Conflict Communication Behaviours and Employee Satisfaction:  
The Moderating Role of Cultural Intelligence and Transformational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This paper advances our understanding of the way task and relationship conflicts are communicated at work and how these conflict communication behaviours impact employee satisfaction. Additionally, the paper examines the moderating role of employee’s cultural intelligence and transformational leadership in the relationship between conflict, communication behaviours, and employee satisfaction. Data were collected from 109 organisational workers and students in Europe and Australia. Results indicated that aspects of cultural intelligence moderated the link between conflict and conflict communication behaviours while transformational leader moderated the link between conflict communication behaviours and employee satisfaction. We discuss the implications of our results.

Keywords: Conflict, communication, cultural intelligence, leadership, satisfaction.

Organisations are increasingly working with culturally diverse employees (Thomas, 2008). This is because cultural diversity represents a great competitive advantage for the organisation as it puts together people with different ideas, skills, abilities and approaches to work (Distefano & Manevski, 2000). However, research has also revealed that cultural diversity is a complex phenomenon and can prevent employees from working together and fulfilling their mission (Distefano & Manevski, 2000). In particular, cultural diversity is associated with conflict (Ayoko, 2003; Jehn, 1997; Thomas, 2008). More importantly, the way conflict is communicated is crucial in handling conflict at work (Larkey, 1996) as cultural diversity only leads to increased performance when employees are able to interact, understand each other and combine their different expertise (Maznevski, 1994).

Additionally, while many studies have examined the impact of conflict on employee outcomes, limited studies have examined the role of the leader in shaping conflict communication at work. Yet, scholars report that leaders tend to spend twenty per cent of their time in managing conflict (De Dreu, Evers, Beersma, Kluwer & Nauta, 2001). Furthermore, we are aware that employees often expect that their leaders will act as mediators to reduce or resolve conflict (Doucet, Poitras & Chênevert, 2008) and that leaders might be able to assist in minimizing the impact of conflict and poor communication at work (e.g. Ayoko, 2003).

Moreover, researchers in cross-cultural work have examined the relationship between cultural intelligence and the success of overseas assignments (Thomas, 2008) but limited studies have examined the influence of cultural intelligence on the way workers communicate conflict in their interpersonal interactions. The present research builds on work in this area by building a model that depicts different types
of conflict as triggering differing conflict communication behaviours, which, in turn, are proposed to impact outcomes. The model (see Figure 1) also portrays cultural intelligence and leadership style as moderators of the relationship between different types of conflict, conflict communication behaviours and employee satisfaction.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Social Identity Theory (SIT)

SIT proposes that an individual’s self-concept is based both on his/her personal and social identity (Hogg & Reid, 2006). SIT suggests that individuals want to reach a positive self-esteem (personal identity) and a positive distinctiveness for the group they belong to (social identity) (Hogg & Reid, 2006). This means that individuals maintain their own values while fitting into the group values. According to Jehn, Chadwick and Thatcher (1997), values are individuals’ core beliefs regarding the desirability of behavioural choices. Jehn and colleagues (1997) argue that the degree of similarity in co-workers’ values is a key driver of the conflict experienced at work. This is because values and norms strongly influence individuals’ behaviours (Jehn et al., 1997). Given the above, we argue that individuals belonging to the same culture and sharing the same values will be more likely to identify with each other (reducing relationship conflict) and cooperate at work (reducing task conflict). In contrast, conflict is more likely to increase between individuals from different cultural backgrounds due to their values’ and beliefs’ dissemblance (Jehn et al., 1997). Altogether, given SIT, individuals from different cultures and social groups will be more likely to prioritize their group membership when competing against others; leading to differing conflict and conflict communication styles.

Intragroup Conflict

Conflict is a struggle that emerges between two or more parties who perceive opposite goals, incompatible resources, values or behaviours among them (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2006). Amason (1996) identified two main types of workplace conflict: “affective” and “substantive”. Affective or relationship conflict arises from interpersonal relations (non-task issues) and revolves around people’s characteristics such as personal values, specific tastes, individual behaviour and attitudes, interactional style or status and power (Ayoko et al., 2010; Jehn, 1997). Additionally, studies show that relationship conflict is closely related to employees’ self-concept as their issues represent an “ego-threat” (de Wit et al., 2012, p.362) that might lead them to be more sensitive, anxious and resentful (Ayoko, 2007). These feelings are shown to decrease employees’ satisfaction (Ayoko, 2007; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003).
On the contrary, task conflict involves a difference of opinion between two or more parties about task content and outcome (Jehn, 1997) and reflects incompatibilities about how the work should be done (Doucet et al. 2008). Research findings suggest that task conflict allows a better combination and analysis of team members’ ideas, which promotes innovation, creativity and well-considered decision-making (Ayoko, 2007). However, task conflict has also been found to have negative consequences on team members’ satisfaction, as team members may feel disappointed and/or frustrated by other members’ assessment of their viewpoints and competencies (de Wit et al., 2012).

**Conflict Types and Conflict Communication Behaviours**

Effective communication is crucial between co-workers for organising and coordinating their tasks, sharing their knowledge and attaining their objectives for organisational success. We follow Katz and Kahn (1978) to define communication as the transmission and interpretation of information, ideas and feelings. Research by Barber (1984) indicates that managers spend 50-80% of their time communicating while Putnam (2009) argues that an effective (or ineffective) management of conflict, in part, depends on employees’ communication.

In particular, Putnam and Wilson (1982) outlined three main conflict communication behaviours. First, there is a non-confrontation behaviour that is characterized by the conflict avoidance (Wilson & Waltman, 1988) and involves a withdrawal from the conflict (Wheeless & Reichel, 1990). Second, there is solution-orientation behaviour that is based on directness and open discussion. The goal of the solution orientation behaviour is to attain a win-win situation where each party’s needs are understood (Wheeless & Reichel, 1990). Third, the control (or assertive) behaviour aims at satisfying one’s self-interests rather than other people’s interests and it is a win-lose strategy (Wheeless & Reichel, 1990) that is based on direct confrontation and continual argumentation. Goldstein (1999) shows that these conflict communication behaviours have differential conflict outcome. Altogether, given that researchers generally conceptualise conflict as task and relationship conflicts (Brett, 1984; Doucet et al. 2008), we anticipate that different types of conflict will give rise to various conflict communication behaviours.

**Task conflict and conflict communication behaviours**

Task conflict occurs when employees disagree about alternatives and issues related to the collective task content, objectives and outcomes (De Church & Marks, 2001). We know that for employees to achieve these collective objectives, they need to cooperate, coordinate their activities, and communicate effectively.
through information sharing and active listening (De Dreu & Van Vanien, 2001). Thus, we reason that the non-confrontation behaviour characterised by conflict avoidance might minimise chances of working together and resolving disagreements. Similarly, control communication (assertive) usually leads to a win-lose situation (Wilson & Waltman, 1988) and thus we anticipate that this behaviour would benefit some employees without guaranteeing collective goals. Given that solution-orientation behaviour values an “open discussion of different alternatives” and compromise (Wheeless & Reichel, 1990), we argue that it is more likely than others to facilitate task goal attainment in groups. Hence, we hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 1a: Task conflict will be more positively related to solution-orientation communication behaviour than non-confrontation and assertive communication behaviours.

Relationship conflict and conflict communication behaviours

Relationship conflict can prevent team’s effectiveness because it comes from and contributes to develop a negative climate in the team while based on distrust (De Dreu & Van Vanien, 2001). When a relationship conflict occurs, the shared norms and values of the team tend to disappear, as the personal interests fuel conflict development (De Dreu & Van Vanien, 2001). Also, given that the concern for self rather than others interests is the main feature of an assertive behaviour of conflict communication (Wilson & Waltman, 1988), we argue that co-workers will engage in control (assertive) communication while involved in relationship conflict. This is because people prioritize their own interests when engaging in a relationship conflict (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001). Additionally, the emphasis placed on individual self-interests and values when trying to solve a relationship conflict may lead to a direct confrontation and argumentation. Altogether, we hypothesise:

Hypothesis 1b: Relationship conflict will be more positively associated with non-confrontation and assertive conflict communication behaviours than solution-orientation conflict communication behaviour.

Conflict, Conflict Communication and Satisfaction

According to De Dreu and Weingart (2003), conflict hinders workers’ satisfaction. Travaglione and colleagues (2011) describe satisfaction as a person’s evaluation of his or her job and work context. This means that workers would reach a complete satisfaction if they fulfil their personal or social needs, reaching a state of wellbeing (De Dreu, van Dierendonck & Maria, 2004). Specifically, conflict has a potential to disrupt workers well-being if it is not properly communicated and managed (Jehn et al., 2008). Based on the
above, we propose that solution orientation behaviour will be more likely to generate individual satisfaction because it provides opportunities to seek compromises (Wilson & Waltman, 1988). On the contrary, we expect that an assertive communication behaviour ensures only one party’s satisfaction (i.e. individuals who wins the conflict) while other parties are left dissatisfied. Moreover, a non-confrontation conflict communication would lead to little satisfaction because it is about conflict avoidance not conflict resolution. Finally, previous research (e.g. Ayoko & Callan, 2010) suggests that employee’s reactions to conflict (not just the conflict itself) have significant effects on performance. Based on this research, we propose that the impact of differing conflict types on satisfaction may also be explained by different conflict communication behaviours. Altogether, we hypothesise:

Hypothesis 2a: Solution-orientation conflict communication behaviour will be more positively related to satisfaction than control and non-confrontation conflict communication behaviour.

Hypothesis 2b: Control conflict communication behaviour will be more positively related to satisfaction than solution-orientation and non-confrontation conflict communication behaviours.

Hypothesis 2c: Conflict communication behaviours (control, solution-orientation, non-confrontation) will mediate the association between conflict (task, relationship) and employee satisfaction.

The moderating role of cultural intelligence

Culture is a “shared set of knowledge structures” (Thomas, 2008; p. 31), based on “shared values, motives, beliefs, identities and interpretations of significant events that result from common experiences…” (Dorfman & House, 2004; p. 31). For example, differences between individuals, given culture, may become more obvious and create a real challenge in interpersonal communication. Thus, a greater knowledge of each other’s culture when facing a conflict may positively impact individuals’ conflict communication behaviour. Thus, we propose that individuals who are culturally intelligent will be more likely to identify with another’s conflict communication behaviour and engage in appropriate and congruent behaviour when there is conflict.

Cultural intelligence is an aspect of social intelligence; the ability to behave appropriately and interact effectively with others (Crowne, 2009). Indeed, Ting-Toomey (1999) argues that individuals should develop certain qualities in order to understand how they need to behave appropriately during cross-cultural interactions, and more precisely to be effective in cross-cultural communications. How much of this set of qualities, or attributes a person possesses is defined as cultural intelligence (Earley, 2002). More precisely,
cultural intelligence (CQ) is described as an individual’s ability to deal effectively with unfamiliar situations involving people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Thomas, 2006).

According to Ang and van Dyne (2008), cultural intelligence is based on four underlying constructs. Firstly, a specific knowledge of the foundations, values, beliefs, norms, practices and environment of the different cultures is needed in order to be able to predict, understand and decode others’ attitudes and behaviours (Thomas, 2006). Second, cognitive intelligence is closely linked to meta-cognitive intelligence, which represents a person’s level of “conscious cultural awareness” when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds (Ang & van Dyne, 2008, p.5). This means that high levels of cultural meta-cognition show an individual’s ability to question his own assumptions and attitudes and adjust to a new environment by developing appropriate behaviours (Ang & van Dyne, 2008). Third, CQ requires motivation. According to Ang and van Dyne (2008), motivation is an important construct of cultural intelligence because it drives an individual towards learning about different cultures and being able to function in new settings. Finally, cultural intelligence construct combines the three previous components and reflects an individual’s ability to engage in an appropriate behaviour in a cross-cultural interaction (Ang & van Dyne, 2008). This behavioural dimension of CQ concerns both verbal and non-verbal behaviours and is arguably the most prominent and visible element of a cross-cultural interaction (Ang & van Dyne, 2008).

Triandis (2000) indicates that cultural differences prevent an easy resolution of conflict in diverse settings due to problematic communication misunderstandings between the employees. In this case, we argue that a greater knowledge of the other party’s beliefs, values and attitudes, combined with an ability to develop an appropriate behaviour to interact with other parties will most likely lead to a solution-orientation communicative conflict approach. Workers’ disagreements could also be related to differences of opinions about how the work should be done (task conflict) (Doucet et al. 2008). Additionally, we propose that workers will be more likely to explain these ideas to others once they are able to communicate and interact properly and to do this may involve higher levels of assertive conflict communication behaviour. In sum, we contend that high levels of cultural intelligence should assist in minimising communication misunderstandings (Thomas, 2006). Furthermore, we propose that given cultural intelligence, workers might be able to better understand each other’s objectives and thoughts. This, in turn, should develop a greater cooperation, evaluation of alternatives and solution-orientation approach. Hence we hypothesise that:
Hypothesis 3a: CQ will moderate the link between relationship conflict and conflict communication behaviours (solution-orientation, assertiveness and non-confrontation) such that employees with high levels of CQ will be more positively associated with increased solution-orientation conflict communication behaviour.

Hypothesis 3b: CQ will moderate the link between task conflict and conflict communication behaviours (solution-orientation, assertiveness and non-confrontation) such that employees with high levels of CQ will be more positively associated with increased solution-orientation and assertive conflict communication behaviour.

The moderating role of transformational leadership

Yukl (2008) argues that the leader’s role is to influence his followers and motivate them to perform better while finding a solution to resolve followers’ differences and disagreements. The Multifactor Leadership Theory (Avolio et al., 1999) presents three main types of leadership, namely transactional, transformational and laissez-faire. Our research is mainly focused on transformational leadership because it is the most effective and active leadership behaviour (Rubin, Munz & Bommer, 2005). Transformational leadership describes leaders who motivate their followers to go beyond their narrow interests for the larger group’s benefit (Walumbwa & Hartnell, 2011). In particular, transformational leaders go further to encourage their followers to go past their personal interests, for the well-being of the rest of their co-workers while developing their followers’ identification with the group (Zhang et al., 2011) through an “idealized influence” process (Bass, 1990).

Leaders with high levels of idealized influence also have a strong sense of mission and are able to obtain respect and confidence from their followers by developing behaviours that are consistent with followers’ personal values and goals. Additionally, transformational leaders encourage followers to review their opinions, and question their assumptions to increase creativity and innovation through “intellectual stimulation” (Avolio et al., 1999). Specifically, transformational leaders make individuals understand that conflict is a common problem that needs joint consideration as well as an integrative approach (Zhang et al. 2011).

Also, transformational leadership is based on a leader’s ability to develop an “inspirational motivation” by providing meaning to his followers’ work and challenging them to bring new ideas with enthusiasm (Bass, 1990; Avolio et al., 1999). Additionally, transformational leaders develop an “individualised
consideration” with each of their followers. Such leaders pay attention to their followers’ personal goals, listen to their ideas, coach and advise them so that followers can increase their degree of responsibility while achieving satisfaction with both co-workers and job (Bass, 1990). Hence, we argue that transformational leadership has a potential to moderate the link between conflict communication behaviours and workers’ job satisfaction. Altogether, we hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 4: Transformational leadership style will moderate the link between conflict communication behaviours (solution-orientation, assertiveness and non-confrontation) and satisfaction such that employees engaging in a solution-orientation, assertive conflict or non-confrontation communication behaviour will be more positively associated with increased satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and procedure

The sample comprised of 109 business organisational workers and university students. The workers have worked for an average of 3-10 years and were from large organisations such as Areva, IBM and Safran; all located in France and the UK. Participants (61.4% male; 38.6% female) were from 30 countries and their organisations were in the business of nuclear industry; specialty foundry; computer, aerospace, defence and security respectively. The students enrolled in postgraduate courses at one of the largest universities in South East Queensland, Australia and had daily interactions with international students on team assignment. To avoid common methods bias, two surveys (i.e. for leaders and employees) were designed to tap into leader and individual employee behaviours. Given missing values, only 88 responses were usable for analysis.

Measures and Data analysis

To test the hypothesised links in the model, we used pre-existing reliable scales. Conflict was measured with adapted 14 items sourced from Jehn, Greer, Levine & Szulanski (2008). Individual satisfaction with each other and with their jobs was measured with Jehn, Greer, Levone and Szulanski (2008)’s satisfaction scale. We measured conflict communication behaviour with Organizational Communication Conflict Instrument (OCCI) from Wilson and Waltman (1988). Cultural intelligence was measured with the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) from Ang & Van Dyne (2005). Finally, transformational leadership style was gauged with the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) from Bass & Avolio (1990). Factor analysis results showed that all relevant variables tapped into the constructs
being measured. The unit of analysis is at the individual level and we followed the guidelines of Baron and Kenny (1986) to test the direct, mediation and moderating effects.

RESULTS

Direct effect: Conflict and Conflict Communication Behaviours

Results of the regressions did not reveal any significant direct relationships between the conflict and conflict communication behaviours disconfirming Hypotheses 1a and 1b. Although not hypothesized, regressions’ results showed a direct association between conflict and satisfaction. The model was significant (F (5, 84) = 7.24, p < .001) and explained 20.5% of the variance. Specifically, relationship conflict (Beta = -.368, p< .001) was negatively related to employees’ satisfaction with the group. Similar results were obtained for task conflict (F (5, 84) = 6.22, p < .005) explaining 17.3% of the variance and with task conflict (Beta = -.268, p< .005) negatively associated with employees’ satisfaction with the group.

Direct effects: Conflict Communication Behaviours and Satisfaction

None of the hypothesised relationships between conflict communication behaviours and satisfaction was significant. Hence, hypotheses 2a and 2b also were rejected.

Mediating role of Conflict Communication Behaviours in the link between Conflict and Satisfaction

Regression results showed no significant mediating effects for the conflict communication behaviours disconfirming H2c.

The Moderating role of CQ in the link between Conflict and Conflict Communication Behaviours

First, research results revealed an interaction between task conflict, CQ (meta-cognition) for control (assertiveness) communication behaviour. CQ meta-cognition was significant (F (5, 84) = 2.29, p < .05) explaining 12.7% of the variance. The combination of task conflict and workers’ cultural meta-cognition (Beta = .288, p< .05) was strongly predictive of an assertive conflict communication. This suggests workers are more likely to use increased assertive conflict communication behaviour when task conflict is high and when there are high levels of workers’ CQ meta-cognition.

Secondly, analyses revealed an interaction between task conflict and CQ (cognition) for control conflict communication. CQ cognition was significant (F (5, 84) = 1.95, p < .09) explaining 11% of the variance. The combination of task conflict and workers’ CQ cognition (Beta = .189, p< .09) was predictive of a control (assertive) conflict communication. This means that increased control conflict communication is more likely in an environment with high task conflict but with workers who have high CQ cognition.
Thirdly, task conflict interacted with CQ (behaviour) for control communication. CQ behaviour was significant, \((F(5, 84) = 3.67, p< .05)\) explaining 18.8% of the variance. The interaction between task conflict and workers’ CQ behaviour (Beta = .344, \(p< .001\)) was strongly predictive of control conflict communication suggesting that workers in a high task conflict environment are more likely to engage in increased assertive conflict communication behaviour when there is a high level of CQ behaviour. Altogether, the analysis demonstrates that CQ moderates the relationship between task conflict and control (assertive) conflict communication behaviours supporting H3b. However, no other significant moderation was revealed for the moderating effect of cultural intelligence on the link between conflict and other conflict communication behaviours disconfirming H3a.

The Moderating role of Leadership between Conflict Communication behaviours and Satisfaction

First, analysis revealed an interaction between control communication and transformational leadership (idealized attributes and behaviours) for job satisfaction. Specifically, individualized consideration dimension was significant \((F(5, 84) = 4.96, p < .001)\) explaining 23.9% of the variance. The interaction between control communication and leaders’ idealized attributes and behaviours (Beta = .234, \(p< .02\)) was strongly predictive of job satisfaction. This result indicates that workers that engaged in high levels of control conflict communication but with leaders who engaged in high levels of individualized consideration also reported increased job satisfaction.

Additionally, regression results showed that an interaction between control communication and leaders’ idealised attributes and behaviours for job satisfaction was significant. Idealised attributes and behaviours \((F(5, 84) = 5. 59, p < .001)\) explained 26% of the variance. The interaction of control communication and leaders’ idealized attributes and behaviours (Beta = .208, \(p< .04\)) was strongly predictive of job satisfaction. This means that workers who engage in high levels of control conflict communication but with leaders who exercise high levels of idealized attributes and behaviours are linked with increased job satisfaction. No other moderation effects for leadership were revealed. In sum, we accept H4 for job satisfaction.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This is one of the first few studies to examine the moderating role of CQ and leadership in the link between conflict, conflict communication and satisfaction. First, our study demonstrates that there is no significant direct effect between conflict and conflict communication behaviours. However, both task and
relationship conflicts were negatively related to employees’ satisfaction with the group. These results clearly support previous findings results obtained in this area (see De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). We now know that it is not the types of conflict episode that directly determines employee’s conflict communication behaviours. Rather, it may the extent of workers’ CQ (see our CQ results) that is the key driver of conflict communication behaviours in culturally diverse workgroups. Moreover, emotions are possible mediators in the link between conflict and conflict communication behaviours. Previous research shows that emotions frame conflict (Nair, 2008). Also, task and relationship conflicts are associated with emotional arousal (enthusiasm) and self-conscious emotions (guilt) (Chen & Ayoko, 2012). Hence, future research should test the mediating effect of emotions in the link between conflict and conflict communication behaviours.

Secondly, CQ (meta-cognition, cognition and behaviour) are successful moderators between conflict and conflict communication. This result is in consonance with previous literature. Thomas (2008) indicated that individuals should develop certain qualities to avoid misunderstanding and to behave appropriately in cross-cultural interactions (see also Ting-Toomey, 1999). Our research is one of the few, as far as we know, to study the influence of CQ on the way conflict is communicated in organisations. CQ may be one of the qualities/competencies needed for effective conflict management and interactions in cross-cultural groups.

Third, our results showed that aspects of transformational leadership moderated the link between conflict communication and job satisfaction aligning with existing literature. For example, individualised consideration is related to higher job satisfaction (Bass, 1990) and that employees’ satisfaction is dependent on how leaders transformational behaviours such as trust and empowerment (Yukl, 2008). Our result clarifies how transformational leadership may enhance satisfaction in situations of conflict.

Fourth, task conflict interacted with CQ to predict only control (assertive) conflict communication behaviours. Leadership also moderated control communication to predict satisfaction. Perhaps the high percentage (34%) of leaders in our sample may be responsible for this result. Zhenzong and Jaeger (2010) indicated that given their position power and the need to exert control on their followers for effectiveness, leaders are more likely to engage in assertive communication. Moreover, majority of our participants are from individualistic cultures known to choose assertive communication to protect and pursue their self-interests (Hofstede, 1980; Thomas, 2008; Triandis, 2000). Given the above, it is not surprising that assertive conflict communication behaviours were dominant in our data.

Theoretical and practical contributions
So far, while many studies have focused on conflict types and management (Brett, 1984; Jehn, 1997; Rahim, 2001), little research has explored the role of CQ and transformational leadership in employees’ conflict communication and satisfaction. Our study is one of the first few to bridge this gap thereby extending literature in the area of conflict, conflict communication, CQ and leadership. We found that leadership and CQ played key moderating roles in how conflict may be connected with different conflict communication behaviours and control communication may impact on employee satisfaction respectively.

Results from the current study have practical implications. Thomas (2008) suggests that an international assignment’s success mainly depends on the worker’s aptitude to overcome the culture shock, cultural differences and adjust to his new environment. This requires effective communication. Our results implicate CQ training for managers and individuals selected for expatriate overseas assignments especially where cross-cultural conflict management and negotiations are involved. Our results also have implications for conflict management in diverse teams. Hitherto, conflict management strategies have just begun to consider leadership as a variable that can assist in managing conflict (Ayoko, 2003; Ayoko & Callan, 2010; Kotlyar & Karakowsky, 2006) while CQ seems to have been ignored. Our results suggest that CQ has the potential to enhance conflict management in culturally diverse groups. Also, our findings elucidate for managers and leaders the transformational leadership dimensions that are more likely to promote employee satisfaction especially in the context of conflict and conflict communication.

Limitations and future research

We had small sample size which might be responsible for some of the non-significant results. Future research should replicate this study with larger samples. Also, our study is cross-sectional and did not take into account any non-verbal aspects of conflict communication. Future research should consider a qualitative and or longitudinal examination of the variables in the present research.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research offers useful insights into the domains of conflict, communication, cultural intelligence and leadership. Specifically, it has demonstrated that CQ moderates the link between conflict and communication behaviours. It also indicates that transformational leadership plays a major moderating role between control conflict communication behaviours and employees’ satisfaction. Our results should now inform future research that continues to tease out the connection between conflict and communication in culturally diverse settings.
REFERENCES


Figure 1: Conflict Communication Behaviours and Employee Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Cultural Intelligence and Transformational Leadership