

Analysis Of Conflicts Observed In The Activities Of Heads Of Preschool Educational Institutions

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the essence and content of the concept of “conflict,” its levels, as well as conflict situations arising in the activities of heads of preschool educational institutions, the causes of their occurrence, and ways to resolve them.

Keywords: Conflict, preschool educational institution, head, management, manager, educator, education, upbringing.

INTRODUCTION

The new quality of preschool education depends not only on its content, but also on the competence of the heads of educational institutions, their managerial mastery, personal qualities, as well as their attitude toward the introduction of new knowledge and innovations. “The most important task today,” emphasizes the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, “is to find in all spheres of our life, especially in governance—at the republican level, in regions, cities, districts, towns and mahallas (self-governing bodies), and in the management of sectoral structures—people capable of thinking in new ways, taking responsibility in difficult situations, making the right decisions, keeping up with the times, being honest, knowledgeable and businesslike, and worthy of trust.”

Undoubtedly, this process requires a fundamental renewal of the management system, the introduction of new innovative educational technologies and variable programs in the training of managerial personnel. In addition, it is important to develop the necessary requirements for the competence of management personnel in the preschool education system. In particular, Chapter 3 of the “Concept for the Development of the Preschool Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030,” Section 6, “Introducing fundamentally new approaches to training, retraining, advanced training, selection and development

of personnel in the preschool education system,” stipulates that the following measures should be implemented in the training, retraining and advanced training of personnel in the field of preschool education:

1. creation of a unified, multi-level, continuous education system that meets international requirements;
2. integration of education and practice, introduction of international educational standards, curricula and programs, interactive and problem-oriented teaching methods, as well as advanced information and communication technologies;
3. further improvement of qualification requirements for employees of the preschool education system, development and approval of criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of their activities, as well as professional standards for pedagogical staff;
4. improvement of the system of advanced training for personnel in the field of preschool education by engaging foreign specialists, as well as increasing the number of educational institutions, including in the regions of the country, to organize a system of advanced training in this area.

These measures define the core competencies required of

heads of preschool educational institutions for the high-quality fulfillment of their professional duties in planning, organizing, conducting, and evaluating the educational process. One of the pressing pedagogical tasks of today is the development of conflictological competence among the heads of preschool educational institutions.

There are several levels to the concept of “conflict”: a life conflict—manifested as a clash, dispute, quarrel, or fight; a philosophical conflict—as a type of situation arising in the process of developing diversity of thinking; a socio-ethnic conflict—as an acute situation expressed in contradictions between people’s personal relationships, social groups, social institutions, and, overall, between generally accepted moral norms of society; and a psychological conflict—as a collision of opposing sides, forces, aspirations, interests, needs, motives, and passions.

The word “conflict” (from Latin *conflictus*) means “clash.” In the Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language (2006 edition), the term “conflict” is defined as a “clash,” “contradiction.” A conflict is a collision of opposing sides, opinions, forces, etc.; a serious disagreement, an acute dispute; in international relations—a quarrel or confrontation, sometimes leading to armed clashes.

In the Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, the concept of “conflict” is defined as follows: conflict (Latin *conflictus*—disagreement, clash, dispute) is life’s contradictions, the confrontation of human desires and aspirations, feelings and emotions, thoughts and actions; intense, dramatic collisions and disagreements; contradictions and conflicts that are manifested in a

person’s consciousness, worldview, mood, and character, as well as the form of their artistic and scholarly reflection in art and literature.

METHODOLOGY

In M. Akhmedova’s textbook *Pedagogical Conflictology*, a conflict is defined as “an open clash of contradictory interests and relationships that are mutually contradictory.”

From the above, it can be concluded that conflict represents relations between two or more parties (individuals or groups) that have incompatible goals or different conceptions of those goals. Conflict is assessed as a “method of integrity for complex systems.” It can serve as a factor both dividing and uniting contradictory sides. Conflicts between two systems give rise to a new conflict system. In managing conflicting systems, the decisive role is played by the degree to which the opposing sides are informed about each other. As an important epistemological tool, one can cite systemic examples—models that make it possible to consider conflict at the macro level and study it experimentally.

A dispute (or conflict) is usually understood as a clash manifested in intergroup or interpersonal relations associated with opposing views and unpleasant emotional experiences.

Based on the above reasons and the analysis of pedagogical and psychological literature, the following types of conflicts observed in preschool educational institutions can be distinguished (see Figure 1):

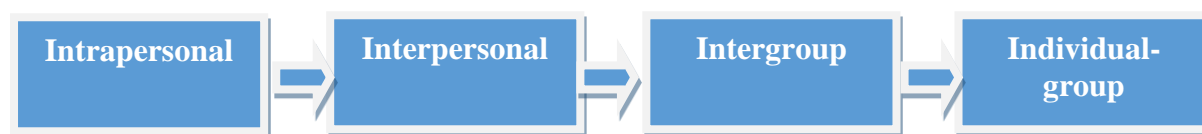


Figure 1. Types of conflicts observed in preschool educational institutions

Intrapersonal conflicts — contradictions reflecting the struggle of motives, interests, values, as well as conscious and unconscious (related to the sphere of the subconscious) needs of the individual;

Interpersonal conflicts — contradictions arising between people who seek to realize opposing intentions, dreams, desires, and goals in their life activities;

Intergroup conflicts — conflicts between social groups pursuing incompatible goals and hindering each other in achieving them;

Individual–group conflicts — contradictions arising when the behavior of an individual does not correspond to the norms, aspirations, and values of the group.

In the textbook *Fundamentals of Management* by R.

Validzhanov, O. Kabulov, and A. Ergashev, the concepts of conflict and its management, types and causes of conflicts, as well as effective methods of their resolution are examined. The authors emphasize that there are four main types of conflicts:

1. Intrapersonal conflict.
2. Interpersonal conflict.
3. Conflict between the individual and the group.
4. Intergroup conflict.

The textbook also provides recommendations regarding how a leader should behave when resolving conflicts. In addition, it notes that the following are the main methods for resolving interpersonal conflicts: (1) self-withdrawal (leaving the conflict); (2) avoidance (evading confrontation); (3) coercion (struggle, pressure on the opponent); (4) smoothing (concession, accommodation); (5) problem solving (seeking a mutually acceptable solution).

In the teaching manual Pedagogical Conflictology by Zamira Khuzhaniyazova, Maksuda Dusmetova, and Doniyor Nafasov, it is noted that the completion of conflicts can be classified into the following groups:

- resolution and termination of the contradiction by mutual agreement of the parties;
- symmetrical resolution of the conflict (when both sides equally win or lose);
- asymmetrical resolution of the conflict (when only one side prevails);
- escalation of the conflict into a larger contradiction;
- gradual “fading,” “extinction,” and disappearance of the conflict.

In the activities of heads of preschool educational institutions, various conflict situations may arise. These conflicts, as a rule, stem from mutual relations between the head and staff, parents, partner organizations, and sometimes children. Below are the most common types of conflict situations encountered in preschool institutions:

1. Conflicts between the head and teachers/caregivers

- Improper distribution of workload: some caregivers are assigned an excessive amount of work, while others perform lighter duties.

- Inequity in pay and incentives: uneven distribution of remuneration regardless of performance results.

- Objections to criticism and evaluation: criticism from the head is perceived by caregivers as subjective or unfounded.

- Lack of transparency in decision-making: decisions are made without prior discussion with staff.

2. Conflicts between the head and technical or support staff

- Misunderstanding of requirements and duties: discrepancies regarding responsibility for sanitation, safety, kitchen, and cleaning work.

- Issues related to working hours and shifts: disagreements over shift schedules or overtime.

3. Conflicts between the head and parents

- Dissatisfaction with the educational or upbringing process: complaints about insufficient attention to the child or low learning and upbringing outcomes.

- Financial and material issues: dissatisfaction with contractual payments, fees for events, and other financial matters.

- Complaints about attitudes toward children: claims regarding the behavior of the head or caregivers toward the child.

4. Conflicts between the head and higher-level organizations (department of education, local authorities, etc.)

- Reporting and administrative pressure: frequent demands for extensive reports that adversely affect the work process.

- Insufficient provision of financial resources: lack of proper attention to the needs of the institution.

5. Intra-team personal conflicts

- Disagreements related to personal character traits: arguments and misunderstandings among employees who

find it difficult to interact as a team.

- Gossip, cliques, and workplace stress: situations in which the head does not take timely measures to resolve such problems.

6. Conflicts between the head and children (safe category)

- Although direct conflicts generally do not arise, during the upbringing of certain children complex situations may occur (aggressive behavior, adaptation difficulties, etc.), which create conflict circumstances for the head—both through staff and through parents.

A sociological analysis was conducted of conflict situations frequently discussed on the internet that arise between heads and staff, parents, or other participants in the educational process.

Improper distribution of workload (conflict between the head and a teacher/caregiver)

For example, in one preschool educational institution in Tashkent Region, during a conversation with 20 caregivers, 12 people expressed the view that “the workload is distributed unfairly.” One participant noted: “Every time, the additional responsibility for supervising another group or organizing a celebration is assigned specifically to me. I feel this is related to the head’s personal attitude.”

Analysis of this conflict shows that its cause was a lack of transparency in the distribution of work duties. Assigning new tasks without mutual discussion with all staff intensified the team’s dissatisfaction. Such conflicts usually begin in a “latent” form but over time grow into open confrontation.

Cliques due to personal relationships (intra-team conflict)

For example, in one preschool institution in Fergana Region, the caregivers split into two groups—one group was closer to the head, while the other felt excluded. This negatively affected the working atmosphere.

The analysis shows that a breakdown of team spirit and internal trust is a sign of an unresolved yet persistent conflict. In such situations, the head needs to remain neutral, act fairly, and foster open communication within the team.

Disagreements with higher-level organizations (conflict between the head and the education department/local authorities)

For example, one head noted in an anonymous survey: “Every month I submit 8–10 different reports. We don’t always understand why they need to be completed. Time is spent not on solving children’s problems, but on filling out paperwork.”

Viewed sociologically, this situation is a conflictogenic factor of authoritarian pressure. It negatively affects the head’s work efficiency, morale, and communication with staff. The conflict is indirect but powerful in its impact.

Conclusion. In conclusion, based on the analysis of the collected data, heads of preschool educational institutions need to develop practical conflict-management skills and organize trainings and professional development courses on this topic. Alongside this, the introduction of internal regulations and instructions for conflict management will help ensure the stability of the organization’s activities.

For this reason, a modern leader should possess a high level of communicative management, observe professional ethics, and be able to channel emerging conflict situations in a constructive direction. These skills enable effective management of external impressions, contribute to forming a positive image of the leader, and strengthen their business reputation, lending maximum appeal to their personal and professional profile. Undoubtedly, all of this is a necessary condition for ensuring the high efficiency of the organization as a whole.

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