce the importance of the issues as well as avoid thinking about the conflict matter (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Such individuals are indifferent towards them as well as to others and are reluctant to take any responsibility for a particular action. They disregard their own as well as others' interests, goals and needs by changing the topic or ignoring and suppressing the matter (De Dreu et al., 2004; Rahim, 2002). They not only fail to address their own needs but also fail to address other's need and

evades from the situation without doing anything (Parmer, 2018). In the conflict management literature, avoiding conflict management style is known in different labels such as evading, withdrawal, apathy, non-confrontation, inaction and escaping (Barki & Hartwick, 2001; Gross & Guerro, 2000). Avoiding style may help to stay out of trouble, but conflict remains and adversely affect the situation and individuals alike (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001, Friedman, Chin & Liu, 2006; Lovelace, Shapiro & Weingart, 2001; Ohbuchi & Atsumi, 2010).

## 2.10.4 Yielding Conflict Management Style

Yielding conflict management style is characterised by high concern for others and low concern for the self (Ayub et al., 2017, Parmer, 2018; Yeung et al., 2015) which indicates satisfying the need of others at the expense of own needs (Rahim, 2002). Yielding conflict management style is a sort of self-sacrificing behaviour by giving concessions to others and being loyal to others (Saeed et al., 2014; Thammavijitdej & Horayangkura, 2006) and foregoes to meet personal needs to satisfy the needs of the other party (Parmer, 2018). Individuals with yielding style try to satisfy others concern and neglect his/her own needs (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010). Though the yielding style is cooperative, he or she neglects the individual needs. This style is unassertive but cooperative (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). It also lowers the individual's aspirations and tends to fully accept and incorporate others interests (Dijkstra et al., 2009) by offering unlimited promises and help (De Dreu et al., 2004). Yielding conflict management style is also labelled as cooperating, obliging, accommodating and sacrificing (Barki &

Hartwick, 2001). Yielding conflict management style is effective when the individual is wrong, and the matter of conflict is important for another person and maintaining harmony is utmost important. The yielding style is considered passive and indirect (Blake & Mouton, 1964) and effective when two parties cannot agree but require a decision (Saeed et al., 2014).

#### 2.11 SOCIAL SUPPORT AT WORK

The concept of social support at work has been evolved from the general social-support literature (Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011). It is widely acclaimed as a global construct with a range of theoretical definitions and different meanings across different situations (House, 1981). It was Cobb (1976), who defined social support as an individual's belief that he or she is valued and loved and their well-being is cared by others as a part of belonging to a wider social network. Visweswaran, Sanchez, and Fischer (1999) defined social support as an individual's perception of having access to supportive and helping relationships, which provide various resources such as emotional empathy, informational resources, and tangible resources. Social support at work is considered as a vital resource at the workplace for employees to meet the various job demands (Kossek et al., 2011). Social support at work is a supportive factor for employee well-being and it is defined as the extent to which employees perceive that their well-being and happiness are valued by employees' immediate workplace sources such as co-workers and by the organization which they are associated with (Eisenberger, Singlhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002).

In the workplace literature, the concept of social support has gained wide attention (Dormann & Zapf, 1999; Etzion, 1984; Evans & Steptoe, 2001; George, Reed, Ballard, Colin & Fielding,1993; Halbesleben, 2006; Karlin, Brondolo & Schwartz, 2003; Viswesvaran et al., 1999). Social support at work is an indicator of an individual's social environment at workplace, resources available to perform in his/her social network and the nature of interpersonal harmony at work (House et al., 1988; Humphrey, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007; Johnson & Hall, 1988; Karasek, Triantis & Chaudhry, 1982). Individuals spent a considerable amount of time of their life at the workplace, and the quality of relationships at work has a more significant role in influencing various outcomes (Ilies et al., 2011). Social support at work is found to have various benefits to organisations and individuals alike.

Though social support is widely researched for the past few decades, the inconsistency among the researchers regarding the operationalisation of social support creates generalizability issues. However, in this research, the study specifically defined social support at work as a workplace or a situational construct and examined the role of supportive supervisors and coworkers in the workplace context.

The concept of social support is defined in different ways in different studies. Broadly social support is defined as "the presence of and availability of people whom we can depend, love us and people who let us know that they care about" (Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarason, 1983). Though this broader definition of social support is widely acclaimed and accepted but in

the context of workplace this definition is inappropriate. Hence this study defines social support at work as "the overall levels of helpful social interaction available on the job from co-workers and supervisors" (Karasek & Theorell, 1990).

#### 2.12 EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Employee's health and well-being is a significant topic both in academia and in the industry (Cooper & Cartwright, 1994; Coleman, 1997; King, 1995; Neville, 1998). Employee well-being is getting scholarly and managerial attention and employees, organisations and managers have realised that employee well-being influences employee performance and various levels of outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; De Neve, Diener, Tay & Xuereb, 2013). Employee well-being influences their behaviour at the workplace both in the long run and in the short run (Hakanen, Seppala & Peeters, 2017). Wright and Cropanzano (2000) in their "Happy-productive worker thesis" established a positive relationship between employee well-being and performance.

Employee well-being is vital for the survival of organizations as it influences the performance of the organization by influencing cost related to health and illness care (Danna & Griffin, 1999) and employees discretionary effort, turn over and absenteeism (Spector, 1997), organisational citizenship behaviour (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000), and job performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). Considering this critical role of employee well-being, organisations, managers and supervisors believe happy and healthier

employees are vital for enhancing productivity and organisational effectiveness (Fisher, 2003). Accordingly, organisations and managers are investing in various organisational resources to improve and enhance employee well-being through various interventions programs (Hartwell et al., 1996). Considering the paramount influence of employee well-being to different levels of outcomes, human resource managers and other stakeholders continuously measure and check the employee well-being through surveys (Rynes et al., 2002). Considering this vital role of wellbeing for organisations and employees, various international organisations started honouring organisations that foster well-being and American psychological association (2006), started giving awards to psychologically healthy workplaces. The Great Place Work Institute (2006), started implementing steps for organisations to enhance the quality of life of employees. World Health Organisation (WHO) has highlighted the importance of well-being, both in work and in non-work domain.

Though employee well-being is of such great importance to organisation and individuals alike, there is no single agreed definition of employee well-being in occupational health research (Anderson, Jane-Llopis & Cooper, 2011). Employee well-being is a complex concept (Wright, Cropanzano & Bonnett, 2007; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2008) and various scholars have conceptualised employee well-being differently. Employee well-being in the literature is examined from various theoretical viewpoints, and a single overarching approach is lacking (Busseri, Sadaava & Decourville, 2007). Well-being is assessed in organisational studies using

different indicators such as self-reported perception of mental health (Bamberger et al., 2012, Loretto, Platt & Popham, 2010), physical health problems, sleep patterns, increased stress related medications (Dahl, 2011; Kivimaki, Vahtera, Elovainio, Virtanen & Siegrist, 2007) and increased absence from work due to sickness (Vahtera, Jussi, Kivimaki & Penti, 1997).

In the present study following Danna and Griffin (1999) employee well-being is defined in a broader way as, "employee's state of physical, mental and general health and general level of satisfaction both at work and outside work". According to them, well-being comprises both psychological outcomes such as lack of distress, emotional exhaustion and anxiety and physiological outcomes such as heart condition and lack of general physical exhaustion. Drawing from Danna & Griffin definition, it can be stated that employee well-being is influenced by positive and negative experiences from the work itself and employee's interpersonal interactions with co-workers, team members, and supervisors. Dana and Griffin (1999) stated that employees' various experiences at work such as physical, emotional, social or mental experiences influence their well-being. Employee well-being is a multi-dimensional construct. Employee well-being comprises both physical health and mental health (Danna & Griffin, 1999). In different stages of a career, both in the early and later stages, there are work demands which challenge employee well-being (Price, 2015). For instance, work environment stressors result in deleterious physical and emotional outcomes because of the additional physical and psychological demands placed on individual's to cope with such stressors (Cooper & Cartwright, 1994).

Interdisciplinary evidence suggests three dimensions to measure an individual's well-being such as psychological, physiological and social dimensions (Diener & Seligman, 2004). The psychological approach defines well-being in terms of various subjective psychological functioning and experiences and physiological approach defines well-being in respect to bodily health and functioning whereas, social approach defines well-being in terms of interpersonal relational experience and functioning (Grant, Christianson & Price, 2007). According to Finn (1992), these are the critical dimensions of employee well-being, and these are considered as ends rather than means to other ends.

#### 2.12.1 Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being is a matter of research interest for psychologists and social scientists for several decades, and they have given more focus on the individual's subjective experiences (Grant et al., 2007). They have given more focus on two components of psychological well-being such as hedonic and eudaimonic (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The hedonic component of psychological well-being is concerned about an individual's subjective experiences of pleasure or the balance of various positive and negative feelings and thoughts in their evaluations. In occupational research, the hedonic approach focussed on job satisfaction which was defined in terms of employee's subjective judgments about their immediate work conditions, to measure hedonic well-being (Locke, 1976; Weiss, 2002). The

researchers who followed eudemonic approach towards psychological wellbeing focussed on fulfilment and realisation of human potential.

## 2.12.2 Physical Well-Being

Physical well-being has got a wide range of scholarly attention and extensively studied in terms of both subjective experiences of bodily health and various objective physiological measures (Testa & Simonson, 1996). In occupational research, the researchers studied the relationship between work and physiological well-being in two ways. In the first way of linking work and physiological well-being, work is considered as a significant source of injury and disease for employees (Danna & Griffin, 1999) and in the second way, work events are considered as a major source of stress for employees (Karasek & Theorell, 1990) which adversely influence their physical health.

## 2.12.3 Social Well-Being

Social well-being refers to the nature and quality of an individuals' relationship with others (Keyes, 1998). The other dimensions of individual well-being such as psychological and physiological well-being emanate from within the employees; social well-being focuses on the quality and nature of interpersonal interactions that occur among employees at the workplace (Bradbury & Lichtenstein, 2000). In organisational researches, social well-being of employees is studied in respect to various relational factors such as social support, trust, reciprocity, cooperation coordination and integration among employees (Adler, & Kwon, 2002; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Kramer, 1999).

# 2.13 AFFECTIVE EVENTS THEORY AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study relies on Affective Events Theory by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) for developing various relationships in the study. In contrast to the traditional theories, Affective Events Theory states that an individual's affective states vary over time due to various discrete events. Affective events theory (AET) provides a wide range of antecedents, consequences and explains the structure of affective experiences at work. Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) stated that workplace events are capable of evoking affective responses which influence employee's workplace attitudes. behaviour, and perceptions. According to them, "things happen to people in work settings, and people often react emotionally to these events. These affective experiences have a direct influence on behaviours and attitudes" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996, p 11). Various work events are the antecedents of employee's affective states and affective states of the employee directly influence employee's behaviours and attitudes (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Though AET is considered as a major contribution towards explaining the various antecedents and outcomes of individuals' affective states, more empirical examinations are needed to test the basic assumptions in the model (Briner & Totterdell, 2002; Glasø et al., 2011; Weiss & Beal, 2005). Although AET stated that work events are proximal causes of an employee's affective experiences, the AET model did not specify the work events and environments associated with an employee's affective reactions (Glasø et al., 2011).

According to Affective Events Theory, various features and characteristics of the employee's work environment directly influence their attitudes through a cognitive route, and indirectly through an affective route. This affective route determines the occurrence of positive or negative work events and the experience of such positive or negative work events results in positive or negative affective states within the individual, which influences various organisational and individual level outcomes. Moreover, AET states that individual affect level not only depends on work events alone but is also influenced by various dispositional and environmental factors. More specifically, according to AET, various work environment features, as well as individual trait like features, also influence an employee's affective experiences following a work event and subsequent attitude and behaviours.

The term affect is considered as an all-encompassing term including a broad range of feelings that individuals experience such as feeling states (which are short-term affective states and momentary) and feeling traits (which are dispositional and stable tendencies to feel and act in certain ways) (Watson & Clark, 1984). In general, the term affect refers to a wide range of emotions, dispositions, and moods (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Watson et al. (1988) suggested a positive and negative affectivity model with two independent dimensions such as positive affect and negative affect. In organisational research, this two-factor model suggested by Watson, Clark and Tellegen received a wide range of attention (Volmer, 2015). They stated that positive affect and negative affect are not two extremes of a continuum, but are two orthogonal dimensions with independent characteristics.

Individual's affective reactions emanating from various events manifest as positive affect and negative affect. Positive affect is a state of mind exhibiting enthusiasm, activeness, and alertness whereas negative affect is a state of mind being upset and unpleasantly aroused (Watson et al., 1988). Positive affect explains an individual's pleasant interaction and negative affect indicates an individual's experienced distress. Positive affect and negative affect can be measured as a trait as well as a state. Affect as a trait is considered as a stable personality characteristic, whereas affect as a state includes emotions and moods of the individual (Volmer, 2015).

Examining the contributions of AET, one major contribution of the theory is that, it attributes a mediating role to individual's affective states. Wiess and Cropanzano (1996) explain that an individual's positive and negative affective experiences to various workplace events mediate the relationship between work events and an individual's cognition and behaviour (Weiss & Beal, 2005). Affective events theory proposed by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), explains the mechanism through which work events influence employee's various attitudes and behaviours, primarily focusing on personality, emotions and affective states. Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) argue that various workplace events trigger affective responses, which subsequently get accumulated over time will influence employee's workplace attitudes. Thus this study building on AET considers a particular type of negative work event, namely the experience of various types of conflict such as task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict. Precisely, this study within the theoretical framework of affective events

theory examines the effect of different types of conflict on employee well-being and also examines the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being. Further, AET states that various environmental and dispositional factors influence the way people feel and react to various events (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Following these assumptions, the study also examines the moderating role of perceived social support at work as a situational factor and individuals' conflict management styles as a dispositional factor in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state.

#### 2.14 HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The following section explains how the study developed various proposed relationships in the study and explains the postulated moderating role of perceived social support and individual's conflict management styles such as avoiding, yielding, forcing and problem-solving.

## 2.14.1 Task Conflict and Employee Well-Being

When employees work together, it is natural to have disagreements regarding the goals of the task they undertake. Task conflicts are disagreements among employees about opinions and ideas pertaining to a particular task, such as disagreements about defining project goals (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, 1995, 1997). Task conflict exists when employees at the workplace have different views and opinions about the tasks being performed and the understanding of task-related information. Task conflicts are related to non-relationship issues, and it is related to disagreements about the task to be undertaken at the workplace (Giebels & Jannsen, 2005).

Cognitive at its core (Amason, 1996; Simons & Peterson, 2000), task conflict occurs when there are disagreements among employees regarding the goals of a task.

Past researches which examined the outcomes of task conflict have established that task conflicts can benefit a broad variety of group outcomes (e.g., Amason, 1996; Jehn, 1995). However, the effects of task conflict on individual level outcomes, such as health and well-being have not been examined rigorously (Bruk-Lee, Nixon, & Spector, 2013). Considering the importance and difficulty to manage task conflict, it is vital to understand its effects on employee well-being (Meier et al., 2013).

In general, task conflicts are upsetting and stressful to the individuals (Jimmieson, Tucker, & Campbell, 2017). Jehn (1995) stated that task conflicts are always associated with annoyance, tension, and animosity among employees. Task conflicts interfere with the individual's goal attainment (Barki & Hartwick, 2004) and threaten the goal of having a harmonious relationship with others (Fiske, 1992) and employees appraise task conflicts as social stressors (Bruk-Lee et al., 2013). Task conflict obstructs individual's goal-oriented actions, which results in thoughts and feelings which are pre-requisites for stress (Spector & Bruk-Lee, 2012; Spector & Bruk-Lee, 2008). Employees attribute task conflicts as a disruption to their routine activities (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003) and increase their cognitive load (Carnevale & Probst, 1998) which results in negative reaction and negative attitudes (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012). Few authors have stated that high levels of task conflict are

associated with reduced job satisfaction and commitment (e.g., Amason, 1996; Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Jehn, 1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Schweiger, Sandberg, & Ragin, 1986). Dissatisfaction with one's job is used as an indicator of the lowered state of well-being (Bruk-Lee et al., 2013).

Task conflicts are often associated with intensive disagreements among employees, and they consider such conflict-related behaviours as actions of disrespect (Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2016). Employees may perceive task conflicts as a personal insult and an effort to embarrass them by others (Swann, Polzer, Seyle, & Ko, 2004). When they feel that their colleagues are considering their behaviours as negative, they may reciprocate initiating a destructive reinforcement cycle which further amplify the conflict (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) and may impair employee well-being.

Adverse work conditions such as intense arguments regarding diverse viewpoints and difference of opinions are positively related to stress and reduce employees' energy levels (Demerouti, Bakker, & Bulters, 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). When employees experience task conflicts, they consider it as a negative feedback of their opinions considering it as wrong. Even though such feedbacks are communicated without any personal animosities, it negatively impacts their self-view and results in strain (Meier et al., 2013). Though task conflict is cognitive, cognitive criticism associated with task conflicts are likely to be considered as personal disapproval (Amason, 1996). When other co-workers challenge the viewpoints of other employees, they feel dissatisfied as they consider it as a negative assessment

of their skills and abilities, and hence it results in stress (Yang & Mossholder, 2004).

Though task conflicts have benefits to groups in certain circumstances, its detrimental effects on the employee well-being have been proved in a few cross-sectional and experimental studies. Friedman, Tidd, Curral, and Tai (2000) and Guerra, Martinez, Munduate, and Medina (2005) in their studies established a negative relationship between task conflict and psychological well-being. De Dreu and Van Knippenberg (2005) in their laboratory studies established the negative relationship between task conflict and well-being. Through experimental studies, they have proved that individuals tend to identify their ideas with themselves and consider it as their part. Opposition to such ideas and viewpoints are perceived as ego-threatening and likely to adversely affect their well-being.

Friedman et al. (2000) have established a positive relationship between task conflict and work associated stress. Task conflict increases tension and fatigue among employees (Dreu, Dierendonck, & Best-Waldhober, 2003) and reduces job satisfaction (Swann et al., 2004) and affective well-being. Task conflicts are additional job-related demand on an employee's routine work activity. This is because, to deal with task conflict employees requires additional time and cognitive effort to reach an amicable solution to the conflict situation (Sonnentag et al., 2013). This additional time and effort needed to deal with task conflict are likely to demotivate individuals in the process (Marineau & Labianca, 2010) and diminishes the goal clarity (Jehn & Chatman, 2000; Yang & Mossholder, 2004). Moreover,

additional time spent to deal with task conflict reduces the available time to perform the task and usually lack of time to perform a task is associated with impaired well-being (Crawford, LePine & Rich, 2010; De Lange, Taris, Kompier, Houtman & Bongers, 2003).

Employees' cognitive efforts to cope with task conflict contributes to the cognitive load (Sonnentag et al., 2013). To deal with task conflict employees require considerable cognitive activities such as planning, designing tactics, assessing and implementing strategies which divert the attentional resource for the task at hand. As a result, employees will have lesser cognitive resources for coping (Carnevale & Probst, 1998) and coping is vital to deal with stressors and for maintaining well-being (De Rijk, Le Blanc, Schaufeli & DeJonge, 1998). Hence, it is logical to postulate that additional resources spent to manage task conflict, reduces the available cognitive and affective resources, which in turn will adversely affect the employee well-being. Task conflicts are energy demanding workplace events, which distracts them from task accomplishment and impaired task accomplishments are often associated with reduced well-being. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Task conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.

# 2.14.2 Relationship Conflict and Employee Well-Being

Relationship conflict arises from non-work matters such as personality and value differences (Lu et al., 2011; Martínez-Moreno et al., 2009; Shaukat et al., 2017). Relationship conflicts are associated with

identity-oriented issues, where personal beliefs and values come into play. There is a consensus among researchers that relationship conflict at the workplace is harmful to individuals, groups and organisations alike (Meier et al., 2013).

Researches across different domains established that relationship conflicts are detrimental to individuals. Relationship conflicts are considered as social stressors and employees experiencing social stressors exhibit adverse behaviour and attitudes which are detrimental for their well-being (Bruk-Lee et al., 2013). Employees' affective responses to relationship conflict result in physical strain (Greenglass, Fiksenbaum & Bruke, 1996) and somatic symptoms such as headaches and digestive disorders (Nixon et al., 2011). There are empirical evidence which has established a positive relationship between relationship conflicts and indicators of impaired wellbeing such as emotional exhaustion and burn out (Dijkstra et al., 2009; Wright & Loving, 2011). Relationship conflicts are considered more interpersonal and emotional (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003) and indicate a greater threat to one's identity and self-esteem (De Dreu et al., 2004). This is because negative job-related experiences that are related to one's self will have more detrimental outcomes (Semmer, Tschan, Meier, Facchin & Jacobshagen, 2010). Relationship conflict elicits intention to quit the organisation, decreases organisational and affective commitment as well as job satisfaction (Frone, 2000; Guerra et al., 2005; Heffner & Rentsch, 2001; Spector & Jex, 1998). These adverse outcomes related to relationship conflicts are likely to diminish employee's perception of their well-being.

Relationship conflicts are related to destructive interpersonal relationships at the workplace and are negatively related to physical health and mental health (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018). Relationship conflicts are positively related to burn out and various psychological problems (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Relationship conflict about such personal differences is considered as the most prominent stressor at work having adverse negative outcomes (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012). Individuals like to maintain a positive identity (Fiske, 1992), and positive and lasting interpersonal relationships are essential for maintaining a positive social identity (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and they try to be liked by other individuals (Dijkstra et al., 2011). Relationship conflict is a threat to this need of the individuals and is likely to impair well-being.

Various studies have established the detrimental outcomes of relationship conflict such as increased hostile attribution among employees (Janssen et al.,1999, Simons & Peterson, 2000), reduced cooperation among employees (Jehn et al., 2008), increased stress and anxiety levels within individuals (De Wit et al., 2012) and reduced employee participation in collective activities (De Church & Marks, 2001). At the workplace, relationship conflict is considered as an act of disrespect and rejection among employees (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). Thus it is often perceived as a threat to the goal of social belonging and maintaining a positive and harmonious relationship (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Shaukat et al., 2017). Relationship conflict is also a threat to an employee's embeddedness and reduces social attachment at the workplace (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Leary, Tambor,

Terdal & Downs, 1995). Feeling positively connected to others and positive interpersonal relationships are essential for healthy human functioning (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Fyson, 1999; Royal & Rossi, 1996), and it is a basic human need (Ryan & Deci,2000). When this basic need is not satisfied, it is likely to negatively impact well-being (Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe & Ryan, 2000).

Jehn and Bendersky (2003) stated that relationship conflicts are associated with distraction, limited cognitive processing, wastage of time and effort, diminish commitment to decisions and decreases the ability to assess new information. Like task conflict, relationship conflicts are also related to wasted time and effort and consume individuals' cognitive resources and diminish task accomplishment and increases stress level (Sonnentag et al., 2013). Generally, impaired task accomplishment is negatively related to employee well-being,

Relationship conflicts are positively related to affective reactions (De Wit et al., 2012), such as anxiety and depression and impair well-being. Various studies have established this negative relationship between relationship conflict and psychological well-being and physical health (De Dreu et al., 2003; Friedman et al., 2000; Giebels & Janssen, 2005; Guerra et al., 2005). Relationship conflict threatens an individual's self-esteem and social esteem and increases stress among employees and diminishes their well-being (Lazarus, 1999; Semmer, Jacobshagen, Meier, & Elfering, 2007). Relationship conflict can negatively affect one's sense of self and identity

feeling, and a threat to one's sense of self and identity feeling is negatively related to well-being (Crawford et al., 2010; De Lange et al., 2003).

A few studies have claimed that relationship conflicts are negatively related to psychological well-being and increase somatic complaints (Dreu et al., 2003; Friedman et al., 2000; Giebels & Janssen, 2005; Guerra et al., 2005). Disagreements related to personal issues are ego-threatening and increase anxiety. This is because various issues related to relationship conflicts are closely related to the individual's self-concept. When the individuals' ego is threatened, individuals are likely to experience anger, fear, disgust (Frone, 2000) and fatigue (Dreu & Weingart, 2003) and it is likely to diminish employee well-being. In brief, impaired relationships among employees, lack of positive relationships, psychological tension, and stress associated with relationship conflict are likely to affect employee well-being adversely. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2: Relationship conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.

# 2.14.3 Process Conflict and Employee Well-Being

Process conflict has been neglected for a long time in the workplace conflict research, considering it as similar to task conflict. However, recent research findings differentiated process conflict from task conflict and established its unique existence (Behfar et al., 2011; Greer & Jehn, 2007). Process conflict was defined as "conflict about how task accomplishments should proceed in the work unit, who is responsible for what, and how things should be delegated" (Jehn, 1997, p. 540). Jehn (1997) thereby suggested

that process conflict was different from task conflict because the latter was traditionally studied concerning disagreements over task outcomes.

There is literary evidence which has established a negative association between process conflict and both short term and long term group outcomes such as, group climate (Jehn et al., 2008), lower decision quality (Passos & Caetano, 2005) lower group innovation and creativity (Kurtzberg & Mueller, 2005), lower group productivity (Jehn et al., 1997) and lower group viability (Jehn et al., 2008). However, the impact of process conflict on employee well-being is not known much.

Considering conflict as a negative event, process conflicts are also likely to impact employees negatively. Compared to other types of conflict such as task conflict and relationship conflict, process conflicts are the most long-lasting conflict in the organisation (Greer & Dannals, 2017). Process conflict diminishes the perception of creativity (Dirks & Parks, 2003; Matsuo, 2006), and increases negative emotions such as anger and animosity (Greer & Jehn, 2007; Jehn, 1997; Jordan, Lawrence, & Troth, 2006; Passos & Caetano, 2005). Experience of process conflict that is disagreement regarding who does what?, disagreement about the allocation of resources, decreases satisfaction and increases uncertainty regarding task progress and misdirects the discussion to irrelevant matters such as members' skills and ability (Jehn, 1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

Jehn and Bendersky (2003) stated that process conflict is detrimental to individuals as it increases claim and blame perspective, unfairness and inequity primed and employees feel that other employees are personally attacking them. Issues related to process conflicts revolve around people and result in process loss, and like relationship conflict, it is also negatively related to performance and satisfaction.

Issues related to process conflicts such as role assignment and task delegation have personal implications related to capabilities of the employee (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). The process of how task processes are delegated is highly linked to interpersonal skills. When an individual feels that tasks assigned to them are below the capabilities they possess, they perceive it as a personal insult and make process conflicts highly personal. Process conflicts have been found to diminish various individual-level outcomes such as morale, commitment, intention to remain in the organisation and perceived individual performance (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn et al., 1999; Thatcher et al., 1998). This may negatively affect the well-being of the individuals (Greer & Jehn, 2007). Hence, it is logical to assume that personal connotations, perceived inequity, injustice and diminished morale associated with process conflicts are likely to influence the employees' perception of their well-being adversely. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Process conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.

#### 2.14.4 Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

For employees, the experiences of task conflicts are stressful and make them feel uncomfortable (Amason & Schweiger, 1994) which can stimulate the experience of negative affect state. Amason and Schweiger (1994) stated that task conflict is negatively related to affective outcomes

and positively related to psychological strain (Dijkstra et al., 2012; Dijkstra et al., 2011; Guerra et al., 2005; Sonnentag et al., 2013).

Task conflict is likely to increase negative emotions and adversely affect ones' sense of self, self-esteem, self-worth and increases psychological strain (De Dreu & Van Knippenberg, 2005; Frone, 2000; Spector & Bruk-Lee, 2008). Jehn (1997), stated that task conflicts are often associated with negative affective states such as annoyance, hatred, and animosity. Experience of task conflicts are often perceived as a threat to their goal accomplishment and hinders them on their way to achieve their goals (Cronin & Bezrukova, 2006) which result in frustration, anger, anxiety, and depression within the individual (Todorova et al., 2014). Cognitive criticism and critical evaluation related to task conflicts also result in affective reactions (Baron, 1990).

Based on the findings of Festinger (1957) also it can be assumed that experience of task conflict leads to cognitive dissonance and mental discomfort, as it contradicts with the values and beliefs an individual holds. Also, there is empirical evidence for employees experiencing task conflicts reporting higher negative emotions and lower satisfaction with their coworkers, colleagues, work and group (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012; Jehn et al., 2008; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). Employees consider task conflict as adverse work event obstructing their goal accomplishment and distracting them from the task at hand (Jimmieson et al., 2017; Sonnentag et al., 2013), and AET states that negative work event results in negative affect state. Hence, the study presumes that these adverse intra-personal and inter-

personal effects associated with task conflict result in negative affect state. Thus drawing from AET and various empirical evidence the study proposes the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Task conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.

#### 2.14.5 Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

Affective events theory (Weis & Cropanzano, 1996) states that workplace events are proximal causes of employee's affective states. Building on this assumption, relationship conflicts at the workplace which are considered as negative work events, are likely to result in negative affect state within the individual. Experience of relationship conflict increases stress level (Friedman et al., 2000) and propensity to leave the job (Medina, Munduate, Dorado, Martinez & Guerro, 2005). Various qualitative (Keenan & Newton, 1985) and quantitative studies using cross-sectional (Spector, 1997; Spector & Jex, 1998) and longitudinal (Spector & O' Connell, 1994) sources of data have established a positive association between relationship conflict and various negative affective reactions such as anger, annoyance, and frustration. Anxiety as a result of interpersonal animosity diminishes cognitive functioning (Roseman, Wiest, & Swartz, 1994; Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981), distracts employee's attention from the task (Jehn, 1997) and reduces job satisfaction (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001). Indeed, the interpersonal nature and emotional aspects associated with relationship conflicts are likely to result in negative affective states. Positive interpersonal relationships are essential for healthy human functioning (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Fyson, 1999; Royal & Rossi, 1996) and experience of relationship conflict results in unpleasant feelings within the individuals (Amason, 1996; Jehn, 1997) because individuals do not like being personally attacked (Cronin & Bezrukova, 2006). This personal attack is considered as an unpleasant experience and results in anger, irritation, and annoyance within the individual. Positive relationships are a key basis for happiness and reduce the stress of individuals (McCarthy, Pretty & Catano, 1990). Positive interpersonal relationships are vital for emotional and social development in different domains of an individual's life (Kelly & Hansen, 1987; Lonczak et al., 2001). Positive relationships provide individuals to receive instrumental support as well as emotional support to perform difficult tasks, face challenges and companionship in associative activities (Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002).

Conversely, relationship conflict reduces happiness and increases distress. Relationship conflict reduces harmony among employees and individuals become irritable, suspicious, negative and resentful (Jehn,1997), and they are likely to experience feelings of helplessness (Boz, Martínez-Corts, & Munduate, 2009) and such feeling of helplessness are likely to evoke negative affect state. There is a consensus among such studies that relationship conflicts are detrimental to individuals and diminish satisfaction and commitment (Deutsch, 1969; Evan, 1965; Jehn et al., 1999; Lehmann-Willenbrock, Grohmann, & Kauffeld, 2011). Relationship conflict is a hindrance for effective cognitive functioning by increasing anxiety and stress among employees (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Staw et al., 1981).

Relationship conflict issues are intertwined with the self-concept of individuals and are often considered as a threat to the ego. Relationship conflicts are adversely related to team and individual functioning (Amason, 1996; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Simons & Peterson, 2000). Relationship conflicts related to disagreements about personal issues increase anxiety, tension and other negative emotional states (Dijkstra, Dierendonck, Evers, & Dreu, 2005). Individuals experiencing relationship conflict exhibit animosity, enmity and lack of trust (Evan, 1965). Researches about workplace conflict across various cultures and context consistently have proved the detrimental nature of relationship conflict on individuals.

Relationship conflict reduces respect among employees and is often associated with tension and rejection, and it adversely affects interpersonal relationships and feeling of belonging to a group (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). It hinders information sharing among employees, reduces trust and increases suspicion between each other. Relationship conflict distracts individual effort towards the goal and deviates attention from the goal. Employees experiencing relationship conflict exhibit nervousness, anxiety and affective reactions (Staw et al., 1981). Relationship conflict is a major stressor, which diminishes social esteem and well-being of employees (Semmer et al., 2007). Hence, drawing from Affective events theory and several empirical evidence, relationship conflict is likely to result in negative affect state. In brief, the adverse intra-individual and interpersonal effects of relationship conflicts are likely to result in negative affect state, and hence the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 5: Relationship conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.

#### 2.14.6 Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

Process conflict at work which is related to logistical and delegation issues is often associated with arguments and interpersonal tensions among employees (Greer & Jehn, 2007). Employees consider process conflicts as a negative work event, adversely assessing their skills and abilities. Process conflicts are likely to result in negative emotions within the individual as they are related to the perception of justice and equity related to allocation of resources and responsibilities among employees at work. Hence, process conflicts result in following negative feelings and emotional states such as, frustration ("why I am not given the assignment I wanted?) (Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954), resentment ("the process of task delegation is not fair") (Stearns, 1972), anger ("they always fix meeting time without considering my convenience") (Russell, 1978), and reproach ("my co-workers are biased, and they give me the worst task every time") (Allport, 1937). De Wit et al. (2012) stated that process conflicts are often associated with negative moods and emotions.

Issues related to process conflicts often carry personal connotations and result in negative affect (Greer & Jehn, 2007). Process conflict issues are related to the individual's skills and abilities, and negative assessment of an individual's skills and abilities by others is often associated with negative affect state (Behfar et al., 2002). When employees attribute issues related to process conflict to such interpersonal roots, negative affect is likely to result.

Because, according to attribution theory how people attribute to various situations influences their emotional reactions (Weiner, 1986; Lazarus, 1991). People often consider process conflict as a threat which undermines their abilities to perform a particular role and negative affect may result as a threat - response to the situation (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996). Employees experience process conflict when they perceive injustice and inequity regarding the allocation of duties and resources at work, and as a result of this incompatibility among employees, they experience negative affect state. Researches state that, when employees perceive that the available resources to perform various tasks are insufficient, they perceive the situation as a threat and negative affect is likely to result as a threat response (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996).

Since process conflicts are closely related to personal judgments and personal interests, employees are likely to make affect inducing attributions. Such attributions influence the reactions of the individuals towards conflict (Thomas & Pondy, 1977). Greer and Jehn (2007) stated that conflicts are susceptible to such misattributions, and past researches have revealed that when individuals lack justifying information, they are likely to attribute a person's behaviour to stable characteristics or traits rather than to the situation (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Kelley, 1973; Trope, 1986). This "correspondence bias" or "fundamental attribution error," is likely to occur in process conflict as the fundamental issues of process conflict such as task delegation, resource allocation, and role assignment, have personal connotations related to capabilities of the individuals and respect within the

group (cf. Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). This is likely to result in negative affect state.

Process conflict among employees as a result of perceived incompatibilities about the accomplishment of a particular task results in negative affect (Bell & Song, 2005). Based on appraisal theories of emotions, it can be assumed that process conflicts are likely to increase negative affect state. Process conflicts are appraised as an interruption to achieve one's goals and when goal accomplishments are obstructed negative affect is likely to occur. Process conflicts are related to undesired allocation of resources and undesired assignments (Jehn, 1997), and when events take place inconsistent with what one is needed and desired, negative affect is likely to result (Roseman et al., 1996). Process conflicts are adverse work event which threatens individual needs, social harmony and smooth functioning of human resources in organisations. Employees consider process conflict as a negative work event. Building on Affective events theory also it can be assumed that process conflict evokes negative affect state. Affective events theory (Weis & Cropanzano, 1996) states that workplace events are antecedents of individual's affective state. Considering process conflict as an adverse work event, negative affect is likely to result. In brief, misattributions, personal connotations associated with process conflicts, inherent incompatibilities and concerns over resource allocation and role assignments may result in negative affect. Against this background the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 6: Process conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.

#### 2.14.7 Negative Affect State and Employee Well-Being

An individual's affective states or subjective emotional experiences are best described by two independent dimensions: namely positive affect and negative affect (Watson et al., 1988). Both positive affect and negative affect can be measured as a trait and state (Loughry & Amason, 2014). Positive affect is an enduring state of mind exhibited by positive engagement with others, alertness, active nature and enthusiasm (Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson et al., 1988) whereas negative affect is a general dimension of subjective distress and negative engagement, a reflection of an individual's experience of negative emotions. An individual's experience of negative affect is a function of trait negative affect and various life events (George, 1995). Negative affect state is a continuing state of mind characterised by negative feelings and emotions (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Lazarus, 1991; Park, Sims & Mottowidlo, 1986; Zajonc 1984).

Individual's affective state influences individual health and well-being. Watson et al. (1988) stated that it is negative affect and not positive affect which is related to health problems and other adverse individual-level outcomes. Empirical evidence suggests that both trait and state negative affect is related to high levels of somatic complaints (Friedman & Booth-Kewley, 1987; Watson & Pennebaker, 1989). Negative affect is positively associated with psychological and physical strain. Negative affect reduces

the individual's rational and instrumental reasoning and results in irrational decisions and behaviours (Brief & Weiss, 2002).

There is a consensus among researchers that both trait and state negative affect is significantly related to increased somatic complaints (Friedman & Booth-Kewley, 1987). There is experimental evidence relating state negative affect and health complaints, independent of trait negative affect (Cohen, Tyrrel & Smith, 1993). In two different experimental studies, after manipulating negative mood, participants have reported more self-reported symptoms of illness (Croyle & Uretsky, 1987; Salovey & Birnbaum, 1989).

A possible explanation for this might be that the negative moods remind them of the negative experiences they had in the past and this adversely influences their self-reporting of physical health (Van Eck, Berkhof, Nicolson, & Sulon, 1996). Another possible reason for negative affect to adversely influence employees' perception of their health is, negative affect result in negative biases in the perception of various stimuli and labelling of various physical sensations as negative symptoms (Cohen & Williamson, 1991; Pennebaker, 1982). This positive relationship between negative affect state and symptoms of health complaints are independent of trait negative affect (Cohen, Doyle & Skoner, 1995). Bower (1981), stated that when people experience negative affect state, they are likely to evaluate and judge various cues unfavourably, which in turn adversely influence their perception of well-being.

Negative affect state negatively influences immune systems (Herbert & Cohen, 1993) and increases respiratory illness (Cohen et al., 1993). Negative affect state is often associated with anxiety and depression. Negative affect state reduces the coping ability, and control over the situation (Archer, Adrianson, Plancak & Karlsson, 2007; George & Brief, 1992) and lack of coping ability and lack of control may adversely influence employee well-being. Individuals tend to adopt improper coping strategies when they experience negative affect (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). Since coping is important for well-being, improper coping as a result of negative affect may diminish well-being. Negative affect is positively associated with pessimism (Marshall, Wortman, Kusulas, Hervig & Vickers, 1992) and general depression (Lindahl & Archer, 2013).

Generally, negative affect state has been found inversely related to health and wellness. The experience of negative affect results in higher levels of stress, depression, poor psychological health, well-being and low self-esteem (Cohen et al., 2003). Affective events theory (Weiss& Cropanzano, 1996), also states that when individuals experience negative affective states, it adversely influences their perception, attitude and behaviours. In line with AET and various empirical evidence, the study postulates an inverse relationship between negative affect state and employee well-being. Hence, in this background the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 7: Negative affect state is negatively related to employee wellbeing.

#### 2.14.8 Affective Events Theory and Negative Affect State as a Mediator

Drawing from Affective Events Theory, the present study examines the within individual effect (negative affect state) of conflict types and examines whether negative affect state mediates the relationship between three types of conflict and employee well-being. Thus building on Affective Events theory, the study postulates the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between conflict types and employee well-being. Affective events theory states that various workplace events are antecedents of employees' affective states and affective states mediate the relationship between various workplace events and various levels of outcomes. An important theoretical contribution of AET is that the theory attributes mediating role to affective states (Glasø et al., 2011). More specifically, Affective Events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) argue that an individual's positive and negative affective experiences to various workplace events mediate the relationship between work events, cognition and behaviour (Weiss & Beal, 2005). Various studies have established that individual's affect state act as a mediating mechanism through which many work experiences impact various work-related outcomes (Kelloway, Barling, & Shah, 1993; Penney & Spector, 2005). Various studies have established that affect influences various levels of outcomes such as processing information and attribution, (Bless, Mackie, & Schwarz, 1992; Schwarz & Clore, 1983).

For example, Mikkelsen & Einarsen (2002), in their study have established the partial mediating role of negative affect state in the

relationship between workplace bullying and physical health and mental health. Exposure to stressors at the workplace such as conflict increases negative affect state such as tension, stress and frustration within the individual which in turn adversely influence their perception of physical and mental health (Hyun, Sliwinski, Almeida, Smyth & Scott, 2018). In another study, Greer and Jehn (2007) have established the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between process conflict and performance.

Conflict is generally considered as a negative event, and it is likely to evoke negative affect state within the individual (Rook, 2001). Illies et al. (2011) in their studies established that experience of negative workplace events such as conflict is positively related to negative affect. Generally, negative work events are associated with negative affect state and decrease happiness and satisfaction with life as a whole (Schwartz & Clore, 1983). Hence, following Affective events theory and various empirical evidence, the study postulates that negative affect state mediates the relationship between conflict types (task, relationship and process conflicts) and employee well-being. In this background, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 8: Negative affect state mediates the relationship between task conflict at work and employee well-being.

Hypothesis 9:Negative affect state mediates the relationship between relationship conflict at work and employee well-being.

Hypothesis 10: Negative affect state mediates the relationship between process conflict at work and employee well-being.

# 2.14.9 Affective Events Theory and the Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work and Individual's Conflict Management Styles

Drawing from affective events theory (AET), the study examines the moderating role of perceived social support at work and individual's conflict management styles in the relationship between conflict types and negative affect state. AET states that various dispositional factors and environmental factors influence how individuals feel and react to various work events. Building on this assumption, the present study examines the moderating role of perceived social support at work as a situational factor and individual's conflict management styles as a dispositional factor in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state.

# 2.14.9.1 Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work

In organisational settings, the role of social support at work in reducing the negative effects of various adverse work events was well established (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Viswesaran et al. (1999) in a meta-analysis have established social support at work as a moderating variable in the stressor-strain relationship. Various studies have established the buffering role of social support at work in the detrimental relationship between various workplace stressors and personal functioning (e.g., Illies et al., 2011; Etzion, 1984; Kirmeyer & Dougherty, 1988).

Social support at the workplace can reduce the negative effects of stressors and influence various relationships. There is a general view that lack of social support increases negative psychological states such as depression and anxiety (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Though social support is widely researched, the major limitation in the domain of stress literature is the inconsistency among the scholars regarding the definition of social support, which limits the generalizability of such studies. This study examines the moderating role of perceived social support from co-workers and supervisors at work in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state.

The study relies on buffering hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985), to postulate the moderating role of perceived social support at work. The stress-buffering model compares the relationships among levels of stress, individuals' available coping resources and adjustment. This model states that available coping resources of the individual buffer and protects the individual from the negative effect of the stressors when experiencing stressful events in life. This states that social support acts as a buffer and helps to decrease the appraisal of various life events as stressful and reduces the negative effects of such events.

According to buffering hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985), the social group does not directly impact the stress; instead, it helps to moderate the stress experienced by the individual by influencing stress judgment, immune responses and coping behaviours. The impact of the social group on the individual is indirect; social support is a resource available to the individuals

to cope with stressful issues (Schafer, 1992) and high-quality personal relationships can buffer against the effects of stressors (House et al., 1988).

Perceived social support at work buffers against a number of negative outcomes such as burn out (Etzion, 1984; Halbesleben, 2006), cardiovascular symptoms (Evans-Turner, Veitch & Higgins, 2010; Karlin et al, 2003) and negative affect (Buunk & Verhoeven, 1991; George et al., 1993). The most reliable evidence establishing the moderating role of social support at the workplace in the relationship between stressful events and negative affect was established in a study conducted by Peeters, Buunk and Schaufeli (1995). The study conducted among female secretaries followed an event recording method to capture stressful events, negative affect and perceived social support over one week period. The study established the moderating role of social support at work in the relationship between stressful events and affective distress. In another study by Illies et al. (2011), they examined the role of social support at work in the relationship between interpersonal conflict and within the individual effect of interpersonal conflict that is intrapersonal strain which is operationalised as negative affect. The study established that perceived social support at work attenuates the positive relationship between interpersonal conflict and negative affect, and employees with higher perceived social support reported lesser negative affect and vice versa.

Hence building on affective events theory (AET) and several empirical evidence, the present study postulates that, perceived social support at work buffer the positive relationship between conflict types (task

conflict, relationship conflict and process conflict) and negative affect state. Hence the following hypotheses are proposed:

- Hypothesis 11: Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state such that, positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work.
- Hypothesis 12: Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state such that, positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have perceived lower (higher) social support.
- Hypothesis 13: Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state such that, positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have perceived lower (higher) social support.

# 2.14.9.2 Moderating Role of Conflict Management Styles

Conflict management style refers to what individuals who experience conflict intend to do as well as what they do in response to conflict (Van de Vliert, 1997). In classifying conflict management styles, researchers tend to converge on the four-way taxonomy that includes two active (forcing and

problem-solving) and two passive (avoiding and yielding) conflict management styles (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1992).

The dual model classification of individuals' conflict management style is analogous to the control/escape distinction in the stress/coping literature. Whether individuals' coping styles are detrimental or beneficial depends on the degree to which individuals exhibit control over various situations: "Consisting of both actions and cognitive reappraisals that are proactive, take-charge in tone"-or escape-"consisting of both actions and cognitive reappraisals that suggest an escapist, avoidance mode" (Latack, 1986, p. 378).

Various studies in the area of stress literature have established that, when employees perceive that they have less control over the situation, the adverse effect of stressors are stronger and when they perceive better control over the situation, the adverse effect of stressors are weaker (Dijkstra et al., 2012). Generally, avoidance or passive coping styles are found to work against people, and pro-active ways of handling conflict in which individuals have better control over various situations attenuate the adverse effect of stressors such as conflict (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Various empirical evidence suggests that lack of proactivity strengthens the adverse impact of various stressors, whereas pro-activity weakens (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1994; Shapiro et al., 1996). The way individuals handle conflict or individuals' conflict management style influences performance and employee health and well-being have been established in various studies (Behfar et al., 2008; Tjosvold, Hui, Ding, & Hu, 2003).

### 2.14.9.2.1 Moderating Role of Avoiding Conflict Management Style

Avoiding involves taking a passive stance and attempting to reduce and downplay the importance of the conflict issues, as well as attempting to suppress thoughts about them (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1992). Avoiding conflict management style is characterised by low concern for self and low concern for others. Individuals with avoiding conflict management style tend to move away from conflict situation by withdrawing or by inaction. They evade issues at hand. They disregard their own as well as other's needs, goals and interests either by diverting the issue or by suppressing and ignoring the conflict (De Dreu et al., 2004; Rahim, 2002). Though avoiding is intended to downplay and reduce the conflict issue, the conflict remains unresolved, and further, in the long run, it can lead to conflict escalation also (Van Dierendonck & Mevissen, 2002). Individuals with avoiding conflict management style avoid the underlying conflict issue and become a passive recipient of their counterpart's actions and initiatives (Van de Vliert, Euwema, & Huismans, 1995), and lack advocacy for their own position (Tidd& Friedman, 2002).

Avoiding style restrains individuals from expressing their feelings, creating a sense of frustration which increases heart diseases (Siegman, 1994), eating disorders (Van den Broucke, Vandereycken, & Vertommen, 1995) and diminishes immune function and well-being. Avoiding conflict management style hinders an individual's goal achievement (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010) and increases frustration and incompetence within the

individual (Van Dierendonck & Mevissen, 2002). Avoiding threatens an individual's goal accomplishment and lack of goal accomplishment is positively related to strain. Avoiding conflict management style is characterised by loss of control over the situation (Dijkstra et al., 2009) which is likely to increase the psychological distress. Hence in this background, the study postulates that avoiding conflict management style strengthens the positive relationship between conflict types and negative affect state and the study proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 14: Avoiding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.

Hypothesis 15: Avoiding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.

Hypothesis 16: Avoiding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between

process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.

# 2.14.9.2.2 Moderating Role of Yielding Conflict Management Style

Yielding implies lowering one's aspirations and an orientation towards fully accepting and incorporating the other's will (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Yielding conflict management style is characterised by low concern for self and high concern for others. Individuals with yielding conflict management style give over emphasis to others' interest at the expense of self. Yielding conflict management style obstructs the attainment of individuals' goals by not addressing the conflict issues or unhesitatingly obliging to the others' requests. They do not express their concerns and needs when encountering a conflict (Tidd & Friedman, 2002). Individuals with yielding conflict management style become a passive recipient of other's actions and initiatives and fail to achieve their self-needs (Tidd & Friedman, 2002) and conflict issues remain (Van de Vliert et al., 1995). This may adversely impact health and well-being by creating a sense of frustration or incompetence (Van Dierendonck & Mevissen, 2002).

Yielding, which is oriented towards accepting and incorporating the other's will, involves unilateral concessions, unconditional promises, and offering help. Overly focusing on others' interest at the expense of self is associated with poor physical health, depression, strain and self-neglect (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010) and impaired self-esteem and self-efficacy (Van Dierendonck & Mevissen, 2002). Employees handling interpersonal

conflict with yielding style were reported to show more somatic symptoms such as headaches and fatigue (De Dreu et al., 2004). Yielding involves an emphasis on satisfying others' interests at the expense of one's own, thus conforming to the desires and wants of the other party by obliging to their requests as well as offering unlimited assurances and assistance (De Dreu et al., 2004; Rahim, 2002) which results in feelings of loss and sacrifice. Such unconditional yielding to others' interests by sacrificing self-interest is likely to increase frustration and amplify the strain associated with conflict. Individuals with yielding conflict management style have less control over the situation and are likely to experience more negative effects of conflict. Yielding is related to compliance and compliance itself is related to negative reaction, and individuals do not do anything to address the underlying conflict (Tidd & Friedman, 2002) which in turn increases negative affect state. Hence, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 17: Yielding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state; such that the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style.

Hypothesis 18: Yielding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect

state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style.

Hypothesis 19: Yielding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style.

# 2.14.9.2.3 Moderating Role of Forcing Conflict Management Style

Forcing is an active way of handling conflict with a focus on individuals' needs and desires. Research has established that actively dealing with conflict reduces the negative effects of conflict (Tidd & Friedman, 2002). Forcing conflict management style is characterised by low concern for others and high concern for self-outcomes (Dijkstra et al., 2011). Individuals high in forcing conflict management style tries to dominate others by imposing their will over others through persuasive arguments, threats, positional commitments and make demands which are not acceptable to the other parties (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1992). Forcing involves a rigid stance and the assertion of one's own interests and needs irrespective of the other party's needs. Individuals with forcing conflict management style focuses on the problem and behave in an assertive way and exhibit control over the situation (Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994).

Forcing conflict management style is characterised by expression of individual interest and thus results in active engagement with the other party (Tidd & Friedman, 2002). Individuals using this style generally dominate with the use of various intimidation tactics (De Dreu et al., 2004; Rahim, 2002). Generally, individuals who are high in conflict management style are high in agency, and they are high in resilience also. Forcing style helps to achieve the self-goals and exhibits better control over the situation (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Having control over the situation is found to attenuate the negative impact of conflict on the individual. When employees feel that their viewpoints are accepted and their goals are met, they feel happy and are less likely to experience strain associated with conflict. Hence, forcing conflict management style is likely to reduce the strain associated with conflict types, and the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 20: Forcing conflict management style **negatively** moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is weaker (stronger) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.

Hypothesis 21: Forcing conflict management style **negatively** moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect

state is weaker (stronger) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.

Hypothesis 22: Forcing conflict management style **negatively** moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is weaker (stronger) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.

# 2.14.9.2.4 Moderating Role of Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style

Problem-solving conflict management style is oriented towards achieving an agreement that satisfies one's own and the other's aspirations as much as possible, and involves an exchange of information about priorities and preferences, showing insights, and making trade-offs between important and unimportant issues (Rahim, 2002; De Dreu et al., 2004). Problem-solving conflict management style is a collaborative way of handling conflict in which individuals analyse and identify the different aspects of a problem and explore differences and search for solutions (Gray, 1989, Rahim, 2002). Handling conflict through problem-solving conflict management style enhances satisfaction and performance (Rahim, Antonioni & Psenicka, 2001). Generally, problem-solving conflict management style is considered as the most effective style to deal with conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1970, 1984; Miller, Lefcourt, Holmes, Ware, 1986). When employees handle conflict through problem-solving style, they feel the environment is less

conflict-laden and chances of achieving mutually agreeable solutions are high (Friedman et al., 2000). The problem-solving style is characterised by high concern for self and high concern for others (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Problem-solving style is found to positively influence organisational level outcomes as well as individual level outcomes (Dijkstra et al., 2011). Individuals adopting problem-solving strategy try to satisfy their self needs as well others needs by respecting social relationships.

Problem-solving conflict management style results in a proper diagnosis of the conflict issue and results in amicable solutions (Rahim, Civelek, & Liang, 2018). Individuals with problem-solving style try to achieve the desired outcome, they have considerable control over their actions and as a result, they experience less frustration and helplessness (Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994). Individuals who are high in problem-solving style have high concern for others also. They mutually share information about their own priorities and preferences and amicably try to find the optimal solution (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim., 1994). They have control over the situations and partially over outcomes (Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994), and try to maintain the social relationships by respecting each other, which in turn increases positive interpersonal relationships and enhances self-esteem (Van Dierendonck & Mevissen, 2002).

In a study among bank employees, it was found that proactive way of handling conflict is positively related to job satisfaction and inversely related to psychological distress (Fortes-Ferreira, Peiro, Conza lez-Morales, & Martin, 2006). Studies have shown that maintaining a good and

harmonious relationship with others is positively related to self-reported health (Melchior, Berkman, Niedhammer, Chea, & Goldberg, 2003), well-being (Baumeister, 1995), life satisfaction (Barger, Donoho, & Wayment, 2009) and happiness (Schulz, 1995). In brief, positive intra-individual benefits such as goal accomplishment, enhanced self-esteem and positive interpersonal relationships associated with problem-solving conflict management style are likely to reduce the strain associated with conflict. Based on the empirical findings, the study postulates that problem-solving conflict management style attenuates the positive relationship between conflict types and negative affect state. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 23: Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.

Hypothesis 24: Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.

Hypothesis 25: Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.

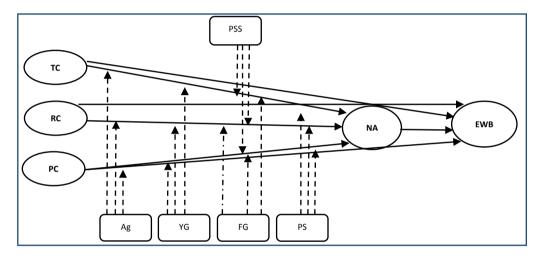


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Model

Notes: TC=Task Conflict, RC=Relationship Conflict, PC=Process conflict, NA= Negative Affect State EWB=Employee Well-being, PSS=Perceived Social Support at Work, AG=Avoiding, YG= Yielding, FG=Forcing, PS=Problem-solving.

#### 2.15 SUMMARY OF CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The proposed conceptual model for the study is shown in Figure 2.1. The study proposes an inverse relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being and a positive relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state. The study also hypothesised an inverse relationship between negative affect state and employee well-being. It was also predicted that negative affect state mediates the relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being. Drawing from AET, the study proposes the moderating role of perceived social support at work and individuals' conflict management styles in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state.



# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, various aspects of research methodology will be dealt with. Thus, the chapter provides, research design, proposed hypotheses, theoretical and operational definitions of the constructs and summarises the various research instruments. The chapter also deals with sampling design, data collection techniques and ends with a brief overview of the data analysis process.

#### 3.1 PRELIMINARY STUDY

The study stated that conflict at the workplace is a reality frequently occurring among employees. Various empirical evidence has established that conflicts have deleterious effect on organisations, groups, individuals and various levels of outcomes. To understand the occurrences of conflict among the employees the researcher conducted a survey study among employees from IT, Banking, Tourism and Health sectors. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to measure conflict among employees, and 138 usable questionnaires were received back. Out of which 81 respondents were male, and the remaining 57 were female. Irrespective of industry the occurrences of interpersonal conflict among the employees were reported. However, IT sector employees reported more instances of interpersonal conflicts. The study could not find any significant influence of demographic factors such as gender and

designation of respondents in experiencing conflict at the workplace. The findings of the preliminary study provided support for the problem stated for the present study.

#### 3.2 EXPERT SURVEY

An expert survey was conducted among academicians and practitioners in the field of organisational behaviour and human resource management. The purpose of the survey was to validate the research problem and also to ensure that the variables which the researcher identified from the literature review are of theoretical and practical relevance. They agreed with the research problem under perusal and the variables included in the study.

#### 3.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study based on the conceptual model presented in the previous chapter has the following objectives:

### 3.3.1 Major Objective of the Study

➤ To understand the effect of different types of workplace conflict, such as task, relationship and process conflicts, on employee well-being and the study also examines the mechanism linking different types of conflict and employee well-being. Further, the study also seeks to identify the influence of situational and dispositional moderators in the proposed relationships.

#### 3.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

To understand the effect of task, relationship and process conflicts on employee well-being.

- > To understand the effect of task, relationship and process conflicts on negative affect state.
- ➤ To understand the effect of negative affect state on employee wellbeing.
- ➤ To ascertain the mediating role of negative affect state in the relations hip between different types of conflicts and negative affect state.
- ➤ To ascertain the moderating role of perceived social support and individual's conflict management styles in the relationship between different types of conflicts and negative affect state.

#### 3.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated from the literature review to meet the various objectives of the study. The assumed relations between variables are formulated on the basis of insights derived from the existing literature.

- Hypothesis 1: Task conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.
- Hypothesis 2: Relationship conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.
- Hypothesis 3: Process conflict at work is negatively related to employee wellbeing
- Hypothesis 4: Task conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.

- Hypothesis 5: Relationship conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.
- Hypothesis 6: Process conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.
- Hypothesis 7: Negative affect state is negatively related to employee well-being.
- Hypothesis 8: Negative affect state mediates the relationship between task conflict at work and employee well-being.
- Hypothesis 9: Negative affect state mediates the relationship between relationship conflict at work and employee well-being.
- Hypothesis 10: Negative affect state mediates the relationship between process conflict at work and employee well-being.
- Hypothesis 11: Perceived social support at work **negatively** moderates the relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state such that, positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work.
- Hypothesis 12: Perceived social support at work **negatively** moderates the relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state such that, positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is

stronger (weaker) for those who have perceived lower (higher) social support.

- Hypothesis 13: Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have perceived lower (higher) social support.
- Hypothesis 14: Avoiding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.
- Hypothesis 15: Avoiding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.
- Hypothesis 16: Avoiding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between

process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.

- Hypothesis 17: Yielding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state; such that the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style.
- Hypothesis 18: Yielding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style.
- Hypothesis 19: Yielding conflict management style **positively** moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style.
- Hypothesis 20: Forcing conflict management style **negatively** moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and

negative affect state; such that positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is weaker (stronger) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.

- Hypothesis 21: Forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is weaker (stronger) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.
- Hypothesis 22: Forcing conflict management style **negatively** moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is weaker (stronger) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.
- Hypothesis 23: Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between task conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.

Hypothesis 24: Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between relationship conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.

Hypothesis 25: Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state; such that positive relationship between process conflict at work and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.

#### 3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is descriptive and analytical. The study is descriptive as it proposed various relationships with the help of various empirical evidence, such as the relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being, the role of negative affect state in the relationship between conflict types and employee well-being, and the role of conflict management styles and perceived social support at work. The study is analytical as it tries to establish the proposed relationships in the study using various analytical tools. Specifically, the study statistically tries to establish the direct effect of conflict types on employee well-being and the mediating role of negative affect state. Further, the study tries to establish the moderating role of conflict management styles and perceived social support at work in the proposed model.

#### 3.6 DEFINITIONS OF THE STUDY VARIABLES

#### 3.6.1 Task Conflict

**Theoretical Definition:** Task conflicts are defined as disagreements among the employees related to ideas and opinions about the goal of the task being performed (Jehn et al., 2008).

**Operational Definition:** Task conflicts at the workplace are related to the goals of the task. It is related to differences of opinion among the employees regarding the goals of the task. Task conflict is operationalised as the disagreement about ideas, opinions and viewpoints among the employees regarding the task. Task conflict is related to the content of the task and is based on factual evidence with data or facts about the task.

#### 3.6.2 Process Conflict

**Theoretical Definition:** Process conflicts are defined as "disagreements about logistical and delegation issues, such as how task accomplishment should proceed in the work unit, who is responsible for what, and how things should be delegated" (Jehn et al., 2008).

Operational Definition: Process conflict is operationalized as disagreements and differences of opinion among the employees at the workplace regarding logistical and delegation issues. Process conflict occurs when there are differences of opinion regarding the process to get the work done, regarding the responsibilities and the way to do things to complete the task. Process conflicts are related to disagreements among employees about how to accomplish a particular task.

# 3.6.3 Relationship Conflict

**Theoretical Definition:** Relationship conflict at the workplace is defined as, "disagreements and incompatibilities among group members regarding personal issues that are not task-related" (Jehn et al., 2008).

**Operational Definition:** Relationship conflicts at the workplace are operationalized as conflicts among employees over, social and personal issues which are not related to work or task. Relationship conflict takes place among employees related to differences in political views, social events, hobbies, clothing preferences and gossips (Jehn, 1997).

#### 3.6.4 Negative Affect State

**Theoretical definition:** Negative affect state is defined as "a general dimension of subjective distress and is indicative of negative exchange, reflecting the extent to which one is feeling upset or unpleasantly aroused" (Watson & Clark, 1984). It was also defined as a continuing state of mind characterised by negative feelings and emotions (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Lazarus, 1991; Park et al., 1986).

**Operational definition:** In the present study, negative affect state is operationalised as an individual's personal level of experienced distress, such as being anxious, angry, frustrated, scared, etc. as a result of experience of various types of conflict at work. Negative affect state includes a wide range of negative emotions and negative moods.

# 3.6.5 Employee Well-being

**Theoretical definition:** Since an overarching definition of employee well-being lacks the study, in the present study following Danna and Griffin (1999), employee well-being is defined in a broader way as "employee's state of physical, mental and general health and general level of satisfaction both at work and outside work".

Operational definition: The studies which have examined the relationship between conflict and well-being generally used various indicators of impaired well-being such as *psychological complaints, physical complaints and burn out.* Employee well-being is generally reflected in measures of life satisfaction, burn out, psychosomatic complaints, and mental health among other many things (Van der Doef & Maes, 1999). Psychological complaints related to adverse workplace events are feelings of upset, worry, and feelings of inability to manage. Physiological complaints related to adverse workplace events are feelings of cardiac symptoms, headaches, tingling sensations etc. (Van der Doef & Maes, 1999). Following this, the present study operationalised well-being as employee's self-reported perception of their mental health and physical health.

# 3.6.6 Perceived Social Support at Work

**Theoretical definition:** Perceived social support at work is defined as "the overall levels of helpful social interaction available on the job from co-workers and supervisors" (Karasek & Theorell, 1990).

**Operational definition:** Perceived social support at work is operationalised as employee's perception of support from co-workers and supervisors at the workplace to perform particular tasks and to deal with certain co-workers.

# 3.6.7 Avoiding Conflict Management Style

**Theoretical definition:** Avoiding conflict management style is defined as "taking a passive stance and attempts to reduce and downplay the importance of the conflict issues as well as attempts to suppress thinking about them" (Dijkstra et al., 2009, p. 407).

**Operational definition:** Avoiding conflict management style is operationalised as the individuals' consistent way of handling conflict at the workplace with low concern for self and low concern for others. It is operationalized as a passive way of handling conflict and measured as a trait-like characteristic of the individual.

# 3.6.8 Yielding Conflict Management Style

**Theoretical definition:** Yielding conflict management style is defined as "a style of handling conflict by lowering one's aspirations and an orientation towards fully accepting and incorporating the other's will" (Dijkstra et al., 2009, p. 407).

**Operational definition:** Yielding conflict management style of the individuals is operationalized as the individuals' consistent way of handling conflict at the workplace with low concern for self and high concern for others. Individuals high in yielding conflict management style try to satisfy the needs of the others at the cost of self-interest. Yielding is also a passive conflict

management style, and it is measured as a trait-like variable, consistent across situations

# 3.6.9 Forcing Conflict Management Style

**Theoretical definition:** Forcing conflict management style is defined as "a style of handling conflict which includes threats, explicit demands, physical or verbal force, expressing commitment to unalterable positions and imposing deadlines" (Dijkstra et al., 2009. p.47).

Operational definition: Forcing conflict management style is operationalised as the individual's consistent way of handling conflict with high concern for self and low concern for others. Individuals high in forcing conflict management style have low concern for the needs and wishes of others, and when they experience conflict, they try to protect their own interest at any cost. Forcing conflict management style is also an active conflict management style, and, in the present study, it has been operationalised and measured as a trait like variable, which is consistent across situations.

# 3.6.10 Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style

**Theoretical definition:** Problem-solving conflict management style is defined as "a style of handling conflict which involves exchange of information about priorities and preferences, showing insights and making trade-offs between important and unimportant issues" (Dijkstra et al., 2009, p 407).

**Operational definition:** Problem-solving conflict management style is operationalized as the individual's consistent way of handling conflict with

high concern for self and high concern for others. Individual's high in problem-solving conflict management style try to satisfy their own need as well as the needs of others. Problem-solving conflict management style is an active conflict management style and is measured as a trait like variable consistent across situations.

#### 3.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This section provides details about the time, place, and sources from which necessary information have been collected for the study.

#### 3.7.1 Time Dimension

The study is cross-sectional in nature in collecting information about task conflict, process conflict, relationship conflict, negative affect state, perceived social support at work, conflict management styles and employee well-being. The data needed for the study was collected during December 2016- March 2017.

#### **3.7.2 Place**

The data was collected from IT engineers working in large IT firms in Kerala.

# 3.7.3 Data Source and Data Collection

From the preliminary study, the researcher found support for occurrences of interpersonal conflict among employees in IT, Banking, Tourism and Health sectors. Though interpersonal conflict among employees is a reality irrespective of different sectors, IT sector reported more episodes of interpersonal conflict. Further, a survey study among Indian software engineers revealed that the majority of the engineers, more specifically 73

percent of the engineers, experience conflicts every day (Thoti et al., 2013). The success of any software firms depends on the sincere and dedicated effort of software professionals, right from the inception till the end. Each project in software firms are unique, with specific goals and different processes. These differences and uniqueness of each project can result in differences in viewpoints and opinion among employees and can result in conflict among engineers. Such conflicts are related to the distribution of work, allocation of resources, performance evaluation and establishing effective communication network (Alok, 2014). Hence, the researcher selected the IT sector for the final study.

To address the major and specific objectives of the study, responses from employees working in IT firms is needed. So primary data source is needed and was collected from IT engineers who possess a minimum of one year experience working in large IT firms in Kerala. Such large IT firms operating in Kerala were identified from NASSCOM list. Considering the time and cost limitations, a widely accepted, self-administered questionnaire survey was used to measure the various concepts in the conceptual model. This method has many advantages over other methods as it helps in collecting large coverage of data within a shorter period. The data was collected through both offline and online methods.

#### 3.7.4 Population

The study defines population as software engineers working in IT firms.

#### 3.7.5 Inclusion criteria

Software engineers with at least one year experience in the current firm.

# 3.7.6 Sampling Method

To collect the responses, simple random sampling technique was used.

# 3.7.7 Sample Size

Since the hypothesised relationships were proposed to test using Structural Equation Modeling, the sample size required for the study is determined by the suggestions of Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010). Hair et al. (2010), gave the following suggestions. When models contain five or fewer constructs and each construct with more than 5 items and with high item communalities (.6 or higher), minimum sample size required is 100. A minimum sample size of 150 is required in case of models with seven constructs or less with modest communalities (.5) without any under identified constructs. A minimum sample size of 300 is suggested in cases of models with seven or fewer constructs with lower communalities (below .45). Further, they suggest a minimum sample size of 500 when models with more than seven constructs and with lower communalities are dealt with. Apart from these characteristics of the model being estimated, the sample size should be increased if data deviates from multivariate normality, missing data exceeds, and sample intensive techniques are used. Considering these suggestions, and the proposed model for the present study has more than seven constructs, sample size of more than 500 is required.

#### 3.7.8 Units of Observation

In this study, the units of observation are engineers working in IT firms. Thus the study is based on individual level analysis, to test the proposed relationships.

# 3.7.9 Justification for Individual Level Analysis

Conflict at the workplace can occur between individuals, among individuals within a group and between groups (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008) and it can be analysed at different organisational levels (Sonnentag et al., 2013). The present study focusses on the individual level because of the following reasons.

Conflict, at its core, is an individual level phenomenon and experience of conflict, that is, perceived incompatibilities and subsequent affective reactions, is an intra-individual phenomenon (Smith-Crowe, Brief, & Umphress, 2007). Further, task, relationship, and process conflict is a multilevel phenomenon (individual level: individual's experience of conflict with one or more members in a group or in organisation; dyadic: mutual experience of conflict between two persons at the workplace; unit level: conflict experienced by all employees in an organisation) and individual level conflict is considered especially relevant (Todorava et al., 2014). Hence, an understanding of the effect of conflict on individual level is essential because, an understanding about the effect of conflict at higher levels require an awareness of conflict processes at lower levels (Korsgaard, Jeong, Mahony & Pitariu, 2008).

Recently researches have established that employees experience task, relationship and process conflict differently and employees' perception of different types of conflict differ from each other and such differences result in variance in employees' unique attitudes and behaviours (Jehn, Rispens & Thatcher, 2010). Since individuals experience conflict differently, these differences in individual perceptions are likely to be found even if they experience conflict collectively. Moreover, given that individuals are more strongly influenced by their own experience (Lewin, 1951), the study believes that our focus on the individual-level experience of relationship, task, and process conflict is optimal.

Thirdly, building on the above arguments, it is essential to focus on individual-level perceptions of conflict for the proposed model as the theory focusses on how task, relationship and process conflicts affect individual's affective states emanating from conflict and their perception of well-being. Since, individual perceptions influences cognitive as well as affective responses, the study argues that an individual's perceptions of conflict will be the proximal causes of individual-level affective experiences and their well-being.

#### 3.7.10 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using standardised questionnaires. The study relied on google survey forms to collect the responses from the respondents. As part of the survey and data collection process, the study distributed a total of 1000 questionnaires. From this list, we received 620 filled questionnaires back on or before the specified time. In this, 66 questionnaires were later

removed from the analysis as they were found to be incomplete during the initial screening. Hence, 554 responses were used for final analysis. Thus the average response rate was 55.4 %.

Since the data was collected from a single source using self-report, and at a single time, social desirability bias is likely to influence the response which can lead to the problem of common method variance. Common Method Variance (CMV) is defined as, the variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent. Social desirability is defined as, "the need for social approval and acceptance and the belief that it can be attained through culturally acceptable and appropriate behaviours" (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964, p. 109). It is commonly observed as the propensity of the respondents to present themselves in a positive light, regardless of their true feelings about the topic or issue of interest of the research. This nature of the respondent is problematic, as it results in biased responses and also masks the true relationships between variables in the study (Ganster, Hennessey & Luthans, 1983). Hence, the researcher tried to reduce the self-report bias and common method variance by following the suggestions of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff (2003). Podsakoff et al. (2003), suggested procedural techniques as well as statistical techniques to reduce common method variance. Procedural techniques are applicable while designing the questionnaire and collecting the responses. Statistical techniques are used to empirically establish that the study is free from common method variance. The present study tried to control common method variance while collecting the responses and statistical

techniques were used to establish that the study is free from common method variance. The statistical techniques are also used to establish that the study is free from common method variance which is explained in the data analysis chapter later.

The following procedural techniques were used to control the common method variance. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured their anonymity and confidentiality of the information collected. Further, the respondents were informed that there are no right or wrong answers, and they are requested to answer as honestly as possible. Further, the various scales used in the study were presented in the questionnaire in a random order to avoid respondents to assume illusory correlations between different variables. Podsakoff et al. (2003), stated that these procedural techniques would help to reduce respondents' evaluation and make them less likely to respond in a socially desirable way.

#### 3.7.11 Tools for Data Collection

The scales used in the study were adapted from previous studies, as the context and the research problem in the previous studies were different from that of the present study. Since the scales were adapted, the researcher performed a validation process as suggested by Aguinis and Vandenberg (2014).

# 3.7.11.1 Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire developed to collect responses has two parts. The first part of the questionnaire measured the constructs included in the study to

check the hypothesised relationships. The second part of the questionnaire collected the demographic information of the respondents.

# 3.7.11.2 Conflict Types- Task Conflict, Relationship Conflict and Process Conflict

The scales to measure task, relationship and process conflicts were adapted from the Extended Intragroup conflict Scale (Jehn et al., 2008). The scale consists of 14 items, 6 items to measure task conflict and the remaining, 4 items each, to measure relationship conflict and process conflict. Sample item: Task Conflict- "we had task-related disagreements", Relationship Conflict- "sometimes we fought over personal matters", Process Conflict-"we disagreed about the process to get the work done". The respondents were requested to report the amount of each type of conflict in the last six months in a 5 point scale ranging from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Very much").

# 3.7.11.3 Perceived Social Support at Work

Perceived social support at work is measured using a scale developed by Illies et al. (2011). Sample item: "Co-workers and supervisors gave information that helped me in my work". The scale consists of 6 items and respondents were requested to indicate their agreement or disagreement in a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree").

# 3.7.11.4 Negative Affect State

Negative affect state is measured using 10 adjectives in the widely accepted Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Watson et al., 1988). Sample items are "troubled", "upset" and "scared". Respondents

were requested to indicate to what extent they felt each of the adjective after various, conflict episodes. The respondents were asked to respond on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 ("Very slightly") to 5 ("Extremely at all").

# 3.7.11.5 Conflict Management Styles

Conflict management styles of the individuals were measured with the Dutch Test for Conflict Handling (De Dreu et al., 2001). Respondents were asked to report how they behave in response to conflicts at the workplace. They were requested to recall as many conflict situations as possible while responding to the questions. The scale has 16 items (four items for each conflict management style such as avoiding, yielding, forcing and problem-solving). Sample items are: "I avoid differences of opinion as much as possible" (avoiding), "I give in to the wishes of the other party" (yielding), "I push my own point of view" (forcing) and "I examine ideas from both sides to find a mutually optimal solution" (problem-solving). Respondents were asked to answer on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree").

# 3.7.11.6 Employee Well-being

Employee well-being was measured using two subscales (mental health scale and physical health scale) from the Occupational Stress Indicator (Evers, Frese, & Cooper, 2000). Sample items are: "During an ordinary working day, there are times when you feel worried, though the reasons for this might not always be clear?" (Mental health), "Feeling unaccountably tired" (Physical health). Both the scales consists of seven items. Respondents were requested to report how often they felt each of the statement in general.

Responses ranged from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always"). Responses were later reverse coded.

#### 3.7.11.7 Control Variables

Becker (2005), defined, "control variables are factors that researchers include in their work to rule out alternative explanations for their findings or to reduce error terms and increase statistical power ...."

It is vital to establish the robustness of the research findings by ruling out alternative explanations. Though control variables are vital, it was not given due importance, which was reiterated by Atinc, Simmering and Kroll (2012). They have reviewed 812 articles published in top four management journals and found that majority of the papers have not included control variables. Hence, to ensure the robustness of the research findings, based on the empirical findings the present study included gender and age as control variables. The following paragraph describes the reasons for including age and gender as control variables in the present study.

Few studies have reported the differential effect of gender in the way the people handle conflict (e.g., Stuhlmacher & Walters, 1999). Further, past studies have reported gender differences in coping with various adverse events (e.g., Almeida & Kessler, 1998; Matud, 2004; Ptacek, Smith, & Dodge, 1994). Finally, there are consistent gender differences in experiencing negative affective states (e.g., Barnett, Biener, & Baruch, 1987; Nolen- Hoeksema, 1987). Also like gender, the age of the respondents is considered as a control variable not only due to its correlation with indicators of well-being (Siu,

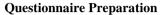
Spector, Cooper, & Donald, 2001), but also due to its influence on individuals' conflict management styles (van Lange, Otten, De Bruin, & Joireman, 1997). Hence, the study included age and gender as control variables.

# 3.7.11.8 Socio-Demographic Profile

The questionnaire also collected the following information about the respondents such as age, gender, marital status, religion, managerial position in the organisation, educational qualification, total years of experience and annual income.

#### 3.8 OVERVIEW OF DATA ANALYSIS

The following flowchart provides a brief overview of the various steps in data analysis followed in the present study. The analysis process followed in the study is shown in Figure 3.1.



- Pre-test- Face Validity and Content Validity
- Pilot Study- Reliability analysis, EFA, Correlation analysis

# Testing of Assumptions, CFA and SEM

# **Hypotheses Testing**

- Test of Direct Effect
- Test of Indirect effect (Mediation).
- Test of Moderation

Figure 3.1 Overview of Data Analysis



# DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The previous chapter explained the methodological aspects such as population, sample and various tools used to measure the constructs in the study. This chapter provides the details of the data analysis and results of the various hypotheses tests. This chapter has been organised into three sections. The following paragraphs explain how this chapter is organised.

#### **SECTION-1**

The first section of this chapter provides the details of the pre-test conducted and the results of the pilot study. Pre-test was conducted to ensure the face validity and content validity of the scales used in the study. After the pre-test, a pilot study was conducted to check the reliability of the scales used to measure the constructs such as *conflict types*, *employee well-being*, *negative affect state*, *conflict management styles and perceived social support at work*. Though all the scales have been previously validated and established, the researcher has made minor changes to meet the requirements of the study which necessitates performing Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and reliability analysis. With the responses collected for the pilot study, EFA was performed. The first section also provides the results of the EFA, reliability analysis, and the results of the correlation analysis.

#### **SECTION-2**

In the second section, the study provides the details of the final study conducted. Detailed information of the demographic profile of the respondents including, age, gender, religion, hierarchical position, experience, marital status, annual income and educational qualification is provided. Rest of this section provides the details of the data screening process, verification of the various assumptions required for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and validation of the measurement model using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and structural model validation also.

#### **SECTION-3**

The section three of this chapter provides the details of various tests of hypotheses such as – direct effect, indirect effect and moderation analysis.

#### **SECTION-1**

#### 4.1 PRE-TEST AND PILOT STUDY

#### 4.1.1 Pre-Test of the Scales

The researcher conducted a pre-testing of the questionnaire, to ensure the quality of the various scales used to measure the various constructs in the study. The researcher conducted a pre-test to ensure that the construed meaning is same for different individuals and the construed meaning is similar as operationalised. To ensure this a face validity process was initiated and the developed questionnaire was shared with academicians and a small subset of the targeted population. By discussions with them, minor changes in language were made to remove ambiguity.

MacKenzie (2003), stated that to develop an effective scale it is essential to define the constructs clearly and ensure that items are measuring the constructs intended. The researcher followed the suggestions of Aguinis and Vandenburg (2014) to test the content validity of the instrument. A document was prepared, with definitions of the constructs along with items to measure each construct and distributed among 10 academicians, 10 doctoral students and 10 prospective participants and requested to comment about the appropriateness of the items to measure each construct. Though they were contented with the scales used to measure the various constructs, some of them suggested to change a few words, and such minor language changes were incorporated.

# **4.1.2** Pilot Study of the Questionnaire

A pilot study was conducted to test the questionnaire and to gain insights about the relationships between the study variables, before conducting the final study. The questionnaires were distributed among 200 Information Technology engineers who were working in Top IT companies operating in Kerala according to the NASSCOM list. The respondents were randomly selected for the pilot study. As part of the pilot study, 200 questionnaires were distributed, and 160 employees returned the questionnaire. Among 160 questionnaires 15 questionnaires were removed due to a large number of missing values, and finally, 145 questionnaires were used for the pilot study. Both offline and online methods were used to collect responses from respondents.

Among the 145 usable responses, 94 were male respondents, and 51 were female respondents. 86 respondents were unmarried, and 59 respondents were unmarried. 77 respondents reported that they belong to junior level management, 55 respondents were from middle-level management, and 13 respondents were from top level management. 86 respondents follow Hindu religion, 48 respondents follow Christian religion, and 11 respondents follow Muslim religion. 96 respondents were graduates, 44 respondents were postgraduates, and 5 have educational qualification above post-graduation. The demographic profile of the respondents of the pilot study is summarised in Table 4.1.1.

Table 4.1.1 Demographic Details of the Respondents of the Pilot Study

Variables	Frequency	Valid (%)
	Age	<u>'</u>
21-25	64	44.1
26-30	25	17.2
31-35	17	11.7
36-40	12	8.2
41-45	16	11.03
45-50	11	7.5
	Gender	<u>'</u>
Male	94	64.83
Female	51	35.17
	Marital Status	<u>.</u> S
Single	86	59
Married	59	41

Designation							
Junior Level	77	53.1					
Medium Level	55	37.9					
Top Level	13	8.2					
	Religion	•					
Hindu	86	59.3					
Christian	48	33.1					
Muslim	11	7.6					
]	Education Qualifications						
Graduate	96	66.2					
Post Graduate	44	30.3					
Others	5	3.5					

Source: Compiled from the data collected

# 4.1.3 Reliability Analysis of the Measures Used for the Study

With the data collected for the pilot study, the reliability analysis of the scales used to measure the different constructs in the study such as conflict types, negative affect state, mental health, physical health, conflict management styles and perceived social support at work was performed. The reliability of an instrument is defined as the ability of the instrument to provide consistent score of the constructs under consideration (Dillan, Madden & Firtle, 1994).

Though there are various ways to check the reliability of the scales, internal consistency is considered as the best method to ensure the reliability. Internal consistency provides information about the similarity of the items in a scale and ensures that items are measuring a single item. Cronbach's Alpha

coefficient is used for estimating the reliability of the scales (Cronbach, 1951). An alpha value above 0.70 is considered suitable for ensuring the reliability of the scales (Nunnally, 1978). The Cronbach's coefficient value of all the scales used in the study ranged from .84 to .98, which are above the necessary threshold level, which ensures the reliability of the scales used in the study. The results of the reliability analysis are shown in Table 4.1.2.

Table 4.1.2 Reliability Analyses of the Measures Used for the Study

Constructs	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Task conflict	6	.94
Relationship Conflict	4	.93
Process Conflict	4	.88
Negative Affect	10	.94
Mental Health	7	.90
Physical Health	7	.93
Perceived Social Support	6	.98
Avoiding	4	.84
Yielding	4	.85
Forcing	4	.95
Problem Solving	4	.92

Source: Compiled from the result of data analysis

# 4.1.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

After ensuring the reliability of the various scales used in the study, the researcher proceeded with the EFA. Factor analysis is an interdependence technique, and the primary objective is to determine the underlying structure among the different variables in the study. Factor analysis helps to identify the dimensions which explain the most variations

in the proposed model. In multivariate data analysis, factor analysis is considered as the first multivariate technique as it has a unique role in the other multivariate techniques. To identify the underlying dimensions of the various constructs used in the study, EFA should be conducted. EFA reduces and summarises data based on their common underlying factors or dimensions (Hair et al., 2010).

The purpose of EFA in this study was to ensure that items were loaded in the related categories, as the researcher have made minor adaptations to the scales used to measure the various constructs in the study. Before proceeding with factor analysis, the researcher ensured the appropriateness of the data to conduct exploratory factor analysis. The appropriateness of the data to perform exploratory factor analysis was checked using various statistical analyses such as Determinant value, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) - a measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity.

#### 4.1.4.1 The Determinant Value

The determinant value is used to check the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis. The determinant value should be above 0.00001. The determinant value obtained in the study is 1.02 which is above the cut off value. This value ensures that there are adequate interrelationships among the items in the study. The determinant value ensured that the data is appropriate for performing factor analysis.

# 4.1.4.2 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and KMO

Bartlett's test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1950) is used to check whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. In other words, if the variables are uncorrelated in the population further analysis of EFA will not be performed. It also examines whether the correlation matrix follows the Chi-Square distribution. Higher Bartlett's value denotes that the correlation matrix is less likely to become an identity matrix. The Bartlett's test value in the study is 30924.352 which is a higher value and significant (p= <.05) which indicates that there is sufficient correlation between variables in the study, which ensures and that the data is appropriate for factor analysis (Malhotra, 2008).

The study also ensured the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) developed by Kaiser in 1970, which is a measure of sampling adequacy. This measure quantifies the degree of inter-correlations among the variables. The KMO index ranges from 0 to 1. KMO value above 0.80 is considered meritorious, 0.70 above is middling, 0.60 above is mediocre, and 0.50 above is miserable. KMO value below 0.50 is considered to be unacceptable for factor analysis. KMO value obtained in the study is 0.921 which is meritorious and indicates that the sample is adequate and appropriateness of the data for factor analysis (Malhotra, 2008).

The Determinant value, Bartlett's test result and KMO value indicates that the data is appropriate for factor analysis and hence the data can be used to extract the factors. The results are shown in Table 4.1.3.

Table 4.1.3 Results of KMO and Barlett's Test of Sphericity

KMO Value	0.922			
	Approx. Chi-Square	30924.352		
Bartlett's test of Sphericity	Df	1770		
	Sig.	.000		

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

After established the appropriateness of the data using determinant value, KMO and Barlett's test of Sphericity, Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed. Table 4.1.4 provides the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis. Though there are different factor extraction techniques are available, the present study used Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation. While analysing the observed items, PCA takes into account the total variance of the data without considering the measurement error. It follows the rule of parsimony, which explains that fewer components which can provide a better explanation are informative than one involving many, thereby it summarises the given data into fewer components.

Thus PCA was performed on 60 items, and all items which had a factor loading of above ±.5 were retained for subsequent analysis because loading above ±.5 was considered fundamentally significant (Hair et al., 2010). The communalities presented in the table denote the proportion of variance of each variable accounted by the Common factors. Generally, variables with communality values above 0.50 (which is the cut off value)

are considered. In the study communality values of all the variables are above 0.50.

Further, in the EFA, factor extraction was based on the Eigen value. On the basis of Eigen value greater than one criterion, items loaded on 11 factors as conceptualised by the researcher. These 11 factors accounted for 21.722, 13.722, 8.668, 6.592, 5.366, 5.050, 4.416, 3.800, 3.372, 2.618, 1.978 variance. Altogether these 11 factors explained 77.304 percentage of the total variance.

In order to retain the items, the factor loading should be above .5. The factor loadings ranged from 0.68 to 0.94 for the entire 60 items, and hence all these items were retained after Exploratory Factor Analysis. These 11 factors are Task Conflict (TC), Relationship Conflict (RC), Process Conflict (PC), Perceived Social Support (PSS), Negative Affect (NA), Avoiding (AV), Yielding (YG), Forcing (FG), Problem-solving (PS), Physical Health (PH), and Mental Health (MH). All the items significantly loaded on one respective factor only.

**Table 4.1.4 Summary of Exploratory Factor Analysis** 

	Variable Eigen Variance Factor Comm						
, ar and	Value	Explained	Loadings	nalities			
F1: Relationship Conflict	2.650	4.416	Zoudings	idition in the second			
• RC1			<b>.</b> 891	.871			
• RC2			.851	.858			
• RC3			.896	.892			
• RC4			.877	.889			
F2: Task Conflict	3.955	6.592					
• TC1			.862	.790			
• TC2			.877	.823			
• TC3			.886	.833			
• TC4			.873	.822			
• TC5			.879	.844			
• TC6			.853	.798			
F3: Process Conflict	1 571	2 (10	0.52	021			
• PC1	1.571	2.618	.852	.821			
• PC2			.861	.813			
• PC3			.842	.794 .789			
• PC4			.828	.789			
F4: Perceived Social	8.233	13.722					
Support	0.233	13.722					
PSS1			.935	.910			
• PSS2			.943	.918			
• PSS3			.949	.930			
• PSS4			.947	.927			
• PSS5			.948	.934			
• PSS6			.935	.907			
F5: Negative Affect	13.033	21.722					
• NA1			.691	.609			
• NA2			.772	.687			
• NA3			.760	.640			
• NA4			.839	.766			
• NA5			.702	.565			
• NA6			.766	.644			
• NA7			.766	.661			
• NA8			.772	.673			
• NA9							
			.750	.647			

	Т	1		T 1
• NA10			.770	.667
F6: Yielding				
• YG1	2.023	3.372	.798	.749
• YG2			.800	.778
• YG3			.814	.791
• YG4			.858	.814
F7: Forcing	2 0 2 0	- 0 - 0	0.43	0.5
• FG1	3.030	5.050	.843	.865
• FG2			.820	.867
• FG3			.850	.891
• FG4			.864	.897
F8: Problem-Solving	2.280	3.800		
• PS1	2.200	3.800	.845	.886
• PS2			.791	.804
• PS3			.824	.811
• PS4			.827	.875
F9: Avoiding	1.187	1.978	.027	.073
• AV1	1.107	1.576	.825	.687
• AV2			.861	.756
• AV3			.872	.765
• AV4			.843	.719
F10: Mental Health			.0-13	./1/
• MH1	3.219	5.366	.723	.621
• MH2			.778	.734
• MH3			.758	.635
• MH4			.709	.659
• MH5			.734	.654
• MH6			.686	.638
• MH7			.697	.675
F11: Physical Health				
• PH1	5.201	8.668	.771	.715
• PH2			.817	.744
• PH3			.819	.774
• PH4			.770	.669
• PH5			.807	.737
• PH6			.782	.704
• PH7				
<b>▼</b> F11/			.797	.748

Source: compiled from the results of data analysis

To confirm the parsimony rule, a scree plot was developed with Eigen value on Y-axis and factors extracted on X-axis. The factor with the highest eigen value is at the top of the scree plot and slopes downwards in the order of variance explained by extracted factors. 11 factors with Eigen value more than one have been extracted which is according to the concept developed by the researcher. Figure 4.1.1 shows the scree plot obtained.

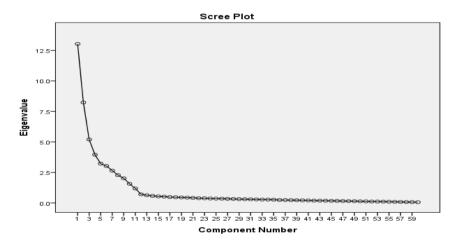


Figure 4.1.1 Scree Plot of EFA

# 4.1.5 Correlation Analysis

After performing EFA, which provided confidence to the scales used in the study, the researcher performed correlation analysis to gain insights about the relationships among the study variables. From the correlation analysis, it was found that the relationships among the study variables are as expected. The mean, standard deviation and correlation are shown in Table 4.1.5

Table 4.1.5 Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations among Study Variables (Pilot Study)

Construct	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. TC	2.58	.90	-										
2. RC	2.43	1.15	.12	-									
3. PC	2.24	.74	.26	.17	-								
4. NA	2.15	.91	.20	.39	.20	-							
5.MH	3.48	.74	19	38	18	49	-						
6.PH	3.80	.86	10	27	23	35	.48	-					
7.PSS	3.58	1.30	06	06	07	.01	02	.11	-				
8.AV	3.20	.77	.06	.14	.03	.03	09	03	03	-			
9.YG	3.38	.72	.13	12	.12	11	.01	01	.19	14	-		
10.FG	3.55	1.14	.09	04	03	06	.02	.01	14	12	.48	-	
11.PS	3.73	1.04	.04	43	.06	09	.06	.03	.18	07	.51	.58	-

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis.

Notes: N= 145; TC- Task Conflict; RC- Relationship Conflict; PC- Process Conflict; NA-Negative Affect; MH- Mental Health; PH- Physical Health; PSS- Perceived Social Support at Work; AV- Avoiding Conflict Management Style; YG- Yielding Conflict Management Style; FG- Forcing Conflict Management Style; PS- Problem- Solving Conflict Management Style; SD- Standard Deviation; \*\* Correlation significant at the .01 level; \* Correlation significant at the .05 level.

The results of the reliability analysis, EFA, and correlation analysis provide confidence for the scales used in the study and hypothesised relationships, hence the researcher proceeded with the final study. The details of the final study conducted and various statistical analysis performed are detailed in sections 2 and 3.

#### **SECTION -2**

# 4.2 CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS AND STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING

This section provides the details of the final study conducted to test the proposed relationships in the study.

### 4.2.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

The data was collected using a survey method from the sample constituting Information Technology (IT) engineers working in Top 20 NASSCOM companies which are operating in Kerala. The data was collected from IT parks situated in Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi, the major IT hubs of Kerala. Total of 1000 questionnaires were distributed and received back 620 questionnaires, and 66 questionnaires were removed due to incompleteness, and finally, 554 responses were used for final data analysis. Thus the average response rate was 55.4 %. The demographic profile of the respondents are given in Table 4.2.1

**Table 4.2.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents (Final Study)** 

Variables	Frequency	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)							
		Age								
21-25	185	33.4	33.4							
26-30	272	49.1	82.5							
31-35	73	13.2	95.7							
36-40	17	3.1	98.8							
41-45	4	.7	99.5							
45-50	3	.5	100							
		Gender								
Male	327	59	59							
Female	227	41	100							
Marital Status										
Single	293	52.8	52.8							
Married	261	47.2	100							
	De	esignation	•							
Junior Level	172	31	31							
Medium Level	331	59.7	90.8							
Top Level	51	9.2	100							
_	]	Religion	•							
Hindu	254	45.8	45.8							
Christian	223	40.3	86.1							
Muslim	75	13.5	99.6							
Others	2	.4	100							
	Educatio	n Qualifications								
Graduate	404	72.9	72.9							
Post Graduate	143	25.8	98.7							
Others	7	1.2	100							
	Experi	ence in Years								
1-3	264	47.7	47.7							
4-6	198	35.7	83.4							
7-10	59	10.6	94.0							
11-13	20	3.6	97.7							
More than 13	13	2.3	100							
		ncome (In Lakhs)								
3-5	257	46.4	46.4							
5-8	238	42.8	89.2							
8-10	48	8.7	97.9							
More than 10	12	2.1	100							

As shown in Table 4.2.1, the majority (82.5%) of the respondents fall in the age group of 21-30 years. The respondents in the age group of 31-35 constituted 13.2% of the sample. While 3.1 percent of the respondents belong to 36-40 age group, 0.7% and 0.5% belonged to 41-45 and 46 to 50 age group respectively. Out of the total 554 respondents, 59% (327) are male respondents, and 31% (227) are female respondents.

Among the 554 respondents, 52.8 % (293) of them are married, and 47.2 % (261) are unmarried. Out of the 554 respondents, 59.7 % (331) of the respondents were from middle-level management, 31 % (172) were from junior level management, and 9.1% (51) belong to top level management. While considering the religious profile of the respondents, 45.8 % (254) of the respondents belong to Hindu religion, 40.3 % (223) belong to the Christian religion, and 13.5% (75) of the respondents are Muslims. Only 0.4 % (2) of the respondents belonged to other religions category. Regarding the educational qualification of the respondents, 72.9% (404) of the respondents are graduates, while 25.8% (143) are postgraduates. Only 1.2 % (7) of the respondents have educational qualification above post-graduation.

Out of the 554 respondents, 47.7 % (264) belong to the group of 1-3 years of experience and 35.7 % (198) belong to group of 4-6 years of experience. While 10.6 % (59) belong to the group of 7-10 years of experience another 3.6 % (20) and 2.3 % (13) belong to the group of 11-13 and more than 13 respectively. The annual income of the respondents were classified into four categories namely, income from 3-5 lakhs, 5-8 lakhs, 8-10 lakhs and more than 10 lakhs. Approximately 46.4 % (257) of the

respondents have an annual income of 3-5 lakhs, and nearly 42.8 % (238) belong to 5-8 lakhs annual income group. Only 8.7 % (47) belong to an annual income of 8-10 lakhs. Another 2.1 % (12) belong to an annual income of more than 10 lakhs group.

# 4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

This research study consists of eleven variables: Task Conflict (TC), Relationship Conflict (RC), Process Conflict (PC), Perceived Social Support (PSS), Negative Affect State (NA), Physical Health (PH), Mental Health (MH) and four conflict management styles such as Avoiding (AG), Yielding (YG), Forcing (FG), and Problem-solving (PS).

TC measures the occurrence of conflict related to goals of the task at the workplace. RC measures the occurrence of conflict over personality differences and values. PC measures the occurrence of conflict at workplace over logistical and delegation issues among employees. PSS measures the individuals' perception of receiving social support from co-workers and supervisors to perform a task or to deal with particular workers and various work-related situations. NA State measures the individual's state of mind after various conflict episodes. MH and PH measure how well respondents felt psychologically and physically in general. Conflict management styles namely yielding, forcing, problem-solving, and avoiding measures an individual's general way of handling conflict at the workplace. The descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, inter-construct correlations) of the above mentioned eleven variables are given in Table 4.2.2.

**Table 4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics** 

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. TC	2.69	.98	(.95)										
2. RC	2.54	1.31	.182**	(.95)									
3.PC	2.41	.89	.306**	.161**	(.91)								
4.NA	2.18	.85	.327**	.393**	.369**	(.93)							
5.MH	3.57	.74	241**	327**	275**	440**	(.90)						
6.PH	3.77	.85	140**	305**	294**	394**	.546**	(.93)					
7.PSS	3.61	1.21	122**	201**	062	145**	.021	.123**	(.98)				
8.AV	3.37	.85	029	121**	.043	014	.064	.010	.026	(.87)			
9.YG	3.40	.89	182**	035	.115**	035	.028	.056	.182**	016	(.90)		
10.FG	3.49	1.16	103*	121**	021	121**	.123**	.074	.209**	.015	.547**	(.95)	
11.PS	3.58	1.12	.070	095*	.027	145**	018	.077	.292**	.016	.520**	.637**	(.93)

Notes: N= 554; TC- Task Conflict; RC- Relationship Conflict; PC- Process Conflict; NA- Negative Affect; MH- Mental Health; PH- Physical Health; PSS- Perceived Social Support at Work; AV- Avoiding Conflict Management Style; YG- Yielding Conflict Management Style; FG-Forcing Conflict Management Style; PS- Problem- Solving Conflict Management Style; M- Mean; SD- Standard Deviation; \*\* Correlation significant at the .01 level; \* Correlation significant at the .05 level; Values in the parenthesis represent Cronbach's Alpha coefficient;

# 4.2.3 Assessment Using Structural Equation Modeling

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a multivariate analytical technique which simultaneously performs various multiple regression equations along with factor analysis for confirming the hypothetical relation existing between the constructs (Williams, Vandenberg, & Edwards, 2009; Astrachan, Patel, & Wanzenried, 2014). Comparing with other various multivariate analytical techniques, SEM permits to include three separate acts such as multiple regressions, canonical correlation, and Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) which makes it unique. It can perform multiple regression analyses simultaneously and enables to integrate latent variables which were assessed using various manifest variables or items which helps to reduce measurement error. Most importantly SEM is able to run the entire hypothesised model which helps to examine the various complex relationships postulated in the model. Assessment using SEM is performed in two stages. In the first stage measurement model was evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis and in the second stage the structural model is tested (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

# 4.2.4 Preliminary Analysis of Data before SEM

Before the measurement model assessment was conducted, the researcher ensured that the data set satisfies the necessary assumptions to perform Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling through the following estimations:

- 1. Common Method Bias estimate
- 2. Tests for normality

- 3. Examination of multicollinearity
- 4. Examination of offending estimates

#### 4.2.4.1 Common Method Bias

Common Method Bias refers to the variance that occurs due to the measurement method adopted by the researcher (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In SEM one of the assumptions is that data is free from common method bias or variance. Common Method Variance or Bias results in deflated or inflated intercorrelations among measures depending upon several factors (Williams & Brown, 1994). Generally, Common Method Bias is measured by two methods: Harman's Single factor test and Common Latent Factor test.

### **4.2.4.1.1** Harman's Single Factor Test

Harman's single factor test is performed by loading all the items in a single factor. For this Exploratory Factor Analysis without rotation was performed. If the percentage of variance explained by that single factor is less than 50 percent, then it can be assumed that the study is free from common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In this study when Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed without rotation, limiting to a single factor, the percentage of total variance explained by a single factor is 21.722 %, which is less than 50 percent which indicates that there is no single dominant factor which confirms that the study is free from common method bias.

#### 4.2.4.1.2 Common Latent Factor Test

Since there are some disagreements among the practitioners regarding Harman's Single factor test, in order to confirm that the study is free from common method variance, Common Latent Factor test was also performed. This is performed in SPSS AMOS, by creating a common latent variable and it is connected to all the observed variables in the study. The new latent variable variance is constrained to 1, and all the paths are assumed to be equal. If the square of the Common Latent Factor (CLF) value is lower than the conventional threshold level of 50%, it can be assumed that the study is free from common method bias.

It can be further confirmed by decreasing the standardised regression weights of the model with common latent factor, from standardised regression weights of the model without common latent factor. If the new value obtained after this deduction does not exceed 0.2, it can be concluded that the study is free from common method bias (Williams, Hartman, & Cavazotte, 2010). From the analysis, the researcher established that the study is free from Common Method bias as the square of common latent factor value is 12.32 % (CLF Value = .351) is lower than the threshold level of 50%, and the difference between the standardised regression weight with and without the model does not exceed 0.2.

# **4.2.4.2** Examination of Offending Estimates

Estimation of offending estimates is a pre-requisite for performing measurement model assessment. Offending estimates are any values of constructs in the model which exceeds theoretical limits (Hair et al., 2010). It

is suggested to modify the model if any indicator fails to measure the underlying dimensions or construct (Cheng, 2001). The modification is done by deleting the indicator (Cheng, 2001). Generally, offending estimates in a measurement model are instances of high standard errors of estimated coefficients, negative error variances and standardised loadings of the manifest variables is higher than 1 (Reisinger &Turner,1999). The data results were carefully examined for these offending estimates and ensured no such offending estimates are present.

# **4.2.4.3 Tests for Normality**

Many of the statistical analysis are fundamentally based on the assumption that data were collected from populations which are normally distributed (Field, 2009; Driscoll, Lecky & Crosby, 2009). To perform Structural equation modelling with Maximum Likelihood Estimate (MLE), the normality of the data is a prerequisite. Normality of the data provides confidence to the researcher to generalise the findings of the study to the reality (Field, 2009). When structural equation modeling is performed using MLE, the normality assumption is checked on the Dependent Variable and not on Independent Variables (Kline, 2012). Hence, before proceeding with model estimation, the normality of the data is checked.

Generally, normality is tested by analysing symmetry and skewness. In a symmetric data, mean, median and mode values are approximately equal. Skewness indicates the direction of deviation of data from mean and Kurtosis indicates the peakness of the distribution. Distribution which is normal will have Skewness value and Kurtosis value closer to zero.

However, a small deviation from zero is not considered as a violation of normality assumption if it is within the prescribed limits of -1.96 to +1.96 (Cramer,1998; Doane & Seward, 2011). The symmetry, skewness and Kurtosis values of all the variables in the study are given in Table 4.2.3. Upon analysing the values given in the table, it can be concluded that the normality assumption is satisfied. Further, the normality was checked using a Q-Q plot of dimensions of dependent variable. The distribution follows normality, and thus the normality was ensured.

**Table 4.2.3 Test for Normality** 

Construct	Mean	Median	Skewness	Kurtosis
RC	2.54	2.00	.603	-1.123
TC	2.69	2.50	.671	212
PC	2.41	2.5	.822	.554
PSS	3.61	4.16	894	852
NA	2.18	2.00	.752	094
PH	3.77	3.85	580	056
MH	3.57	3.71	467	.015
YG	3.40	3.50	674	208
AG	3.37	3.50	307	394
PS	3.58	4.00	991	449
FG	3.49	3.50	854	833

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: TC- Task Conflict; RC- Relationship Conflict; PC- Process Conflict; NA- Negative Affect; MH- Mental Health; PH- Physical Health; PSS- Perceived Social Support at Work; AV- Avoiding Conflict Management Style; YG- Yielding Conflict Management Style; FG-Forcing Conflict Management Style; PS- Problem- Solving Conflict Management Style.

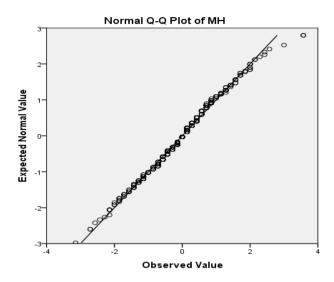


Figure 4.2.1 QQ-Plot of Mental Health

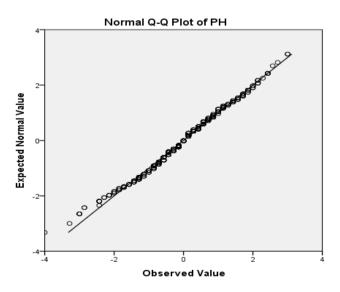


Figure 4.2.2 Q-Q Plot of Physical Health

# **4.2.4.4** Examination of Multicollinearity

Another prerequisite of structural equation modelling is the absence of Multi-collinearity in the model. Multi-collinearity refers to a situation in which there is an exact linear relationship between predictor variables (independent variables) (Hawking & Pendleton, 1983). When the intercorrelations between predictor variables exceed 0.70 which is the most widely accepted threshold level indicates there is Multi-collinearity issue between the predictor variables. Upon evaluating the inter-correlations between independent variables and it was found that correlations between three independent variables ranged from 0.191 to 0.306 which indicates the absence of Multi-collinearity.

To confirm that the study is free from the problem of Multi-collinearity, tolerance level and Variance Inflated Factor (VIF) was examined. VIF indicates how much the variance of the coefficient estimate is inflated by Multi-collinearity. Generally, tolerance level less than 0.10 and VIF above 3 is considered as a situation in which there is a problem of Multi-collinearity (Belsley, Kuh & Welsch, 1980). The problem of Multi-collinearity can be checked by performing linear regression on independent variables, with keeping one independent variable as the dependent variable and other variables as independent variables. Since in the study, there are three independent variables, and hence three collinearity diagnoses were performed. In all the three diagnosis tolerance level and VIF ranges from 0.90 to 0.96 and 1.03 to 1.10 respectively which are within the generally

accepted threshold levels. The results indicate that there is no Multicollinearity problem in the study.

#### 4.2.5 Evaluation of Measurement Model

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), otherwise referred to as restricted factor analysis (Hattie & Fraser, 1988), Structural Factor Analysis (McArdle, 1996), or the Measurement Model (Hoyle, 1991), typically is used in a deductive mode to test hypotheses regarding unmeasured sources of variability responsible for the commonality among a set of scores.

Confirmatory Factor analysis provides various reliability and validity scores to check the validity and reliability of the measures used as well as various indices to prove the validity of the measurement model empirically. There are eleven variables of interest in the hypothesised model namely: Relationship Conflict, Task Conflict, Process Conflict, Perceived Social Support, Negative Affect state, Mental Health, Physical Health, Avoiding Conflict management style, Yielding Conflict management style, Forcing Conflict Management Style and Problem-Solving Conflict management style.

The measurement model validity of the hypothesised model was tested through a Confirmatory Factor Analysis using IBM SPSS AMOS 21, which can be done in two different ways. The first method is by testing each measure separately and second is by testing all the measures together. The second method is considered superior to the first one and in the current study, the second method was used for measurement model validation.

Validation procedure which ensures the validity and reliability of the constructs should satisfy the following criteria:

- 1) Unidimensionality
- 2) Reliability
- 3) Convergent Validity
- 4) Discriminant Validity

# 4.2.5.1 Inspection of Unidimensionality

confirmatory factor analysis, the study examined unidimensionality of the latent constructs. The fundamental principle behind ensuring unidimensionality is that there is only one underlying dimension for each set of measures (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), which means scales are measuring a single construct only. The property of unidimensionality is a basic assumption of measurement theory and is vital for unconfounded calculation of variable relationships in path modelling. Though there are various traditional techniques such as reliability analysis and exploratory factor analysis to check the unidimensionality, contemporary techniques like Confirmatory factor analysis are considered better to confirm the property of unidimensionality (Hunter & Gerbing, 1982). Unidimensionality is checked in CFA by examining the Standardised Residuals. Absolute Standardised residual mean value above 2.58 is considered as a threat to unidimensionality (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Joreskog & Sorbom, 2001). After examining the standardised residual mean of variables, it was found that in none of the cases Standardised residual mean value exceeded above 2.58 and thus the unidimensionality of the constructs was ensured.

### **4.2.5.2** Examination of Convergent Validity

After examining the unidimensionality of the constructs, the study examined the convergent validity. Measures have convergent validity when all the unstandardized factor loadings of items or indicators in a measurement model are significant statistically. Convergent validity ensures that items used to measure a particular construct measure that construct itself. The convergent validity is checked by examining the magnitude and significance of the un-standardised indicator loadings. All the unstandardized indicator loadings in the study are statistically significant (p< .001) which ensures the convergent validity. It is also suggested to confirm the validity of the indicators by examining the standardised factor loadings. Standardised Factor loadings should exceed the minimum threshold level of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). In this study, the standardised factor loadings values range from 0.68 to 0.96 which are above the threshold level which supports convergent validity (See Table 4.2.5). Apart from this a good overall model fit of the measurement model (see Table 4.2.6) also provide evidence for convergent validity (Steenkamp & Trijp, 1991).

# 4.2.5.3 Examination of Reliability of the Scales

It is suggested to check the reliability of the scales after establishing the Uni-dimensionality and convergent validity as in some cases reliability will be high though the scale lacks convergent validity (Steenkamp & Van Trijp, 1991). Most widely used method to examine the reliability of the scales is through Cronbach's (1951) coefficient. It is suggested to assess the Cronbach Alpha coefficient after ensuring the Uni-dimensionality of the

constructs as in some cases items can be correlated but lack homogeneity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Hence, coefficient alpha will be an unbiased estimate only when the scale is unidimensional (Hunter & Gerbing, 1982). Hence, before assessing reliability coefficients, it is advised to ensure the Uni-dimensionality of the constructs. Since the study ensured the unidimensionality, the study proceeded with reliability analysis.

The Cronbach coefficient of all the scales used in the study ranges from 0.87 to 0.98 which are above the threshold level 0.70 as suggested by Nunnally (1978). Thus the reliability of all the scales used in the study is established. To confirm the reliability of the scales in the study composite reliability or construct reliability of all the constructs was also examined. Constructs are said to have composite reliability when it has the value above 0.60 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). All the constructs have composite reliability scores above the threshold level (ranges from 0.87-0.98) thus confirming the composite reliability (See Table 4.2.5).

# 4.2.5.4 Examination of Discriminant Validity of the Scales

Discriminant validity checks the distinctiveness of the constructs (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). Discriminant validity of the measures are examined to ensure that there are no redundant constructs used in the model. Generally, discriminant validity is checked by examining the intercorrelations between the variables. If the correlations between two factors in a model exceed 0.85 (Kline, 2012) it is an indication of poor discriminant validity and indicates the problem of multi-collinearity also. By examining Table 4.2.4, it was found that none of the correlations exceed the threshold

level which indicates there is discriminant validity. Also, the discriminant validity is examined by comparing the AVE of two constructs and square of the correlation estimate between these two constructs (Hair et al., 2010). It can be concluded that there is discriminant validity if AVE exceeds the correlation estimate in all the cases. Table 4.2.4 shows AVE and correlation estimates which prove that each constructs are distinctively different from other constructs. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis performed is shown in Table 4.2.5.

Table 4.2.4 Correlation Matrix for Checking Discriminant Validity

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.PC	(0.85)										
2.NA	0.39	(0.77)									
3.PSS	-0.06	-0.15	(0.95)								
4.PH	-0.31	-0.41	0.12	(0.82)							
5.TC	0.32	0.33	-0.13	-0.15	(0.88)						
6.MH	-0.31	-0.47	0.02	0.60	-0.25	(0.75)					
7.FG	-0.02	-0.13	0.21	0.07	0.11	0.13	(0.92)				
8.RC	0.17	0.41	-0.21	-0.32	0.18	-0.36	-0.13	(0.91)			
9.PS	0.02	-0.15	0.30	0.07	0.07	0.02	0.66	-0.10	(0.89)		
10.YG	0.12	-0.05	0.19	0.06	0.18	0.04	0.58	-0.04	0.56	(0.84)	
11.AV	0.04	-0.01	0.03	0.01	-0.03	0.07	0.02	-0.01	0.02	-0.02	(0.79)

Source: Compiled by the author, 1) Values in the parentheses are the square root of the AVE value; 2) Other values are inter-item correlations; TC- Task Conflict; RC- Relationship Conflict; PC- Process Conflict; NA- Negative Affect; MH- Mental Health; PH- Physical Health; PSS- Perceived Social Support at Work; AV- Avoiding Conflict Management Style; YG- Yielding Conflict Management Style; FG- Forcing Conflict Management Style; PS- Problem- Solving Conflict Management Style

**Table 4.2.5 Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis** 

Construct	Item( Summary)	Mean (SD)	CFA	CR*	AVE
		, ,	LOD	(a)	
RC	Fighting about personal issue	2.67(1.45)	.90	.95	
	Disagreement about non-work	2.58(1.34)	.90	(.95)	
	Fight about non-work things	2.54(1.44)	.92	(.93)	.83
	Fight over personal matters	2.40(1.39)	.92		
TC	Fight about work matters	2.64(1.12)	.86	.95	
	Task-related disagreements	2.77(1.06)	.88		
	Conflict of Ideas	2.77(1.06)	.89		77
	Different viewpoints on	2.76(1.07)	.88	(.95)	.77
	decisions	2.69(1.09)	.91		
	Work through disagreements				
	about varying opinions	2.53(1.12)	.86		
	Disagreement about work				
	things				
PC	Disagreement about delegation	2.42(1.01)	.88	.91	
	issues				
	Disagreement about process to	2.36(1.01)	.86		
	get the work done				
	Disagreement about the way to	2.43 (.982)	.85	<b>(.91</b> )	.73
	do things				
	Disagreement about work	2.44(1.20)	.85		
	responsibilities				
PSS	Co-workers and supervisors			.98	
	helped with a certain task or	3.53 (1.32)	.94		
	problem.			<b>(.98</b> )	.90
	Co-workers and supervisors	3.66 (1.31)	.95		
	gave information that helped				
	me in my Work.				
	Co-workers and supervisors	3.65(1.33)	.96		
	gave advice on how to handle				
	things at work	3.63(1.32)			
	Co-workers and supervisors		.95		

		I		1	
	gave his/her opinion on a				
	problem concerning my work				
	Co-workers and supervisors	3.61(1.32)	.96		
	explained how to perform a				
	certain task or activity.				
	Co-workers and supervisors	3.60 (1.32)	.94		
	gave advice on how to deal				
	with a certain co-worker				
NA	Troubled	2.30 (1.01)	.73	.93	
	Upset	2.30 (1.11)	.80		
	Guilty	2.00 (1.02)	.76		
	Scared	2.06 (1.07)	.85	<b>(.93)</b>	.60
	Hostile	2.18 (1.00)	.72		
	Irritable	2.32 (1.13)	.76		
	Ashamed	2.00 (1.04)	.78		
	Nervous	2.20 (1.08)	.80		
	Stressed out	2.39 (1.10)	.77		
	Afraid	2.09(1.10)	.79		
YG	Give in to the wishes of the	3.29 (.970)	.79	.90	
	other party			<b>(.90</b> )	.70
	Agree with the other party	3.54 (1.06)	.85		
	Try to accommodate the	3.44 (1.01)	.86		
	wishes of other party				
	Adjust to the parties' goals	3.34 (1.01)	.85		
	and interests				
AG	Avoid confrontation about	3.32(.97)	.75	.87	
	differences			<b>(.87</b> )	.63
	Avoid differences of opinion	3.24 (.99)	.83		
	Try to make differences	3.57(1.02)	.83		
	appear less severe				
	Try to avoid confrontation	3.37 (1.01)	.78		

PS	Examine issues untill find a	3.62 (1.29)	.93	.94	
	solution			(.93)	.79
	Stand for own and others' goals	3.58(1.15)	.86	(.,,)	•,,,
	Examine ideas from both sides	3.51(1.18)	.86		
	Work out solution serves both	3.62 (1.25)	.93		
	parties interest				
FG	Push my own point of view	3.54 (1.25)	.90	.95	
	Search for gains	3.53 (1.23)	.91	(.95)	.84
	Fight for a good outcome for	3.46(1.22)	.93	(1)	
	myself				
	Do everything to win	3.44(1.26)	.93		
MH	Feel worried about for no reason	3.57 (.89)	.71	.90	
	Feel frustrated	3.52 (.95)	.80	(.90)	.56
	Questioning own ability and	3.42 (.89)	.68	(•>0)	
	judgement				
	Feel restless and tense	3.49 (.89)	.79		
	Feel lack of confidence and	3.54 (.91)	.74		
	anxious				
	Describe yourself as a worrier	3.71 (1.01)	.74		
	Feel depressed for no reason	3.79 (.97)	.77		
PH	Inability to get sleep	3.79 (.99)	.82	.93	
	Headaches	3.71(.98)	.83		
	Unaccountably tired	3.68 (1.01)	.85	(02)	
	Decrease in sexual interest	3.96 (1.03)	.75	(.93)	.65
	Pricking sensations or twinges	3.95 (1.01)	.80		
	Do not want to get up in the	3.60 (1.07)	.79		
	morning				
	Feeling weak	3.72 (.98)	.83		

Note: SD=standard Deviation, CR=Composite Reliability (Cronbach  $\alpha$  values), AVE=Average Variance Extracted, Lod= loadings

#### 4.2.5.5 Measurement Model Validation

Since the study ensured the basic assumptions to perform CFA and SEM, the study proceeded with measurement model validation through CFA. Further model fit was examined using various indices. Examination of various indices established the fit of the model as all the indices are within the accepted threshold levels. The chi-square test of the measurement model is found to be significant (χ2= 2783, p < 0.01), since the value of ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom are in the acceptable level the model can be considered having enough model fit (Cote et al., 2001). Apart from other indices like Goodness of fit, Comparative fit indices and parsimonious fit indices were also examined. It was found that all the indices (NFI= .91, IFI=.96, CFI=.96, PNFI=.851, PGFI=.897, GFI=.85, AGFI= .83, RMR=.043, SRMR= .038, and RMSEA= .03) are within the generally accepted limits which establishes the model fit of the measurement model (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006). The various model fit indices are shown in Table 4.2.6 and the measurement model in Figure 4.2.3.

**Table 4.2.6 Measurement Model Fit Indices** 

Fit Indices	Tit Indices General Rule of Thumb					
	Absolute/ Pr	edictive Indices				
Chi-Square	(χ2)	Lower value denotes good model fit	2783			
Ratio of Chi-square to DF	(χ2/df)	Ratio of $\chi 2$ to df $\leq 2$ or 3	1.68			
Akaike information criterion	(AIC)	Smaller the value better for model comparison	3263			
Expected cross validation index	(ECVI)	Smaller the value better for model comparison	5.90			
	Comparati	ve Fit Indices				
Normed fit index (NFI)		> 0.95 for acceptance	0.91			
Incremental fit index	(IFI)	> 0.95 for acceptance	0.96			
Comparative fit index	(CFI)	> 0.95 for acceptance	0.96			
	Parsimonio	us Fit Indices				
Parsimony- adjusted NFI	(PNFI)	Sensitive to model size	0.851			
Parsimony- adjusted GFI	(PGFI)	Close to 1 shows better model fit	0.897			
Parsimony- adjusted NFI	(PNFI)	Sensitive to model size	0.851			
	Other	Indices				
Goodness of fit index	(GFI)	≥ 0.95 not generally recommended	0.85			
Adjusted GFI	(AGFI)	≥ 0.95	0.83			
Root Mean Residual	(RMR)	Smaller the better; 0 shows perfect fit.	0.043			
Standardised RMR	(SRMR)	≥0.08	0.038			
Root Mean Square error of approximation	(RMSEA)	< 0.06 to 0.08 with confidence interval	0.03			

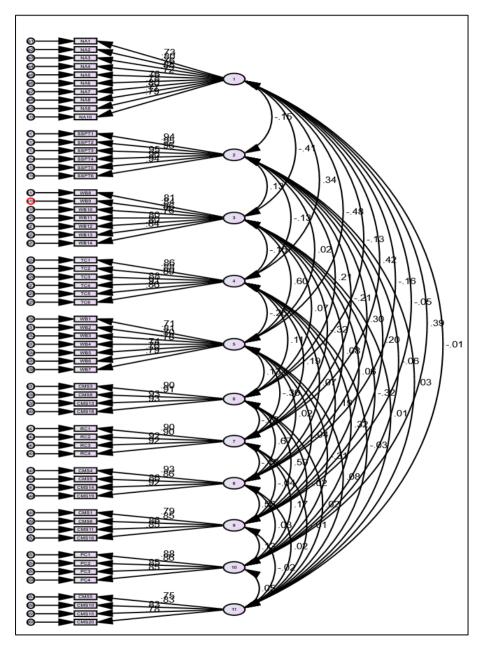


Figure 4.2.3 Measurement Model

# 4.2.6 Structural Model Evaluation Without Moderating Variables

After the measurement model validation, the researcher validated the structural model. During model validation, proposed moderating variables were not included. The Structural model is shown in Figure 4.2.4. Examination of various indices revealed that indices are within the threshold limits which provide sufficient evidence for model fit (Hair et al., 2010). Overall, the proposed model explained 41 percent variance. Various indices used for the model validation are shown in Table 4.2.7.

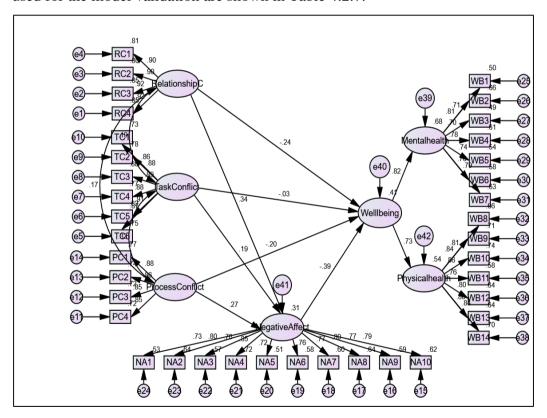


Figure 4.2.4 Structural Model

**Table 4.2.7 Structural Model Fit Indices** 

Fit Indices	General Rule of Thumb	Model Indices
Absolute	Predictive Indices	
Chi-Square (χ2)	Lower value denotes good model fit	1488
Ratio of Chi-square to DF $(\chi 2/df)$	Ratio of $\chi 2$ to df $\leq 2$ or 3	2.280
Akaike information criterion (AIC)	Smaller the value better for model comparison	1664
Expected cross validation index (ECVI)	Smaller the value better for model comparison	3.01
Compa	rative Fit Indices	
Normed fit index (NFI)	> 0.95 for acceptance	.91
Incremental fit index (IFI)	> 0.95 for acceptance	.95
Comparative fit index (CFI)	> 0.95 for acceptance	.95
Parsim	onious Fit Indices	
Parsimony- adjusted NFI (PNFI)	Sensitive to model size	.85
Parsimony- adjusted GFI (PGFI)	Close to 1 shows better model fit	.89
O	ther Indices	
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	≥ 0.95 not generally recommended	.85
Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	≥ 0.95	.85
Root Mean Residual (RMR)	Smaller the better; 0 shows perfect fit.	.04
Standardised RMR (SRMR)	≥0.08	.03
Root Mean Square error of approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.06 to 0.08 with confidence interval	.04

#### **SECTION-3**

#### 4.3 TEST OF HYPOTHESES

After validating the measurement model and structural model through various indices, the researcher further proceeded with the testing of various postulated relationships in the study. To check the hypotheses, the researcher followed a two-step process. Firstly, to check the hypothesised direct effect and indirect effect the researcher relied on Path analysis using SEM and bootstrapping which provides standard errors and *t*-statistics of the proposed model (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Bootstrapping was performed with 5000 samples at 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). After examining the direct effect and indirect effect, the study proceeded with the test of various moderating hypotheses. The proposed moderating hypotheses were examined using Process Macros by Hayes (2013).

# **4.3.1** Hypotheses Test of Direct and Indirect Effects

The summated results of hypotheses testing of direct and indirect effects are presented in Table 4.3.1. The hypotheses were tested by examining the path coefficient and subsequently examining the p value and boot strapped bias-corrected confidence intervals.

# 4.3.1.1 Effect of Task Conflict on Employee Well-Being (H1)

In Hypothesis 1 the study postulated that "task conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being". From the inspection of estimates of the direct path between task conflict and employee well-being, it was found that the path coefficient is negative and the corresponding p-value is

statistically significant. This implies that the data supported the proposed hypothesis ( $\beta$ = -.102, SE =.05, p<.05, CI 95 [-.20, -.02]). Thus, the proposed hypothesis 1 is accepted which indicates that experience of task conflict is detrimental for employee well-being.

# 4.3.1.2 Effect of Relationship Conflict on Employee Well-Being (H2)

Hypothesis 2 stated that "relationship conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being". The estimates of the direct path linking relationship conflict and well-being is negative, and the corresponding p-value is within the statistical limits which implies that the data supports the proposed negative direct effect of relationship conflict on employee well-Being ( $\beta$ =-.370, SE =.05, p< .001, CI 95 [-.46, -.26]) and hence the hypothesis 2 is supported.

# **4.3.1.3** Effect of Process Conflict on Employee Well-Being (H3)

In hypothesis 3 it was hypothesised that "process conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being". The estimates of the direct path linking process conflict and employee well-being is found to be negative, and the corresponding p-value is significant at .01 level ( $\beta$ =-.304, SE =.05, p< .001, CI 95 [-.41, -.18]) which provides support for hypothesis 3 and is accepted. This finding establishes that process conflict is negatively related to employee well-being.

# 4.3.1.4 Effect of Task Conflict on Negative Affect State (H4)

In hypothesis 4 the researcher postulated that "task conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state". From the inspection of

estimates of the path linking task conflict and negative affect state, it was found that there is a significant positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state ( $\beta$ =.19, SE= .04, p<.001, CI 95 [.10, .27]). The data found support for the hypothesis and thus the hypothesis 4 is accepted. This finding indicates that task conflict at work increases negative affect state.

# 4.3.1.5 Effect of Relationship Conflict on Negative Affect State (H5)

In hypothesis 5 it was hypothesised that "relationship conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state". From the inspection of the estimates of the path linking relationship conflict and negative affect state it was found that the data support the proposed hypotheses and the corresponding p-value is statistically significant ( $\beta$ =.34, SE=.04, p<.001, CI 95 [.25, .41]) and thus the proposed hypothesis (H5) is accepted. This statistically significant relationship establishes that relationship conflict at work results in negative affect state.

# **4.3.1.6** Effect of Process Conflict on Negative Affect State (H6)

In hypothesis 6, the study hypothesised that "process conflict is positively related to negative affect state". The results indicate that the path coefficient of the path linking process conflict and negative affect state is statistically significant ( $\beta$ =.27, SE= .04, p<.001, CI 95 [.17, .36]) which supports the proposed hypothesis and hence the hypothesis (H6) is accepted. This statistically proves that process conflicts increase negative affect state.

# 4.3.1.7 Effect of Negative Affect State on Employee Well-being (H7)

Hypothesis 7 predicted that "negative affect state is negatively related to Employee Well-Being". The estimates of the path linking negative affect state and employee well-being is negative, and the p-value is significant at .000 level which provides support for the proposed hypothesis ( $\beta$ =-.38, p value< .001, CI95 [-.500,-.272]) and thus the proposed hypothesis (H7) is accepted. The finding establishes that negative affect state diminishes employee well-being.

# **4.3.2** Test of Mediation (H8 – H10)

From hypotheses 8 to 10 the study hypothesised the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being. Since, the study has found a significant relationship between independent variables, proposed mediating variable and dependent variable the study proceeded with the test of mediation hypotheses.

# 4.3.2.1 Mediating Role of Negative Affect State in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Employee Well-being.

In hypothesis 8 it was postulated that "negative affect state mediates the relationship between task conflict at work and employee well-being". From the inspection of estimates of the indirect effect table it was found that there is a significant indirect effect ( $\beta$ =-.072, SE =.02, p<.001, CI95 [-.118, -.037]) of task conflict on employee well-being through negative affect state. Thus the hypothesis 8 is accepted.

The result implies that negative affect state is a psychological or within individual mechanism linking task conflict and employee well-being. Also, with the presence of mediating variable the magnitude of the direct effect of task conflict on employee well-being has come down from  $\beta$ =-.102 to  $\beta$ =-.031 and become insignificant also, which indicates that negative affect state fully mediates the relationship between task conflict and employee well-being.

# 4.3.2.2 Mediating Role of Negative Affect State in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Employee Well-being.

In hypothesis 9 it was stated that "negative affect state mediates the relationship between relationship conflict at work and employee well-being". After examining the standardised direct effect and standardised indirect effect ( $\beta = -.130$ , SE =.02, p < .001, CI95 [-.186, -.085]) it was found that there is a significant indirect effect of Negative Affect state in the relationship between relationship conflict and employee well-being. Thus the hypothesis 9 is accepted.

Also, with the presence of the mediating variable, the magnitude of the direct path linking relationship conflict has diminished from  $\beta$ =-.371 to  $\beta$ =-.24 which clearly represents the mediating effect of negative affect state. However, the direct path is still significant which indicates the partial mediation existing between relationship conflict and employee well-being. This mediating effect of negative affect state implies that negative affective state is an adverse psychological mechanism through which relationship conflict diminishes employee well-being.

# 4.3.2.3 Mediating Role of Negative Affect State in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Employee Well-being.

Hypothesis 10 stated that "negative affect state mediates the relationship between process conflict at work and employee well-being" and after examining the standardised direct effect and standardised indirect effect it was found that the indirect effect ( $\beta = -.106$ , SE=.02, p<.001 CI95 [-.156, -.066]) is significant which leads to the acceptance of hypothesis 10.

Further from the analysis, it was found that though the magnitude of the direct effect of process conflict on employee well-being has come down from  $\beta$ =-.304 to  $\beta$ =-.20, the direct effect is still statistically significant which indicates the partial mediating effect of negative affect state in the relationship between process conflict and employee well-being. Like in the case of other types of conflict also negative affect state is an adverse psychological mechanism linking process conflict and employee well-being. Table 4.3.1 summarises the results of various tests of direct effect and indirect effect.

**Table 4.3.1 Direct effect and Mediation Analysis** 

Variables	Well-Being Direct effect (c)		Negat Affec (a)	ct			0		
	β		β		β		β		
Task Conflict	102*		0.19*	**	031 <sup>ns</sup>		072**	**	
Relationship Conflict	370**	370***		**	24*		130***		
Process Conflict	304**	*	0.27*	**	20*		106*	**	
Negative Affect	38***	×							
	Good	ness	of Fit I	ndice	es				
χ²	р	$\chi^{2/d.f}$		]	RMSEA		RMR	CFI	
1488	<.01	2	2.28		.04		.03	.95	

Notes: c = Direct effect without mediation; c = Direct effect with mediation; a= Direct effect between variable and mediating variable negative affect;  $\beta$  =standardized regression coefficient; \*p <.05; \*\*p <.01; \*\*\*p <.001; ns= non-significant; CFI=Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, SRMR= Standardized Root Mean Residual.

#### 4.3.3 Tests of Moderation

To test the proposed moderating hypotheses in the study, the researcher used the Process Macros in IBM SPSS developed by Hayes (2013). Process Macros is developed by Preacher and Hayes in 2013 which is a conditional process modelling program based on Ordinary Least Square (Hayes, 2013). Also, the process macro gives interactive effects using simple slopes (Hayes, 2013). Simple slopes provide the pictorial representation of the moderating variable's mean value, one above and below the mean value as conditional values of the moderator. Further to confirm results the researcher has performed a bootstrap analysis with 5000 samples at 95%

confidence intervals as suggested by Hayes and Matthes (2009); Preacher and Hayes (2008). The researcher used the Model 1 in *Process Macros* to check the various postulated moderating relationships. The following section provides the results of the hypotheses testing of various moderation hypotheses. Following the recommendation of Cohen et al. (2003), the mean centering of the continuous variables was done to avoid multi-collinearity issues. In addition following various empirical evidence, age and gender of the respondents were entered as control variables.

# **4.3.3.1** Moderating role of Perceived Social Support in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 11 it was hypothesised that "perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state; such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.2.

Table 4.3.2 Moderation Analysis of Perceived Social Support at Work in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	B*		SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2 = .16, p < .001$	NA						
Age	007		01	.67	< .001	014	.029
Gender	.12		06	1.82	.06	009	.262
Constant	2.18		26	8.21	<.001	1.65	2.70
TC	.27		.03	7.78	<.001	.20	.30
PSS	07		02	-2.68	<.001	12	01
TC× PSS	05		02	-2.06	.03	10	01
R	-square	incr	ease	due to in	teraction	(s):	
Interaction	$\mathbb{R}^2$		F	Df1		Df2	P
TC× PSS	.006		4.2	1.00		553	.03
Conditional I	Effect of	Tas	sk Co	nflict on	Negative	Affect Sta	te at
	Values	of I	Percei	ved Socia	al Suppor	rt	
PSS E	ffect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
-1.27	.33	.04	7.4	8 <.001	.24	.42	
.000	.27	.03	7.7	8 <.001	.20	.34	
1.27	.20	.05	4.0	8 <.001	.10	.30	

Notes: TC= Task Conflict (Independent variable); PSS=Perceived Social Support (Moderating Variable); NA= Negative Affect (Dependent Variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval.

The study found support for the overall model ( $r^2 = .16$ , p < .001) and for the moderating role of perceived social support at work in the relationship between task conflict and negative affect state ( $\beta = -.05$ ; SE = 0.02; p = .03; CI 95 [-.10, -.01]). Further the conditional effect of moderator

at different levels (perceived social support at high, mean + SD and low mean-SD) indicated that the positive effect of task conflict to increase negative affect state is stronger for those who reported lower perceived social support at work ( $\beta = .33$ ; SE = .04;, p < .001; CI 95 [0.24, 0.42]), compared to those who reported higher perceived social support at work ( $\beta = 0.20$ ; SE = 0.05;, p < .001; CI95 [0.10, 0.30]), and found to be significant at both the levels. Thus the data found support for hypothesis 11 and hence the hypothesis 11 accepted. The interaction pattern is shown in Figure 4.3.1.

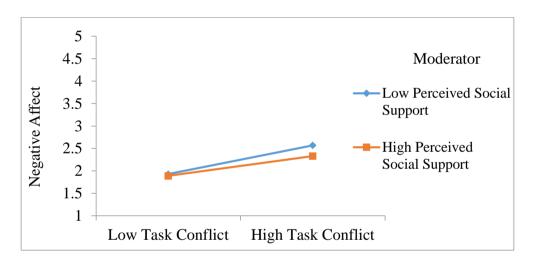


Figure 4.3.1 Perceived Social Support at Work as a Moderator of the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

# 4.3.3.2 Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 12 it was hypothesised that "perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.3. Though the overall model is found to be significant ( $R^2$ =.19; p<.001) the interaction effect (RC\* PSS) is found to be insignificant ( $\beta$  = .02; SE = .01;p= .14; CI 95 [-.01, .06]). Hence, the data failed to support the presumed relationship, and hence the hypothesis 12 is not accepted.

Table 4.3.3 Moderation Analysis of Perceived Social Support at Work in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	<b>B</b> *	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2$ =.19, $p$ <.001	NA					
Age	.10	.05	1.83	.06	001	.21
Gender	.11	.06	1.71	.08	01	.24
Constant	2.39	.13	17.29	<.001	2.11	2.66
RC	.25	.02	9.90	<.001	.20	.30
PSS	01	.03	36	.71	07	.05
RC×PSS	.02	.01	1.44	.14	01	.06

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: RC= Relationship Conflict (Independent variable); PSS=Perceived Social Support (Moderating Variable); NA= Negative Affect (Dependent Variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval.

### 4.3.3.3 Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 13 it was postulated that "perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work". The result of the moderation analysis is shown in Table 4.3.4.

Table 4.3.4 Moderation Analysis of Perceived Social Support in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	,	B*	SE	t	р	LLCI	UL	CI		
$R^2 = .18, p < .0$	001	NA								
Age		.002	.01	.24	.80	01		.02		
Gender		.09	.06	1.35	.17	04		22		
Constant		2.34	.26	8.91	<.001	1.82	2	.85		
PC		.33	.03	9.14	<.001	.26		.41		
PSS		08	.02	-3.34	<.001	13	-	.03		
PC× PSS	PC× PSS05 .02 -1.98 .0411						-	.01		
R-square increase due to interaction(s):										
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> C	hange		F	Df1	Df2	2	P		
PC× PSS		.006	,	3.92	1.00	553		.04		
Conditi	onal ef	fect of	Process (	Conflict o	n Negativ	e Affect sta	ate			
	at valu	es of F	<b>Perceived</b>	Social Su	pport at <b>\</b>	Work				
PSS	Effect	t s	e t	p	LLC	I ULC	I			
-1.27	.41	.05	7.92	<.001	.31	.52				
.00	.34	.03	9.18	<.001	.27	.41				
1.27	.26	.05	5.04	<.001	.09	.37				

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: PC= Process Conflict (Independent variable); PSS=Perceived Social Support (Moderating Variable); NA= Negative affect (Dependent Variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval.

The overall model is found to be significant ( $r^2 = .18$ ; p < .001) and also the data supported the moderating role of perceived social support at work in the relationship between process conflict and negative affect state of the individual ( $\beta = -0.05$ ; SE = 0.02; p = .04; CI 95 [-.11, -.01]). Upon further examination of levels of perceived social support (high and low), it was found that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect is stronger for employees who have reported lower levels of perceived social support ( $\beta = 0.41$ ; SE = 0.05; p < .001; CI 95 [.31, .52]) compared to those who have reported higher level of perceived social support ( $\beta = 0.26$ ; p < .001; SE = 0.05; CI 95 [.09, .37). Also, the conditional effect was found to be significant at different levels of perceived social support. Thus the study found support for hypothesis 13 and hence the hypothesis 13 is accepted. The interaction pattern is shown in Figure 4.3.2.

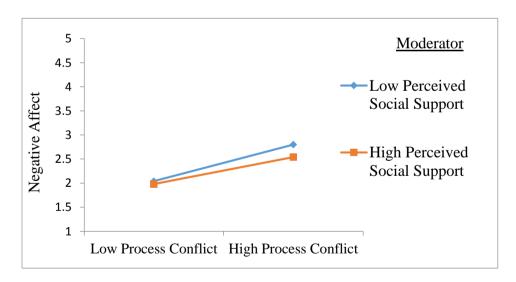


Figure 4.3.2 Perceived Social Support at Work as a Moderator of the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

### 4.3.3.4 Moderating Role of Avoiding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 14 it was hypothesised that "avoiding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state; such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.5.

Table 4.3.5 Moderation analysis of Avoiding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	B*	S	E	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2$ =.14, $p$ <.001	NA						
Age	.008	.0	1	.78	.43	01	.03
Gender	.11	.0	7	1.61	.10	02	.25
Constant	2.16	.2	6	8.09	<.001	1.63	2.68
TC	.28	.0.	3	8.23	<.001	.21	.35
Avoiding	004	.0.	3	12	.90	08	07
TC× Avoiding	.07	.0.	3	1.99	.04	.02	.14
	R-square	incre	ase du	e to inte	eraction(s):		•
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Change	!	F	D	f1	Df2	р
TC× Avoiding	.006		3.99	1.	00	553	.04
Conditional effect	of Task Cor	nflict (	on Neg	ative A	ffect state at	values of	Avoiding
Avoidi	ng Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
85	.22	.04	4.54	4 <.00	1 .12	.31	
.00	.28	.03	8.2	3 <.00	.21	.35	
.85	.35	.04	7.6	8 <.00	1 .26	.43	

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: TC= Task Conflict (Independent variable); NA= Negative Affect (Dependent Variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Moderating Variable- Avoiding.

The study found support for the overall model ( $R^2$ = .14; p< .001) and for the moderating role of avoiding conflict management style in the

relationship between task conflict and negative affect state ( $\beta = 0.07$ ; SE = 0.03; p < .001; CI 95 [.02, .16]). Further the conditional effect of moderator at different levels (avoiding at high, mean + SD and low, mean-SD) indicated that, the effect of task conflict to increase negative affect state of the individual is stronger for those who reported higher Avoiding conflict management style ( $\beta = .35$ ; SE = 0.04; p < .001; CI 95 [0.26, 0.43]), compared to those who reported lower avoiding conflict management style ( $\beta = 0.22$ ; SE = 0.04; p < .001; CI95 [0.12, 0.31]), and this is also found to be significant at both the levels. Thus the hypothesis 14 is accepted. The interaction pattern is shown in Figure 4.3.3.

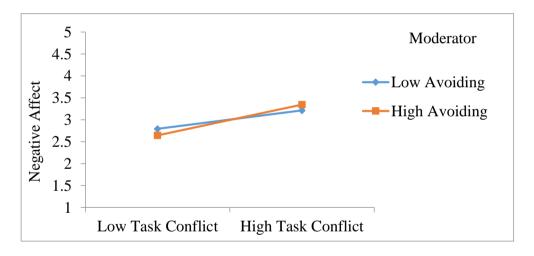


Figure 4.3.3 Avoiding Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

# 4.3.3.5 Moderating Role of Avoiding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 15 it was postulated that "avoiding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style". The result of the moderation analysis is shown in Table 4.3.6.

Table 4.3.6 Moderation Analysis of Avoiding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	B*	SE	t	р	LLCI	ULC				
$R^2$ =.20, $p$ <.001	NA									
Age	.004	.01	.43	.66	02	.01				
Gender	.11	.06	1.71	.08	0	1 .24				
Constant	2.49	.25	9.67	<.001	1.98	3.00				
RC	.25	.02	10.37	<.001	.20	.30				
Avoiding	.01	.03	-0.05	.95	0´	7 .07				
RC× Avoiding	.09	.02	3.26	<.001	.0.	3 .14				
R-square increase due to interaction(s):										
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Cha	nge	F	Df1	Df2	P				
RC× Avoiding	.01		10.64	1.00	553	<.001				
<b>Conditional effe</b>	ct of Rel	ationshi	p Confli	ct on Neg	ative Aff	fect state				
	at	values	of Avoid	ling						
Avoiding	Effect	se	t j	) LL	CI U	ULCI				
85	.18 .	03 5	.10 <.0	.1 .100	1	.25				
.00	.25 .	02 10	.37 <.0	001 .2	20	.30				
.85	.33 .	03 10	.05 <.0	001 .2	27	.40				

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: RC= Relationship Conflict (Independent variable); Confidence level =95%; SE-Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval; Dependent Variable- Negative affect; Moderating Variable- Avoiding.

The data found significance for the overall model ( $R^2$ =.20; p <.001) and for the moderating effect of avoiding conflict management style ( $\beta$  =.09; SE = 0.02; p <.001 CI 95 [.03, .14]). On further assessment, it was found that the positive effect of relationship conflict on negative affect is weaker for those who are low in avoiding conflict management style ( $\beta$  = .18; SE = 0.04; p <.001 CI 95 [.11, .25]) and stronger for those who are high in avoiding conflict management style ( $\beta$  = .33; SE = 0.03; p <.001; CI 95 [.27, .40]) and this relationship is found to be significant at different levels of avoiding conflict management style. Thus the hypothesis 15 is accepted. The interaction effect of avoiding conflict management style is shown in Figure 4.3.4.

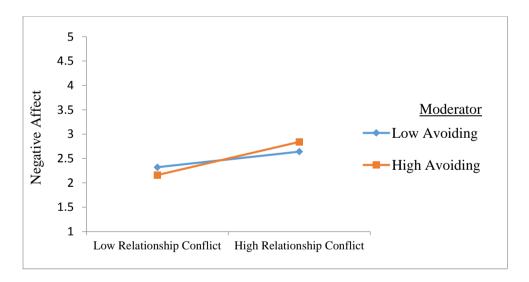


Figure 4.3.4 Avoiding Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

### **4.3.3.6** Moderating Role Avoiding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect state

Hypothesis 16 predicted that "avoiding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.7.

Table 4.3.7 Moderation analysis of Avoiding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	B*	SE	t	р	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2$ =.16, $p$ <.001	NA					
Age	.004	.01	.39	.69	01	.02
Gender	.08	.06	1.21	.22	05	.21
Constant	2.18	.03	64.51	<.001	2.11	2.24
PC	.33	.03	8.72	<.001	.26	.41
Avoiding	03	.03	76	.44	10	.04
PC× Avoiding	.08	.04	2.02	.04	.01	.17
	R-square	increas	e due to int	eraction(s)	) <b>:</b>	
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Change	e 1	F	Df1	Df2	P
PC× Avoiding	.006	4	4.11	1.00	553	.04
Conditional effect	of Process C	Conflict o	n Negative A	Affect state	at values of	Avoiding
Avoiding	Effect	se	t	р	LLCI	ULCI
85	.26	.05	4.48	<.001	.14	.37
.00	.33	.03	8.72	<.001	.26	.41
.85	.41	.04	8.70	<.001	.31	.50

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: PC- Process Conflict; Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Independent variable-Task conflict; Dependent Variable- Negative affect; Moderating Variable- Avoiding.

The overall model is found to be significant ( $R^2 = .14$ ; p < .001) and the analysis also found support for the positive moderating role of avoiding

conflict management style in the relationship between process conflict and negative affect state ( $\beta = 0.08$ ; SE = 0.04; p=.04; CI 95 [.01, .17). On further analysing the effect of avoiding conflict management style at different levels of moderating variable, it was found that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger for those who reported higher in avoiding conflict management style ( $\beta = 0.41$ ; SE = 0.04; p<.001; CI 95 [.31, .50]) compared to those who are low in avoiding conflict management style ( $\beta = 0.26$ ; SE = 0.05; p<.00; CI 95 [.14, .37]). Also, this conditional effect is found to be significant at different levels of avoiding conflict management style. Thus the hypothesis 16 is accepted. The moderating effect of avoiding conflict management style is shown in Figure 4.3.5.

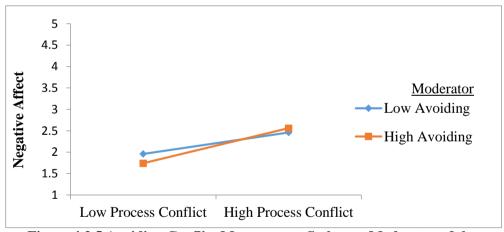


Figure 4.3.5 Avoiding Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

### 4.3.3.7 Moderating Role of Yielding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 17 it was postulated that "yielding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.". The moderation analysis of the hypothesised relationship is shown in Table 4.3.8.

Table 4.3.8 Moderation analysis of Yielding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect state

Predictor	<b>B</b> *	SE	t		р	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2 = .14, p < .001$	NA						
Age	.009	.01		87	.38	01	.03
Gender	.12	.06	1.	84	.06	008	.26
Constant	2.12	.26	8.	02	<.001	1.60	2.64
TC	.28	.03	8.	12	<.001	.21	.35
Yielding	08	.03	-2.	18	.02	15	008
TC× Yielding	.09	.03	2.	55	.01	.02	.16
	R-square	increas	e due t	o in	teraction	<b>n(s):</b>	
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Chan	ge	F	1	Df1	Df2	P
TC× Yielding	.01		6.53	1	1.00	553	.01
Conditional eff	ect of Ta	sk Conf	flict on	Ne	gative A	ffect state	at values
		of	Yieldir	ng			
Yielding	Effect	se	t	р	LL	CI UL	CI
89	.20	.05	3.95	<.0	01 .1	0	30
.00	.28	.03	8.12	<.00	01 .2	1 .3	35
.89	.37	.04	8.56	<.00	01 .2	8 .4	45

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: TC= Task Conflict (Independent variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Dependent Variable- Negative affect; Moderating Variable-Yielding.

The study find support for the overall model ( $R^2 = .14$ ; p < .001) and for the moderating role of yielding conflict management style in the relationship between task conflict and negative affect state ( $\beta = 0.09$ ; SE = 0.04; p = .01; CI 95 [.02, .16]). Further the conditional effect of moderator at different levels (Yielding at high mean + SD and low mean-SD) indicated that, the effect of task conflict to increase negative affect state of the individual is stronger for those who reported higher *yielding conflict management style*( $\beta = .37$ ; SE = 0.04; p < .001; CI 95 [0.28, 0.45]), compared to those who reported lower on yielding conflict management style ( $\beta = 0.20$ ; SE = 0.05; p < .001 C195 [0.10, 0.30]), and also found to be significant at both the levels. Thus the hypothesis 17 is accepted. The interaction effect of yielding conflict management style is shown in Figure 4.3.6.

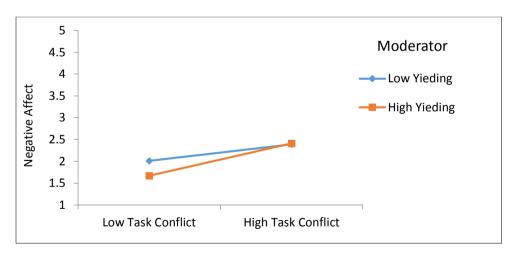


Figure 4.3.6 Yielding Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

# 4.3.3.8 Moderating Role of Yielding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 18, it was hypothesised that "yielding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style". The result of the moderation analysis is shown in Table 4.3.9.

Table 4.3.9 Moderation Analysis of Yielding Conflict Management Style in the relationship Between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	<b>B</b> *	SE	1	t	p I	LCI	ULCI			
$R^2$ =.20, $p$ <.001	NA									
Age	.004	.01	.40	) .6	58	02	.01			
Gender	.11	.06	1.67	).	)9	02	.01			
Constant	2.49	.25	9.69	<.00	)1	1.99	3.00			
RC	.25	.02	10.40	<.00	)1	.20	.30			
Yielding	02	.03	-0.40	) .5	51	09	.04			
RC× Yielding	.08	.02	3.15	<.00	)1	.03	.13			
R-square increase due to interaction(s):										
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Cha	nge	F	Df1	Df2		р			
RC× Yielding	.01		9.93	1.00	553		<.001			
Conditional effect	of Relation	ship C	onflict o	n Nega	tive Affec	t state	at values			
		of Y	Yielding							
Yielding	Effect	se	t	р	LLCI	UL	CI			
89	.18	.03	5.31	<.001	.11	.4	25			
.00	.25	.02	10.40	<.001	.20	.3	30			
.89	.33	.03	9.98	<.001	.26	.3	39			

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

**Notes:** RC= Relationship Conflict (Independent variable); Confidence level =95%; SE-Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Dependent Variable- Negative affect; Moderating Variable- Yielding.

Examination of the results found support for the overall model significance ( $R^2$ = .20, p<.001) and for the interaction effect of (RC\*Yielding) ( $\beta$  = 0.08; SE = 0.02; p<.001; CI 95 [.03, .13]). On further examination of conditional effect of yielding conflict management style at different levels, it was found that the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect is stronger for those who are high in yielding conflict management style ( $\beta$  = 0.33; SE = 0.03, p<.001; CI 95 [.26, .39]), compared to those who are low in yielding conflict management style ( $\beta$  = 0.18; SE = 0.04; p<.001; CI 95 [.11, .25]) and this relationship is found to be significant at different levels. Hence, the hypothesis 18 is accepted. The moderating effect of yielding conflict management style is shown in Figure 4.3.7.

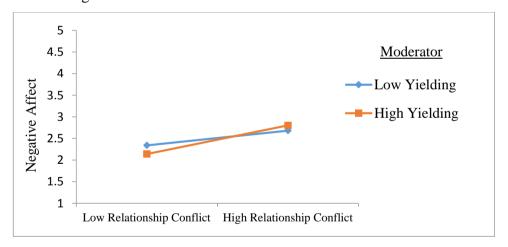


Figure 4.3.7 Yielding Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

### **4.3.3.9** Moderating Role of Yielding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 19 it was postulated that "yielding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.10.

Table 4.3.10 Moderation Analysis of Yielding Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect state

Predictor	B*	SE	t	р	LLCI	ULCI				
$R^2$ =.16, $p$ <.001	NA									
Age	.002	.01	.21	.83	01	.02				
Gender	.10	.06	1.49	.13	03	.23				
Constant	2.34	.26	8.96	<.001	1.83	2.86				
PC	.34	.03	8.97	<.001	.26	.41				
Yielding	05	.03	-1.58	.11	13	.01				
PC× Yielding	.10	.04	2.28	.02	.01	.19				
	R-square	increase d	ue to int	eraction(s)	):					
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Cha	inge	F	Df1	Df2	р				
PC× Yielding	.00	7	5.21	1.00	553	.02				
Conditional effect of Process Conflict on Negative Affect state at values of										
Yielding										
Violding	Effort	co 1	n	TIC	I III CI	Ī				

				•			
Yielding	<b>Effect</b>	se	t	р	LLCI	ULCI	
89	.24	.06	4.11	<.001	.13	.36	
.00	.34	.03	8.97	<.001	.26	.41	
.89	.43	.05	8.56	<.001	.33	.53	

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: PC= Process Conflict (Independent variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Dependent Variable- Negative affect; Moderating Variable- Yielding.

The results of the moderation analysis found that the overall model is significant ( $R^2$ =.16, p<.001) and found support for the hypothesised positive moderating role of yielding conflict management style ( $\beta$  = .10; SE = 0.04, p =.02, CI 95 [.01, .19]). Further analysis revealed that the positive effect of process conflict on negative affect is stronger for those who are high in yielding conflict management style ( $\beta$  = 0.43; SE = 0.05;, p<.001; CI 95 [.33, .53]) compared to those who are low in yielding conflict management style ( $\beta$  = 0.24; SE = 0.06; p<.001 CI 95 [.13, .36]). It was also found that this conditional effect is significant at different levels of moderators. Hence, the hypothesis 19 is accepted. The interaction effect of yielding conflict management style is shown in Figure 4.3.8.

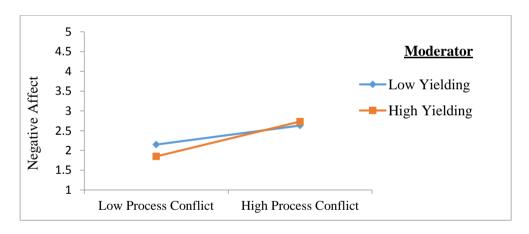


Figure 4.3.8 Yielding Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Process conflict and Negative Affect State

### **4.3.3.10** Moderating Role of Forcing Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 20, it was postulated that "forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in forcing conflict management style". The result of the moderation analysis is shown in Table 4.3.11.

Table 4.3.11 Moderation Analysis of Forcing Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	B*	SE	t	р	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2$ =.16, $p$ <.001	NA					
Age	.007	.01	.66	.50	01	.02
Gender	.12	.06	1.82	.06	009	.261
Constant	2.18	.26	8.27	<.001	.66	2.70
TC	.30	.03	8.73	<.001	.23	.37
Forcing	11	.02	-3.84	<.001	16	05
TC× Forcing	.01	.03	.34	.73	04	.06

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: Bootstrap Samples = 5000; TC= Task Conflict; NA= Negative Affect Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Independent variable-Task conflict; Dependent Variable-Negative affect; Moderating Variable-Forcing.

Though the overall model is found to be significant ( $R^2$ =.13, p<.001), the data failed to find support for the interaction effect of forcing conflict management style in the relationship between task conflict and negative affect state ( $\beta = 0.01$ ; SE = 0.03; p=.73; CI 95 [-04, .06]). Hence, the hypothesis 20 is not accepted.

#### 4.3.3.11 Moderating Role of Forcing Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

Hypothesis 21 postulated that "forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in forcing conflict management style". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.12.

Table 4.3.12 Moderation Analysis of Forcing Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	В	* S	SE .		t	р	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2$ =.22, $p$ <.001	N	A						
Age	0	05	.01		54	.58	02	.01
Gender	.1	1	.06		1.80	.07	01	.25
Constant	2.5	2	.25		9.92	<.001	2.02	3.02
RC	.2	5	.02		10.38	<.001	.20	.30
Forcing	0	6	.02		-2.24	.02	11	.01
RC× Forcing	.0	8	.02		4.30	<.001	.04	.13
	R-squ	are incre	ase dı	ue t	o interac	tion(s):		
Interaction		R <sup>2</sup> Chang	e	F	Df	1	Df2	р
RC× Forcing		.02		18.	.54	1.00	553	<.001
Conditi	ional eff	ect of RC	on N	IA s	state at v	alues of	Forcing	
Forcing I	Effect	se	1	t	р	LI	<b>.CI</b>	ULCI
-1.16	.15	.03	4.3	38	<.00	1 .(	)8	.22
.00	.25	.02	10.	38	<.00	1 .2	20	.30
1.16	.36	.03	10.	45	<.00	1 .2	29	.42

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: RC= Relationship Conflict; Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI-Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Independent variable-Relationship Conflict; Dependent Variable- Negative affect; Moderating Variable-Forcing

Results found support for the significance of overall model ( $R^2$ = .22, p<.001) and for the moderating effect of forcing conflict management style ( $\beta$  = 0.08; SE = 0.02; p<.001; CI 95 [.04, .13]). However, contrary to the prediction, it was found that forcing conflict management style **amplifies** the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state. Upon a closer evaluation of the conditional effect of forcing conflict management style, it was found that the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect is stronger for those who are high in forcing conflict management style ( $\beta$  = 0.36; SE = 0.03; p<.001; CI 95 [.29, .42]) compared to those who are low in forcing conflict management style ( $\beta$  = 0.15; SE = 0.03; p<.001; CI 95 [.08, .22]). Since the result of the hypothesis test is contrary to the prediction, hypothesis 21 is not accepted. The interaction effect is shown in Figure 4.3.9.

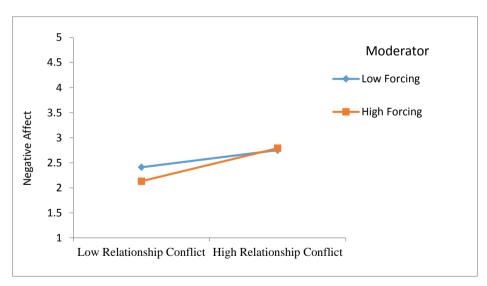


Figure 4.3.9 Forcing Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

### 4.3.3.12 Moderating Role of Forcing Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

Hypothesis 22 postulated that "forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in forcing conflict management style". Though the result found significance for the overall model ( $R^2$ = .17, P<.001), the data failed to find support for the moderating effect of forcing conflict management style ( $\beta$ =-.007; SE = 0.03; p=.79 C195 [-06, .05]). Hence, the hypothesis 22 is not accepted. The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.13.

Table 4.3.13 Moderation Analysis of Forcing Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	B*	SE	t	р	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2 = .17, p < .001$	1 NA					
Age	.002	.01	.19	.84	01	.02
Gender	.09	.06	1.34	.17	04	.22
Constant	2.35	.26	8.97	<.001	1.84	2.87
PC	.34	.03	9.27	<.001	.27	.41
Forcing	08	.02	-2.84	.004	13	.02
PC× Forcing	007	.03	25	.79	06	.05

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: PC= Process Conflict (Independent variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Dependent Variable- Negative affect; Moderating Variable- Forcing.

#### 4.3.3.13. Moderating Role of Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 23 it was postulated that "problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.14.

Table 4.3.14 Moderation Analysis of Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	B*	SE		t	р	LLCI	ULCI
$R^2$ =.18, $p$ <.001	NA						
Age	.009	.01		.86	.38	01	.03
Gender	.12	.06	1.	.88	.05	005	.26
Constant	2.15	.26	8.	.22	<.001	1.63	2.66
TC	.29	.03	8.	.79	<.001	.23	.36
PS	14	.03	-4.	.75	<.001	20	08
$TC \times PS$	09	.03	-2.	.97	.003	15	03
	R-square i	ncrease	due to	inte	raction(s	) <b>:</b>	
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Cha	ange	F		Df1	Df2	р
$TC \times PS$	.01		8.86 1.00		1.00	553	.003
Conditional e	ffect of TC	on NA	state a	t va	lues of P	roblem-S	olving
PS Eff	fect	se	t		<b>p</b> .	LLCI	ULCI
-1.12 .40	)	.04	8.26		<.001	.30	.50
.00 .29	1	.03	8.79	<	<.001	.23	.36
1.12 .19		.04	3.90	•	<.001	.09	.29

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: TC= Task Conflict (Independent variable); PS= Problem-Solving conflict management style (Moderating Variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Dependent Variable- Negative affect.

The study find support for the overall model ( $R^2$ =.19; p<.001) and for the moderating effect of problem-solving conflict management style ( $\beta$  = -0.09; SE = 0.03, p= .003 CI 95 [-.15, -.03]). The analysis of the conditional effect of moderator at different levels (problem-solving at high mean + SD and low mean- SD) indicated that, the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, is stronger for those who reported lower problem-solving conflict management style ( $\beta$  = .40; SE = 0.04, p <.001, CI 95 [0.30, 0.50]), compared to those who reported higher problem-solving conflict management style( $\beta$  =0.19; SE = 0.05, p <.001, CI95 [0.09, 0.29]), and also found to be significant at both the levels. Hence, the hypothesis 23 is accepted. The interaction effect of problem solving conflict management style is shown in Figure 4.3.10.

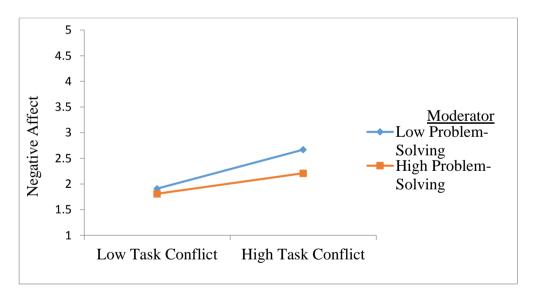


Figure 4.3.10 Problem-solving Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

## 4.3.3.14 Moderating Role of Problem-solving Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect state

In hypothesis 24 the study postulated stated that "problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style". The results of the moderation analysis are shown in Table 4.3.15.

Table 4.3.15 Moderation Analysis of Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor		B*	SE		t	р	LLCI	ULC	'I
$R^2 = .19, p < .001$	1	NA							
Age	0.	003	.01		.28	.77	01	.02	
Gender		.07	.06		1.12	.25	05	.20	
Constant	2	.35	.11	20	0.05	<.001	2.12	2.58	
RC		.25	.02	Ç	9.92	<.001	.20	.30	
PS		.06	.03	-2	2.09	.03	12	02	
RC× PS		.04	.02	-2	2.20	.02	13	02	
	R-squ	ıare inc	rease d	ue to ir	ntera	ction(s):			
Interaction	R <sup>2</sup> Cha	nge	I	7		Df1		Df2	p
RC× PS	.00	7	4.3	87		1.00		553	
Condition	Conditional effect of RC on NA state at values of Problem-Solving								
PS	Effect	SE	t		р	L	LCI	ULCI	
-1.12	.30	.03	8	3.55	<.0	01	.23	.37	
.00	.25	.02	9	.92	<.0	01	.20	.30	
1.12	.19	.03	5	.43	<.0	01	.12	.26	

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: RC= Relationship Conflict (Independent variable); PS= Problem-Solving conflict management style (Moderating Variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI- Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Dependent Variable- Negative affect.

The analysis found support for the significance of the overall model ( $R^2 = .19$ ; p < .001) and also for the negative interaction effect of problem-solving conflict management style ( $\beta = -0.04$ ; SE = 0.02; p = .02; CI 95 [-.13, -.02]). On further evaluation of the conditional effect of moderator at different levels in the relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, it was found that the positive effect of relationship conflict on negative affect is stronger for employees who are lower in problem-solving style ( $\beta = 0.30$ ; SE = 0.03; p < .001; CI 95 [.23, .37]) compared to those who are higher in problem solving Style ( $\beta = 0.19$ ; SE = 0.03; p < .001 CI 95 [.12, .36]). Thus the data found support for the moderating role of problem-solving style. Hence, the hypothesis 24 is accepted. Figure 4.3.11 exhibits the interaction effect of the problem-solving conflict management style in the relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state.

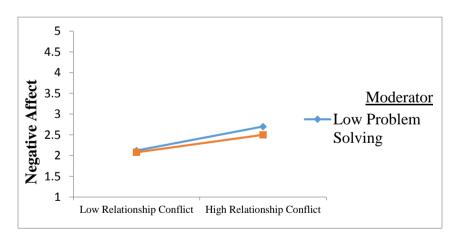


Figure 4.3.11 Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

# 4.3.3.15 Moderating Role of Problem-solving Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

Hypothesis 25 postulated that "problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.". The result of the moderation analysis is shown in Table 4.3.16.

Table 4.3.16 Moderation Analysis of Problem-Solving Conflict Management Style in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

Predictor	<b>B</b> *		SE		t	р	LLCI	U	LCI
$R^2 = .19, p < .001$	NA								
Age	.003	3	.01		.28	.77	01		02
Gender	.0	7	.06		1.12	.25	05		20
Constant	2.18	3	.03	6	5.58	<.001	2.12	2	.25
PC	.30	5	.03		9.77	<.001	.29		.44
PS	12	2	.02	-4	4.22	<.001	18	-	.06
PC× PS	07	7	.03	-2	2.06	.03	14	-	.02
	R-square	incr	ease du	ie to	intera	action(s):			
<b>Interaction</b> R <sup>2</sup> Char				F		Df1	Df	2	р
PC× Yielding	.006		4	.26		1.00	553	3	.03
Conditional e	ffect of P	C on	NA sta	ate a	t valu	es of Pro	oblem-Sc	lvii	ıg
PS I	Effect	se	t		p	LLC	l UL	CI	
-1.12	.45	.05	7.	.61	<.00	1 .33	3 .5	6	
.00	.36	.03	9.	.77	<.00	1 .29	.4	4	
1.12	.28	.05	5.	49	<.00	1 .18	3 .3	8	

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis

Notes: PC= Process Conflict (Independent variable); PS= Problem-Solving conflict management style (Moderating Variable); Confidence level =95%; SE- Standard error; LLCI-Lower level of confidence interval; ULCI- Upper level of confidence interval. Dependent Variable- Negative affect

The analysis found support for the significance of overall model  $(R^2 = .19; p < .001)$  and also for the negative interaction effect of problem solving conflict management style  $(\beta = -0.07; SE = 0.03; p = .03; CI 95 [-.14, -.02])$ . On further evaluation of the conditional effect of moderator at different levels of problem-solving conflict management style, it was found that the positive effect of process conflict on negative affect is stronger for employees who are lower in problem solving style  $(\beta = 0.45; SE = 0.05; p < .001; CI 95 [.33, .56])$  compared to those who are higher in problem solving style  $(\beta = 0.28; SE = 0.05; p < .001; CI 95 [.18, .38])$ . Thus the data found support for the moderating role of problem solving style. Hence, the hypothesis 25 is accepted. The interaction effect of problem-solving conflict management style in the relationship between process conflict and negative affect is shown in Figure 4.3.12.

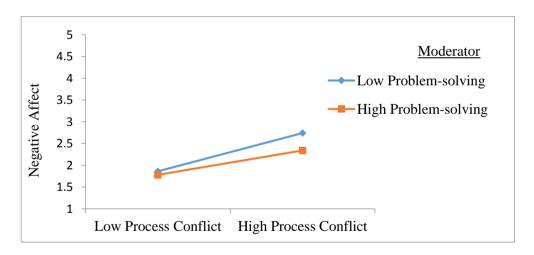


Figure 4.3.12 Problem-solving Conflict Management Style as a Moderator of the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

#### 4.3.4 Summary of Hypotheses Testing

The following table summarises the results of the various hypotheses test. The study finds support for the majority of the assumptions. However, the study did not find support for 4 assumptions and result of one hypothesis test was in contradictory to the assumption developed by the researcher. (Hypothesis 21- Moderating role of forcing conflict management style in the relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state).

**Table 4.3.17 Summary of Hypotheses Test** 

SL.No	Hypotheses	Results
1.	Task conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.	Accepted
2.	Relationship conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.	Accepted
3.	Process conflict at work is negatively related to employee well-being.	Accepted
4	Task conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.	Accepted
5	Relationship conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.	Accepted
6	Process conflict at work is positively related to negative affect state.	Accepted
7	Negative affect state is inversely related to employee well-being.	Accepted
8	Negative affect state mediates the relationship between task conflict and employee well-being.	Accepted
9	Negative affect state mediates the relationship between relationship conflict and employee well-being.	Accepted
10	Negative affect state mediates the relationship between process conflict and employee well-being.	Accepted

11	Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work.	Accepted
12	Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work.	Not Accepted
13	Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who have lower (higher) perceived social support at work.	Accepted
14	Avoiding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.	Accepted
15	Avoiding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.	Accepted
16	Avoiding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in avoiding conflict management style.	Accepted

17	Yielding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.	Accepted
18	Yielding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in forcing conflict management style.	Accepted
19	Yielding conflict management style positively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are high (low) in yielding conflict management style.	Accepted
20	Forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in forcing conflict management style.	Not Accepted
21	Forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in forcing conflict management style.	Not Accepted
22	Forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in forcing conflict management style.	Not Accepted

23	Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.	Accepted
24	Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.	Accepted
25	Problem-solving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state, such that, the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state is stronger (weaker) for those who are low (high) in problem-solving conflict management style.	Accepted

Source: Compiled from the results of data analysis



#### FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the findings, theoretical and managerial implications and contributions of the study to the existing body of knowledge. The chapter also puts in record the significant limitations of the study and suggests directions for future research.

#### 5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are summarised here and discussed in detail in the succeeding sections.

- The study established that different types of conflicts, regardless of types (task, relationship and process conflicts), are detrimental to employee well-being. This adverse impact of different types of conflict on well-being is found to be stronger for relationship conflict, followed by process conflict and task conflict.
- Task, relationship and process conflicts are perceived as adverse
  work events and result in negative affect state within the individual.
  This positive relationship between conflict types and negative affect
  is stronger for relationship conflict, followed by process conflict and
  task conflict.
- Negative affect state is inversely related to employee well-being.
- Negative affect state fully mediates the relationship between task

conflict and employee well-being and partially mediates the relationship between relationship, process conflicts and employee well-being. Thus, the study established that negative affect state is a psychological mechanism linking different types of conflict and employee well-being.

- Perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between task, process conflicts and negative affect. The study did not find support for the moderating role of perceived social support at work in the relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state.
- Passive conflict management styles such as avoiding and yielding were found to amplify the positive relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state.
- The study did not find support for the moderating role of forcing conflict management style in the relationship between task, process conflicts and negative affect state. However, contrary to the assumption, it was found that forcing conflict management style amplifies the positive association between relationship conflict and negative affect state.
- Problem-solving conflict management style is found to be the most effective conflict management style as it is found to diminish the positive relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state.

#### 5.2 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO HYPOTHESES

#### 5.2.1 Effect of Conflict Types on Employee Well-being

One of the primary objectives of the present study was to examine the relationship between different types of conflict at work and employee well-being. The study has predicted from hypotheses 1-3 that various types of conflict at the workplace, such as task conflict, relationship conflict and process conflict, negatively influence employee well-being.

The study found support for the hypothesised inverse relationship between different types of conflict (task, relationship and process conflicts) and employee well-being. The findings of this study are in line with the existing studies which examined the effect of workplace conflict on employee well-being using a general measure of conflict (Dijkstra et al., 2005; Eatough, 2010; Giebels & Janssen, 2005; Sonnentag et al., 2013). Conflict is considered as a major stressor at workplace and experience of conflict results in strain among employees (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; de Wit et al., 2012; Dijkstra et al., 2005). The findings of the study can be theoretically explained and supported by various theoretical models such as Stressor- strain theory, Job- Demands Resource theory (Demerouti et al., 2001) and Transactional theory of stress (Lazarus, 1990).

The findings of the study corroborate the findings of Engers (1995), who had established that experience of conflict is considered as the major reason for employee's poor mental health. The study has included three types of conflict and has empirically established that irrespective of types, conflict reduces employee well-being. Thus the findings of the present study

corroborate the existing knowledge that conflict is a threat to individual satisfaction, well-being and increase psycho-somatic complaints, burnout and fatigue (De Dreu et al., 2001, Spector & Jex, 1998). The findings also add to the existing knowledge that the detrimental impact of conflict applies to different types of conflicts also. This fills one of the major gaps in the conflict literature, which rarely distinguished between conflict types (Shaukat et al., 2017; Sonnentag et al., 2013).

#### 5.2.1.1 Effect of Task Conflict on Employee Well-being

In hypothesis 1, the study has postulated that task conflict is detrimental to employee well-being and the study found support for this assumption. The findings of the study are in line with findings of previous studies which have established that task conflict impairs well-being (Meier et al., 2013; Sonnentag et al., 2013). However, those studies which have established that task conflicts are detrimental to employee well-being have included process conflict-related issues also in their measures (Dijkstra et al., 2012; Guerra et al., 2005). In the present study, following several empirical pieces of evidence which have stated that task conflict and process conflict are distinct, the study has differentiated between task and process conflict. Thus, the study empirically established that task conflict over the goals of the task is also detrimental to employee well-being. Experience of task conflict distracts employees from the task at hand and impairs task accomplishment. When employees are unable to finish the task properly, they feel lower wellbeing (Crawford et al., 2010; De Lange et al., 2003). Though few researchers have stated that task conflicts are beneficial for well-being, the finding of the present study indicates that this proposition does not stand, at least for the well-being (Pondy, 1992; Meier et al., 2013). In line with that, the present study also established that task conflicts at the workplace diminish employee well-being.

#### 5.2.1.2 Effect of Relationship Conflict on Employee Well-being

In hypothesis 2, the study has postulated that relationship conflict is detrimental to employee well-being. The data supported the hypothesis and established the inverse relationship between relationship conflict and employee well-being. The study adds to the existing line of studies which have established the detrimental impact of relationship conflict at work on various levels of outcomes (De Dreu et al., 2004; Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Dijkstra et al., 2005; Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018; Medina et al., 2005; Shaukat et al., 2017; Sonnentag et al., 2013). This finding is in line with the previous research findings which have established an inverse relationship between relationship conflict and employee well-being (Meier et al., 2013; Sonnentag et al., 2013). When people experience relationship conflict, they cut their social ties and loss of social relationships at work adversely influence feelings of wellness and diminish their well-being. This finding indicates that relationship rift at the workplace has serious impacts on employee well-being. Since relationships are the lifeblood of organisation, relationship conflicts are deleterious for individual well-being (Ren & Gray, 2009).

#### 5.2.1.3 Effect of Process Conflict on Employee Well-being

In hypothesis 3, the study stated that process conflict is negatively related to employee well-being and the data supported the hypothesis. Further, the study also established that process conflicts are a distinct type of conflict different from that of task conflict and impair employee well-being. One major reason for process conflict to negatively relate to well-being could be the personal connotations associated with process conflict. Issues concerned with process conflicts are related to personal skills and abilities (Greer & Jehn, 2007) which may negatively influence the perception of their well-being. Process conflicts over the distribution of resources and responsibilities (Greer et al., 2011), make them negative and perceive lower well-being. Compared to other types of conflicts, process conflicts are long lasting (Greer et al., 2008) which also influence their well-being adversely. Process conflict elicits negative feelings, such as tasks and responsibilities delegated to the individual are not being on par with his/ her abilities and others being unfair in delegating resources, increases unpleasantness at work and reduces their perception of well-being. Though a few studies have established the detrimental role of process conflict on performance, the number of studies which have examined the effect of process conflict on employee well-being are scarce, and this study adds to the understanding about the detrimental effect of process conflict on employee well-being.

## **5.2.1.4** Conclusions Related to the Direct Effect of Conflict Types on Employee Well-Being

The study examined whether conclusions based on a general measure of workplace conflict hold for different types of conflict also. The study established that disagreements and dissimilarities among employees, whether it is over the task, process or relationship issues, adversely influence the perception of their well-being. The findings of the study provide insights into the impact of different types of conflict on employee well-being. Further, regarding the magnitude of the negative impact of types of conflict on well-being, relationship conflict poses a major threat to well-being followed by process conflict and task conflict. Since, the sample represents a collectivist society where social harmony and social connectedness are valued (Chen, Chen, & Meindl, 1998), and relationship conflicts are a threat to these core values, it is logical for relationship conflict to have a more damaging impact on employee well-being. In brief, the study establishes that conflict in any form is detrimental, as it makes the work environment uncomfortable and diminishes well-being (Kabanoff, 1991; Jehn et al., 1997).

#### **5.2.2** Conflict Types and Negative Affect State

Building on Affective events theory and several empirical evidence linking conflict to various adverse psychological outcomes (Volmer, 2015; Volmer et al., 2012; Illies et al., 2011), it was predicted that different types of conflicts are adverse work events resulting in negative affect state. The study supported these assumptions and findings are in line with the previous empirical studies which have established that hassles at work in general and

more specifically, conflicts at work increase negative affect state (e.g., Vittengl & Holt, 1998; Zohar, 1999). It is logical to justify this finding as the conflict itself is inherently unpleasant and results in negative affect (Suls, Martin & David, 1998; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Conflict at work which is associated with arguments (Clark & Watson, 1988; Vittengl & Holt, 1998) and interpersonal frustration (Buunk & Verhoeven, 1991; Peeters et al., 1995) results in negative affect state. Adding to such empirical pieces of evidence, the present study established that task, relationship and process conflicts result in negative affect state.

#### 5.2.2.1 Effect of Task Conflict on Negative Affect State

The study found support for hypothesis 4 which stated that task conflict is positively related to negative affect state. Individuals consider task conflicts as a challenge to their strongly held views as a negative assessment by others and have a debilitating effect. Employees consider task conflicts as personally stressful and increase intra-personal strain. De Wit et al. (2012), stated that task conflicts are negatively related to satisfaction, commitment, trust and organisation citizenship behaviour. These negative effects of task conflict make individuals negative and elicit negative affect state. Though task conflict is related to task issues, when employees work together it is risky to have disagreements with each other and oppositions to existing ideas and viewpoints (e.g., Edmondson, 1999; Morrison, Wheeler-Smith & Kamdar, 2011), lead to tension and negative emotions (e.g., Langfred, 2007). Task conflict interferes with the cognitive processes required to process information and such hindrance (Jehn et al., 2008)

results in frustration and dissatisfaction and increases negative affect state. Employees perceive task conflicts as a hindrance to goal achievement and increase frustration. Thus it is logical to conclude the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state.

## 5.2.2.2 Effect of Relationship Conflict on Negative Affect State

Various studies have established the adverse effect of relationship conflict on various levels of outcomes (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018; Meier et al., 2013; Shaukat et al., 2017). Researchers unanimously agreed that relationship conflict should be avoided, as it is considered as a negative work event. Adding to such empirical findings the present study also established that relationship conflict is considered as a negative work event resulting in negative affect state within the individual. Since relationship conflict reduces the relationship harmony among employees and increases loneliness, social detachment and various adverse psychological issues result in various negative affective states. This result is in line with previous research findings which have established a positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state (Volmer, 2015; Volmer et al., 2012). Thus the present study also adds to the affective events theory that relationship conflicts are also considered as adverse work events and result in negative affect state within the individual.

## **5.2.2.3** Effect of Process conflict on Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 6, the study has postulated that process conflicts are positively related to negative affect state and the study supported this assumption. This finding is in agreement with the previous study which has

established that process conflict results in negative affect state (e.g. Greer & Jehn, 2007). Process conflict is considered as the most long-lasting form of conflict among employees in the organisation (Greer & Jehn, 2007). Process conflict issues are associated with the perception of justice and equity in the workplace and evoke negative emotions such as guilt and hatred. Adding to this empirical evidence and building on affective events theory, the present study also established that process conflicts are considered as adverse work events resulting in negative affect state. Another reason for process conflict to increase negative affect state is that process conflicts raise concerns about self-competency and efficiency.

# 5.2.2.4 Conclusions Regarding the Effect of Conflict Types on Negative Affect State.

The findings of the study are parallel to the various studies in the workplace conflict domain which used a general measure of conflict (Bolger et al., 1989; Ilies et al., 2011, Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Also, Frone (2000), in his studies established a positive correlation between the average level of self-reported interpersonal conflict and negative emotion. Compared to other stressors at the workplace, it had been established in the studies of Vittengal and Holt (2000) and Zohar (1999) that conflicts have a more strong effect on negative affect state.

Though conflict, regardless of type (task conflict, relationship conflict and process conflict), increases negative affective states, this positive relationship is stronger for relationship conflict followed by process conflict and task conflict. Harmonious and positive relationships are

considered as a basic need (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and are vital for healthy human functioning (Bronfenbrenner 1986; Fyson 1999; Royal & Rossi, 1996) and such necessities when not being met, increases negative affective states within the individual. The stronger relationship between relationship conflict and negative affective state could be due to a high linkage of relationship conflict with intra-individual factors such as sense of self, identity feeling (Janssen et al., 1999; Jehn, 1995) and self–esteem (Lazarus,1999). Relationship conflict is considered as ego-threatening which increases disgust, anger and fear (Frone, 2000). Hence, relationship conflict is likely to result in high negative affective states among employees than other types of conflict, such as task conflict and process conflict.

## 5.2.3 Effect of Negative Affect State on Employee Well-being

In hypothesis 7, the study has hypothesised that negative affect state is inversely related to employee well-being. The finding of the study established the inverse relationship between negative affect state and well-being of the employees. The findings are in line with previous studies which have established an inverse relationship between negative affect and well-being (Consedine et al., 2002; Leventhal, Hansell, Difenbach, 1996; Pressman, Gallagher & Lopez, 2013). The findings of the study add to the existing knowledge about the deleterious effect of negative affect state on individual well-being. Various studies have established this inverse relationship (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). The study corroborated the previous findings and established that negative affect state diminishes employee well-being.

### **5.2.4** Mediating Role of Negative Affect State

Drawing from affective events theory (Weis & Cropanzano, 1996) and incorporating this into workplace-conflict context, the study has postulated the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between different types of conflict and employee well-being. The study has found support for the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between task, relationship and process conflicts and employee well-being. This finding corroborates the previous research findings (e.g., Kelloway et al., 1993; Penney & Spector, 2005) and affective events theory, which established that affective states of the individual are a mechanism through which various workplace events influence various levels of outcomes. Since the study has focused on the effect of conflict types on well-being through negative affect state which is an adverse state of mind, negative affect state can be considered as an intra-personal mechanism linking conflict types and employee well-being.

## 5.2.4.1 Mediating Role of Negative Affect State in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Employee Well-being.

In hypothesis 8, the study has postulated that negative affect state mediates the relationship between task conflict and employee well-being. The study has established that negative affect state fully mediates the relationship between task conflict and employee well-being. This finding establishes that negative affect state fully transmits the effect of task conflict on employee well-being. This finding indicates that task conflict increases negative affect states and such negative affect states adversely influence

their well-being. This finding suggests that negative affect state has a predominant role in the relationship between task conflict and employee well-being. This finding indicates that if negative affect state due to task conflict can be reduced, the detrimental effect of task conflict could be reduced as well, and the possibility could arise for task conflict actually to enhance employee well-being. This finding supports the assumption of AET and several empirical evidences that affective state mediates the relationship between different work events and its outcomes.

# 5.2.4.2 Mediating Role of Negative Affect State in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Employee Well-being

In hypothesis 9, the study hypothesised that negative affect state mediates the relationship between relationship conflict and employee well-being. The study found support for the hypothesis and results established that negative affect state partially mediates the relationship. The reason for partial mediation may account for other factors or mechanisms which are outside the scope of this research. However, the partial mediation suggests that negative affect state transmits the effect of relationship conflict on employee well-being. This finding also corroborates our hypothesis that when employees experience relationship conflict, they experience negative affective states and such negative affect state adversely influences their perception of well-being.

# 5.2.4.3 Mediating Role of Negative Affect State in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Employee Well-being.

In hypothesis 10, the study has postulated that negative affect state mediates the relationship between process conflict and employee well-being. The results supported this hypothesis and established the partial mediating effect of negative affect state. The finding is in line with previous studies which have established the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between process conflict and performance (Greer & Jehn, 2007). This partial mediating effect indicates the possibility of other mechanisms, linking process conflict and employee well-being which are outside the purview of research. This partial mediating effect indicates that negative affect state transmits the adverse effect of process conflict on employee well-being. Though the mediating effect is partial, the finding suggests that if negative affect state can be reduced the detrimental effect of process conflict on employee well-being can be minimised.

The results of the study highlight the deleterious influence of various conflict types on employee well-being through negative affect state. Previous studies have established the mediating role of individual's affect states in influencing various levels of outcomes (Bakker, 2015; Beal et al., 2005; Glasø et al., 2011; Rhoades, et al., 2001; Weiss et al., 1999; Yang et al., 2015). Thus adding to such studies, the present study establishes the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between conflict types and employee well-being.

### 5.2.5 Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work

Drawing from AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), the study examined the moderating role of perceived social support at work as a situational factor. Perceived social support at work indicates important interpersonal processes and relationships at the workplace (McCaskill & Lakey, 2000). Employees perceive social support through helpful and considerate acts of co-workers and supervisors. Building on buffering hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985) and various empirical evidence the study has hypothesised that perceived social support at workplace negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict and negative affect state. Findings related to the moderating role of perceived social support at work are discussed in detail below.

## 5.2.5.1 Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work in the Relationship between Task Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 11, the study has postulated that perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state. The results of the study supported this assumption and established that positive relationship between task conflict and negative affect state is stronger for those who have lower perceived social support than for those who have higher perceived social support. This finding is in line with previous researches in the domain of workplace conflict which used a general measure of conflict and established the moderating role of perceived social support at work (Giebels & Janssen,

2005; Guerra et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2011). Task conflicts are related to goals of the task and perception of supportive co-workers and supervisors help them to perform tasks better which makes them feel task conflict as less troublesome and reduces negative affect state.

## 5.2.5.2 Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work in the Relationship between Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 12, the study has postulated that perceived social support negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect. However, the data did not support this assumption. One primary reason for the failure of the data to support the moderating role of perceived social support could be that relationship conflict at workplace results in interpersonal strain (Rakovec-Felser, 2011) and enhances tension and frustration and employees feel estranged and alienated from others (Consiglio, 2014). Such interpersonal discomfort and alienation associated with relationship conflicts diminish the coordination among employees (Jehn, 1995) and employees keep distancing themselves from co-workers and reduce knowledge sharing and perceive lower social support at the workplace (Shaukat et al., 2017).

The findings highlight that harmonious social relationships are a vital resource and relationship conflict reduces such resources. It further indicates that loss of social ties make them emotional and perceive lower social support and experience more negative affect states. As a result of relationship conflict employees become socially detached (Sonnentag et al.,

2013), and it increases negative affective state further. Since relationships are considered as the lifeblood of organisations (Ren & Gray, 2009), relationship conflict at work can be fatal for organisation and individuals.

# **5.2.5.3** Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work in the Relationship between Process Conflict and Negative Affect State

In hypothesis 13, the study postulated that perceived social support at work negatively moderates the positive relationship between process conflict and negative affect state and the data supported this assumption. The finding established the moderating role of perceived social support at work in the relationship between process conflict and negative affect state. This finding also corroborates previous research findings which have established perceived social support as a buffer against various adverse work events and stressors. In the context of process conflict also, social support helps them to reduce the issues related to process conflict. Issues related to process conflicts are related to logistical issues and how to accomplish a task. Supportive supervisors and co-workers help to address these task-related issues and reduce the detrimental effect of process conflict. Concerned and empathetic acts of supervisors and co-workers make them perceive such episodes as less stressful. Like task conflict, process conflicts are also considered less impersonal and strongly related to task accomplishment.

# **5.2.5.4** Conclusion Regarding the Moderating Role of Perceived Social Support at Work

Building on Affective events theory and buffering hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985), the study hypothesised the moderating role of perceived

social support in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state. Social support is generally considered as a buffer against various stressors and adverse work events. The study established the buffering role of perceived social support at work in the relationship between task, process conflicts and negative affect state. However, the data failed to support the assumption that perceived social support moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and well-being. This highlights the need for more studies differentiating conflict into different types and establishing its outcomes and examining the role of different moderators influencing the relationship.

# 5.2.6 Moderating Role of Conflict Management Styles of the Employees in the Relationship between Conflict Types and Negative Affect State

The way the employees handle conflict may influence the various outcomes of conflict. A few studies in the western population have addressed this question and have established the moderating role of conflict management styles (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010; Dijkstra et al., 2011, 2009). In this study, it was hypothesised that passive conflict management styles such as avoiding and yielding amplify and proactive conflict management styles such as forcing and problem-solving conflict management styles attenuate the positive relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state. The following section discusses the findings.

# **5.2.6.1** Moderating Role of Passive Conflict Management Styles (Avoiding and Yielding)

From hypotheses 14-19, the study postulated that avoiding and yielding conflict management styles strengthen the positive relationship between conflict types (task, relationship and process conflicts) and negative affect state. The study found support for these hypotheses and established that avoiding and yielding conflict management styles amplify the positive relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state. The findings of the present study corroborate the findings of the previous studies which have established that passive conflict management increases strain associated with the conflict (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010; Dijkstra et al., 2009; Siegman, 1994). The findings of the study related to passive conflict management styles match with research findings related to coping for avoidance (Koeske, Kirk, & Koeske, 1993). The findings of the study related to passive conflict management styles can be justified with the help of the Theory of Communion (McCreary & Korabik, 1994). Communion refers to an individual's attempt to integrate with a larger whole by focussing on others' interest (Abele & Wojciszke, 2007). Individuals with high communion have high concern for others. Too much communion is related to excessively obliging to others at the expense of self, and low communion is related with low concern for self and others (Chung-Yan & Moeller, 2010). Too much communion can be related to yielding and low communion, being passive, can be related to avoiding. Too much communion and low communion are found detrimental for individuals. Hence, it is logical to conclude the findings of the study that is, passively handling conflict with avoiding and yielding conflict management styles, amplifies the detrimental effect of conflict. These findings corroborate the findings of the previous studies in the stressor-strain literature which established that being passive or lack of pro-activity enhances the negative impacts of stressors (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1994; Shapiro, et al., 1996).

The study also likes to add a caution. Passive conflict management styles may not be harmful in all circumstances (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Passive conflict management styles can be beneficial which was proved in the negotiation and dispute resolution research (e.g., Murnighan & Conlon, 1991). However, when the focus is on negative affect state, the study established that passive conflict management styles such as yielding and avoiding are unconditionally damaging.

# **5.2.6.2** Moderating Role of Active (Forcing and Problem-Solving) Conflict Management Styles

From hypotheses 20 to 22, the study has hypothesised that forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between task, relationship and process conflicts and negative affect. The study did not find support for the hypotheses 20 and 22. In hypothesis 22, the study has postulated that forcing conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state. However, contrary to the expectation, the study found that forcing conflict management style amplifies the relationship between relationship conflict and negative affect state. One plausible reason for this might be, forcing conflict management style is characterised by high concern

for self and low concern for others and exhibit threats, persuasion, and intimidation (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1992), which may increase interpersonal strain further and increases the negative affect state. Relationship conflict is a threat to positive interpersonal relationships and social harmony at the workplace, and when an individual tries to satisfy his or her needs without considering others' need, it may further amplify the interpersonal strain (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Such interpersonal strain results in impaired relationships and escalates relationship conflict which increases various negative affective states within the individual. Considering the importance of harmony in a collectivistic society (Rai & Agarwal, 2018) where collective goals are significant, the pursuit of self-goals without considering others' interest may lead to cynicism and increase the strain (Thomas & Gupta, 2018). This corroborates the previous findings which have established the importance of positive interpersonal relationships for health (Melchior et al., 2003), satisfaction (Barger et al., 2009), well-being (Baumeister, 1995) and happiness (Schulz, 1995) and overly focussing on self-interests threatens these needs and increases negative affect state.

From hypotheses 22 to 23 the study has postulated that problemsolving conflict management style negatively moderates the positive relationship between conflict types (task, relationship, and process conflicts) and negative affect state. The study found support for this assumption and established that problem-solving conflict management style attenuates the positive relationship between conflict types (task, relationship, and process conflicts) and negative affect state. This finding is in line with previous studies which have established that problem- solving conflict management style is the most effective style of handling conflict (Dijkstra et al., 2011).

These findings can be justified with the emerging Activity Reduces Conflict Associated Strain (ARCAS) model which states that actively dealing with conflict reduces the strain (Dijkstra et al., 2012). The study adds to the existing knowledge that this beneficial effect of the problem-solving conflict management style applies to different conflict types also. Problem-solving conflict management style which is characterised by high concern for self and high concern for others creates a condition of a win-win situation. In a collectivistic society like India, handling conflict in a mutually satisfying way satisfies the need of both parties. Especially in a working environment behaving and managing conflict in a mutually satisfying way fosters mutual trust, information sharing, and satisfaction and mitigates the detrimental effects of conflicts.

## 5.2.6.3 Conclusions Regarding the Moderating Role of Conflict Management Styles

In brief, the study corroborates the assumption of AET that individual-level factors can influence the affective experiences followed by various work events as well as the various empirical findings which have established the moderating role of individual's conflict management styles. The finding that an individual's conflict management style indicates the importance of person-environment fit in the organisation. If the personal traits are not suitable with the organisational characteristics, individuals will suffer due to this mismatch. Though avoiding and yielding may benefit

organisational level outcomes, such as performance and better productivity, to the individuals, it is likely to result in adverse outcomes. Avoiding and yielding may help to maintain harmony at the workplace, but they hinder an individual's goal accomplishment and amplify the adverse effect of conflict.

### 5.3 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study contribute to the existing theory and practice in the following ways:

- The study extended our knowledge about the effect of different types of conflict on employee well-being and established the detrimental effect of conflict types on employee well-being. Conflict is unavoidable and detrimental regardless of the reason due to which it occurs. By differentiating process conflict from task conflict, the study established that process conflicts are distinct from task conflict and adversely influence well-being. This finding of the study necessitates the need for process conflict to be considered as a distinct type of conflict in research and practice.
- The study explained the intra-personal mechanism through which conflict types influence well-being. The study shifting from the traditional rational approach, focused on the affect-related variable, specifically the role of negative affect state. The negative affect states have been found to mediate the relationship between conflict types and employee well-being. These findings highlight the role of intra-individual factors in the relationship between various workplace events and individual level outcomes.

- The study establishes that conflict is fundamentally an individual level phenomenon, and this individual-level effect of conflict is the reason for adverse effect of conflict on well-being.
- The study established that the effect of conflict on employee wellbeing can be managed by controlling situational factors and understanding individual-level factors.

### **5.3.1** Theoretical Implications of the Study

The findings of the study contribute to the existing conflict literature with the aid of Affective Events Theory. A considerable amount of research in the domain of workplace conflict has examined how conflict management styles of the individuals' influences the performance of groups and individuals (Dijkstra et al., 2005). This line of research focussing on performance-related outcomes established that under specific circumstances conflict can benefit groups and individuals (Nemeth, 1986; De Dreu & West, 2001; Lovelace et al., 2001; West & Anderson, 1996; Tjosvold, 1998) when conflict is managed constructively. This line of research ignored the effect of conflict on employee health, and well-being and thus resulted in one-sided theory.

A few studies which examined the effect of conflict on well-being, measuring conflict using a general measure of conflict, have established the deleterious effect of conflict on well-being (De Dreu et al., 2004; Demsky, 2012; Frone, 2000). This line of research using a general measure of conflict limited our understanding of the effect of different types of conflict on

employee well-being. This paucity of research created difficulties for theorists and practitioners alike. The present study contributes to the existing theory by examining the effect of different types of conflict on employee well-being.

The study contributes to the existing conflict literature by establishing that conflict, irrespective of type, are detrimental to employee well-being. Though few studies have stated the beneficial effect of task conflict, the present study established the detrimental effect of task conflict on individual well-being. Another significant contribution of the present study is that the study established that process conflict, which was omitted from conflict literature considering it as similar to task conflict, is a distinct type of conflict, and in the study, it was found that process conflicts are detrimental to employee well-being more than task conflict. This finding necessitates the need for more research looking into the effect of process conflict on various levels of outcomes. Also, the present study adds to the previous studies which have established the detrimental effect of relationship conflict at the workplace.

The study building on Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano) established that different types of conflict are considered as negative events resulting in negative affect state within the individual. Though AET has stated that workplace events are proximal causes of employees' affective experiences, the theory has not specified the various events resulting in affective experiences (Glasø et al., 2011). Rook (2001), has stated that, in general, conflicts in social relationships are considered as

negative events and result in negative affect state. The present study contributes to AET by establishing that task, relationship and process conflicts are adverse work events resulting in negative affect state. Conflicts are generally considered as a hindrance for individual's goal accomplishment and result in frustration. Adding to this, workplace conflicts are also considered as negative work events resulting in negative affect state within the individual. Regardless of type, workplace conflicts elicit negative affect within the individual. These results add to the existing theory that for employees conflicts result in adverse psychological condition. Such adverse psychological condition can impact not only the individual but also other coworkers. Such emotional contagion may adversely influence co-workers' performance and well-being also.

Research in the conflict domain focussed on explaining the antecedents and the direct effect of conflict on various levels of outcomes. Very few studies explained the mechanism through which various conflict types influence well-being. This paucity of research limited our understanding of how conflict influences well-being. Drawing from AET, the study explained the intra-individual mechanism through which conflict impairs well-being. The study established that negative affect state is a mechanism through which workplace conflict types impair employee well-being. These findings enrich the theory by establishing the significance of the individual's affect states in the conflict process. Shifting from the predominant rational approach in the conflict literature, the study highlights that affect related variables also have a predominant role in the conflict process.

This finding adds to the existing knowledge, as it explicates the intraindividual mechanism through which different conflict types influence individual-level outcomes.

Another theoretical contribution of the present study to the existing conflict literature is the finding that an individual's behavioural response can mitigate and amplify the conflict outcomes, specifically employee wellbeing. The study differentiated experience of conflict from subsequent conflict behaviour through which the study established that individuals' conflict management styles explain the differential effect of conflict on employees. Individual's conflict management style is a coping response to adverse workplace events. The findings reveal that irrespective of the type of conflict, handling conflict with passive styles such as avoiding and yielding amplifies the detrimental effect of conflict. Though the study did not find support for the mitigating effect of forcing conflict management style in the context of task conflict and process conflict, the finding that forcing conflict management style amplifies the negative affect associated with relationship conflict adds to the theoretical knowledge. Since relationship conflicts are related to interpersonal relationships, behaving with low concern for others and high concern for self may further deteriorate the relationship harmony and increases the strain. Hence, theoretical conclusions without considering the type of conflict may be misleading. These findings indicate that the dynamics associated with each type of conflict is different and necessitates more research classifying conflicts into different types (Shaukat et al., 2017; Sonnentag et al., 2013). The findings related to conflict management styles

provide confidence to emerging Activity Reduces Conflict Associated Strain (ARCAS) model (Dijkstra et al., 2012), which stated that passively managing conflict amplifies the adverse effect of conflict and actively managing conflict reduces the adverse impact of conflict.

In brief, the study contributes to the existing knowledge in the conflict domain in the following ways. Firstly, the study established that conflict, irrespective of types, are detrimental to employee well-being. This highlights the need for classifying conflict into different types and establishing its effect on various levels of outcomes. Since the effect of conflict on well-being differs, special attention should be taken to understand the type of conflict occurring at the workplace. Secondly, the study establishes that process conflict is different from task conflict and has a more detrimental effect on well-being. Hence, conclusions based on considering process conflict as similar to task conflict may mislead, which calls for further research differentiating process conflict from task conflict and establishing its impact on various levels of outcomes. Thirdly, the study established the mediating role of negative affect state in the relationship between different types of conflict and negative affect state which provide insights into the role of affect-related variables. Fourthly, the study establishes the buffering role of perceived social support in the relationship between task, process conflicts and negative affect state. Finally, the study extends the theoretical understanding of the role of the individual's conflict management styles in influencing the conflict outcomes.

## **5.3.2** Managerial Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study have implications for conflict management in organisations. The study established that conflicts, irrespective of types, are detrimental to employee well-being. Hence organisations, practitioners, managers and employees cannot overlook the occurrences of different types of conflict at the workplace (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018). Considering the diverse composition of the modern workforce, research suggests that conflicts are likely to increase at the workplace. Hence the findings of the study have practical implications for organisations and managers alike.

Since workplace conflicts are negatively related to well-being (Dijkstra et al., 2005), job satisfaction, effectiveness (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), and organisation commitment and increased depression and turnover intention (Frone, 2000), organisations should be aware of the various detrimental effects that conflict can have on organisation and employees. Further, considering the detrimental effects of conflict on well-being, work attitudes, and work behaviours it can hinder the smooth functioning of the organisation itself (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001). Hence, to mitigate the detrimental effect of workplace conflict, it is vital to create awareness among employees regarding the detrimental effect that conflict can have on well-being and other outcomes (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018). Since conflicts are found to diminish well-being and impaired well-being is associated with absenteeism, lower productivity and high turnover, practitioners should continuously check the conflict levels in organisations with high absenteeism, turn over and lower productivity. This highlights the need for

strategies and interventions to reduce the conflict at the workplace (Sonnentag et al., 2013).

Since task and process conflicts are task related, better communication about the task and roles to be performed by each employee and proper allocation of resources may help to reduce task and process conflict among employees (Jehn, 1995). Research suggests that a proper job analysis helps to mitigate work stressors such as conflict at work (Hagemeister & Volmer, 2018). Though task conflict is considered beneficial in conflict literature, this assumption does not hold, at least with regard to individual well-being. Relationship conflicts have been found to diminish employee well-being the most. Hence, special attention should be given to episodes of relationship conflict at work.

The finding that conflict at work evokes negative affect state, which in turn reduces well-being enhances the managerial knowledge and provides direction to manage conflict. This negative affect state associated with conflict is a reason for impaired well-being. This provides direction for organisations and managers to develop and design intervention strategies. If managers can design various strategies to reduce the negative affect state arising due to conflict types, the detrimental effect of conflict can be reduced. The findings also highlight the relevance of interpersonal interactions at work in influencing individual's affect state.

Regarding employees' relation with their work environment, the findings of the present study establish that conflict at work influences

individual affect state and adds to the understanding about the exogenous factors influencing individual's affect state (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and also corroborates the previous findings related to conflict in general (nonwork) and negative affect (Suls et al., 1998). Since, employees' affective experiences influence various levels of outcomes, such as job satisfaction (e.g., Ilies & Judge, 2002; Niklas & Dormann, 2005), task performance (Beal, et al., 2005), and citizenship behaviour (Ilies, Scott & Judge, 2006), hence an understanding of causes of affective experiences has significant implications. Organisations should take steps to understand the factors that can mitigate the negative affect state, to reduce the detrimental effect of conflict types on well-being.

Since conflicts are unavoidable and found to diminish employee well-being, it is vital to mitigate the detrimental effect of conflict. Though conflicts are a reality in day to day activities of organisations, past research established that various situational and dispositional factors could mitigate and amplify the effect of conflict. To provide directions for managers and organisations to mitigate the detrimental effect of conflict types, the study examined the role of perceived social support at work as a situational variable and individual's conflict management styles as a dispositional variable. The findings of the study will help managers, organisations, and individuals to manage conflict.

Perceived social support at work has been found to negatively moderate the positive relationship between two types of conflict (task and process conflicts) and negative affect state. These findings imply that the perception of having supportive co-workers and supervisors reduces the strain associated with these two types of conflict. Hence, organisations should develop a supportive climate in organisations (Simons & Peterson, 2000). This supportive climate can be developed through mutual information sharing, promoting openness and trust (Jehn, 1997) and encouraging employees to be cooperative rather than competitive (Johnson et al., 2006). Employees should be motivated to provide and seek social support during conflict situations (Ilies et al., 2011). Though social support at work is considered as a buffer against various adverse workplace events, the study did not find support for this assumption in the case of relationship conflict. This necessitates special attention to relationship conflict as relationship conflict may elicit the feeling of social exclusion, reduced social connectivity and lack of perceived social support. Hence, managers should provide extra support to co-workers so that they feel social inclusion.

The findings that an individual's conflict management styles influence the effect of conflict have implications for practice. Hence an understanding of employees preferred conflict management styles help to understand and predict who will be suffering more from workplace conflict. Organisations can use various conflict management style measures as a tool in their recruitment process to ensure a better person-environment fit. Since an individual's preferred conflict management styles cannot be changed overnight, individuals should be informed about the adverse effect of being passive to conflict situations. Various training programmes and courses should be offered to equip them to manage conflict effectively. These

training programs and courses may help them to manage conflict effectively instead of being passive.

### 5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations of the study cannot be overlooked. Firstly, the cross-sectional research design of the study limits the causal conclusions of the inferences. Though it is logical to assume that workplace conflicts increase negative affect state and diminish employee well-being, it cannot be ruled out that deteriorated well-being can result in more conflict. Secondly, the present study relied on self-reported measures which could give rise to the problem of common method bias. Though the study has statistically proved itself being free from common method bias, social desirability bias can influence the self-report. Thirdly, the measures of task, relationship and process conflict did not differentiate between conflict with supervisors and conflict with co-workers. Frone, (2000) has stated that the effect of conflict with supervisors and conflict with co-workers differs. Fourthly, the proposed relationships were tested among employees from only one industry. Though affective mechanisms are similar across different industries, to have confidence and to generalise the results of the study to other job settings, the model needs to be tested in other job settings also. Finally, the study considered conflict management styles as a trait. However few studies have stated that various situational factors can influence individual conflict management styles.

### 5.5 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The limitations mentioned above give directions for future research for the researchers. Since the cross-sectional research design limits the causal conclusions, future research using longitudinal design should look into the causal linkages between conflict types and employee well-being. Secondly, future researchers can examine whether there is a differential effect of conflict with a supervisor and a conflict with a co-worker on employee wellbeing. Thirdly, the study examined the role of one mediating mechanism and two moderating variables. Future research can look into the role of mediating variables and other moderating variables. Furthermore, the sample of this study was taken only from the IT industry; future studies should include heterogeneous samples so as to establish generalizability of the findings across different samples. More longitudinal research with different occupational groups such as research on service providers (doctor/nurses/lawyers/ public vs private sector employees/educationists, etc.) will surely yield interesting insights for researchers and practitioners.

### 5.6 CONCLUSION

The present study was an attempt to understand the effect of different types of conflict on employee well-being. The study also tried to explain the affective mechanism linking different types of conflict and employee well-being. Further, by examining the role of conflict management styles and perceived social support in the AET driven model, the study explained the differential effect of different types of conflict on well-being. The findings of the study increased the theoretical understanding and provide valuable

guidelines for managers and organisations to mitigate the detrimental effect of conflict types on employee well-being. Altogether, the study contributed to the theory and practice to develop a happy workplace and a healthy workforce.



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## **ANNEXURE 1**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

The purpose of my research is to understand the impact of interpersonal conflict at work on employee well-being. The result will be analysed and used as a part of my PhD thesis. Your anonymity is absolutely guaranteed. There is no right and wrong answer. Kindly report your true experiences.

	The following statements are about interpersonal conflict at your workplace or in your team. Kindly indicate the level of interpersonal conflicts at your workplace in the last 6 months by marking   symbol.	Never	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much
1	How much fighting about <i>personal</i> issues was there at your work place or in your team?					
2	We disagreed about <i>non-work</i> (social or personality things).					
3	We fought about <i>non-work</i> things(social or personality things					
4	Sometimes, we fought over personal matters					
5	We fought about work matters					
6	We had task-related disagreements					
7	How much conflict <i>of ideas</i> was there at your work place or in your team?					
8	How different were members' viewpoints on decisions?					
9	How much did you and your colleagues have to work through disagreements about varying <i>opinions?</i>					
10	We often disagreed about work things					
11	How much disagreement was there about <i>delegation issues</i> at your work place or in your team?					
12	We disagreed about the <i>process</i> to get the work done					
13	To what extent there was disagreement about the way to do things at your work place or in your team?					
14	How much disagreement was there about <i>work</i> responsibilities at your work place or in your team?					

Read each item and then list the number from the scale below next to each word. **Indicate to what** extent you felt each of the following after various conflict episodes at your workplace.

1 2 3 4 5 Very Slightly A Little Moderately Quite a Bit Extremely at All

I was	Rating	I was	Rating
1. Troubled		6.Irritable	
2. Nervous		7. Ashamed	
3. Upset		8. Stressed out	
4. Guilty		9. Afraid	
5. Scared		10. Hostile	

	Direction: Kindly read and mark \( \square \) how often you feel the following in general.	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	During an ordinary working day, there are times when you feel worried though the reasons for this might not always be clear?					
2	Are there times at work when you feel so frustrated that you think to yourself that 'life is all really too much effort'?					
3	As you do your job have you noticed yourself questioning your own ability and judgment?					
4	Do you tend to feel restless and tense?					
5	If the jobs you are doing start to go wrong, do you sometimes feel lack of confidence and anxious?					
6	Concerning work and life in general, would you describe yourself as a 'worrier'?					
7	Do you find yourself experiencing quite long periods in which you feel depressed for no clear reason?					
8	Inability to get to sleep					
9	Headaches					
10	Feeling unaccountably tired					
11	Decrease in sexual interest					
12	Pricking sensations or twinges in parts of your body					
13	Feeling as though you do not want to get up in the morning					
14	Feeling weak					

	Please tick after each statement, to indicate <i>How you handle your disagreement or conflict at your work place</i> . Try to recall as many recent conflict situations as possible while marking these statements.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I give in to the wishes of the other party					
2	I push my own point of view					
3	I examine issues until I find a solution that really satisfies me and the other party.					
4	I avoid confrontation about our differences					
5	I agree with the other party					
6	I search for gains					
7	I stand for my own and other's goals and interests					
8	I avoid differences of opinion as much as possible					
9	I try to accommodate the wishes of other party					
10	I fight for a good outcome for myself					
11	I examine ideas from both sides to find a mutually optimal solution					
12	I try to make differences appear less severe					
13	I adjust to the parties' goals and interests					
14	I do everything to win					
15	I work out a solution that serves my own as well as other's interests as good as possible					
16	I try to avoid a confrontation with the other party					

	Following statements are about social support at your work place.  Kindly rate the degree to which you agree to the following Statements by marking	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Co-workers and supervisors helped with a certain task or problen					
2	Co-workers and supervisors gave information that helped me in my work					
3	Co-workers and supervisors gave advice on how to handle things work					
4	Co-workers and supervisors gave his/her opinion on a problem concerning my work.					
5	Co-workers and supervisors explained how to perform a certain task or activity.					
6	Co-workers and supervisors gave advice on how to deal with a certain co-worker					

# Kindly provide the following details by marking ✓

Age:
Gender: Male Female
Marital Status: Single Married Others
Level: Junior Level Middle level Top Level
Religion: Hindu Christian Muslim Others
Education Qualification: Graduate Post Graduate Others
<b>Experience (in years):</b> 1-3
11-13 More than 13
Annual income (in Lakhs): 3-5 5-8
8-10 More than 11

Thank you.....

#### **List of Publications and Presentations**

#### **Publications**

- 1. Kuriakose, Vijay & Wilson, P.R (2018), Process Conflict and Employee Well-Being: Buffering Effect of Perceived Social Support. *International Journal of Management, IT & Engineering,* 8 (11), 64-71.
- 2. Kuriakose, Vijay & Wilson, P.R (2017), Relationship Conflict and Negative Affect State of the Employees: Role of Perceived Social Support at *Workplace*. *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 7(9), 399-408.

#### **Paper Presentations**

- Paper titled "Examining the intrapersonal mechanism linking conflict types and employee well-being: The role of negative affect state" presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference on Excellence in Research and Education (CERE 2018) held at Indian Institute of Management Indore from May 3-6, 2018.
- 2. Paper titled "A Moderated Mediation Model of Process conflict and Employee Well-Being: A Test of ARCAS Model" presented at the National Conference on Invasion Technology in Marketing and Society organised by Department of Management Studies, Viswajyothi College of Engineering and Technology, Vazhakulam on 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2019.