

Abstract

Whether conflict within an organization is viewed as desirable or not, it exists and is endemic. Research in the West suggests the value of conflict and the need to manage it. Chinese educators, students, and managers increasingly recognize that to capitalize on their considerable opportunities as well as handle emerging threats in their rapidly changing society, they must update their conflict management knowledge. Therefore, this research aimed to examine the relationship between personality traits and conflict resolution styles.

The Big Five personality model—extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience—was used as the framework to test the relationship between personality traits upon five conflict resolution styles, which were integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising. The target population of this study was both male and female, who had been on the management level of an organization in Shanghai. Self-administered questionnaires were used in this research to collect information from samples using the convenience sampling method. Simple correlation coefficient (Pearson's r) was applied to analyze the data and solve the research questions.

The research findings showed that the relationships between personality traits and conflict resolution styles were not strong. Moderate relationships were found between agreeableness and obliging style, agreeableness and compromising style, conscientiousness and integrating style, conscientiousness and obliging style, conscientiousness and avoiding style, openness to experience and integrating style,

openness to experience and obliging style, openness to experience and compromising style. There was no relationship between extraversion and dominating style, extraversion and avoiding style, neuroticism and dominating style, agreeableness and dominating, conscientiousness and dominating style. Weak and very weak relationships were found among the rest of the hypotheses.

The findings have the implication for Chinese managers, who intend to increase their conflict management knowledge about the linkage between their personality traits and conflict resolution styles. If Chinese managers can understand well about the personality traits of their subordinates, they could evaluate the situations and put the right person to the proper position, which could help them be in a step forward in the competition.

