



## Impact of Cultural Intelligence Level on Conflict Resolution Ability: A Conceptual Model and Research Proposal

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Cultural intelligence and conflict resolution ability are essential for 21st-century leaders when considering the increased interaction with individuals from different cultural backgrounds that is now prevalent due to the technological advances of the internet and improved modes of mobility (Templer, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2006). With increased frequent interactions, there is greater opportunity for cultural differences to create conflict (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). New global skills must be acquired to be an effective leader in the 21st century (Robinson & Harvey, 2008). In response to literature gaps, this model suggests a 2X2 factorial design to test to see if cultural intelligence levels predict the appropriate conflict resolution strategy adoption, thus the conflict resolution ability.

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As the 21st century presents a deepened global experience through internet resources and more accessible modes of mobility, a greater number of individuals have the opportunity to interact with persons from different cultural backgrounds (Templer et al., 2006). With these increased frequent interactions, there is greater opportunity for cultural differences to create conflict (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). Although conflict itself and resolving conflict is a part of every culture, “the way it is expressed, perceived, and dealt with varies from culture to culture” (Miyahara, Kim, Shin, & Yoon, 1998, p. 506). Therefore, new global skills must be acquired to be an effective leader in the 21st century (Robinson & Harvey, 2008).

As a result, increasing interest continues to focus on issues surrounding cultural diversity and the conflict it produces (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). Much could be at risk if businesses and leaders do not understand the issues that arise and how to effectively overcome them. Cultural intelligence is a proven tool to increase an individual’s ability to connect with others outside their own culture, thus cultural diversity (Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Yee Ng, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2007; Brislin, Worthley, & MacNab, 2006; Earley & Ang, 2003) For example, Americans doing business in Japan who adapt to the cultural norm of exchanging business cards will be better received by Japanese businessmen than those who ignore this cultural expectation (Brislin et al.,

2006). Conflict resolution strategies can be helpful in resolving conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Holt & DeVore, 2005; Thomas & Kilmann, 2007; Wood & Bell, 2008). Global teams and individuals that do not know how to effectively communicate, identify with, and resolve conflicts across cultures are likely to be in danger of pitfalls such as losing cross-cultural business opportunities, encountering reluctance to share valuable ideas occurring when culture is not understood, and potentially losing revenue (Janssens & Brett, 2006). Adversely, businesses and individuals who do know how to effectively use cultural intelligence and conflict resolution strategies have the opportunity to create a path for others to follow.

In light of the importance of utilizing cultural intelligence and appropriate conflict resolution strategies to effectively overcome conflict related to cultural differences, this study builds on previous literature to present a model examining how levels of cultural intelligence might potentially impact conflict resolution ability. Selecting an appropriate conflict resolution strategy that is fitting for the situation has been found to be one of the key factors for determining the quality of the outcome resolving the conflict (Deutsch, 1973; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Wood & Bell, 2008). Conflict resolution ability is the skill to affectively resolve conflict by determining which conflict resolution strategy is most appropriate for a given situation (Koza & Dant, 2007; Lawrence & Lorsch; Van de Vliert, Euwema, & Huismans, 1995). Some studies have found that certain conflict resolution strategies are more culturally acceptable to those involved in the conflict (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998; Ting-Toomey, Yee-Jung, Shapiro, Garcia, Wright, & Oetzel, 2000). Therefore, this model presents that a higher level of cultural intelligence positively affects and predicts whether an individual will select an appropriate conflict resolution strategy fitting for the cultural backgrounds of those involved in the conflict.

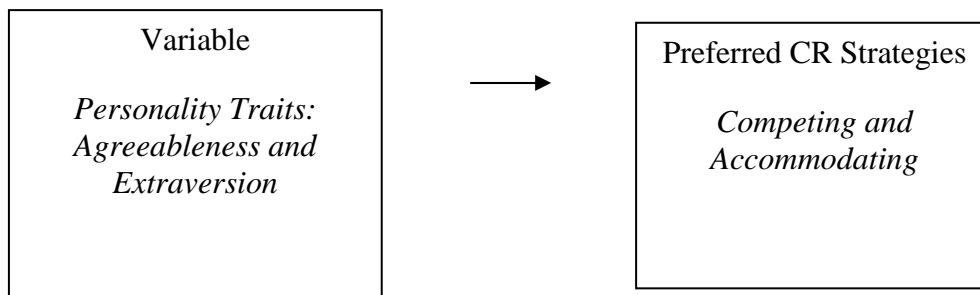
### **The Gap in Current Studies**

Since conflict resolution strategies are essential to resolving conflict, much focus has been on variables that influence or predict an individual's preferences regarding which conflict resolution strategy is selected (Baron, 1989; Sternberg & Soriano, 1984; Wood & Bell, 2008). Studies examining hindrances to resolving conflict have identified such variables as being driven and determined found to be characteristics of Type A individuals, having low self-monitoring skills, and indicating a low level of marital satisfaction (Baron; Bell & Blakeney, 1977; Geist & Gilbert, 1996; Holt & DeVore, 2005). Although determining which factors hinder certain conflict strategy preferences is of interest, there seems to be a larger number of studies attempting to identify factors that instead predict conflict resolution strategy preferences (Geist & Gilbert; Rizkalla, Wertheim, & Hodgson, 2008; Sternberg & Soriano; Wood & Bell). These studies have reviewed predictor variables such as forgiveness, the Big Five personality traits, bilingualism, and gender, and found them to positively predict which conflict resolution strategy an individual prefers (Costa, Hernandez, Costa-Faidella, & Sebastian-Galles, 2009; Rizkall et al.; Sternberg & Soriano; Wood & Bell). For example, as pointed out by Costa et al., bilingual individuals were found to have a stronger ability to ignore distractions and solve problems faster than monolinguals when dealing with assignments involving conflict resolution. Additional studies have examined interventions that might prove productive in helping children select appropriate conflict resolution strategies with training such as the use of social stories and peer

mediation training (Kalyva & Agaliotis, 2009; Trunuklu, Kacmaz, Turk, Kalender, Sevkin, & Zengin, 2009).

Although these studies are valuable and aid in determining which variables might influence or predict the conflict resolution strategy that will be selected, three significant gaps seem to exist. First, there seems to be a gap in identifying variables that will predict which conflict resolution strategy an individual will adopt when selecting based on what is most culturally appropriate given the cultural background of the parties involved in the conflict. Second, there seems to be an absence of studies examining if the other parties involved in the conflict are in agreement with the conflict resolution strategy selected by the individual and determining if the strategy selected is the most ideal for their cultural backgrounds and understandings. Third, the impact of cultural intelligence levels, including variables such as versatility and confusion acceptance, which could aid in selecting a culturally appropriate strategy have not yet been tested to see if they serve as predictors for increased or decreased conflict resolution ability (Brislin et al., 2006).

These gaps are evidenced when considering Wood and Bell's (2008) study where the findings show individuals with the personality traits of agreeableness (A) and extraversion (E) are likely to prefer and adopt the conflict resolution strategies of competing and accommodating. However, it is unknown if these strategies were also preferred by the other parties involved in the conflict. Furthermore, were these preferred strategies the most culturally appropriate? How would cultural intelligence levels impact the conflict resolution strategy adopted? Current literature has focused on a model as seen in Figure 1 where the variable is tested to see if it predicts which conflict resolution strategy will be most preferred by the individual tested.



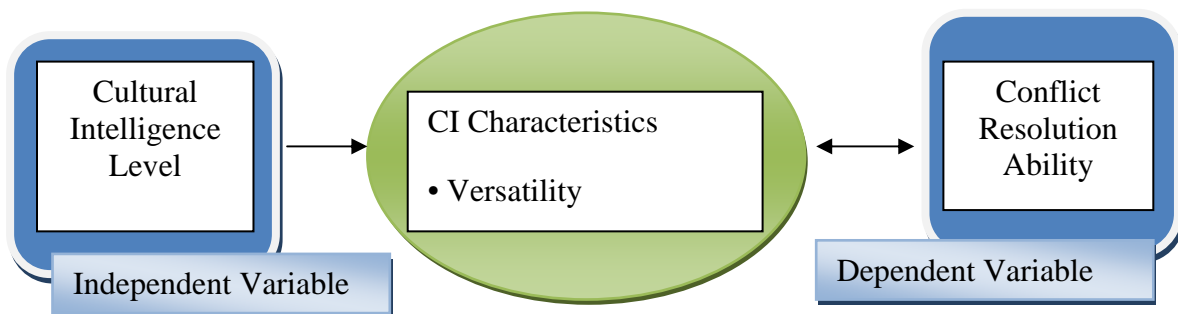
*Figure 1.* Current model illustrating how literature has tested variables such as personality traits to predict which conflict resolution strategies will be preferred.

The focus of the current literature is the preferred conflict resolution strategy of an individual based on certain variables instead of on the variables that will predict the most

appropriate conflict resolution strategy suited for the situation (Holt & DeVore, 2005; Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006; Wachter, 1999; Wood & Bell, 2008). By examining the preferences of one individual instead of those of the whole group, the literature seems to be individual focused instead of group focused.

### *Explanation of the Variables in the Proposed Model*

This gap of determining appropriateness and testing a potential variable that might increase an appropriate conflict resolution strategy being adopted is what this proposed model seeks to address. The proposed testing will see if cultural intelligence levels predict the appropriate conflict resolution strategy adoption, thus the conflict resolution ability. In order to adequately present this model as seen in Figure 2, the definitions of the variables must be clearly defined. Following the graphic of the proposed model presented is an explanation of each variable.



*Figure 2.* Proposed model illustrating how cultural intelligence levels predict conflict resolution ability with cultural intelligence characteristics serving as mediating variables.

### *Cultural Intelligence Level*

The study of culture and multiple intelligences has gained traction since the 1990s (Crawford-Mathis, 2009; Hofstede, 2006). Four major cross-cultural studies paved the way for cultural intelligence to develop including (a) House's GLOBE study which aimed at describing the relationships between social culture, organizational processes, and leadership; (b) the World Values Survey which was conducted on respondents from market research agencies across various countries; (c) Schwartz's Survey of Values covering students and teachers in over 50 countries; and (d) a study of event management including managers from 47 countries (Hofstede; House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002; Inglehart, Basanez, & Moreno, 1998; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001; Smith, Peterson, & Swartz, 2002; Yukl, 2006). Another noteworthy study was performed by Den Hartog et al. (1999) which explored universal leadership traits. By building on

these studies and others to determine why some individuals “are more effective than others in culturally diverse situations” (Ang et al., 2007, p. 336), Earley (2002) theorized that cultural intelligence impacts several key aspects of intercultural interactions.

Plainly stated, the definition used in this model for cultural intelligence is “an individual’s capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings. . . . a specific form of intelligence focused on capabilities to grasp, reason, and behave effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity” (Ang et al., 2007, p. 337). Early and Ang (2003) also asserted that this ability adapts regardless of culture (Ng & Earley, 2006). There are four components of cultural intelligence which include (a) cognitive, (b) metacognitive, (c) motivational, and (d) behavioral.

Cognitive cultural intelligence “reflects knowledge of the norms, practices and conventions in different cultures acquired from education and personal experiences . . . those with high cognitive CQ understand similarities and differences across cultures” (Ang et al., 2007, p. 338). Whereas, metacognitive cultural intelligence “reflects mental processes that individuals use to acquire and understand cultural knowledge . . . those with high metacognitive CQ are consciously aware of others’ cultural preferences before and during interactions . . . they also . . . adjust their mental models during and after interactions” (Ang et al., p. 338). Motivational cultural intelligence refers to the “capability to direct attention and energy toward learning about and functioning in situations characterized by cultural differences” (p. 338). Finally, behavioral intelligence is the “capability to exhibit appropriate verbal and nonverbal actions when interacting with people from different cultures . . . this includes having a wide and flexible repertoire of behaviors . . . exhibit situationally appropriate behaviors” (Ang et al., p. 338).

To measure cultural intelligence, the cultural intelligence scale (CQS), a 20-item scale developed by Ang et al. (2007), can be used which the following breakdown of positively worded question items: “four metacognitive CQ, six cognitive CQ, five motivational CQ, and five behavior CQ” (p. 344). High and low levels of cultural intelligence are determined by the results of this measurement tool. As seen in Figure 3, high levels of cultural intelligence produce versatility with appropriate actions when interacting with people from different cultures, energy toward learning how to function in different cultural situations, an awareness of cultural norms, and an adaptability to adjust mental modes to effectively interact (Ang et al.; Brislin et al., 2006). Whereas, low levels of cultural intelligence are evidenced by individuals who have difficulty adjusting to those from different cultural backgrounds, a low tolerance with not understanding cultural norms, also known as confusion acceptance, and a lack of placing energy on focused learning to reach cultural awareness (Brislin et al.).

As levels of cultural intelligence are manipulated, the knowledge base to select a culturally appropriate strategy—the conflict resolution ability—is increased or decreased. Therefore, cultural intelligence level serves as the independent variable on the dependent variable of conflict resolution ability.

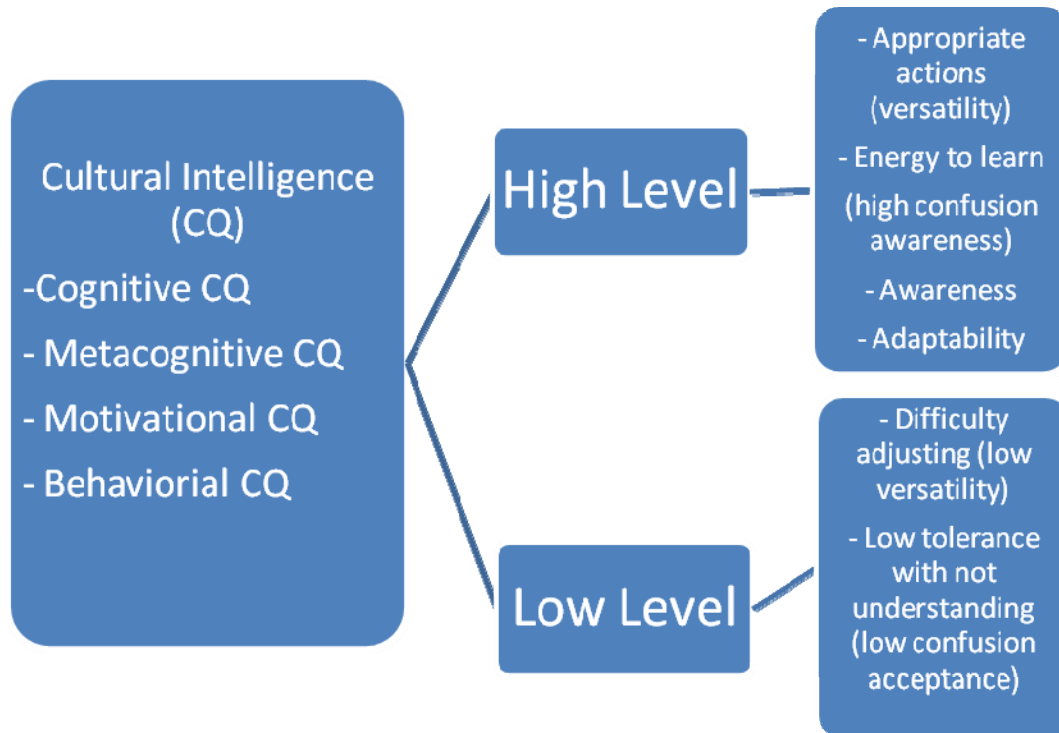


Figure 3. Cultural intelligence level diagram illustrating the characteristics associated with high and low levels of cultural intelligence.

#### *Conflict Resolution Ability (Dependent Variable)*

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).

Initially, the thought was that problem solving with a high concern for both production and people was the ideal strategy, however after further study by Killman and Thomas (1978), it was concluded that no one strategy is better than another and that certain strategies will be more

ideal in different situations and cultures (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Fisher & Ury, 1981; Holt & Devore, 2005; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). Thomas and Killman (2007) defined assertiveness as “the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy his or her own concerns” (p. 7) and cooperativeness as “the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy the other person’s concerns” (p. 7). According to their model, “conflict resolution behavior can be simultaneously classified according to whether the behavior is cooperative or uncooperative, and whether it is assertive or unassertive . . . for example . . . behavior that is uncooperative and assertive is labeled as ‘competing’ behavior” (Wood & Bell, 2008, p. 127).

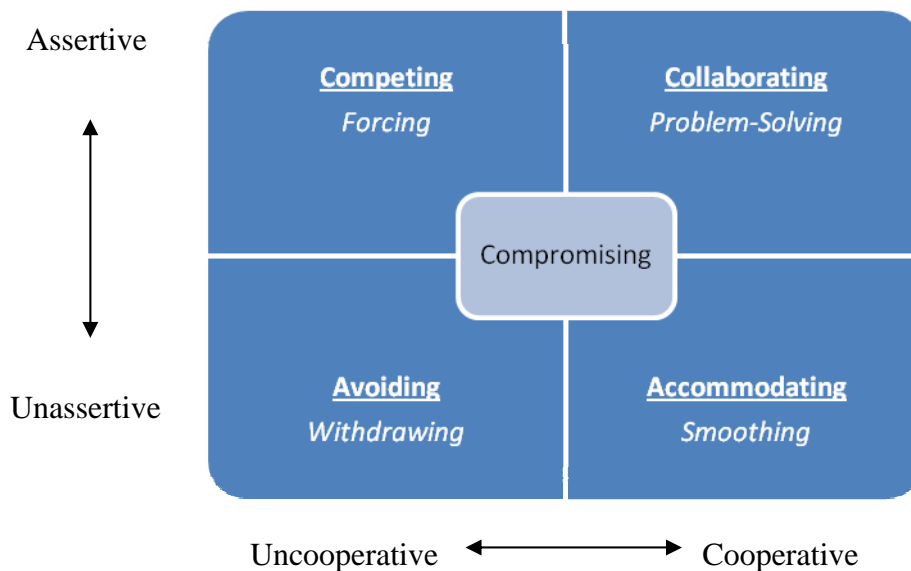


Figure 4. Overlay of Thomas-Killman’s (2007) conflict resolution strategies (in bold and underlined) and Blake and Mouton’s (1964) strategies (highlighted with italics).

Conflict resolution ability is the skill to affectively resolve conflict by determining which of these conflict resolution strategies is most appropriate for a given situation (Koza & Dant, 2007; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Van de Vliert et al., 1995). Strong conflict resolution ability will be measured by determining if the conflict resolution strategy selected is preferred by the majority of those individuals involved in the conflict. With the opposite anticipated result, weak conflict resolution ability will be determined if the conflict resolution strategy selected is not preferred by the majority of those individuals involved in the conflict. 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 behavior in their ethnic and cultural environment” (p. 48). For example, the study findings discovered that “Latino(a) Americans and Asian Americans use avoiding and third party conflict styles more than African Americans, and, Asian Americans use avoiding

conflict style more than European Americans” (p. 47). Therefore, the ability to decipher which conflict resolution strategy is most appropriate for the situation while considering cultural norms of those involved in the conflict is considered conflict resolution ability in this model (Deutsch, 1973; Lawrence & Lorsch; Wood & Bell, 2008).

### *Mediating Variables of Versatility and Confusion Acceptance*

Cultural intelligence encompasses the ability to discern appropriate interactions and not merely a cognizant awareness of emotions or social occurrences (Thomas & Inkson, 2004). Earley and Peterson (2004) explained that cultural intelligence reflects an individual’s capability to adjust to new situations and thus producing novel behavior. The ability to discern, adjust, and behave effectively in this manner is called versatility in this proposed model. As stated above, Killman and Thomas’ (1978) study concluded that no one strategy is better than another and that certain strategies will be more ideal in different situations and cultures (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Fisher & Ury, 1981; Holt & Devore, 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Therefore, versatility to adjust from strategy to strategy depending on the situation is needed for ideal selection. If an individual is limited to only the conflict resolution strategies they are most comfortable with and cannot be versatile to use all the forms, then the success of potentially solving the conflict is impacted (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000; Wood & Bell, 2008). 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 behavior 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 in order 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)



Therefore, culturally intelligent individuals have high levels of confusion acceptance which offers more time for the conflict to be resolved and by reducing stress and working out a greater level of patience allows for consideration of which conflict resolution strategy is most suited for the situation (Brislin et al., 2006). Therefore, as cultural intelligence levels increase so does versatility and confusion acceptance which in turn could positively impact and predict a stronger conflict resolution ability which is selecting the most appropriate strategy based on the cultural backgrounds of the individuals involved in the conflict.

### **Future Testing**

In order to test this model, a Solomon four-group design will be used which is a “special case of a 2X2 factorial design, this procedure involves the random assignment of participant to four groups. Pre-tests and treatments are varied for the four groups. All groups receive a post-text” (Creswell, 2009, p. 161). The 2X2 factorial test measures high/low cultural intelligence and strong/weak conflict resolution ability. Descriptive statistics and Factorial AVOVA tests will be run to measure the hypotheses statements.

The hypotheses statements that will be tested include:

H<sub>1</sub>: High levels of cultural intelligence will predict stronger conflict resolution ability.

H<sub>2</sub>: Higher levels of versatility will be found in individuals with high levels of cultural intelligence and that have strong conflict resolution ability.

H<sub>3</sub>: Higher levels of confusion acceptance will be found in individuals with high levels of cultural intelligence and that have strong conflict resolution ability.

H<sub>4</sub>: Low levels of cultural intelligence will predict weaker conflict resolution ability.

H<sub>5</sub>: Lower levels of versatility will be found in individuals with high levels of cultural intelligence and that have strong conflict resolution ability.

H<sub>6</sub>: Lower levels of confusion acceptance will be found in individuals with high levels of cultural intelligence and that have strong conflict resolution ability.

### *Participants*

Four groups of church staff members will be used to test this model. The groups will be representative of predominantly African American, Anglo American, Hispanic American, and Asian American Baptist congregations in the Dallas Metroplex. To avoid an extraneous variable of cultural differences within the church staff groups, only church staff where all of the staff members are of the same cultural background under these four categories will be selected for testing this model (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Another extraneous variable that might construe the results is variance of the church staff size. Therefore, the selected church staffs will be a size of three to eight full-time staff members to ensure a small staff and consistency among the size of the groups. A random sampling of 16 college professors will be invited to participate in serving as a consultant to the church staff to help solve a conflict for this test. In order to reduce internal validity threats—“experiences of the participants that threaten the researcher’s ability to draw correct inferences from the data about the population in an experiment” (Creswell, 2009, p. 162)—the professor will be of a different cultural background than the designated church staff.

### *Materials*

To test cultural intelligence levels of the professors serving as consultants, the 20-item cultural intelligence scale will be used (Ang et al., 2007). A Likert scale survey will be created to test what the church staff members feel is the conflict resolution strategy most appropriate for their subcultural norms. Since all of the individuals will also most likely be influenced by the American culture, the church staff members will be asked to specifically consider the cultural norms of African American, Anglo American, Hispanic American, and Asian American subcultures. A Likert scale exit survey will also be used for the professors to determine which conflict resolution strategy they select, how many of the Thomas-Kilmann (2007) strategies they feel comfortable using so as to test versatility, how comfortable they will be with working with a different cultural group which is to test confusion acceptance, and which strategy they believe will be most commonly used in the cultural group of the assigned church staff.

### *Procedure*

First, four church staff groups representing African American, Anglo American, Hispanic American, and Asian American congregations will be located using the permission of a church association representative. The four church staff groups will be invited to participate in the experiment. As previously stated, to reduce validity threats, the church staff groups will be selected based on a size of three to eight full-time church staff members. Then, a random sampling will be used from a list of university faculty within the Dallas Metroplex. The random sampling will produce 16 professors. Four professors will be assigned to individually work with each church staff group on a conflict they have not resolved in the last year. The church staff group will be asked to identify four conflicts they have not resolved in the last year so as to have a separate conflict to share with each professor assigned to their church staff group.

To ensure reliability, a pre-test will be administered to the 16 professors to determine their cultural intelligence levels using the cultural intelligence 20-item scale (Ang et al., 2007). After the pre-test results are recorded, the professors will be assigned to the church staff groups by cultural diversity. The professors will not be paired with a church staff group that is of the same subculture as the professor. The researcher will explain the Thomas-Killman (2007) conflict resolution strategies to the professors and explain that the professors will need to pick which strategy they deem most appropriate for the church staff conflict. Each professor will meet with the assigned church staff group and discuss one of the conflicts that has remained unresolved in the last year. Then, a Likert scale survey that will be created by the researcher using the Survey Monkey tool will be printed and administered to the church staff members to determine which conflict resolution strategy they feel is most appropriate for their subcultural norms. The results will be recorded and analyzed using the Survey Monkey tool to determine which is the majority choice for the most culturally appropriate strategy. This is the purpose of limiting church staffs to three to eight full-time staff members. Only three staffed churches or more will be able to get a majority choice. A Likert scale exit survey will also be created using the Survey Monkey tool also administered electronically for the professors to (a) report which conflict resolution strategy they selected, (b) how many of the Thomas-Kilmann strategies they felt comfortable using so as to test versatility, (c) how comfortable they were with working with

a different cultural group which would test confusion acceptance, and (d) which strategy did they believe was most commonly used in the cultural group of the assigned church staff. The results will be recorded and entered into SPSS where initial descriptive statistics will be run to measure for standard deviation, mean, and standard error mean. In order to test  $H_1$  and  $H_4$ , factorial 2X2 ANOVA will be run since there are two factors of the independent variables being the two levels of cultural intelligence (high/low) and then two categories of the dependent variable which will be the strong and weak conflict resolution ability.

The test of the between-subject factors such as degrees of freedom (*df*), mean square, *F*, and sig. will also be run to determine the value of *p*. If *p* is less than .05, these hypotheses statements are true, however if they are greater than, a null hypotheses statement will have to be used in that there will be no relationship between the variables. This test will be repeated using the results of the Likert scale given to the professors regarding validity and confusion acceptance and will be compared to both cultural intelligence levels (high/low) and then again to compare to conflict resolution ability (strong/weak). These repeated tests will be run for the purpose of testing  $H_2$ ,  $H_3$ ,  $H_5$ ,  $H_6$ .

Limitations include the geographic concentration of individuals found in the Metroplex might not be indicative of individuals found all throughout the United States. Future study would need to confirm if these same results are found in other regions in the United States and a more comprehensive study would need to be conducted to determine if these results remain true outside of the United States. Another limitation is individuals being tested on cultural intelligence and conflict resolution ability are professors who deal with students from various cultures daily. This might cause the results to be skewed toward higher levels of cultural intelligence than pulling a random sampling from the general public.

### Conclusion

Cultural intelligence and conflict resolution ability are essential for the 21st-century leaders when considering the increased interaction with individuals from different cultural backgrounds that is prevalent due to the technological advances of the internet and improved modes of mobility (Templer et al., 2006). With increased frequent interactions, there is greater opportunity for cultural differences to create conflict (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). New global skills must be acquired to be an effective leader in the 21st century (Robinson & Harvey, 2008).

Much of the literature surrounding conflict resolution strategies have been focused on hindrances and predictors of an individual's conflict resolution strategy preference (Baron, 1989; Bell & Blakeney, 1977; Geist & Gilbert, 1996; Holt & DeVore, 2005; Rizkalla et al., 2008; Sternberg & Soriano, 1984; Wood & Bell, 2008). The presented model attempts to address the three significant gaps that are found in the current literature. These gaps include (a) identifying variables that will predict which conflict resolution strategy an individual will adopt when selecting based on what is most culturally appropriate given the cultural background of the parties involved in the conflict; (b) examining if the other parties involved in the conflict are in agreement with the conflict resolution strategy selected by the individual and determining if the strategy selected is the most ideal for their cultural backgrounds and understandings; and (c) testing the impact of cultural intelligence levels, including variables such as versatility and confusion acceptance, which could aid in selecting a culturally appropriate strategy have not yet

been tested to see if they serve as predictors for increased or decreased conflict resolution ability (Brislin et al., 2006). In response to these gaps, the model suggests a 2X2 factorial design to test to see if cultural intelligence levels predict the appropriate conflict resolution strategy adoption, thus the conflict resolution ability. The test will include the examination of the other parties involved in the conflict are in agreement with the conflict resolution strategy selected.

An area for future research might be the exploration of how Christianity impacts conflict resolution strategy and cultural intelligence. Many concepts in the Bible support resolving differences and having sensitivity for individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Ephes 4; John 4; Psalm 133). Does being a Christian increase the levels of either cultural intelligence or strengthen conflict resolution ability? More studies could also concentrate on the group's conflict resolution preferences such as Ting-Toomey and Kurogi's (1998) study on the impact of the cultural norm of saving face on a cultural group's conflict resolution strategy preference.

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Andrea Reyes Ramirez earned her Bachelor's of Business Administration majoring in management and her MBA concentrating in conflict resolution at Dallas Baptist University. She is a doctoral student concentrating in organizational leadership in the School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship at Regent University and serves as an insurance operations supervisor at a financial institution in Dallas, Texas.

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