



## Research Article

# Conflict Management Skills among Nursing Tutors Working in Nursing Colleges

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### Abstract

Conflict can exist among individuals, educational institutions, organizations, leadership of department, between staff, students and among tutors Conflict management is the practice of being able to identify and handle conflicts sensibly, fairly and efficiently. The objective of the study is to assess the conflict management skills among nursing tutors working in nursing colleges. Descriptive cross sectional research design was adopted for this study. Census method was used to select the subjects. Data collection was done among 74 nursing tutors of Kaski district. Data was collected by using self-administered Thomas Killman conflict mode standardized tool. The study revealed that 28.78% use avoiding, 20.58% use compromising, 19.9% use accommodating, and 18.74% collaborating and 12% use competing as conflict management skill. Conclusion: Avoiding was most commonly used conflict management style by nursing tutors whereas competing is the least.

### Introduction

Conflict is a situation in which the conditions, practices or goals for the different participants are inherently incompatible (Corwin,1969). Conflict is a stage where people strive for their preferred outcome which if attained prevents others from achieving their own preferred outcome

thereby resulting in hostility and breakdown in human relation (Barry & Reece, 2006)

In fact, conflict is a part and parcel of everyday life and each individual enters into some type of conflict in his/her life Conflict can exist among individuals, educational

institutions, organizations, leadership of departments as well as conflicts can also exist between staff, students and among tutors. In educational institutions the consequences of such conflicts may be direct and indirect and they include employee grievances, diversion of management time and disruption of professional relationship, workplace aggression, and psychological aggression (Weaver, 2008).

Workplace conflict can also result from poor communication, lack of employee motivation and/or unequal treatment in terms of allocation of duties/responsibility and authority or in the distribution of benefits (Morrison, 2008).

Conflict management is the practice of being able to identify and handle conflicts sensibly, fairly and efficiently. Conflict can also be managed in different ways, some focusing on inter-personal relationship and other on structural changes. In western cultural concept such as Canada and USA conflict is managed by fostering communication among disputants, problem solving and drafting agreement that meet their underlying needs, a win-win solution (Hotepo *et al.*, 2010)

Handling conflict can have a positive impact on patient care and safety. It can also boost up the staff morale and reduces anxiety among the nursing professionals. It can also reduce the burnout syndrome. Review of number of studies carried out in various settings has revealed that various modes of conflict management skills are used by the nurses. This includes avoiding, competing, collaboration, accommodating and compromising (Johansen, 2012).

Though a number of studies have focused in conflict management skills among various professionals, a few studies have been carried out in developing countries regarding conflict management skills among nurses. This type of study has not done in nursing colleges in Pokhara of Kaski district. Hence, the researchers are interested to find out the conflict management skills among nursing tutors working in nursing colleges of Pokhara.

## Methods

Descriptive cross sectional research design was adopted for this study. Census method was used to select the subjects. Data collection was done in nursing tutors of nine nursing colleges of Pokhara which includes Pokhara Nursing Campus, Charak Academy of Health Sciences, Novel Academy, Pokhara University, School of Health and Allied Science, Pokhara Technical Health And Medical Institute, Manipal College of Health Sciences, Fewacity Nursing Campus, Fishtail Nursing Campus, Padma Nursing Home School of Nursing. Out of 100 nursing tutors, 74 responded. Self-administered Thomas Killman conflict mode standardized tool was used to collect data. The research instrument was divided into 2 parts:

**Part I:** Semi-structured questions related to social demographic variables.

**Part II:** Structured questions as measured by Thomas Killman conflict mode.

Thomas Killman conflict mode comprises 30 items (60statements). The instrument includes 12 statements of each five style of conflict management i.e. competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding and accommodating.

Ethical clearance was taken from GMC, Institutional Review Committee of the college (GMC-IRC). Informed written consent was taken from each participant. Collected data was edited, coded and entered into Microsoft Excel and transferred into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. The obtained data was analyzed by using descriptive method (mean, frequency, percentage).

## Results

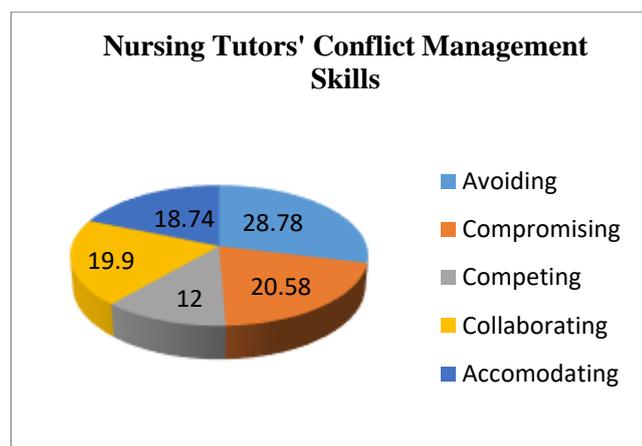
Table 1 shows that more than half (59.5%) of respondents were from age group 31 to 40 years. All of the respondents were female and 82.4% were married. About two third of the respondents (62.2%) completed master in nursing. Most of the respondents (87.8%) follows Hinduism. More than half of the respondents (56.8%) are lecturer. About one third of the respondents (39.2%) had teaching experience of 3 to 6 years.

**Table 1:** Socio Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	Number	Percent
<b>Age in Completed Years</b>		
20 to 30 years	27	36.5
31 to 40 years	44	59.5
Above 41	3	4.1
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	74	100
Male	0	0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	61	82.4
Single	13	17.6
<b>Highest Educational Qualification</b>		
Masters in Nursing (MN/MSc)	46	62.2
Bachelor in Nursing (BNS/BSc)	28	37.8
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	65	87.8
Buddhist	7	9.5
Christian	1	1.4
Muslim	1	1.4
<b>Rank</b>		
Lecturer	42	56.8

**Table 1:** Socio Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Instructor	24	32.4
Teaching Assistant	6	8.1
Others	2	2.7
<b>Teaching Experience</b>		
<3 years	27	36.5
3 to 6 years	29	39.2
>6 years	18	24.3



**Fig. 1:** Nursing tutors’ conflict management skills percentage.

Among 74 participants, 28.78% use avoiding, 20.58% use compromising, 19.9% use accommodating, 18.74% collaborating and 12% use competing as conflict management skill (Fig. 1).

### Discussion

In this study the most common conflict management style used by nursing tutors was avoiding (28.78%) which was followed by compromising (20.58%). The study done among professional nurses in Madrid, Spain revealed that compromising was commonly used style to deal with workplace conflicts (Williams, 2005).

Similarly, another study finding concluded that accommodation style was commonly used for conflict resolution among nurses in clinical area and academic area (Thomas & Saroj, 2015)

This study finding is in consistent with the findings of the study done in pediatric hospitals in Greece and in public hospitals in Cyprus among health-care personnel, where avoidance was found to be the most frequent mode chosen for conflict management (Kaitelidou et al., 2012)

Compromising as a conflict management style was preferred as second style by nursing tutors which is quite similar to the finding of the study performed among nurse managers in the nine Ministry of Health referral hospital, Jordan (Pavlakis,et al., 2011)

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study out of 5 different conflict management styles (Competing, Collaborating, Compromising, Avoiding and Accommodating) avoiding was most commonly used style by nursing tutors in selected Nursing Colleges of Kaski district which was followed by compromising. The least preferable conflict management style among nursing tutors was competing.

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