

The relationship between Conflict resolution styles and Workplace stress in employees

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Bachelor of Science in Psychology

By

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, "The relationship between Conflict Resolution Styles and Workplace stress in employees", is a Bonafide record submitted by Aaliyah Rehman, Reg.no. SB22PSY002, of St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Princy Thobias, and that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma, fellowship, title or recognition before.

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DECLARATION

I, Aaliyah Rehman, hereby declare that the study presented in the dissertation, which is submitted to the Department of Psychology, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulum is a Bonafide record of the research work carried out by me, under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Princy Thobias, Assistant Professor of the Department of Psychology, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulum, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science in Psychology and has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship, title or recognition before.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaliyah', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end.

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First of all, I would like to thank God Almighty for blessing me in all the stages of this project and for helping me complete the project successfully. It is not possible to prepare a project report without the assistance and encouragement of other people. This one is certainly no exception.

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Abstract

Conflicts in a workplace are quite common to happen, and different individuals respond differently to conflict situations. Stress might affect how an individual might handle conflicts in the workplace. The aim of the study is to explore the relationship between conflict resolution styles and workplace stress among employees. Conflict resolution styles were measured through the conflict resolution style questionnaire by the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI; 1974) and workplace stress was measured using the workplace stress scale by The Marlin Company and the American Institute of Stress (2001). The data was collected from 204 working employees with the help of google forms. The data was analyzed using Jamovi. Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to test correlation and the findings showed no significant relationship between workplace stress and all of the conflict resolution styles except collaborating style of conflict resolution. There was a positive relationship between collaborating style and workplace stress. The results of the study can be applied in a workplace to understand and predict the behavior of employees. It can also be applied in organization to improve their productivity by understanding how managers and subordinates resolve conflict.

Keywords: conflict resolution styles, workplace stress

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Chapter I

Introduction

Background of the study

Workplace stress

Workplace stress is common challenge faced by employees across various industries. It arises when the demands of the job exceed an individual's ability to cope, leading to mental, emotional and physical strain, stress in the workplace can stem from heavy workloads, tight deadlines, lack of control over work, poor management, interpersonal conflicts, job insecurity and insufficient support from colleagues or supervisors. Factors like unclear job expectations, long working hours, and work life imbalance can further intensify stress levels (Smith,2022). If not properly managed, workplace stress can negatively impact employee performance, motivation, and overall well-being, ultimately affecting the organizations productivity and morale. People respond to workplace stress in different ways. Stress management refers to the ways individuals use to handle and reduce stress. the Lazarus and Folkman transactional model of stress and coping is one of the most widely used frameworks for understanding how people deal with stress. According to this model, stress is a result of the interaction between a person and their environment. The model identifies two main coping strategies: problem focused coping and emotion focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Problem focused coping involves addressing the source of stress directly by finding solutions, while emotion focused coping involves managing the emotional response to stress rather than changing the situation itself. Effective stress management often requires a balance between these two approaches

Problem focused coping is practical and solution oriented. It involves identifying the causes of stress and taking steps to resolve it, such as reorganizing workloads, improving communication, or setting boundaries. On the other hand, emotional reactions to stress. This may involve relaxation techniques, seeking social support, or reframing the situation from a

more positive perspective. while problem focused coping is often seen as more effective in resolving the root cause of stress, emotion focused coping can be valuable when the source of stress is beyond an individual's control. Several factors influence how people cope with workplace stress. Research suggests that women are more likely to use emotion focused coping strategies, while men tend to rely on problem focused approaches. Age also plays a role, with younger employees more likely to seek quick solutions, whereas older employees may lean more toward emotional regulation and acceptance (Brown et al., 2019). Personality traits also shape how individuals manage stress. For example, people with high emotional stability and resilience are more likely to adopt problem focused coping strategies, while those with higher anxiety levels may rely more on emotion focused methods (Taylor & Stanton, 2007). Understanding how personality and other factors influence stress responses can help organizations develop targeted strategies to support their employee's mental health and well being

Conflict resolution

Conflicts are a natural part of any workplace, where people with different backgrounds, values and ways of working come together. when people collaborate on tasks, it's almost inevitable that disagreements will happen. If these conflicts aren't handled well, they can create tension between coworkers and affect overall productivity, conflicts can also arise for many reasons, poor communication differences in personal or professional goals, task dependencies, unequal status and competition for resources. Cultural differences, such as religious or ethnic misunderstanding, and high employee turnover can also make conflicts worse (Valdes, 2023). People tend to handle conflict in different ways. Conflict resolution styles reflect how individuals respond when disagreements arise. The Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument (TKI) outlines five common styles for managing conflict: competing, avoiding, collaborating, accommodating and compromising. This model looks at

conflict resolution through two main lenses: cooperativeness (how much you consider other's needs) and assertiveness (how much you push for your own needs) (Mossanen et al., 2014). Leaning too much toward either extremely being overly cooperative or overly assertive can create problems. The Competing style is high in assertiveness but low in cooperativeness, it's about dodging the issue altogether and hoping it goes away. The collaborating style involves both high assertiveness and high cooperativeness, where both sides work together to find a solution that satisfies everyone. The accommodating style, which is low in assertiveness but high in cooperativeness, means letting go of one's own needs to keep the peace. Finally, the compromising style sits somewhere in the middle, where both parties make concessions to reach an agreement. Several factors influence how someone handles conflict. Research shows that female students are more likely to use a competitive approach, while male students are more competitive compared to younger students (Gbadamosi et al., 2014).

For this experiment, the sample will consist of individuals aged 18–40, representing a diverse demographic group. The study will be conducted in two distinct geographical locations: India and Dubai, allowing for a cross-cultural comparison. This age group was selected to focus on young adults who are likely to be in the early to mid-stages of their careers, a period when work-related stress is often most pronounced. By conducting the experiment in both India and Dubai, the study will capture the influence of cultural, economic, and workplace differences on stress experiences, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how work stress manifests across these two regions.

Theoretical framework

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Resolution Model, developed by Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann in the early 1970s, is a widely recognized framework for understanding and addressing conflict within organizations. The model identifies five distinct

conflict-handling modes competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating—each representing a different combination of assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness refers to the extent to which an individual attempts to satisfy their own concerns, while cooperativeness pertains to the degree to which they seek to satisfy the concerns of others.

Understanding and appropriately applying these conflict-handling modes can significantly enhance organizational conflict management. By recognizing the nature of a conflict and the preferred styles of those involved, organizations can tailor their approaches to conflict resolution, leading to more effective and harmonious outcomes. This model underscores the importance of flexibility and situational awareness in managing conflicts, suggesting that no single style is superior; rather, the effectiveness of a conflict-handling mode depends on the specific context and objectives of the interaction.

Chapter II

Review of literature

The Effect of Work Conflict on Workplace stress and Employee Performance by Maryani & Gazali (2024) conducted a study to explore the relationship between work conflict, workplace stress, and employee performance. The researchers used questionnaires and regression analysis to analyze the data collected from employees in various industries. The results revealed that work conflict significantly increased workplace stress; however, when conflict was effectively managed, it also had the potential to enhance employee performance. Specifically, conflict explained 10.7% of the variability in workplace stress and 62.9% of the variability in employee performance. These findings highlight the dual role of conflict in the workplace—as both a stressor and a performance enhancer. The study emphasizes the importance of implementing effective conflict resolution strategies to minimize negative outcomes and optimize organizational performance.

Personality traits and conflict resolution styles: A meta-analysis by Tehrani Yamini (2020) conducted a meta-analysis to explore the relationship between personality traits and conflict resolution styles. They analyzed 20 eligible studies involving 5,337 participants, retrieved from databases such as ProQuest, PsycINFO, Scopus, and Web of Science. The findings revealed that neuroticism and agreeableness are positively associated with the avoiding style, while agreeableness, extroversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness are linked to the compromising style. Additionally, extroversion and agreeableness were positively related to the dominating style, while agreeableness was strongly associated with the obliging style. The integrating style showed positive correlations with agreeableness, extroversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness, and a negative correlation with neuroticism. Moderator analysis indicated different patterns of relationships between personality traits and conflict styles in work versus academic settings, specifically regarding agreeableness and neuroticism. These findings provide valuable

insights into how personality traits influence the choice of conflict resolution strategies in various contexts.

Managing job performance, social support, and work-life conflict to reduce workplace stress by Foy, Dwyer, Nafarrete, Hammoud, & Rockett (2019) examined the relationships between social support, work-life conflict, job performance, and workplace stress in an Irish higher education institution. Using a combination of reward imbalance theory, expectancy theory, and equity theory, the study surveyed 1,420 staff members. Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that social support negatively correlated with workplace stress, while work-life conflict had a positive correlation with stress, and job performance negatively correlated with stress ($p < 0.05$). The study also found significant relationships between direct reports and gender and workplace stress. These results suggest that enhancing social support and addressing work-life conflict can help reduce workplace stress and improve employee performance

A study by Wu et al., (2018) aimed to examine the impact of workplace stress on unsafe behaviors among construction workers by developing and validating a workplace stress scale. The researchers reviewed existing literature, conducted semi-structured interviews with construction workers, and created a questionnaire to assess workplace stress and safety behaviors. Data from 150 construction workers in Beijing were analyzed using reliability analysis and factor analysis, which revealed six key dimensions of workplace stress. The study found that workplace stress was negatively correlated with safety behavior, meaning that increased stress led to more unsafe behaviors. The research highlighted the importance of managing workplace stress to improve safety performance in the construction industry, suggesting that addressing stressors like workload and role ambiguity could help reduce accidents and enhance safety.

The Relationship Between Conflict Resolution Approaches and Trust-A Cross Cultural Study by Sullivan, Peterson, Kameda, & Shimada (2017) examined how different conflict resolution approaches—such as collaborative, competitive, and avoiding strategies—affect trust across various cultures. The authors used structured surveys and statistical analysis to assess the impact of these approaches on trust in intercultural settings. The findings revealed that collaborative conflict resolution strategies were positively associated with increased trust, while competitive and avoiding approaches were found to negatively affect trust levels. Additionally, the study identified cultural differences in the effectiveness of these strategies, suggesting that conflict resolution techniques that work well in one culture may not be as effective in another. The results underscore the importance of cultural sensitivity and awareness when applying conflict resolution strategies, as understanding cultural contexts can significantly impact trust-building and overall success in resolving conflicts.

A study by Noble, Fincher, Park, & Press (2014) examined the evolution of conflict resolution practices in the workplace, with a particular focus on mediation, arbitration, conflict coaching, and ombuds offices. The study explored how these methods have changed over time and highlighted the growing importance of Integrated Conflict Management Systems (ICMS), which aim to address disputes more effectively while fostering collaboration within organizations. The authors also emphasized the increasing demand for alternative dispute resolution (ADR) education in law schools, noting a rise in specialized roles such as mediators and conflict coaches. Their findings suggest that proactive conflict resolution training and the implementation of integrated conflict management approaches are essential for improving workplace dynamics, promoting collaboration, and encouraging innovation. The study underscores the importance of equipping organizations with the tools to address conflicts constructively, both for individual and organizational growth.

A Framework for Conflict Resolution by Mostert (2009) aimed to develop a comprehensive model for conflict resolution, particularly in the context of water management conflicts, while also providing insights for future research. Based on a literature review, the model integrates various approaches to overcome the limitations of individual conflict resolution strategies. It consists of four parts: (1) identifying sources of conflict and their interrelations, (2) presenting basic mechanisms for addressing these sources, (3) offering an overview of conflict resolution methods and procedures, and (4) discussing the influence of contextual factors, with a focus on cultural factors. The study concludes by emphasizing the implications for both conflict resolution practices and research, highlighting the need for context-sensitive approaches in resolving conflicts effectively

Behfar et al., (2008) was to examine how different conflict types and management strategies relate to team performance and satisfaction. Using a qualitative study of 57 autonomous teams, the researchers investigated the specific strategies that successful teams use to handle conflict. The findings revealed that teams with sustained high performance shared three key conflict resolution practices: focusing on the content of interpersonal interactions, explicitly discussing reasons behind decisions, and assigning tasks based on expertise rather than convenience or volunteering. The study also highlighted that successful teams are proactive in anticipating conflicts and develop pluralistic strategies that accommodate all members. These results underscore the importance of effective conflict management in promoting long-term team success, both in terms of performance and satisfaction.

A study on gender-based categorization for conflict resolution by Brahnham et al. (2005) aimed to explore the relationship between gender and conflict resolution strategies among information systems (IS) students. Using the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, they assessed the conflict resolution styles of 163 undergraduate IS students (ages

18–22) from a large Midwestern university. The study revealed that women were more likely to adopt a collaborative conflict resolution style, while men tended to avoid conflict. Since collaboration is generally seen as more productive and avoidance as more disruptive in resolving conflicts, the findings suggest that women may possess more effective conflict resolution attributes than men. These results support the theory that gender influences conflict resolution styles, with female students in IS displaying greater collaboration skills in conflict-prone situations

A Developmental Meta-Analysis of Peer Conflict Resolution by Laursen, Finkelstein, & Betts (2001), developed trends in peer conflict resolution strategies, analyzing variations by age, peer relationships, assessment methods, and reporter types. The findings revealed that negotiation was the most prevalent strategy across all age groups, with coercion being common in children and disengagement rare. Adolescents showed similar levels of coercion and disengagement, while young adults preferred disengagement over coercion. Negotiation was dominant in all peer relationships except among siblings, with romantic partners negotiating more than friends and friends more than acquaintances. Assessment methods revealed that hypothetical disputes favored negotiation, whereas real conflicts often involved coercion; observers reported coercion as the most common strategy, while self-reports suggested negotiation. Developmentally, negotiation increased and coercion decreased with age, leading to a convergence in conflict resolution patterns during young adulthood. Despite the limited number of studies analyzed, the results indicate a developmental shift, with negotiation becoming more prominent and coercion declining across peer relationships and assessment contexts.

Interfunction Conflict, Conflict Resolution Styles, and New Product Success: A Four-Culture Comparison by Xie, Song, & Stringfellow (1998), developed a model linking innovation success to Interfunctional conflict and conflict resolution methods. The model proposed a concave relationship between performance and the level of interfunctional conflict among marketing, R&D, and manufacturing teams. It also suggested that both national culture and the level of interfunctional conflict affect the effectiveness of various conflict resolution styles. The empirical test and Great Britain supported the model's predictions and revealed significant cross-national differences in the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies.

A study by Spielberger & Reheiser's (1995) study, *Measuring Occupational Stress: The Workplace stress Survey*, developed and validated a tool to assess work-related stress across various job settings. The Workplace stress Survey measures key stressors, including job demands, control, support, and role clarity, to evaluate their effects on employee well-being and performance. The study's results demonstrated that the survey effectively identified stressors that contributed to employee strain, revealing that high job demands combined with low control were significant predictors of occupational stress. Furthermore, the survey showed that adequate social support could mitigate the adverse effects of work stress. The findings provided valuable insights into how different organizational factors influence stress and highlighted the importance of stress management interventions in the workplace.

Rationale of the study

Conflict in the workplace is a common problem that has a negative effect on a number of workers, frequently creating stress, job dissatisfaction and poor job performance. If conflicts are not well managed, it can lead to a difficult working environment, generate turnover and even affect an organization's general success. Unsolved conflicts have been

identified as a primary source of stress that can lead to burnout and absenteeism. when conflicts have been identified and handled effectively, they can improve teamwork, communication, and job satisfaction, decrease stress, and enhance overall performance. One of the key elements of conflict management is knowing which conflict resolution styles are most effective in minimizing workplace stress, especially in various industries. This study seeks to investigate how various conflict resolution styles impact workplace stress. the results will enable organizations to create effective strategies for managing conflict that led to stress and enhancing employee well-being and performance.

Current study

The aim of this research is to find out the connection between conflict resolution styles and workplace stress, with determining the most effective conflict resolution style to minimize stress in the workplace, through an analysis of these variables, this study aims to determine effective styles for conflict and stress management, leading to enhanced employee well-being and enhanced job performance in various industries.

Chapter III

Methodology

Aim

To explore the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and workplace stress among employees.

Problem statement

To what extent do conflict resolution strategies influence workplace stress among employees, and how do different conflict resolution strategies impact the level of workplace stress experienced by employees?

Objectives

- To find out the most effective conflict resolution strategies to reduce workplace stress
- To explore the difference between conflict resolution strategies and workplace stress among employees
- To find out the relationship between conflict resolution styles and workplace stress among employees

Hypothesis

H1: There is no significant relationship between competing (conflict resolution style) and workplace stress in employees

H2: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style compromising and workplace stress in employees

H3: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style avoiding and workplace stress in employees

H4: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style accommodating and workplace stress in employees

H5: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style collaborating and workplace stress in employees

Operational definition

Conflict resolution style

There are 5 conflict resolution styles, namely competing, compromising, avoiding, accommodating, and collaborating. Each of the styles is defined as the sum of total of scores assessed using the 12 items of the conflict resolution questionnaire developed by Kenneth Thomas & Ralph Kilmann developed their Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) in 1974

Workplace stress

The sum of total of scores assessed using 8 items of the workplace stress scale developed by by The Marlin Company and the American Institute of Stress in 2001

Research design

The study employs cross-sectional quantitative design research, which involves collecting and analyzing data from a sample of participants at a single point in time with the aim of identifying relationships and differences between conflict resolution styles and workplace stress.

Sampling

The population of the study includes employees from India and Dubai. A sample of 207 working employees of both males and females within the age group 18-40 participated in the study. The convenient sampling method was used for the collection of data.

Inclusion criteria

1. The participants who are 18-40 of age
2. Those who are the residents of India and Dubai
3. Participants who are literate

Exclusion criteria

1. Participants below the age of 18
2. participants who are illiterate

Tools***Conflict resolution questionnaire***

Kenneth Thomas & Ralph Kilmann developed their Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) in 1974, within this conflict resolution tool is contained in a measure assessing how people deal with conflicts of their own desires or objectives with those of other people. The tool has 30 items, and each of them describes a situation in which there exists a discrepancy of two people's desires. In both situations, the respondent is presented with a choice between two opposing behavioural reactions that represent potential means of resolving the conflict. These reactions are then placed into five columns, each corresponding to a distinct conflict resolution style: competing (assertive, uncooperative), collaborating (assertive, cooperative), compromising (moderately assertive, moderately cooperative), avoiding (unassertive, uncooperative), and accommodating (unassertive, cooperative). After the person finishes answering the questions, the scores are counted in all the five columns, and the most frequent answer in any column will reflect the dominant conflict resolution style. The reason behind using this test is that it will give an insight into how an individual commonly deals with conflict. Test-Retest Reliability: Moderate, with scores ranging from

0.61 to 0.68, which suggests consistent response over time Internal Consistency. Moderate, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha, which represents reasonable internal cohesion among items that measure conflict styles.

Workplace stress scale

The Workplace Stress Scale (WSS) was created by The Marlin Company and the American Institute of Stress in 2001. The test gauges stress on the basis of a person's present job and includes 8 items that pertain to several workplace stress elements. The items cover topics such as job pressure, inability to express feelings, unpleasant working conditions, and the effects of these elements on physical and mental health. The scoring system employs a five-point Likert scale, with numerical values assigned to the response. The scores are then obtained by adding the assigned numbers for each item. The score can be anywhere from 15 to 40, with the higher the score, the more stress the individual feels. This instrument assists in measuring the level of stress an individual is experiencing in their workplace, offering significant information regarding how work-related aspects might be impacting their health. Studies have shown the WSS to be reliable, with a cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.80, indicating good internal consistency.

Table 1

Scale Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's α	
Competing Scale	0.620
Compromising Scale	0.499

Avoiding Scale	0.564
Accommodating Scale	0.558
Collaborating Scale	0.576
Workplace Stress Scale	0.788

The Cronbach's alpha of competing is 0.620 which indicates a moderate reliability, The Cronbach's alpha of compromising is 0.499 which indicates a low reliability, The Cronbach's alpha of avoiding is 0.564 which indicates a low reliability, The Cronbach's alpha of accommodating is 0.558 which indicated a low reliability, The Cronbach's alpha of collaborating is 0.576 which indicates a low reliability, The Cronbach's alpha of workplace stress scale is 0.788 which indicated a moderate reliability.

Procedure

The data for the study was collected using Google Forms. The samples were collected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The informed consent was obtained from all the individuals. Individual's socio-demographic data was collected, and further questionnaires were administered through Google Forms. Prior to participation, respondents were informed about the confidentiality of their information and anonymity of their identities. It was ensured that the collected data would be used solely for research purposes. Participants were required to provide their socio-demographic details before proceeding with the scales.

Ethical considerations

Prior to the data collection Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary involvement in the study. Strict confidentiality measures were maintained throughout the data collection process and beyond. The research adhered to the

predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Additionally, no potential harm was inflicted on participants at any stage of the study. Transparency was upheld in all aspects of the research process, and scoring was conducted strictly in accordance with the provided guidelines, eliminating any possibility of bias.

Data analysis

The data collected from the participants is analyzed using Jamovi. Descriptive statistics was calculated from the data. To find the relationship between conflict resolution styles and workplace stress, spearman correlation method was used.

Table 2

Shapiro-Wilk		
	W	p
COMPETING	0.973	<.001
COMPROMISING	0.961	<.001
AVOIDING	0.965	<.001
ACCOMMODATING	0.966	<.001
COLLABORATING	0.964	<.001
WORKPLACE STRESS	0.949	<.001

Shapiro- wilk test of normality of conflict resolution styles and workplace stress shows that these variables are not normally distributed ($p<.001$).

Chapter IV

Result and Discussion

The result section presents a comprehensive analysis of the correlation between conflict resolution styles and workplace stress among employees, using the Spearman's rho correlation. It shows the data on different conflict resolution styles, investigating how different styles like collaborative, compromising, avoiding, accommodating, or competing styles influence perceived workplace stress levels. The section will highlight any significant correlations revealed through Spearman's analysis, showing whether effective conflict resolution leads to a reduction in workplace stress and improves overall employee well-being.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3

Descriptive analysis of the data

	N	Mean	SD
COMPETING	204	5.41	2.39
COMPROMISNG	204	5.03	1.73
AVOIDING	204	6.33	1.75
ACCOMMODATING	204	5.70	2.25
COLLABORATING	204	5.47	1.71
WORKPLACE STRESS	204	19.48	5.44

From the given table, we understand that the n value is 204 the mean and standard deviation of competing are 5.41 and 2.39 respectively. The mean and the standard deviation of compromising are 5.03 and 1.73 respectively. The mean and the standard deviation of avoiding are 6.33 and 1.75 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of accommodating are 5.70 and 2.25 respectively. The mean and the standard deviation of collaborating are 5.47 and 1.71 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of the workplace stress scale is 19.48 and 5.44 respectively

Correlation Analysis

H1: There is no significant relationship between competing conflict resolution style and workplace stress in employees

Table 4

Indicates the correlation of competing conflict resolution style and workplace stress

	COMPETING
Workplace stress	-0.014

Spearman's rho correlation shows no significant negative correlation between competing conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees. Competing conflict resolution style, characterized by assertiveness and uncooperativeness, is not directly related to workplace stress due to its assertive and goal-focused nature, which can actually reduce stress in the long run. However, it may still have negative consequences for relationships and teamwork. Hence the H1, there is no significant relationship between competing conflict resolution styles and workplace stress is not rejected.

Jimmieson, Tucker, & Campbell (2017) aimed to examine how trait self-control (TSC) moderates the relationship between task conflict and relationship conflict and its subsequent impact on employee strain. The study was conducted in two phases: Study 1 involved 160 healthcare employees, while Study 2 followed 106 local council employees over a 10-month period. Participants completed validated self-report measures assessing task conflict, relationship conflict, TSC, psychological strain, burnout, and turnover intentions. Structural equation modeling and regression analyses were used to test the hypothesized relationships. The results showed that employees with low TSC were more likely to experience an escalation of task conflict into relationship conflict, leading to increased psychological strain, burnout, and turnover intentions. Conversely, individuals with high TSC effectively managed task conflicts without allowing them to become personal disputes, reducing negative emotional and occupational consequences. These findings highlight the significance of self-regulation in workplace conflict management, emphasizing the need for organizations to develop training programs that enhance self-control skills to minimize workplace stress and improve employee well-being.

H2: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style compromising and workplace stress in employees

Table 5

Indicates the correlation of compromising conflict resolution style and workplace stress

COMPROMISING	
Workplace stress	0.062

Spearman's rho correlation shows no significant no correlation between Compromising conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees. Compromising in conflict resolution involves both parties making concessions to reach a mutually acceptable solution, potentially leading to a lose-lose scenario where neither fully achieves their goals. While it can reduce workplace stress by resolving conflicts quickly, it might also leave issues unresolved and create feelings of frustration if the compromise isn't satisfactory. Hence the H2, there is no significant relationship between compromising conflict resolution styles and workplace stress is not rejected.

Momayez et al. (2016) aimed to investigate the relationship between conflict management styles and workplace stress among elementary school teachers. In this cross-sectional study, 310 teachers from Varamin city were surveyed using Robbins and DeCenzo's (1998) conflict management styles questionnaire and Spector and Jex's (1998) workplace stress questionnaire. The findings revealed that accommodating and cooperating conflict management styles were significantly negatively correlated with workplace stress, whereas avoiding and competing styles showed a significant positive correlation; no significant relationship was found between the compromising style and workplace stress. Furthermore, regression analysis indicated that avoiding, accommodating, and cooperating styles collectively accounted for 38.4% of the variance in workplace stress among the teachers. These results underscore the importance of adopting appropriate conflict management strategies to mitigate workplace stress in educational settings and suggest that counselors and therapists should design and implement programs aimed at reducing stress among elementary school teachers through educational workshops

H3: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style avoiding and workplace stress in employees

Table 6

Indicates the correlation of avoiding conflict resolution style and workplace stress

AVOIDING	
Workplace stress	0.030

Spearman's rho correlation shows no significant no correlation between Compromising conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees. Avoiding conflict resolution style might offer temporary relief from immediate confrontation, it can lead to unresolved issues, increased stress, and resentment in the long run, rather than demonstrating a lack of relationship between this style and workplace stress. Hence the H3, there is no significant relationship between Avoiding conflict resolution styles and workplace stress is not rejected.

Reich, Wagner-Westbrook, & Kressel (2007) investigated the relationship between actual and ideal conflict management styles and job distress among employees in a healthcare organization. The study involved 176 employees who completed the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Inventory (TKI) to assess their actual and ideal conflict styles, along with measures of job distress and demographic information. The results indicated that compromising and avoiding were the most commonly reported actual conflict styles, while avoiding was the most preferred ideal style. Notably, there was a discrepancy between actual and ideal styles, with employees desiring to be more competitive, less collaborative, and more avoidant than their current approaches. While neither actual nor ideal conflict styles alone were directly associated with job distress, employees whose actual conflict style matched their ideal reported lower levels of distress, particularly in environments with high levels of destructive conflict. Additionally, lower distress levels were observed among employees in higher managerial positions and those with shorter tenures in the organization.

These findings highlight the importance of aligning conflict management styles with personal preferences to reduce job distress and suggest that organizations should consider individual differences in conflict resolution approaches when developing stress-reduction interventions

H4: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style accommodating and workplace stress in employees

Table 7

Indicates the correlation of accommodating conflict resolution style and workplace stress

	ACCOMMODATING
Workplace stress	0.012

Spearman's rho correlation shows no significant no correlation between Accommodating conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees. Accommodating conflict resolution style prioritizes the needs and desires of others over one's own, often at the expense of personal goals, and while it can reduce immediate conflict, it might not always address underlying issues or lead to long-term solutions. Hence the H4, there is no significant relationship between Accommodating conflict resolution styles and workplace stress is not rejected.

In their 2016 study, Johansen & Cadmus explored how emergency department (ED) nurses handle conflict and how their conflict management styles, along with the level of support they perceive in their work environment, relate to their experiences of work stress. Surveying 222 ED nurses, the researchers found that 27% reported high levels of work stress. Notably, nurses who tended to avoid conflict and those who felt less supported by their organization experienced higher stress levels. These findings highlight the importance of

fostering supportive work environments and providing training in effective conflict resolution strategies to help reduce stress among ED nurses and improve patient care.

H5: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution style collaborating and workplace stress in employees

Table 8

Indicates the correlation of collaborating conflict resolution style and workplace stress

	COLLABORATING
Workplace stress	0.185**

**p = 0.01

Spearman's rho correlation shows significant correlation between Collaborating conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees. collaborating conflict resolution style aims for win-win solutions, it's important to note that the process of collaborating, while beneficial, can also be stressful and time-consuming, potentially leading to workplace stress. Hence the H5, there is significant relationship between collaborating conflict resolution styles and workplace stress is rejected.

Dijkstra, De Dreu, Evers, & van Dierendonck (2009) conducted a study examining how passive conflict management strategies, such as avoidance and yielding, influence the relationship between interpersonal conflict at work and employee strain. The study found that these passive strategies intensified the association between workplace conflict and stress-related outcomes, including psychological strain and exhaustion. In contrast, active strategies like forcing and problem-solving did not significantly moderate this relationship. These findings underscore the importance of adopting proactive conflict resolution approaches to mitigate employee strain in organizational settings.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Key findings

- There is no significant correlation between competing conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees
- There is no significant correlation between compromising conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees
- There is no significant correlation between avoiding conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees
- There is no significant correlation between Accommodating conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees
- There is a significant positive correlation between collaborating conflict resolution style and workplace stress among employees

Implications

The study findings can be applied in organizations to foster a healthier, more inclusive workplace. Encouraging team-building activities and social support programs can reduce Workplace stress while confidence-building workshops and constructive feedback training can help manage fear of negative evaluation effective conflict resolution in the workplace suggests that proactive communication and active listening can prevent minor disagreements from escalating into major disputes. By fostering mutual understanding, promoting empathy, and addressing concerns promptly, organizations can cultivate a collaborative and productive work environment while maintaining positive professional relationships

Limitations

The study has potential limitations. For a more actual representation of the population,

sample size could've been larger with similar sample size for both males and females. Most of the sample collected for my study belongs to the Indian culture and it does not cover other regions, thus can include cultural biases. Extraneous variables like workplace environment, organizational culture, and external stressors (e.g., job demands, leadership style) might also influence the results.

Recommendation for future research

For future research, it would be interesting to understand if comparing different jobs would affect the results for example public and private or health, education and defense etc. Expanding the study among different cultures would also add to the results of study and can also reduce the cultural biases that could affect this study. Exploring age differences and comparing them can also be interesting to study.

Conclusion

This study examines the relationship between workplace stress and conflict resolution styles among working individuals while also assessing variations in these variables. To analyze the relationship between workplace stress and different conflict resolution styles, a correlation analysis was conducted. The findings indicate that workplace stress does not have a significant association with any specific conflict resolution style. The correlation results further confirm that no meaningful relationship exists between workplace stress and the way individuals handle conflicts in their professional settings. These findings suggest that workplace stress and conflict resolution styles may operate independently of one another, highlighting the need for further research to explore other potential factors that might mediate or moderate their interaction in organizational contexts.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent form

Hello! I am Aaliyah Rehman, a final year BSc Psychology Student from St. Teresa's College Ernakulam. As a part of my final year project, I am conducting a study on " CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLE IN WORKPLACE STRESS IN EMPLOYEES"

I Kindly request you to fill out this form if you are of age 18-40 and a working employee

This form will only take about 5-10 minutes to complete. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the survey at any time, without any consequences. I assure you that your responses will remain completely anonymous, and your data will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Kindly provide sincere answers, which will be a great help for my research.

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me at

email id: aaliyahere101@gmail.com

By clicking "I Agree"

1. You have read the above description.
2. You belong to the age group 18-40 years.
3. You are working
4. You have consented to participate in this research and understand that your responses will be kept confidential.

- I agree
- I disagree

Appendix B: Socio demographic details

NAME (in initials, example AR)

Your answer

AGE

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33

- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40

GENDER

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

WHERE DO YOU LIVE

- India
- Dubai

WHAT IS YOUR HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

- High school diploma
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree

RELATIONSHIP STATUS

- Single

- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed

HOW MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE

- 1-2 Years
- 3-4 Years
- 6-8 Years
- 8-10 Years

HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU WORK PER WEEK

- 21- 40 Hours
- 50-60 Hours
- More than 60 Hours

EMPLOYMENT TYPE

- Full-time
- Part- time
- Freelance
- Other

Appendix C: Conflict resolution styles questionnaire

Below are pairs of statements describing possible responses. For each pair, choose the statement ('A' or 'B') that best reflects your behavior. If neither is typical, pick the one you're more likely to use

1. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.

B. Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree.

2. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try to find a compromise solution.

B. I attempt to deal with all of his or her and my concerns.

3. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.

B. I might try to soothe others' feelings and preserve our relationship(s).

4. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try to compromise solutions.

B. I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.

5. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I consistently seek others' help in working out a solution.

B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

6. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.

B. I try to win my position.

7. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.

B. I give up some points in exchange for others.

8. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.

B. I try to find a compromise solution.

9. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.

B. I make some effort to get my way.

10. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I am firm in pursuing my goals.

B. I try to find a compromise solution

11. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.

B. I might try to soothe others' feelings and preserve our relationship.

12. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.

B. I will let him or her have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.

13. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I propose a middle ground.

B. I press to get my points made.

14. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I tell him or her my ideas and ask for theirs.

B. I try to show him or her the logic and benefits of my position.

15. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I might try to soothe others' feelings and preserve our relations.

B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid tensions.

16. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try not to hurt others' feelings.

B. I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.

17. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.

B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

18. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.

B. I will let them have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.

19. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.

B. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.

20. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I attempt to immediately work through differences.

B. I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for us both.

21. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.

B. I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.

22. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try to find a position that is intermediate between theirs and mine.

B. I assert my wishes.

23. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I am very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.

B. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.

24. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. If others' positions seems very important to them, I would try to meet their wishes

B. I try to get them to settle for a compromise.

25. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try to show them the logic and benefit of my position

B. In approaching negotiations I try to be considerate of others' wishes.

26. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I propose a middle ground.

B. I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all our wishes.

27. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.

B. If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.

28. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.

B. I usually request others help in working out a solution

29. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I propose a middle ground.

B. I feel that differences aren't always worth worrying about.

30. CHOOSE ANY ONE

A. I try not to hurt others' feelings.

B. I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

Appendix D: Workplace stress scale

1. Conditions at work are unpleasant or sometimes even unsafe

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

2. I feel that my job is negatively affecting my physical or emotional well-being.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

3. I have too much work to do an/or too many unreasonable deadlines.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

4. I find it difficult to express my opinions or feelings about my job conditions to my superiors.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

5. I feel that job pressures interfere with my family or personal life.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

6. I feel that I have inadequate control or input over my work duties.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

7. I receive inadequate recognition or rewards for good performance.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

8. I am unable to fully utilize my skills and talents at work.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often