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**Delayed analyses, unpublished results: Poorly managed workplace conflicts can harm research, senior physicists say**

**In their new report, researchers at the Bavarian State Institute for Higher Education Research and Planning (IHF) address research leaders' views on workplace conflicts and their organizational management. Based on a survey of more than 300 senior physicists, the results show that conflict is perceived as very common, and often involves authorship issues and perceived lack of respectful collegial behaviour. Some conflicts cause damage to research productivity, such as delays or unpublished results. Moreover, when official institutional bodies are involved, they are often not perceived as helpful.**

The good news is: Conflict can also channel professionalisation. Most research leaders changed their leadership practices in response to conflict experiences. Female research leaders in particular reported that they started to communicate expectations more clearly, had improved meeting structures or downsized their groups. Respondents also advocated for changes in conflict management procedures and structures at an organizational level, and an admission that conflicts are part of teamwork in research.

*'Collaborative teamwork is very important in physics', comments Dr. Maike Reimer, the report's corresponding author. 'Research leaders face various challenges as they progress in their scientific career, and roles and expectations change.'*

Recently, a lot of criticism has been levelled both at individual senior researchers who fail to exert their leadership functions responsibly and professionally, and at the organizational structures of governance in universities and research organizations which are not able to deal with these problems in a fair and transparent manner. Carried out in cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Physik (DPG), this study aims to broaden the empirical data base by giving the leaders an opportunity to describe their perspectives on workplace conflicts and evaluate the encompassing institutional reactions. Complementing recent surveys that focus on pre- and postdoctoral researchers, the analyses contribute to the understanding and prevention/management of conflict escalation in research groups and development of potentially useful suggestions for improvement.

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