



AN ANALYSIS OF A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND  
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES IN THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL  
COMPANY

by

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## ABSTRACT

In an era where globalization has led to increasingly diverse work environments, understanding the dynamics of cultural intelligence (CQ) and conflict management is crucial for organizational success. This thesis investigates the relationship between cultural intelligence and different conflict management styles within modern multicultural organizations. By integrating theoretical perspectives and empirical findings, this research aims to review if there is a relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict resolution practices.

Chapter 1 provides a comprehensive literature review on cultural intelligence and conflict management. It begins with a detailed exploration of the concept of cultural intelligence, including its definition, historical development, and major theories. The necessity of cultural intelligence in the workplace is then discussed, highlighting its role in facilitating effective intercultural interactions and promoting organizational harmony. Following this, the chapter delves into the theoretical underpinnings of conflict resolution, covering its definition, historical evolution, and key theories. The importance of conflict resolution in maintaining workplace productivity and employee satisfaction is underscored. The chapter concludes with a review of studies examining the intersection of cultural intelligence and conflict resolution, setting the stage for the empirical investigation.

Chapter 2 outlines the materials and methods used in the study. It begins with the theoretical background, defining the latent constructs related to cultural intelligence and conflict resolution. The chapter then presents the final research model, detailing the structure of the questionnaire and the data collection process, which employs convenience and snowball sampling techniques. The main tools for hypotheses testing are also discussed, ensuring a robust methodological framework for the research.

Chapter 3 presents the results and discussion. It starts by reiterating the research purpose and providing descriptive statistics of the sample. Reliability and validity tests are conducted to ensure the robustness of the measures used. Hypotheses testing is carried out, with a detailed analysis of the probability values and the results. The discussion section interprets these findings in the context of existing literature, offering insights into the practical implications of the relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict management. Based on these findings there is a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict management styles.

The Conclusion and Recommendations section synthesizes the key findings and discusses their implications for theory and practice. It provides actionable recommendations for

organizations seeking to enhance their conflict resolution strategies through the development of cultural intelligence. The study concludes by suggesting avenues for future research, emphasizing the ongoing importance of cultural intelligence in an increasingly globalized workforce.

This thesis contributes to the understanding of how cultural intelligence can be leveraged to improve conflict management in multicultural settings both in Azerbaijan and abroad. By offering a detailed theoretical and basic empirical examination, it aims to inform organizational policies and training programs, ultimately fostering more harmonious and productive work environments.

## ABBREVIATIONS

CQ – Cultural intelligence

BCE – Before Common Era

CMS – Conflict management styles

CBT – Cognitive behavioural therapy

CQS – Cultural Intelligence scale

ROCI-II - Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II

CR – Conflict resolution

## Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, the landscape of organizational environments has transformed, bringing together a mosaic of cultures, perspectives, and communication styles. This convergence has amplified the importance of cultural intelligence (CQ), a critical capability for individuals and organizations to navigate the complexities of multicultural interactions effectively. Cultural intelligence refers to the ability to relate to and work effectively across cultures, encompassing metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions. As organizations become more culturally diverse, the need to understand how CQ influences various organizational outcomes, particularly conflict management, becomes paramount.

Conflict management is an integral aspect of organizational dynamics, directly impacting team cohesion, productivity, and overall organizational success. Different conflict management styles—such as integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising—are employed by individuals and teams to address and resolve disputes. These styles vary in their approach to handling disagreements, ranging from collaborative problem-solving to assertive imposition of one’s viewpoint. In multicultural organizations,

where cultural norms and values shape individuals' perceptions and behaviors, the interplay between cultural intelligence and conflict management styles presents a unique area of study.

**Purpose and objectives of the research.**

This thesis explores the relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict management styles within modern multicultural organizational environments in Azerbaijan and abroad.

The primary aim is to understand is there a relationship between levels of cultural intelligence and different conflict management styles and how varying levels of cultural intelligence influence the preference and effectiveness of different conflict management styles. By examining this relationship, the study seeks to provide insights into how organizations can enhance their conflict resolution strategies and foster a more harmonious and productive work environment.

**The object and the subject of the research.**

The main subject of the research is a relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict management styles. The objects of the research are cultural intelligence and conflict management styles.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical applications. From a theoretical perspective, it adds to the growing body of literature on cultural intelligence and conflict management by integrating these two domains. It offers a nuanced perspective on how cultural intelligence can serve as a moderating factor in conflict resolution processes, potentially leading to more culturally sensitive and effective management practices. Practically, the findings of this study can inform organizational policies and training programs aimed at enhancing cultural competence and conflict resolution skills among employees and leaders.

Modern organizations, characterized by their diverse workforce, face unique challenges in maintaining effective communication and collaboration. Misunderstandings and conflicts arising from cultural differences can hinder organizational performance and employee satisfaction. Therefore, developing a high level of cultural intelligence among employees and leaders is crucial. Culturally intelligent individuals are more likely to recognize and respect cultural differences, adapt their communication styles, and employ conflict management strategies that are considerate of diverse cultural perspectives.

Furthermore, the study investigates the implications of cultural intelligence on organizational culture and leadership. Based on previous studies on this topic, leaders with high cultural intelligence are better equipped to create inclusive environments that value diversity and promote equitable conflict resolution. Such environments not only enhance employee morale

and engagement but also drive innovation and competitive advantage by leveraging the diverse talents and perspectives within the organization.

### **Research methods.**

To achieve the objectives of this research, the author has conducted a survey to assess levels of cultural intelligence and preferred conflict management styles. The results were analyzed using open-source statistical programming language R, EViews econometrics statistical package and Microsoft Excel. This methodology allowed for a robust analysis of basic descriptive statistics, normality check and correlation of the findings from survey about whether a relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict management is there, and what are the main correlations between them.

In summary, this thesis addresses the critical intersection of cultural intelligence and conflict management within modern multicultural organizations in Azerbaijan and abroad. By elucidating how cultural intelligence influences conflict management styles, the study aims to offer valuable contributions to organizational theory and practice, primarily for international organizations located in Azerbaijan. It underscores the importance of fostering cultural intelligence to enhance conflict resolution, promote a positive organizational climate, and ultimately, achieve greater organizational effectiveness in a diverse and interconnected world.

## **Chapter 1. Literature Review on Cultural Intelligence and Conflict Management**

### **1.1 Cultural intelligence: theoretical perspective.**

Cultural intelligence is a relatively new concept; however, it is built upon a rich foundation of historical and generational knowledge from various disciplines, including philosophy, linguistics, psychology, sociology, and history. Cultural intelligence, or CQ, refers to an individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse settings, encompassing the understanding and adaptation to cultural differences.

The origins of cultural intelligence can be traced back to ancient inquiries by philosophers such as Confucius and Socrates, who explored ethical behaviour and the importance of understanding others. Herodotus, often considered the 'Father of History,' provided early insights into cultural intelligence by documenting diverse customs and practices, challenging ethnocentrism—the belief in the inherent superiority of one's own culture. Linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky examined how language shapes our perception and facilitates cross-cultural communication.

Sociologists such as Émile Durkheim and Max Weber studied societal structures and cultural norms, emphasizing the social context of human behaviour. Historians documented

intercultural interactions throughout history, illustrating the dynamic nature of cultural exchanges.

The formalization of cultural intelligence as a distinct construct gained momentum with the work of Christopher Earley and Soon Ang in the early 2000s. Their research identified CQ as crucial for success in globalized environments. Linn Van Dyne further advanced the field with tools to assess and enhance cultural intelligence.

Let's explore the evolution of this concept from its beginnings to recent years and review the major works related to it. Key contributors include Christopher Earley, Soon Ang, and Linn Van Dyne, whose collective efforts have defined and advanced the understanding of cultural intelligence.

### 1.1.1 Definition of Cultural intelligence

Cultural intelligence is currently widely used in the modern sociology, education, business and in different research contexts.

Starting from the first official definition, cultural intelligence has been refined and expanded upon by numerous researchers. The term was first introduced in the research conducted by London Business School professor Christopher Earley in 2002. Earley defined cultural intelligence as “a person’s capacity to adapt to new cultural settings” (Earley, 2002: 271), emphasizing the importance of flexibility and adaptability in diverse cultural environments. In 2003, Earley continued his work in collaboration with Soon Ang, a professor at Nanyang Business School. Together, they further developed the concept, incorporating a multidimensional approach that included metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioural components. Their collaboration led to a more comprehensive understanding of cultural intelligence, recognizing that effective cross-cultural interaction requires not just knowledge about different cultures (cognitive), but also the motivation to engage with those cultures (motivational), capacity to learn about other cultures (metacognitive), and the ability to modify one’s behaviour accordingly (behavioural).

Earley and Ang's research highlighted that cultural intelligence is essential for individuals and organizations operating in an increasingly globalized world. They proposed that high cultural intelligence enables better communication, collaboration, and performance in multicultural settings. Their work has since inspired a wide range of studies exploring the applications and implications of cultural intelligence in various fields such as international business, education, and intercultural communication.

The initial definition and subsequent enhancements by Earley and Ang have laid a foundational framework for ongoing research, underscoring the dynamic and evolving nature



of cultural intelligence. As a result, CQ has become a critical competence for navigating the complexities of global interactions and fostering effective intercultural relationships. Later, this definition has been improved by different researchers which the author is sharing as in below table:

Table 1. Definitions of CQ

Authors	Definition
Earley (2002: pp 271)	a person's capacity to adapt to new cultural settings
Chen (2015)	is an individual's capability to adapt effectively to situations of cultural diversity
Earley and Mosakowski (2004a: 139)	Cultural intelligence is an outsider's seemingly natural ability to interpret someone's unfamiliar and ambiguous gestures the way that person's colleagues and compatriots would
Earley and Ang, with Tan, (2006: 5)	a person's capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is, unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context
Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Ng, Templer, Tay and Chandrasekar (2007: 336)	an individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings
Ang (2007: 336)	a specific form of intelligence focused on capabilities to grasp, reason, and behave effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity
Ang and Inkpen (2008: 338)	a form of organizational intelligence or firm-level capability in functioning effectively in culturally diverse situations
Van Dyne, Ang, and Livermore (2010) – two definitions	1 <sup>st</sup> one is "one's capability to effectively understand and adapt to a myriad of cultural contexts as an essential skill set needed to lead effectively across cultures" and 2 <sup>nd</sup> one is CQ is "an individual's capability to function effectively across cultures - this can include national, ethnic and organizational as well as other types of culture"
Thomas and Inkson (2004: 182-183)	a multifaceted competency consisting of cultural knowledge, the practice of mindfulness, and the repertoire of behavioural skills

Source: own editing based on literature review.

In the current work the author supports the idea of the definitions given by Earley (2002-2006) and others as well as Van Dyne et al.

### 1.1.2 History of Cultural intelligence (CQ)

Let's have a closer look at how CQ research developed over the last decades and where it originated. To do this properly, the author will examine the materials, including research papers, books, and publications written by the people who created this term and added to its meaning through numerous studies and surveys worldwide. Today, the workplace has become increasingly global, affecting both expatriates and local employees who face daily cross-cultural communication challenges that test their intercultural mindset.

Why does it cause complexity when people from different cultural backgrounds interact?

Humans have been interested in culture and its psychology since ancient times. The origins of cultural intelligence can be traced back to ancient inquiries by philosophers such as Confucius and Socrates, who explored ethical behaviour and the importance of understanding others. Herodotus, often considered the 'Father of History,' provided early insights into cultural intelligence by documenting diverse customs and practices in his work "Histories" around 430 BCE, challenging ethnocentrism—the belief in the inherent superiority of one's own culture. This early observation laid the groundwork for understanding cultural biases and the importance of cross-cultural awareness.

Linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky examined how language shapes our perception and facilitates cross-cultural communication. Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (1916) introduced structuralism, emphasizing the relational aspects of language, while Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* (1957) and *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965) revolutionized the understanding of linguistic competence and universal grammar. Their work underscored the role of language in cross-cultural understanding and communication. After Darwin published his theory of evolution, Wilhelm Wundt, between 1900 and 1920, published ten volumes of *Völkerpsychologie*, collecting earlier findings about cultural psychology from anthropologists, linguists, and historians. This work marked the first step in studying cross-cultural psychology as an independent discipline. Despite its later association with Nazi ideology, such as Ernst Bergmann's advocacy for its use in Nazi Germany, *Völkerpsychologie* initially sought to understand cultural influences on psychological processes.

Sociologists such as Émile Durkheim and Max Weber studied societal structures and cultural norms, emphasizing the social context of human behaviour. Durkheim's *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893) and Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

(1905) provided insights into how cultural and religious values shape societal behaviour and economic systems. Historians documented intercultural interactions throughout history, illustrating the dynamic nature of cultural exchanges.

In more recent times, Harry Triandis published *The Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology* in the early 1980s. Cross-cultural psychology analyses characteristics and behaviour across different cultural groups, focusing on variations and human universals. It encompasses three broad goals: understanding behaviour that is universal regardless of culture, understanding how culture shapes behaviour, and understanding psychological commonalities across cultures (Laungani, 2009). Researchers examine participants from different cultures and compare their behaviour concerning specific criteria, using methodologies based primarily on traditional Western psychology (Keith, 2011). Triandis faced criticism for sometimes oversimplifying complex cultural interactions and for a perceived Western bias in his methodologies.

Geert Hofstede's 1980 publication *Culture's Consequences* was pivotal, introducing cultural value dimensions such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity-femininity. Hofstede's framework provided a structured approach to analysing cultural differences, though it has faced criticism. Critics like Brendan McSweeney allege excessive determinism and methodological flaws, while others like Galit Ailon and Philippe d'Iribarne caution against oversimplification and ecological fallacy. Despite these critiques, re-analyses, such as those by Arno Tausch, confirm many of Hofstede's findings, particularly regarding dimensions like Power Distance and Individualism vs. Collectivism. In 1991, Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama explored how culture impacts psychological processes, such as self-concept, motivation, perception, emotion, and cognition, in their influential work *Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation*. Their research highlighted the profound effects of cultural context on individual psychology. Critics of their work argue that while their theories are influential, they may sometimes overemphasize cultural differences at the expense of recognizing individual variability within cultural groups.

Another landmark study by Shalom H. Schwartz in 1992 presented a theory of value structure based on data from 20 countries, later extended to 50, in *Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries*. Schwartz's work provided a comprehensive framework for understanding the commonalities and differences in values across cultures. Critics note that while Schwartz's value dimensions are

useful, they may not fully capture the complexity of cultural values and their influences on behaviour.

Further contributions to the field include the works of Michele Gelfand, who studied cultural tightness and looseness, exploring how societal norms and their enforcement impact behaviour. Gelfand's research added another layer to understanding how cultural contexts influence individual and group behaviour. Her book *Rule Makers, Rule Breakers* (2018) received praise for its insights but also faced critique for potentially oversimplifying cultural dynamics.

The GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness) study, led by Robert House in the 1990s, also significantly advanced our understanding of cultural intelligence. This extensive research project examined leadership and organizational practices across 62 societies, highlighting the impact of cultural values on leadership effectiveness and organizational practices. While comprehensive, GLOBE has been critiqued for its complexity and for challenges in operationalizing its findings in practical contexts.

As these scientific findings improved our understanding of cultural differences, globalization intensified, leading to tighter connections between people from different cultures daily. CQ, or cultural intelligence, was first defined by Christopher Earley in 2002 as “a person’s capacity to adapt to new cultural settings” (Earley, 2002: 271). Earley and Soon Ang further developed this concept in 2003, emphasizing its importance for success in a globalized world. This definition and subsequent enhancements have provided a foundational framework for ongoing research into the dynamic and evolving nature of cultural intelligence. Critics of CQ argue that while the concept is valuable, it may sometimes lack specificity and practical guidance for individuals and organizations seeking to develop CQ effectively.

### 1.1.3 Main theories on Cultural intelligence

As already mentioned above, cultural intelligence as a concept was developed by Christopher Earley and Ang Soon as the ability of the individuals to have to interact effectively across cultural contexts and with culturally different individuals. Currently, there are many definitions of CQ, but the most common understanding of this term reflects the first description that was formulated by Christopher Earley and Ang Soon and elaborated by Linn Van Dyne. According to the research (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008; Earley & Ang, 2003) conceptualization of cultural intelligence comprises four factors:

Table 2. Four factors of CQ.

Metacognitive CQ	one's mental capability to acquire and understand cultural knowledge;
Cognitive CQ	one's knowledge about cultures and cultural differences;
Motivational CQ	one's capability to direct and sustain effort toward functioning in intercultural situations;
Behavioural CQ	one's capacity for behavioural flexibility in cross-cultural interactions.

Source: own editing based on literature review.

Based on Van Dyne et al (2012), these initial four factors were developed into narrower subdimensions: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioural.

Metacognitive CQ refers to a person's "mental capability to acquire and evaluate cultural knowledge." Individuals with high metacognitive CQ have heightened awareness of self, other and situation, monitoring and adjusting their inferences in response to input from intercultural experiences.

Based on comprehensive article, published in Psychology Today, Pogosyan, M. (2021, March 16). "The what, how and why of cultural intelligence." metacognitive CQ involves 3 processes that are activated before, during and after interactions:

**Planning:** Preparation before cross-cultural encounters. Individuals reflect on their goals and objectives prior to the interaction and anticipate possible outcomes by considering the cultural perspective of their interlocutors.

**Awareness:** Being conscious in real-time of culture's influence on thinking, feeling, and behaviour.

**Checking:** Re-calibration of expectations, assumptions and beliefs that occurs during or after cross-cultural interactions. As new information is learned, the individual adapts their mental maps accordingly.

Cognitive CQ describes the wide scope of general knowledge individuals hold about cultures. Two kinds of knowledge contribute to the success of cross-cultural experiences: culture-general and context-specific knowledge.

**Culture-general knowledge:** Declarative knowledge about the main elements that make up cultures (value systems, political, historical, and philosophical traditions, social and communication norms, insight into local languages).

**Context-specific knowledge:** "Insider understanding" of the norms and rules of behaviour among various demographic subcultures within a culture (age, gender, occupation).

Motivational CQ refers to the ability to “direct attention and energy toward learning about and functioning” in cross-cultural situations. Individuals with high motivational CQ tend to be drawn to intercultural experiences and have the confidence to manage them successfully.

**Intrinsic interest:** The satisfaction and value that interactions with others from different cultural backgrounds bring. People with high intrinsic interest tend to gain “self-generated benefits” from their cross-cultural experiences.

**Extrinsic interest:** Being motivated by the tangible, variable-dependent benefits of cross-cultural experiences, including promotions and new opportunities. Organizations frequently use these extrinsic rewards as incentives for employees on international assignments.

**Self-efficacy to adjust:** Confidence in the ability to engage, interact and work across cultures.

**Behavioral CQ** is the capability to put knowledge into practice and to demonstrate an extensive range of culturally appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviours. Individuals with high behavioural CQ can appear as more effective and respectful communicators, thanks to their ability to adjust the content, structure, and style of their communication.

**Verbal behaviour:** Capacity to express oneself linguistically. This might include tailoring one’s tone of voice or the speed, warmth, formality of speech to appropriate cultural standards. Knowing when and how to use silences during conversations, as well as the etiquette surrounding taking turns are all implicated in linguistic rules of communication.

**Non-verbal behaviour:** Ability to express oneself through culturally appropriate non-verbal means (gestures, facial expressions), as well as to read others’ body language.

**Speech acts:** Knowledge about the culture-specific nuances of expressing apologies, gratitude, warnings, and refusals. (Pogosyan, M. (2021, March 16))

Apart from the main theory, the author briefly reviewed five additional theoretical perspectives of cultural impact on human personality:

#### 1. Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, developed by Geert Hofstede, is a framework used to understand the differences in culture across countries. Hofstede's initial six key dimensions include power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, and short vs. long-term orientation. The author has used this theory further to explain the difference between people from various cultural background at workplace.

#### 2. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory.

Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is widely recognized as a comprehensive explanation of how social environments influence human development. Bronfenbrenner

posited that the environment in which a person is raised profoundly affects every aspect of their life, from personal relationships to broader societal interactions.

Bronfenbrenner's theory divides the environment into five interrelated systems: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. Each system represents different levels of influence on an individual's development, from direct interactions to broader societal and cultural contexts.

The microsystem is the innermost layer of Bronfenbrenner's model, encompassing the immediate environment in which an individual lives. This includes family, school, peer group, and neighbourhood. According to Bronfenbrenner, the microsystem is the setting where the most direct interactions with social agents take place. "The developing person is not a tabula rasa, but a growing, dynamic entity that progressively moves into and restructures the milieu in which it resides" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The mesosystem refers to the interconnections between the microsystems. Essentially, it is the system of relationships between the contexts within the microsystem. For instance, the relationship between a child's family and their school represents the mesosystem.

Bronfenbrenner emphasized that the mesosystem provides the "connective tissue" that binds the different aspects of a child's life together (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The exosystem involves settings that do not directly involve the individual but still affect them. This includes parents' workplaces, extended family members, and community services. For example, a parent's workplace policies can impact the amount of time they spend with their child, thereby indirectly influencing the child's development. "The exosystem encompasses the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which does not ordinarily contain the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

The macrosystem encompasses the broader cultural values, laws, customs, and resources of the society. It includes overarching patterns of culture, such as economic policies, social conditions, and cultural norms. According to Bronfenbrenner, the macrosystem exerts a significant influence by permeating the other systems with cultural and social ideologies. "The macrosystem refers to the overarching institutional patterns of the culture or subculture, such as the economic, social, educational, legal, and political systems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

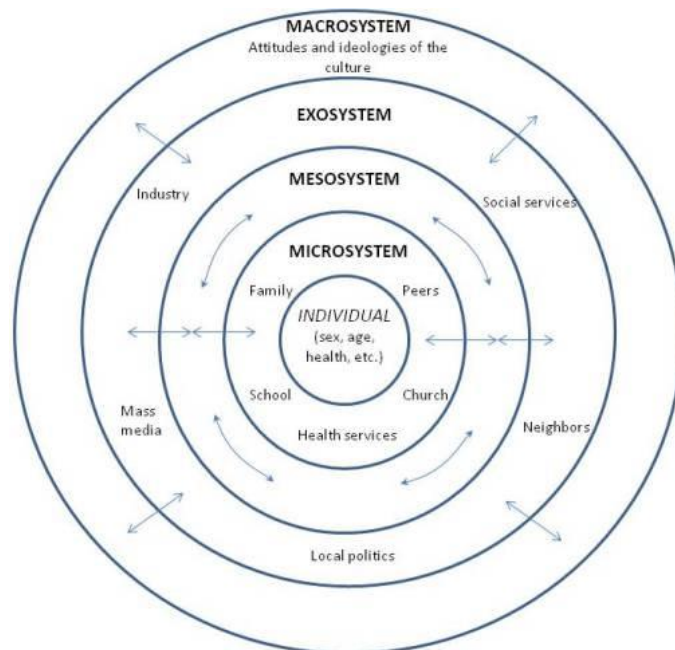
The chronosystem includes the dimension of time, reflecting the environmental events and transitions that occur throughout a person's life. It also encompasses the sociohistorical contexts that may influence an individual. For example, growing up during a war or a technological revolution can significantly shape a person's development. "The chronosystem

consists of the dimension of time as it relates to a child's environments. Elements within this system can be either external, such as the timing of a parent's death, or internal, such as the physiological changes that occur with the aging of a child" (Bronfenbrenner, 1995).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory has been extensively applied in various fields, including psychology, education, and social work. It offers a framework for understanding how different environmental factors interact and influence human development. For instance, in educational settings, the theory helps educators appreciate the multiple contexts affecting a child's learning and development.

Critics of Bronfenbrenner's theory argue that it may oversimplify complex human interactions and does not adequately account for the individual's active role in shaping their environment. Additionally, some suggest that the theory's broad scope can make it challenging to apply empirically. Despite these critiques, the ecological systems theory remains influential, providing a valuable lens for examining the multifaceted nature of human development.

Figure 1. Ecological systems theory.



Source: cited on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological\\_systems\\_theory#The\\_five\\_systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_systems_theory#The_five_systems)

### 3. Julian Steward and the Concept of Cultural Ecology.

Cultural ecology is a methodological approach that investigates the relationship between humans and their environments, positing that culture is a crucial factor in understanding the evolutionary processes that differentiate humans from other living beings. Unlike other species, humans adapt to their environments through cultural innovations and practices,



making cultural ecology an essential framework for examining human-environment interactions.

Julian Steward, an American anthropologist, is credited with developing the concept and method of cultural ecology. Steward's work laid the foundation for understanding how cultural practices and social structures are influenced by environmental conditions. In his seminal work, *Theory of Culture Change: The Methodology of Multilinear Evolution* (1955), Steward articulated that "the core of cultural ecology lies in the study of the processes by which a society adapts to its environment."

Steward introduced the idea that cultures evolve not in a linear, unidirectional manner, but through multilinear evolution, where different societies adapt uniquely to their specific environments. He emphasized that environmental factors, such as climate, geography, and available resources, play a significant role in shaping cultural practices. According to Steward, understanding these adaptive processes requires a detailed examination of the interplay between environmental conditions and cultural responses.

Cultural ecology is part of a broader theoretical division within human ecology, which is split into two primary areas: human biological ecology and human cultural ecology. Human biological ecology focuses on how people adapt to their environments through biological means, such as genetic changes and physiological adaptations. In contrast, human cultural ecology examines how cultural practices, social structures, and technological innovations enable humans to adapt to their environments.

Steward's approach highlighted that while biological adaptations are crucial, cultural adaptations are equally significant in understanding human-environment interactions. As Steward stated, "The cultural ecology approach seeks to understand the functional interdependence between culture and environment" (Steward, 1955).

Steward's methodology for cultural ecology involved several key steps. First, he advocated for identifying the "cultural core," which includes the basic economic activities and social practices that directly relate to environmental adaptation. This involves understanding subsistence strategies, resource management, and the technological means employed by a society to exploit their environment.

Next, Steward emphasized the need to analyse the ecological setting, including the physical and biological aspects of the environment that influence cultural practices. This step involves examining the availability of natural resources, climate patterns, and geographic features that impact how societies organize their activities.

Finally, Steward's methodology required examining the cultural infrastructure, including social organization, kinship systems, and political structures, to understand how these elements facilitate or constrain environmental adaptation. By integrating these components, cultural ecologists can gain a comprehensive understanding of how societies adapt to their environments through cultural means.

Since Steward's work, cultural ecology has evolved and expanded, influencing various fields such as anthropology, geography, and environmental studies. Researchers have applied cultural ecological principles to study diverse societies and environments, from indigenous communities in the Amazon rainforest to agricultural practices in rural Asia.

One significant development in cultural ecology is the focus on sustainable practices and environmental conservation. Scholars like Eugene Anderson in *Ecologies of the Heart: Emotion, Belief, and the Environment* (1996) have explored how traditional ecological knowledge and cultural practices contribute to sustainable resource management. Anderson argues that "understanding the cultural dimensions of environmental management is crucial for developing sustainable solutions."

Another important contribution is the study of political ecology, which integrates cultural ecological perspectives with political economy to examine how power relations and economic systems influence environmental practices. In *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* (2015), Paul Robbins highlights that "political ecology expands the scope of cultural ecology by considering the role of power and inequality in shaping environmental outcomes."

While cultural ecology has significantly advanced our understanding of human-environment interactions, it has also faced critiques. Some scholars argue that cultural ecology can sometimes overemphasize environmental determinism, neglecting the agency of individuals and the complexity of cultural practices. Moreover, critics have pointed out that cultural ecological studies may overlook historical and social contexts that influence cultural adaptations.

In response to these critiques, contemporary cultural ecologists have adopted more integrative and interdisciplinary approaches. They emphasize the importance of considering historical processes, social dynamics, and power relations in understanding cultural adaptations.

Additionally, there is a growing recognition of the need to include indigenous knowledge systems and local perspectives in cultural ecological research.

4. Social identity theory.

Social identity theory, developed by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner, is a seminal framework for understanding intergroup behavior and communication. The theory posits that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, internalizing the defining attributes of these groups to shape their self-concept and social identity. As Tajfel and Turner (1986) state, "a group is defined as a collection of people who categorize themselves as belonging to the same social category and internalize the category's social identity-defining attributes to define and evaluate themselves" (*Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2021).

One of the core tenets of social identity theory is that individuals derive a significant part of their identity from the social groups to which they belong. This categorization leads to a comparison between in-groups (the groups to which individuals belong) and out-groups (the groups to which they do not belong). According to Tajfel and Turner (1979), this comparison often results in the accentuation of intragroup similarities and intergroup differences, thereby enhancing group cohesion and identity. As they put it, "the very act of defining oneself in terms of group membership implies a positive evaluation of one's own group relative to others" (*The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, 1979).

The desire to view one's social groups in a positive light can lead to ingroup favoritism, where individuals preferentially treat members of their own group over those of other groups. This is driven by the need for positive distinctiveness, which is the motivation to see one's group as distinct and superior. This desire can foster intergroup prejudice and conflict, as individuals may devalue out-group members to enhance the status of their in-group.

Social identity development progresses through several stages: naive, acceptance, resistance, redefinition, and internalization.

**Naive Stage:** In this initial stage, individuals have a limited awareness of their social identity and its implications.

**Acceptance Stage:** Here, individuals begin to recognize and accept the attributes and norms of their social groups. This stage often continues from childhood into adulthood, and some people may remain in this stage throughout their lives.

**Resistance Stage:** At this stage, individuals may question and resist the norms and attributes of their social groups, seeking to challenge and redefine them.

**Redefinition Stage:** In this stage, individuals actively redefine their social identity, incorporating new elements and rejecting those that do not align with their self-concept.

**Internalization Stage:** Finally, individuals fully internalize their redefined social identity, integrating it into their self-concept and daily life.

Social identity is influenced by a multitude of factors, both internal and external. Society, family, friends, ethnicity, culture, location, media, interests, self-expression, and life experiences all play critical roles in shaping one's identity. These factors contribute to the complex and dynamic nature of social identity, reflecting the interplay between individual agency and social context.

The "Big 8" socially constructed identities are crucial components of social identity. These include:

1. **Race:** Racial identity is shaped by societal perceptions and personal experiences related to race.
2. **Ethnicity:** Ethnic identity involves a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group and the cultural traditions associated with it.
3. **Sexual Orientation:** This refers to an individual's sexual preferences and the identity they associate with them.
4. **Gender Identity:** Gender identity is a deeply held sense of being male, female, or another gender, which may or may not align with one's biological sex.
5. **Ability:** This encompasses physical, mental, and emotional abilities and disabilities.
6. **Religion/Spirituality:** Religious and spiritual beliefs and practices significantly shape social identity.
7. **Nationality:** National identity is derived from one's affiliation with a particular nation and its cultural and political norms.
8. **Socioeconomic Status:** This includes aspects related to economic resources, social class, and associated lifestyles.

Social identity theory has far-reaching applications in various fields, including psychology, sociology, and organizational studies. For instance, in organizational settings, understanding social identity dynamics can help address issues related to team cohesion, diversity, and conflict resolution. Researchers such as Ashforth and Mael (1989) have explored how organizational identification influences employee behavior and attitudes, highlighting the importance of fostering a positive organizational identity to enhance performance and job satisfaction.

While social identity theory has significantly advanced our understanding of intergroup behavior, it has also faced critiques. Some scholars argue that the theory overemphasizes the role of social categorization and underestimates the complexity of individual identities. Additionally, the focus on group membership can sometimes overshadow the unique experiences and perspectives of individuals within those groups.

Contemporary research has sought to address these critiques by adopting more nuanced and intersectional approaches to social identity. For example, Crenshaw (1989) introduced the concept of intersectionality to highlight how multiple social identities (such as race, gender, and class) intersect and shape individual experiences. This perspective has enriched social identity theory by emphasizing the interplay of various identity dimensions and the importance of context in understanding social behavior.

### 5. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Cognitive Development

Sociocultural theory is considered primarily a developmental theory. It focuses on change in behavior over time, specifically on changes that occur as individuals mature from infancy, to childhood, to adolescence, and finally to adulthood. According to the sociocultural perspective, our psychological growth is guided, in part, by people in our lives who are in mentor-type roles, such as teachers and parents. Other times, we develop our values and beliefs through our interactions within social groups or by participating in cultural events. Sociocultural theory was created by Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, as a response to Behaviorism. Vygotsky emphasized the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition. He stated, "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). This highlights the importance of social interactions and the influence of culture on cognitive development. The theory also introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which he described as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). This concept emphasizes the potential for cognitive growth that occurs when children engage in social interactions with more knowledgeable Vygotsky asserted that tools and signs, particularly language, are essential in mediating cognitive development. He argued that "tools and symbols are involved in all higher mental functions, and their role in this respect is identical to that of the technical tool in labor" (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 137).

#### 1.2 Necessity of cultural intelligence in the workplace.

Organizational CQ is a firm's capability to function effectively in an unpredictable, multicultural world (Ang & Inkpen, 2008). This includes agile strategies that support organizational resilience, evolutionary fitness, and bouncing beyond adversity.

According to Ang and Inkpen (2008) organizational CQ includes managerial, competitive,

and structural aspects. Managerial CQ is about individual-level CQ of members of the top management team. Competitive CQ refers to the extent to which organizations have processes and routines for international knowledge integration. Structural CQ refers to an organization’s capability to organize and develop effective routines for hierarchical relationships with international business partners. T. Moon (2010 b) extended this conceptualization and suggested that organizational level CQ also encompasses process capabilities (i.e, processes related to intercultural coordination and integration, intercultural learning and intercultural reconfiguration) and path capabilities (i.e early internationalization, extent of international experience, and ease of deployment of resources in intercultural contexts).

Cameron and Quinn (1999) have developed an organizational culture framework built upon a theoretical model called the “Competing Values Framework.” This framework refers to whether an organization has a predominant internal or external focus and whether it strives for flexibility and individuality, or stability and control. The framework is based on six organizational culture dimensions developed originally by Geert Hofstede. These are: process-oriented versus results-oriented, job-oriented versus employee-oriented, professional versus parochial, open systems versus closed systems, tightly versus loosely controlled, and pragmatic versus normative.

Also, the framework is based on four dominant culture types, Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy (Figure 2).

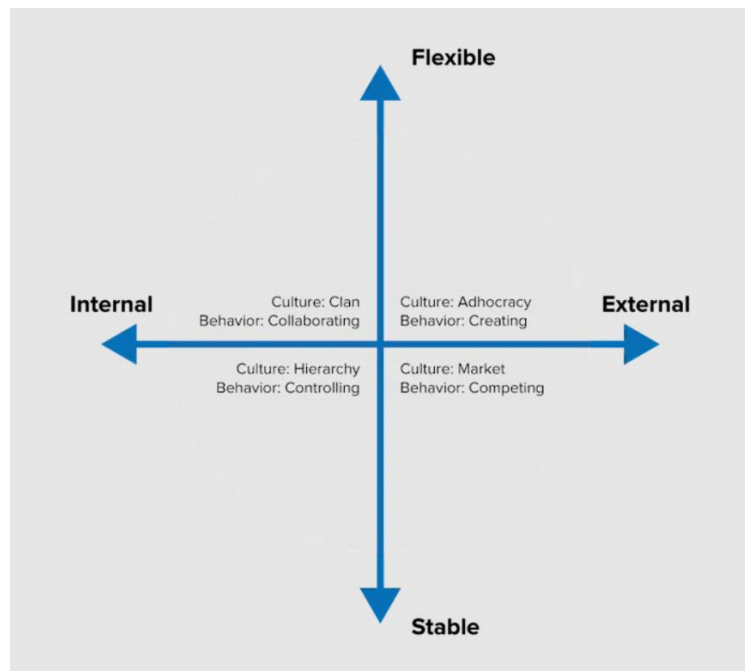


Figure 2. The Four Culture Types

Source: Quinn, R.E. and Rohrbaugh, J., "A Spatial Model of Effectiveness Criteria: Towards a Competing Values Approach to Organizational Analysis

The first dimension is represented on the vertical axis and shows where the organization's culture sits between the extremes of being completely flexible and stable. Google, for example, would sit well towards the "flexible" end of this axis, in contrast to an organization like the New York Stock Exchange, which is rightly bureaucratic and consistent.

The second dimension is represented on the horizontal axis and shows whether the organization is more internally or externally focused. Organizations with a strong, internally focused culture benefit from effective relationships between team members, and clearly defined processes. General Electric, for example, is renowned for its internal focus on the Six Sigma quality approach. In externally focused organizations, such as Apple, the culture puts strong emphasis on valuing customer satisfaction and competitiveness.

As you can see in figure 1, these two intersecting axes result in four quadrants, each representing sets of values and typical activities. Organizations in each quadrant are described as follows:

Clan (Collaborate) – The Clan quadrant, in the upper left, represents teamwork, effective relationships, personal empowerment, and talent management. This is the "people-oriented" section.

Market (Compete) – This quadrant, in the lower right, is Clan's opposite. It represents goal achievement, fast response, and competitiveness. This is the "task and goals" section.

Adhocracy (Create) – The Create quadrant is in the upper right section. It represents innovation, creativity, and planning. This is the "informal and entrepreneurial" section.

Hierarchy (Control) – This quadrant, located in the lower left section, represents bureaucracy, structure, and efficiency. This is the "formal, stable" section.

There is no "best" or "worst" quadrant to be in. Most organizations will show all these characteristics to some degree. But what matters is that the characteristics of one, or perhaps two, of the quadrants will be clearly dominant. The "right" quadrant for an organization at a particular time will depend on what it produces or does, where it is in its lifecycle, the conditions in which it operates, its position within the marketplace, and its source of competitive advantage.

### 1.3 Conflict Management: theoretical perspective.

Conflict Management involves the application of processes, tools, and skills to handle disagreements and disputes creatively and respectfully. This approach emphasizes the collaborative resolution of conflicts through effective communication skills, such as active

listening and assertive speaking. Active listening involves fully concentrating, understanding, and responding to what is being said, ensuring that all parties feel heard and valued. Assertive speaking, on the other hand, entails expressing one's thoughts and feelings clearly and respectfully, without infringing on the rights of others.

The origins of conflict management can be traced back to various historical practices and theories that have evolved over time. Early examples include diplomatic negotiations and community-based dispute resolution methods in ancient civilizations. Over the centuries, scholars and practitioners have developed numerous theories and models to better understand and manage conflict.

Two primary sources of conflict are miscommunication and incompatibility.

Miscommunication can occur when messages are misunderstood or not conveyed clearly, leading to confusion and conflict. Incompatibility, on the other hand, arises when the goals, values, or interests of the parties involved are fundamentally different or opposing. These conflicts are particularly prevalent in multicultural settings, where diverse backgrounds and perspectives can lead to misunderstandings and disagreements.

In contemporary settings, conflict management is crucial for businesses, diplomats, and international organizations. Effective conflict management strategies are essential for maintaining productive and harmonious relationships in these contexts. Unlike conflict resolution, which seeks to end a conflict that has already occurred, conflict management is an ongoing process that aims to prevent conflicts from escalating and to address them constructively when they arise.

In the subsequent sections, we will delve deeper into the definitions, historical context, and key theories of conflict management. This exploration will provide a comprehensive understanding of how conflicts can be effectively managed in various settings.

### 1.3.1 Definition of Conflict.

Before defining conflict management, it's crucial to understand the nature of conflict itself.

Conflict fundamentally means being in opposition to one another. It is defined as a disagreement between two or more individuals or groups, with each individual or group striving to defend their position and achieve their targets. Schellenberg (1996) articulates that conflict is neither inherently bad nor good but is a vital element of human social life. This perspective is supported by scholars such as Gluckman (1956), Gulliver (1963), and Nanda (1994), who argue that conflict is an integral part of social life, making society impossible without it.



From a historical viewpoint, the Marxian perspective sees conflict as an inherent part of the social system and as the primary stimulus for social change (Seymour-Smith, 1986). Conflict is thus the result of disagreements between actors based on perceived incompatible goals (Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 2012). Earlier researchers focused on creating comprehensive definitions that encompass the entire phenomenon and its processes, including antecedent conditions, emotions, perceptions, and behaviours. For instance, Pondy (1969) described conflict in terms of these elements, while Corwin (1969) conceptualized conflict as forms of interpersonal or intergroup strain that violate cooperation norms within organizations. Thomas (1992) similarly identified conflict as the process that begins when one party perceives that another has frustrated, or is about to frustrate, some concern of theirs. Classical organizational theorists viewed conflict as producing inefficiency, thus considering it undesirable and even detrimental to the organization. They advocated for the elimination or minimization of conflict wherever possible. However, over time, the understanding of conflict has evolved. Some researchers have explored the presence of conflict as a result of personal and environmental influences on group members (Almost, Doran, McGillis, & Spence, 2010). Robbins and Judge (2013) noted that conflict begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected or is about to negatively affect something the first party cares about. Opatha (2015) defined conflicts as disagreements between at least two persons or parties concerning something significant to both parties.

Conflict management involves applying processes, tools, and skills to handle disagreements and disputes creatively and respectfully. This approach emphasizes the collaborative resolution of conflicts through effective communication skills, such as active listening and assertive speaking. Active listening involves fully concentrating, understanding, and responding to what is being said, ensuring that all parties feel heard and valued. Assertive speaking, on the other hand, entails expressing one's thoughts and feelings clearly and respectfully without infringing on the rights of others.

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Several theoretical frameworks underpin conflict management practices. Negotiation theory involves the process of discussing issues to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Key components include preparation, discussion, clarification, and problem-solving. The theory emphasizes the importance of understanding each party's interests and finding a common ground. Mediation theory involves a neutral third party who helps disputants reach a voluntary agreement. The mediator facilitates communication, promotes understanding, and assists the parties in exploring potential solutions. Transformative conflict theory focuses on changing the relationships and interactions between the parties involved. It aims to empower the disputants and encourage mutual recognition and respect. Game theory, often applied in strategic conflict management, examines the strategies individuals or groups use in situations of conflict and cooperation. It involves understanding the payoffs and risks associated with different choices.

Modern conflict management theories build on these traditional frameworks, incorporating insights from psychology, sociology, and organizational behaviour. Some contemporary theories include the Interest-Based Relational (IBR) approach developed by Roger Fisher and William Ury, which emphasizes separating the people from the problem, focusing on interests rather than positions, and working together to create options that satisfy all parties involved. Conflict transformation theory, championed by John Paul Lederach, goes beyond resolving specific disputes to addressing the underlying causes of conflict. It seeks to transform the relationships, structures, and processes that generate and sustain conflict. Systems theory views conflict as a dynamic and systemic phenomenon influenced by various interconnected factors. It emphasizes understanding the broader context in which conflict occurs and addressing the underlying systemic issues.

Effective conflict management involves various techniques and strategies. Active listening ensures that all parties feel heard and understood by attentively listening to their concerns and

perspectives. Assertive communication involves expressing thoughts and feelings clearly and respectfully, without infringing on others' rights. Problem-solving involves collaboratively identifying the root causes of conflict and developing mutually acceptable solutions.

Compromise entails finding a middle ground where each party makes concessions to reach an agreement. Collaboration involves working together to achieve a win-win outcome that satisfies the interests of all parties involved.

Conflict is an inevitable part of human interaction and social life. While it can be perceived as a negative force, it also holds the potential to drive social change and personal growth.

Understanding the nature of conflict and employing effective conflict management strategies are essential for maintaining harmonious relationships and achieving productive outcomes.

By applying theoretical frameworks and practical techniques, individuals and organizations can navigate conflicts constructively and foster a culture of cooperation and mutual respect.

Conflict management is thus a vital skill in various settings, from personal relationships to organizational dynamics and international diplomacy. As conflicts are bound to arise due to miscommunication, incompatibility, or other factors, being equipped with the knowledge and tools to manage these conflicts constructively can lead to better outcomes and stronger relationships. This ongoing process involves continuous learning and adaptation, highlighting the dynamic nature of conflict management in our ever-changing social landscape.

### 1.3.2. Conflict resolution and Conflict Management.

After reviewing various definitions of the concept of conflict, it is crucial to understand how conflicts can be resolved and managed. It is important to distinguish between conflict resolution and conflict management, as they involve different approaches and outcomes.

Conflict resolution refers to various approaches aimed at terminating conflict through the constructive solving of problems. In contrast, conflict management is defined as the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through various measures and by working with and through the parties involved in the conflict.

According to Bloomfield and Reilly (1998), conflict management addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict: how to deal with it constructively, how to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative process, and how to design a practically achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management of differences. This perspective recognizes that conflict is an inevitable part of social relations and cannot be eliminated or terminated but should be constructively handled to yield positive outcomes.

Conflict management involves interventions designed to reduce excessive conflict or, in some instances, to increase insufficient conflict (Hellriegel and Slocum, 1996). It also encompasses

diagnosing and intervening in conflicts with appropriate styles and strategies to achieve organizational and individual goals (Gumuseli and Hacifazlioglu, 2009). These definitions highlight that conflict management is a process involving approaches capable of reducing the volume and intensity of conflict to create a positive climate that promotes peace in society. Comparing conflict management to conflict resolution reveals key differences. Conflict resolution seeks to end conflicts definitively through negotiation, mediation, or other means. The primary goal is to address the root causes of the conflict and reach an agreement that satisfies all parties involved. Conflict management, however, recognizes that conflicts are ongoing and often unavoidable. Instead of seeking a final resolution, it aims to manage conflicts constructively, ensuring they do not escalate and cause significant harm.

Several theoretical frameworks and models underscore these differences. One prominent model is the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI), developed by Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann in 1974. The TKI identifies five conflict-handling styles: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. These styles illustrate the various approaches individuals and organizations can take in managing conflicts, highlighting that conflict management involves a range of strategies tailored to specific situations and desired outcomes (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974).

Additionally, the work of Blake and Mouton (1964) introduced the managerial grid, which identifies different leadership styles based on concern for people and concern for production. This model applies to conflict management by emphasizing the importance of balancing task-oriented and relationship-oriented approaches in handling conflicts. Effective conflict management requires understanding the needs and concerns of all parties involved and finding ways to address them while maintaining productivity and achieving organizational goals.

Scholars such as Folger, Poole, and Stutman (2017) have contributed significantly to understanding conflict and its management in organizational settings. Their work on conflict communication emphasizes the role of communication strategies in managing conflicts effectively. By employing active listening, assertive communication, and problem-solving techniques, individuals and organizations can manage conflicts constructively, fostering a collaborative and productive environment (Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2017).

The distinction between conflict management and conflict resolution is further illustrated by the work of John Burton (1990), who introduced the concept of "conflict prevention." Burton argued that traditional conflict resolution methods often fail to address the underlying causes of conflict, leading to recurring disputes. Conflict prevention focuses on identifying and

addressing the root causes of conflict, such as unmet human needs and structural inequalities, to prevent conflicts from arising in the first place. This approach aligns with conflict management's emphasis on ongoing processes and strategies to manage conflicts constructively over time (Burton, 1990).

Furthermore, the transformative approach to conflict management, championed by John Paul Lederach (1995), emphasizes the importance of transforming relationships and social structures that contribute to conflict. This approach goes beyond resolving specific disputes to addressing the broader context in which conflicts occur. By fostering mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation, the transformative approach aims to create a more just and peaceful society (Lederach, 1995).

In practical terms, effective conflict management involves various tools and techniques. Mediation is a widely used method where a neutral third party facilitates discussions between conflicting parties to help them reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Negotiation involves direct discussions between parties to find common ground and resolve differences. Conflict coaching provides individuals with personalized guidance and strategies to manage conflicts effectively. Training programs and workshops on conflict management skills are also valuable for equipping individuals and organizations with the knowledge and tools to handle conflicts constructively (Moore, 2014).

Research by De Dreu and Van Vianen (2001) emphasizes the importance of conflict management styles in team dynamics. Their study found that teams with a collaborative conflict management style tended to have higher performance and satisfaction levels compared to teams that used more competitive or avoidant styles. This finding underscores the value of adopting constructive conflict management approaches to enhance team functioning and organizational outcomes (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001).

Another critical aspect of conflict management is the role of cultural differences. Research by Ting-Toomey (2007) highlights that cultural factors significantly influence how conflicts are perceived and managed. Understanding cultural differences and adopting culturally sensitive conflict management strategies is crucial in multicultural settings. This approach helps prevent misunderstandings and fosters more effective communication and collaboration (Ting-Toomey, 2007).

The complexity of conflicts and the need for effective management strategies are further highlighted by the work of Rahim (2002). Rahim identified five conflict-handling styles: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. These styles reflect different levels of concern for self and others and provide a framework for understanding how

individuals and organizations can approach conflict management. The integrating style, which involves collaboration and problem-solving, is often considered the most effective for managing conflicts constructively (Rahim, 2002).

Conflict management and conflict resolution also differ in their temporal focus. Conflict resolution is often seen as a one-time event aimed at resolving a specific issue. Once the issue is resolved, the process is considered complete. Conflict management, on the other hand, is an ongoing process that requires continuous effort and adaptation. It involves monitoring the dynamics of conflict, addressing emerging issues, and maintaining a positive environment for constructive interactions. This ongoing nature of conflict management makes it a critical skill for leaders and managers who need to navigate complex and evolving organizational landscapes (Lewicki, Saunders, & Barry, 2015).

In conclusion, conflict management and conflict resolution are distinct but complementary approaches to handling conflicts. While conflict resolution seeks to end conflicts definitively, conflict management recognizes the ongoing nature of conflicts and focuses on managing them constructively. Effective conflict management involves various theoretical frameworks, tools, and techniques that address the root causes of conflicts and promote a positive climate for peace and cooperation. By understanding the nature of conflict and employing appropriate strategies, individuals and organizations can navigate conflicts effectively, fostering harmonious relationships and achieving productive outcomes. The ongoing process of conflict management, coupled with effective conflict resolution strategies, ensures that conflicts are addressed in a manner that promotes growth, understanding, and cooperation.

### 1.3.3 History of Conflict Management

German philosopher Karl Marx developed conflict theory in the 19th century to explain the relationship between the ruling and working classes in capitalist societies. Marx's conflict theory posits that society is in a state of perpetual conflict due to competition for limited resources. He argued that social order is maintained by domination and power, rather than consensus and conformity. In his seminal works, "The Communist Manifesto" (1848) and "Das Kapital" (1867), Marx detailed how the bourgeoisie (the ruling class) exploits the proletariat (the working class), leading to inherent class struggles that drive societal change. Max Weber, a 19th-century German sociologist and economist, expanded upon Marx's theory by introducing a more nuanced understanding of social stratification. While he agreed with Marx that society was in constant conflict over resources, Weber believed conflict theory applied to power on levels other than class inequalities, including gender, race, and religion.

In his works, such as "Economy and Society" (1922), Weber introduced the concept of "status groups," which are based on social honour and prestige rather than purely economic factors. Weber also diverged from Marx by arguing that social change could result from ideas and conversation, not just economic factors. This perspective is evident in his study of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, where he argued that religious ideas could influence economic behaviour and contribute to the development of capitalism. Weber's analysis included a broader range of social hierarchies, such as those based on ethnicity, religion, and political affiliation.

While Marx's definition of inequality involved only economics, Weber's included social ranking and prominence as well. He argued that the link between economic class and social status was sometimes unclear. For instance, an individual might be wealthy but have low social status, or little wealth but significant influence or fame. This distinction is critical in understanding the complexity of social stratification in contemporary societies.

Critics of Marx and Weber have pointed out limitations in their theories. For example, some argue that Marx's focus on economic determinism overlooks the influence of other social factors on conflict and inequality. Additionally, while Weber's broader approach to social stratification is praised for its inclusiveness, it has been critiqued for its potential to overemphasize the role of ideas and underplay material conditions.

American sociologist C. Wright Mills founded modern conflict theory in the mid-20th century. He updated Karl Marx's original theory to apply to modern society, renaming the "ruling class" as the "power elite." In his seminal work, "The Power Elite" (1956), Mills argued that this group, composed of business, economic, military, and political leaders, makes important decisions primarily with their own status and well-being in mind. Mills contended that the power elite dominate the key institutions of society and make decisions that benefit their interests, often at the expense of the broader public. This elite group maintains its power through a combination of interlocking directorates, mutual interests, and shared backgrounds, creating a closed system that is difficult to penetrate.

Anatol Rapoport (1960) pointed out that conflict is a theme that has occupied human thought more than any other issue except for God and love. He argued that the age-old thinking about conflict has metamorphosed into a volume of ideas on the subject and how it can be handled. Rapoport's work emphasized the importance of understanding the underlying causes of conflict and developing strategies for its management and resolution. He noted that while conflict can be managed using various strategies, conscious efforts toward the evolution of conflict management began in the 1940s.

Mary Parker Follett, an early pioneer in conflict management, suggested three main styles of handling conflict in 1940: domination, compromise, and integration. She later added two other styles: avoidance and suppression, making the styles a total of five. According to Owens (2001), the work of Mary Parker Follett marked a significant shift from the traditional organization theory of scientific management toward the human relations movement and contingency theory. Follett's contributions laid the groundwork for modern approaches to conflict management by emphasizing the importance of understanding human behaviour and the social dynamics within organizations.

In 1949, Morton Deutsch developed a classification of conflict management styles, which are composed of the cooperation-competition dichotomy. Deutsch's work, particularly in "The Resolution of Conflict" (1973), highlighted the importance of cooperative strategies in resolving conflicts and the detrimental effects of competitive approaches. His research demonstrated that cooperative strategies lead to more sustainable and positive outcomes, while competitive strategies often exacerbate conflicts and create win-lose situations.

Kenneth Boulding (1962) cautioned that "the biggest problem in developing the institutions of conflict control is that of catching conflicts young." He argued that conflict situations are frequently allowed to develop to almost unmanageable proportions before anything is done about them, by which time it is often too late to resolve them by peaceable and procedural means. Boulding's insights emphasize the importance of early intervention and proactive conflict management strategies to prevent conflicts from escalating.

Despite the advancements in conflict management theories and strategies, critics argue that these approaches can sometimes oversimplify the complexities of real-world conflicts. For instance, conflict management strategies that work well in one context may not be effective in another due to cultural, social, or organizational differences. Additionally, the emphasis on conflict management rather than resolution can sometimes lead to a focus on managing symptoms rather than addressing underlying causes.

Blake and Mouton (1964) were pioneers in conceptualizing the modes for handling interpersonal conflicts, presenting a scheme that classifies these modes into five distinct types: forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and problem-solving. Their work was instrumental in the field of conflict management, providing a foundational framework that has been widely used and built upon by subsequent scholars and practitioners. According to Blake and Mouton, managers using the problem-solving approach exhibit a high concern for both productivity and people, reflecting a balanced and integrative approach to conflict. Conversely, those employing a forcing style show a high concern for productivity but a low



concern for people, indicative of a more authoritarian and unilateral approach. Managers who adopt a compromising style demonstrate moderate concern for both productivity and people, aiming for middle-ground solutions that partially satisfy both parties. The smoothing style, characterized by a high concern for people and low concern for productivity, focuses on maintaining harmony and minimizing discord, sometimes at the expense of addressing substantive issues. Lastly, the withdrawing style, marked by low concern for both productivity and people, involves avoiding conflict altogether, which can lead to unresolved issues festering over time (Blake & Mouton, 1964).

Building on Blake and Mouton's work, Kenneth W. Thomas, and Ralph H. Kilmann (1974) developed a comprehensive model for managing conflict that introduced the styles of competing, avoiding, accommodating, compromising, and collaborating. This model emphasized the importance of understanding individual behavioural tendencies in conflict situations and was based on the dimensions of assertiveness and cooperativeness.

Assertiveness pertains to the degree to which an individual attempts to satisfy their own concerns, while cooperativeness refers to the degree to which an individual attempts to satisfy the concerns of others (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). Thomas (1976) further refined this model, underscoring the necessity of balancing these two dimensions to effectively manage conflicts. In 1979, Afzalur M. Rahim and Thomas V. Bonoma contributed significantly to the field by introducing a two-dimensional model of conflict management, based on the dual concerns for self and others. This model delineated five distinct conflict management styles: avoiding, obliging, integrating, dominating, and compromising. The avoiding style, characterized by low concern for both self and others, involves sidestepping conflict, which can lead to unresolved issues. The obliging style, marked by a low concern for self and high concern for others, prioritizes the needs of others, often at the expense of one's own interests. The integrating style, associated with high concerns for both self and others, seeks collaborative solutions that fully satisfy the interests of all parties involved. The dominating style, indicative of high concern for self and low concern for others, involves asserting one's own position, often disregarding the needs of others. Lastly, the compromising style, characterized by intermediate concern for both self and others, aims for solutions that partially satisfy both parties (Rahim & Bonoma, 1979).

The contributions of these scholars have laid the groundwork for modern conflict management theories and practices. However, these models are not without their critics. Some argue that the rigid categorization of conflict styles can oversimplify the complexities of real-world conflicts. For instance, Pruitt and Rubin (1986) suggest that conflict

management styles are not fixed traits but rather situationally dependent behaviours that can change based on the context and dynamics of the conflict. Additionally, Kolb and Putnam (1992) critique the traditional models for their gender bias, arguing that they often reflect masculine perspectives on conflict and overlook the relational and collaborative approaches more commonly employed by women.

Moreover, contemporary research has expanded these traditional models to include more nuanced perspectives on conflict management. For example, Tjosvold (2006) emphasizes the role of cooperative conflict in fostering innovation and organizational learning. He argues that when managed constructively, conflict can be a powerful driver of creativity and performance, challenging the traditional view that conflict is inherently negative and should be minimized.

The evolution of conflict management theories reflects a broader shift in understanding conflict itself. Earlier theories, such as those proposed by Blake and Mouton, Thomas and Kilmann, and Rahim and Bonoma, primarily focused on categorizing and managing conflict styles within organizational settings. However, more recent approaches recognize the dynamic and context-dependent nature of conflict and emphasize the importance of adaptability and situational awareness in conflict management.

The Rahim Dual Concern Model of Conflict Management Styles, developed by Afzalur M. Rahim in 1979, offers a framework for understanding how individuals approach conflicts based on their dual concerns for self and others. Rahim's model identifies five distinct conflict management styles: avoiding, obliging, integrating, dominating, and compromising. In the avoiding style, individuals exhibit low concern for both self and others, often choosing to ignore or sidestep conflicts entirely. Conversely, the obliging style reflects a low concern for self but a high concern for others, prioritizing the needs and interests of others over one's own. The integrating style involves high concern for both self and others, emphasizing collaboration and mutual problem-solving to achieve win-win outcomes. In contrast, the dominating style demonstrates high concern for self and low concern for others, characterized by assertive and unilateral approaches to conflict resolution. Finally, the compromising style shows intermediate concern for both self and others, seeking solutions that offer partial satisfaction to all parties involved. Critics argue that while Rahim's model provides valuable insights into conflict management styles, it may oversimplify the complexities of real-world conflicts and overlook situational factors that influence individuals' responses.

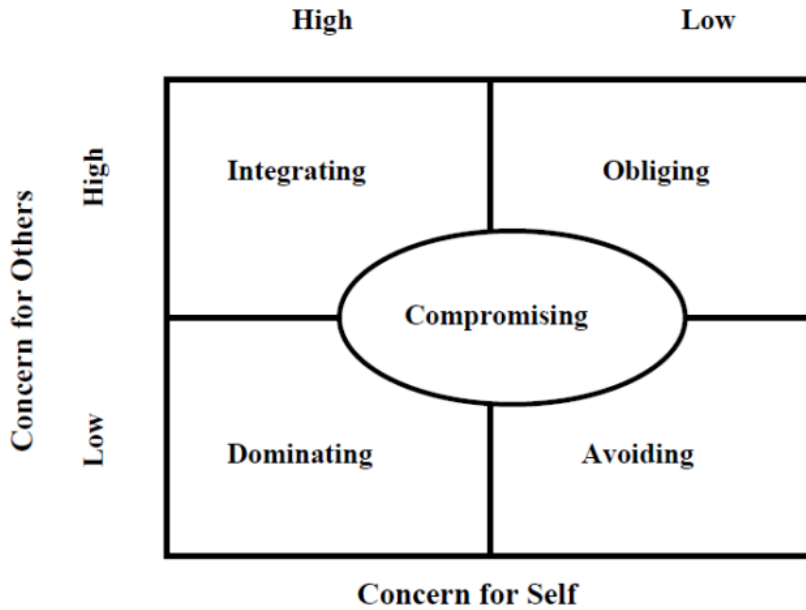


Figure 3: Rahim Dual Concern Model of Conflict Management Styles.

Source: Rahim (1983)

In the current work the author will analyse the relationship of CQ with conflict management styles formulated by Rahim and Bonoma in 1979.

In 1982, Linda Putman and Charmaine Wilson introduced a three-conflict management styles model that emphasized three variables: non-confrontation (obliging), solution-oriented (integrating), and control (dominating). Putman and Wilson's model highlighted how individuals approach conflict by either avoiding it, seeking innovative solutions, or asserting control over the situation (Putman & Wilson, 1982). This model provides valuable insights into the diverse approaches people take when faced with conflicts, acknowledging the spectrum from avoidance to dominance.

Pruitt (1983), drawing on the work of Blake and Mouton (1964), proposed four styles of handling conflict: yielding, problem-solving, inaction, and contending. Pruitt's model, like others, was based on the two-dimensional framework of concern for self and concern for others. It recognized the complexities of conflict resolution by offering nuanced strategies for addressing conflicts based on varying levels of assertiveness and cooperativeness (Pruitt, 1983).

In 1986, Stanley A. Deetz and Sheryl L. Stevenson expanded on existing conflict styles by proposing five distinct approaches: avoidance, pacification, competition, compromise, and creative integration. Deetz and Stevenson's model emphasized the importance of understanding when each style might be appropriate and effective in managing conflicts (Deetz & Stevenson, 1986). Their insights highlighted the diverse ways individuals navigate

conflicts, from avoiding confrontation altogether to creatively integrating differing perspectives.

However, the proliferation of conflict management styles from different researchers has led to debates about the most effective approaches and the validity of various models. While some scholars advocate for more comprehensive frameworks that encompass a wide range of conflict management strategies (Nicotera, 1993), others argue that simpler models may overlook important nuances in conflict resolution (Cheung & Chuah, 2000).

Despite these debates, the dual concern theory remains one of the most widely discussed and utilized frameworks in conflict management. Researchers continue to explore and apply this model in various contexts, recognizing its relevance and applicability in understanding and addressing conflicts (Rose et al., 2007). The enduring popularity of the dual concern theory underscores its effectiveness in providing a structured approach to conflict resolution that considers both individual and collective interests (Vokic & Sontor, 2009).

In summary, the evolution of conflict management styles has been characterized by the development of diverse models and frameworks that offer valuable insights into how individuals approach conflicts. While each model may have its strengths and limitations, the dual concern theory remains a cornerstone in conflict resolution research, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding and managing conflicts effectively.

#### 1.3.4 Main theories on of Conflict Management.

Over time, the perception of conflict has evolved, reflecting shifts in organizational theories and management practices:

**Traditional School View of Conflict:** Traditionally, conflict was viewed as detrimental to organizations, characterized by disruption and deviant behaviour. Scholars like Robbins (2005) highlighted this perspective, emphasizing that conflict indicated malfunction within a group and should be avoided. The scientific management approach and administrative school of management sought to control conflict through rigid structures and rules. According to this view, conflict had little to no value and could adversely affect organizational performance.

**Human Relation School View of Conflict:** The Human Relation School shared similarities with the Traditional School but emphasized creating goodwill and trust to prevent conflict.

Management aimed to avoid conflict whenever possible and resolve it quickly when it arose.

**The Interactionist School View of Conflict:** Townsend (1985) introduced the idea that conflict could signal a healthy organization to a certain extent. Conflict, according to this view, should be managed rather than eliminated entirely. Robbins (1998) expanded on this, considering

conflict a positive force necessary for effective performance. This perspective encouraged a minimum level of conflict within groups to stimulate self-criticism, innovation, and change.

**Integrationist School View of Conflict:** The Integrationist School, represented by scholars like De Dreu and Van de Vliert (1997), introduced a more nuanced perspective. It argued that some conflict is not inherently good or bad but rather necessary for group effectiveness. This view acknowledges that conflict can lead to constructive outcomes when managed effectively, serving as a catalyst for innovation and growth.

Critics of the Integrationist School argue that while some conflict may be beneficial, it can also lead to negative consequences if not properly managed. They emphasize the importance of distinguishing between productive and destructive conflict, advocating for strategies that promote the former while mitigating the latter. Additionally, critics suggest that viewing conflict as inherently positive may overlook its potential to escalate into harmful behaviours and undermine organizational cohesion.

Mary Parker Follett, in her work dating back to 1926 but published posthumously in 1940, delineated three primary ways individuals manage conflict: domination, compromise, and integration. She also noted avoidance and suppression as other methods organizations employ to handle conflict. Follett's insights laid the groundwork for later theories on conflict management (Follett, 1926/1940).

Building on Follett's work, Blake, and Mouton (1964) introduced a classification scheme for interpersonal conflict management styles, identifying five types: forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and problem-solving. Their framework provided a more structured understanding of how individuals address conflicts in various situations.

Robbins (1978) emphasized a shift in focus from conflict resolution to conflict management, highlighting the distinction between the two. Conflict resolution implies the complete elimination or termination of conflict, whereas conflict management involves handling conflict in a way that minimizes its negative impact while acknowledging its inevitability. This shift in perspective influenced subsequent research on negotiation, mediation, and arbitration, placing greater emphasis on managing conflict effectively rather than simply resolving it.

Thomas (1976) and Pruitt (1983) further developed models of conflict management based on the concerns and intentions of the parties involved. By considering both assertiveness and cooperativeness, researchers could classify conflict management styles. For example, Pruitt identified yielding, problem-solving, inaction, and contending as four distinct styles based on varying levels of assertiveness and cooperativeness. He argued that problem-solving,

characterized by high assertiveness and cooperativeness, is often the preferred approach for achieving mutually beneficial outcomes.

Rahim (1983) observed that organizational conflict is not only legitimate but also inevitable, serving as an indicator of effective management. This perspective challenged the traditional view of conflict as inherently negative and highlighted its potential benefits in promoting productivity and innovation within organizations.

Critics of these models argue that they may oversimplify the complexities of conflict management and fail to account for cultural and situational differences. Additionally, some critics question the assumption that conflict is always necessary or beneficial, suggesting that certain conflicts may be counterproductive and should be avoided altogether. Moreover, there is ongoing debate about the most effective strategies for managing conflict in different contexts, highlighting the need for further research and refinement of existing models.

Organizational conflict within educational systems, contrary to common belief, does not necessarily undermine the quality of education but can, in fact, foster creative solutions, unity, and support through periods of change and stress (Rahim, 1983; Hanson, 1991). The outcome of conflict in academic settings hinges on both the intensity of the conflict and the approach to its management (King, 1999).

Kozan (1997) proposed three normative models of group conflict management, providing insight into how conflicts are handled within organizations:

**Confrontational Model:** This model involves breaking down conflicts into sub-issues that are openly confronted by both parties. Acknowledging the perspectives of all sides is crucial, with an emphasis on reaching a reasonable compromise to resolve the sub-issues effectively.

**Harmony Model:** In contrast, the harmony model primarily relies on conflict avoidance, guided by societal and organizational norms. Conflict is perceived as detrimental, and mediation by third parties is often employed to address conflicts when they arise.

**Regulative Model:** The regulative model employs strict rules and regulations to manage conflicts, aiming to minimize or avoid conflicts altogether through bureaucratic means.

Conflicts, when they occur, are resolved based on predetermined procedures and general principles.

Building upon Kozan's work, Kuhn and Poole (2000) refined the system of group conflict management, distinguishing between two sub-models within the confrontational approach:

**Distributive Model:** Conflict is viewed as a competition for a fixed amount of positive outcomes or resources, often resulting in a win-lose situation where one side prevails at the expense of the other, albeit with some concessions.

**Integrative Model:** In contrast, the integrative model perceives conflict as an opportunity to integrate the needs and concerns of both parties, aiming for mutually beneficial outcomes through compromise. This approach emphasizes finding solutions that accommodate the interests of all parties involved.

Research by Kuhn and Poole demonstrated that groups utilizing the integrative model consistently achieved better task-related outcomes compared to those employing the distributive model. This finding underscores the importance of adopting collaborative approaches to conflict resolution, prioritizing compromise, and mutual understanding (Kuhn & Poole, 2000).

Critics of these models argue that the emphasis on compromise and cooperation in the integrative model may not always be feasible or practical, particularly in situations where power differentials are significant, or interests are fundamentally incompatible.

Furthermore, some scholars caution against the tendency to categorize conflict management approaches into rigid models, as this may limit the flexibility needed to address unique challenges and circumstances. Instead, they advocate for a more nuanced understanding of conflict management that takes into account situational factors and individual preferences (Pruitt & Rubin, 2006).

DeChurch and Marks (2001) conducted an extensive review of existing literature on conflict management and proposed a comprehensive "meta-taxonomy" that they claimed encompasses all other models. Their meta-taxonomy revolves around two primary dimensions: activeness and agreeableness.

**Activeness:** This dimension refers to the extent to which conflict behaviours are responsive and direct rather than inert and indirect. In conflicts characterized by high activeness, individuals openly discuss differences of opinion and actively pursue their own interests.

**Agreeableness:** This dimension pertains to the extent to which conflict behaviours create a pleasant and relaxed rather than unpleasant and strained impression. High agreeableness involves attempts to satisfy all parties involved in the conflict, fostering a cooperative and harmonious atmosphere.

DeChurch and Marks' meta-taxonomy provides a framework for understanding various styles of conflict management by highlighting the interplay between activeness and agreeableness.

By examining these dimensions, researchers and practitioners can better categorize and analyse different approaches to conflict resolution.

Critics of DeChurch and Marks' meta-taxonomy argue that while it offers a useful framework for conceptualizing conflict management styles, it may oversimplify the complexities of real-

world conflicts. In practice, conflicts often involve a multitude of factors and considerations beyond just activeness and agreeableness, including power dynamics, cultural norms, and individual personalities.

Additionally, some scholars question the universality of the dimensions proposed by DeChurch and Marks, suggesting that they may not fully capture the diverse range of conflict management strategies employed across different contexts and cultures. For example, in certain cultural settings, assertiveness may be valued more highly than agreeableness, leading to different preferences for conflict resolution styles.

Despite these criticisms, DeChurch and Marks' meta-taxonomy remains a valuable contribution to the field of conflict management, offering a structured framework for organizing and analysing various approaches to conflict resolution. By considering both activeness and agreeableness as key dimensions, researchers and practitioners can gain insights into the underlying dynamics of conflicts and develop more effective strategies for managing them in diverse organizational and cultural settings.

In their research to substantiate this classification, the level of activeness was found to have no significant impact on the efficacy of conflict resolution. However, the agreeableness exhibited in the conflict management style, irrespective of its nature, did indeed positively influence how groups perceived the management of the conflict, regardless of its outcome. Rahim (2002) observed a consensus among management scholars that there is no singular optimal approach to decision-making, leadership, or conflict management. In alignment with this perspective, rather than delineating a highly specific model of conflict management, Rahim devised a meta-model akin to the approach taken by DeChurch and Marks (2001) with their meta-taxonomy. This meta-model of conflict styles is rooted in two fundamental dimensions: concern for self and concern for others.

Within this overarching framework lie five distinct management approaches: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. Integration entails fostering openness, exchanging information, exploring alternatives, and addressing differences to resolve the issue in a manner acceptable to all parties involved. Obliging is characterized by attempts to minimize differences and emphasize commonalities to meet the concerns of the opposing party. Conversely, the dominating style involves one party exerting maximal effort to achieve their objectives, often disregarding the needs and expectations of the other party. In cases of avoidance, a party neglects to address their own concerns as well as those of the other party. Lastly, compromising entails a give-and-take dynamic where both parties concede certain aspects to reach a mutually acceptable resolution (Rahim, 2002).



Critics of this meta-model argue that while it provides a useful framework for understanding and categorizing conflict management styles, it may oversimplify the complexities inherent in real-world conflicts. Conflict situations often involve multifaceted dynamics influenced by factors such as power dynamics, cultural norms, and individual personalities. Additionally, the meta-model's emphasis on concern for self and concern for others may not fully capture the diverse array of strategies and approaches employed in different contexts and cultures.

Allan E. Barsky (2016, p1)	Conflict resolution (CR) may be defined as any process used to manage, determine, or settle differences that may arise among individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, nations, or any other social unit.
Robert, Jane, and Mouton (2007)	There are five conflict management styles: accommodating, competing, collaborating, compromising, and avoiding.
Thomas (2005)	There are eight strategies as regarding management and they are – Citizen Advisories, Confrontation Sessions, Sensitivity Training, Process Involvement, Education Pluralism,
Conard (1985)	Communication strategy in conflicts generally divides into three categories. They include Structuring Strategies, Confrontive Strategies, and Avoidance Strategies.

Table 3. Definitions of CMS.

Source: own editing based on literature review

#### 1.4 Necessity of Conflict Management in the workplace.

In contemporary organizational discourse, conflict is increasingly perceived not merely as a disruptive force but rather as a potentially constructive element that can stimulate innovation and catalyse change when managed effectively. This evolved perspective acknowledges the inevitability of conflict within organizational contexts and advocates for its strategic utilization as a catalyst for growth and development (Dessler, 1998: 511).

De Dreu (2008) highlighted the centrality of organizational conflicts within the realms of occupational psychology, social psychology, and organizational behaviour. Conflict, therefore, emerges as a salient theme that warrants comprehensive exploration and understanding within the broader discourse of organizational dynamics.

Anwar et al. (2012) delineated intra-group conflicts as conflicts that manifest within organizational structures, encompassing inter-departmental disputes, branch-to-branch tensions, and employee-to-employee frictions. Such conflicts permeate various levels of organizational hierarchy and demand nuanced approaches for resolution.

Riaz and Junaid (2014) introduced alternative terminology to characterize different forms of intra-group conflicts, distinguishing between task conflicts, characterized by cognitive and substantive differences, and relationship conflicts, marked by affective and emotional tensions. This nuanced classification underscores the multifaceted nature of conflicts within organizational settings.

Opatha (2015) offered a comprehensive classification of the underlying reasons for organizational conflicts, categorizing them into two primary groups: organizational causes and personal reasons. Organizational causes stem from structural inadequacies within the organizational framework, whereas personal reasons originate from interpersonal disparities among employees, emphasizing the diverse origins of conflicts within organizational contexts.

Cheong and Kim (2017) elucidated the myriad factors that can precipitate organizational conflicts, including incompatibilities, dissatisfaction, arguments, interdependencies, and mismatches in preferences, values, goals, and attitudes among employees. These diverse triggers underscore the complex interplay of individual and organizational factors that contribute to conflict emergence.

Critically analysing these perspectives, it becomes evident that while conflict may engender disruption and discord within organizations, it also harbours the potential to stimulate positive change and foster innovation when managed judiciously. By recognizing conflict as an inherent aspect of organizational dynamics and adopting proactive strategies for conflict resolution and management, organizations can harness its transformative potential to drive growth and enhance organizational effectiveness.

Forms of Conflict in Organisations:

Organizational conflict encompasses behaviors aimed at impeding the achievement of another individual's objectives, arising from the clash of incompatible goals, and opposing behaviors. As Lewis, French, and Steane (1997) assert, conflict within organizations is virtually unavoidable due to the inherent boundaries within organizational structures, which foster competition among distinct groups for limited resources.

Effectively managing conflict, regardless of the approach taken, necessitates careful consideration of multiple factors. In essence, one must assess the level of hostility among

parties, the underlying reasons for the conflict, and the specific issues at stake. Schmidt and Tannenbaum (1960) emphasize the importance of addressing various aspects, including the intensity of the conflict, the nature of the issues and goals, the role of communication, the norms governing conflict behavior, the forces maintaining the conflict, the power dynamics, and the strength of relationships. While interventions targeting specific factors may yield results, comprehensive management of conflict entails addressing each dimension to maximize the likelihood of success.

Conflict in organizational settings can manifest in diverse forms, including interpersonal, intrapersonal, intergroup, and interorganizational conflicts. It is crucial to discern between conflicts occurring within individual entities (intrapersonal and interpersonal) and those arising between or among different groups or organizations (intergroup and interorganizational). The prefix "inter" denotes conflicts occurring between entities, while "intra" signifies conflicts transpiring within a singular entity.

In summary, organizational conflict stems from clashes in objectives and behaviors, perpetuated by the inherent boundaries within organizational structures. Successfully managing conflict necessitates comprehensive attention to various factors, as highlighted by Schmidt and Tannenbaum (1960). Moreover, conflicts can manifest in multiple forms within organizational contexts, necessitating a nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play. By adopting proactive strategies to address conflict and promote effective communication and resolution, organizations can mitigate the adverse effects of conflict and leverage its potential for constructive change and growth.

1) Interpersonal conflict within organizational settings underscores the interplay of human elements, particularly within dyadic relationships. This type of conflict emerges from a myriad of individual disparities, encompassing variances in personalities, attitudes, values, perceptions, and other distinct characteristics. As expressed by Robbins (2005), conflicts may manifest in either substantive or emotional forms, or even a combination of both.

A concrete illustration of substantive interpersonal conflict involves two individuals engaging in vigorous debate over the merits of hiring a job applicant. This scenario epitomizes a clash driven by differing perspectives on a tangible issue within the organizational context.

Conversely, emotional interpersonal conflict materializes when two individuals continuously find themselves at odds regarding each other's choices of work attire. This example underscores the presence of discord rooted in subjective preferences and emotional sensitivities rather than substantive matters.

In essence, interpersonal conflict encapsulates the intricate dynamics of human interaction within organizations, encompassing both substantive disagreements and emotional tensions. By acknowledging the multifaceted nature of interpersonal conflicts, organizations can adopt tailored strategies to effectively manage and resolve such discord, fostering a harmonious and productive work environment.

## 2) Intrapersonal Conflict:

Intrapersonal conflict, an internal struggle within an individual, is one of the most complex forms of conflict to analyze and manage. Despite being an internal phenomenon, its repercussions can significantly impact organizational functioning. This type of conflict arises from incompatible tendencies or goals within the individual, leading to internal discord that manifests in various behaviors.

Intrapersonal conflict is fundamentally a clash between two incompatible tendencies or desires within a person. It occurs when a stimulus triggers conflicting responses, compelling the individual to choose between them. This internal struggle can lead to frustration and can manifest in behaviors ranging from apathy and boredom to more severe reactions like absenteeism, excessive drinking, or destructive behavior.

Intrapersonal conflicts often involve perceived or actual pressures from conflicting goals or expectations. These conflicts are categorized into three main types: approach-approach conflict, avoidance-avoidance conflict, and approach-avoidance conflict.

Approach-approach conflict occurs when an individual must choose between two positive and equally attractive alternatives. A classic scenario is choosing between a valued promotion within the current organization, or a desirable new job offer from another firm. Both options are appealing, making the decision difficult. This type of conflict can lead to indecision and stress, as highlighted by psychologist Kurt Lewin in his field theory, where he states, "A person faces a situation in which he has to choose between two desirable goals, each of which is equally attractive" (Lewin, 1935).

Avoidance-avoidance conflict arises when an individual faces two negative and equally unattractive alternatives. An individual might be asked to accept a job transfer to an undesirable location or face termination from the current job. Both choices are unfavorable, creating significant stress and anxiety. Psychologist Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance explains how such conflicts can create psychological discomfort, leading individuals to adopt coping mechanisms. Festinger notes, "Cognitive dissonance is the distressing mental state caused by the discrepancy between two incompatible beliefs or attitudes" (Festinger, 1957).

Approach-avoidance conflict occurs when a person must decide on an action that has both positive and negative consequences. Being offered a higher-paying job that comes with increased responsibilities and demands on personal time illustrates this type of conflict. The individual is torn between the benefits and the drawbacks. Neal Miller's work on conflict behavior describes this ambivalence, stating, "An approach-avoidance conflict arises when an individual is attracted to and repelled by the same goal" (Miller, 1944).

The internal turmoil of intrapersonal conflict can manifest in various detrimental behaviors if not properly addressed. Individuals may experience anxiety, frustration, and emotional distress, leading to reduced productivity and engagement within the organization. Behavioral consequences can include apathy and boredom, where individuals disengage from their tasks, leading to decreased productivity and morale. Absenteeism, where individuals avoid work altogether, can become a coping mechanism to escape the conflict. Excessive drinking might be used to alleviate the stress and anxiety caused by the conflict, and in extreme cases, individuals may engage in actions that harm themselves or the organization.

To mitigate the negative impacts of intrapersonal conflict, organizations can employ several strategies. Understanding how individuals perceive the conflict is crucial. This involves identifying the sources of internal conflict and the specific pressures or incompatible goals involved. Techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) can help individuals manage anxiety and develop healthier coping mechanisms. According to Beck (1976), CBT is effective in altering the negative thought patterns that contribute to stress. Aligning individual behavior with organizational requirements can reduce conflict. This might involve adjusting job roles, providing clearer expectations, and offering support for personal development.

Several theories provide a deeper understanding of intrapersonal conflict and its implications. Kurt Lewin's field theory posits that behavior is a result of the individual's internal state and the environment. Intrapersonal conflict arises when these two factors are in opposition. Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance explains the discomfort individuals feel when they hold conflicting cognitions. This discomfort motivates them to reduce dissonance by changing their attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors. Neal Miller's work highlights how individuals navigate approach-avoidance conflicts, balancing the positive and negative aspects of their choices.

### 3) Intergroup conflict:

Intergroup conflict, which occurs among members of different teams or groups, can have both substantive and emotional underpinnings. This type of conflict is prevalent in

organizations and can significantly hinder the coordination and integration of task activities. Classic examples include conflicts among functional groups or departments, such as marketing and manufacturing. These conflicts arise due to differing goals, priorities, and perspectives within the organization.

Intergroup conflicts are common and can be challenging to manage. According to Lewin, "Intergroup conflicts are almost unavoidable in organizations due to the inherent differences in goals and the competition for limited resources" (Lewin, 1935). Such conflicts often arise from the functional interdependence within organizations where departments must work together but have different objectives and performance metrics. For example, the marketing department may push for customer-driven changes that manufacturing sees as infeasible within current production capabilities. This misalignment creates a substantive conflict based on the differences in the goals of each department.

To minimize such conflicts and promote more creative and efficient operations, many organizations have turned to the use of cross-functional teams and task forces. According to Katzenbach and Smith in "The Wisdom of Teams" (1993), "High-performance teams are critical to managing intergroup conflict because they integrate diverse perspectives and drive toward common goals." Cross-functional teams bring together members from different departments to work on common projects, fostering understanding and collaboration. Additionally, the integration of diverse perspectives through cross-functional teams can lead to more innovative solutions and a more cohesive organizational culture. As noted by Thomas and Kilmann in their seminal work on conflict management, "Integrating various functional viewpoints within a team can turn potential conflicts into opportunities for organizational learning and innovation" (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). This approach encourages team members to appreciate and leverage their differences rather than allowing them to become sources of friction.

Moreover, the emotional underpinnings of intergroup conflict, such as feelings of mistrust or competition, must be addressed to ensure effective conflict resolution. Blake and Mouton (1964) in their Managerial Grid Model emphasized that "creating a climate of mutual respect and understanding is essential for managing intergroup conflict effectively." By fostering a culture where open communication and mutual respect are prioritized, organizations can mitigate the emotional aspects of intergroup conflict.

Despite these strategies, intergroup conflicts can persist and even escalate if not managed properly. Sherif's Robbers Cave Experiment demonstrated that "intergroup conflict can quickly escalate and become entrenched without intervention," highlighting the importance of

proactive conflict management strategies (Sherif, 1966). This experiment showed how quickly groups could form strong in-group identities and develop animosity toward out-groups, underlining the importance of creating structures and processes that promote intergroup collaboration and understanding.

Furthermore, effective leadership plays a crucial role in managing intergroup conflicts. Leaders must be adept at recognizing the early signs of intergroup conflict and addressing them before they escalate. As Lencioni noted in "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team," "Effective leaders do not avoid conflict but engage in constructive conflict management practices to drive team cohesion and performance" (Lencioni, 2002). By facilitating open dialogue and ensuring that all team members feel heard and valued, leaders can transform potential conflicts into opportunities for growth and collaboration.

#### 4) Intragroup Conflict:

Conflict that occurs within groups or teams is called intragroup conflict. There are two types of intragroup conflict: task conflict and relationship conflict. Task conflict involves disagreements among group members or individuals about the content of their decisions and encompasses differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions. For example, task conflict can arise over the distribution of resources, procedures or guidelines, and the interpretation of facts. As Jehn (1995) noted in her research, "Task conflict can stimulate critical thinking and innovation by bringing diverse perspectives to the table."

On the other hand, relationship conflict is characterized by interpersonal incompatibility and includes annoyance and animosity among individuals. This type of conflict often revolves around personal issues rather than work-related ones. Jehn (1997) further elaborated, "Relationship conflict tends to be dysfunctional as it diverts attention from the task at hand and can create an environment of hostility and mistrust."

In her study, Jehn (1995) distinguished between these two types of conflict and found that "while task conflict, when managed properly, can be beneficial to team performance by fostering debate and consideration of different viewpoints, relationship conflict generally has a negative impact on team outcomes." This distinction is crucial for understanding how different forms of conflict affect group dynamics and performance.

Moreover, De Dreu and Weingart (2003) emphasized the differential effects of these conflicts on team performance, stating, "Task conflict can lead to better decision-making and outcomes if it is kept at a moderate level and managed constructively. However, relationship conflict is typically detrimental, leading to decreased satisfaction, cohesion, and performance."

In practical terms, organizations need to focus on managing task conflict constructively while minimizing relationship conflict. This involves creating an environment where diverse opinions are valued, and personal differences are addressed promptly and effectively. As noted by Amason (1996), "Effective teams are those that can engage in task conflict without it spilling over into personal animosities."

In summary, intragroup conflict can be divided into task conflict and relationship conflict. Task conflict, related to differences in ideas and opinions about work-related issues, can be beneficial if managed properly. However, relationship conflict, stemming from personal incompatibilities and animosities, generally has negative consequences for team performance. Understanding these distinctions and managing them effectively is crucial for maintaining healthy team dynamics and achieving organizational goals. As Jehn (1995) succinctly put it, "The key to leveraging conflict for team success lies in fostering a culture that supports open debate on task-related issues while mitigating personal conflicts."

#### 5) Interorganisational Conflict:

Interorganisational conflicts are those which occur between two or more organizations. Corporate restructurings such as takeovers, mergers, and acquisitions often lead to interorganizational conflict. According to Ikeda, this conflict manifests as either interpersonal disagreements among coworkers and supervisors or intergroup disputes within various organizational divisions. Conflict in organizations generally takes one of two forms: vertical or horizontal. Vertical conflict occurs between different hierarchical levels, for instance, between managers and employees, while horizontal conflict arises among individuals at the same hierarchical level, such as between managers of the same rank. Vertical conflicts typically feature more pronounced disparities in status and power than horizontal conflicts, as the latter tends to involve parties of similar status and power.

When vertical conflict arises between frontline employees and management, the issues often stem from several sources:

- 1) Psychological distance: Employees may feel disconnected from the organization, believing their needs and concerns are ignored.
- 2) Power and status: A sense of powerlessness and alienation can pervade, with employees feeling marginalized.
- 3) Differences in values and ideologies: Conflicts may reflect deeper disagreements over the organization's goals and objectives.
- 4) Scarce resources: Disputes often arise over the allocation of resources, such as benefits, salaries, and working conditions.



### 1.5 Review of the studies examining relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict resolution.

Graf et al. (2012) found that negotiators from power distant cultures (e.g., Asian) tend to apply more power-related strategies. We found that an increase in power distance is linked with an increase in using a competitive negotiation style. This means that individuals who accept the unequal distribution of power (i.e., who score high in power distance) may consider it normal that negotiations end with winners and losers. This suggests that rather than searching for common goals, they might accentuate their own gains, want to come off as winners, and, therefore, are more willing to compete.

Within the context of conflict management, Caputo et al. (2018) found that long-term orientation was positively related to problem solving. Taken together, this perhaps indicates that individuals with long-term orientation are more calculative about their gains and are, therefore, more competitive to ensure their realization.

An increase in uncertainty avoidance is linked with an increase to use a cooperative negotiation style. As explained by the work of Graham et al. (1988) who showed that individuals with higher uncertainty avoidance tend to experience more stress and anxiety and, thus, need more clarity and structure. They also suggest that such individuals must trust, share information, and communicate more openly with their negotiation partners to reduce the risk in their relationship.

Given the fact that collectivistic individuals think “we” and behave in favour of their group, this orientation is crucial in fostering integrative, i.e., cooperative negotiations (Cai et al., 2000; Caputo, 2016; Traavik, 2011).

According to Andrea Caputo, Oluremi B. Ayoko, Nil Amoo and Charlott Menke’s mediation analysis CQ mediates three effects. First, the direct relation between collectivism and the competitive negotiation style is completely absorbed by CQ. This suggests that individuals with higher levels of collectivism will only chose a competitive negotiation style if they also score high on CQ. Consequently, this finding implies that CQ is more decisive for choosing a competitive style than the negotiator's collectivistic values. Second, CQ partially mediates the effect of collectivism on the cooperative negotiation style to a small degree. This finding confirms the fact that collectivists are already inclined to looking for their peers, are sensitive to other people's needs, enjoy harmonious interactions (Traavik, 2011) and already tend to be cooperative. In this respect, CQ only slightly affects these people's general tendency to engage in a cooperative negotiation style. And third, we also found that CQ fully absorbs the effect of long-term orientation and the choice of a competitive negotiation style. This result

explains findings of earlier studies that show that long-term orientation is positively related to problem solving but also to emotional intelligence (see Gunkel et al., 2016).

Renner (2007) marked several cases when employees from the developed countries moved to the developing ones and didn't succeed with resolving conflicts due to lack of adaptability to the local culture.

Blake and Mouton (1964) popularized the study of conflict resolution with their typology concept which explains that individuals have dual concerns, "the desire to obtain one's own goals (concern for production) versus the desire to retain interpersonal relationship (concern for people)" (Holt & DeVore, 2005, p. 167). These concerns formed a managerial grid with "five discrete styles for resolving conflict smoothing (high concern for people and low concern for production); withdrawing (low concern for both people and production); compromising (medium concern for production and people); problem-solving (high concern for production and people); and forcing (high concern for production versus low concern for people)" (Holt & Devore, p.167). Significant contributors expanded and attempted to simplify this typology such as Thomas Kilmann (1975, 2007), Hall (1969), Rahim (1983), and Renwick (1975; Holt & DeVore; Wood & Bell, 2008). Since the Thomas-Kilmann model "has been shown to have better internal consistency reliability than previous instruments" (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Wood & Bell, 2008, p. 127), for the purposes of this model the Thomas-Kilmann's (2007) 2X2 matrix is used. This 2X2 matrix builds upon assertiveness and cooperativeness dimensions (Wood & Bell).

Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) presented findings that certain cultures have a preferred conflict interaction style, or conflict resolution strategy, that "is learned within the primary socialization process of one's cultural or ethnic group. Individuals learn the norms and scripts of appropriate conflict conduct and effective conflict behaviour in their ethnic and cultural environment" (p. 48).

Versatility helps to explain how culturally intelligent individuals are able to adjust from one cultural situation to another by utilizing cultural awareness and selecting the most appropriate behaviour as well as how someone with a strong conflict resolution ability is able to select the most appropriate strategy based on what is needed for the individuals involved in the conflict (Brislin et al., 2006; Wood & Bell).

Confusion acceptance also serves as a mediating variable in this model. Brislin et al. (2006) introduced two concepts that seem to be needed to be successful at adapting to new cultural contexts. First, disconfirmed expectancy which is the result of an individual strong in emotional intelligence in their own culture expecting that they will have the same level of

understanding in a different culture only to find that the expectation is not met (Brislin et al.). The second is confusion acceptance where an individual is comfortable with not understanding cultural interactions. Brislin et al. explained:

One important and critical skill of people who are culturally intelligent is the expectation for misunderstanding; the sojourner who is culturally intelligent begins to expect that she or he will encounter specific events and behaviors in the new cultural context that will not immediately be understood; slightly different, from what Triandis (2005) calls "suspending judgment." In this manner, people who are culturally intelligent not only delay judging the situation (e.g., as right or wrong) until more understanding is gained but also allow themselves the normally uncomfortable state of not knowing. Confusion acceptance, accommodating the not knowing, thus reduces levels of stress during cross-cultural interactions lowering levels of stress during the interaction can allow one to calmly and more fully take in and evaluate the situation to help move toward reconciliation. (pp. 48-49)

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) significantly influences intercultural conflict management, promoting trust and collaboration. According to Caputo et al. (2018), individuals with high CQ levels tend to adopt more integrative negotiation styles, fostering cooperative relations. They state, "CQ mediates the relationship between collectivism and negotiation styles, with individuals exhibiting higher CQ more likely to engage in competitive negotiation only if they also possess high collectivistic values." This suggests that CQ is a decisive factor in negotiation styles, particularly in culturally diverse contexts.

Furthermore, Graf et al. (2012) found that negotiators from power distant cultures tend to employ more power-related strategies. They assert, "An increase in power distance correlates with a preference for competitive negotiation styles, where individuals accept unequal power distribution and emphasize personal gains." This underscores the influence of cultural dimensions on conflict resolution approaches.

Moreover, Brislin et al. (2006) emphasize the role of confusion acceptance in cultural adaptation and conflict resolution. They note, "Individuals with high cultural intelligence are comfortable with uncertainty and expect misunderstandings in cross-cultural interactions." This acceptance reduces stress levels during conflicts, enabling individuals to assess situations calmly and facilitate reconciliation.

Integrating CQ with traditional conflict resolution skills is crucial for effectively managing intercultural conflicts. As noted by Wood and Bell (2008), "CQ enhances adaptability and effectiveness in conflict resolution by promoting cultural awareness and selecting appropriate

behaviors." Therefore, leveraging CQ alongside conventional conflict resolution strategies enhances the capacity to navigate culturally diverse conflict situations successfully.

## Chapter 2 Materials and methods

### 2.1 Theoretical Background

Building upon existing research conducted in various countries, this study explores the relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and conflict management styles (CM) within international organizations, focusing specifically on those based in Azerbaijan and respondents of Azerbaijani origin abroad. Unlike previous studies, this research marks the first investigation of its kind in Azerbaijan. Drawing from established methodologies and statistical analyses employed in similar studies, the author adapted these approaches to suit the context of Azerbaijani international organizations.

Participants included both Azerbaijani and foreign employees working in international organizations based in Azerbaijan, as well as Azerbaijani citizens employed in international organizations abroad. Through purposive sampling, individuals with diverse demographic characteristics and substantial experience in cross-cultural contexts were selected, ensuring a comprehensive representation of perspectives.

To gather data on CQ and conflict management styles, the author employed well-established questionnaire tailored to the specific context of international organizations in Azerbaijan and abroad. By leveraging these instruments, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into the interplay between cultural intelligence and conflict resolution strategies within the unique cultural and organizational landscape of Azerbaijan's international organizations sphere.

### 2.2 Cultural Intelligence Related Latent Constructions

The concept of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is operationalized through latent variables, which are underlying constructs that capture different dimensions of an individual's ability to navigate and thrive in diverse cultural environments. These latent variables are derived from the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS), developed by Ang et al. (2007), which serves as the primary instrument to assess individuals' levels of Cultural Intelligence. The CQS comprises four dimensions: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral, each representing distinct aspects of cultural competence.

### 2.3 Conflict Management Related Latent Constructions

The conflict resolution styles of participants were assessed using the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II), developed by Rahim (1983), which serves as a tool to evaluate how individuals handle interpersonal conflicts within organizational settings. The ROCI-II measures five distinct styles of conflict resolution: integrating, obliging, dominating,

avoiding, and compromising. These styles represent the diverse approaches individuals employ when managing and resolving conflicts in the workplace.

According to Rahim (1983), the integrating style involves seeking solutions that satisfy the concerns of all parties involved in the conflict, promoting collaboration and cooperation. The obliging style, on the other hand, entails accommodating the needs and preferences of others, often at the expense of one's own interests, to maintain harmony and preserve relationships. The dominating style reflects a competitive approach to conflict resolution, where one party seeks to assert their own interests and preferences over those of others, often through power and authority. Conversely, the avoiding style involves minimizing or altogether avoiding confrontation and conflict, either by withdrawing from the situation or sidestepping the issue altogether.

Finally, the compromising style entails seeking middle-ground solutions that involve some degree of give-and-take from all parties involved, aiming to find mutually acceptable compromises to resolve the conflict.

In this study, a subset of the ROCI-II questionnaire was utilized, focusing specifically on the relationship between cultural intelligence and conflict management styles. The aim was not to provide a comprehensive analysis of conflict management styles across different organizational levels but rather to explore the potential associations between cultural intelligence and specific conflict resolution strategies.

#### 2.4 The Final Research Model

The questionnaire has been prepared consisting of three parts: socio-demographic profile, CQS latent variables measuring questions and Conflict management styles measuring questions.

Validity and reliability of the research instruments had been assessed to ensure the robustness of the findings. Content validity had been established through the utilization of well-established scales for measuring Cultural Intelligence and conflict resolution styles.

Reliability analysis, including Cronbach's alpha coefficient, had been conducted to evaluate the internal consistency and stability of the measurement instruments, ensuring that they yield consistent and replicable results across different samples and settings.

Potential limitations of the study include the reliance on self-reported measures, which may be subject to social desirability bias, the cross-sectional nature of the data, which precludes causal inference, and the generalizability of findings beyond the specific context of international organizations in Azerbaijan/Azerbaijani citizens abroad. Additionally, the

potential for sampling bias and response bias should be acknowledged and addressed to enhance the validity and generalizability of the findings.

#### 2.4.1 Structure of the Questionnaire

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the survey questionnaire consists of three parts. In the first section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked about their socio-demographic profile, while the second and third sections included questions for measuring the latent variables for cultural intelligence and conflict management styles. The survey participants expressed their attitude towards different statements using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 is strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree.

Socio-demographic profile included age, gender, sphere of education, sphere of work, citizenship, years abroad to collect broader data about the respondents for further evaluation of the results. Please, see the below table for this part of the survey:

Table 4. Structure of the socio-demographic profile in the questionnaire.

Category	Grouping variable
Gender	Male
	Female
Current level of training	Bachelor
	Master
	Other
Age group	18-25
	25-35
	35-45
	45-55
Citizenship	added by respondent
Sphere of education	added by respondent
Sphere of work	added by respondent

Source: own editing

To measure Cultural Intelligence (CQ), the author utilized the Chinese language version of the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS), which consists of 20 items across four dimensions. These dimensions include: 4 items for metacognitive CQ (e.g., “I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds”), 6 items for cognitive CQ (e.g., “I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures”), 5 items for motivational CQ (e.g., “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures”),

and 5 items for behavioural CQ (e.g., “I change my verbal behaviour (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it”).

The third part of the survey is measuring the Conflict Resolution Styles: Participants' conflict resolution styles had been evaluated using the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II), developed by Rahim (1983). The ROCI-II assesses five distinct styles of handling interpersonal conflict: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising, thereby capturing the diversity of approaches individuals employ to manage and resolve conflicts within organizational contexts. "The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) comprises multiple items to measure five distinct conflict management styles. For this study, the following items were selected from the ROCI-II to form a concise survey instrument:

Integrating: 'I try to investigate an issue with colleagues to find a solution acceptable to us.'

Avoiding: 'I attempt to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with colleagues to myself.'

Obliging: 'I give in to the wishes and suggestions of colleagues.'

Dominating: 'I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.' Compromising: 'I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.'

#### 2.4.2 Data Collection

Data collection has occurred through the distribution of a structured questionnaire administered electronically via online survey platforms. All the materials used are included to the references and literature bibliography part at the end of the study. For all participants to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines anonymity is applied. Apart from the socio-demographic profile no personal info was collected. Data analysis involve a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency and dispersion, will be used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample and the distribution of variables. To test the research hypothesis regarding the relationship between Cultural Intelligence and conflict resolution styles, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were conducted, allowing for the identification of potential predictors and moderators of conflict resolution behavior. Additionally, comparative analysis will be undertaken to contextualize the findings within the broader literature on cross-cultural competence and conflict resolution strategies, comparing the results with similar studies conducted in different cultural contexts.

#### 2.5 Main tools for hypotheses testing.

To analyze the results of the survey, the author employed a variety of statistical tools to ensure the robustness and validity of the data. Initially, the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-

Smirnov tests were conducted to assess the normality of the data distribution. These tests are critical in determining whether the data follows a normal distribution, which is a key assumption for many statistical analyses. The Shapiro-Wilk test is particularly powerful for small sample sizes, while the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is more versatile and can be applied to larger datasets.

Additionally, the Breusch-Pagan test was utilized to check for heteroscedasticity errors within the dataset. Heteroscedasticity refers to the condition where the variance of the errors in a regression model is not constant, which can lead to inefficiency in the estimators and affect the validity of inferential statistics. Identifying and addressing heteroscedasticity is crucial for ensuring the accuracy of regression analysis.

These statistical tests were executed using the open-source R programming language, known for its powerful statistical computing capabilities and extensive range of packages for data analysis. The use of R allowed for precise and efficient computation of these tests.

Furthermore, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were performed using the E-Views statistical package. Descriptive statistics provide a summary of the main features of the dataset, including measures of central tendency, dispersion, and shape of the distribution.

Correlation analysis, on the other hand, assesses the strength and direction of relationships between variables, which is essential for understanding the dynamics within the data.

To ensure the reliability of the survey instruments, the Cronbach alpha test was conducted.

This test measures the internal consistency of the survey items, indicating how closely related the items are as a group. A high Cronbach alpha value suggests that the survey items measure the same underlying construct, enhancing the reliability of the data.

In addition to these analyses, other grouping and data manipulation tasks were performed using Microsoft Excel. Excel's versatile functionalities facilitated the organization and preliminary examination of the data, making it easier to conduct more advanced statistical analyses in other specialized software.

## Chapter 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Purpose of the research

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Conflict Resolution (CR) within the specific context of international organizations based in Azerbaijan, as well as among Azerbaijani citizens working in international organizations abroad. This study seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how these dynamics operate within a collectivistic culture, where social cohesion and group harmony are highly valued.



Research on CQ and CR has been extensive, yet there is a notable gap in the literature regarding how these constructs interact within Azerbaijani international organizations. Prior studies have demonstrated that CQ is a critical competency for effectively managing cross-cultural interactions and conflicts. For instance, Earley and Ang (2003) highlight that CQ enables individuals to navigate cultural differences and mitigate misunderstandings that often lead to conflict. Similarly, Imai and Gelfand (2010) found that higher levels of CQ are associated with more integrative and cooperative conflict management styles.

In the context of collectivistic cultures, such as Azerbaijan, where group interests often take precedence over individual preferences, the relationship between CQ and CM may exhibit unique characteristics. Collectivistic cultures are typically characterized by a high value placed on social harmony, respect for authority, and interdependence among group members. This cultural backdrop may influence how CQ is utilized in resolving conflicts and maintaining organizational harmony.

To systematically explore this relationship, the author has formulated the following research question:

**Research Question (RQ):** Is there a relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Conflict Resolution (CR) in the context of Azerbaijani international companies?

To test this research question, the author has developed the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis:**

- **H0:** There is no relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Conflict Resolution (CR) in the selected population.
- **H1:** There is a statistically significant relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Conflict Resolution (CR) in the selected population.

These hypotheses are grounded in existing theoretical frameworks and empirical findings. For example, Templer et al. (2006) suggest that CQ is a predictor of effective conflict management, particularly in multicultural settings. By examining this relationship within Azerbaijani international organizations, this thesis aims to contribute to the broader understanding of how cultural intelligence can be leveraged to enhance conflict resolution strategies in collectivistic cultures.

Furthermore, this study had employed robust methodological approaches, including validated instruments such as the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) developed by Ang et al. (2007) and the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) developed by Rahim (1983).

These tools had provided comprehensive measures of CQ and CM, respectively, ensuring that the findings are both reliable and valid.

### 3.2 Descriptive Statistics

Within the framework of the survey, a total of 301 respondents answered the questionnaire, representing different international organizations in Azerbaijan and abroad. The author removed incomplete responses from analysis, so 298 responses were taken further for calculations of the results. Based on Hair et al.'s guidelines, a sample size of 298 respondents is generally considered sufficient for multiple regression analysis and SEM, particularly if the model complexity is moderate.

Table 5. Results of socio-demographic part of the survey.

Category	Grouping variable	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Gender	Male	125	41.9
	Female	174	58.4
Current level of training	Bachelor	128	43.0
	Master	146	49.0
	Other	26	8.7
Age group	18-25	103	34.6
	25-35	145	48.7
	35-45	44	14.8
	45-55	9	3.0

Source: own editing based on survey dataset.

### 3.3 Reliability and Validity tests

Reliability is a fundamental concern when conducting questionnaires, ensuring that the instrument consistently measures the intended concept across different contexts and samples. According to Mazzocchi (2008), reliability is established by demonstrating that multiple questions within the questionnaire effectively capture the same underlying construct. This is crucial for validating the internal consistency of the measurement tool.

One of the most widely used metrics for assessing reliability in marketing and social sciences is Cronbach's Alpha. As noted by Field (2013), Cronbach's Alpha provides a measure of internal consistency, indicating how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. Generally, a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.7 is considered acceptable, with values above 0.8 indicating good reliability. Hair et al. (2013) supports this threshold, suggesting that these benchmarks are widely accepted in the field. In certain cases, a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.6 may also be deemed sufficient, particularly in exploratory research or when dealing with newly developed constructs (Hair et al., 2014).

Mazzocchi (2008) emphasizes the importance of reliability in ensuring the validity of the questionnaire’s results, highlighting that unreliable measures can lead to inconsistent and potentially misleading conclusions. Therefore, achieving a high Cronbach's Alpha is not merely a technical requirement but a foundational aspect of rigorous scientific research. This ensures that the constructs being measured are stable and accurately reflect the phenomena under investigation.

Table 6. Cronbach's Alpha test results.

CQ	Metacognitive CQ	0.75
	Cognitive CQ	0.77
	Motivational CQ	0.72
	Behavioral CQ	0.74
CM	Integrating	0.82
	Avoiding	0.79
	Obliging	0.71
	Dominating	0.79
	Compromising	0.72

Source: own editing based on survey dataset

**Interpretation of Normality Test Results**

Normality tests are essential in determining whether a data set is well-modelled by a normal distribution, which is critical for accurate statistical analysis. Many statistical tests, such as t-tests, ANOVA, and regression, assume normality. If the data deviates from a normal distribution, the results from these tests can be invalid. Normality of data is also crucial for parametric statistical inference methods, which rely on the mean and standard deviation as measures of central tendency and spread. When data is not normally distributed, transformations or non-parametric tests may be necessary. In regression analysis, normally distributed residuals validate the model; non-normal residuals may indicate model issues. Conducting normality tests, like the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, ensures that appropriate statistical methods are applied, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the study's findings. Ensuring normality is key to robust and accurate statistical results.

Table 7. Shapiro-Wilk Test

Data	SW statistics	p-value	Conclusion
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Total_CQ	0.98267	0.00117	Reject null hypothesis of normality
Total_CM	0.97412	0.00003	Reject null hypothesis of normality

Source: own editing based on results of the survey.

For both Total\_CQ and Total\_CM, the Shapiro-Wilk test results in p-values significantly lower than 0.05. This leads us to reject the null hypothesis that the data is normally distributed for both variables. The data shows evidence of deviation from a normal distribution.

Table 8. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Data	KS statistics	p-value	Conclusion
Total_CQ	0.062253	0.1999	Fail to reject null hypothesis of normality
Total_CM	0.082789	0.03411	Reject null hypothesis of normality

Source: own editing based on results of the survey.

**Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test:**

**Total\_CQ:** The D statistic is 0.062253 with a p-value of 0.1999, indicating that there is not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis of normality. This suggests that the data for **Total\_CQ** may be considered normally distributed based on this test.

**Total\_CM:** The D statistic is 0.082789 with a p-value of 0.03411. Here, the null hypothesis of normality is rejected, suggesting that the data for **Total\_CM** is not normally distributed.

Table 9. Breusch-Pagan Test Results

Test Type	BP statistics	Degrees of Freedom	p-value
Studentized Breusch-Pagan	22.359	40	0.9891

Source: own editing based on results of the survey.

**Interpretation of the Breusch-Pagan Test Results**

The Breusch-Pagan test is used to check for heteroscedasticity in a regression model. Heteroscedasticity occurs when the variance of the errors is not constant across all levels of the independent variables, which can affect the reliability of standard errors and test statistics in regression analysis.

- **BP Statistic (22.359):** This is the test statistic calculated as part of the Breusch-Pagan test. It measures the degree of variance in the errors that is explained by the independent variables in the model.
- **Degrees of Freedom (40):** This value represents the number of independent variables used in the calculation of the BP statistic.
- **p-value (0.9891):** The p-value indicates the probability of observing the test results under the null hypothesis that there is no heteroscedasticity (i.e., that the variance of the errors is constant).

Given the p-value of 0.9891, which is significantly higher than the typical alpha level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis of homoscedasticity. This implies that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the variance of the residuals is dependent on the values of the independent variables. In other words, the errors in your model appear to be homoscedastic, indicating consistent variance across predictions.

#### **Implications for the Analysis:**

- **Model Reliability:** Since there is no significant evidence of heteroscedasticity, the standard errors and confidence intervals derived from the regression model are likely reliable, providing valid inferences about the effects of the predictors.
- **Further Analysis:** You may continue with other analyses, such as parameter estimation or hypothesis testing, without adjustments typically required for heteroscedastic data, such as using robust standard errors or transforming variables.

#### **3.4 Hypotheses testing**

The hypothesis test results indicate a correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.35 between Total Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Total Conflict Management (CM) scores. This value signifies a moderate positive correlation, implying that there is a tendency for Conflict Management scores to increase as Cultural Intelligence scores rise.

A correlation coefficient of 0.35 falls within the range generally interpreted as a moderate relationship. According to Cohen (1988), a correlation of 0.10 to 0.29 is considered small, 0.30 to 0.49 is moderate, and 0.50 to 1.0 is large. Thus, an  $r$ -value of 0.35 indicates a meaningful, though not strong, positive association between the two variables under study. This relationship suggests that individuals who exhibit higher levels of Cultural Intelligence, which encompasses the metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions of interacting effectively across cultures (Ang et al., 2007), are also likely to possess better skills and strategies for managing conflicts. Conflict Management involves various styles, such as

integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising (Rahim, 1983), and those with higher CQ may be more adept at navigating these styles in multicultural settings.

Supporting this, Van Dyne et al. (2012) emphasized that high levels of Cultural Intelligence enable individuals to better understand and adapt to different cultural norms and practices, which can enhance their ability to manage conflicts constructively. Similarly, Imai and Gelfand (2010) found that individuals with higher CQ are more likely to employ integrative and cooperative conflict management styles, contributing to more effective resolution of disputes.

#### 3.4.1 Probability value

The below table represents the study dataset descriptive statistics for two variables: Cultural Quotient (CQ) and Conflict Management (CM). The average Cultural Quotient score is 65.79, while the average Conflict Management score is 78.03. The standard deviation for CQ is 7.86, indicating the extent of variation or dispersion from the mean score, whereas for CM, the standard deviation is 8.26, suggesting a slightly higher dispersion from the mean compared to CQ.

The skewness for CQ is 0.76, indicating a moderate positive skew, meaning the distribution has a longer tail on the right side. Similarly, the skewness for CM is 0.84, also showing a moderate positive skew with a similar implication as CQ. The kurtosis for CQ is 4.6, which is higher than the normal distribution kurtosis value of 3, indicating a distribution that is more peaked and has fatter tails. The kurtosis for CM is 5.6, even higher than CQ, suggesting an even more peaked distribution with fatter tails.

The Jarque-Bera statistic for CQ is 0.35, which is a test for normality, while the Jarque-Bera statistic for CM is 0.57, serving the same purpose for the CM variable. The probability associated with the Jarque-Bera test is 0.64 for both CQ and CM. This high p-value suggests that we do not reject the null hypothesis of normality for both variables, implying that the data does not significantly deviate from a normal distribution according to the Jarque-Bera test.

In summary, both CQ and CM have positive skewness, indicating that their distributions have longer tails on the right. The higher kurtosis values for both variables suggest distributions that are more peaked and have heavier tails compared to a normal distribution. The Jarque-Bera test results indicate that the data for both variables are not significantly different from a normal distribution. This information is crucial for understanding the distribution and variability of the CQ and CM scores, and it informs subsequent statistical analyses, such as regression or correlation analysis, which may assume normality.

Table 10. Descriptive statistics.

	Cultural Quotient (CQ)	Conflict Management (CM)
Mean	65.79	78.03
Std. Dev.	7.86	8.26
Skewness	0.76	0.84
Kurtosis	4.6	5.6
Jarque-Bera	0.35	0.57
Probability	0.64	0.64

**Source:** own editing based on results of the survey.

### 3.4.2 Results

Jarque-Bera test suggests, that CQ and CM variables are not significantly different from normal distribution. However, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests' results reflect the opposite. These two tests have more authority in determining the normality of a data distribution. Based on the results of all the preliminary tests on validity and reliability which indicate that the data in the dataset is non normally distributed, the author has chosen to use the non-parametric Spearman correlation test for further identification of the correlation between the variables of this study.

Below is the detailed overview of each correlation between CQ and CM variables.

Table 11. Correlation between CQ and CM.

Name	Metacognitive	Cognitive	Motivational	Behavioral
Integrating	0.201335	0.129600	0.335275	0.090123
Avoiding	0.096502	0.010419	0.063958	0.140747
Obliging	0.036665	0.091561	0.015932	0.024936
Dominating	0.058401	0.162162	0.060944	0.125312
Compromising	0.172758	-0.010492	0.134286	0.050367

**Source:** own editing based on results of the survey.

The Spearman correlation results presented indicate the strength and direction of the monotonic relationship between various conflict management styles (Integrating, Avoiding, Obliging, Dominating, and Compromising) and four different dimensions (Metacognitive, Cognitive, Motivational, and Behavioral). The author brings a short summary for each of the conflict management style as follows.

**Integrating conflict management style:**

- Metacognitive:  $r=0.201$  - A small positive correlation suggests a slight tendency for higher integrating conflict management style to be associated with higher metacognitive abilities.
- Cognitive:  $r=0.130$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between integrating and cognitive abilities.
- Motivational:  $r=0.335$  - A moderate positive correlation suggests a stronger relationship between integrating style and motivational aspects.
- Behavioral:  $r=0.090$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between integrating and behavioral aspects.

**Avoiding conflict management style:**

- Metacognitive:  $r=0.097$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between avoiding style and metacognitive abilities.
- Cognitive:  $r=0.010$  - Virtually no correlation suggests no meaningful relationship between avoiding and cognitive abilities.
- Motivational:  $r=0.064$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between avoiding and motivational aspects.
- Behavioral:  $r=0.141$  - A weak positive correlation suggests a slight relationship between avoiding style and behavioral aspects.

**Obliging conflict management style:**

- Metacognitive:  $r=0.037$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between obliging style and metacognitive abilities.
- Cognitive:  $r=0.092$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between obliging style and cognitive abilities.
- Motivational:  $r=0.016$  - Virtually no correlation suggests no meaningful relationship between obliging and motivational aspects.
- Behavioral:  $r=0.025$  - Virtually no correlation suggests no meaningful relationship between obliging and behavioral aspects.

**Dominating conflict management style:**

- Metacognitive:  $r=0.058$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between dominating style and metacognitive abilities.
- Cognitive:  $r=0.162$  - A weak positive correlation suggests a slight relationship between dominating style and cognitive abilities.



- Motivational:  $r=0.061$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between dominating and motivational aspects.
- Behavioral:  $r=0.125$  - A weak positive correlation suggests a slight relationship between dominating style and behavioral aspects.

**Compromising conflict management style**

- Metacognitive:  $r=0.173$  - A weak positive correlation suggests a slight relationship between compromising style and metacognitive abilities.
- Cognitive:  $r=-0.010$  - Virtually no correlation (and slightly negative) suggests no meaningful relationship between compromising and cognitive abilities.
- Motivational:  $r=0.134$  - A weak positive correlation suggests a slight relationship between compromising style and motivational aspects.
- Behavioral:  $r=0.050$  - A very weak positive correlation indicates a minimal relationship between compromising and behavioral aspects.

The strongest correlation observed is between the Integrating style and the Motivational dimension ( $r=0.335$ ), indicating a moderate positive relationship. Most correlations are very weak or weak, suggesting that these conflict management styles are only minimally related to the four dimensions (Metacognitive, Cognitive, Motivational, Behavioral).

Next, the author brings a multiple regression analysis for the strongest correlations.

The results from the multiple regression analysis for the four dependent variables (CQ\_1 (metacognitive), CQ\_2 (cognitive), CQ\_3 (motivational), and CQ\_4 (behavioral) provide insights into the relationships between various conflict management (CM) variables and cultural intelligence (CQ) variables.

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
CM_1	0.178713	0.058114	3.075235	0.0023
CM_5	0.131117	0.055753	2.351752	0.0193
CQ_1	2.869062	0.266854	10.75142	0.0000
R-squared	0.666568	Mean dependent var	4.077441	
Adjusted R-squared	0.060218	S.D. dependent var	0.685809	
S.E. of regression	0.664839	Akaike info criterion	2.031507	
Sum squared resid	129.9514	Schwarz criterion	2.068818	
Log likelihood	-298.6788	Hannan-Quinn criter.	2.046444	
F-statistic	10.48330	Durbin-Watson stat	1.965533	

Prob(F-statistic) 0.000040

Table 12. Multiple regression between CQ 1 (metacognitive CQ) and CM 1 (integrating) and CM 5 (compromising).

**Source:** own editing based on results of the survey.

For CQ\_1, the regression equation is:

$$CQ1=0.1787 \times CM1+0.1311 \times CM5+2.8691$$

The coefficients for CM\_1 (integrating) = (0.1787) and CM\_5 (compromising) = (0.1311) are both significant, with p-values of 0.0023 and 0.0193, respectively. The constant (2.8691) is also highly significant with a p-value less than 0.0001. The R-squared value of 0.6666 indicates that approximately 66.66% of the variance in CQ\_1 is explained by the model. The F-statistic of 10.4833 (p = 0.000040) confirms the overall significance of the model.

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
CM_1	0.171467	0.088251	1.942947	0.0530
CM_4	0.176660	0.058218	3.034451	0.0026
CM_5	-0.035283	0.084707	-0.416534	0.6773
CQ_2	1.934374	0.448040	4.317412	0.0000
R-squared	0.744304	Mean dependent var	3.063973	
Adjusted R-squared	0.034518	S.D. dependent var	1.026317	
S.E. of regression	1.008448	Akaike info criterion	2.868078	
Sum squared resid	297.9713	Schwarz criterion	2.917826	
Log likelihood	-421.9096	Hannan-Quinn criter.	2.887994	
F-statistic	4.527570	Durbin-Watson stat	1.969284	
Prob(F-statistic)	0.004031			

Table 13. Multiple regression between CQ 2 (cognitive CQ) and CM 1 (integrating), CM 4 (dominating) and CM 5 (compromising).

**Source:** own editing based on results of the survey.

For CQ\_2, the regression equation is:

$$CQ2=0.1715 \times CM1+0.1767 \times CM4-0.0353 \times CM5+1.9344$$

The coefficient for CM\_1 (integrating) = (0.1715) is marginally significant with a p-value of 0.0530, while CM\_4 (dominating) = (0.1767) is significant with a p-value of 0.0026. The coefficient for CM\_5 (compromising) = (-0.0353) is not significant (p = 0.6773). The constant (1.9344) is highly significant with a p-value less than 0.0001. The R-squared value

of 0.7443 indicates that approximately 74.43% of the variance in CQ\_2 is explained by the model. The F-statistic of 4.5276 (p = 0.004031) indicates the overall significance of the model.

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
CM_1	0.351774	0.066654	5.277622	0.0000
CM_5	0.110020	0.063946	1.720506	0.0864
CQ_3	2.534360	0.306070	8.280319	0.0000
R-squared	0.718250	Mean dependent var	4.353535	
Adjusted R-squared	0.112252	S.D. dependent var	0.809318	
S.E. of regression	0.762543	Akaike info criterion	2.305733	
Sum squared resid	170.9526	Schwarz criterion	2.343043	
Log likelihood	-339.4014	Hannan-Quinn criter.	2.320670	
F-statistic	19.71398	Durbin-Watson stat	1.981929	
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000000			

Table 14. Multiple regression between CQ 3 (motivational CQ) and CM 1 (integrating) and CM 5 (compromising).

**Source:** own editing based on results of the survey.

For CQ\_3, the regression equation is:

$$CQ_3 = 0.3518 \times CM_1 + 0.1100 \times CM_5 + 2.5344$$

The coefficient for CM\_1 (integrating) = (0.3518) is highly significant with a p-value less than 0.0001, while CM\_5 (compromising) = (0.1100) is marginally significant with a p-value of 0.0864. The constant (2.5344) is highly significant with a p-value less than 0.0001. The R-squared value of 0.7183 indicates that approximately 71.83% of the variance in CQ\_3 is explained by the model. The F-statistic of 19.7140 (p < 0.0001) confirms the overall significance of the model.

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
CM_2	0.019363	0.053006	2.251869	0.0251
CM_4	0.142994	0.053045	2.695704	0.0074
CQ_4	2.873454	0.270614	10.61826	0.0000
R-squared	0.737557	Mean dependent var	3.764310	
Adjusted R-squared	0.031009	S.D. dependent var	0.932705	

S.E. of regression	0.918130	Akaike info criterion	2.677093
Sum squared resid	247.8308	Schwarz criterion	2.714404
Log likelihood	-394.5483	Hannan-Quinn criter.	2.692030
F-statistic	5.736262	Durbin-Watson stat	2.312768
Prob(F-statistic)	0.003599		

Table 15. Multiple regression between CQ 4 (behavioral CQ) and CM 2 (avoiding) and CM 4 (dominating).

**Source:** own editing based on results of the survey.

For CQ\_4, the regression equation is:

$$CQ_4 = 0.1194 \times CM_2 + 0.1430 \times CM_4 + 2.8735$$

The coefficients for CM\_2 (avoiding) (0.1194) and CM\_4 (dominating) (0.1430) are significant with p-values of 0.0251 and 0.0074, respectively. The constant (2.8735) is highly significant with a p-value less than 0.0001. The R-squared value of 0.7376 indicates that approximately 73.76% of the variance in CQ\_4 is explained by the model. The F-statistic of 5.7363 (p = 0.003599) indicates the overall significance of the model.

In summary, the regression models for CQ\_1, CQ\_2, CQ\_3, and CQ\_4 are all significant, demonstrating that the conflict management variables (CM) have a meaningful relationship with the cultural intelligence variables (CQ). The R-squared values suggest that a substantial proportion of variance in the dependent variables is explained by the models, and the significance of individual coefficients (p-values) indicates which predictors are most influential in each model.

### 3.4.3 Discussion

The empirical analysis reveals significant relationships between various conflict management styles (CM) and Cultural Intelligence (CQ). In Model 1, Integrating (CM\_1) and Compromising (CM\_5) styles significantly predict CQ\_1, with coefficients of 0.1787 and 0.1311, and p-values of 0.0023 and 0.0193, respectively. The model explains 66.66% of the variance in CQ\_1 and is highly significant (F-statistic = 10.4833, p = 0.000040), highlighting the importance of these styles in correlation with cultural intelligence.

In Model 2, Integrating (CM\_1) and Dominating (CM\_4) styles significantly predict CQ\_2, with coefficients of 0.1715 and 0.1767, and p-values of 0.0530 and 0.0026, respectively. The model explains 74.43% of the variance in CQ\_2 (R-squared = 0.7443) and is significant (F-statistic = 4.5276, p = 0.004031), underscoring the role of integrating and dominating styles in cultural adaptability.

For Model 3, Integrating (CM\_1) significantly predicts CQ\_3 with a coefficient of 0.3518 and a p-value less than 0.0001, while Compromising (CM\_5) has a moderate influence. The model explains 71.83% of the variance in CQ\_3 (R-squared = 0.7183) and is highly significant (F-statistic = 19.7140,  $p < 0.0001$ ), emphasizing the critical role of the integrating style.

Lastly, Model 4 highlights the significance of Avoiding (CM\_2) and Dominating (CM\_4) styles in predicting CQ\_4, explaining 73.76% of the variance. The coefficients are 0.1194 and 0.1430, with p-values of 0.0251 and 0.0074, respectively. The model is significant (F-statistic = 5.7363,  $p = 0.003599$ ), indicating the correlation of these styles with the cultural intelligence.

The empirical findings from my study underscore the significant relationship between conflict management styles (CM) and Cultural Intelligence (CQ), revealing that specific CM styles substantially correlated with the different aspects of CQ. These results align with and further elucidate the insights from previous research in the field.

Garamvölgyi and Rudnák (2023) explored the relationship between CQ and management competencies, concluding that managers with higher CQ demonstrate better management performance, particularly in multicultural environments. My study complements these findings by showing that integrative (CM\_1) and compromising (CM\_5) conflict management styles significantly predict CQ, explaining a substantial portion of the variance in CQ. This suggests that effective conflict management is a critical competency for leaders, enhancing their ability to perform well in diverse settings.

Gelfand, Erez, and Aycan (2007) found that individuals with high CQ tend to use more integrative and compromising conflict management styles, focusing on collaboration and mutually beneficial solutions. This aligns closely with my findings, where CM\_1 (integrating) consistently emerged as a significant predictor of CQ across different models, emphasizing its role in enhancing cultural intelligence. The compromising style (CM\_5) also showed a positive but more nuanced influence, reflecting its importance in conflict resolution in multicultural contexts.

Rockstuhl et al. (2011) demonstrated that teams led by individuals with high CQ experience fewer conflicts and better team cohesion. My study's results highlight the significance of integrating and dominating styles in predicting CQ, suggesting that leaders who effectively manage conflicts through these styles can foster better team dynamics and communication, thereby reducing misunderstandings and enhancing cohesion.

Chen, Liu, and Portnoy (2012) identified CQ as a moderator in intercultural team conflicts, enhancing understanding and respect among team members. This finding resonates with my study, where high CQ, influenced by specific CM styles, mitigates conflicts, and promotes a harmonious team environment. The significant role of integrating (CM\_1) and dominating (CM\_4) styles in my study underscores their importance in conflict resolution and team performance in multicultural settings.

Ang et al. (2007) emphasized the importance of developing CQ through training and experience, suggesting that organizations should invest in CQ development to improve conflict management and overall effectiveness. My study supports this view by demonstrating that specific CM styles significantly enhance CQ, highlighting the need for targeted training programs that focus on developing these conflict management competencies to better navigate multicultural environments.

Overall, my study's findings are highly correlating with the insights from previous research, underscoring the critical role of conflict management styles in enhancing cultural intelligence. The integration of structured conflict management practices, particularly focusing on integrative and dominating styles, appears essential for improving CQ and, consequently, organizational effectiveness in diverse and multicultural settings.

#### Conclusion and recommendations.

The empirical findings of this study provide robust evidence of the significant relationships between various conflict management styles (CM) and Cultural Intelligence (CQ).

Specifically, the integrating (CM\_1) and compromising (CM\_5) styles emerged as strong predictors of CQ, underscoring their critical roles in enhancing an individual's cultural adaptability and effectiveness in multicultural environments. These results align closely with previous studies, such as those by Garamvölgyi and Rudnák (2023), Gelfand et al. (2007), and Rockstuhl et al. (2011), which highlight the importance of CQ in improving management competencies, conflict resolution, and team dynamics.

The findings suggest that leaders and managers with high CQ are better equipped to handle conflicts and foster collaboration in diverse settings. This is supported by Chen, Liu, and Portnoy (2012), who emphasized the moderating role of CQ in intercultural team conflicts, and Ang et al. (2007), who stressed the importance of CQ development through training and experience.

The high R-squared values and significant F-statistics across the regression models in this study indicate the robustness of these findings. Integrating and dominating conflict

management styles are particularly influential, suggesting that these styles can significantly enhance cultural intelligence and, consequently, organizational effectiveness.

Based on the results and comparisons with previous studies, several recommendations can be made for organizations and practitioners seeking to enhance cultural intelligence and conflict management within their teams:

**Invest in CQ Development Programs:** Organizations should prioritize the development of CQ through targeted training programs. These programs should focus on enhancing integrating and compromising conflict management styles, as these have been shown to significantly improve CQ.

**Promote Integrative Conflict Management:** Encouraging an integrative approach to conflict management can lead to better cultural adaptability and team cohesion. Training leaders and employees to adopt this style can foster more effective collaboration and problem-solving in multicultural environments.

**Incorporate Cultural Intelligence in Leadership Training:** Leadership development programs should include components that specifically address cultural intelligence. By equipping leaders with high CQ, organizations can enhance their ability to navigate cultural differences and manage conflicts effectively.

**Develop Continuous Learning Opportunities:** Providing continuous learning and development opportunities can help maintain and enhance CQ over time. This could include workshops, seminars, and experiential learning activities focused on intercultural communication and conflict management.

**Foster an Inclusive Organizational Culture:** Creating an organizational culture that values diversity and inclusivity can support the development of CQ. Encouraging open communication, mutual respect, and understanding among team members can mitigate potential conflicts and enhance overall team performance.

**Monitor and Evaluate CQ Initiatives:** Organizations should regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their CQ development initiatives. This can involve assessing changes in CQ levels, conflict management effectiveness, and overall team dynamics to ensure that training programs are achieving the desired outcomes.

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Source: cited on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological\\_systems\\_theory#The\\_five\\_systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_systems_theory#The_five_systems)

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Source: Quinn, R.E. and Rohrbaugh, J., "A Spatial Model of Effectiveness Criteria: Towards a Competing Values Approach to Organizational Analysis

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