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Conflict Prevention and Moderation System (CPM-System) in Multicultural Science

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Abstract

Globalisation has seen an increasingly diverse range of people working together in multicultural research projects – a process which can often result in intercultural conflicts. However, conflict prevention and conflict management systems are still not widely implemented in the scientific realm. Conflict Management and Moderation System (CPM-System) can be defined as a programme designed for conflict prevention and conflict resolution within organisations. The aim of the CPM-Platform is to prevent and, if they arise, to solve conflicts within the research consortium. CPM-System is based on the assumption that conflict management is more successful and reliable if adequate structures and procedures have been established in advance. So far Conflict Management Systems have successfully been implemented in the “business arena”, they are, however, new in the research context. This study is focused on identifying the specific categories that trigger potential conflicts in a multicultural science project that are different to those in business. We used Grounded Theory to develop the study and adopted a qualitative method for the collection of the data. Results from this study were used to categorise the concepts and develop the Conflict Prevention and Moderation System (CPM System) three level categories, which consist of the conflict levels, conflict triggering factors, and the consequences of the conflict. Cultural Diversity appeared to be the most important conflict triggering factor that influences all other factors. Other specific intercultural conflict triggering factors include finances, interdependence, hierarchies, and scientific issues. The findings suggest that intercultural challenges can be controlled by the proper introduction and use of a CPM System. We conclude that the implementation of a CPM System in a scientific context strongly supports a constructive way of dealing with conflicts in multicultural scientific projects.

Keywords: Conflict management, conflict management system, conflict prevention, conflict-triggering factors, cultural diversity, intercultural conflicts