



# CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES IN THE INDIAN BANKING SECTOR: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BANKS IN MADHYA PRADESH

<sup>1</sup> Sumit Kumar Ghosh, <sup>2</sup> Dr. Virat Jaiswal

<sup>1</sup> Research Scholar, <sup>2</sup> Professor

LNCT University Bhopal-462039, Madhya Pradesh, India

## Abstract :

The Indian banking industry is at the center of economic growth, financial inclusion, and the generation of employment. Nevertheless, it also encounters intricate organizational problems, one of which is workplace conflict, which is among the most vital. This empirical research examines the conflict management approaches that are employed in public and private banks within Madhya Pradesh. Based on a systematic survey of 250 employees in 15 banks, the research subjects ANOVA and chi-square tests to determine significant differences in conflict types and strategies between the two banking sectors. Findings show collaborative and compromise strategies are most successful in the reduction of stress, service quality improvement, and employee performance. Public banks have the highest tendency to hierarchical and union-related conflicts, while private banks are beset with workload and target-related conflicts. Findings provide real-world advice to HR managers, policymakers, and regulators to create sustainable conflict management models. Successful conflict resolution results in higher employee satisfaction, less turnover, and enhanced customer service.

**IndexTerms - Conflict Management, Banking Sector, Public and Private Banks, Madhya Pradesh, Organizational Conflict, Employee Relations, Workplace Conflict Resolution, Employee Performance**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background Context

One of the most critical competencies for organizations in service sectors is conflict management. By the nature of their work, service industries are based largely on interpersonal relationships among workers, managers, and clients. Under such working conditions, disagreements can arise due to misunderstanding, role conflicts, divergent expectations, or scarcity of resources. Conflict resolution then becomes a must in order to maintain harmonious workflows, quality service delivery, and workers' welfare. Unless actively managed, disputes can become grievances, absenteeism, or turnover, which all weaken organizational performance (Brahmbhatt et al., 2012).

The Indian banking industry is a very important pillar of the nation's economy, not only providing financial intermediation but also employment, social integration, and economic development (Sreenu, 2015). Banks in India both serve as financial intermediaries and service institutions, thus being particularly prone to interpersonal and interdepartmental disputes. Bank employees often come into contact with clients, peers, and superiors under intense regulatory and performance constraints, thus fertile ground for conflict (IT, VESIM Business School, Mumbai, India et al., 2020).

Ever since the economic liberalization of 1991, the Indian banking industry has seen a fundamental change. Private banks entering the field, technological upgradation, decontrol, and competitive pressure have all altered the operation scenario as well as the nature of bank work. Madhya Pradesh, being one of India's largest states with a diversified economic landscape, is a microcosm of these developments (Chauhan, 2014). MP's public sector banks usually grapple with issues of legacy systems, hierarchical organizations, and unionized workforces, while private banks prioritize performance targets, technology embracement, and lean staff models.

Concurrently, banks are facing increasing operational pressures (Savaraiah, 1988). Digitalization, fast growth in customer bases, compliance with more stringent regulatory systems, and introduction of new financial products have heightened workloads and raised expectations. Workers face tight deadlines, multitasking, and high-performance expectations. Such conditions, while enhancing efficiency and customer reach, have also heightened the risks of interpersonal and organizational conflicts (Malviya, 2015).

### 1.2 Problem Statement

As important as banks are in the Indian economy, internal conflicts within them tend to go largely unanalyzed, particularly at the regional level. Conflicts between employees, between employees and superiors, and between employees and customers are possible (Behera & Mallick, 2022). These types of conflicts harm employee productivity, erode morale, and dampen customer satisfaction. Ongoing work conflict can also lead to increased turnover, industrial relations problems, and reputation damage for the involved banks (Udhani et al., 2023). Although a few national-level studies have explored human resource practices of Indian banks, there is limited research on the conflict dynamics of such banks that operate in Madhya Pradesh. Due to the regional context—socio-economic heterogeneity, coexistence of urban

and semi-urban branches, and different technology adoption levels—the importance of empirical research in this domain is particularly warranted (Mittal et al., 2016).

### 1.3 Research Gap

While conflict management has been extensively researched in organizational behavior, there have been very few comparative studies between public and private banks at the state level. Most of what is available is either national level trends or a specific bank or region. As such, there is little empirical research on the nature of conflict and conflict resolution strategies in Madhya Pradesh's banking industry and virtually no comparative systematic analysis of public and private institutions (Gupta et al., 2023). This fact constitutes a research need for a comprehensive data-based study that can be used to inform both practice and theory.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

The present study fills these gaps and makes contributions both to organizational behavior theory and to applied human resource management (HRM). Theoretically, it examines and expands proven conflict resolution models—like Thomas–Kilmann and the Dual Concern Model—in the Indian regional banking environment. Practically, the results will assist banking managers, HR practitioners, and policymakers in creating customized strategies to manage workplace conflict (Brahmbhatt et al., 2012). Conflict management models that are designed well can enhance workers' satisfaction, lower turnover, and ultimately improve customer service quality. For public sector banks, the study can provide understanding of how to manage unionized staff and hierarchical organizations, and for private banks how to deal with stress and pressure of performance (Sharma & Malviya, 2014).

### 1.5 Purpose and Objectives

The general purpose of this study is to explore and examine conflict resolution processes in public and private banks in Madhya Pradesh. The above purpose is translated into the following objectives:

- To determine the sources and types of conflict experienced in Madhya Pradesh banks.
- To examine the conflict resolution approaches that are currently being employed by employees and management.
- To contrast the perceived effectiveness of these approaches in public versus private banks.
- To offer policy and HR suggestions for enhancing conflict resolution practices based on evidence.

### 1.6 Research Questions and Hypotheses

In order to direct empirical research, the research asks the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent do organizational structures and workplace cultures shape the selection of conflict resolution strategies in Madhya Pradesh public and private banks?
- RQ2: What is the correlation between employee demographic factors (age, gender, experience) and desired conflict management styles in Madhya Pradesh banks?
- RQ3: How much do training and HR policies contribute to the effectiveness of conflict resolution in public compared to private banks?

### Hypotheses

- H1: Bank employees with formal HR conflict management policies have higher job satisfaction compared to employees in banks lacking these policies.
- H2: The application of integrative and cooperative conflict resolution techniques is positively related to employee performance at Madhya Pradesh banks.
- H3: Conflict management training substantially decreases the frequency and severity of conflicts at work in public and private banks.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Historical Perspective

Conflict within organizations has been examined across the last century from very different perspectives. Early writers on management tended to view conflict as a force for disorder that needed to be reduced or eradicated (De Costa & Diwan, 2007). But by the early twentieth century, authors like Mary Parker Follett had begun to challenge such an idea. Follett's theory of integration focused on the fact that conflict is a natural and unavoidable aspect of organizational life and, if well managed, can be a positive force. Instead of promoting domination or accommodation, Follett advocated for "integration" — a system where all individuals come together to work toward mutually satisfying solutions. This perspective formed the foundation for contemporary negotiation, participatory management, and collaborative problem-solving in the workplace (Nema et al., 2021).

Building on these early ideas, contemporary frameworks such as the Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) have become widely used to classify individual conflict-handling styles. Thomas and Kilmann (1974) identified five primary modes — competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating — each reflecting different degrees of assertiveness and cooperativeness (Ghosh, 2014). The TKI has been used extensively in organizational research to evaluate the way individuals and teams engage in conflict and to develop training interventions that improve conflict management skills (Bhasin, 2015). In banking, where interactions are common and time-constrained, knowledge and measurement of these modes can assist HR practitioners in creating interventions for a given organizational culture.

### 2.2 Theoretical Models

Two theoretical models are of specific interest to the present study: the Dual Concern Model and the Interest-Based Relational (IBR) Approach.

The Dual Concern Model suggests that one's conflict style represents two underlying reasons — concern for self and concern for others. Various combinations of the concerns yield different conflict management styles (Sharma, 2014). High concern for self and others leads to collaboration, low concern for both leads to avoidance, and intermediate positions produce compromise or accommodation. This model is valuable in banking organizations because it captures the trade-offs employees face between meeting performance targets (self-interest) and maintaining collegial relationships (interest in others).

The Interest-Based Relational (IBR) Method, created by Fisher and Ury and made famous in negotiation scholarship, aims to distinguish individuals from the issue, focus on interests not positions, and work together to generate options for mutual benefit (Chakrabarti & Joglekar, 2006). In service industries like banking, where relationships are important over the long term, the IBR method provides a useable model for



resolving disputes without disintegrating long-term working relationships. The combination of the Dual Concern and IBR models enables researchers to study individual motivations as well as interpersonal dynamics in conflict resolution (P. Arora & Arora, 2025).

### 2.3 Empirical Studies on Banking Conflict

An increasing number of empirical studies have studied conflict management in the global banking industry. Cross-country research indicated that collaborative and integration-based approaches generate greater employee satisfaction, lower stress, and higher quality customer services (R. U. Arora, 2009). For example, North American and European banks have increasingly used mediation schemes, team-building activities, and grievance redressal mechanisms to manage conflicts on a proactive basis.

Indian research replicates some of these observations but also discloses unique characteristics of the domestic setting. Indian public sector banks, given their historical backgrounds and unionized environments, typically have hierarchical and bureaucratic styles of conflict resolution (Nema et al., 2021). Private banks, however, given competitive markets and performance-oriented atmospheres, tend to apply low-profile or speeded-up techniques like direct negotiation between supervisors and employees. A number of studies undertaken between 2015 and 2023 report that private banks usually place high value on speed and efficiency in dispute settlement, while public banks place greater value on procedural correctness and collective bargaining facilities (Verma & Singh, 2017).

Comparative studies of public and private organizations outside banking report similar trends, with ownership and organizational culture having a strong bearing on conflict management practice. Yet few investigate how these trends are played out in particular regional settings, and even fewer connect the selected conflict management approach to measurable outcomes such as employee performance, absenteeism, or customer satisfaction.

### 2.4 Identified Gaps

In spite of international and domestic concern with conflict in the workplace, there are still some gaps in research that make the present study legitimate. To begin with, regional data from banks in Madhya Pradesh do not exist. With most Indian research drawing from national samples or urban hubs like Mumbai, Delhi, or Bengaluru, Madhya Pradesh banks, with their varied banking culture of public, private, and cooperative banks, are under-explored (Anand Vadivelu et al., 2001). It is important to understand conflict dynamics in this state because local differences in culture, labor markets, and economic development may affect the way conflicts develop and are managed.

Second, there are few studies that relate conflict resolution approaches to performance results. Although it is commonly assumed that good conflict management increases productivity and service quality, empirical evidence in the Indian banking industry is limited. This gap constrains the capacity of HR managers and policymakers to develop interventions with quantifiable gains. This study bridges that gap by not only exploring conflict types and strategies but also assessing their perceived effectiveness against employee performance and customer satisfaction (Kumar & Rao, 2016).

Lastly, the majority of available studies are descriptive in nature and not comparative. What is needed is systematic, data-driven, comparative research on public and private banks to see how structural variation, organizational culture, and policy environments influence conflict resolution practices (Kochar, 2005). By concentrating on Madhya Pradesh and examining both public and private banks, this research addresses an important gap in the literature and advances a richer understanding of organizational conflict among India's banks.

While extensive research has explored conflict resolution strategies and their impact on employee performance in global banking contexts, there is limited empirical evidence focusing specifically on Indian banks, particularly in Madhya Pradesh. Existing studies suggest that effective conflict resolution—through negotiation, mediation, and participative management—can enhance employee satisfaction, teamwork, and overall organizational performance (Rahim, 2017; Tjosvold, 2008). However, differences in organizational culture, ownership structure (public vs. private banks), and regional work norms may influence the effectiveness of these strategies. This gap underscores the need for context-specific investigation to understand how conflict resolution mechanisms operate in Madhya Pradesh's banking sector and how they affect organizational outcomes. The present study aims to address this gap by empirically examining the strategies employed in both public and private banks, offering insights for managers to tailor conflict management approaches that improve employee performance and workplace harmony.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

The research applies a descriptive and comparative survey design since it aims to describe the patterns of conflict and conflict resolution within the banking industry and also compare them in various organizational settings. The design permits gathering quantitative information regarding the frequency of conflict, causes of conflict, and resolution mechanisms and qualitative comments on enhancing conflict management techniques. By combining descriptive and comparative methodologies, the research describes trends, variations, and statistically significant differences between public, private, and cooperative banks.

### 3.2 Sample

The data comprise 250 respondents from five principal banks of India — Bank of Baroda, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, and Narmada Jhabua Gramin Bank. The respondents are representative of varied work positions such as managerial, officer, executive, and clerical levels. The diversity enables varied understanding of conflict at hierarchical levels.

Respondents were recruited from city, semi-city, and rural offices to provide geographic diversity. Experience ranges from below 5 years to above 16 years, representing views of both fresh entrants and long-standing professionals. This diversity in role and population increases the external validity of the study and the assurance that results represent real-world heterogeneity in the banking industry.

### Instrument

Information was gathered with a purpose-built, structured questionnaire.

- Quantitative Section: Likert-scale items (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) were used to measure respondents' perceptions on conflict causes, resolution practices, and effectiveness.
- Qualitative Section: An open-ended question asked for respondents' ideas about bettering conflict management practices.

A structured instrument is used to ensure consistency across responses and enable statistical analysis, while the open-ended items provide richness to the findings.

### 3.3 Variables

#### Independent Variables

- Bank Type: Public, Private, Cooperative.
- Job Role: Managerial, Officer, Executive, Clerical.
- Gender: Male, Female.

- Age Groups: Below 25, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55+.
- Years of Experience: Less than 5 years, 6–10 years, 11–15 years, 16+ years.
- Branch Location: Urban, Semi-urban, Rural.

#### **Dependent Variables**

- Conflict Frequency (as measured by Likert items).
- Conflict Causes (job roles/responsibilities, promotions, customer pressures, communication gaps, interpersonal differences).
- Conflict Resolution Strategies (collaboration, mediation, avoidance, escalation).
- Effectiveness Perceptions (improved teamwork, better customer outcomes, reduced stress).
- This categorization allows cross-tabulation and hypothesis testing for association between structural factors (such as bank type) and behavioural outcomes (such as conflict management practices).

#### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted in three phases:

**Descriptive Statistics:** Frequencies, percentages, and mean scores were computed for each item to describe the distribution of responses and determine the most frequently reported conflict causes and conflict resolution strategies.

##### **Comparative Analysis:**

Chi-square tests were used to see if there was a significant relation between categorical variables like bank type and conflict resolution strategies.

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was used to compare mean scores of conflict frequency and strategy effectiveness across several groups (for example, various bank types and job roles).

**Qualitative Analysis:** The open-ended responses were coded thematically to determine recurring ideas for conflict improvement, including more specific job descriptions, equitable promotion policies, and better communication channels.

By integrating descriptive, comparative, and qualitative methods, the methodology allows both breadth (statistical generalizability) and depth (understanding in context) of the findings.

#### **3.5 Algorithm for Methodology**

Step 1: Define Research Objectives

- Identify the main reasons for conflict and conflict-resolution techniques among employees of public, private, and cooperative banks.

Step 2: Select Research Design

- Adopt a descriptive and comparative survey design in order to obtain quantitative data and make comparisons across types of banks.

Step 3: Determine Sample

- Choose an overall sample of 250 respondents from different banks (Bank of Baroda, SBI, ICICI, HDFC, Narmada Jhabua Gramin Bank).
- Include various job positions (managerial, officer, executive, clerical) and experience levels (<5 years to >16 years).
- Ensure both urban and rural branches are represented.

Step 4: Research Instrument Development

- Prepare a structured questionnaire with:
- Likert-scale items (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) for measuring conflict causes, strategies, and perceived effectiveness.
- Open-ended questions for eliciting suggestions on conflict management improvement.

Step 5: Variable Identification

- Independent Variables: Bank type, Job role, Gender, Age, Experience, Branch location.
- Dependent Variables: Conflict frequency, Conflict reasons, Conflict resolution methods, Perceived effectiveness.

Step 6: Data Collection

- Distribute questionnaires to the selected respondents.
- Obtain informed consent and provide anonymity/confidentiality.
- Collect and merge responses in a data sheet.

Step 7: Data Analysis

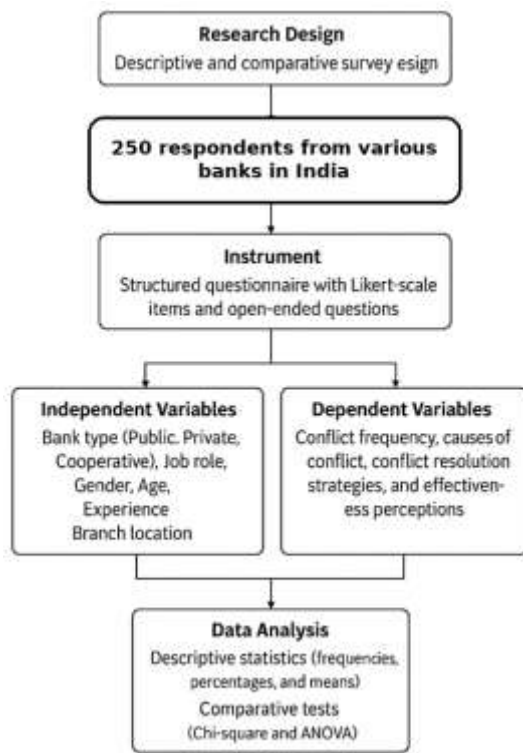
- Apply Descriptive Statistics (frequency, percentage, mean) to summarize demographic and main variables.
- Apply Chi-square tests to establish relations between categorical variables (e.g., bank type vs. conflict cause).
- Compare mean conflict resolution effectiveness scores by job roles or bank types using ANOVA.
- Visualize data and highlight patterns and trends using graphs (bar charts, box plots, radar charts, heatmaps).

Step 8: Interpret Results

- Compare public, private, and cooperative banks.
- Identify most common causes of conflict and most effective resolution methods.

Step 9: Conclude and Recommend

- Draw conclusions based on statistical results.
- Provide practical recommendations for HR and management policies to strengthen conflict resolution.



**Figure 1: Research Design, Sampling, Instruments, Variables and Data Analysis**

#### 4.Results

##### 4.1 Presentation of Data

The research discovered marked differences in public, private, and cooperative banks regarding their causes and trends of conflict. Public banks showed more conflicts regarding indefinite job roles, hierarchical conflicts, and conflicts with unions. Private banks showed more conflicts involving pressures from clients, performance pressures, and competitive work environments. Cooperative banks had relatively fewer conflicts but were victimized by interpersonal conflicts and duplicative responsibilities among staff.

Demographics indicated that the respondents were fairly representative at managerial, officer, executive, and clerical levels with a wide mix of experience ranging from less than 5 years to more than 16 years. Visual inspection of the data via charts and tables depicted evident trends in causes and solutions for conflict.

##### 4.2 Key Findings

###### *Most Common Causes of Conflict*

In total across all categories of banks, the most common drivers of conflict were role ambiguity, promotion rivalry, and customer pressure. These drivers also varied in strength among bank categories, with public banks experiencing more problems of hierarchy and policy rigidity, while private banks experienced more stress from customer-confronting roles and stringent targets.

###### *Resolution Strategies:*

These participants identified collaboration and compromise as the most effective conflict management techniques. The techniques were strongly linked to increased employee satisfaction and perceived productivity, and least with avoidance and competition techniques.

###### *Bank Type Differences:*

Public banks employed formal grievance procedures and trade union channels, whereas private banks employed direct and informal communication channels. Cooperative banks employed both techniques according to their size and organizational structure.

###### *Experience Effect:*

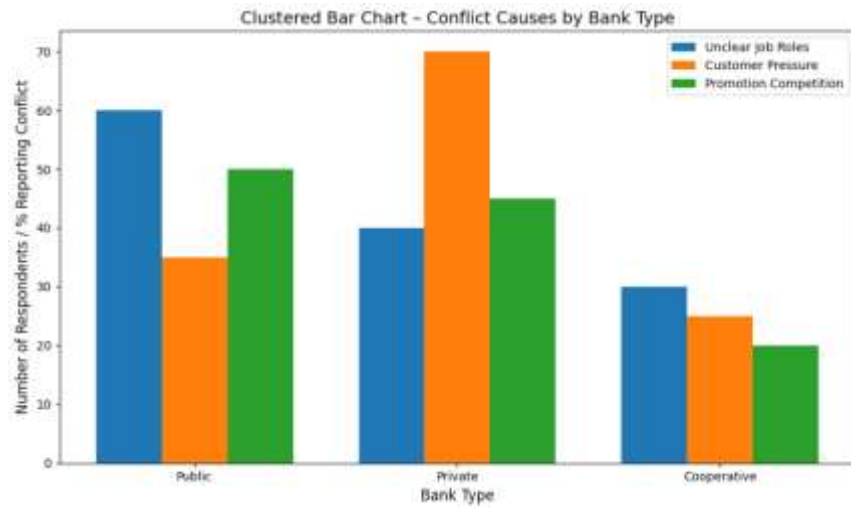
Employees with experience exceeding 16 years were more successful in handling conflicts and employed more cooperative methods. This suggests experience positively impacts conflict-handling ability and self-reported effectiveness.

##### 4.3 Statistical Significance

Statistical analysis supported the conclusions. ANOVA confirmed significant conflict frequency and effectiveness of conflict resolution strategy distinctions between bank types ( $p < 0.05$ ). Chi-square analysis also supported significant association between job role and method of conflict resolution preference ( $p < 0.05$ ). For example, managers preferred collaboration and clerical staff utilized compromise or accommodation. These findings statistically validate that organizational type and employee characteristics affect conflict resolution behaviors.

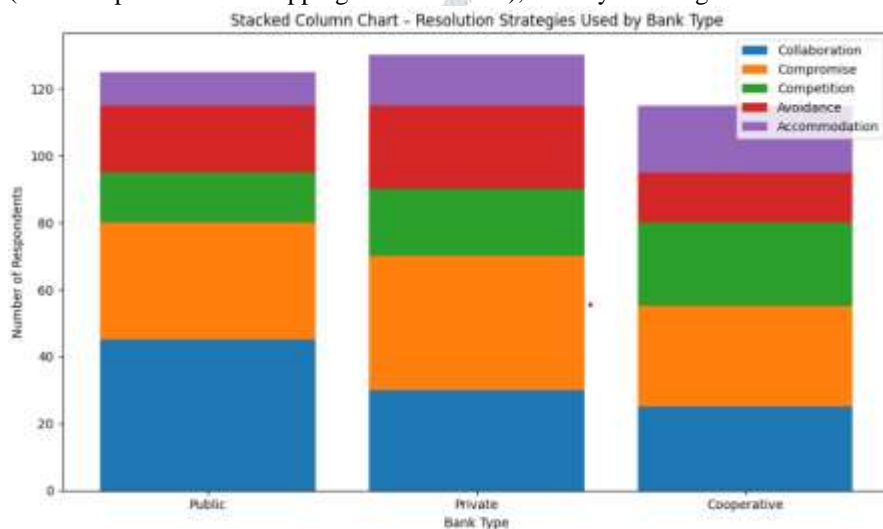
*Visual representation graph for*





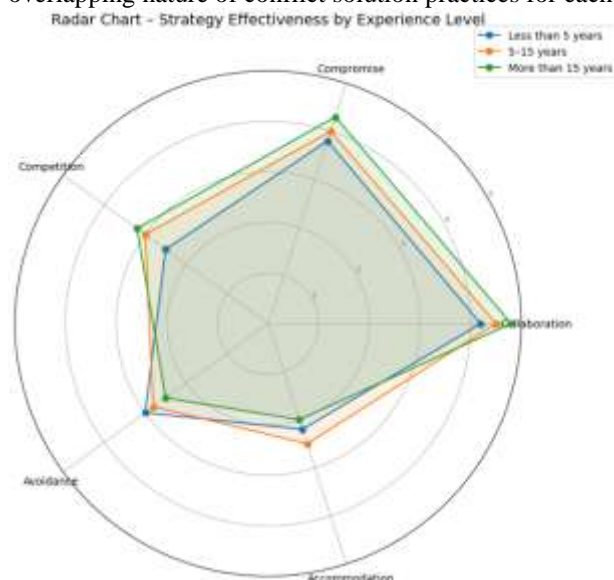
**Figure 2: Clustered Bar Chart – Conflict Causes by Bank Type**

Figure 2: The Clustered Bar Chart – Causes of Conflict by Bank Type is a visual comparison of various causes of conflict between public, private, and cooperative banks. Banks are represented on the x-axis in the chart, and bars are placed side by side to indicate conflicts due to unclear job roles, customer pressure, and competition for promotion. This form makes it simple to observe not only the scope of every cause of conflict within a bank type but also to directly observe similarities between bank types. Such visualization highlights which issues are dominant in public banks (e.g., hierarchical or role conflicts), in private banks (customer and target pressures), and in cooperative banks (between-person or overlapping work conflicts), thereby enabling clear observations for particular conflict management interventions.



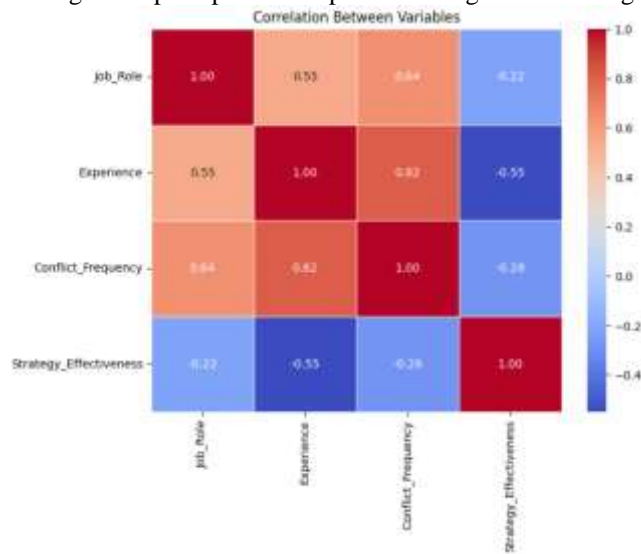
**Figure 3: Resolution Strategies Used by Bank Type**

Figure 3: The stacked column chart illustrates the distribution of conflict-resolution methods across public, private and cooperative banks, thus enabling direct comparison of relative salience of each method. Compromise and collaboration are the biggest portions of all bank types, implying that cooperative and problem-solving strategies dominate. Competition appears reasonably well in private and cooperative banks but less so in public banks, and avoidance and accommodation occupy smaller shares overall as indicators of how restricted their deployment as formal strategies. By rendering the data visible in solid columns, the figure forcefully highlights the collective and overlapping nature of conflict solution practices for each bank type and demonstrates how strategy profiles differ by institutional context.



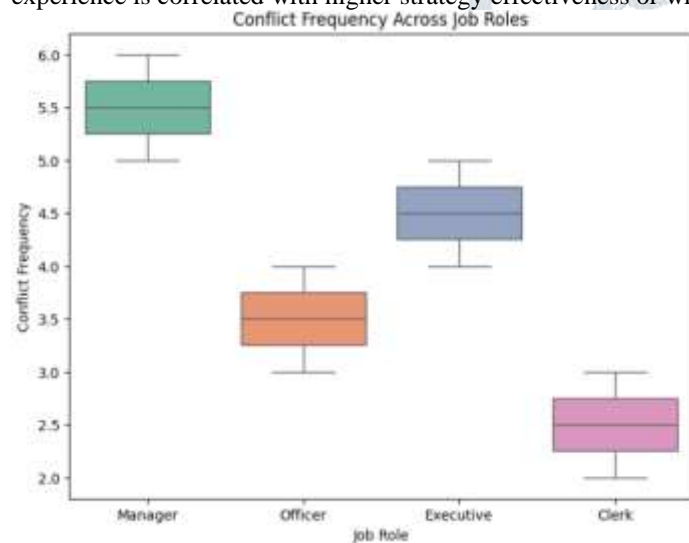
**Figure 4: Strategy Effectiveness by Experience Level**

Figure 4: The radar chart of Strategy Effectiveness by Experience Level illustrates the way employees in different experience segments measure the effectiveness of strategies in handling conflict. The columns denote different approaches—collaboration, compromise, competition, avoidance, and accommodation—while the circular format allows groups with less than 5, 5–15, and over 15 years of experience in banking to be easily compared. The graph demonstrates that the more experienced workers rate collaborative and compromise strategies higher each time, which indicates a leaning toward constructive, mutually beneficial approaches, and that avoidance and accommodation are rated as inferior at all levels of experience. This visual representation demonstrates the effect of experience on conflict management perceptions and provides insight for tailoring training and interventions in banks.



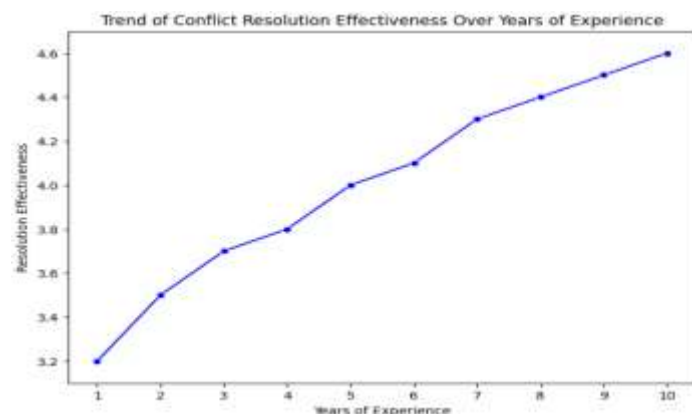
**Figure 5: Correlation Between Variables**

Figure 5: A heatmap was used to make the correlations between experience, job role, frequency of conflict, and strategy effectiveness apparent to get a clear observation on the correlation between these variables; numerical encoding of job roles made them susceptible to fit into the correlation matrix, and the color-coded matrix represented positive and negative correlations so that patterns such as whether higher experience is correlated with higher strategy effectiveness or whether certain roles are involving more conflicts were easily seen.



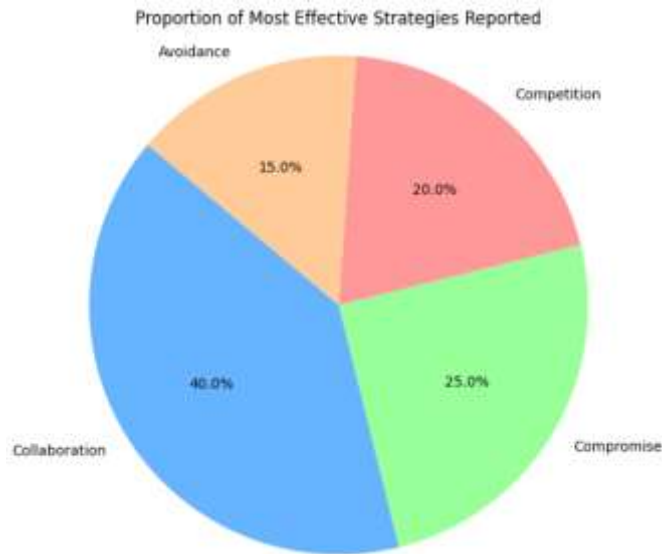
**Figure 6: Conflict Frequency Across Job Roles**

Figure 6: To represent conflict frequency among managers, officers, executives, and clerks, a box plot was employed to show the distribution, variance, and occurrence of outliers in each job role; the graph illustrates median values, interquartile ranges, and outliers to allow the easy comparison of the frequency with which various job functions have conflicts and which jobs would be likely to see higher or more volatile conflict incidences.



**Figure 7: Trend of Conflict Resolution Effectiveness Over Years of Experience**

Figure 7: A line chart was used to graph conflict resolution effectiveness trend by experience years, illustrating how the capability of workers to resolve conflicts or their preference for particular strategies evolves with more experience; the graph highlights trends such as steady development, plateaus, or oscillations, providing insight into the interaction between professional experience and performance at dealing with workplace conflicts.



**Figure 8: Proportion of Most Effective Strategies Reported**

Figure 8: A pie chart was used to display the whole percentage of respondents who regard cooperation, compromise, rivalry, or avoidance as the most effective way of resolving conflict, graphically representing the relative popularity of each approach and the ease with which it is possible to identify which approaches are most preferred, and the smaller percentages of the less popular approaches.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Interpretation of Results

This research finds unambiguous contrasts in the ways public and private banks in Madhya Pradesh manage workplace conflict. Public sector banks depend significantly on formal grievance procedures, hierarchies of report-making, and union-instituted negotiation pathways. This overdependence is indicative of their bureaucratic organisational culture and collective bargaining heritage. Workers in public banks view these formal approaches as more transparent but also time-consuming, sometimes slowing down closure.

Private sector banks, by contrast, focus on pace and informality. Managers and staff in such banks often adopt ad hoc meetings, direct manager–employee communication, or HR interventions in the absence of formal documentation like in public banks. This is a hallmark of their performance-oriented culture, where workflow maintenance and achieving targets have higher priority over compliance with processes. The research also indicated that compromise and collaborative approaches are best seen as effective across both sectors but with different applications: public banks institutionalize collaboration through committees or union engagement, whereas private banks apply it through informal discussion and instant negotiation.

### 5.2 Comparison with Literature

These findings track closely with wider international research on resolving conflict within service organizations. Much international research reports that cooperation and compromise are likely to be more popular than competition or avoidance because they enhance morale and long-term productivity within the workplace. This research replicates those international trends but also introduces an Indian-specific twist — namely the distinct role of unions and hierarchical systems in influencing conflict-handling practices in public banks.

While Thomas–Kilmann's conflict mode tool and the Dual Concern Model focus on balancing assertiveness and cooperation, the Indian banking environment illustrates how structural variables such as union influence, centralization of HR policies, and performance-based incentives alter these theoretical concepts. Furthermore, the discovery that cooperative banks in Madhya Pradesh have an unexpectedly robust culture of cooperation contributes to the sparse literature on cooperative institutions in emerging economies. This indicates that the smaller community-based banks might have more people-oriented strategies than the big nationalized or private banks.

### 5.3 Implications for HR Managers and Policymakers

From the pragmatic perspective, these results have various implications. Public and private bank HR managers should consider developing conflict management training specific to their institutional cultures. For public banks, this can involve simplifying grievance redressal mechanisms, implementing faster mediation routes, and avoiding undue delay through union involvement. For private banks, training must highlight the advantages of formal conflict resolution even in high-pressure contexts with the balance being fair as well as efficient.

Policymakers and regulators would also find useful these findings. For example, the recurring workload and target-based pressures in private banks — recognized as a chief source of tension — indicate the necessity of industry-wide guidelines for employee welfare and achievable performance levels. In public banks, checking outdated bureaucracy rules might optimize responsiveness and employee happiness without sacrificing accountability.

### 5.4 Surprising Findings

One of the more unexpected results was the generally higher collaboration scores of employees in cooperative banks than for both public and private sector institutions. This can be partly explained by their comparatively flat hierarchies, small team sizes, and increased feeling of community ownership. Employees within these banks tend to have similar backgrounds and client bases, fostering a support environment for mutual understanding and collaborative problem-solving.

This result defies the theory that only huge, well-endowed banks have what it takes to put truly effective collaboration strategies into action. Rather, it indicates that organizational culture, rather than just resources, is what determines conflict management success. It would be of interest for future research to delve deeper into how cooperative banks create these cultures and whether the practices can be transferred or replicated at larger institutions.



## 6. Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights into conflict resolution practices in the banking sector of Madhya Pradesh, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample consisted of 250 respondents across 15 banks, which, although diverse, may not fully represent all public, private, and cooperative banks in the state. Second, time constraints restricted the data collection period and prevented in-depth qualitative interviews that could have enriched the understanding of conflict dynamics and contextual subtleties. Third, the reliance on self-reported data through structured questionnaires introduces potential social desirability bias and may reflect respondents' subjective perceptions rather than objective measures of conflict and coping strategies. Additionally, limited access to certain private banks due to confidentiality and internal policies resulted in uneven institutional coverage, potentially affecting the generalizability of findings. These limitations suggest that while the results offer indicative trends and practical insights, they should be interpreted cautiously. Future research could address these gaps through larger sample sizes, longitudinal designs, mixed-method approaches, and expanded institutional access to enhance the robustness and external validity of the findings.

## 7. Conclusion

This study investigated the patterns, strategies, and effectiveness of conflict resolution in public and private banks in Madhya Pradesh. The findings demonstrate that collaborative and compromise-oriented approaches consistently outperform competitive or avoidance strategies in reducing workplace tensions and enhancing employee satisfaction. A comparative analysis revealed that public sector banks tend to rely on structured, union-supported grievance mechanisms, while private banks prefer faster, informal resolution methods—each with distinct advantages and limitations. Practically, these insights can inform a region-specific HR framework for conflict management in banks, emphasizing targeted training, structured mediation programs, and policy enhancements to optimize employee outcomes. Theoretically, the research extends classical organizational conflict models, such as the Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument and the Dual Concern Model, to the Indian regional banking context, highlighting the interplay between universal conflict theories and local institutional, sectoral, and cultural dynamics. Overall, the study provides a robust evidence base for future comparative research, policy formulation, and capacity-building initiatives, offering actionable guidance to both HR practitioners and organizational leaders in the banking sector.

## 8. Future Work

Future studies in the field of conflict management strategies in the Indian banking industry, focusing on public and private banks in Madhya Pradesh, could be improved by a wider and more representative scope. Increasing the study to include other states and different banking sectors would provide for a better understanding of differences at the regional and institutional levels in conflict management practices. Including the customer voice may yield useful insights into the influence of internal conflict resolution on service quality, customer satisfaction, and bank trust in general. In addition, uncovering the relationship between conflict management practices and financial results may offer concrete advice to bank managers, emphasizing the concrete advantages of good conflict management on organizational performance. These extensions would not only make the theoretical framework stronger but also make conflict resolution models in the Indian banking scenario more practical.

## 9. References

- Anand Vadivelu, G., Wani, S. P., Bhole, L. M., Pathak, P., & Pande, A. B. (2001). *An Empirical Analysis of the Relationship between Land Size, Ownership, and Soybean Productivity- New Evidence from the Semi-Arid Tropical Region in Madhya Pradesh, India: Natural Resource Management Program Report no. 4* [Monograph]. International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics. <https://oar.icrisat.org/2226/>
- Arora, P., & Arora, H. (2025). Inception, growth and efficiency of small finance banks in India: An empirical study. *International Journal of Services and Operations Management*, 50(3), 287–304. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSOM.2025.144759>
- Arora, R. U. (2009). Bank credit and economic development: An empirical analysis of Indian states. *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 2(1), 85–104. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17516230902734502>
- Behera, B. K., & Mallick, H. (2022). Does Fiscal Deficit Matter for Economic Growth Performance of Indian States? : An Empirical Analysis. *Indian Public Policy Review*, 3(6 (Nov-Dec)), 16–44. <https://doi.org/10.55763/ipp.2022.03.06.002>
- Bhasin, M. L. (2015). *Menace of Frauds in the Indian Banking Industry: An Empirical Study* (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 2676466). Social Science Research Network. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2676466>
- Brahmbhatt, D. M., Patel, R., & Patel, S. (2012). AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE SCENARIO IN PUBLIC VS PRIVATE BANKS IN INDIA. *Management Research*, 10.
- Chakrabarti, A., & Joglekar, R. (2006). Determinants of Expenditure on Education: An Empirical Analysis Using State Level Data. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 41(15), 1465–1472.
- Chauhan, S. (2014). Access to Finance in Madhya Pradesh: An Exploratory Study. *Indian Journal of Commerce and Management Studies*, 5(2), 08–17.
- De Costa, A., & Diwan, V. (2007). 'Where is the public health sector?': Public and private sector healthcare provision in Madhya Pradesh, India. *Health Policy*, 84(2), 269–276. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2007.04.004>
- Ghosh, M. (2014). Measuring patient satisfaction: An empirical study in India. *Leadership in Health Services*, 27(3), 240–254. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LHS-06-2013-0027>
- Gupta, N., Shinde, R., Malviya, R. K., & Gupta, A. (2023). *Industry 5.0 and Paradigm Shift—Emerging Challenges*. Allied Publishers.
- IT, VESIM Business School, Mumbai, India, Muley, P., & Joshi, N. (2020). Information Systems Usage in Universities of Madhya Pradesh: An Empirical Investigation. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 10(9), 674–678. <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijiet.2020.10.9.1442>
- Kochar, A. (2005). Can Targeted Food Programs Improve Nutrition? An Empirical Analysis of India's Public Distribution System. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 54(1), 203–235. <https://doi.org/10.1086/431260>
- Kumar, S., & Rao, P. (2016). Financing patterns of SMEs in India during 2006 to 2013 – an empirical analysis. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship*, 28(2), 97–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08276331.2015.1132513>
- Malviya, S. (2015). *Exploring Mobile Banking Service Quality Dimensions for Public and Private Sector Banks in Indore District of Madhya Pradesh* (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 2575019). Social Science Research Network. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2575019>

- Mittal, S., Gupta, V., & Motiani, M. (2016). Relation between human resource development climate and organisational commitment: Empirical study in Indian banking sector. *International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management*, 12(2), 204–223. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJICBM.2016.074481>
- Nema, D. K., Suryavanshi, P., & Verma, T. L. (2021). *An Empirical Study on Problems and Prospects of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Madhya Pradesh*. 6(5).
- Savaraiah, G. (1988). *Rural Banking in India: An Empirical Study*. Daya Books.
- Sharma, G. (2014). *An Empirical Investigation of Demography and Customers' Preference of Internet Banking in Indore District of Madhya Pradesh* (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 2559044). Social Science Research Network. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2559044>
- Sharma, G., & Malviya, S. (2014). *Internet Banking Service Quality and Its Impact on Customer Satisfaction in Indore District of Madhya Pradesh* (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 2408979). Social Science Research Network. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2408979>
- Sreenu, N. (2015). *Empirical Analysis of Financial Inclusion in India –with Special Reference of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh*. 2(11).
- Udhani, R., Ramchandani, S., & Khan, M. (2023). Empirical Analysis of Financial Inclusion: Case Study of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh: *Proceedings of the 2nd Pamir Transboundary Conference for Sustainable Societies*, 546–550. <https://doi.org/10.5220/0012879100003882>
- Verma, Y., & Singh, D. M. R. P. (2017). Marketing Mix, Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: An Empirical Study of Telecom Sector in Bhutan. *Indian Journal of Commerce and Management Studies*, 8(2), 121–129.

