



Managerial Negotiation and Conflict Resolution on Banking Sector of Kathmandu Valley: Evidence from Structural Equation Modelling

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Abstract

Background: Conflict is an inevitable aspect of any organization, including the banking sector, where disagreements between parties, such as between superiors and subordinates, are common. Effective negotiation is often key to resolving these disputes, ensuring mutual satisfaction through discussion and compromise.

Objective: This study aims to critically evaluate the negotiation strategies used by management in the commercial banking sector of Kathmandu Valley for conflict resolution.

Method: A survey was conducted to gather data on negotiation strategies used by managers in the banking sector for conflict resolution. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, resulting in a total of 267 respondents, including managers and officers. The collected data were then analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to identify the preferred negotiation strategies and their effectiveness in conflict resolution.

Result: The findings indicate that the majority of respondents, who are managers, prefer cooperative strategies in conflict situations, reflecting a high concern for others. The integration strategy was the most commonly used approach for negotiation, demonstrating a focus on maintaining positive relationships while resolving disputes.

Conclusion: The study concludes that managers in the Kathmandu Valley banking sector prioritize maintaining good relationships during conflict resolution. This approach reflects a broader strategy of using negotiation to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. The study provides valuable insights into current practices and offers recommendations for enhancing conflict resolution strategies in Nepal's commercial banking sector, contributing to smoother operations and greater employee and employer satisfaction.

Paper Types: Research Paper

Keywords: Negotiation, conflict resolution, structure equation modeling, integrative strategy, compromising strategy, avoiding strategy

JEL Classification: F51, D74, G21, C1, C5

Introduction

Conflict is an inevitable issue in any organization (Oredein & Eigbe, 2014). Conflict is described simply as a disagreement or dispute between two or more parties. A conflict can arise as a result of a clash between a superior and a subordinate that cannot come to a compromise. Milburn (1998) claims that conflicts can prove to be costly, even if they sometimes offer social and personal benefits such as inventions and new social structures. In some of the settings, conflicts can grow to a very high extent. Strategies have been developed to resolve the processes involved, escalate tensions into violence, and de-escalate them through negotiation and mediation into a mutually satisfactory resolution (Milhench, 2004). Negotiation may prove to be an effective way of putting an end to or resolving disputes to the mutual satisfaction of parties through discussion and shared compromises between opponents (Drake, 1995). A negotiation is a key tool used in conflict management and resolution (Cenere et al., 2018). Negotiations are any social interaction in which two or more parties mutually decide how to allocate scarce resources or address conflicting interests (Van Zant & Kray, 2015). The ability to successfully negotiate has long been recognized as a comprehensive and essential component of managerial performance (Watson & Hoffman, 1996). Furthermore, the main managerial roles were described as “negotiator” and “disturbance handler” reflecting formal and informal forms of managerial negotiations. Managers negotiate with peers and superiors within the company, vendors, and clients, and even with subordinates when the manager chooses not to use legitimate authority or force or is unable to do so (Watson & Hoffman, 1996). When there is a wide disparity in values and practices in a particular culture or between different people that contributes to feelings of dissonance, there is scope for negotiations to restore the balance between expectations and reality (Karacay et al., 2019).

Negotiation strategies are the interaction techniques used by the opposing parties to resolve conflicts (Ganesan, 1993). According to Zohar (2015), there are two forms of strategy: cooperation and control. Controlling strategy depicts one benefit only from the defeat of the other. This strategy is less common, but successful, and is getting certain results. Strategy for cooperation on the other hand is a theoretical possibility that both parties will reach their goal by compromise (Zohar, 2015). However, Ganesan (1993) from conflict resolution research found that there are four negotiation styles or strategies often used in business. These strategies are:

Problem-solving strategy that helps to resolve conflicts through the development of solutions that integrates the requirement of both the parties, hence also known as integrating strategy (Ganesan, 1993; Mahmoodi, 2012). Compromising strategy helps in conflict resolution by the development of a middle course on the issues of both parties (Wertheim, 2002). A competing strategy which is also known as dominating strategy refers to preference to satisfying your needs rather than satisfying the other’s needs. Avoiding strategy refers to being indifferent about satisfying either your needs or the other’s needs and the final strategy is accommodating strategy where: simply it doesn’t matter to you but it matters to the other person to win (Wertheim, 2002). This paper aims to identify and analyze the different negotiation strategies used by the managerial level in context of Commercial Banks in Kathmandu Valley and identification of the most preferred strategies for the conflict resolution.

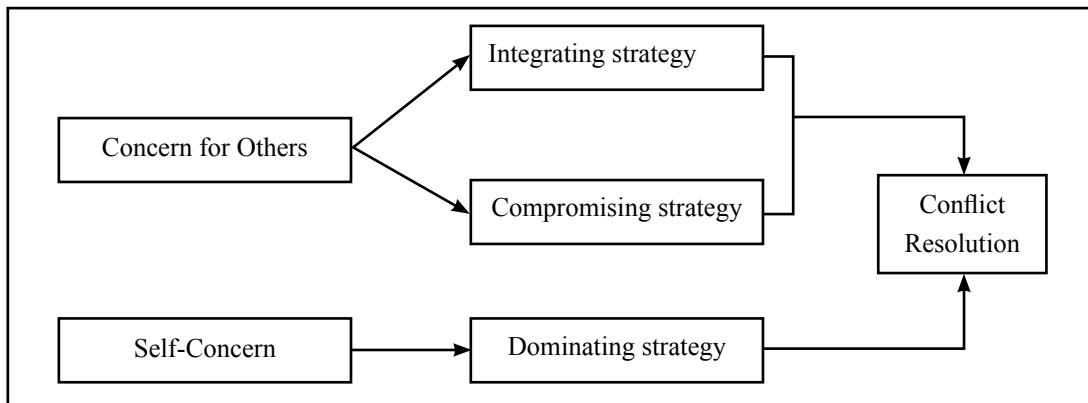
The general purpose of the research is to explore which of the negotiation techniques are used the best, where the main purpose is then supported and guided by supporting purpose. This paper will help the managers and employees of banking sector to identify and understand which of the strategies would be suitable for resolving the conflict in their respective organizations. Remaining part of the paper will reflect the overall study methodology, where methods and materials will be addressed. The findings and discussion of key problems will then be discussed, followed by the final remarks.

Research Method

Theoretical framework

Conflicts are increasingly common aspects of our everyday lives. The resolution of such disputes is the subject of increased academic research (Drake, 1997). Conflict is not just a face-threatening phenomenon, but also an occurrence that is emotionally laden. There is no conflict in the absence of emotion, as conflict is often charged, motivated, and valanced emotionally (Zhang et al., 2014). The paper is based on dual concern model which states that individuals when negotiating face two concerns along a continuum which ranges from self-concern and other-concern. Here, self-concern refers to pursuing and defending their own interests and concern for others refers to fostering and upholding a positive relationship with the other parties involved (Caputo et al., 2019). Negotiators are thus found to switch between cooperation and competition and even do so during the same negotiation because they often have mixed motives given their general tendency to either end of the spectrum of self / other’s concern (Caputo et al., 2019). Negotiators, who follow a competitive negotiating strategy, believe the negotiation is a fixed-sum game and one party’s gain is a loss to the other (win- lose). One side “wins” and one side “loses” in this kind of negotiation. In this case there are fixed resources to be shared so that the more one gets the less the other gets (Wertheim, 1996). Wertheim (1996) further claims that techniques in this strategy include data manipulation, forcing and withholding of information. However, people who have high concern for others use cooperative strategies for negotiation which includes integrative strategy, compromising strategy or avoiding strategy. This paper focuses on the use of cooperative strategies for managerial negotiation for conflict resolution in Commercial Banking sector in Kathmandu Valley. The conceptual framework developed from the argument is presented in table 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Concern for Others: Concern for others refers to fostering or maintaining a positive relationship with other parties in a negotiating situation (Caputo et al., 2019). It basically means the consideration of the image of the other party, and the mutual concern to the preservation of the image of both the parties involved or image of the relationship (Zhang et al., 2014). If negotiators are more inclined towards concern for others, their involvement in relations with other parties will lead them to value-creating and cooperative approaches (Caputo et al., 2019)

Dominating strategy (win-lose): Dominating strategy of negotiation for conflict resolution is based on high concern for self and low concern for others (Ting-Toomey, 2007). This strategy is uncooperative and assertive (Ma, 2007). The individual pursues his or her own concerns at the expense of the other person (Miller, 2014). This model is power-oriented in which one uses whatever power they think is appropriate to win one’s own position over others. This negotiation style is biased.

Integrative Strategy: The integrative strategy of negotiation, often referred to as a cooperative or problem-solving model, includes using strategies to improve communication and the exchange of information with the other side (Caputo et al., 2019). Negotiators view the agreement as a solution to problems and see the process as a shared decision-making process. They sincerely address both parties’ concerns, expectations and needs and try to find a solution that protects all from one another (win - win). According to Wertheim (1996), there is a variable amount of resources to be shared in this kind of negotiation and both sides can “win.” The main concern here is to optimize the joint results.

H₀₁: Integrating strategy is not significantly related to concern for others.

H₀₂: Integrating strategy is not significantly related to conflict resolution.

Compromising Strategy: Compromising strategy helps in conflict resolution by the development of a middle course on the issues of both parties. Compromising style of negotiation for conflict resolution lies in between cooperativeness and assertiveness. The purpose is to find a solution which is convenient, mutually acceptable and partially satisfies both parties (Miller, 2014). Compromising may mean splitting the difference, making compromises or looking for a quick middle ground.

H₀₃: Compromising strategy is not significantly related to concern for others.

H₀₄: Compromising strategy is not significantly related to conflict resolution.

Self-Concern: Self-Concern generally means to pursue your own interests and defend them over others interest (Caputo et al., 2019). Self-Concern in a situation of negotiation for resolving conflicts refers to protecting one’s own image (Zhang et al., 2014). If negotiators lean more toward self-concern, they will put their own interest first, resulting in a fixed-sum situation. Thus, in such situation, negotiators will show competitive behaviors to claim their value (Caputo et al., 2019).

Variable construct

Self-concern, concern for others, integrating, dominating/controlling, compromising strategy, avoiding strategy and conflict resolution are the variables observed for the study (See Table 1).

Table 1: Observed Variables

Construct	Variable	Description
Self-Concern	No shame to self	I was concerned with not bringing shame to myself.
	Self-image	I was concerned with protecting my self-image.
	Not appearing weak	I was concerned with not appearing weak in front of the other party.
	Personal pride	I was concerned with protecting my personal pride.
	Rudeness	I am not very friendly to the person until s/he gets the hint that I am not very pleased with the quality of his/her work.
Concern for others	Maintaining poise	I was concerned with maintaining the poise of the other person.
	Humbleness	Maintaining humbleness to preserve the relationship was important to me.
	Peace	Maintaining peace in our interaction was important to me.
	Other’s pride	Helping to maintain the other person’s pride was important to me.
	Other’s self-worth	I try to be sensitive to the other person’s self-worth.
	Common ground	I try to get on ‘common ground’ with the other person by showing how alike we are on things.

Construct	Variable	Description
Integrating	Need satisfaction	Satisfying both your needs and other's needs are important to you.
	Middle course	I try to find a middle course to resolve the situation.
	Prime targets	I opt for both the parties getting their prime targets.
	Long-term relationships	I aim at long term partnerships.
Dominating/ Controlling	Give and take	I try to use 'give and take' approach.
	Persuasion	I try to persuade the other person that my way is the best way.
Compromising	Dominate others	I dominate the other person that my way is the best way.
	Acceptance of position	I insist that my position to be accepted during the negotiation.
	Telling others wrong	I tell the other person that s/he is wrong.
	Dominating argument	I dominate the argument until the other person understands my position.
	Respect	I respect the other person's position or status.
	Considering other's feelings	I try not to hurt other person's feelings.
	Pleasing	I try not to be seen as an unpleasant person.
	Apologizing	I apologize just to keep the situation calm.
Maintaining relationship	I try not to agitate relationships with people around me.	

Study Area and population

This research was based on the explanatory research design and both qualitative and quantitative methods of research were used. Kathmandu valley was chosen for the study. Kathmandu valley located in Bagmati Province, latitude is 27°32'13" and 27°49'10" north and longitudes is 85°11'31" and 85°31'38" east (Parajuli, 2018) covering the area of 665 km². Banking sector is being popular in Kathmandu Valley for saving reason (Paudel & Devkota, 2020).

The population for this study is the managers and employees at the officer level from the different selected commercial banks located in Kathmandu Valley (Devkota et al., 2021; (Dhakal et al., 2022). The purposive sampling under the non-probability sampling was selected for the research. Purposive sampling is used for data collecting (Khadayat et al., 2024) , because researchers choose participants for their surveys based on their own assessment (Paudel et al., 2018). 267 respondents from the manager, an employee at officer level for the sample size was determined by using the following formula: $n = z^2pq/l^2$ (Basnet et al., 2024 & Devkota et al., 2022).

Research Instrument and procedure for data collection and analysis

The research instruments used for the study were Self-Administered Questionnaires, a pre-test of the questionnaires. The self-administered questionnaire and structured questionnaire were prepared for the collection of the data where the participants have provided their responses on the basis of their preferences and assumptions. The questionnaires were formed with the 5-point Likert Scale, subjective and multiple choices questions. The data were collected from the managers and senior-level employees in different branches of the 27 "A" grade banks in Kathmandu Valley. Formulation of the questionnaire was done after the pretest was done on 10% of the sample before starting the process of data collection.

Explanatory research design is used for the analysis of the study (Amatya et al., 2023). Inferential analysis is done to have the result on significance level of relationship between the variables and to get the result on reliability and validity of the data. The result for inferential analysis is deliberated by using SPSS, AMOS, STATA.

Data Analysis and Results

267 respondents were observed in each of the three districts i.e., Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur. Out of the total respondents, 64% were male and 36% were female. Our study depicts that in the context of Commercial Banking sector of Nepal, most of the negotiators i.e., 82% are between the age of 35-54 which implies that in Nepalese Banking Sector negotiation for Conflict Resolution generally takes place during Mid-Career and Late Career. Among the total respondents, majority have completed their masters i.e., 92.9%. As per the survey, it has come into conclusion that most of the bankers of Commercial Banks in Kathmandu Valley at managerial level i.e. 62% have experience level in between 10-19 years. As per our study, 53.09% of the total male respondents agreed that they have negotiated in their workplace whereas the remaining 46.91% answered that they haven't negotiated.

Summary Statistics

Mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis are presented in summary statistics. Standard deviation is measured to find the cluster of the data. Our result showed mean = 2.13 to 3.40 and standard deviation = 0.65 to 1.11. Similarly, skewness is measured to find the normality of distribution and kurtosis for flatness or peakedness. As (Kallner, 2018) our result was suited to have the perfect distribution of normality, as the outcome were lies under -3 to +3 and -10 to +10 respectively. Thus, the data have normality and peakedness.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA seeks to discover the significance of a series of responses-influencing constructs (Downing, 2003). KMO and Bartlett's tests are carried out to test the sampling adequacy and correlation of data. Marsh et al. (2009), our result showed KMO = 0.800 and Bartlett's test = 0.000 which means the data was acceptable and had an adequate sampling. Hence, the dataset was correlated. The extraction values tell us the proportion of the variance for each variable that can be explained by the factors. In communalities table the values should be greater than 0.5 which is met by the selected variables. The twin responses made by variables lead to having a bias in the data. Harman single factor test was used to test the common bias method. Harman, (1960), less than 50% of cumulative single factors need to maintain in the data to avoid biasness. Thus, our result, 34.74% of the variance for a single factor presented that we did not need to concern about biases for the study.

Measurement Model

The measurement model quantifies the relations between hypothetical frameworks that could perhaps be known but not measurable elements and observed variables that, in the form of a linear mixture, represent a particular imaginary construct (Lam & Maguire, 2012).

Bertsch, (2012), criteria of convergent and discriminant validity need to meet to be the data valid. The criteria were; for convergent validity; $AVE > 0.5$ (Awale et al., 2023 & Magar et al., 2023), $CR > 0.7$, $CR > AVE$, and for discriminant validity; the square root of AVE, and $AVE > MSV$. Construct reliability yielded an estimation of genuine dependability that was, on average, higher than Cronbach's alpha (Thapa et al., 2022). From the table 2, we have the result which matched well with the mentioned criteria and the minimum value for CR, Ave and MSV were; 0.858, 0.670, and 0.010 respectively. Thus, the data is valid. Likewise, Cronbach alpha was also observed, and its minimum value from our result was 0.854 which means the data is reliable. Table 3 also satisfy the required conditions.

Table 2: Reliability and Validity

Construct	Indicator	Factor loading	CRONBACH ALPHA	CR	AVE	MSV
Self-Concern	SC_2	.857	0.854	0.858	0.670	0.116
	SC_3	.898				
	SC_4	.820				
Concern for Others	CFO_1	.859	0.970	0.971	0.918	0.285
	CFO_3	.858				
	CFO_4	.873				
Integrating Strategy	INT_2	.846	0.869	0.877	0.705	0.116
	INT_3	.906				
	INT_4	.866				
Dominating/ Controlling	DOM_1	.876	0.951	0.955	0.877	0.265
	DOM_3	.954				
	DOM_4	.918				
Compromising Strategy	COM_1	.923	0.970	0.971	0.917	0.285
	COM_2	.928				
	COM_3	.916				
Conflict Resolution	CR_1	.955	0.928	0.934	0.826	0.010
	CR_2	.966				
	CR_3	.879				

Table 3: Latent Construct Correlation

SEM Correlation						
	COM	SC	CFO	INT	DOM	CR
COM	0.958					
SC	-0.341	0.818				
CFO	0.534	-0.340	0.958			
INT	0.341	-0.133	0.325	0.840		
DOM	-0.250	0.234	-0.515	-0.198	0.936	
CR	0.031	0.001	0.092	-0.100	0.020	0.909

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is performed to test whether a certain set of constructs affect the responses in a predicted manner (Pett et al., 2011). Seven indicators (CMIN/DF, RMR, GFI, CFI, TLI, IFI, RMSEA) are examined with certain criteria to analyze the goodness of fit for the data (Hair et al., 2010). The table 4 showed the obtained values from our result are suited well with the respective accepted value. Thus, the model for the data was fitted perfectly.

Table 4: Measures of Model fit

Fit indicates	Good Fitting	Acceptable Value	Obtained Value	Decision for model fit
(CMIN/DF)	<3 excellent; <5 sometimes permissible	<5 it can be accepted	1.425	Excellent
RMR	<0.08	<0.08	0.021	Excellent
GFI	>0.90	>0.80	0.932	Excellent
CFI	>0.95	>0.90	0.989	Excellent
TLI	>0.95	>0.90	0.986	Excellent
IFI	>0.95	>0.90	0.989	Excellent
RMSEA	<0.08	<0.08	0.041	Excellent

Test of Hypothesis

By examining the model fit of each observed variables the final observed variables are allocated to each latent variable. Hypothesis testing are done to know about the relationship between the variables (Harris, 2014). P-value shows the characteristics of hypothesis as significant or insignificant. Like, (Lieber and L. 1990) p-value for hypothesis; H₁, and H₃ were near to zero (***) each which means the variables of those hypothesis have significance relationship (See Figure 2). Similarly, from table 5 hypothesis H₂, and H₄ have p-value greater than 0.05 which are 0.131 and 0.630 respectively which means the variables have insignificant relationship.

Figure 2: Structural Model

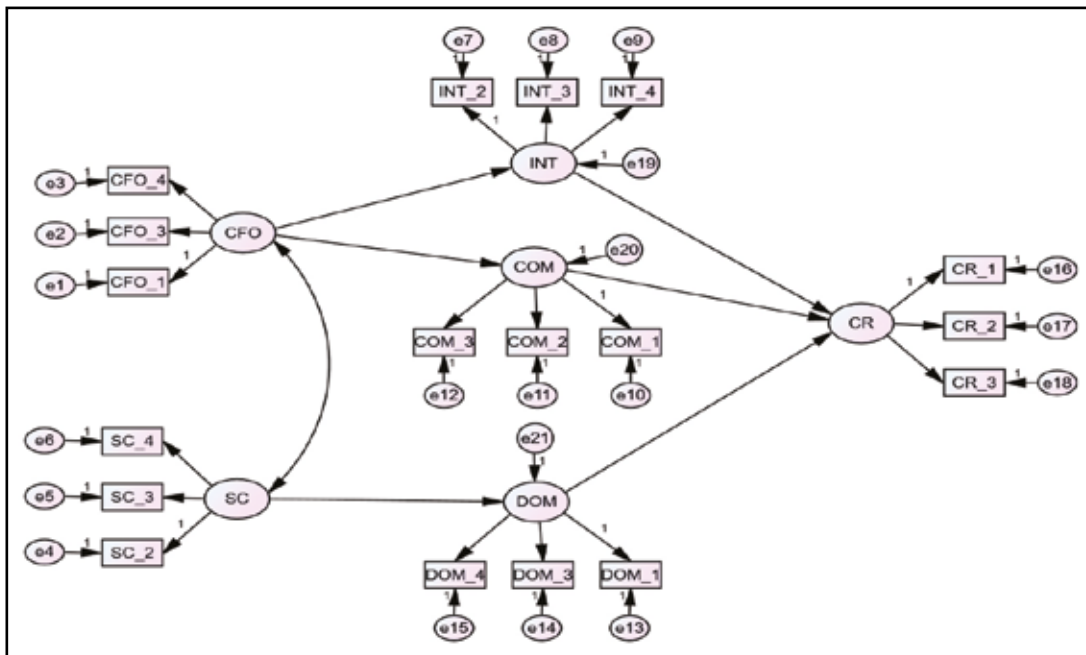


Table 5: Path estimates for structural model

Hypothesis	Relationship	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Significant/ Insignificant
H ₁	Concern for Others → Integrating Strategy	.139	.031	4.470	***	Significant
H ₂	Integrating Strategy → Conflict Resolution	-.019	.013	-1.509	.131	Insignificant
H ₃	Concern for Others → Compromising Strategy	.451	.063	7.128	***	Significant
H ₄	Compromising Strategy → Conflict Resolution	.012	.024	.482	.630	Insignificant

Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis is performed to analyze to see the effect of the mediating variable; concern for others (CFO), on dependent; conflict resolution (CR) and independent variables; integrating strategy (INT) and compromising strategy (COM). Sobel test was conducted to inspect the mediating effect and the test was done through p-value which must be less than 0.05. Our result showed 0.000 p-value for each relationship; INT → CFO → CR (a= -0.66, b=0.038) and COM → CFO → CR (a=0.558, b=0.311) which means there is full mediating effect on the dependent and independent variables. Hence, the variables have indirect relationship. Table 6 shows the result from mediation analysis.

Table 6: Mediating relationship

			Mediating Effect		Test Statistic	p-value
			b	s _b		
INT → CFO → CR	a	-0.66	-0.309	0.038	6.8469	0.00
	s _a	0.052				
COM → CFO → CR	a	0.558	0.311	0.034	6.4153	0.00
	s _a	0.062				

Discussion

The researcher has observed six constructs in the study which are: Self-Concern, Concern for Others, Integrating Strategy, Dominating/ Controlling, Compromising Strategy, Conflict Resolution. The researcher created hypothesis through those factors. The hypothesis 1 and 3 shows significant relationship with the variables whereas hypothesis 2 and 4 does not show significant relationship with the variables. The null hypothesis showing relationship between concern for others and integrating strategy and, concern for others and compromising strategy were rejected. If negotiators are more inclined towards self-concern, they may put their own interests first whereas when negotiators are more oriented towards other concerns, their involvement in the relationship with the other parties will make them participate in value development and cooperative approaches (Caputo et al., 2019). According to the study, almost 67.16% of the respondents have high concerns for others, which means that majority of the managers in banking sector focuses on maintaining good relationship with the other party while trying to resolve conflict through negotiation.

The hypothesis 2 and 3 fail to reject the relationship with the variables; Integrating Strategy and Conflict Resolution and, Compromising Strategy and Conflict Resolution do not show any positive relationship with each other. Among the respondents of the study, most of them prefer using Integration Strategy, rather than using Compromising Strategy. It contradicted the dual-concern model prediction that increases in the degree of intensity for both self-interest and concern for others would generate

increases in compromise and integration. Inconsistent with the dual-concern model, as concern for oneself increased, the option to incorporate sharply decreased. The concern for oneself was negatively associated and the concern for others was positively associated to the compromising approach. Paudel et al., (2021), the managers of banking sector have good managerial communication in terms of identity factors, negotiation and adaptation, and decision making. When there is little concern for oneself and concern for others, the dual-concern models reflect avoiding as the preferable choice.

Conclusion

The result of the study is concluded through the model fit test, reliability and validity test. This study depicts that the concern for others is relatively significant with integrating strategy and compromising strategy for managerial negotiation and conflict resolution on banking sector of Kathmandu valley. Our study concludes that most respondents are highly concerned about others, which indicates that most banking sector managers concentrate on maintaining a good relationship with the other party when seeking to resolve disputes through negotiation. The result was consistent with the projections obtained from the dual-concern model for the compromising strategy. It is the instrument to analyze current facts, discussing how conflicts can be better resolved in an organization. To strengthen the system of communication and also the conflict resolution process, researchers have listed some recommendations. The recommendations are like: negotiators need to plan properly for description, and the compilation of all appropriate data and information on related issues, negotiators would avoid using any language that can create confusion or generate suspicion during the negotiation process. Mentioned recommendation can form the concerns for others. Implementing the good planning process can decrease the conflicts and the negotiations with the betterment.

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