

**Citation:** Süklün H. (2019), A Case Study: Do Misconceptions Lead To Intergroup Conflicts At Workplaces?, BMIJ, (2019), 7(1): 42-57 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v7i1.1040>

## A CASE STUDY: DO MISCONCEPTIONS LEAD TO INTERGROUP CONFLICTS AT WORKPLACES?

Harika SÜKLÜN<sup>1</sup>

Received Date (Başvuru Tarihi): 23/01/2019

Accepted Date (Kabul Tarihi): 11/02/2019

Published Date (Yayın Tarihi): 25/03/2019

### ABSTRACT

*This study's purpose was to investigate if misconceptions lead to conflicts and increase attention among scholars for further research as well. Although misconception is one of the roots of conflicts is somehow accepted, especially by the practitioners, there are not many empirical studies conducted to investigate if there is a relationship between misconception and conflicts. This study is prepared on a small scale as a starting point. To explore the subject better case study methodology is used. Two different studies conducted to be able to compare and analyze the situation among the groups. One group is taken as in-group and the other group is taken as out-group. This study's findings revealed that misconception leads to conflict at workplaces and to a hostile work environment. "We vs. them" situation among the groups and intergroup conflicts are observed. Conclusion and limitation are discussed.*

**Keywords:** Misconception; Conflict; Organizational Behavior

**JEL Codes:** M0, M1

## ÖRNEK ÇALIŞMA: YANLIŞ ALGILAMALAR İŞ YERLERİNDE ÇATIŞMALARA NEDEN OLUR MU?

### ÖZ

*Bu çalışma, yanlış algıların çatışmalara yol açıp açmadığını incelemek ve daha fazla araştırma yapmak için bilim adamları arasında dikkati arttırmak amacı ile yapılmıştır. Çatışmaların köklerinden biri olarak yanlış algı, özellikle de uygulayıcılar tarafından kabul görse de, yanlış anlama ve çatışmalar arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığını araştırmak için pek çok deneye dayalı çalışma yoktur. Bu çalışma başlangıç noktası olarak küçük ölçekli olarak hazırlanmıştır. Konuyu daha iyi anlamaya çalışmak için olay inceleme metodu kullanılmıştır. Gruplar arasındaki durumu karşılaştırabilmek ve analiz edebilmek için iki farklı çalışma yapılmıştır. Biri grup içi, diğeri ise grup dışı olarak alınmıştır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, yanlış algılamaların işyerlerinde çalışma ortamında çatışmaya yol açtığını ortaya koymuştur. Gruplar arasında "Biz ve Onlar" olgusunun yanı sıra gruplar arası çatışmalar gözlemlenmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları incelenmiştir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yanlış Algılama; Çatışmalar; Örgütsel Davranış

**JEL Codes:** M0, M1

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Prof. Dr., Abdullah Gul University, [harika.suklun@agu.edu.tr](mailto:harika.suklun@agu.edu.tr)

<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1016-268X>

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. The Differences between Misconception and Misperception**

Misconception defined as; a view or opinion that is incorrect because based on faulty thinking or understanding (Oxford Dictionary), an idea that is wrong because it has been based on a failure to understand situation (Cambridge Dictionary). For example, without checking the accuracy of myths we wrongly believe them thus, our belief is based on faulty thinking or accepting whatever has been said before.

The misperception is defined as; A wrong or incorrect understanding or interpretation (Oxford Dictionary), a belief or opinion about something that is wrong or not accurate (Cambridge Dictionary). In misperception even we see, feel and hear or observe behaviors of others we misunderstand the situation, speech, and behaviors. In another word (Arntzen, Lokke, Lokke, & Eilertsen (2010) misconceptions can be regarded as “beliefs that are held contrary to known evidence” (as cited in Taylor & Kowalski, 2004, p. 15)

In sum, according to the definitions, we can say that misconception is thinking and misperception is interpretation. Since almost no study found in the recent literature this study based on misconception and investigate if misconception leads to conflicts at workplaces.

### **1.2. Consequences of Conflicts at Workplaces**

Conflicts are inevitable and all organizations have conflicts between departments, between managers and so on. Certainly, conflicts will not disappear in organizations, nations, between group even individuals amongst others and conflicts will persist. As Katz and Flynn (2013) stressed conflict is on the rise and will continue to go up in the workplace. Although organizations gain information from the conflicts and not all of the effects of conflicts is negative there is still a cost of conflicts. According to Freres (2013) conflict has been asserted to be one of the most important and attenuate costs to organizations (as cited in Slaikeu & Hasson, 1998).

First of all, conflicts create harmful work environments and disrupt the workflows and some of the most common problems are bullying, mobbing, untrusting, tardiness, discrimination, high employee turnover, and legal problems as well. Ignoring or avoiding conflicts will not solve workplace problems. Hays (2008) found that “U.S. employees spend 2.8 hours per week dealing with conflict, equating to approximately \$359 billion in paid hours in 2008” (pg. 2). Perhaps many organizations are not aware of the cost of conflicts and because of that, they are not looking for conflict resolutions.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Unfortunately, not many studies are found specifically on perception conflicts in the current literature. It is found that perception is taken as a role in conflict especially culture, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, knowledge, the impression of the messenger and previous experience (<http://www.ohrd.wisc.edu>). Thus several relevant kinds of literature are reviewed for this case study. Although few studies mentioned that misconception is a source of conflict for either interpersonal or intergroup but there are no empirical studies that confirmed it. The literature review revealed that the question of if misconception leads to intergroup conflicts at workplaces has not been asked yet up to date. Still, the answer to the question of if misconception leads to conflict is unknown. Thus, it is worth to explore it for further research.

### **2.1. Intergroup Relations and Conflicts**

Intergroup relations have always been an important subject for organizations (Lipponen, and Leskinen, 2006). Since more organizations move from an individual to a team performance model (Brubaker, Noble, Fincher, Kee-Young, and Press, 2014) conflict among teams is a very important factor for productive works. Thus, recognition of conflicts is vital for productive works and to be able to understand intergroup conflicts, the internal tensions between group welfare and individual welfare have to be considered (Halavy, Borntesin, and Sagiv, 2008). Group perceptions and intergroup relations are a very complex process (Hong, Levy and Chu, 2001). The literature review exposed that in intergroup conflicts communication is the main subject among scholars. According to Brooker (2001) "in most cases, the problem is really due to a breakdown of communication in intergroup conflicts" (p. 16) and he also concluded that if "we vs. they" situation is observed at workplaces it can also be observed that bad communication left unresolved. Of course, bad communication is not the only source of we vs. they situation there are other sources for its existence. For example, Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, and Flament (1971) discussed that individuals in a group may feel that it is necessary to divide us and them. Individual differences not only flavor reaction to out-groups, but they are also central to the development of in-group attachments (Huddy, 2004).

Based on social communication, Kwok, Wright, and Kashima (2007) stated that social communications possibly will have reflective effects in settling intergroup relationships and these relationships are formed by information given to people instead of obtaining information from straight communications. Their findings included that in-groups tend to duplicate stereotypes, which they already have; their out-groups and individuals are different in their

enthusiasm to incorporate in-group relationship or denigrate out-group members. Huddy, (2004) also noted that individuals who dislike one out-group tend to dislike other as well.

In their study, Turner, Brown, and Tajfel (1979) confirmed that favoritism in-group exists and when group members know each other better and when they feel close to each other, the group will not be negatively affected by relationship (Rispen, Greer, Jehn, and Thatcher, 2011). According to O'Neil, Allen and Hastings (2013) relationship conflict can harm team performance. On top of that relationship, a conflict would destroy a harmonized workplace too. Avgar and Neuman (2015) discussed that to prevent, or at least minimize harmful conflicts team members responded to the conflicts in some ways and if they responded accordingly "they can focus on the task at hand, uncomfortable situations can be avoided, and the conflict can be effectively managed" (pg. 65). In many organizations, unmanaged conflicts will have snowball effects; therefore, recognizing conflicts is the first step to prevent conflicts.

Lechner, Frankenberger, and Floyd (2010) reported that at the intergroup level, research starts from the premise that an organization can be conceptualized as a network in which organizational subunits and other kinds of groups are interacting with each other (as cited in Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve & Tsai, 2004). These interactions take place as formal or informal relationships. Often, they are influenced by the relationships of individual members, as these individuals interact not only as representatives of their groups but also in interpersonally (as cited in Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). Thus, interpersonal linkages frequently act as antecedents for the formation of intergroup relationships (Rosenkopf, Metiu, & George, 2001: p. 866). When interactions are disconnected among the organizational subunits, team members and individuals their relationship will not be close either. Disconnected interaction would support the situation of we vs. they or disconnection among the team members.

## **2.2. Misconception**

Most of the researches are based on misperception not on misconception and HR divisions are stressing this problem to come up how to deal with this type of conflicts. Chambers, Baron, and Inman (2006) reasoned that intergroup conflicts caused by the misperception that aroused from feeling hostility and mistrust. The Office of HRD, on the University of Wisconsin's website (n.d.), it is mentioned that misunderstanding each other's perception becomes a contributor to conflicts. Since misconception is faulty thinking which is not based on the facts it is possible that it would lead to conflicts. Strongly believing something without proof would turn into biases which would be challenging to change it.

### **3. SETTING**

The subject is set for this study is a local government organization at the division of planning with 35 employees in the US. The division is formed by four sections; transportation (it is also called Metro Planning Organization (MPO)), planning services, zoning compliance, and long-range planning. Each group has its own manager, an administrative specialist, planners, and senior planners. Although all of the sections are under the division of planning each section has different specific responsibilities and tasks. Each section has a different culture and each manager has his own managing style. For the local government transportation section's manager's title is "Transportation Section Manager" but for the Federal Government his title is "Director of MPO".

#### **3.1. Background**

In the division of planning 3 sections are funded by local government and large city projects are funded by state government. On the other hand, an MPO is a federally mandated and federally funded transportation policy-making organization in the United States that is made up of representatives from local, state and federal governmental transportation authorities. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs are channeled through this MPO planning process. Federal transportation legislation requires that an MPO has to be designated for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 people in order to carry out the MPO process, as a condition of Federal aid.

#### **3.2. Problem**

MPO staffs believed that the division including the director discriminates against to them because of jealousy, and not understanding their responsibilities. They also believe that because of the complexity of their work their salary should be higher than other planners and senior planners in the division. The feeling of discrimination was one of the hints that there were conflicts in the workplace from the point of view MPO. After short interviews with the employees in the division of planning, complains about gossip, disconnection, favoritism, jealousy, tardiness and some employees being lazy are mentioned among the employees. Employees from other sections accused the MPO staffs doing nothing. The situation needed to be deeply investigated therefore the question of "is there any misconception between the sections" is set as a research question for this study.

### **4. METHOD**

To explore if there is a connection between misconceptions and conflicts a case study method is chosen. A case study is thought to be better suited for this study. In the study, transportation section, (Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)) is taken as an intergroup

and other 3 sections are taken as out-groups. Although MPO is housed in the division of planning it is an independent organization and that's why MPO is chosen as intergroup. To be able to analyze if there are connections between misconceptions and conflicts 2 different studies conducted for data collection. In the study one data from MPO and in study two from other sections are collected. Data is collected by deep interviews with open-ended questions. Interviews took 30 to 60 minutes and recorded with the permission of individuals. Later on, transcripts are created from the records. After analyzing the transcripts carefully statements listed from the transcripts.

#### **4.1. Study One**

In this part, MPO's conception about their selves and other sections are examined by conducting interviews with every 8 senior planners and the director. From the interviews, the following conceptions are compiled to compare with the result of the second study to investigate if any of them are misconceptions. Conceptions that made lower than half of the MPO staff are omitted. The followings are compiled from the interviews of MPO staff.

##### ***MPO Staff Problem Statements***

*P2:* The big problem is that the division is more designed to deal with land development. One section gets more emphasis over the other 3 sections in the division. Decision making is not equal in the division among sections. Zoning is a driver for land use and comprehensive plan. It is out of balance. There are problems in the division. Actually, we work better with engineering and traffic engineering; not the planning division. We work with land use, zoning, and subdivision planners; even though we understand those other sections much better than the engineers. We are like a bridge between the two.

*P3:* They think that MPO is reviewed as a low priority within the division because their planning division director worked in planning and zoning for 30 years thus, planning and zoning are his priority. They think he sees transportation as a sidebar. In reality, we believe transportation is the engine that drives the entire economy, culture, and everything; if you do not have a mobile society you cannot conduct business, education, and healthcare and so on; you have to be mobile and functional to be successful.

*P4:* Transportation should be equal with other sections, not more important in the division. There are lots of MPOs that are independent. We need more independence. We have to put up with organizational restrictions of local government. They perceive us as a good budgeting source and they question why we are getting all of the things in the division. We should be able to do what we have to do but we are often turned down because of a perception that we should be just like other sections or departments.

*Housing problems:*

*P5:* Being housed in the local government brings lots of problems. Although the MPO is an independent entity, local rules and regulations apply to the MPO too.

*Budget problems:*

*P6:* It is often hard to purchase things. In the division not understanding the budgeting differences and complication of the work of the transportation section creates conflicts between sections. For example; the transportation section/MPO often updates the computers because we have a budget that is reserved for that. On the other hand, other sections do not have enough money for updating their computers; indeed they get older computers from the MPO. Sometimes in our local government bureaucracy affects us badly.

*P1:* We have our own funding but, for example, we cannot go to seminars or receive extra training because of the local government's budget cuts. They think that because other division's employees cannot go so we cannot go either. Changes in administrations can be another problem. We constantly are having to redo our organizational structure; it does not matter if it is working or not working. New administration changes are largely political. When we need to we cannot hire outside consultants because they will not allow us.

*HR problems:*

*P7:* Staff thinks that the HR people are a different breed. HR people think that people are machines or tools but they are not. You have to organize people some way. In our level, we have highly educated planners and conceptual people. We need to be viewed differently not like general services or the building inspection. We are not producing widgets or cleaning buildings, we are producing plans for today and for the future. We are trying to do things smarter and better. But HR and local government tend to see everybody the same. It is not right. In HR you have people who have no clue about transportation. The HR creates all kind of problems for us. Especially compensation; we cannot attract the best people because salaries are adjusted by the HR department. We have no control and we cannot offer any incentive which is very bad.

*P8:* Being housed in the local government creates problems. When a position is opened the local government's HR department reviews applications and picks top five candidates for interviews. Then the candidate's list is sent to the director of planning and MPO director to schedule interviews. The MPO director has no control in choosing the right candidates.

*P9:* One problem with this is HR people are not experts in the area. They just look at the education and some specific words while scanning the applications. Many other MPOs have

their own HR section which gives them the freedom to choose the right applicant. Recently we lost a technician position and everybody is overloaded but we cannot hire new employees now.

*IT and Technical Problems:*

P2: There are lots of restrictions on the internet and social media usage. We use Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter constantly for our public outreach which is required by the federal government. Only two people can access this site, that's all. To get permission takes a long time.

P4: The other thing is we cannot update our computers because of restrictions. It takes a long time and special permission to do that too. For example when we need to buy software they always ask why we need it. We have to explain them in detail.

P9: There is another problem; we need a car-pool, cellular phones etcetera and they took this away from us; basically, we have to do everything on our own. We use our own cellular phone for business purposes. Even to get mileage on city business reimbursements, you get lots of questions. It is very unproductive. There are lots of technical problems in this system.

*Challenges:*

P9: First of all, we have lots of responsibilities. We do not have authority over the city or the state; however, they are supposed to follow our plans. Coordination is a big challenge because there are lots of mistrust between agencies. We interact with federal, state and local agencies. All of the players are constantly changing. There is a challenge of being with the local government where we have regional responsibility. There are challenges with new legislation. It is getting harder and harder to do the simplest things.

P1: We involved into all aspects of planning, we examine land use planning to consider smart growth, compact growth, multi-use growth, where you do not necessarily have to get into your vehicle to go somewhere. We do everything with highly qualified and highly educated planners who are specialized in different parts of planning. We need to get the best tools like computers, and software. We use all kind of resources such as social media, databases and so on to have the most efficient transportation system now and in the future. If we fail to plan we plan to fail. We should be streamlining to be more functional.

From the MPO's interviews and transcripts, the following conception compiled to investigate if conceptions are misconceptions or not. Conceptions that not mentioned less than 5 employees are omitted.

*Conception 1:* 5 MPO staffs believe that they do not have more responsibilities than the other three sections.

*Conception 2:* 6 MPO staffs feel that they are a part of the division.

*Conception 3:* 5 MPO staffs believe that the other sections do not understand what MPO does.

*Conception 4:* 8 MPO staffs feel like they are the stepchild in the division.

*Conception 5:* 7 MPO staffs believe that there is injustice on treatment and they are treated differently.

*Conception 6:* 7 MPO staffs believe that other sections are jealous about the MPO.

*Conception 7:* 6 MPO staffs feel that other sections are watching them.

*Conception 8:* 8 MPO staffs agree that their work involves with other sections.

*Conception 9:* 7 MPO staff would like to know more about other sections.

*Conception 10:* 6 MPO staffs think that other sections are not willing to get involved with the MPO process.

*Conception 11:* 6 MPO staffs do not think that other sections have less thing things to do than the MPO.

*Conception 12:* 7 MPO staffs strongly agreed that their salary should be higher than other section's senior planners and MPO's work is more complex than the other sections.

*Conception 13:* 6 MPO staffs agreed that other sections are treated differently.

*Conception 14:* 5 MPO staffs believe that other sections have more advantages than the MPO.

*Conception 15:* 8 MPO staffs do not think that other section's work is more complicated.

*Conception 16:* 6 MPO staff agreed that there is miscommunication among the sections in the division.

#### **4.2. Study 2**

To be able to find out MPO's conception are misconceptions a survey handed to other 3 sections' employees (out-groups) and questions were based on MPO's conceptions. Participants of the study two included 27 employees in other 3 sections. Followings are some of the questions that are included in the survey.

1. Do you understand what MPO does?
2. Do you see the MPO as a part of the division of planning?
3. Do you think MPO staff should make a higher salary?
4. Do you appreciate the work of MPO?
5. Do you believe MPO should be housed independently?
6. Do you involve in the MPO process?
7. Do you think that there are miscommunication and conflicts among the sections?

The survey result showed that the other sections' employees understood only the basics of the MPO's jobs and its foundation. 20 of respondents agreed that they do not understand what

the MPO does, see the MPO as a part of the division and MPO has more advantages than the other sections. 15 respondents believed that; the MPO's job is not complicated, MPO's staff salary should not be higher than the other sections' employees and MPO is treated differently in terms of favorability in the division and they get priority on funding, there is a miscommunication among sections and conflicts exist among the sections, and the amount of the MPO's job is not less than their section. 10 of respondents agreed that the MPO's staff did not seem busy with work.

## 5. COMPARISON OF TWO STUDIES AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the two studies proved that some of the MPO's conceptions are misconceptions. From 16 conceptions 6 of it turned out to be misconceptions.

### 5.1. Misconceptions

*Conception 3:* The other sections do not understand what MPO does.

Results show that this is a misconception because other sections' knowledge about the MPO is at the intermediate level which is better than what MPO staffs think.

*Conception 4:* MPO staffs feel like they are the stepchild in the division.

Interestingly other sections' employee MPO is favored in the division

*Conception 10:* The other sections are not willing to get involved with the MPO process.

Unlike the MPO staff thoughts, other sections' employees are willing to involve with MPO process thus this conception is also a misconception.

*Conception 12:* Their salary should be higher than other section's senior planners and MPO's work is more complex than the other sections.

Members of out-groups respondents believe that the MPO's job is not complicated and MPO's staff salary should not be higher than the other section employees, therefore, conception 12 is turned out to be a misconception.

*Conception 13:* Other sections are treated differently.

This turned out to be a misconception because of not knowing funding of the MPO out-group members feel MPO gets priority and they favored in the division.

*Conception 14:* Other sections have more advantages than the MPO.

In contrast, out-group members believe that the MPO has more advantages than the other sections. So this conception is also a misconception.

## **5.2. Conflicts**

Because of misconceptions between the groups create gossiping among employees. People talk to each other about things that are not true. In this case employees pass misconceptions to each other. Although some gossips are positive but negative gossips have more effects on a work environment. Some of the most common reasons for gossiping are; a need to confirm a perspective, get support about an opinion, a need to mention to others something have not been right, and for speculations. Major negative effects of gossiping in a work environment are; untrustworthiness (between employees and to employers), immorality, concern in employees, misperception of facts, smudged reputations, and a lessening in efficiency.

Comparison of the two studies proved that there are misconceptions made by MPO toward other sections. It is certain that in the division "we" versus "them" concept exists. MPO feeling like stepchild would make them believe that they are treated unfairly which may lead to conflict. On the other hand other section believing that MPO is favored in the division this would lead them to think that they are treated unfairly too. Additionally, MPO employees think that they are being watched by the other sections' employees which came out to be true. Out-group stated that the MPO did not look busy with work which proves that they watch the MPO. Being watched by other employees would yield to stress. Moreover, the other sections' employee believing that MPO has more advantages can be taken as a proof of jealousy which would create an unpleasant work environment. The results of this study showed that because of misconceptions conflicts exist in the division.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This study's aim was to investigate if misconceptions lead to intergroup conflicts and increase attention among scholars for further research. According to Bornstein (2003), intergroup conflicts are usually based on conflicts of interests within the competing groups and this study in agreement with this statement. Although De Neys (2014) argues that it is hard to detect conflicts the subject is still worth to investigate further. Monteiro (2003) pointed out that professional status among other status categorize people. Although the professional status comparison is not included in this study MPO can be taken as a high-status group in case of professional status because MPO hires only senior planners and in other sections, there are more planners. High-status categorization may have a role in conflicts in the division. Burford (2012) concluded that the distinction of "different identities may be considered as influences on

teamwork and interprofessional learning, and issues in communication and assessment may be considered in terms of intergroup biases" (pg. 143).

The MPO staffs have some misconceptions toward other sections. Although the MPO staffs feel they are a part of the division, but they do not feel that they are accepted as a part of the division. This study confirmed that other sections see the MPO as a part of the division but appreciation is left out. Unlike the other sections, the MPO staff believed that their salary should be higher than other section's employees which other sections employees did not agree with it. The other section employees think that the MPO should stay in the division where the majority of MPO staffs agreed to leave the division. The reason for this difference of opinion might be that the other sections are not aware of the problems that the MPO faces just being housed in the local government. Study two confirmed that fewer people feel that there are miscommunications and conflicts among sections. On the other hand, the first study confirmed that MPO employees do not feel the same way because they stated there are conflicts and miscommunications among the sections. The study two also rebutted the conceptions of other sections not being aware of their jobs being involved with the MPO work. The study revealed that most of the employees in the division are aware of MPO's work.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

In this study, some misconceptions are found among the four sections which created conflicts. Brooker (2001) suggests that one of the most useful ways of inducing a constructive social change in business organizations is the process of intergroup problem solving (p.17). Employees having strong citizenship would also prevent conflicts in organizations. Tekin (2018) found that leader-member conversation affects organizational citizenship behavior positively and meaningfully. Therefore, weak organizational citizenship behavior has important negative effects on the organization especially, triggering anti-productive business behavior and a significant threat to the integrity and continuity of the organization (Uysal, 2018). Ruzgar (2018) stated that one of the factors that affect employees' perceived internal or external status is based on the managerial roles played by managers. Additionally, Durmuş (2016) proved that employee satisfaction increases by leadership behavior and their attendance and commitment to organization increases as well. Kaymaz (2018) also confirmed that organizational culture has a significant and positive effect on job satisfaction. In this case, the department director has the responsibility to establish positive citizenship among the employees.

As Keskin, Ayar Şentürk & Beydoğan (2018) mentioned information sharing and communicating information or experience, increases the productivity of the company, promotes the development of integration and provides a sustainable competitive advantage as well. The

department director should establish clear communication and encourage employees to share experiences with other employees. Furthermore, organizational culture plays an important role in preventing or reasoning possible workplace conflicts. Erden Ayhün (2018) stated the organizational culture perceived by the employee might be different in the organizational culture and the desired organizational culture dimensions. Thus, the director should make sure that everybody in the division is on the same page.

Intergroup behavior is also observed in this study. It is somehow obvious that there is we vs. they mentality in the division. Brooker (2001) reported that "in order to explore the dangers of a "we vs. them" situation, it is not necessary to do so in laboratory situation; it can be observed quite readily in an actual work situation" (p. 25). According to Fiol, Pratt and O'Connor (2009) leaders must promote more unified images of the in-group and in this case, the division director and the section managers should spend some efforts to unite the four sections. In-group biases toward other sections are also observed.

Numerous intergroup conflicts research can be found in the literature and many of them agreed that communication is one of the main reasons for intergroup conflicts. Another subject that popular in research is the biases toward out-groups (Caricati, Monacelli, 2010, Tekman, Hortaçsu, and Ok, 2008) and work-related identity. As Horton, Bayerl and Jacob (2014) commented that the last decade has seen a rapidly increasing literature focusing on work-related identity conflicts on all levels. Kılıç Akıncı (2018) stressed that job satisfaction is not enough for employees to do more than to accomplish the main job requirements. There is a high possibility that conflicts at workplaces might decrease job satisfaction and it would be true especially for the out-group in this study. Moreover negative work environment would create unpleasant feelings on employees and as Ertosun, Erdil, & Alpkan (2018) stated that impacts of such environment should be taken into consideration or be papered negative results such as loss of performance, and loss of employees.

In their study Enehaug, Helmersen, Mamelund (2016) found that employees who had directly involved with a conflict showed symptoms of mental health problems. As Choi (2013) mentioned conflict and style of conflict management have important influences on individual, group, and organizational effectiveness in workplaces. Taking into account the above statement, in every organization's leaders and upper-level managers have important roles to solve the problems and it is true for this study. Since the division director is not included in this study in further studies, it would be better to interview with a director who oversees the whole division in an organization. Thus the effects of a director on misconception conflicts can be better identified at workplaces.

Out-group's behavior toward in-group can be taken as sarcastic thus; observed organizational support would avoid employees from being in sarcastic to others (Kanbur and Canbek, 2018). Another study by Ergün and Eyisoy, (2018) demonstrated that providing an opportunity to team members for improvement increased the team's cooperation. They also found that communication among the teams has an impact on team performance, training and development, team spirit, and support for team members. Certainly, conflict management training has to be given to all employees for a healthy organization.

Future studies about misconceptions and conflicts should include type conflicts that misconception reasons. Since the author worked in the division and being an insider future studies should be conducted by an outside researcher. Looking at the subject on a small scale the findings cannot be generalized, thus further studies should be formed on a larger scale as well.

## REFERENCES

- Avgar, A. C., Neuman, E. J. (2015). Seeing conflict: A study of conflict accuracy in work teams. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, Volume 8, Number 2, Pages 65–84.
- Brass, D.J., Galaskiewicz, J., Greve, R. H., Tsai, B. W. (2004). Taking stock of networks and organizations: Multilevel perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 47, No. 6, 795–817.
- Bornstein, G. (2003). Intergroup conflict: Individual, group, and collective interests. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 129–145.
- Brooker, M. W., (2001), Eliminating intergroup conflicts, *S.A.M. Advanced Management Journal*, Vol. 40, 16-25.
- Brubaker, D., Noble, C., Fincher, R., Kee-Young, S., Press S. (2014). Conflict resolution in the workplace: What will the future bring? *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 4, DOI: 10.1002/crq.21104
- Burford, B. (2012) Group processes in medical education: learning from social identity theory. *Medical Education*, 46: 143–152, doi:10.1111/j.1365-2923.2011.04099.x
- Caricati, L., Monacelli, N. (2010) Social hierarchies and intergroup discrimination: The case of the intermediate status group. *British Journal of Social Psychology*. 49. 637-646.
- Chambers, J.R., Baron, R.S., Inman, M.L. (2006). Misperceptions in intergroup conflict, disagreeing about what we disagree about. *Psychological Science*, Volume 17.
- Choi, Y. (2013). The influence of conflict management culture on job satisfaction. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 41(4), 687-692 dx.doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2013.41.4.687
- De Neys, W. (2014). Conflict detection, dual process, and logical intuitions: Some clarifications. *Thinking & Reasoning*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 169–187.
- Durmuş, A. (2016). Research of relationship between leadership behavior of managers and organizational commitment of employees using statistical methods. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*. Vol.:4 Issue: 2, pp. 203-225. doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v4i2.154
- Enehaug, H., Helmersen, M., Mamelund, S. E. (2016). Individual and organizational well-being when workplace conflicts are on the agenda: A mixed-methods study. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*, Volume 6, Number 1.
- Erden Ayhün S. (2018), Örgütsel Süreçlerdeki Kuşaklararası Çatışmalarda Kültürel Değişimlerin Rolü: Akademisyenlere Yönelik Bir Araştırma, *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*. 6(1): 209-236 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i1.205>
- Ergün, E. & Eyisoy, M.E. (2018), Takım Çalışması Özelliklerinin Takım Performansına Etkisi Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, Vol.: 6 Issue: 4, pp. 1455-1475 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i4.406>.
- Ertosun, O. G. & Erdil, O. & Alpkın, L. (2018). Pozitif psikolojik sermaye ve çalışan adanmışlığı ilişkisi – deneysel bir çalışma, *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*. Vol.:6 Issue: 4, pp. 1033-1052. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i4.295>.
- Fiol, C., M., Pratt, M. G., and O'Connor, E., J., (2009) Managing intractable identity conflicts. *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 34, No 1, pp. 32-55.
- Freres, M. (2013). Financial Costs of Workplace Conflict. *Journal of the International Ombudsman Association*. volume 6, number 2, pp 83-94.
- Halavy, N., Bornstein, G., and Sagiv, L. (2008). “In-group love” and “out-group hate” as motives for individual participation in intergroup conflict: A new game paradigm. *Psychological Science*, 19(4):405-11. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9280.2008.02100.x.
- Hays, J. (2008). Workplace Conflict and How Businesses Can Harness it to Thrive. *CPP Global Human Capital Report*. Retrieved from [http://img.en25.com/Web/ CPP/Conflict\\_report.pdf](http://img.en25.com/Web/ CPP/Conflict_report.pdf).
- Hong, Y., Levy, S.R., and Chiu C., (2011). The contribution of the lay theories approach to the study groups, *Personality & Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 98-106.
- Horton, K. E., Bayerl, P. S., Jacobs, G. (2014). Identity conflicts at work: An integrative framework. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35, S6 –S22 DOI: 10.1002/job.1893
- Huddy, L., (2004). Contrasting theoretical approaches to intergroup relations, *International Society of Political Psychology*, Vol. 25, No 6.
- Kanbur E. & Canbek M. (2018), Algılanan Örgütsel Adaletin Örgütsel Sinizm Üzerine Etkisi: Algılanan Örgütsel Desteğin Aracılık Rolü, *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal* Vol.:6 Issue: 3.
- Katz, N.H., Flynn, L.T (2013). Understanding conflict management systems and strategies in the workplace. A pilot study. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 4, DOI: 10.1002/crq.21070

- Kaymaz K. (2018), Örgüt Kültürünün İş Tatmini Üzerindeki Etkileri: Diana C. Phesey'in Örgüt Kültürü Sınıflandırması Ekseninde Bir Araştırma (2018). *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal* Vol.:6 Issue: 4, pp. 1053-1070. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i4.282>
- Keskin H. & Ayar Şentürk H. & Beydoğan A. (2018), Yenilikçilik kalitesi perspektifinden bilgi paylaşımı, entelektüel sermaye ve performans ilişkisi. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, 6(3): 71-94. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i3.344>.
- Kilduff, M., Tsai, W. (2005) Review: Social networks and organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 207-209.
- Kılıç Akıncı S. (2018), Investigating The role of job satisfaction: Does it act as a moderator or mediator between organizational identification and work engagement? *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal* Vol.:6 Issue: 4 pp. 1322-1335 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i4.353>
- Kwok, W. W., Wright, B., and Kashima, Y. (2007), Constructing intergroup relationships in social communication. *Japanese Psychological Research*, 49: 121-135. doi:10.1111/j.1468-5884.2007.00339.x
- Lechner, C., Frankenberger K., and Floyd S. W., (2010) Task contingencies in the curvilinear relationship between intergroup networks and initiative performance, *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 53, No.4, 865-889.
- Lipponen, J., Leskinen, J. (2006). Conditions of contact, common in-group identity, and in-group bias toward contingent workers. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 146(6), 671-684.
- Monteiro, M. B. (2003). Dealing with intergroup conflicts in organizations: A challenge to the right of diversity. *Portuguese Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 2 Issue 2, p79.
- O'Neil, T. A., Allen, N. J., and Hastings, S. E. (2013) Examining the “pros” and “cons” of team conflict: A team-level meta-analysis of task, relationship, and process conflict. *Human Performance*, 26:236-260, ISSN: 0895-9285 print/1532-7043 online DOI: 10.1080/08959285.2013.795573
- Rispens, S., Greer, L., Jehn, K.A., and Thatcher, S.M.B (2011). Not so bad after all: How relational closeness buffers the association between relationship conflict and helpful and deviant group behaviors. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, Volume 4, Number 4, 277-296.
- Rosenkopf, L., Metiu, A. & V. P. George, (2001) From the bottom up? Technical committee activity and alliance formation. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 46(4):748-772.
- Rüzgar N. (2018), Hizmet Sektöründe Faaliyet Gösteren İşletme Yöneticilerinin, Mintzberg Taksonomisine Göre Üstlendikleri Roller, İnsan Kaynaklarının İçsellik Ve Dışsallık Statüsü Algısına Etkisi: Bir Uygulama. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, Vol.: 6 Issue: 4, pp. 1101-1117 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i4.325>.
- Slaikue, K. A. & Hasson, R. H. (1998). *Controlling the Costs of Conflict: How to Design a System for Your Organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Tajfel, H, Billig M.G., Bundy R. P. and Flament C., (1971), Social categorization and intergroup behavior, *European. Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 149-178.
- Taylor, A. K., & Kowaski, P. (2004). Naïve psychological science: the prevalence, strength, and source of misconceptions. *The Psychological Record*, 54, 15 -25.
- Tekin E. (2018), Lider-Üye Etkileşiminin Örgütsel Vatandaşlık Davranışı Üzerindeki Etkisinde Örgütsel Adalet Algısının Aracılık Rolü. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, 6(1): 291-314 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i1.225>
- Tekman, H.G., Hortaçsu, N., Ok, A.B. (2008). Message content, group identification and the intergroup sensitivity effect: Responses to the message and recognition memory. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 11, 279-285. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-839X.2008.00268.x
- Turner, J.C., Brown, R.J. and Tajfel, H. (1979). Social comparison and group interest in ingroup favoritism. *European. Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 9, 187-204.
- The University of Wisconsin, The role perception in conflicts, retrieved from <https://www.ohrd.wisc.edu/home/HideATab/FullyPreparedtoManage/ConflictResolution/>
- Uysal, H. T. (2018), Çalışanlarda İşe Yabancılaşmanın Üretkenlik Karşıtı İş Davranışlarına Etkisi. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, Vol.: 6 Issue: 4 Year, pp. 1434-1454 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v6i4.405>