

## Conflicts Management Strategies; A Concept Analysis

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### Abstract

*Conflict is an inevitable feature of organizational life and plays a significant role in shaping employee relationships, leadership effectiveness, and organizational performance. This study aimed to clarify the concept of conflict management strategies through a systematic concept analysis based on Walker and Avant's framework. A comprehensive review of the literature was conducted to identify the defining attributes, antecedents, consequences, and empirical referents associated with conflict management. The analysis revealed that conflict management is a multidimensional process characterized by intentional engagement, effective communication, emotional regulation, problem-solving orientation, and contextual adaptability. Antecedents of conflict management include workplace tensions, leadership behaviors, emotional competence, and organizational climate, while its consequences range from improved collaboration and job satisfaction to reduced burnout and enhanced organizational effectiveness. Empirical referents were identified through observable behaviors such as communication practices, leadership actions, and employee performance outcomes. The findings provide conceptual clarity and emphasize the importance of integrating conflict management into leadership development, organizational policy, and professional practice. This analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of conflict management strategies and offers a foundation for future research and evidence-based interventions aimed at fostering constructive conflict resolution in diverse organizational settings.*

**Keywords:** Conflict management strategies; Concept analysis; Leadership; Organizational behavior; Communication.

### 1. Introduction

Conflict is an inevitable and persistent phenomenon in contemporary organizational environments, arising from differences in values, goals, roles, and interpersonal interactions. In increasingly complex and interdependent workplaces, conflict is no longer viewed solely as a disruptive force but as a dynamic process that can influence performance, relationships, and organizational outcomes. In professional settings such as healthcare, education, public administration, and corporate organizations, unmanaged conflict has been associated with reduced productivity, impaired communication, emotional exhaustion,

and declining job satisfaction. Conversely, when appropriately managed, conflict can stimulate critical thinking, innovation, and constructive dialogue, contributing to organizational learning and effectiveness. The growing scholarly attention to conflict management reflects its significance as a core organizational competency. Studies have demonstrated that conflict management strategies influence employee motivation, teamwork, leadership effectiveness, and organizational climate. Irwan (2024) emphasized that interpersonal conflict negatively affects employee motivation and productivity when poorly managed, whereas task-related conflict can enhance creativity and performance when addressed constructively. Similarly, Omene (2021) highlighted that effective conflict management improves communication quality, strengthens cooperation, and enhances organizational performance. These findings underscore the dual nature of conflict and the importance of understanding how it can be managed constructively rather than avoided.

Within leadership and organizational behavior research, conflict management has been increasingly examined as a multidimensional construct influenced by leadership style, emotional intelligence, communication patterns, and organizational culture. Babatunde et al. (2023) demonstrated that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in leaders' ability to manage conflict effectively, facilitating dialogue, emotional regulation, and problem-solving. Alan et al. (2022) further reported that ethical leadership behaviors significantly shape conflict management approaches among nurse managers, reinforcing the importance of values-based leadership in conflict resolution. These findings suggest that conflict management is not merely a behavioral response but a strategic and relational process embedded within leadership practices. In healthcare and service-oriented sectors, conflict management assumes particular importance due to the high-stress environments, interprofessional collaboration, and direct impact on service quality. Studies conducted in healthcare settings have shown that unresolved conflict contributes to burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and compromised patient outcomes. Naeem et al. (2025) found that workplace conflict among nurses was positively associated with burnout and secondary traumatic stress, while self-realization and empathic concern served as protective factors. Similarly, Orchard et al. (2024) emphasized that interprofessional conflict, when unmanaged, undermines team functioning and collaborative care, whereas structured conflict resolution training enhances team effectiveness and patient-centered practice.

Despite the growing body of literature on conflict management, there remains considerable conceptual ambiguity regarding its defining attributes, antecedents, and consequences. Research has approached conflict management from diverse perspectives, including leadership theory, organizational behavior, psychology, and healthcare management, often using varying definitions and measurement approaches. Pang et al. (2023) noted that conflict management theories have evolved across disciplines, yet inconsistencies persist in how conflict is conceptualized and operationalized. This lack of conceptual clarity limits theoretical integration and complicates the development of standardized assessment tools and intervention strategies. Concept analysis provides a systematic method for clarifying ambiguous or inconsistently used concepts by identifying their defining characteristics, antecedents, consequences, and empirical referents. Walker and Avant's concept analysis framework is widely used in health and social sciences to refine conceptual understanding and support theory development. Previous studies have successfully applied this approach to clarify complex constructs such as workplace conflict, leadership, and teamwork. Parvaresh-Masoud et al. (2021) employed Walker and Avant's method to analyze workplace interpersonal conflict in emergency settings, demonstrating its utility in distinguishing core attributes and practical implications. Similarly, Viljoen et al. (2024) applied concept analysis to define person-centered teamwork, illustrating how conceptual clarity enhances research and practice.

Given the central role of conflict management in organizational effectiveness and employee well-being, a systematic concept analysis is warranted to consolidate existing knowledge and clarify its essential components. Although numerous empirical studies have examined conflict management strategies, there remains a need for an integrative conceptual examination that synthesizes findings across disciplines and contexts. Addressing this gap is particularly important for informing leadership development, organizational policy, and professional training programs. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the concept of conflict management strategies using Walker and Avant's concept analysis framework. This analysis aims to identify the defining attributes, antecedents, consequences, and empirical referents of conflict management strategies as reflected in contemporary literature. By clarifying the conceptual boundaries of conflict management, this study seeks to provide a theoretical foundation to guide future research, enhance organizational practice, and support the development of effective conflict management interventions across professional settings.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Selection of the Concept**

The concept selected for analysis in this study is conflict management strategies, due to its central role in shaping organizational effectiveness, employee well-being, and leadership performance. Conflict is an inevitable feature of organizational life and emerges from differences in goals, values, communication styles, and work roles. When poorly managed, conflict can negatively affect motivation, productivity, and interpersonal relationships, whereas effective conflict management can enhance collaboration and performance. Irwan (2024) demonstrated that unresolved workplace conflict reduces employee motivation and productivity, while constructive conflict handling can promote innovation and teamwork. The concept was selected because of its strong relevance to leadership and professional practice, particularly in high-demand environments such as healthcare and education. Babatunde et al. (2023) highlighted the role of emotional intelligence in enabling leaders to manage conflict effectively, while Alan et al. (2022) showed that ethical leadership significantly influences conflict management approaches among nurse managers. In healthcare contexts, unmanaged conflict has been linked to burnout and reduced quality of care, emphasizing the importance of structured conflict management strategies (Naeem et al., 2025). Additionally, conflict management was chosen due to conceptual inconsistencies in how it is defined and applied across studies. Pang et al. (2023) noted that conflict management theories vary widely, leading to fragmented understanding and inconsistent measurement. This conceptual ambiguity justifies the use of Walker and Avant's method to clarify the defining attributes, antecedents, and consequences of conflict management strategies. By systematically analyzing this concept, the study aims to enhance theoretical clarity and support the development of effective conflict management practices in organizational settings.

### **2.2 Determination of the Aim of Analysis**

The aim of this concept analysis is to clarify and refine the concept of conflict management strategies by identifying its defining attributes, antecedents, consequences, and empirical referents. Although conflict management is widely discussed across organizational, healthcare, and leadership literature, its conceptual boundaries remain inconsistent and fragmented. This lack of clarity limits theoretical

development and reduces the effectiveness of practical applications in organizational settings. Previous studies have demonstrated that conflict management is closely linked to leadership effectiveness, employee well-being, and organizational performance. Irwan (2024) emphasized that conflict influences motivation and productivity depending on how it is managed, highlighting the need for a clearer conceptual understanding of effective conflict management strategies. Similarly, Omene (2021) noted that conflict management serves as a foundational element for organizational performance, communication, and cooperation, yet is often applied without a unified conceptual framework. The present analysis seeks to address this gap by systematically examining how conflict management strategies are described and applied across empirical and theoretical studies. Babatunde et al. (2023) identified emotional intelligence as a key factor influencing conflict resolution, while Alan et al. (2022) demonstrated that ethical leadership shapes the selection of conflict management approaches. These findings indicate that conflict management is a multidimensional construct influenced by personal, relational, and organizational factors, further reinforcing the need for conceptual clarification.

In addition, conflict management has particular relevance in high-stress professional environments such as healthcare, where ineffective conflict resolution has been associated with burnout, reduced collaboration, and compromised service quality. Naeem et al. (2025) showed that workplace conflict negatively affects nurses' psychological well-being, while Orchard et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of structured conflict resolution mechanisms in interprofessional teams. These studies support the need for a concept analysis that clearly delineates the core elements of conflict management strategies. Therefore, the primary aim of this analysis is to develop a clear and comprehensive understanding of conflict management strategies using Walker and Avant's framework. By identifying the essential attributes, antecedents, and consequences of the concept, this study seeks to provide a theoretical foundation that can guide future research, support leadership development, and inform organizational policies aimed at improving conflict resolution practices.

### **2.3 Identification of All Uses of the Concept**

The concept of conflict management strategies is widely used across multiple disciplines, including organizational behavior, healthcare management, leadership studies, education, and psychology. Across these fields, the term generally refers to the methods and approaches individuals or organizations use to handle disagreements, disputes, or incompatible goals in the workplace. However, the meaning and application of the concept vary depending on theoretical orientation and professional context. In organizational and management literature, conflict management strategies are commonly used to describe behavioral approaches such as collaboration, compromise, avoidance, accommodation, and competition. Omene (2021) described conflict management as a mechanism for improving organizational effectiveness by reducing disruptions, strengthening communication, and enhancing cooperation among employees. Similarly, Irwan (2024) viewed conflict management as a process that influences employee motivation and productivity, emphasizing that different types of conflict require different management approaches. In leadership studies, conflict management is frequently linked to leadership effectiveness and interpersonal competence. Babatunde et al. (2023) identified conflict management as a key leadership function supported by emotional intelligence, enabling leaders to regulate emotions, resolve disagreements, and maintain productive relationships. Alan et al. (2022) further demonstrated that ethical leadership behaviors influence how conflicts are handled, particularly in healthcare environments where collaboration and communication are essential.

Within healthcare and nursing literature, conflict management is often framed as a professional competency necessary for maintaining teamwork and patient safety. Orchard et al. (2024) highlighted the use of conflict management strategies in interprofessional teams to improve collaboration and care outcomes. Naeem et al. (2025) examined conflict management in relation to nurses' psychological well-being, showing that unmanaged conflict contributes to burnout and reduced quality of life. In educational and organizational development contexts, conflict management is also viewed as a skill that can be developed through training and leadership development programs. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) conceptualized conflict management as part of a broader framework influencing job satisfaction through organizational climate and leadership support. Similarly, Pang et al. (2023) discussed conflict management within contingency theory, emphasizing its situational and adaptive nature. Across these diverse applications, conflict management is consistently used to describe deliberate actions or strategies aimed at reducing the negative effects of conflict while maximizing its potential benefits. These varied uses underscore the need for a clear conceptual definition, which this concept analysis seeks to establish.

#### **2.4 Determination of Defining Attributes**

Defining attributes are the core characteristics that consistently appear in the literature and distinguish a concept from related phenomena. Based on the reviewed studies, several defining attributes of conflict management strategies were identified. The first defining attribute is intentionality. Conflict management involves deliberate and conscious efforts to address disagreement rather than passive avoidance. Irwan (2024) emphasized that effective conflict management requires purposeful action to transform conflict into productive outcomes. Similarly, Omene (2021) noted that successful conflict management depends on intentional strategies aimed at improving communication and cooperation. The second defining attribute is communication competence. Effective conflict management relies heavily on open, respectful, and clear communication. Alan et al. (2022) found that ethical and communicative leadership strongly influences how conflicts are resolved, particularly through dialogue and mutual understanding. Orchard et al. (2024) also emphasized communication as a central element in resolving interprofessional conflict.

A third defining attribute is emotional and relational regulation. Conflict management requires the ability to manage emotions, understand others' perspectives, and maintain professional relationships. Babatunde et al. (2023) highlighted emotional intelligence as a critical factor that enables individuals to navigate conflict constructively. Naeem et al. (2025) further demonstrated that emotional awareness and self-regulation reduce the negative psychological effects of workplace conflict. The fourth defining attribute is problem-solving orientation. Conflict management strategies aim not only to reduce tension but also to achieve mutually acceptable solutions. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) described conflict management as a process embedded within organizational systems that facilitates resolution through leadership support and collaborative problem-solving. Pang et al. (2023) similarly emphasized that effective conflict management adapts to situational demands and seeks constructive outcomes rather than dominance. Finally, context sensitivity emerges as a defining attribute. Conflict management strategies vary depending on organizational culture, leadership style, and situational demands. Orchard et al. (2024) demonstrated that team-based healthcare environments require different conflict management approaches compared to individual-based settings, reinforcing the contextual nature of the concept.

## 2.5 Identification of a Model Case

A model case demonstrates all defining attributes of conflict management strategies and illustrates how the concept functions in practice. In a healthcare setting, for example, a nurse manager identifies growing tension between two staff members related to task responsibilities and communication breakdowns during shifts. Rather than ignoring the issue or imposing a unilateral decision, the manager arranges a structured discussion where both individuals are encouraged to express their perspectives openly. The manager listens attentively, acknowledges emotional responses, and facilitates constructive dialogue aimed at identifying shared goals and mutually acceptable solutions. Through collaborative problem-solving, the conflict is resolved in a manner that restores trust, improves communication, and strengthens team functioning. This example reflects intentional action, emotional regulation, effective communication, and a problem-solving orientation, all of which are defining attributes of conflict management strategies. The case is consistent with the findings of Alan et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of ethical and communicative leadership in managing conflict among healthcare professionals. It also aligns with Orchard et al. (2024), who highlighted that structured dialogue and collaborative approaches enhance interprofessional teamwork. Furthermore, the emphasis on emotional awareness reflects the role of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution as identified by Babatunde et al. (2023).

## 2.6 Identification of Borderline, Related, and Contrary Cases

A borderline case contains some but not all of the defining attributes of the concept. For instance, a supervisor may recognize conflict among employees and attempt to address it by instructing the parties to avoid each other or by reassigning tasks without discussing the underlying issues. While this approach demonstrates awareness of conflict and some degree of managerial intervention, it lacks open communication, emotional engagement, and collaborative problem-solving. As a result, the conflict may be temporarily suppressed but not truly resolved. This reflects findings by Irwan (2024), who noted that avoidance-based strategies often fail to address the root causes of conflict and may allow tensions to resurface later. A related case refers to a situation that resembles conflict management but does not fully represent the concept. An example includes the implementation of formal grievance procedures or institutional policies that allow employees to file complaints. While such mechanisms provide structure and accountability, they do not necessarily involve interpersonal dialogue or collaborative resolution. This form of conflict handling is more administrative than relational. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) emphasized that conflict management extends beyond formal procedures and requires leadership support and an enabling organizational climate to be effective. A contrary case clearly lacks the defining attributes of conflict management strategies. For example, a manager who ignores workplace conflict, discourages discussion, or responds with authoritarian control demonstrates the absence of intentional engagement, communication, and emotional regulation. In such cases, conflict intensifies, morale declines, and productivity deteriorates. This scenario reflects the negative outcomes described by Naem et al. (2025), who linked unresolved conflict to burnout and psychological distress, and contrasts sharply with the constructive approaches outlined by Omene (2021), who emphasized that effective conflict management promotes cooperation and organizational stability.

## 2.7 Identification of Antecedents and Consequences

Antecedents are events or conditions that must exist prior to the occurrence of a concept. In the context of conflict management strategies, several antecedents consistently emerge across the literature. One major antecedent is the presence of workplace conflict, which may arise from interpersonal differences, role ambiguity, communication breakdowns, or competing organizational goals. Irwan (2024) identified interpersonal, task-related, and process-related conflicts as common precursors that necessitate the use of conflict management strategies. Similarly, Pavlović et al. (2022) emphasized that conflicts often originate from poor communication, organizational structure, and divergent expectations among employees. Another key antecedent is leadership behavior and organizational climate. Leaders play a central role in shaping how conflict is perceived and addressed. Alan et al. (2022) demonstrated that ethical leadership and communicative behaviors influence the choice of conflict management strategies used by nurse managers. Leadership support and fairness also determine whether conflicts escalate or are resolved constructively. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) further highlighted that organizational climate and leadership support function as contextual conditions that activate or inhibit effective conflict management practices.

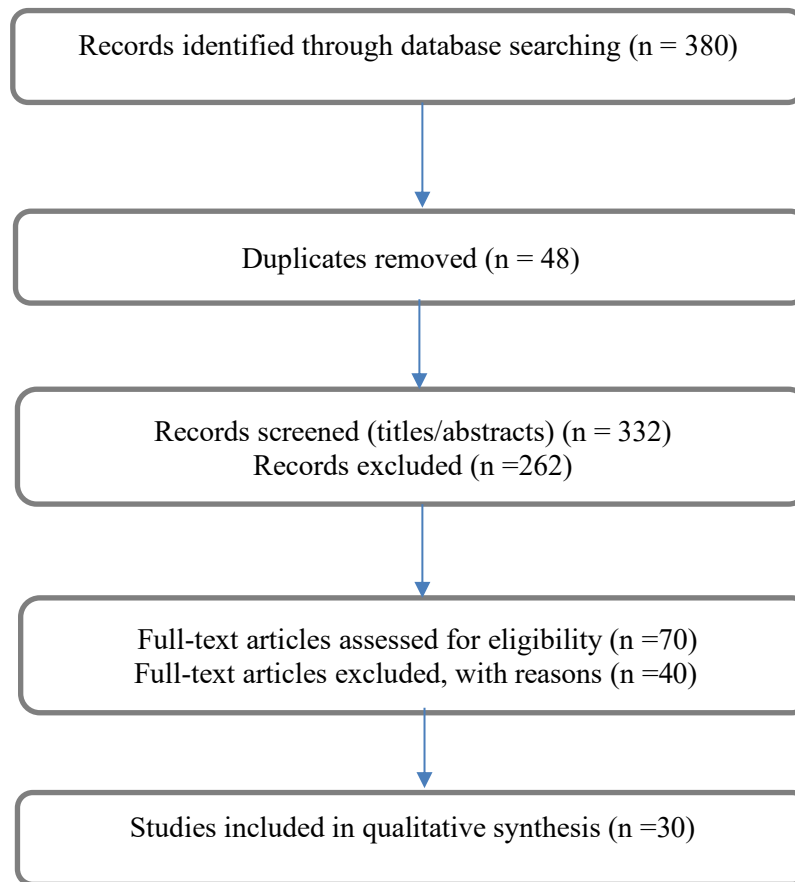
Emotional and interpersonal factors also serve as important antecedents. Babatunde et al. (2023) showed that emotional intelligence enables individuals to regulate emotions, engage in dialogue, and manage disagreements constructively. Naeem et al. (2025) found that low self-realization and high emotional strain increase vulnerability to workplace conflict, particularly in high-stress professions such as nursing. These findings suggest that psychological readiness and emotional competence are essential precursors to effective conflict management. The consequences of conflict management strategies can be either positive or negative depending on how conflict is handled. Positive consequences include improved communication, enhanced teamwork, increased job satisfaction, and higher organizational performance. Omene (2021) reported that effective conflict management leads to improved cooperation, reduced workplace tension, and increased productivity. Orchard et al. (2024) similarly found that structured conflict resolution enhances collaboration within interprofessional teams and improves service outcomes.

## 2.8 Definition of Empirical Referents

Empirical referents refer to observable and measurable indicators that demonstrate the existence of a concept in practice. In the case of conflict management strategies, empirical referents are reflected through behavioral, psychological, and organizational indicators assessed using validated tools and observable outcomes. One key empirical referent is the use of identifiable conflict management styles, such as collaboration, compromise, accommodation, avoidance, and competition. These styles are commonly measured using standardized instruments, including adaptations of the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory, as reported by Alan et al. (2022) and Vesperi et al. (2021). The presence of collaborative and integrative styles serves as a strong indicator of effective conflict management. Another empirical referent is communication quality, which includes openness, clarity, and mutual respect during conflict situations. Jasim and Faris (2024) demonstrated that effective communication skills are significantly associated with constructive conflict management among nursing staff. High levels of communication competence reflect the operationalization of conflict management strategies in practice.

Emotional regulation and interpersonal functioning also serve as empirical indicators. Babatunde et al.

(2023) identified emotional intelligence as a measurable construct closely linked to conflict resolution effectiveness. Similarly, Naeem et al. (2025) associated lower burnout and higher compassion satisfaction with better conflict management capacity. At the organizational level, empirical referents include job satisfaction, team performance, and organizational climate. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) highlighted job satisfaction and leadership support as measurable outcomes influenced by conflict management styles. Irwan (2024) further identified productivity and employee engagement as observable indicators of successful conflict resolution. Figure 1 illustrates the systematic process used to identify, screen, and select relevant studies for this concept analysis in accordance with PRISMA guidelines. The diagram outlines the number of records identified through database searches, the removal of duplicates, the screening of titles and abstracts, and the final inclusion of eligible studies for analysis. This structured process ensured transparency, methodological rigor, and consistency in selecting literature relevant to conflict management strategies.



*Fig.1. PRISMA Flow Diagram*

### 3. Results of Concept Analysis

The concept analysis yielded a coherent understanding of conflict management strategies based on a systematic review of the selected literature. The reviewed studies consistently demonstrated that conflict management is a multidimensional construct influenced by individual, relational, and organizational

factors. Across healthcare, education, and organizational settings, conflict management was found to involve deliberate actions aimed at addressing interpersonal or task-related disagreements in a manner that minimizes negative outcomes and promotes constructive engagement. The analysis revealed recurring patterns in how conflict management is conceptualized, operationalized, and evaluated, enabling the identification of core defining attributes that distinguish the concept from related constructs such as conflict avoidance or disciplinary control. The findings further indicate that conflict management strategies are not static behaviors but dynamic processes shaped by leadership style, emotional competence, communication quality, and contextual conditions. Studies consistently emphasized that effective conflict management contributes to improved teamwork, enhanced job satisfaction, and better organizational performance, while ineffective or absent conflict management leads to burnout, reduced productivity, and deteriorating interpersonal relationships. These findings form the basis for identifying the defining attributes of the concept.

### 3.1 Defining Attributes

Defining attributes represent the essential characteristics that consistently appear in the literature and distinguish conflict management strategies from similar concepts. Analysis of the included studies revealed five core attributes. The first defining attribute is intentional and proactive engagement. Conflict management involves deliberate efforts to address disagreement rather than ignoring or suppressing it. Irwan (2024) emphasized that effective conflict management requires purposeful action to prevent conflict escalation and to transform disagreement into constructive dialogue. Similarly, Omene (2021) highlighted that successful conflict management is grounded in conscious managerial intervention aimed at improving cooperation and organizational effectiveness. The second defining attribute is effective communication. Clear, respectful, and open communication emerged as a central element in nearly all studies. Alan et al. (2022) demonstrated that ethical leadership and transparent communication significantly influence how conflicts are resolved among nursing staff. Orchard et al. (2024) further reinforced that communication is essential for resolving interprofessional conflict and fostering collaborative practice.

The third defining attribute is emotional regulation and interpersonal awareness. Conflict management requires the ability to manage emotions, recognize others' perspectives, and respond appropriately during disagreements. Babatunde et al. (2023) identified emotional intelligence as a critical factor enabling leaders to manage conflict constructively. Naeem et al. (2025) similarly showed that emotional awareness reduces burnout and supports healthier conflict resolution in nursing environments. The fourth defining attribute is problem-solving orientation. Conflict management strategies emphasize reaching mutually acceptable solutions rather than assigning blame. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) described conflict management as a process embedded within organizational systems that facilitates resolution through leadership support and collaborative problem-solving. This attribute distinguishes conflict management from authoritarian or avoidance-based approaches. The fifth defining attribute is contextual adaptability. Conflict management strategies vary depending on organizational culture, leadership style, and situational demands. Pang et al. (2023) highlighted that conflict management is contingent upon contextual factors, reinforcing the need for flexible and situationally appropriate responses. Orchard et al. (2024) similarly emphasized that team-based healthcare environments require adaptive conflict management approaches to support collaboration.

The descriptive characteristics of the studies included in this concept analysis are summarized in Table 1. The table presents key information regarding the author(s), year of publication, study context, research methodology, and principal findings related to conflict management strategies. As shown in Table 1, the included studies span diverse professional contexts, including healthcare, education, organizational management, and leadership development. The methodologies range from concept analyses and systematic reviews to quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods designs. Collectively, the findings reported in Table 1 demonstrate consistent emphasis on communication, leadership behavior, emotional regulation, and problem-solving as central components of conflict management strategies. The table also illustrates how conflict management has been examined from both theoretical and empirical perspectives, providing a comprehensive foundation for identifying the defining attributes of the concept.

*Table 1. Descriptive Data of the Research Studies*

No.	Citation	Setting (Domain)	Key Attributes (Conceptual / Methodological)
1	Parvaresh-Masoud et al. (2021)	Prehospital emergency care	Concept analysis identifying attributes, antecedents, and consequences of workplace interpersonal conflict using Walker and Avant's method.
2	Viljoen et al. (2024)	Healthcare teamwork	Concept analysis defining person-centered teamwork; identified attributes of individuality, relationships, inclusivity, and synergy.
3	Bano et al. (2024)	Non-governmental organizations	SEM study examining conflict management strategies in relation to leadership, psychological safety, and job performance.
4	Recigno (2022)	Occupational therapy education	Concept analysis integrated with mixed methods to define leadership development using andragogical principles.
5	Laukka et al. (2022)	Digital health services	Concept analysis identifying leadership attributes, antecedents, and outcomes within digital healthcare contexts.
6	Telecan et al. (2023)	Military organizations	Scenario-based experiment distinguishing task and relationship conflict; showed task conflict supports cooperation while relationship conflict reduces team effectiveness.
7	Luqman & Fatmawati (2024)	Educational institutions	Qualitative study identifying collaborative and mediation-based conflict management strategies used by school leaders.
8	Omene (2021)	Organizational management	Literature-based analysis linking conflict management strategies to productivity, communication quality, and organizational performance.
9	Babatunde et al. (2023)	Organizational leadership	Empirical study demonstrating the role of emotional intelligence in effective conflict management and leadership performance.
10	Bodunde et al. (2024)	Multisector organizations	Quantitative study highlighting information exchange and collaborative problem-solving as key mechanisms in conflict resolution.
11	Egerová & Rotenbornová (2021)	Workplace organizations	Qualitative study identifying causes of workplace conflict and commonly used conflict management styles, including avoidance, adaptation, collaboration, and confrontation.
12	Pang et al. (2023)	Strategic communication and organizations	Theoretical review outlining contingency theory of strategic conflict management and emphasizing situational, adaptive conflict responses.
13	Maddalena (2023)	Healthcare leadership	Quality improvement study demonstrating that structured training enhances conflict management skills among nurse leaders.
14	Alan et al. (2022)	Nursing management	Correlational study linking ethical leadership behaviors with collaborative and constructive conflict management strategies.
15	Vesperi et al. (2021)	Healthcare organizations	Survey-based study identifying conflict management styles among hospital managers using the ROCI-II instrument and emphasizing conflict management as an organizational capability.

No.	Citation	Setting (Domain)	Key Attributes (Conceptual / Methodological)
16	Orchard et al. (2024)	Interprofessional healthcare teams	Critical review identifying task, relationship, and process conflict; emphasized team-based conflict resolution and the importance of structured training in collaborative conflict management.
17	Nacem et al. (2025)	Nursing workforce	Correlational study linking workplace conflict with burnout and secondary traumatic stress; highlighted the protective role of self-realization and empathic concern.
18	Al Kiyumi (2023)	Healthcare leadership	Narrative review emphasizing conflict management as a core leadership competency; highlighted communication, emotional intelligence, and proactive conflict resolution strategies.
19	Jasim & Faris (2024)	Nursing practice	Descriptive study identifying collaboration as the most frequently used conflict management style and demonstrating a strong link between communication skills and conflict resolution.
20	Shafait et al. (2021)	Higher education institutions	Empirical study showing emotional intelligence as a key predictor of effective conflict management, mediated by organizational learning and innovative behavior.
21	Elgoibar et al. (2025)	Family and non-family businesses	Multigroup analysis showing that laissez-faire leadership influences problem-solving conflict management through trust in subordinates, with contextual differences across business types.
22	Inayatullah et al. (2022)	Organizational communication	Literature-based study identifying negotiation and communication skills as essential mechanisms for constructive conflict management.
23	Saikrishna (2025)	Professional service organizations	Configurational analysis demonstrating that workplace conflict results from combined effects of leadership style, justice perception, psychological safety, and team cohesion.
24	Pavlović et al. (2022)	Public sector organizations	Survey study showing relationships between conflict frequency, conflict resolution strategies, and job satisfaction among public sector employees.
25	Nunkoo & Sungkur (2021)	Software development teams	Model-based study identifying conflict dynamics and team interaction patterns that influence performance and project success.
26	Irwan (2024)	Organizational settings	Systematic review showing that interpersonal conflict reduces motivation, while task conflict can enhance creativity when managed effectively; emphasized proactive conflict resolution strategies.
27	Alsaedi & Jumaan (2025)	Organizational behavior	Conceptual framework illustrating how conflict management styles influence job satisfaction through organizational climate and leadership support.
28	Qayyum et al. (2022)	Organizational psychology	Instrument development study validating conflict type and conflict management style inventories using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses.
29	Muthumani & Kumar (2023)	Industrial organizations	Empirical study demonstrating that collaborative and accommodative conflict management strategies positively influence employee productivity.
30	Nikitara et al. (2024)	Nursing practice	Systematic review identifying accommodation and collaboration as dominant conflict management styles and highlighting contextual factors influencing strategy selection.

### 3.2 Antecedents

Antecedents refer to the conditions or events that must be present before the occurrence of conflict management strategies. Analysis of the reviewed literature indicates that workplace conflict itself is the primary antecedent necessitating the use of conflict management strategies. Conflict commonly arises from interpersonal differences, role ambiguity, communication breakdowns, and competing

organizational demands. Irwan (2024) identified interpersonal, task-related, and process-related conflicts as recurring triggers that require deliberate management to prevent negative organizational outcomes. Leadership behavior is another critical antecedent influencing how conflicts emerge and are managed. Leaders shape the environment in which conflict occurs and determine whether it escalates or is addressed constructively. Alan et al. (2022) demonstrated that ethical leadership behaviors strongly influence the conflict management strategies adopted by nurse managers, particularly through open communication and mutual respect. Similarly, Omene (2021) emphasized that ineffective leadership and weak communication structures often precede dysfunctional conflict patterns within organizations.

Emotional and psychological factors also function as key antecedents. Emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and interpersonal sensitivity influence individuals' capacity to respond constructively to conflict. Babatunde et al. (2023) reported that low emotional intelligence contributes to poor conflict handling, whereas higher emotional awareness enhances problem-solving and collaboration. Naeem et al. (2025) further showed that emotional strain, compassion fatigue, and low self-realization increase vulnerability to workplace conflict, particularly in high-stress professional environments such as healthcare. Organizational context and climate further serve as important antecedents. Supportive organizational cultures, clear role definitions, and leadership support promote constructive conflict resolution, whereas rigid hierarchies and unclear expectations increase conflict frequency. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) highlighted that organizational climate and leadership support act as enabling conditions that shape how conflict management strategies are enacted. Pang et al. (2023) also emphasized that conflict management is context-dependent, with situational variables influencing how conflict is perceived and addressed.

### **3.3 Consequences**

The consequences of conflict management strategies reflect the outcomes that occur following the application of these strategies and may be either positive or negative depending on their effectiveness. When conflict is managed constructively, positive consequences are consistently observed across organizational settings. Effective conflict management promotes improved communication, enhanced teamwork, and greater job satisfaction. Omene (2021) reported that organizations with effective conflict management practices experience improved cooperation, reduced tension, and increased productivity. Similarly, Orchard et al. (2024) found that structured conflict resolution approaches strengthen interprofessional collaboration and improve team functioning in healthcare settings. Positive conflict management also contributes to psychological well-being and work engagement. Naeem et al. (2025) demonstrated that effective handling of conflict is associated with lower levels of burnout and higher levels of compassion satisfaction among nurses. Babatunde et al. (2023) further showed that emotionally intelligent conflict management enhances trust, motivation, and leadership effectiveness. These outcomes highlight the role of conflict management as a protective mechanism against occupational stress.

Conversely, ineffective or absent conflict management leads to adverse consequences. Irwan (2024) identified that unresolved interpersonal conflict reduces employee motivation, increases stress, and negatively affects productivity. Poorly managed conflict has also been linked to deteriorating workplace relationships, increased turnover intention, and reduced organizational stability. Alan et al. (2022) noted

that the absence of ethical leadership and constructive communication contributes to dysfunctional conflict behaviors, further exacerbating workplace tensions. At the organizational level, ineffective conflict management can impair service quality and weaken organizational performance. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) emphasized that failure to manage conflict appropriately undermines job satisfaction and weakens organizational climate. Pang et al. (2023) similarly noted that unmanaged conflict disrupts decision-making processes and limits organizational adaptability.

### **3.4 Empirical Referents**

Empirical referents are observable and measurable indicators that demonstrate the existence of a concept in practice. In the context of conflict management strategies, empirical referents are reflected through behavioral patterns, leadership practices, communication processes, and measurable organizational outcomes. Across the reviewed studies, several indicators consistently represented the operational presence of conflict management strategies. One of the most prominent empirical referents is the use of identifiable conflict management styles, including collaboration, accommodation, compromise, avoidance, and competition. These styles are commonly measured using validated instruments such as the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory or structured conflict management scales. Alan et al. (2022) used such measures to assess how nurses perceived their managers' conflict management approaches, demonstrating that collaborative and integrative styles were associated with positive workplace outcomes. Similarly, Muthumani and Kumar (2023) empirically linked conflict management styles to employee productivity using survey-based measures. Another important empirical referent is communication effectiveness, which includes clarity, openness, and mutual understanding during conflict situations.

Jasim and Faris (2024) identified communication competence as a measurable indicator of conflict management effectiveness among nursing staff, showing that higher communication skill levels were associated with constructive conflict resolution styles. Orchard et al. (2024) also emphasized observable communication behaviors, such as dialogue facilitation and shared decision-making, as indicators of effective conflict management within interprofessional teams. Emotional regulation and psychological functioning also serve as empirical referents. Babatunde et al. (2023) demonstrated that emotional intelligence scores are closely associated with conflict management effectiveness, making emotional awareness and regulation measurable indicators of the concept. Naeem et al. (2025) further supported this by linking conflict management to levels of burnout, compassion satisfaction, and emotional well-being among nurses. At the organizational level, job satisfaction, team performance, and organizational climate function as key empirical referents. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) identified job satisfaction and leadership support as observable outcomes influenced by conflict management strategies. Irwan (2024) similarly reported that employee motivation and productivity serve as measurable indicators of how well conflict is managed in the workplace.

### **3.5 Summary of Findings**

This concept analysis clarified the meaning and structure of conflict management strategies by systematically examining their attributes, antecedents, consequences, and empirical referents. The findings indicate that conflict management is a multidimensional and dynamic process shaped by

leadership behavior, emotional competence, communication quality, and organizational context. The defining attributes identified in this analysis include intentional engagement, effective communication, emotional regulation, problem-solving orientation, and contextual adaptability. These attributes consistently appeared across studies and distinguished conflict management strategies from related constructs such as conflict avoidance or disciplinary control. The analysis further demonstrated that conflict management does not occur in isolation but is influenced by antecedents such as workplace conflict, leadership style, emotional readiness, and organizational climate.

The consequences of conflict management were found to be significant at both individual and organizational levels. Effective conflict management was associated with improved job satisfaction, enhanced teamwork, increased productivity, and reduced burnout. In contrast, ineffective conflict management contributed to emotional exhaustion, reduced performance, and organizational instability. These findings highlight the critical role of conflict management strategies in promoting healthy and productive work environments. The empirical referents identified across the literature confirm that conflict management strategies can be measured through observable behaviors, validated assessment tools, and organizational outcomes. Measures related to communication quality, emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness, and job satisfaction provide concrete indicators for evaluating the presence and effectiveness of conflict management practices.

#### **4. Discussion**

The present concept analysis sought to clarify the meaning, attributes, antecedents, consequences, and empirical referents of conflict management strategies through the systematic application of Walker and Avant's framework. The findings reveal that conflict management is a multidimensional and context-dependent construct shaped by leadership behavior, emotional competence, communication processes, and organizational environment. Across the reviewed studies, conflict management emerged not as a singular skill but as a dynamic process involving intentional engagement, interpersonal regulation, and adaptive problem-solving. The analysis demonstrated strong consistency across empirical and theoretical literature regarding the central role of leadership in shaping conflict outcomes. Leadership behaviors, particularly those grounded in ethical conduct, emotional intelligence, and communication competence, were repeatedly identified as key mechanisms through which conflict is either resolved constructively or allowed to escalate. These findings reinforce the argument that conflict management should be conceptualized as an integral leadership function rather than an isolated interpersonal skill. Additionally, the results highlight that conflict management strategies operate within broader organizational and psychological systems. Factors such as organizational climate, emotional well-being, and role clarity were found to influence both the emergence of conflict and the effectiveness of resolution strategies. This supports the view that conflict management cannot be fully understood without considering contextual and relational variables, particularly in high-demand environments such as healthcare and education.

#### 4.1 Theoretical Implications

The findings of this concept analysis offer several important theoretical implications for the study of conflict management. First, the analysis supports the conceptualization of conflict management as a multidimensional construct rather than a single behavioral response. The identified attributes intentional engagement, communication competence, emotional regulation, problem-solving orientation, and contextual adaptability extend existing theoretical models by integrating cognitive, emotional, and relational dimensions. This aligns with the work of Pang (2023), who emphasized that conflict management is contingent upon situational and relational dynamics rather than fixed behavioral patterns. Second, the results reinforce the relevance of emotional intelligence and leadership theory in explaining conflict management processes. Babatunde et al. (2023) demonstrated that emotional intelligence plays a central role in enabling leaders to navigate conflict effectively, supporting theoretical models that integrate emotional competence into leadership and conflict resolution frameworks. Similarly, Alan et al. (2022) provided empirical support for ethical leadership as a determinant of constructive conflict management, suggesting that moral and relational leadership dimensions should be embedded within conflict management theory.

Third, the findings contribute to organizational and behavioral theory by highlighting conflict management as a mediator between organizational conditions and employee outcomes. Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) emphasized that conflict management strategies influence job satisfaction through organizational climate and leadership support, reinforcing systems-based perspectives of organizational behavior. This supports theoretical assumptions that conflict management functions as a linking mechanism between structural conditions and individual outcomes. Furthermore, the concept analysis strengthens theoretical integration across disciplines. The consistent identification of communication, emotional regulation, and leadership behavior across healthcare, education, and organizational studies suggests that conflict management operates as a universal construct with context-specific expressions. Orchard et al. (2024) and Naeem et al. (2025) both highlighted how conflict management theories apply across professional boundaries, reinforcing the transferability of the concept. Finally, this analysis advances conceptual clarity by distinguishing conflict management from related constructs such as conflict avoidance, conflict suppression, or disciplinary control. By identifying empirical referents and defining attributes, the study responds to calls in the literature for greater conceptual precision. Irwan (2024) emphasized that inconsistent conceptualization has limited the explanatory power of conflict-related research, a gap that this concept analysis helps to address.

#### 4.2 Management and Policy Implications

The findings of this concept analysis have important implications for organizational management and policy development. The identification of conflict management as a multidimensional and leadership-dependent construct highlights the need for organizations to move beyond reactive approaches toward structured and preventive conflict management frameworks. Managers play a critical role in shaping how conflict is addressed, and leadership behaviors directly influence whether conflict leads to constructive outcomes or organizational dysfunction. Alan et al. (2022) demonstrated that ethical leadership significantly affects the way conflicts are managed, particularly in healthcare environments where communication and trust are essential. This suggests that organizational policies should explicitly

integrate ethical leadership principles into conflict management protocols. From a policy perspective, conflict management should be embedded within organizational governance structures rather than treated as an informal or ad hoc process. Omene (2021) emphasized that organizations with clear conflict resolution policies experience improved communication, cooperation, and productivity.

Similarly, Alsaedi and Jumaan (2025) highlighted that leadership support and organizational climate function as mediating mechanisms between conflict management strategies and employee outcomes. These findings indicate that policies promoting transparent communication, leadership accountability, and psychological safety are essential for effective conflict management. In high-risk environments such as healthcare, formal conflict management policies are particularly critical. Orchard et al. (2024) emphasized that structured conflict resolution mechanisms improve interprofessional collaboration and reduce errors in patient care. Naeem et al. (2025) further demonstrated that unmanaged conflict contributes to burnout and emotional distress, reinforcing the need for institutional policies that prioritize early conflict identification and intervention. Collectively, these findings support the integration of conflict management competencies into leadership standards, performance evaluations, and organizational policy frameworks.

### **4.3 Practical Applications**

The findings of this concept analysis provide several practical applications for organizational leaders, healthcare administrators, and human resource professionals. One key application is the incorporation of conflict management training into leadership development programs. Babatunde et al. (2023) showed that emotional intelligence significantly enhances leaders' ability to manage conflict effectively, indicating that training programs should emphasize emotional awareness, empathy, and communication skills. In clinical and organizational settings, practical tools such as structured dialogue sessions, mediation protocols, and conflict resolution workshops can be implemented to strengthen conflict management capacity. Jasim and Faris (2024) demonstrated that communication competence is strongly associated with effective conflict management among nursing staff, suggesting that communication training should be a core component of professional development programs. Similarly, Muthumani and Kumar (2023) found that conflict management strategies positively influence employee productivity, reinforcing the value of training interventions aimed at improving collaborative problem-solving skills.

At the organizational level, the use of validated assessment tools can help identify prevailing conflict management styles and areas requiring intervention. Alan et al. (2022) and Vesperi et al. (2021) illustrated the utility of structured instruments in evaluating conflict management behaviors and guiding targeted improvement strategies. In practice, organizations can use these tools to assess leadership effectiveness, monitor workplace climate, and evaluate the impact of conflict management initiatives. Furthermore, fostering a culture that encourages open communication and psychological safety can enhance conflict resolution outcomes. Irwan (2024) emphasized that when employees feel safe to express concerns, conflict can be transformed into a source of innovation and improved performance. These findings highlight the practical value of integrating conflict management into organizational development strategies rather than treating it as an isolated interpersonal issue.

#### 4.4 Future Research Directions

Despite the growing body of literature on conflict management, several areas require further investigation. Future research should explore conflict management strategies using longitudinal designs to better understand how conflict dynamics evolve over time and how interventions influence long-term outcomes. Most existing studies rely on cross-sectional designs, limiting causal interpretation, as noted by Irwan (2024). Further research is also needed to examine conflict management across diverse organizational and cultural contexts. Pang (2023) emphasized that conflict management is highly context-dependent, suggesting the need for comparative studies across sectors, cultures, and leadership models. Expanding research beyond healthcare and education to include corporate, governmental, and multicultural settings would enhance theoretical generalizability. Another important direction involves examining the interaction between emotional intelligence, leadership style, and organizational culture in shaping conflict outcomes.

Babatunde et al. (2023) and Naeem et al. (2025) highlighted the psychological dimensions of conflict management, indicating a need for integrative models that combine emotional, behavioral, and organizational factors. Future studies should also focus on developing and validating standardized instruments for assessing conflict management strategies. Although several tools exist, variations in measurement approaches limit comparability across studies. Qayyum et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of culturally valid measurement tools, suggesting that future research should refine and standardize assessment instruments. Finally, intervention-based research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of conflict management training programs and leadership development initiatives. Empirical testing of structured interventions would provide stronger evidence for best practices and inform policy development. Such research would further strengthen the theoretical and practical contributions of conflict management scholarship.

#### 5. Conclusion

This concept analysis provided a comprehensive examination of conflict management strategies through the systematic application of Walker and Avant's framework. The analysis clarified the meaning of the concept, identified its defining attributes, and distinguished it from related and overlapping constructs. Conflict management emerged as a dynamic, intentional, and context-sensitive process that involves communication competence, emotional regulation, problem-solving orientation, and adaptive leadership. These attributes collectively shape how individuals and organizations respond to conflict and determine whether conflict results in constructive or detrimental outcomes. The analysis further demonstrated that conflict management is influenced by multiple antecedents, including leadership behavior, emotional readiness, organizational climate, and the presence of interpersonal or task-related tensions. When these conditions are appropriately addressed, conflict management leads to positive consequences such as improved collaboration, enhanced job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and strengthened organizational performance. Conversely, the absence of effective conflict management contributes to persistent workplace tension, emotional exhaustion, reduced productivity, and weakened professional relationships.

By identifying clear empirical referents, this study established that conflict management strategies can be observed and measured through communication behaviors, leadership practices, emotional regulation, and organizational outcomes. These indicators provide a practical foundation for assessing conflict

management in both research and professional settings. The concept analysis also highlighted the importance of viewing conflict management as an essential leadership and organizational competency rather than a reactive or situational response. Overall, this study contributes to theoretical clarity by refining the conceptual boundaries of conflict management strategies and emphasizing their multidimensional nature. The findings support the integration of conflict management training into leadership development programs and organizational policies. By strengthening conceptual understanding, this analysis provides a foundation for future research, evidence-based practice, and the development of structured interventions aimed at fostering constructive conflict resolution and healthier work environments.

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