

REVIEW ARTICLE

A systematic literature review of the preferred organizational conflict management styles in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Conflict is considered an inevitable aspect of human social relationships and an inevitable and significant occurrence in all organizations. This study will review the literature on preference conflict organizational management style in Malaysia. From 2013 to February 2023, a systematic examination of the three most databases was conducted. Articles from peer-reviewed journals that examine conflict management styles in Malaysia and are consistent with the theory of conflict management style were included to achieve the research goals. The reviewers independently applied the selected criteria, extracted the data, and evaluated the quality of the study. Eleven of the 635 studies discovered met the inclusion requirements. The findings indicate that Malaysia's preferred management style is integrative and compromising. However, if the organization's demographics are multicultural, Malaysians tend to employ a conflict-avoidance style to avoid significant conflicts. Depending on the circumstances, the research indicates that Malaysians are pacifists and fighters in conflicts threatening their well-being. They attempt to become more respectful while maintaining positive relationships with all parties involved. The study provides several significant contributions for practical purposes and knowledge to interested parties, such as managers and organizational leaders, in determining the best practice for conflict resolution. Further research is required to investigate the state of the employee-employer relationship following the implementation of the proposed conflict resolution style.

Keywords: organizational conflict; conflict management; organization performance; workplace; Malaysia

1. Introduction

The growing diversity of the workforce today presents employers with both opportunities and challenges. As a result, the organization is enriched by the diversity of beliefs, opinions, values, and attitudes. Despite this, conflicts will eventually result from these differences. It expresses the struggles between at least two interdependent parties with seemingly incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference on the other party's part that prevents them from accomplishing what they are trying to accomplish. Katz and Kahn^[1] define conflict as a particular type of interaction characterised by obstruction, struggles, constraints, and problems, as well as resistance to these efforts or retaliation against them. Organizational conflict is typically perceived as opposed to cooperation rather than an open dialogue between two or more organizational groups. Negative manifestations prevent communication and break trust, which prevents cooperation^[2].

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In fact, Rose et al.^[3] acknowledged that the conflict continues both in social circles and in professional interactions. Apart from that, Henry^[4] and Hotepo et al.^[5] also mentioned that workplace conflict is an unpleasant reality for the organization as long as there is competition for jobs, resources, power, recognition, and stability. Several researchers identify that organizational conflict at work can result from various things, such as poor leadership, lack of commitment, personality conflicts, poor coordination, and poor communication^[6-8].

Researchers have noted that conflict can result in stress, absenteeism, and turnover^[9,10]. De Dreu and Weingart^[11] has proved empirically that relationship conflict adversely affects work-related and individual outcomes. Conflicts within organizations reduce individuals' ability to work as a team since they spend more energy arguing rather than solving tasks. In a separate study, it was discovered that there was a strong relationship between organizational conflict and lower levels of innovative behavior^[12], higher turnover intentions^[13], and lower employee trust levels^[14].

Although it is always viewed as negative phenomenon, the existence and importance of organizational conflict has been deemed to be inherent and essential for organizational functioning. In fact, not all conflicts are destructive because some constructive and managed conflict increases the understanding and productivity of members of an organization. As Pace^[15] asserts, conflict-free organizations are impossible and will never exist as long as men have to live together and work together. Organizational conflict is critical for understanding central phenomena and performing necessary functions^[16]. Conflict in the workplace allows managers to reassess their roles and goals. As a result, it promotes healthy conversations among employees and improves an organization's overall productivity and performance. Organizations benefit from cooperative relations because they enable conflict resolution at all levels, primarily through mutual trust between parties^[17]. There is evidence that conflict plays a positive role in the continuation of organizations by triggering change^[18] and innovation^[19]. Conflicts can contribute to long-term organizational development and sustainability^[20], challenging conventional wisdom.

The impact of diversity on an organization can be either positive or negative^[21]. However, the more dissimilar an individual is from other group members on a given demographic characteristic, the more likely there is a conflict in the relationship^[22]. As a nation with a multiracial culture, Malaysia can be a powerhouse if it fulfills equal racial rights in every aspect of governance. It will enable it to sustain its stability and progress. There is a possibility that this condition can either be seen as a risk or as an opportunity. Any organization that refuses to recognise both risks and opportunities will probably fail in the future. There is no doubt that corporate culture is considered a very complex issue to discuss in the workplace. It is because of the psychological and social influences that are present in the workplace. Management of organizational conflict in Malaysia is, therefore, a challenging task. In addition to regular organizational conflict, they also experience diverse organizational conflict. It is crucial to determine which conflict management approach is best for the Malaysian context in order to reduce the risk of conflict, address it before it worsens, and spend less time and money doing so^[23,24].

So, in order to improve organizational outcomes through effective conflict management approaches, the article seeks to investigate how Malaysia's organization and its employees managed workplace conflict. The research will utilise a systematic literature review technique to assess the most popular conflict management strategies employed by local organizations.

2. Literature review

2.1. Organizational conflict

Organizational conflict is defined as "organizational rift" (a lack of understanding or common sense or disagreement caused by the perceived and actual conflict between needs, interests, values and personalities of

those who work together to achieve success). Organizational conflict is another name for workplace conflict. Conflicts occur when two or more members of an organization engage in a manner that is contrary to each other's views. These opinions may be expressed as regards any specific activity or task carried out by the organization. Essentially, organizational conflict refers to the results of human interaction that starts with a member of an organization identifying its values, attitudes or purposes as incompatible with those set out by it and expects its members to obey them^[25].

Conflict is inevitable in an organization because of the extensive social interaction that occurs there, but how it is handled determines whether it will have a positive or negative outcome. Conflicts may be functional, although they're usually deemed dysfunctional; conflict can have both good and bad effects. If it facilitates creative thinking and clarification, this may be beneficial. This also includes the development of people's ability to cope with other people's differences. Conflict within organization is not unusual because they create or provide opportunities for change and resolution between the aggrieved parties for the benefit of employees and the organization^[26].

However, some scholars argued that conflict is not necessarily related to the differences in the perception ends. It can also happen when people disagree over means but have similar goals in mind. From an end's perspective, there has been a lot of focus on the theories underlying conflict and how it arises. Jehn^[27], this could not have been the case in every situation because it was likely that conflict would occur as a result of disagreement regarding how work should be managed. One commonly used approach to defining this phenomenon is the classification of conflicts on the basis of means and ends, but other causes of conflict should also be taken into account. As a general rule, Putnam and Poole^[28] argue that the description of conflict must be considered in relation to interactions with one another. Individuals or groups are not compatible with each other, but the requirements of their work force them to coordinate with each other. In other words, it illustrates the existence of interdependence.

However, there is a propensity for recurrent arguments because of incompatibility for factors like personally, emotionally, or socially. Some studies have looked into this idea as well. For instance, Almost et al.^[29] identified conflict as being present due to the group members' personal and environmental influences. Therefore, this study adduces that organizational conflict can be inferred as a coherent behavioral and perceptual framework of organizational members driven by a sense of disadvantage or incompatibility with others.

2.2. Conflict management strategy

Conflict in the workplace is inevitable; but how conflict is managed may have a bearing on its outcome. How conflicts are handled will determine the scale and intensity of future conflicts. Conflict management effectiveness fosters enthusiasm, boosts morale, and stimulates personal and organizational development. On the other hand, when conflict resolution is ineffective, it can lead to larger conflicts with devastating effects on the entire organization^[30]. Effective conflict management requires the use of different styles depending on the conflict situation.

For that reason, the biggest step in building a strategy for conflict management is to find out early on which sources of conflict are present and how they affect an organization^[31]. The best way to manage conflict within an organization is to focus on strategies which will enhance constructive function in order to increase the efficiency of an organization; therefore, it is essential to identify all levels of conflict at organizational level, e.g., individuals, interpersonal or intergroup conflicts.

A few of the early researchers^[32] who took intrigued in conflict and conflict management styles include Follet (1926–1940)^[33], Blake and Mouton^[34] and Thomas^[35]. Murewa and Guantai^[33] who synthesized the type of conflict management, described that Follet^[33] recommended three primary strategies for managing

interpersonal conflicts: domination, compromise, and integration. She also suggested that organization could manage conflicts through avoidance and suppression strategies. Blake and Moutton^[34] emphasized their conflict style according to the level of concerns for individuals and production. They asserted that interpersonal conflict can be managed based on the five styles, forcing, compromising, withdrawing, problem solving and smoothing. In contrast with Follet's strategy^[33], they added forcing, solving and smoothing as part of conflict management resolution. At the same time, they hold compromise as best conflictual resolution.

Thomas^[35] proposed a two-dimensional framework for conflict management strategies based on the parties' assertiveness (fulfill their own concerns) and willingness to cooperate (more concerns on other's needs). At the same time, the following five conflict handling modes were supported by him; collaborating, accommodating, competing, avoiding and compromising. Aside from them, Rahim^[36] proposed that interpersonal conflict could be handled using his five modes: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising, all of which are based on how much a person cares about themselves and the people they are in relationships with. Although Rahim modes included obliging, a style that Follet^[33] had not considered, they were an extension of Follet^[33]. A comparison of Thomas and Rahim's approaches shows that the two approaches have great similarities and are widely used by modern managers^[37,38], the study will elaborate on the Rahim's five styles.

The goal of a collaboration strategy is to meet the needs of the parties involved, particularly when the participants have important goals in common. The aim of one person or group to achieve their objectives is known as a competition strategy. In an organization, individuals and groups compete for limited resources, positions, recognition, and power, either fairly or to the detriment of other groups. John-Eke and Akintokunbo^[32] claimed that, to prevent a highly competitive individual from exerting too much power, it is necessary to utilize external factors such as legal restrictions or social stigmas whenever they going too far. In cases where a dispute between management and employees regarding responsibilities is resolved before taking legal action, the bargaining process is commonly employed^[39]. It gives all parties who have been wronged the opportunity to express themselves on an equal footing, without regard to who is in a higher position in the conflict.

There is controversy surrounding the application of avoidance strategy in organizational conflict management. Abdullah^[40] has acknowledged that it can have a detrimental effect on organizational effectiveness by creating undisclosed conflicts that may not be resolved promptly, leading to increased conflict and employee disapproval of management decisions. However, Ohbuchi and Atsumi^[41] found that avoidance as a great strategy for collectivists, who are concerned with belonging to a group. They valued collectivistic and actively choose avoidance with the expectation that it will contribute to group harmony and relationships.

Lastly, compromising style encourages on give and take, or a win-win condition which focuses to address each disputed party concerns. In this style, the concerned parties are willing to settle any differences in peace and harmoniously without furthering any conflict^[42]. It entails finding the middle ground amongst individual or groups in the dispute that has common interest^[43]. It is the most appropriate and best conflictual style as both parties gain something over the conflict. The style considers appropriate when involved parties are ready for mutual actions and agree to the mutual supremacies.

3. Methodology

3.1. Search strategy

The RepOrting Standards for Systematic Evidence Syntheses (ROSES) protocol was used in the current study. It was specifically designed for systematic reviews and mapping in the management field^[44]. The purpose of ROSES is to make sure that researchers offer the appropriate kind and amount of information. The authors created good research questions for the SLR by adhering to the review protocol. The three main sub-

processes of systematic searching strategies are identification, screening (inclusion and exclusion criteria), and eligibility. After outlining the method used to ensure the quality of the articles to be examined, the authors move on to evaluate the chosen articles' quality.

3.2. Formulating research questions

This study developed its research question using PICO. It assists authors in identifying appropriate research questions for reviews^[45]. PICO is based on population or Problem, Interest, and Context. This review focuses on three main aspects based on these concepts, namely organizational conflict management (population/problem), style/approaches (interest), and Malaysia (context). These concepts enable the authors to formulate their central research question: What are organizational conflict management approaches in Malaysia?

3.3. Identification

Identification entails looking for synonyms, related terms, and variations of the study's primary keywords, conflict management approach/style in Malaysia. The aim is to make the selected database searchable for more relevant articles as part of the review. The keywords were developed based on the research question^[46], and they were identified using an online thesaurus, keywords suggested by experts, and keywords used in previous studies (**Table 1**). The authors expanded the existing keywords and developed thorough search strings using Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar (**Table 1**) using Boolean operators, phrase searches, truncation, wild cards, and field codes. These three databases could be the most crucial ones in a thorough literature review because they provide sophisticated search capabilities, comprehensiveness (indexing more than 5000 publishers), article quality control, and a multidisciplinary focus^[44,47], including studies on management. Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar databases produced 635 articles.

Table 1. Enriched keywords.

Keywords	Main keywords	Enriched keywords
	Organizational conflict	Organizational dispute
	Management	Workplace conflict
	Style	Handle
		Approach
Databases	Leading database used	
	Scopus	
	Web of Science	
	Google Scholar	
Searching technique	Advanced searching	
	Full search string	

Table 2. Full search string for systematic searching.

Database	Search string
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("organization* conflict*" OR "organization* dispute*" OR "workplace* conflict*" AND ("manage*" OR "handle*") AND ("style*" OR "approach*"))) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2023) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2022) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2021) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2020) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2019) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2018) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2017) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2016) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2015) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2014)) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2013) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j"))
Web of Science	(TS = (("organization* conflict*" OR "organization* dispute*" OR "workplace* conflict*" AND ("manage*" OR "handle*") AND ("style*" OR "approach*")))) Refined by: PUBLICATION YEARS: (2023 OR 2022 OR 2021 OR 2020 OR 2019 OR 2018 OR 2017 OR 2016 OR 2015 OR 2014 OR 2013) AND DOCUMENT TYPES: (ARTICLE) AND LANGUAGE: (ENGLISH)
Google Scholar	("organizational* conflict*" OR "organization* dispute*" OR "workplace* conflict*") ("manage*" OR "handle*") ("style*" OR "approach*")

3.4. Screening

This study screened all 635 selected articles by choosing the criteria for articles selection which is done automatically based on the sorting function available in the database. Brereton et al.^[48] suggested that the selection criteria are based on the research question. As it is almost impossible for the researchers to review all the existing published articles, Okoli^[46] suggested that researchers determine the range of periods they can review. Therefore, the timeline between 2013 and February 2023 was selected as one of the inclusion criteria. Furthermore, to ensure the quality of the review, only articles published in a journal and credible conference proceedings are included.

Moreover, only articles published in English are incorporated in the review to avoid confusion in understanding (**Table 3**). This process excluded 320 articles as they did not fit the inclusion criteria and removed 47 duplicated articles. The remaining 268 articles were used for the third process: eligibility.

Table 3. The inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	2013–February 2023	<2013
Document type	Article Journal	Article review, conference paper, book chapter, book
Language	English	Non-English

4. Eligibility

Eligibility is the third process, where the authors manually monitor the retrieved articles to ensure all the remaining articles (after the screening process) align with the criteria. This process was done by reading the title and abstract of the articles. This process excluded 257 articles due to not using proper conflict management style theory, focus cultural factors rather than conflict management style, focusing on employee’s perception of organizational conflict rather than conflict management style, focusing on factors of organizational conflict, focusing on the effect of organizational conflict towards the employee, and published in the form of a book chapter. Overall, there were only 11 selected articles.

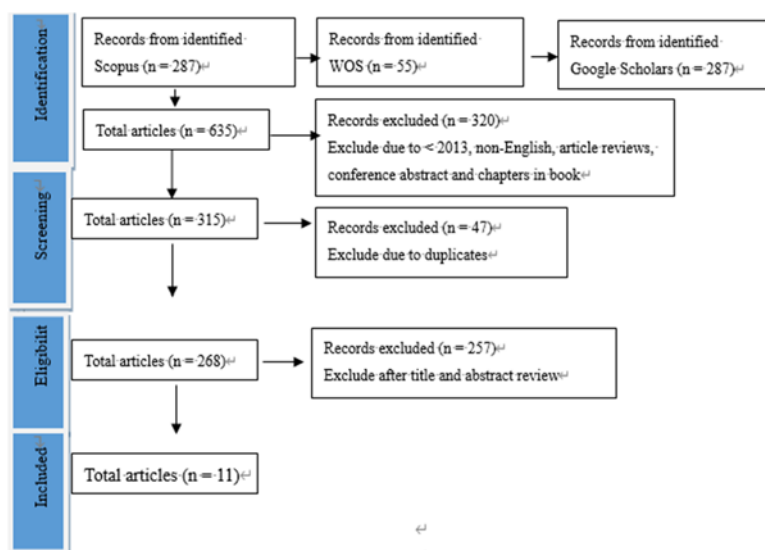


Figure 1. The flow diagram.

5. Results

The three themes of the study emerged from an in-depth analysis of the chosen articles. These themes are integrating, compromising, and avoidance. These studies were conducted in Malaysian organizations, with the

vast majority adopting the Rahim Conflict Management Style^[49]. Intriguingly employees in Malaysia are less likely to choose an approach that avoids conflict. However, if foreigners from other countries are present (cross cultural) or if sensitive background such as religion, race and culture are involved, participants tend to use an avoidance style^[50-52]. It can be said that Malaysians are respectful and attempt to avoid potential conflict by employing withdrawal style to maintain harmony and peace within organization. Therefore, it can be concluded from this study that Malaysians seek win-win solutions to ensure their comfort without hurting others.

Table 4. Selected articles.

Authors	Scope of study	Findings
Asyraf et al. ^[24]	Conflict management style in public universities in Malaysia.	Integrating and compromising styles were perceived to have higher value efforts of affective commitment towards the organization.
Musah et al. ^[53]	Conflict management style in the east and west petrochemical plants in Malaysia.	Integrating and compromising styles augment functional outcomes and positively impact employee performance.
Hamid and Bakar ^[54]	Conflict management style in Teacher's Training Institute in Malaysia.	The educators at the Teacher's Training Institute demonstrated that they favour the integrating and compromising style to overcome conflict, especially intergroup conflict.
Ariffin et al. ^[55]	Conflict handling style among employees at Eversafe Extinguisher Sdn Bhd.	The findings reveal that employees in the company are more committed to integrating and compromising styles in resolving conflict.
Mohd Kassim et al. ^[56]	Conflict management style among bank employees in Malaysia.	Bank employees with higher sensitivity to fairness issues tend to be integrative, obligated and compromising for conflict resolution.
Izham et al. ^[57]	Conflict management style and teacher's job satisfaction in Malaysia's Primary School.	It was found that the headmaster used all types of conflict management styles (cooperating/integrating, adapting, compromising, bargaining and problem-solving). However, the most favourable is cooperating/integrating, which allows a win-win situation for both parties and makes employees feel appreciated.
Johari et al. ^[58]	Workplace conflict management style UiTM, Sarawak, public university in Malaysia.	The UiTM lecturers, Sarawak, prefer collaborating's conflict management style to sustain professionalism and preserve harmony and unity in the organization.
Sahban and Abbas ^[51]	Conflict management style among Malaysia and Thailand employees in Top Glove Corporation.	Malaysia's employees in Top Glove corporation favoured avoiding and compromising conflict style due to the cultural influence.
Tabassi et al. ^[52]	Conflict management style in the multicultural working environment in the construction industry in Malaysia.	The findings advocate that avoiding conflict management will be adopted to improve team performance and coordination.
Jamail et al. ^[59]	The conflict management style of Generation Y Teachers in Malaysia.	There is a high correlation between compromising and conflict resolution among Generation Y teachers, where they hope to achieve a mutual resolution that satisfies all parties involved.
Ramayan et al. ^[50]	Conflict management among students in Sunway University, Malaysia.	Students use the avoiding style to overcome intercultural conflict regarding gender, race, religion and cultural issues.

6. Discussion

6.1. Integrating style

Integrative style can be defined as a style that stresses high regard for both self and others distinguishes integrating style. It requires transparency, exchanging information, and examining differences to reach a mutually acceptable solution. It is linked to problem-solving, which can lead to innovative solutions. This style has effectively utilised various individuals' skills and knowledge to generate solutions, and it may be suitable for addressing strategic issues on objectives, policies, and long-term planning^[60]. In Muhammad Asyraf et al.^[24], 1200 questionnaires were distributed to the academic staff of public universities in Malaysia, and the results indicated that integrating style positively affects the respondents' commitment. It demonstrates that

using an integrative style reduces the likelihood of negative behaviour and increases employee commitment to the organization. The results are consistent with Izham et al.^[57], in that same academic setting, where teachers favour an integrative strategy to resolve conflict. The teaching staff hoped the principal would join them in promoting mutually beneficial interactions and peaceful conflict resolution. The teachers anticipated their principal would collaborate to promote win-win situations and peaceful conflict resolution. In this way, the teacher's job satisfaction can be ensured. The author also discovered that respondents have a high level of job satisfaction. It can be concluded that an integrative style improves task satisfaction, colleague satisfaction, and supervisor (principal) satisfaction.

Even though some people may believe that the academic world is full of professionalism, there is a high likelihood that they will use a professional approach to resolve conflicts maturely. Nonetheless, a study by Ariffin et al.^[55] in a Malaysian company demonstrated that Malaysians prefer integrative conflict resolution styles over others. Integrating style can strengthen employee commitment and increase employee-employer understanding. According to the analysis, Malaysians most frequently use the integrative conflict resolution style. It indicates that Malaysians probably hold traits of individuals with feminist tendencies, which they prefer modesty, humility, empathy, affection, kindness, and warmth. Such individuals prefer to interact socially, develop close relationships with others, and refrain from affecting them^[53]. People will indeed react positively to any conflict if they are satisfied with the resolution of the conflict. It is practical because it focuses on working together to develop the best feasible and appropriate solution, where both sides will own the solution and be committed to it^[58]. They will have a sense of ownership over resolving the conflict, resulting in an improved and more harmonious working environment.

6.2. Compromising style

Compromising styles prone to have a moderate regard for themselves and others. Managers can benefit from a compromising conflict style, especially when confronting multiple parties with divergent interests. The Latin word "comprmissum" translates to "mutual promise", and the French word "compromis" means agreement. Compromise leads to agreement, but it does not necessarily resolve underlying issues. Commonly, a compromise involves a similar concession: an agreement is reached, and both parties sacrifice something to gain something. It could result in a solution, and everyone could move on for a brief time, but in the long run, those involved may feel dissatisfied. Rahim^[61] found in his research that when both parties involved in compromise or sharing solutions agree to give up something to make mutually agreeable decisions. It may mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle position.

Musah et al.^[53] studied thirteen Malaysian petrochemical companies and discovered respondents favoured integrating and compromising conflict management styles. She explained that people are oriented toward compromise because they prefer a less aggressive approach to conflict resolution, mainly if the task is completed by oneself and other group members. The finding backed up by Jamail et al.^[59] that generation Y teachers in Malaysia demonstrated a high level of a compromising approach to conflict resolution. They believe a compromise should be reached when a conflict arises between them and the school's principal (manager).

This style is frequently used because it involves a give-and-take action between both parties, in which neither party wins nor loses. Conflicting parties would exchange and share ideas, ultimately satisfying all parties involved. It has been agreed upon by Ariffin et al.^[55] that the compromising style of conflict management exhibited significant positive relationships and was highly correlated with employees' organizational commitment in a Malaysian company. Malaysians prefer compromising because they value two-way communication to resolve ambiguities and issues, as suggested by Noh et al.^[62] in their study of communication patterns in Malaysia. They simultaneously desired two-way communication with the leader regarding a holistic matter to have a dialogue that matched their style of receiving logical responses^[63,64].

Their behavior defines Malaysians as having an integrated customs orientation, a strong sense of community, and a respectful attitude toward the elderly. Malaysians value harmony in the community and view disagreement as divisive and harmful. For people who value collectivism over individualism, reaching a middle ground is second nature; a sacrifice of personal gain is often accepted in exchange for the greater good.

6.3. Avoiding style

Even though a general analysis of selected articles indicates that avoiding style is the least popular approach by Malaysians, it was preferred in certain instances. Malaysians avoid situations involving multiple cultural backgrounds, including the presence of foreigners and issues on religion and race. For instance, Ariffin et al.^[55] and Mohd Kassim et al.^[56] found avoiding style somewhat unfavorable among Malaysian workers. However, in a study encompassing multiple cultural values, such as those of Tabassi et al.^[52] and that of Sahban and Abbas^[51], avoiding style was discovered to be the preference of Malaysian employees.

Rahim^[61] claimed that avoiding behavior was related to withholding, shifting blame, and eluding responsibility. Avoidance is a common strategy used by those agitated by the conflicts and dissatisfied with conflict, and it is neither assertive nor cooperative^[65]. Avoidance is a sign of suppression, which is handling conflict with little regard for oneself or others. They consequently fall short of addressing their and the other party's concerns.

As previously discussed, Malaysians have a femineity trait whereby they demonstrate affection and compassion for conflict resolution. The avoidance style, ironically, contrasts with the feminine personality. However, in an intercultural situation, the avoidance style of organizational conflict may be understood as the best way to protect one's long-term interests and avoid escalation of conflict due to misunderstanding. In Ramayan et al.^[50], many respondents identified misunderstanding as the primary source of intercultural conflict and viewed it as something negative that creates a barrier between them and others.

Identically, Tabassi et al.^[52] discovered that Malaysians use an avoidance approach to improve team coordination and performance. It is a practice for situational management and is regarded as a short-term style when working with people from different cultural backgrounds to achieve common goals. Regarding the adaptability of various conflict management styles, the avoidance style was most prevalent when addressing cultural issues. As every culture is unique, if one side respects the other, there is a chance that they will gain respect and reduce intercultural conflict.

Despite this, if members of the organization have divergent viewpoints on a particular project, it may be helpful to note them and then attempt to settle the conflict later. It complements a passive, conflict-avoidance management style, which usually implies ignoring the conflict altogether. Instead, it is refraining from confrontation or disagreement to find an appropriate opportunity or moment for addressing the conflict.

Although most of the prior research indicates that avoiding conflict is a lose-lose situation, the purpose of this study is to contend that avoiding is a situation in which neither party wins nor loses. Respect is regarded as the highest standard of professional conduct in employment. Everyone must comprehend the red lines of other cultures and accept them exactly as they are unless other parties are willing to talk. However, if the conflict persists, compromise should be a leading option for conflict remedy. It is the best approach to prevent ill feelings toward each other.

6.4. Discussion's summary

The study offers significant novelty in conflict management styles in Malaysia. It has been found from the synthesized literatures that Malaysians preferred to utilize integrative and compromising styles. Thus, its reject^[41] statement that avoidance is preferred by Asian to manage organizational conflict. Though, several previous studies claimed that Asian cultures are predominantly collectivistic in nature^[66-68], Malaysians prefer to compromise to settle any rising dispute, rather than avoiding the issue. Malaysians are known for their

friendly and well-diverse country, so compromising is not an uncommon handling style for them. The country established and maintained its peace and harmony through *musyawarah* (discussion) among the majority races in the country, where the ends always seek a win-win solution that gratifies all racial needs. Even at the international diplomacy level, *musyawarah* (for compromising) always becomes the conflict management style adopted by the country's leader. The *musyawarah* method of compromising is inherently embedded among Malaysians, who believe that one's must seek their right in harmony and a peaceful way without jeopardizing any group's right. It is a style to ensure one's well-being is respected and promotes fairness and justice in interdependent community.

Ironically, Malaysians recognized avoidance strategy as a viable form of conflict management in some cases, especially the conflict is deadlocked and harmful to all parties. However, such a strategy only acts for the short term as Malaysians are not good at hiding their dissatisfaction and they might quit and look for other job employments that compromise with their needs. Malaysians expect the organization to promote employees' mental health and the current generation is not reluctant to be direct to settle conflict but rather hide their feelings or problems. The statement supported by Jamail et al.^[59], that Y generation teachers perceived compromise as a better conflict resolution. It indicates the future generation expected that conflict management will be open, transparent, fair and justice to all parties.

7. Conclusion

The study reflects Malaysia's most preferred organizational conflict management style. It was discovered that Malaysians preferred integrative and compromising conflict resolution styles while avoiding styles were the least preferred. Malaysians, on the other hand, will use an avoiding style when dealing with intercultural issues to avoid any confrontation. It shows that Malaysians are both pacifists and fighters regarding conflicting issues that threaten their well-being. Malaysians are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully, maintain good relationships with all parties involved and care about the organization's health. They tend to safeguard job satisfaction and want to increase organizational commitment.

The research has several strengths, including highlighting Malaysia's preferred conflict management style and identifying Malaysians as peacemakers who disregard organizational conflict. Managers and organizational leaders can put the study's findings into practice in their organizations. The study also adds to the body of knowledge by backing prior results and can be applied to other research models or hypothesis testing. Yet, the research paper has some limitations, such as using a limited database (Scopus, WOS, and Google Scholar) and a specific focus on Malaysia. As a result, the number of articles reviewed may be limited, and similar studies should be expanded in other countries.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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