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# A Quantitative Study on The Impact of Main Conflict Types between University Administrators and Academics on Job Performance

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# Abstract

Based on the initial literature review work, conflicts between university administrators and academics were prevalent. Among them, value conflict, power conflict and resource allocation conflict are significant conflict types. This study uses the direct effects model (DEM) model as a theoretical framework to identify the relationship between value conflict, power conflict, resource allocation conflict and employee work performance respectively. This study adopted a quantitative research method and used Likert scale as a structured questionnaire to collect data from 100 university employees. It turns out that power conflict and resource allocation conflict are not related to employee performance. The report concludes with reflections on quantitative courses.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In 2021, China released the "Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Vision 2035", in which Chapter 43 clearly stated the goal of building a high-quality education system, this goal has become a guideline for the development of universities in various places in the next 5-10 years (Liu, 2021). The central government listed a series of specific measures in the document, including improving the internal governance structure of universities, establishing and improving the education quality evaluation system, and reforming the fund use management system, to guide universities to carry out a new round of internal management reforms (Bie, 2021). University administrators have formulated specific rules and regulations in accordance with national policy documents and set a series of evaluation indicators to monitor and control the quality of higher education (Yu and Yin, 2023). The academics are both executors of teaching work and contributors to scientific research, and their actions need to comply with the university's management systems (Hu, 2005). However, in the process of upgrading and improving the internal management of universities, it may bring more work burden, uncertainty and fatigue, thus triggering negative reactions to management (Khaw et al., 2022). Since different groups have different goals, values, and interests, this can lead to conflicts between administrators and academics within an organization, that is, within a university (Rai and Singh, 2021). The existence of conflict is a common and normal phenomenon in university management (Guo, 2009). If these conflicts are not properly managed, they may exacerbate the problem and sometimes lead to expressions of dissatisfaction in the form of strikes, demonstrations, and protests (Ndum and

Okey, 2013). This will seriously affect students' course progress and learning experience, and will also resist improvements in internal management of the university. According to Aldiabat et al.'s (2022) empirical test on 436 Jordanian university academics, boycott behavior exerted some negative effects on the development and effectiveness of organizations. Therefore, attaching importance to conflict management is to promote the development and progress of the organization, thereby achieving the goal of high-quality education in universities (Li, 2020). Based on this problem background, the study intends to use quantitative methods to understand the main types of conflicts between university administrators and academics, and their respective impacts on job performance.

## 1.2 Aim and Objectives

This study aims to explore the main types of conflicts between university administrators and academics and the impact of these conflict types on job performance.

Focusing on the research aim, this study is divided into 3 objectives:

1. To identify the main types of conflicts between university administrators and academics.

2. To test and identify the relationship between main conflict types and job performance.

3. To make recommendations for university conflict management to mitigate the negative effects of conflict on university development and operational effectiveness.

## 1.3 Research Questions

The study attempts to emphasize the importance of conflict management in universities by clarifying the main types of conflicts between university administrators and academics and the extent to which they affect job performance.

In order to achieve this expected result, the research will conduct research through the following questions:

(1) What are the main types of conflicts between university administrators and academics?

(2) To what extent do these main conflict types affect job performance?

(3) Which main types of conflicts have a greater impact on job performance?

## 1.4 Research Significance

The researcher will invite administrators and academics from a certain university in China to serve as questionnaire participants for this quantitative study.

**At the theoretical level:** At present, most articles on university conflict management tend to focus on qualitative research methods. The results of this quantitative study can provide data support for research on the main conflicts between university administrators and academics in China and the world to fill the gap in the literature. Secondly, the results of the impact of conflict types on job performance provide scholars with a useful reference for evaluating and improving conflict resolution methods and strategies.

**At the practical level:** Understanding conflict types and their impact on job performance can help university managers better understand internal management challenges. By identifying and handling different types of conflicts, university managers can adopt more appropriate solutions to increase internal management effectiveness and thereby improve overall performance. Secondly, it helps to enhance the working environment and job satisfaction of university employees and reduce internal friction in interpersonal relationships.

**From a macro perspective:** Under the goal of building a high-quality education system in China

"14th Five-Year Plan", it is conducive to promoting reflection and reference by other domestic universities.

**From a micro perspective:** For the study itself, the researcher used quantitative methods to initially understand the main conflict types and performance impact of the research objects. In the next step of research, it can provide a real data basis for qualitative research such as case studies and semi-structured interviews, helping researchers choose more appropriate research methods and design interview questions to discover the essence of the problem in depth.

# 2. Literature Review

A literature review involves the systematic gathering, assessment, and consolidation of pre-existing literature within a related field (Liu and Chen, 2019). The literature review is a crucial undertaking in every research study (Zhao, 2020; Snyder, 2019). Researchers compile and amalgamate data from prior relevant studies that align with the research questions within a particular domain. This process aids researchers in linking their research topics to the existing body of knowledge, thus establishing a robust groundwork for new research (Snyder, 2019). As emphasized by Greetham (2021), literature reviews offer foundational sources for original contributions, enabling researchers to showcase the creativity of their research inquiries through the lens of the literature review.

The literature review section will explain the key terms involved in the study and elaborate on the concepts and theoretical framework, including conflict types, job performance and Direct Effects Model. It then provides practical guidance for quantitative research design by constructing a conceptual framework and research hypotheses.

## 2.1 Key Terms

Explaining key terms helps ensure there is consensus among readers, peer reviewers, and researchers about the meaning of the terms（Hammond and Wellington, 2020). This helps eliminate misunderstandings and ensures transparency and clarity in research（Hammond and Wellington, 2020). For recurring key terms such as *Higher Education*, *Conflict*, and *Conflict Management*, readers and scholars can basically reach a consensus on understanding in the research field (Barnett, 1990, Gellert, 1991, Ma et al., 2008). Based on China's national conditions and culture, the personnel structure and job title settings of universities may be slightly different from those in other

countries. There are differences in the scope of the two key terms *University Administrators* and *University Academics.* To avoid unnecessary ambiguity, the researcher explained the definitions of these two key terms in this study based on the actual situation of the research object university.

### （1）University Administrator

University administrators refer to people who serve in operational management, professional technology, and general daily support within higher education institutions (Hogan, 2014), which are administrative positions and logistics positions at the research object university. Their responsibilities focus on basic functions critical to university operations such as finance, admissions, procurement, etc. (Hogan, 2014). For the aims of this study, the term “administrators” includes not only top managers, principals, or policy makers, but also all university staff engaged in the above activities.

### （2）University Academic

University academics refer to those who participate in teaching tasks and conduct research within higher education institutions (Schneckenberg and Wildt, 2006). They are teaching positions at the research object university, including teaching assistants, lecturers, associate professors, professors, discipline directors, etc.

## 2.2 The existence of conflict in universities

Throughout the course of human development, conflicts have been a persistent feature, with warfare being the most prominent manifestation (Jeong, 2008). Conflicts arise when divergent interests clash with one another (Wall Jr. and Callister, 1995). Jeong (2008) noted that, in addition to physical

violence, non-violent forms of conflict often emerge in the pursuit of distinct values and limited resources.

Zhou (2006), Rai and Singh (2021), view a university as an organization where individuals collaborate to accomplish specific objectives. Nevertheless, within organizations, conflicts are prone to arise due to differences in knowledge, values, competencies, experiences, needs, and motivations (Rai and Singh, 2021). These conflicts often stem from differences in responsibilities, authority, and goals between two groups holding contrasting perspectives and interests (Zhou, 2006). Taking a stakeholder perspective, Yu and Yin (2023) defined academics as individuals not only engaged in teaching but also actively conducting research in their respective fields (Yu and Yin, 2023). University administrators are primarily responsible for shaping education quality objectives and performance metrics in alignment with national policies (Yu and Yin, 2023). In the pursuit of their respective interests, conflicts often surface due to divergent value orientations between the two groups (Muthanna and Sang, 2018). Wang (2014) underscored that multiple stakeholders essentially represent relationships with distinct power dynamics. Academics wield academic power, while administrators exercise administrative power, a result of the expansion of the university's scales and functions (Wang, 2014). Given these contrasting power dynamics, conflicts can easily emerge between administrators and academics (Muthanna and Sang, 2018).

Conflicts between administrators and academics represent a prevalent phenomenon (Wang, 2014), and scholars hold varying perspectives regarding its impact. Researchers, epitomized by Zhou (2006), believe that this role conflict can potentially impede the university's operation. Conversely, other scholars take a more sanguine view, arguing that conflict is neutral, and its effects on organizations hinge on people's attitudes toward it (Wang, 2014). Rai and Singh (2021) contend that

while conflict may have adverse consequences, it is not inherently destructive; it can furnish opportunities for the advancement of higher education (Yu and Yin, 2023).

## 2.3 Types of Conflict between University Administrators and Academics

Universities are commonly recognized as institutions with a primary mission of imparting advanced knowledge through teaching and knowledge dissemination（Scott, 2006). Academics play a pivotal role in higher education, carrying the dual responsibilities of teaching and research. As universities grow in both scale and complexity, an increasing volume of administrative tasks becomes inevitable (Wang, 2014). Consequently, the significance of administrators becomes more pronounced. Nonetheless, different goals, positions, and other contributing factors often give rise to noteworthy conflicts between administrators and academics within the university (Ndum and Okey, 2013). Li (2018) asserts that these conflicts can be traced back to differences in roles, goals, values, institutional and operational methodologies. Each of these differences may independently spark conflict, or they coalesce to generate conflict, and these differences are interconnected（Li, 2018). Based on an extensive literature review, scholars frequently discuss the following three conflict types:

### （1）Value Conflict

Value conflicts arise from individuals or groups holding different values or moral concepts, including core values, beliefs, moral principles, and views on right and wrong (Kouzakova et al., 2012). Values reflect what individuals believe is important (Chambers et al., 2013). University administrators and academics have different roles, cultural backgrounds, and career expectations in

universities, resulting in different thinking patterns and principles (Huang, 2013). Ndum and Okey (2013) discussed the concept of perceptual goal incompatibility, whereby having opposite interpretations and perceptions of the same phenomenon increases the likelihood of conflict. Academics are more inclined to pursue academic freedom and autonomy, such as a conducive teaching environment and flexibility in research fields (Huang, 2013). Autonomy refers to a group's control over certain activities within its own jurisdiction and is a means of protecting itself from external control (Ndum and Okey, 2013). In the decision-making of academic affairs such as course design, admissions policies, and academic evaluation, academic autonomy ensures that academics have a certain degree of control and participation in university operations (Aberbach and Christensen, 2018). However, administrators believe that academic autonomy has the potential to favor self-interest among academic groups (Li, 2018). In pursuit of academic research, professional recognition, and disciplinary interests, academics often neglect the overall development of universities (Li, 2018). Administrators prioritize the survival and development of the university, emphasizing the impact and contribution of university activities on organization building and sustainable development, considering the overall interests of the organization and the policy level (Hao, 2014; Li, 2018). This utilitarian approach to administration conflicts with the pursuit of purity in teaching and research in academia (Hao, 2014; Huang, 2013). From the perspective of academics, universities attach great importance to teaching and scientific research, but the university system often relies on simplistic and quantitative indicators for evaluation, which lacks rationality and has a utilitarian tendency (Huang, 2013). Administrators exert pressure on teaching and scientific research results through disciplinary sanctions, assessments, rewards and punishments, etc., which will dampen academic enthusiasm and initiative (Hao, 2014).

### （2）Power Conflict

Power conflict refers to confrontation arising from the distribution, exercise or control of power, including competition for resources, status, control and decision-making rights (Lawrence and Buchanan, 2017). Academic power emphasizes academic autonomy, self-discipline, and self-management, while administrative power manifests itself in hierarchical obedience and management between superiors and subordinates (Hao, 2014). Administrators exercise relatively centralized power, abide by established rules and regulations, and effectively manage complex university internal affairs and external relationships, thereby improving management efficiency (Li, 2018). However, academics believe that administrators focus too much on the control aspects of management (Hao, 2014). Academics give more consideration to humanistic care and multicultural compatibility (Huang, 2013). The bureaucratic nature of the administrative system and the lack of human interaction and humanistic care lead to academics feeling “controlled”, academic freedom being violated, and dissatisfaction (Hao, 2014). Ndum and Okey (2013) noted that administrative style significantly affects the severity of conflicts within universities, with elements of authoritarianism and dogmatism exacerbating tensions.

In addition, the boundaries between administrative power and academic power are blurred, interfering with each other, and exceeding their authority (Huang, 2013). Administrators have a more comprehensive understanding of the overall situation and policies of the university than academics, and play a coordinating role in various efforts to ensure that daily operations run smoothly (Li, 2018). Due to the concentration of administrative power, communication mainly follows a top-down approach (Huang, 2013). Administrators are influenced by hierarchical thinking and accept and follow the instructions of their leaders to complete their responsibilities (Huang,

2013). Strict procedural boundaries hinder ease of instruction and flexibility (Smith, 2006). Academic power prefers administrators to perform their functions of supporting teaching and scientific research and improve service awareness (Huang, 2013). In terms of finance and procurement applications, administrators mainly act in accordance with rules and regulations and rarely listen to the demands of the academic community (Cardoso et al., 2016). The involvement and needs of academic power in university management often do not receive enough attention (Huang, 2013). Bureaucratization and a culture of accountability impose many regulations on academics, taking away from their time to conduct academic research and interact with students (Smith, 2006). Academics invest time in coordination and administration, such as form completion, email correspondence, and teaching supervision (Smith, 2006). Excessive supervision can reduce academics' sense of job fulfillment (Ndum and Okey, 2013).

### （3）Resource Allocation Conflict

Resource allocation conflicts are associated with value conflicts and power conflicts (Lawrence and Buchanan, 2017). The allocation of limited resources such as research funding, teaching resources, facilities, staff compensation, and welfare services places huge demands within universities (Ndum and Okey, 2013). Li (2018) emphasized the interdependence of administrators and academics in joint pursuit of the university's mission, requiring ongoing collaboration and communication to share common resources. The concentration of administrative power can easily cause an imbalance of interests, and administrative personnel, especially those in management positions, have more opportunities to obtain projects and rewards (Li, 2018). Unfair or inadequate allocation of resources can lead to conflicts, especially in the distribution of housing subsidies, wages, bonuses, and other

benefits (Hao, 2014). Ndum and Okey (2013) highlighted that any major failure in areas such as finance, academic programs, personnel and reward systems can trigger unrest as it is directly related to personal interests. In some cases, conflicts will intensify when resource allocation involves vital interests (Hao, 2014). Conflicts may take the form of strikes, demonstrations, boycotts and even violent riots (Ndum and Okey, 2013).

## 2.4 Job Performance

Job performance is a measure that helps managers and organizations evaluate employee performance, provide feedback, make reward decisions, or identify areas that require further training and development (Giri and Pavan Kumar, 2010). The job performance scale compiled by Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996) includes evaluation of work quality, goal achievement, time management, self-motivation and other aspects. Job performance is typically assessed across multiple dimensions, which may vary by organization and job responsibilities, but typically include the following 3 key dimensions:

(1) **Work results and goal achievement**: This is the core aspect of evaluating employee performance. Whether employees achieve their work goals and tasks, and whether work results meet expectations, are key measurements (Van Scotter II and Van Scotter, 2021; Chilala, 2021).

(2) **Work quality**: Evaluate the quality of work provided by employees, including the accuracy, precision and degree of compliance with standards. This is often closely related to work results and customer satisfaction (Van Scotter and Motowidlo, 1996; Chilala 2021).

(3) **Time management and efficiency**: How employees manage time, handle tasks and maintain high efficiency to ensure that work is completed within the scheduled time (Van Scotter and

Motowidlo, 1996; Chilala, 2021).

## 2.5 Direct Effects Model

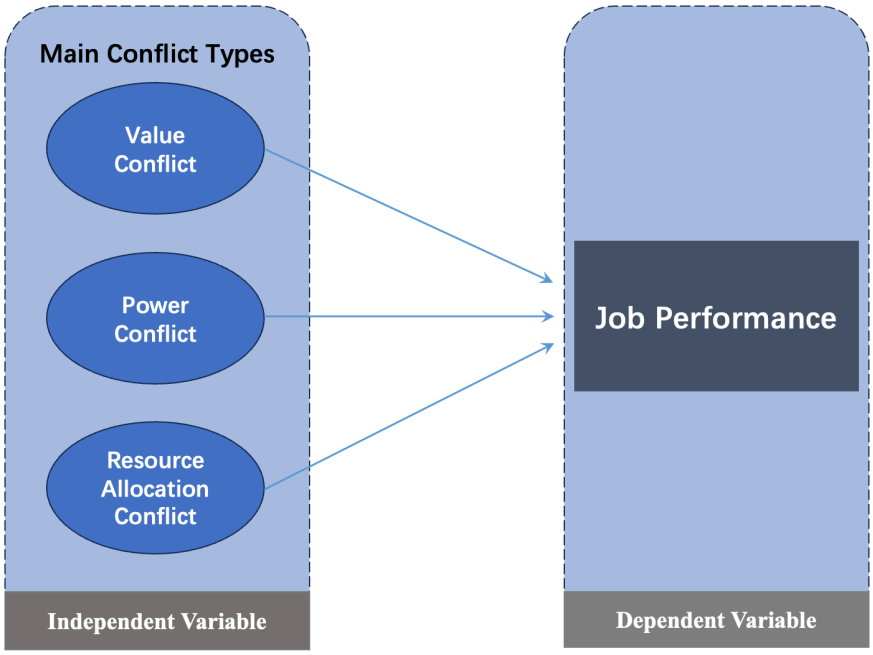
The Direct Effect Model (DFM) is a common research theory used to study the direct relationship between variables and is widely used in the field of social sciences, including psychology, sociology, management and other fields (Van der Laan and Petersen, 2008). The DFM basically states that an independent variable directly affects a dependent variable without having an effect through a mediating variable or moderating variable (Pearl, 2022). The application and interpretation of the DFM is to illustrate the direct relationship between variables to help researchers understand specific phenomena or associations between phenomena (Justi et al., 2009). When studying the relationship between conflict and employee job performance, many scholars will incorporate mediating or moderating effects, such as leadership, communication skills, etc., in order to highlight the comprehensiveness and rationality of the research (Iddagoda and Opatha, 2020). In this study, the researcher directly considers the relationship between the main conflict types in universities and employee job performance to emphasize the importance of conflict management. Therefore, at this stage, the influence of mediating effects is not included.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework refers to a theoretical structure or model used to explain the phenomena, relationships, and variables under study (Maxwell, 2012). The conceptual framework helps researchers clarify research questions and provides a theoretical basis to guide the design, data collection, and analysis of the study (Imenda, 2014). It can be qualitative, describing relationships between concepts, or quantitative, including specific variables and measurement methods (Maxwell,

2012). The conceptual framework is an important starting point for research planning and analysis, helping to ensure that the research has internal logic and coherence, and providing a basis for sharing and communicating research results (Rocco and Plakhotnik, 2009). Based on DFM approach, the following conceptual framework (Figure 1) represents the research logic and ideas of this study.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework




This study aims to explore the direct effect relationship between the main types of conflicts between university administrators and academics (independent variable) and employee performance (dependent variable).

## 2.7 Statement of Hypotheses

Insufficient or ineffective communication between university administrators and scholars can lead to subjective emotions, uncooperative attitudes, and escalation of conflicts, while delays and distortions of information can intensify conflicts (Li, 2018). Chilala (2021) proposed a significant relationship between employee performance and workplace conflict through a quantitative survey

of 105 employees at the Bolgatanga Technical University. In the study of Feng (2023), employee pay gap will significantly affect employee pay performance, and the two are positively correlated. The fair distribution of pay is a point of great concern in resource allocation conflicts and is directly related to the vital interests of employees. Workplace friendships can directly predict work performance, and managers can help employees establish solid workplace friendships to improve work performance by creating a good working atmosphere (He et al., 2023). Based on the research purpose and the previous literature review, the researcher put forward the following research hypotheses on the impact of the three main types of value conflict, power conflict, and resource allocation conflict on job performance:

**H1:** Value conflict is positively related to job performance.

**H2:** Power conflict is positively related to job performance.

**H3:** Resource allocation conflict is positively related to job performance.

**H4:** Value conflict, power conflict, resource allocation conflict are negatively related to job performance.

# 3. Research Methodology

## 3.1 Research Design

Quantitative research is a research method that aims to quantify phenomena, relationships, and changes by collecting and analyzing numerical data (Holton and Burnett, 2005). This research method emphasizes measurability and statistical analysis to draw objective conclusions about the research object (Holton and Burnett, 2005). Numerical data are generally collected using structured questionnaires, experiments, observations and other methods (Sukamolson, 2007). These data are usually expressed in numerical form, such as percentages, scores, frequencies, etc. (Sukamolson, 2007). Quantitative research usually requires relatively large samples to achieve statistical reliability and validity, that is, the research results can be generalized to a wider population or situation (Bloomfield and Fisher, 2019).

Compared with qualitative research, quantitative research emphasizes objectivity and reduces subjectivity and error by using unified measurement tools and statistical methods (Holton and Burnett, 2005). Its numerical results are easy to understand and compare, and can be used to support policy formulation, management decisions, and public communication (Goertzen, 2017). However, quantitative research also has its limitations and cannot cover all types of research questions. Quantitative research often relies on standardized scales and measurement tools, which may not fully capture complex phenomena or overlook the underlying causes (Bloomfield and Fisher, 2019). The nature and objectives of the research question therefore need to be considered when choosing a research method.

Quantitative research typically involves testing a hypothesis or research question; for example, a

researcher may be asked to determine the relationship between two variables or compare differences across groups (Goertzen, 2017). This study attempts to clarify the relationship between major conflict types in universities and employee job performance, and sets four relationship hypotheses. Therefore, the quantitative research method used in this study is in line with the research purpose.

## 3.2 Research Method

This study used a structured questionnaire as the data collection method. Structured questionnaires work by formulating a clear series of questions and providing standardized response options (Cheung, 2021). Questions are closed-ended, and the researcher provides a fixed set of answer options for each question, and the participant selects one or more of these options (Phellas et al., 2011). This method emphasizes the consistency and comparability of data in order to conduct statistical analysis and draw objective conclusions (Cheung, 2021).

### 3.2.1 Sample and Data Collection

Selecting a research sample is a critical decision that has an impact on the outcomes of the research (Campbell et al., 2020). For this study, a purposive sampling approach was employed, which is a deliberate sampling method that ensures the chosen sample aligns with the research questions and goals (Etikan et al., 2016). In purposive sampling, the researcher establishes specific criteria for sample selection (Campbell et al., 2020).

This study applied a preset data set. The 100 participants were from university employees, 60% of whom were in teaching positions, i.e. academics in the study, and 40% were in administrative positions, i.e. administrators. The questionnaire divides age into categories, with 33% of the participants being young employees, 46% and 21% being middle-aged and senior employees.

Regarding the years of working at the university, 39% of the participants had worked for 1-5 years, 32% had worked for 6-10 years, and 29% had worked for more than 10 years. Table 1 shows information on participants' basic characteristics.

Table 1 Participants' Basic Characteristics (n=100)

| Variables | Categories | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Male | 52 | 52.0% |
| | Female | 48 | 48.0% |
| **Age (Years)** | Between 18 and 34 | 33 | 33.0% |
| | Between 35 and 50 | 46 | 46.0% |
| | Between 50 and 65 | 21 | 21.0% |
| **Position Type** | Teaching Position | 60 | 60.0% |
| | Administrative Position | 40 | 40.0% |
| **Working Year** | 1-5 years | 39 | 39.0% |
| | 6-10 years | 32 | 32.0% |
| | 11 years and above | 29 | 29.0% |

### 3.2.2 Questionnaire Design

Based on the research purpose and preset data set, the researcher used Likert scale as the form of structured questionnaire survey. The Likert scale was first proposed by Rensis Likert in 1932 (Jebb et al., 2021). It is a multiple-choice measurement tool used to assess participants' attitudes or opinions towards a certain idea, statement, or issue (Jebb et al., 2021). Likert scales usually consist of a series of ordered statements or questions, each statement is followed by a rating option, and participants need to choose an answer from these options that best reflects their attitude or opinion (Nemoto and Beglar, 2014). The Likert scale of this study is expressed with 5 points, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" or "very dissatisfied" and 5 represents "strongly agree" or "very satisfied". Neutral options are also included between each option. With reference to the job performance scales of Van Scotter and Motowidlo(1996), Li and Xia (2023) and Feng(2023) and the conflict type scale of Zhang(2020), the researchers modified the statement content of Likert

scale in line with the research aim. Table 2 shows the constructs and measurement items of this study. The research questionnaire will be generated based on constructs and measurement items (Appendix 1).

Table 2 Constructs and Measurement Items

| | Constructs | Measurement Items | Sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Dependent Variables**<br><br>Main Conflict Types | Value Conflict | 1. In the workplace, I felt like I was at odds with my colleagues on values.<br>2. Differences in what I consider important at work often lead to value conflicts between me and my colleagues.<br>3. The inconsistency between work values makes me uneasy. | Zhang (2020); Pandey and Kumar (1997); Wright et al. (2017) |
| | Power Conflict | 1. I have a conflict with my colleagues about the distribution of power.<br>2. I feel like there is a frustration around power struggles within organizations.<br>3. I feel dissatisfied with the abuse of power in the decision-making process. | |
| | Resource Allocation Conflict | 1. I feel there is a conflict with other departments regarding resource allocation.<br>2. I think resource allocation conflicts are usually caused by unfair or non-transparent allocation of resources.<br>3. I feel that resource allocation conflicts have a negative impact on our productivity. | |
| **Independent Variable** | Job Performance | 1. I am efficient and able to complete assigned tasks on time.<br>2. I can achieve work goals, and my work results are recognized by colleagues and superiors.<br>3. I am satisfied with the quality of my work. | Van Scotter and Motowidlo(1996); Li and Xia (2023); Feng(2023) |

## 3.3 Ethical Considerations

Quantitative research may involve ethical issues, and researchers should abide by professional ethical principles and laws and regulations to ensure the ethical compliance of the research (Zyphur and Pierides, 2017). This includes obtaining informed consent, protecting privacy, avoiding falsification of data, and assessing and mitigating potential risks.

### (1) Informed Consent

In research, participants are usually required to clearly understand the nature and content of their participation in the research and express their consent to participate through a written signature (Zyphur and Pierides, 2017). Researchers need to be informed in advance of the risks and the rights of participating in the research.

### (2) Privacy and Confidentiality

Collecting personal information or sensitive data may violate the privacy rights of participants (Dowling, 2009). Researchers must ensure the confidentiality of data and take appropriate steps to protect the personal information of respondents during the study. This study will be anonymous, and the principal researcher will be the sole custodian of the data.

### (3) Forgery and Tampering with Data

Researchers must collect and report data honestly and avoid falsifying or tampering with data to ensure the reliability and authenticity of the research (Wassenaar and Mamotte, 2012). In this study, the data were set in advance from previous studies.

## (4) Injuries and Risks

Some quantitative research may cause harm to participants, especially in psychology or medicine (Dowling, 2009). Researchers need to assess and mitigate potential risks and provide support where possible (Wassenaar and Mamotte, 2012). This study focuses on conflict in universities, and some participants may avoid the word “Conflict” and wish to use milder words such as “Disagreement” instead.

# 4. Data Analysis

## 4.1 Reliability

The reliability of data is usually measured using statistical tools and is primarily assessed through internal consistency and stability (Bartko and Carpenter, 1976). This study used SPSS version 28.0.1.0 for data analysis. One of the most common methods for judging reliability is Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (Roberts and Priest, 2006). Usually, the value of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is between 0 and 1, which is used to indicate the internal consistency of the data (Roberts and Priest, 2006). The higher the value of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, the higher the reliability of the data (Bartko and Carpenter, 1976).

- ✓ **0.7 or higher:** A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher is considered reliable, which means that the data performs well in terms of internal consistency (Bruton et al., 2000).
- ✓ **0.6 to 0.7:** If the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is between 0.6 and 0.7, the reliability of the data is acceptable, but not very high. This may mean that the data are somewhat inconsistent in some respects (Bruton et al., 2000).
- ✓ **Below 0.6:** If the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is below 0.6, the reliability of the data may be an issue as it shows lower internal consistency (Bruton et al., 2000).

### (1) Reliability Analysis of Value Conflict (VC)

As shown in figure 2, the Cronbach's Alpha value of value conflict (VC) is -0.040, which is a negative number. A negative Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is usually caused by data processing or calculation errors (Bruton et al., 2000). For example, there may be a data entry error or a wrong

calculation method. In actual research, we usually do not encounter the situation where the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is negative, because this is an unreasonable result (Roberts and Priest, 2006). Researchers should re-examine data and calculation methods to identify the causes of problems and correct them (Bruton et al., 2000).

Figure 2 Reliability Statistics for VC

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha[a] | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items[a] | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| -.040 | -.058 | 3 |

a. The value is negative due to a negative average covariance among items. This violates reliability model assumptions. You may want to check item codings.

## (2) Reliability Analysis of Power Conflict (PC)

As shown in Figure 3, the Cronbach's Alpha value of power conflict（PC） is 0.724, which is greater than 0.7, indicating that the scale has high internal consistency and the data is reliable.

Figure 3 Reliability Statistics for PC

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .724 | .724 | 3 |

## (3) Reliability Analysis of Resource Allocation Conflict (RAC)

Figure 4 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha value of resource allocation conflict (RAC) is 0.416, which is less than 0.6. The data has low internal consistency and low data reliability.

Figure 4 Reliability Statistics for RAC

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .416 | .418 | 3 |

## (4) Reliability Analysis of Job Performance (JP)

Figure 5 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha value of job performance (JP)is 0.353, which is less than 0.6. The data has low internal consistency and low data reliability.

Figure 5 Reliability Statistics for JP

**Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|---|---|---|
| .353 | .355 | 3 |

## (5) Reliability Summary

The reliability of data depends not only on Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, but also on the specific background and purpose of the study (Cohen et al., 2017). In some cases, lower reliability may be acceptable, but in other cases high reliability may be critical (Cohen et al., 2017). Among the four constructs, only 1 PC's data has high reliability, RAC and JB data have low validity, and VC has data errors. If the data are used only for exploratory analysis or preliminary investigation, lower reliability may be acceptable (Roberts and Priest, 2006). Based on the researcher's preliminary exploration of the impact of the main types of conflicts between university administrators and

academics on employee performance, the researcher will continue to analyze the data of RAC and JB. Low-reliability data may have some value, but researchers need to improve the reliability of the data in subsequent quantitative studies. Further analysis related to VC will be stopped, and the researchers will need to re-examine the data in subsequent quantitative studies.

## 4.2 Validity

Data validity refers to whether the data generated by data measurement tools or methods can accurately and reliably reflect the variables or constructs of interest in the study (Downing, 2003). If the data are invalid, then the answers to the research questions or conclusions may be called into question (Roberts and Priest, 2006). This study used factor analysis to examine whether these tools or questions are all measuring the same construct, helping researchers reveal the underlying structures and factors in the data set (Yong and Pearce, 2013). Factor analysis is discussed in terms of factor loadings and eigenvalues.

### (1) Factor Loadings

Factor loadings show the correlation between each variable and each factor (Yong and Pearce, 2013). Typically, researchers focus on the absolute values of factor loadings, especially those greater than 0.3 or 0.4. A higher factor loading indicates a stronger association between the variable and the factor (Yong and Pearce, 2013). If the loading is close to 0, it means that the factor has little impact on the variable.

Figure 6 Component Matrix for PC

**Component Matrix[a]**

| | Component 1 | Component 2 |
|---|---|---|
| ODDS AT WORKPLACE | -.746 | .633 |
| DIFF AT WPLACE WITH COLLEAGUES | .968 | .032 |
| INCONSISTENCY BWN WORK VALUES | .531 | .831 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 2 components extracted.

Figure 7 Component Matrix for RAC

**Component Matrix[a]**

| | Component 1 |
|---|---|
| CONFLICT WITH OTHER DEPARTMENT | .736 |
| UNFAIR RAC | .720 |
| RAC NEGATIVE IMPACT ON WORK EFFICIENCY | .576 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Figure 8 Component Matrix for JB

**Component Matrix[a]**

| | Component 1 |
|---|---|
| COMPLETE TASK ON TIME | .765 |
| ACHIEVING WORK GOALS | .761 |
| SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY | .412 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Through the structure of figures 6, 7, and 8, it can be seen that the inter-item correlations of each factor are greater than 0.3 or 0.4, which indicates that the items of each factor have a strong correlation with the construct. This indicates that the variables measure the construct and also demonstrates the validity of the construct.

## (2) Eigenvalues

Eigenvalues represent the Bartlett's test of sphericity of each factor, telling the researcher how much variability in the data each factor explains (Yong and Pearce, 2013). Bartlett's Test is used to test whether the data correlation matrix is an identity matrix (that is, there is no correlation between data). If the p-value of Bartlett's Test is less than the significance level (usually set to 0.05), that is, there is a correlation between the data and it is suitable for factor analysis.

Figure 9 KMO and Bartlett's Test for PC

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .676 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 59.004 |
| | df | 3 |
| | Sig. | <.001 |

Figure 10 KMO and Bartlett's Test for RAC

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .568 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 11.125 |
| | df | 3 |
| | Sig. | .011 |

Figure 11 KMO and Bartlett's Test for JB

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .528 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 9.456 |
| | df | 3 |
| | Sig. | .024 |

According to Figures 9, 10, and 11, the p-values of Bartlett's Test for the three variables are very small (close to 0), which further supports factor analysis. The data results were satisfactory and confirmed the validity of the study.

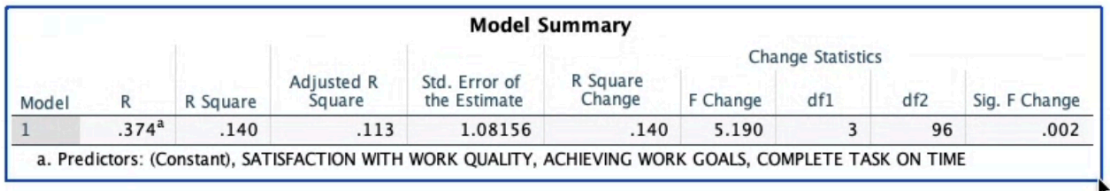
# 5. Findings and Conclusions

## H1: Value conflict is positively related to job performance.

In the first hypothesis, the data due to value conflicts did not pass the credibility analysis, presenting the result of data errors. Therefore, H1 is declared invalid and the data needs to be re-examined and re-tested.

## H2: Power conflict is positively related to job performance.

Figure 12 PC1 and JB



**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .374[a] | .140 | .113 | 1.08156 | .140 | 5.190 | 3 | 96 | .002 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY, ACHIEVING WORK GOALS, COMPLETE TASK ON TIME

Figure 13 PC1 and JB（2）

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 6.124 | .595 | | 10.298 | <.001 | | |
| | COMPLETE TASK ON TIME | -.146 | .095 | -.152 | -1.538 | .127 | .914 | 1.094 |
| | ACHIEVING WORK GOALS | -.319 | .109 | -.290 | -2.933 | .004 | .915 | 1.093 |
| | SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY | -.054 | .097 | -.053 | -.556 | .579 | .987 | 1.013 |

a. Dependent Variable: CONFLICT ON POWER DISTRIBUTION

In the model summary given above, the Adjusted R Square is 11.3%, so the model is not statistically suitable for prediction and the model does not have reliability. The standardized coefficient in the figure is negative and the p value is >.001. The result shows that PC1 is not related to JB.

Figure 14 PC2 and JB

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .650[a] | .422 | .404 | .87562 | .422 | 23.371 | 3 | 96 | <.001 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY, ACHIEVING WORK GOALS, COMPLETE TASK ON TIME

Figure 15 PC2 and JB（2）

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 4.569 | .481 | | 9.489 | <.001 | | |
| | COMPLETE TASK ON TIME | -.045 | .077 | -.047 | -.582 | .562 | .914 | 1.094 |
| | ACHIEVING WORK GOALS | -.553 | .088 | -.509 | -6.276 | <.001 | .915 | 1.093 |
| | SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY | .439 | .079 | .435 | 5.572 | <.001 | .987 | 1.013 |

a. Dependent Variable: POWER STRUGGLE

Figure 16 PC3 and JB

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .450[a] | .202 | .178 | 1.01868 | .202 | 8.124 | 3 | 96 | <.001 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY, ACHIEVING WORK GOALS, COMPLETE TASK ON TIME

Figure 17 PC3 and JB（2）

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 4.078 | .560 | | 7.280 | <.001 | | |
| | COMPLETE TASK ON TIME | .187 | .089 | .199 | 2.092 | .039 | .914 | 1.094 |
| | ACHIEVING WORK GOALS | -.427 | .102 | -.397 | -4.165 | <.001 | .915 | 1.093 |
| | SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY | .241 | .092 | .241 | 2.623 | .010 | .987 | 1.013 |

a. Dependent Variable: ABUSE OF POWER IN DECISION MAKING PROCESS

## H3: Resource allocation conflict is positively related to job performance.

Figure 18 RAC1 and JB

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .627[a] | .393 | .374 | .90824 | .393 | 20.738 | 3 | 96 | <.001 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY, ACHIEVING WORK GOALS, COMPLETE TASK ON TIME

Figure 19 RAC1 and JB (2)

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 5.718 | .499 | | 11.449 | <.001 | | |
| | COMPLETE TASK ON TIME | -.257 | .080 | -.268 | -3.227 | .002 | .914 | 1.094 |
| | ACHIEVING WORK GOALS | -.485 | .091 | -.441 | -5.303 | <.001 | .915 | 1.093 |
| | SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY | .322 | .082 | .315 | 3.943 | <.001 | .987 | 1.013 |

a. Dependent Variable: CONFLICT WITH OTHER DEPARTMENT

Figure 20 RAC2 and JB

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .124[a] | .015 | -.015 | 1.02978 | .015 | .499 | 3 | 96 | .684 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY, ACHIEVING WORK GOALS, COMPLETE TASK ON TIME

Figure 21 RAC2 and JB(2)

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 4.429 | .566 | | 7.822 | <.001 | | |
| | COMPLETE TASK ON TIME | -.069 | .090 | -.081 | -.765 | .446 | .914 | 1.094 |
| | ACHIEVING WORK GOALS | -.064 | .104 | -.066 | -.620 | .537 | .915 | 1.093 |
| | SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY | -.025 | .093 | -.027 | -.265 | .792 | .987 | 1.013 |

a. Dependent Variable: UNFAIR RAC

Figure 22 RAC3 and JB

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .468[a] | .219 | .194 | 1.01251 | .219 | 8.956 | 3 | 96 | <.001 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY, ACHIEVING WORK GOALS, COMPLETE TASK ON TIME

Figure 23 RAC3 and JB(2)

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 5.479 | .557 | | 9.841 | <.001 | | |
| | COMPLETE TASK ON TIME | -.451 | .089 | -.480 | -5.083 | <.001 | .914 | 1.094 |
| | ACHIEVING WORK GOALS | .055 | .102 | .051 | .543 | .588 | .915 | 1.093 |
| | SATISFACTION WITH WORK QUALITY | -2.360E-5 | .091 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .987 | 1.013 |

a. Dependent Variable: RAC NEGATIVE IMPACT ON WORK EFFICIENCY

In the model summary given above, the Adjusted R Square does not exceed 80%, so the model is not statistically suitable for prediction and the model is not reliable. The standardized coefficient in

the figure is negative and the p value is basically >.001. The results show that PC, RAC and JB are not related.

**H4: Value conflict, power conflict, resource allocation conflict are negatively related to job performance.**

Except for the invalid value of value conflict, power conflict, resource allocation conflict and employee performance are not related. The results of this quantitative study are unsatisfactory and require the researcher to re-collect and test data in the next stage to improve data reliability.

# 6. Reflection

Participating in the Quantitative Research Methods course was an important experience in my academic career and provided me with many valuable knowledge and skills. In this course, I learned a lot about the basic principles and methods of quantitative research and how to apply them to solve research problems. The quantitative research course taught me how to design an effective study, including selecting appropriate samples, variables, and measurement tools. Understanding the principles of research design is critical to ensuring the reliability and validity of your research. At the same time, this course teaches how to collect and organize data, and how to use statistical software (such as SPSS) for data analysis. This allows me to process large-scale data sets and extract meaningful information from them. I realized that SPSS is a very useful data measurement tool with many features waiting to be explored. Although the course time is very short, I cannot fully master the use of SPSS in a few hours of online courses. At the same time, SPSS is a huge challenge for me. When I was doing this assignment, I still did not have a clear understanding and perception of the various data results. As a doctoral student, I cannot avoid the quantitative and always only focus on the qualitative, which is detrimental to my research. While the course is over, I plan to strengthen this skill with additional time of video study and practice. In this course, I learned various statistical methods, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, factor analysis, etc. These methods provide me with a wealth of tools with which to explore research questions and test hypotheses. Research ethics is also crucial when conducting quantitative research. Protect the rights of research participants and adhere to ethical guidelines to ensure the ethics of research. Quantitative research is not only useful in the social sciences but can be applied in a variety of disciplines. I realized its interdisciplinary nature and learned how to apply these methods to research

questions in different fields. Regarding my doctoral thesis topic: Exploring conflict and conflict resolution between university administrators and academics, I might consider moving from qualitative to mixed methods, by using data from quantitative research to support the in-depth exploration of qualitative research.

In addition, in this assignment, I encountered a bottleneck in data analysis, which consumed a lot of time, and the data results were not satisfactory. When researchers make research hypotheses, they will swear that the data results are nothing more than positive or negative correlations. But what I actually faced was the result of data errors, which made it impossible for me to start the analysis. When conducting their own research, researchers should fully consider the risks of data results and reserve sufficient time to examine and resolve problems.

Overall, participating in quantitative research courses has made me more research capable and able to better understand and solve complex problems. This course has provided me with a solid foundation for my future academic and professional development, and I look forward to applying the knowledge I have learned to practical research and contributing to solving real-world problems. This learning experience is very valuable to me.

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# Appendix 1

## Questionnaire

**Research Project：** A Quantitative Study on The Impact of Main Conflict Types between University Administrators and Academics on Job Performance

**Principal Researcher：** Yingying Chen

***Instructions:*** Please answer all the questions by writing in the column one number that best represents your view based on the following scale:

1 - Strongly Disagree
**2** – Slightly Disagree
**3** – Neutral
**4** – Slightly Agree
**5** – Strongly Agree

**Section A: Value Conflict**

| No. | Statements | Scale | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| A1 | In the workplace, I felt like I was at odds with my colleagues on values. | | | | | |
| A2 | Differences in what I consider important at work often lead to value conflicts between me and my colleagues. | | | | | |
| A3 | The inconsistency between work values makes me uneasy. | | | | | |

**Section B: Power Conflict**

| No. | Statements | Scale | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| B1 | I have a conflict with my colleagues about the distribution of power. | | | | | |
| B2 | I feel like there is a frustration around power struggles within organizations. | | | | | |
| B3 | I feel dissatisfied with the abuse of power in the decision-making process. | | | | | |

**Section C: Resource Allocation Conflict**

| No. | Statements | Scale | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C1 | I feel there is a conflict with other departments regarding resource allocation. | | | | | |
| C2 | I think resource allocation conflicts are usually caused by unfair or non-transparent allocation of resources. | | | | | |
| C3 | I feel that resource allocation conflicts have a negative impact on our productivity. | | | | | |

**Section D: Job Performance**

| No. | Statements | Scale | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D1 | I am efficient and able to complete assigned tasks on time. | | | | | |
| D2 | I can achieve work goals, and my work results are recognized by colleagues and superiors. | | | | | |
| D3 | I am satisfied with the quality of my work. | | | | | |

**Part E: Personal**

**Gender:**

Male ☐ Female ☐

**Position Type:**

Teaching Position ☐

Administrative Position ☐

Others (please specify): _____

**Age:**

Between 18 and 34 ☐

Between 35 and 49 ☐

Between 50 and 65 ☐

**How long have you been with this university?**

1 – 5 years ☐ 6 – 10 years ☐ 11 years and above ☐