

EXAMINATION OF THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN X AND Y GENERATIONS: RESEARCH FOR ACADEMICIANS¹

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Abstract

Social, economic, politic and technologic recoveries caused changes in present structures of the culture of the societies. Behaviors of the generations born in different periods of time has been differentiated due to respective facts and brought conflicts along with it. Conflicts experienced by generations in social structure also made itself evident during the generations' performances in organizations.

Within this study, conflicts of the academicians partaking in X and Y generation categories and functioning in universities has been tried to be determined if they experienced conflicts between themselves. If conflicts were experienced, it is also examined that if said conflicts originated from relations, tasks and processes.

Data are collected over the web sites by survey method, face to face meeting and via fax and 578 applicable interview results have been provided. The advantages of structural equation modeling, unidirectional variance analyses. As a result of the analyses made; it is reached to a finding that the academicians rarely experienced conflicts both with their generation and older or younger generations. Dependency of the conflicts experienced by the generations are explored due to relations, task and process conflicts and most intense felt conflict type has been expressed as task conflict.

Keywords: Generation, Generation Theory, Conflict, Intergenerational Conflict, Culture

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Introduction

The material and spiritual values created in the historical and social development process and the body of means which is used to create and transfer them to the next generations and which humans signify the rule of sovereignty to natural and social environment are defined as culture. Communities take shape as a result of values, cultural norms and material and moral factors specific for themselves, and show an alteration in time. That the components of cultural structure getting change in time aren't admired and approved by adult generation increases conflicts of generations. Societies' cultural structure show a change in time due to economic, political, social and technological factors. As adult generations aren't dispose to accept the components of cultural structure as much as new generations and the generations do not understand each other, it is so natural to have conflicts between these two generations.

The aim of this study is to determine whether X and Y generation academicians in universities have conflicts with each other, or not. Conflicts of generations show themselves in group as conflicts of relationship, task and process. In the study prepared as mentioned, the relationship between the conflicts between X and Y generations and their sub-dimensions which are relation, task and process has been aimed to associate.

1.The Theory Of Generation

The group of people who were born almost in the same years have experienced the same conditions of the age, similar problems and fate, and have been responsible for the similar duties from the history of humanity until today is stated as the generation term(www.tdk.gov.tr). The theory of generation brings forward a group which consists of the individuals who have experienced similar political and social events by their years of birth, have developed unique values and religious systems and have same personality traits. The term as mentioned consists of the events happened in the society such as political events or threats, social economical period of change, industrial trends, unemployment rate, ideas about security and famine. (Lamm, Meeks 2009: 615).

Some generations gaps classify by dwelling on the factors causing generation gaps in litterateur, and personality traits that every generation has have been tried to determine as a result of studies. When we chronologically classify generations , we can see that it includes Silent Generation, Baby Boomers Generation, X Generation, Y Generation, M Generation and Z Generation.In Table 1, the chronological classification about Silent Generation, Baby Boomers Generation, X Generation, Y Generation, M Generation and Z Generation is remarked. In the classification according to various writers, there are differences of opinions about which years a generation involves (Reeves, Oh 2008: 296). In the study, classification of

different generations has been evaluated as general view and it has been stated that the ones who were born before 1945s are Silent Generation, the ones who were born in between the years of 1946 and 1964 are Baby Boomers Generation, the ones who were born in between the years of 1965 and 1979 are X Generation, the ones who were born in between the years of 1980 and 1994 are Y Generation, the ones who were born in between the years of 1995 and 2002 are M Geneneration and the ones who were born after the year 2003 are Z Generation. In Table 1, there are different descriptions of generations of various writers.

Table 1. Chronologically Identification of Generations

	Silent Generati on	Baby Boomers Generati on	X Generati on	Y Generati on	M Generati on	Z Generatio n
Keleş, 2011		1946- 1964	1965- 1979	1980- 1999		
Yelkikalan & Altın, 2010	1925- 1945	1946- 1964	1965- 1979	1980- 1994		
Salahuddin, 2010	1922- 1943	1943- 1960	1960- 1980	1980- 2000		
Haeberle vd., 2009	1930- 1944	1945- 1964	1965- 1979	1980- 1999	1999,...	
Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007	1929- 1945	1946- 1964	1965- 1979	1980- 1999		
Kyles, 2005	1900- 1945	1946- 1964	1965- 1979	1980- 1999		
Lancaster & Stillman, 2002	1900- 1945	1946- 1964	1965- 1980	1981- 1999		
Tsui, 2001	1925- 1945	1946- 1964	1961- 1981	1976- 1981	1982- 2002	
Washburn, 2000	1926- 1945	1945- 1964	1965- 1981	1982- 2003		
Spitznas, 1998	1925- 1945	1946- 1964	1965- 1980			
Matthews, 2008					2002,...	
Senbir, 2004	1929- 1939	1945- 1965	1965- 1977	1977- 1994	1994- 2003	2003,...
Seçkin, 2005	...,1945	1946- 1964	1965- 1980	1980,199 5	1995,...	

Source: Crumpacker and Crumpacker 2007: 351; Haeberle vd. 2009: 62; Keleş 2011: 131; Kyles 2005, 54; Lancaster, Stillman 2002: 59; Matthews 2008: 49; Salahuddin 2010: 2; Seçkin 2005: 112; Senbir 2004: 22-26; Spitznas 1998: 4; Tsui, Hughes 2001: 16; Washburn 2000: 54; Yelkikalan ve Altın 2010: 1-2.

2. Terms Of Conflict And Organizational Conflict

That the term of conflict is studied by psychology, anthropology, political and administration sciences brings along the identification of the term as mentioned considering from different point of views. In psychology Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and John Dewey; in biology Charles Darwin and in sociology science George Simmel, Elton Mayo, Talcot Parsons and Lewis Coser have pointed out their ideas about the term of generation. Evolutionary theory (1809-1882) brought into question by darwinist point of view asserts that the fact of conflict has been outgrowth of human interaction relation since human beings first appeared (Rahim 2000: 5). In litterateur the term of conflict is defined as a kind of opposition and resistance , which appears as a result of interaction between two or more people(Robbins 1978: 67). The fact of conflict is a part of social life and show itself as disagreements appearing as a result of the differences in people's religion and expectations, backgrounds, personality traits and cultural features. As soon as the individuals having different features as mentioned above start working as a group, the fact of conflict appears (Eren, 2007: 553). Dahrendorf defines organizational conflict as dissociable differences in the embraced aims among employees. Conflicts as mentioned not only latently happen in the groups but also appear clearly, and show themselves as tensions among employees. The conflicts that happens apparently cause employees to behave revengefully and decrease the performance and fertileness of the group (Paltridge 1971: 85).

3. The Term Of Conflict Of Generations

Individuals, communities, tribes and states have disappeared in due course, but cultures and civilizations have maintained their continuity. Cultures have constantly undergone a change and so individuals and corporations that generate culture have had difficulty in the alterations as mentioned. The changes of personality of the individual who has grown up in a specific social personality pattern and encountered culture fact since his birth haven't also occured easily. The personality traits of new generations which interact with changed community have undergone a change rather than adult generations. It is possible to say that the results of international problems stated as conflict of generations and having no solution are based on cultural shift due to changing environmental conditions(Güvenç 1997: 26).

In litterateur, conflict of generations is defined as that two or more generations are not in healthy relationships and disagreements occur among them(Özgüven 2001: 268). Being misperceived and commented of the differences of generations' characteristics is a significant factor bringing conflict of generations into question(Tolbize 2008: 13).

The conflicts of generations emerging among different age groups in organizations are dealt with in the business of group identity conflict within conflict types. One of the most important reasons of group identity conflict appearing in organizations is that there are some demographical differences among employees. The demographical differences as mentioned make organizations heterogeneous structure and also cause conflicts. The reasons of demographical differences in organizations can be resulted from being in category of different age groups, sexes and ethnic identity (Pelled vd. 1999: 1; Platteau, Hondeghem 2010: 6) . The thoughts as mentioned indicate that the conflicts of generations occurred among different age groups are sub-dimensions of the group identity conflicts occurred in organizations, and emerge as relationship conflicts, task conflicts and process conflicts (Jehn, Mannix 2001: 244). In literature, types of conflicts are analyzed as relationship conflicts, task conflicts (Platteau, Hondeghem 2010: 6-7; Jehn, Mannix 2001: 243; Jehn 1995: 268) and additionally process conflicts (Jehn, Mannix 2001: 243; Jehn, Bendersky 2003: 201).

Relationship conflicts focus on the relationships of individuals working in organs.(Robbins, Judge 2012: 455). That there are different groups working in organs and the conflicts caused from the different religion, expectations and ideas of the groups as mentioned are defined as relationship conflicts. (Jehn, Mannix 2001: 244). The surveys in literature show that relationship conflicts always bring along the non-functional results. *Task conflicts* focus on the disagreements that are for content and aim of the work. Although the task conflicts which are low and medium level promote clash of ideas, the ones in medium levels are only functional in specific cases. Task conflicts cause negative results like relationship conflicts and bring along complexation of the things and decrease of fertility. *Process conflicts* are the conflicts shown up due to the disagreements for how things work. It is recommended that the process conflicts occurred in organs should be kept in low levels in terms of fertility and efficiency (Robbins, Judge 2012: 455).

4. Part Of The Research

This part includes the aim of the research, its method, the facts of the research and the interpellation of the facts as mentioned.

4.1. The Aim of the Research

The aim of this study is to determine whether X and Y generation academicians have conflicts with each other, or not. In the survey, The sub-dimensions of conflicts of generations that are due to relationship, task and process have also been searched, in case the existence of conflicts of generations is identified, the dimensions of the relations levels as mentioned above are tried to be gauged.

4.2. The Hypotheses of the Research

That cultural elements have undergone a change in time differentiates the features, behaviours, rules and values of generations, and so the generations as mentioned differentiate from the features of homogeneous adult generations (Vodosek, 2005: 2). The differences in cultural structure of generations differentiate because they cannot contact with and understand each other, think that they aren't in safe and because of their will of sense of authority, and so in the process as mentioned conflicts of generations become a current issue (Deal, 2007: 11). The different socialization processes of X and Y generations come to an end with their developing different point of views against events, so in organs the conflicts and disagreements of generations can be seen (Platteau, Hondeghem 2010: 8). Based on the ideas stated in litterateur, the hypotheses mentioned below have been generated in order to determine the relationship between X and Y generations.

H₁: There is a conflict between X generation and the younger generation (Y generation)

If there is a conflict between X generation and the generation younger than himself (Y generation):

H₂: As relationship conflicts increase, the conflicts between X and Y generations increase.

H₃: As task conflicts increase, the conflicts between X and Y generations increase.

H₄: As process conflicts increase, the conflicts between X and Y generations increase.

4.3. Target Population and Sample of the Study

Target population of the study consists of the professors, associate professors, assistant professors, teaching assistants, research assistants, instructors and specialists of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, the Faculty of Economics, the Faculty of Management, the Faculty of Management and Management Sciences, the Faculty of Management Sciences of operating state and foundation universities in Marmara region. In the study, the numbers of academicians working in the foundation universities have been reached from the site of The Council of Higher Education (<http://www.yok.gov.tr>). Because the numbers of academicians working in the state universities sit out in the site of The Council of Higher Education, the numbers have acquired from the datas in the internet address of the respective universities. Accordingly, as of 2012 the numbers of academicians working in Marmara region are 2582 people according to datum in the internet addresses of The Council of Higher Education and institutional players. The sample of the study consists of 578 academicians who work at the faculties as mentioned and answered the questionnaire. Thus, in the study the %22 part of target population has been reached.

Table 2. State and Foundation Universities Applied Questionnaire Study

STATE UNIVERSITIES- CITY	FOUNDATION UNIVERSITIES- CITY
Balıkesir University- (Balıkesir)	Bahçeşehir University- (İstanbul)
Galatasaray University- (İstanbul)	Beykent University- (İstanbul)
Boğaziçi University - (İstanbul)	Doğuş University- (İstanbul)
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University - (Çanakkale)	Fatih University- (İstanbul)
Gebze Yüksek Teknoloji Institution- (Kocaeli)	Gedik University- (İstanbul)
İstanbul University - (İstanbul)	Haliç University- (İstanbul)
Kocaeli University - (Kocaeli)	Işık University- (İstanbul)
Marmara University- (İstanbul)	İstanbul Aydın University- (İstanbul)
Sakarya University - (Sakarya)	İstanbul Bilgi University- (İstanbul)
Trakya University - (Edirne)	İstanbul Kemerburgaz University- (İstanbul)
Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University - (Bilecik)	İstanbul Kültür University- (İstanbul)
Kırklareli University - (Kırklareli)	İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim University- (İstanbul)
Namık Kemal University- (Tekirdağ)	Kadir Has University- (İstanbul)
Uludağ University- (Bursa)	Koç University- (İstanbul)
Yalova University- (Yalova)	Maltepe University- (İstanbul)
Yıldız Teknik University- (İstanbul)	Okan University- (İstanbul)
	Sabancı University- (İstanbul)
	Süleyman Şah University- (İstanbul)
	Yeni Yüzyıl University- (İstanbul)
	Yeditepe University- (İstanbul)
Toplam: State: 16; Foundation: 20	

4.4. Methods Used for Data Collection and Evaluation

The datum in the survey has been gathered by questionnaire method and has obtained from 578 academician by questionnaire method. The questions evaluating the extent of the conflicts of generations have been prepared by using the scale extents of conflicts of generations mentioned in the Mannix (2001) studies of A. Jehn ve Elizabeth A. Mannix (2001)'in "The Dynamic Nature Of Conflict: A Longitudinalstudy Of Intragroup Conflict And Group Performance". ;The scale as mentioned starts to be developed by Shah and Jehn (1993), then has been regenerated by Jehn (1995) and has updated by Jehn and Mannix (2001). Expressions have been formed by the questions methodized according to 5 point likert scale. The questions have been evaluated in SPSS 13.00 and Lisrel 8.54 Statistical Pack Programmes, and the survey findings have been commented with the structural equation model.

Table 3 indicates the variables and codes evaluating the extents of conflicts of generations.

Table 3. Variables and Codes Evaluating the Extents of Conflicts of Generations

Variable	Expression	Codes
EXTENT OF RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT		
V1	How often do you have problems in the relations with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
V2	How often do you have arguments with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
V3	How often do you have emotional conflicts with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
V4	How often do you have conflicts which are caused from personal disagreements?	Positive code (+)
EXTENT OF TASK CONFLICT		
V5	How often do you have collisions about the done tasks with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
V6	How often do you have disagreements in the projects you re doing together with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
V7	How often do you have conflicts about the mississions with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
EXTENT OF PROCESS CONFLICT		
V8	How often do you have disagreements about who will have to do the job with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
V9	How often do you have problems about when someone does not discharge his responsibility with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)
V10	How often do you have problems about sharing the sources(inadequacy of material and equipment, improperty of physical conditions etc.) with your colleagues in the institution?	Positive code (+)

The expressions about determination of the extents of conflicts of generations are coded below.

- “1” “No conflict”,
- “2” “Rarely”,
- “3” “Sometimes”,
- “4” “Often”
- “5” “Always”

Table 4 shows the value ranges that will use in order to determine in which range in 5 point likert scale the averages of the answers given the scale of conflicts of generations are.

Table 4. Value Ranges for Scale of Conflict of Generations

Value Ranges of Averages	Equiavelants at 5 Point Likert Scale
“1-1,80”	“No conflict”

“1,81-2,60”	“Rarely”
2,61-3,40”	“Sometimes”
“3,41-4,20”	“Often”
“4,21-5,00”	“Always”

4.5. Reliability Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

In the survey, Cronbach’s Alpha reliability parameter has been found as 0,923 in respect of the conflict level of X and Y generations. It is accepted that the value as mentioned has very high reliability level. As there is no negative correlation after checking question correlation in the scale, you cannot see any questions that increase reliability when it is removed from the scale. The test of question averages is found meaningful by searching with Hotelling's T-Squared.

The highest average has been obtained as 2,23 from the expression of “How often do you have collisions about the done tasks with your colleagues in the institution?”, and the lowest average has been obtained as 1,85 from the expression of “ How often do you have emotional conflicts with your colleagues in the institution?”.

The reliability of scale on conflict extents has also been examined and the scale has been found reliable on the extent of relation, task and process. Table 5 shows the datas about reliability analysis and descriptive statistics.

Table 5. Reliability Analysis and Descriptive Statistics For the Scale of Conflict between X and Y Generation

Variables	Average	Standard Deviation	Question correlation	When question is deleted Cronbach's Alpha
Relation Conflict. Cronbach's Alpha= ,851. General Average = 1,94. Hotelling's T-Squared=17,2; F=5,67; P=0,001.				
V1	2,06	,782	,738	,791
V2	1,96	,794	,676	,817
V3	1,85	,826	,633	,836
V4	1,89	,806	720	,798
Task Conflict. Cronbach's Alpha=,855. General Average= 2,030. Hotelling's T-Squared=39,38; F=1958; P=0,001.				
V5	2,23	,849	,671	,852
V6	1,93	,803	,713	,809
V7	1,93	,778	,803	,727
Process Conflict. Cronbach's Alpha= ,815. General Average=2,032. Hotelling's T-Squared=35,7; F=17,75; P=0,0001.				
V8	2,00	,927	,659	,752
V9	2,22	,880	,674	,739
V10	1,87	,927	,665	,746
Cronbach's Alpha=,923; General Average= 1,994. Hotelling's T-Squared=87,661; F=9,3; P=0,0001				

4.6. Study Facts and Evaluations

General average of the scale that evaluates the extent of conflicts of generations has been calculated as 1,994. The results of general average indicate that X generation academicians “rarely” have conflict with Y generation academicians. The average of the all answers in the scale has been found in the “rarely” conflict range.

H₁: There is a conflict between X generation and the younger generation (Y generation). **Hypothesis1 has been verified.**

Structural equation model has been used in order to determine how cultural extents and expressions affecting the rarely conflict structure with X generation and younger generation (Y generation). The goodness of fit obtained as a result of structural equation model have been searched and calculated as $\chi^2/df=1,91$, RMSEA=0,072, GFI=0,91, AGFI= 0,90, NNFI=0,91, NFI=0,89, CFI=0,90. That model has been found at the least acceptable level.

Below there are abbreviations used in the study.

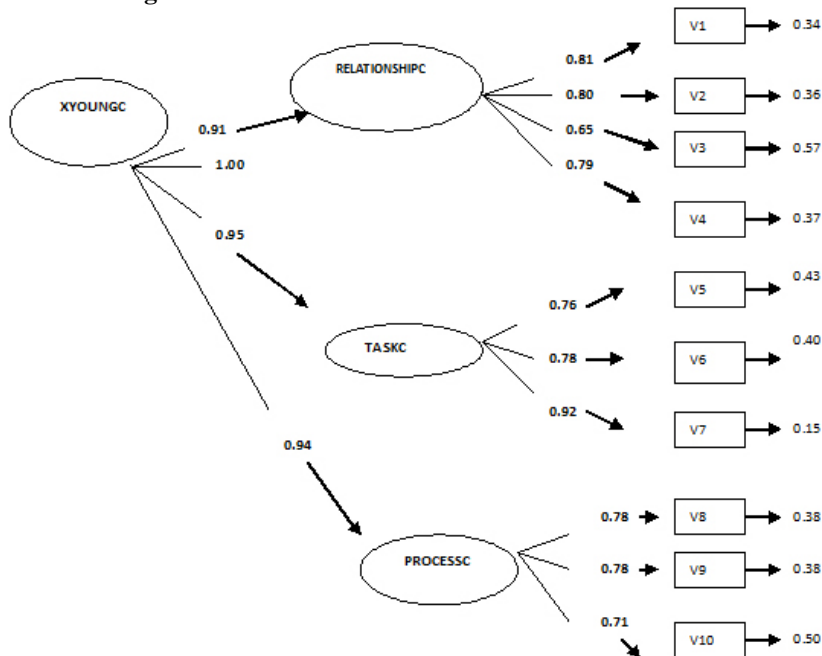
TASKC= Task Conflict

RELATIONSHIPC= Relationship Conflict

PROCESSC= Process Conflict

XYOUNGC= The conflict between X generation and younger Y generation

Figure 1. Model of Conflicts Between X and Y Generations



Chi-Square=870.10, df=455, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.072

Each relation of conflict extent in the conflicts of X and Y generation has been examined in detail. In this regard, the contribution of relation conflict in conflict of X and Y generation has been found the least by means 0,91 unit. While there is one unit raise in relation conflict, in conflict of X generation with Y generation it is resulted 0,91 unit raise.

H₂: As relation conflicts increase, the conflicts of X generation with Y generation increase. **Hypothesis2 has been verified.**

Task conflicts provide utmost contribution to the conflict of X generation with Y generation. The features of conflict extents state that task conflict comes into prominence. One unit raise in task conflict bring along 0,95 unit raise in the conflict of X generation with Y generation.

H₃: As task conflicts increase, the conflict of X generation with Y generation increases. **Hypothesis3 has been verified.**

One unit increase in process conflicts cause 0,94 unit increase in the conflict of X generation with Y generation.

H₄: As process conflicts increase, the conflict of X generation with Y generation increases. **Hypothesis4 has been verified.**

The variable providing enormous contribution in latent variable of **task conflict** with 0,92 unit has been obtained from “*How often do you have disagreements in the projects you’re doing together with your colleagues in the institution?*” variable (V7). Variable (V7) explains the 0,85 unit change of task conflict latent variable. The minimum contribution with 0,76 unit has been obtained from “*How often do you have collisions about the done tasks with your colleagues in the institution?*” variable (V5). Variable V5 explains the 0,57 unit change of task conflict latent variable.

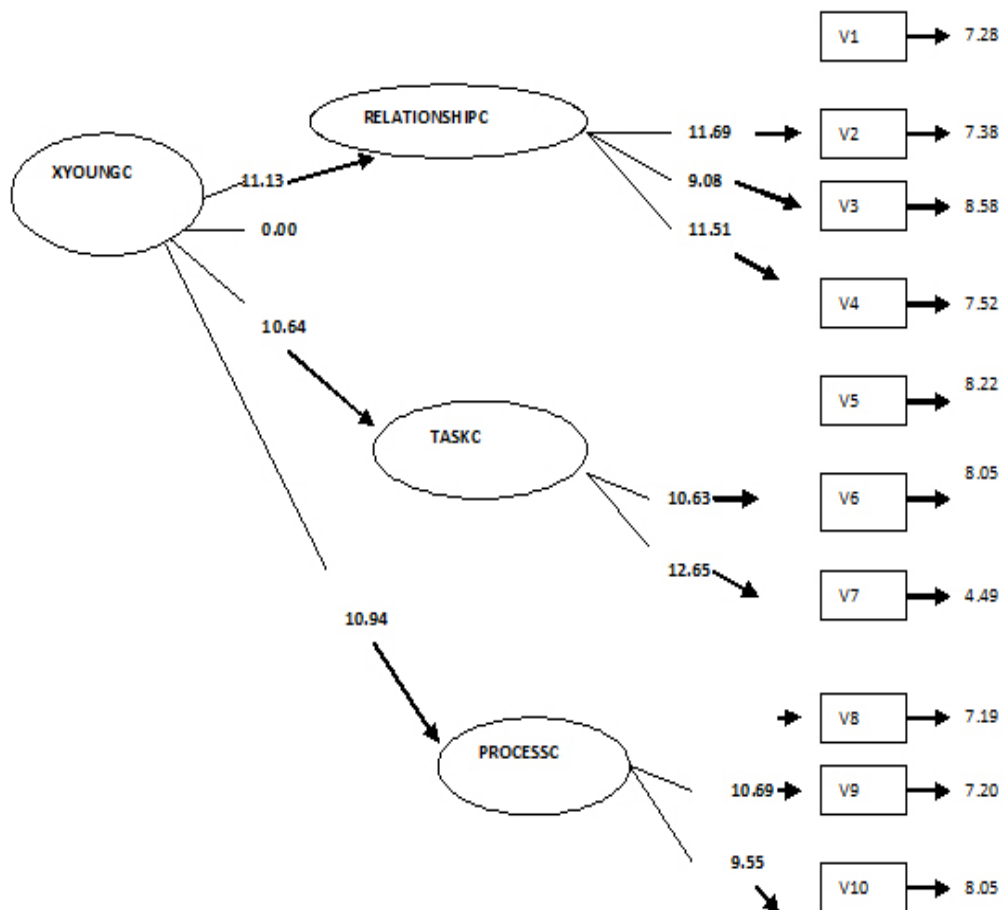
The variables providing enormous contribution in latent variable of **process conflict** with 0,78 unit has been obtained from “*How often do you have disagreements about who will have to do the job with your colleagues in the institution?*” (V8) and “*How often do you have problems about when someone does not discharge his responsibility with your colleagues in the institution?*” (V9) variables. Variables V8 and V9 explain the 0,62 unit change of process conflict latent variable. The minimum contribution with 0,71 unit has been obtained from “*How often do you have problems about sharing the sources(inadequacy of material and equipment, improprerty of physical conditions etc.) with your colleagues in the institution?*” variable (V10). Variable V10 explains the 0,50 unit change of process conflict latent variable.

The variable providing enormous contribution in latent variable of **relation conflict** with 0,81 unit has been obtained from “*How often do you have problems in the relations with your colleagues in the institution?*” variable (V1). Variable V1 explains the 0,66 unit change of relation conflict latent variable. The minimum contribution with 0,65 unit has been obtained

from “How often do you have emotional conflicts with your colleagues in the institution?” variable (V3). Variable V3 explains the 0,43 unit change of relation conflict latent variable.

Whether the relationships between the variables in structural model for conflicts of X generation with Y generation and latent variables, and whether the relationships among latent variables have been searched by t statistics. All relationships in conflicts of X generation with Y generation have been found significant. The minimum t statistics obtained in the model has been calculated as 9.08 and the maximum t statistics has been calculated as 12,65. Figure 2 shows the statistics about road graphic.

Figure 2. t Statistics of Model for Conflicts of X Generation with Y Generation



Chi-Square=870.10, df=455, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.072

Conclusion And Suggestions

In the study, it has been studied to determine the existence of conflicts between X and Y generations and the relations with cultural changes in its extent based on performance. When conflicts of generations are studied, it can be stated that X generation rarely have conflict with Y generation.

The conflicts of X generation academicians with the younger generation (Y generation) have been examined and the results are below:

- As relation conflicts increase, the conflicts of X generation with Y generation increase.
- As task conflicts increase, the conflicts of X generation with Y generation increase..
- As process conflicts increase, the conflicts of X generation with Y generation increase.

It has been reached that the relation, task and process conflicts which X generation have increase the conflicts with Y generation. X generation academicians have some conflicts with younger Y generation due to the reasons caused from relations, tasks and processes. Task conflicts, which is one of conflict types as mentioned, are the highest level of conflicts. X generation say that they primarily have “*conflicts about doings*” with Y generation. When the rates of conflict extents are examined, academicians states that later they have both relation and process conflicts. The expression which remarks the maximum contribution to relation conflicts of academicians is associated with “ that academicians have tensions with each other”. That X generation have disagreements with Y generation about who will do the tasks brings along the process conflicts.

Research findings show that there are rarely task, relation and process conflicts among X and Y generations. When it is considered that relation conflicts always cause non-functional results, it is significantly necessary to solve the conflicts as mentioned by university administrators. It is stated that in literateur task and process conflicts at a certain extent gain favour to the organ and the ones more than a certain extent affect negatively and give harm to the organ. The conflicts about works among employees provide that different point of views come up and the point of views of parties struggle with each other. This side of task and process conflicts has a performance enhancer speciality in organs. Task and process conflicts in high levels turn into relation conflicts after some time, so relational bonds in organs weaken. In this respect, it is a significant necessity that university administrators should provide different generations to be governed well so that the levels of relation, task and process conflicts rarely seen among academicians will not increase.

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