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THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

**A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES AND CONFLICT
IN THE PROPERTY AND FACILITY MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY
IN HONG KONG**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN SURVEYING
DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION**

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ABSTRACT

In spite of the importance of constructive conflict management styles in the maintenance of a positive relationship between property and facility management companies and their clients, few studies have examined the association between conflict management styles and nature of conflict, and none have studied the individual, relational, and organizational variables that are associated with specific conflict management styles that use by the property and facility management employees. Therefore, this dissertation seeks investigate the relationship between the nature of conflict (positive or negative) and conflict management styles (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising) and the influence of the three determinants (individual, relational, and organizational characteristics) to the preference of employee towards each of these conflict management styles in the property and facility management industry in Hong Kong.

Employees of the property and facility management companies are invited to participate in the survey. The questionnaire aims to collect the data about the

preference of conflict management styles of the respondents, nature of conflict that they encounter, personality of the respondents, interdependence between the respondents and the other conflicting parties, and the organizational strategy of the respondent's companies.

Analysis of this data showed there are significant correlations between (1) integrating conflict management style and individual, relational, and organizational characteristics; (2) obliging conflict management style and relational, and organizational characteristics; (3) dominating conflict management style and individual, relational, and organizational characteristics; (4) avoiding conflict management style, and organizational characteristics; (5) compromising conflict management style and individual, relational, and organizational characteristics; and (6) positive conflict and integrating conflict management style.

The result of this dissertation helps to find out appropriate conflict management styles for different conflict incidents. Consequently, proper handling the conflict that encounter between the conflicting parties can be determined, the property and facility management employees and their clients, as a result, constructive outcomes will be created in the conflict incidents.

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I am so thankful for my wonderful family. They gave encouragement to me throughout the process and they gave unconditional support to me when I encounter problems. Therefore, I can complete this dissertation smoothly.

Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the unfailing support of my friends, Maggie and Joey, their understanding, caring, patience, support, and love enabled me to complete this dissertation.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree diploma or other qualification.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Property and facility management industry is one of the fast changing industries in Hong Kong. Nowadays, boundary of property and facility management industry in Hong Kong has expanded when compare it with many years ago. Property and facility management companies as a service providers have expose to different clients by offering them diversified services. A more dynamic communication between the companies and their clients are promote in order to up-date and put in more added value service to enhance the sustainability and competitive advantage of the companies in the property and facility management industry in Hong Kong. This will increase the interactions between the property and facility management employees and their clients. Consequently, frequent interactions will increase the chance of rise of conflict between the parties. The employees who manage conflict effectively are perceived as competent communicators and capable to maintain good relationship to clients of

their satisfactions. Indeed, those who are unable to manage conflict effectively with their clients may have trouble in reaching goals, maintaining positive relationships and solving problems. Clients' perception of how service providers manage conflict is related to satisfaction with their performances. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the relationship between conflict and conflict management style as well as the factors that determinate each of these conflict management styles in the property and facility management industry in Hong Kong.

1.2 Research Objectives

This dissertation seeks to answer the following questions in regarding to the conflict issues in between property and facility management employees and their clients:

1.2.1 Research Objective 1

To examine the use of various conflict management styles under different conflict incidents in the property and facility management industry.

Objective 1 will focus on research of the property and facility management companies that manage the real estates in Hong Kong. Objective 1 diagnoses the relationship between two forms of conflict, positive and negative conflict, and five modes of conflict management styles, integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. It aims to seek if there are any conflict management styles towards different conflict incidents that occur in the property and facility management industry in Hong Kong.

1.2.2 Research Question 2

To determine the effects of different parameters (individual, relational and organizational) on the preference of conflict management styles of the property and facility management employee.

This objective keen on exploring the influences of personality of employee, interdependent between the employee and the client that perceive by the employee, and company strategy of the employee's company to the preference of conflict management styles of the employees when dealing with the conflicting issues with their clients.

This study will carry out examination of these relationships by using samples of the property and facility management companies in Hong Kong where property and facility management companies are those who manage real estates in Hong Kong.

1.3 Importance of the Research

There is not much research has been done on conflict and conflict management styles of property and facility management companies in Hong Kong. Having analyzed the conflict between property and facility management employees and their clients, conflict management styles use by the employees to deal with the conflict they come across, and how personality, interdependence and company strategy influence the use of such conflict management styles, people will start to notice more about the available conflict management styles, nature of conflict, preference of conflict management of the individual, and their interactions, this can make improvement in handling conflict by the property and facility management employees so that the whole industry would be improved later on.

The property and facility management employees may find difficulties in dealing conflict issues with their client, if the conflict issues do not handle properly, this will bring adverse effect on their relationship and job performance of the employees. In contrary, dealing with conflict with appropriate conflict management styles is vital, proper handling the conflict issue can establish a better relationship between the company and the client, thus a long-term relationship can be created.

There are influences of personality (extraversion and agreeableness), relational characteristics (perceptions of high interdependence, perception of positive interdependence, and power advantage) and company strategy (low cost and high customer service) on conflict management styles. Understanding these characteristics allows better understanding on the preference of conflict management styles of the employees. Employees with preference of the appropriate conflict management style to deal with the respective conflict incident can be identified by the three determinates. Therefore, positive outcomes will be results from different conflict incidents.

1.4 Methodology

In order to have a better understanding on conflict, conflict management styles and different characteristics, the relationship between conflict and conflict management styles, and the association between conflict management styles and different characteristics should be studied. Literature review on these variables will be done to get a thorough understanding on the definitions, elements and concept of these key issues. Data collected from the questionnaire survey will be used for testing as well. The arranged data will be used to carry out two analyses for the examination of the research objectives. Linear regression is being use to test these relationships. The first analysis seeks to study if there is a significant relationship between conflict and conflict management styles for research objective 1. The other analysis aims to test if there is any significant correlation between each conflict management styles and personality, interdependence, and company's strategy for research objective 2.

1.5 Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter One will describe the structure of the research. It will briefly state the background, objectives, importance and methodology of this research.

Chapter Two will provide the definitions, detail interpretations, concept, and literature reviews on conflict, conflict management styles, and different characteristics that influence the preference of conflict management styles of the individuals.

Chapter Three will be the methodology of this research. Detail explanation of the method of collecting data, selecting target group, and the setting of the questionnaire will be given.

Chapter Four is going to analyze the data collected from the respondents. The relationship between conflict and conflict management styles, and the relationship between conflict management styles and different characteristics will be examined.

Chapter Five is the discussion of data analyzed in previous chapter. There are two sections of discussion regarding to the two relationships as proposed in the previous chapter.

Chapter Six summarized the analysis and results in the last chapter. Conclusion of the findings will be given. In addition, implications, limitations and recommendation for further studies will be presented.

The following chapter includes a review of relevant literature and research in the field of conflict management.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study of the way people having different personalities, experiences, roles, and organizational cultures manage conflict and their assessment of different styles of conflict management is crucial in today's globalized and competitive world. In such a context, miscommunication and misunderstanding can easily occur, since different people often have different goals, values, beliefs, and assumptions toward various issues, including many aspects of conflict interaction. These differences can create or intensify conflict incidents. The understandings of how nature of conflict incidents affects the use of conflict management styles of people and how individual differences determines the use of conflict management styles can be a major step toward creating more healthy and efficient working environments.

In this chapter, the review of literature will focus on three broad areas. Firstly, attention will be given to nature of conflict; therefore, what are the sources of conflict, how a conflict incident being formed, and how to classify conflicts

according to their natures. Secondly, conflict management styles in different scholars' models will be studied and the relationship between conflict and conflict management styles will be examined. Finally, the literature review will pay attention to the characteristics of people, (a) personal characteristics, (b) relational characteristics and (c) organizational characteristics, and how these determinants interact with conflict management styles of the people.

2.1 Conflict

Conflict is a natural and pervasive phenomenon in human experience. Scholars in various disciplines have generated a wide variety of definitions for the term in which they range from broad to narrow. The extension of aspiration of the parties in conflict may be very large. It may extend from simply attempting to gain acceptance from others for a preference, or securing their advantage over a resource, to the extremes of injuring or eliminating their opponents (Bisno, 1988; Coser, 1968).

Conflict is the perception of differences of interests among people (Thompson, 1998). Conflict is a course of social interaction which involves a

struggle over claims to resources, power and status, beliefs, and other preferences and desires (Hocker & Wilmot, 1991). Putnam and Poole (1987) develop a similar definition in emphasizing several components of interpersonal conflict, they state that conflict is “the interaction of interdependent people who perceive opposition of goals, aims, and value, and who see the other party as potentially interfering with the realization of these goals” (p. 552). The definitions tell three general characteristics associated with interpersonal conflict of incompatible goals, interdependence, and interference.

Van de Vliert (1998) states that conflict may occur when two individuals, individual and a group, or two groups, are said to be in conflict when at least one of the parties feels he or she is being obstructed or aggravated by the other party. Rahim (2001) proposes that when two or more social entities, namely, individuals, groups, organizations and nations, come in contact with one another in attaining their objectives, their relationships may become incompatible or inconsistent. Relationships among such entities may become inconsistent when two or more of them desire a similar resource that is in short supply; when they have partially exclusive behavioural preferences in their joint action; or when they have different attitudes, values, beliefs and skills.

Rahim (2002) suggests that conflict may occur when:

1. A party is required to engage in an activity that is incongruent with his or her needs or interests.
2. A party holds behavioural preferences, the satisfaction of which is incompatible with another person's implementation of his or her preferences.
3. A party wants some mutually desirable resource that is in short supply, such that the wants of everyone may not be satisfied fully.
4. A party possesses attitudes, values, skills, and goals that are salient in directing his or her behavior but are perceived to be exclusive of the attitudes, values, skills, and goals held by the other(s).
5. Two parties have partially exclusive behavioural preferences regarding their joint actions.
6. Two parties are interdependent in the performance of functions or activities.

This definition is much more comprehensive, which implies that conflict can relate to incompatible preferences, goals, and not just activities. In order for conflict to occur, it has to exceed the threshold level of intensity before the parties experience any conflict (Van de Vliert, 1998). This principle of conflict threshold is consistent with Baron's (1990) argument that for conflict to be existing, opposed interests must be recognized by parties. Therefore, the following section will study the components of conflict. Kelley (1987) proposes three components

of conflict: structure, the content or topic and the process. The structure of conflict is a discrepancy of the situation versus the people involved such that conflict can be over resources, personal feelings, or a blend of other situational possibilities. The content or topic of a conflict defines the issue of a conflict. The process of conflict consists of the phases or stages the parties go through to resolve the conflict (Kelley, 1987).

2.1.1 Concepts of Conflict

Conflict can be explained by using two types of models (Thomas 1976). Process models and structural models are two kinds of conflict models being used. Process models concern on the causes of conflicts while structural models pay less attention on the dynamics and consequences of conflicts.

Process models focuses on the cyclical and dynamic courses of conflicts of sequences of the event such as frustration, action, reaction, renewed frustration (Van de Vliert, 1998; Filley, 1975; Lewicki, Weiss, & Lewin, 1992; Pondy, 1967; Rahim, 1992; Thomas, 1992; Walton, 1987). Pondy (1967) and Thomas (1976) propose that the process model seeks to distinguish the stages or events within a

conflict episodes, and to determine how each stage feeds into or relates to other stages. The process model assumes that conflict is continuous, unavoidable process, with each incident affecting the next incident.

On the other hand, structural models centre towards the influencing factors and parties' behaviour such as parties' predispositions, the degree of mutual dependence, pressure from others, rules and procedures (Van de Vliert, 1998; Thomas, 1992; Walton & Dutton, 1969). Thomas (1976) says that structural model seeks to understand conflict through examining the underlying structures and conditions that shape the construct, and it assumes that the conditions are somewhat fixed or slow to change.

2.1.2 Structural Model of Conflict

Antecedents and consequences of conflict are the two categories of constructs that being examined by the structural model. As conflict is assuming to be negative, it explains why there is a majority of the researches concerned with the influences of conditions, attitudes, and behaviours to the occurrence of conflict. In the structural model, structural antecedents and attitudinal antecedents

are being studied (Etgar, 1979). Consequences of conflict are another aspect of the structural model. The outcomes that have been studied can be classified into operational and relational these two broad categories.

Antecedents Structural antecedents are the term used to illustrate the contribution of all relationship, organizational, and inter-organizational structural conditions to certain level of conflict (Toms, 2004). Goal divergence is one of the structural causes of conflict. When a party involves in a personal relationship, as well as those in an intra-organizational or inter-organizational relationship, he or she will undoubtedly have some differences in the goals they prefer to pursue. These incompatible goals are often used as criteria for decision making (Rosenberg & Stern, 1970, 1971), and those decisions can adversely affect the achievement of goal of another party, for instance, chance of conflict between the parties will increase (Frazier, 1983).

Other structural antecedents of conflict are power which includes the sources of power or influence strategies, and balance of power. Gaski (1983) defines power sources as activity seeking to alter another's behaviour, and exercised power, or the actual altering of another's behaviour or an outcome. Frazier (1983) used a different term for power sources or influence strategies, which he states

power sources are the “means of communication used in applying a firm’s power.” Another aspect of power is the balance of power in a relationship. In the case that one party in the relationship possesses an unequal amount of power; the level of conflict will increase. On the contrary, if both parties have an equal amount of power, the level of conflict will decrease (Gaski, 1984; Jap & Weitz, 1995; Young & Wilkinson, 1996).

Balance of power is closely associated with another structural antecedent, dependence. Dependence exists in a relationship if one party relies on another party for achievement of goals. Conflict reduce in the relationship when the interdependence decrease because the parties are less depend upon each other for goal achievement, survival and prosperity (Kumar, Scheer, & Steenkamp, 1995).

Attitudinal antecedents are the second type of structural antecedents to conflict. Attitudinal antecedents are the expression used to describe the attitudes, predispositions, outlooks, and reactions of the individuals and organizations involved in a relationship in conflict incident. One attitudinal source of conflict is role identity. Etgar (1979) notes that it is the roles played by the relationship members, including organizations or firms involved in an alliance. A role is a set of expected behaviours each member should reveal (Etgar, 1979). Conflict may

occur when conduct or activities apparent are incongruent with the role expectations (Rosenberg & Stern, 1970, 1971; Etgar, 1979); when the parties in the relationship are not certain of their roles (Etgar, 1979); or when one or more parties are not satisfied with their roles (Frazier, 1983).

Another attitudinal source of conflict is perception. Rosenberg and Stern (1971) find that differing perceptions of incident leads to intra-channel conflict. The grounds of such differences in perception may be due to subjective interpretations of information (Rosenberg & Stern, 1970), disparate business cultures, and incongruent communication style. Perception can also be interpreted as the various points of view influenced by the conditions of businesses operation.

Thomas (1976) examines both structural and attitudinal antecedents. In his structural model, all of the antecedents are attitudinal in nature. Thomas's (1976) structural model identifies the four parameters that form the conflict episode. The first is behavioural pre-disposition which include one party's motives, abilities and personality. It will cause a party to have a preferred strategy for dealing with conflict. If that strategy does not seem to be effective, the party will advance to a different strategy. The second is social pressure. It is the pressure arising from the group that one member is a component of and the pressure from cultural values,

organization work group norms, and public interest where those parties exist. The third is incentive structure that is the objective reality which gives rise to conflict. It includes level of stakes, relationship between parties, how degree of risk involved in the conflict being managed efficiently, conflict of interests in competitive issues and common problems. The final is rules and procedures which includes the decision-making mechanism, therefore, decision rules, negotiation, and arbitration procedures, which confine and shape behaviour of those conflicting parties.

Each of these parameters determines the behaviour that each party will show in conflict incidents. In addition, the behaviour that is exhibited by one party also affects the behaviour of the other party, and vice versa.

Consequences of Conflict Efficiency of operation is one of the operational outcomes. Rosenbloom (1973) proposes that conflict could affect the efficiency of a channel of distribution with four different outcomes. The first outcome is the decline of efficiency for the reason that an intensifying level of conflict. This outcome implies to negative conflict such that both parties only consider their own goals. Another result of conflict is that it has no effect on channel efficiency. This only occur if both parties are highly dependent upon each other that one

could not continue to exist without the other, accordingly, they will tend to ignored or avoid conflict. Improvement of channel efficiency is the third outcome of this model. This will take place when both parties do not live up to their role expectations when there is conflict. The final outcome will be formed by combining the above three consequences. To begin with, the conflict was ignored, and therefore has no effect on efficiency. Nevertheless, since the level of conflict continued to amplify, efficiency will then be improved first, and then declined.

Relational outcomes are the other category of consequences of conflict. Conflict cannot be remaining unchanged in any relationship. The most noticeable relational outcome of conflict is that the relationship ceases to exist (Walters, 1974; Day, 1995). Alternatively, the other outcome is that the relationship continues to exist. Walters (1974) proposes that besides the state of disintegration, post-conflict relationships could take two forms. The form "Armed Truce" is the result of negative conflict. This form exists when the relationship is integral and performing at a minimal level which do not consists of coordination or positive attitudes. High level of frustration and/or indifference will be found in this form. This condition can exist extensively for a period of time, the relationship will gradually move toward disintegration or the other form called "Coordination."

This form is the post-conflict relationship that is the result of positive conflict. It is characterized by greater cooperation, greater trust and infrequent disagreements.

2.1.3 Process Model of Conflict

Conflict can also be perceived as a process such that there are two or more parties, and differing thought processes, actions and reactions to a situation, referred to as a conflict incident (Pondy, 1967; Thomas, 1976)

Pondy (1967) states that,

“A conflict relationship between two or more individuals in an organization can be analyzed as a sequence of conflict episodes. Each conflict episode begins with conditions characterized by certain conflict potentials. The parties to the relationship may not become aware of any basis of conflict, and they may not develop hostile affections for one another. ... Each episode or encounter leaves an aftermath that affects the course of succeeding episodes. The entire relationship can then be characterized by certain stable aspects of conditions, affect, perception, and behaviour.”

Pondy's (1967) Process Model identifies five stages of conflict episode for a conflict incident to be occurs. The first incident is latent conflict (conditions), in which the parties themselves do not aware the existence of conflict, however the conditions that are inductive to conflict exist. These conditions may include changing environmental factors, remaining doubts over previous conflict incidents, and reactions to alters both in the environment and within the relationship.

The second stage of conflict is perceived conflict (cognition), which may begin at the time one or both parties conceptualize the conditions that exists in latent conflict. However, conflict also can exist when there is no condition of latent conflict existing. It happens when the parties misunderstand each other's true position. If the parties improve their communication, such conflict can be resolved; however, it is not the case if the parties' true positions are in opposition. In some circumstances, latent conflict can exist but fail to move forward into the perceived stage. This happens through a suppression mechanism, which often occurs when the individuals intentionally block conflicts are only mildly threatening and are ignored. It can also occur through an attention-focus mechanism. It is related to organizational behaviour more than to personal values,

it occurs when parties focus their attention on those matters that are easily resolved in given available time and capacities.

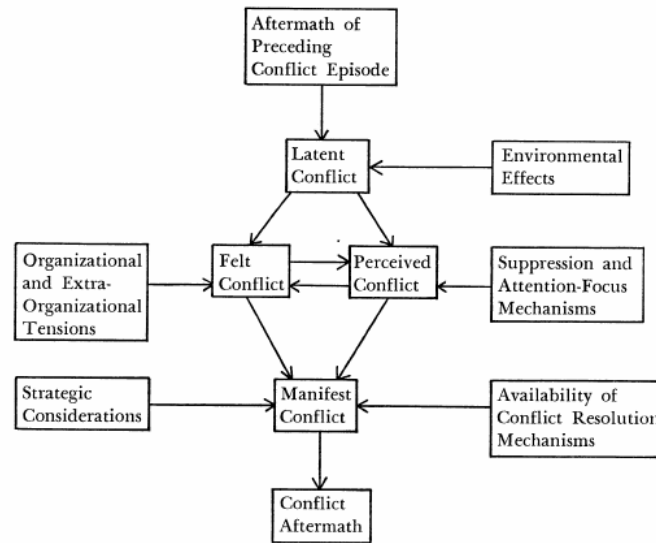
Felt conflict (affect) is the third stage of conflict. This stage occurs simultaneously with perceived conflict. There is a distinction between perceived conflict and felt conflict. Perceived conflict is an awareness that the differences exist while felt conflict is a personalization of conflict which causes participants of organization to be concerned with the negative conflict. Conflict incidents can move forth and back between the felt conflict and perceived conflict without progressing to the next stage of manifest conflict or it can move directly towards manifest conflict.

The fourth stage of conflict in this model is manifest conflict (behaviour), which are several varieties of conflictful behaviour. Behaviour is defined as conflictful if a party engage in behaviour to be conflictful, and impeding another party to achieve his or her of goals. This party may engage in such behaviour deliberately to frustrate other party, or he or she may do so despite the fact that he frustrates another. Although manifest conflict can be mitigated by the availability of conflict resolution mechanisms, if the parties do not value the relationship or if conflict is strategic in the pursuit of individual or sub-unit goals, consequently,

manifest conflict is more likely to occur. Moreover, once manifest conflict breaks out, it is likely to spread and cultivate to include more latent conflict, perceived conflict, or felt conflict that was previously suppressed in the interest of preserving the stability of the relationship.

Conflict aftermath (conditions) is the fifth and final stage of conflict, and it is the result of the occurrence of manifest conflict. If the conflict incident is genuinely resolved to the mutual satisfaction of all parties, the aftermath may be a strengthened and more cooperative relationship. If any party perceives that he or she has a worsened situation than the previous incident, the relationship may be weakened or vulnerable. The conflict aftermath of one conflict incident is an antecedent of the next conflict incident through the latent conflict stage of the next incident. Hence, the process of each conflict incident is an antecedent, and perhaps even a predictor of the next conflict incident.

The development of each conflict incident is determined by a complex combination of the effects of preceding incident. The ideas of the dynamics of conflict are summarized in Figure 2.1.



From L.R., Pondy, Organizational conflict: Concepts and models. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 12(2), pp 306.

Figure 2.1 The dynamic of a conflict incident

Thomas' (1976) Process Model views between two or more parties in terms of the internal dynamics of conflict episodes. Frustration is the initial stage of conflict episode, where one party perceives the inter-party as interfering with the satisfaction of one's needs, wants, objectives, etc.

Conceptualization is the second stage, where each party defines the conflict situation and the significant alternatives available that in turn affect the behaviour of each party. It also is the way a party chooses to characterize the entire issue at the heart of the conflict and his or her emotional or rational reaction to it. The issue can be defined according to one's own wishes, according to the other party's

wishes, or according to underlying concerns that may cause the problem. This leads to the third stage, termed behaviour.

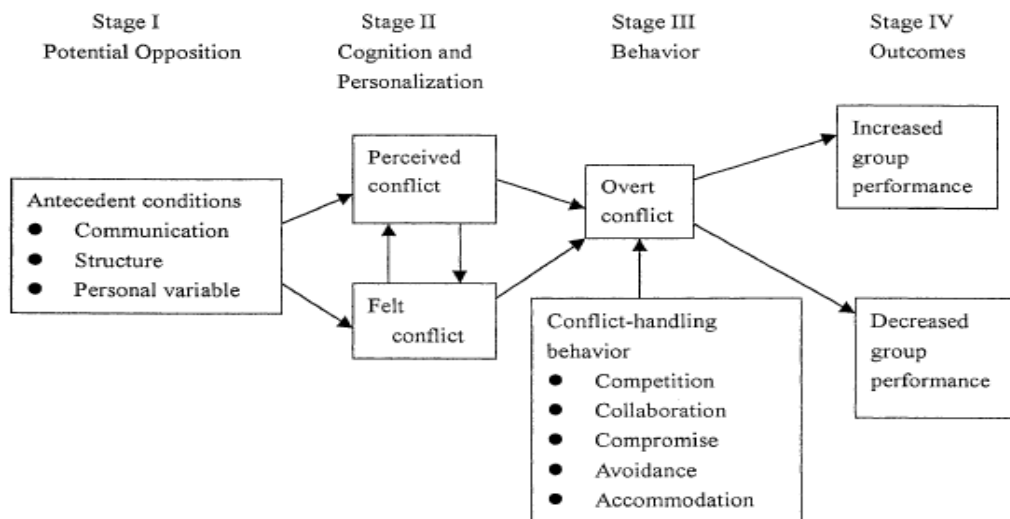
Behaviour is the superficial reaction of one party to his or her conceptualization of the conflict issue. Behaviour consists of three components which are orientation, strategic objectives, and tactics. It was the observation of the actions that result from the perception of conflict, the strategic objectives, which match with orientation, and the tactical behaviour to achieve the objectives set.

The fourth stage is named as interaction. It is the interaction between the two parties either escalates or de-escalates the conflict. It flows through behaviour and back to the conceptualization stage. It is known that one party's behaviour launches a progression of interactions between the two parties. Apparently, one party's behaviour will influence by the other's behaviour, which will subsequently influence the first party's conceptualization in the conflict incident. Since there is changing in conceptualization, behaviour is then modified accordingly. Thomas (1976) suggests that communication is the instrument of interaction.

The final stage of the conflict incident is the outcome. When conflict ceases, people see the results to deal with which range from agreement to long-term

hostility. It included either the terms of agreement or the understanding that the issue is being avoided. The outcome has both short-term and long-term effects to the conflict incident. For short-term effects, included the agreement or lack of agreement, and lingering emotions, they are so called conflict aftermath. The long-term effects included the effect of conflict on trust, satisfaction, attainment of personal objectives, and attainment of organizational goals.

The process model is generally supported in many literatures. However, Robbins (1989) proposes that the last two stages, interaction and outcome, can be combined into one stage as shown in Figure 2.2.



From S.M. Lin, (200), *Relationship among conflict management styles, employees' job satisfaction and team effectiveness- A comparison between public and private hospitals in Taiwan*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Nova Southeastern University, pp 18.

Figure 2.2 Conflict Process

Summarizing the definitions of the structural and process models of conflict, the principle of structural model is the conflict occurs with stable antecedents and consequences. While for process model looks at each conflict incident independently. Both of the models of conflict are precise.

As per the fast changing business environment and increasing levels of competition among the companies, each conflict incident occurs between the parties may become the crucial one which determines the success or failure of relationship between the parties. Therefore, it is necessary for the property and facility management employees to manage conflict effectively with clients in order to maintain and/or strengthen their relationship. Thomas (1976) describes process model,

“Is particularly useful when one is faced with the need to understand and intervene directly into the stream of events of an ongoing (conflict) episode.”

Therefore, process model of conflict is being adopted in this dissertation. In addition to the completion of conflict construct being examined form process model, manifest conflict has also been considered in several ways that discussed in the follow section.

2.1.4 Manifest Conflict

People often seem conflict as a negative force. Many researchers have emphasized the negative outcomes of conflict, ranging from discomfort, misunderstanding, and disruption of relationship to the collapse of organizations (Komin, 1995; Ting-Toomey, 1997; Tjosvold, Moy, & Shigeru, 1999). Esquivel (1997) states that conflict has historically been viewed as undesirable, something to be avoided. Conflict within an organization is viewed as negative and is not supportive in decisions of management. However, Nicotera (1997) suggests the conflict can be healthy if not necessary and should be promoted in organizations. Conflict in such organizations can help members to generate creative alternatives and maintain a balance of power. Jains (1982) suggests that conflict helps members to be more thoughtful and critical in evaluating problems and creating solutions.

Conflict can be viewed as negative and positive. Guetzhaw and Gyr (1954) suggest two dimensions of conflict which are useful for conflict management. Negative (dysfunctional) conflict, consists of emotional or interpersonal issues which lead to conflict, is destructive to the relationship of the conflicting parties; positive (functional) conflict, consists of disagreements relating to task issues and

the other., promotes understanding leads to goals achievement These two dimensions of conflict have been given a variety of labels: e.g. cognitive and affective conflicts (Amason, 1996), A-type and C-type conflicts (Amason et al., 1995), substantive and affective conflicts (Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954; Rahim, 2001), task and relationship conflicts (Pinkley, 1990; Jehn, 1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001), and task and emotional conflicts (Ross & Ross, 1989).

Several researchers (Amason, 1996; Jehn, 1995, 1997) have empirically investigated these two dimensions of conflict. They suggest that the distinction between these two types of conflict is valid and that they have different effects in the workplace.

Negative Conflict Certain types of conflicts, which may have negative effects on individual and group performance, may have to be reduced (Rahim, 2001). These conflicts are generally caused by the negative reactions of organizational members (e.g. personal attacks of group member, racial disharmony, and sexual harassment) and are called affective conflicts. When conflict is affective, it tends to manifest itself in emotional interactions that focus on personal differences (Amason, 1996; Cosier & Rose, 1977; Torrance, 1957). Jehn (1997) summarizes that:

“Relationship conflicts interfere with task-related effort because members focus on reducing threats, increasing power, and attempting to build cohesion rather than working on the task....The conflict causes members to be negative, irritable, suspicious, and resentful.”

Jehn and Mannix (2001) suggest that relationship conflict is an awareness of interpersonal incompatibilities consists of emotional components such as feeling stress and resistance from other parties. It involves personal issues such as feeling annoyance, frustration, and irritation. This definition is consistent with other categorizations of conflict that distinguish between affective and cognitive conflict (Amason, 1996; Pinkley, 1990).

Affective conflict hinders group performance by limiting ability to process information and functioning of group members and antagonistic attributions of group members' behaviour (Rahim, 2001; Amason, 1996; Baron, 1997; Jehn, 1995; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Wall & Nolan, 1986).

Affective conflict diminishes group loyalty, work group commitment, intent to stay in the present organization, and satisfaction (Amason, 1996; Jehn, 1995, 1997; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). These result from higher level of stress and anxiety and conflict escalation.

Positive Conflict Cognitive conflict may have constructive effects on the individual and group performance. This conflict relates to disagreements about tasks, policies, and other business issues (Rahim, 2001). When conflict is cognitive, it is generally task oriented and focused on judgment differences about how best to achieve common objectives (Amason, 1996; Brehmer, 1976; Cosier & Rose, 1977; Jehn, 1992; Priem & Price, 1991; Riecken, 1952; Torrance, 1957). Cognitive conflict is usual in an organization because people in different position see different environments (Mitroff, 1982). Jehn and Mannix (2001) point out that task conflict is an awareness of differences in perspective and opinions concerning to a group task. Similar to cognitive conflict, it relates to divergence about ideas and differences of opinion about the task issues. Task conflict may happen together with dynamic discussions and personal emotion but the negative interpersonal emotions are negated, which are more commonly associated with relationship conflict.

A study by Jehn (1995) suggested that a moderate level of task conflict is beneficial, as it stimulates discussion and debate and enhance commitment, which help groups to attain higher levels of performance. “Group with an absence of task conflict may neglect new ways to enhance their performance, while very high

levels of task conflict may interfere with task completion” (Jehn, 1997).

Evidence indicates that substantive conflict is positively associated with beneficial outcome (Rahim, 2001). Groups that experience this conflict are able to make better decisions than those that do not. This relationship has also been found to be true at the individual level (cf. Rahim, 2001; Amason, 1996, Cosier & Rose, 1977)

Groups that report substantive conflict generally have higher performance. This conflict can improve group performance through better understanding of various viewpoints and alternative solutions (Jehn, 1995, 1997; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Rahim, 2001). It should be noted that the beneficial effects of substantive conflict on performance were found only in groups performing non-routine tasks, but not groups performing standardized or routine tasks.

2.1.5 Constructs of Manifest Conflict

There are a variety of studies regarding to the constructs of manifest conflict. Firstly, conflict has been seen as a uni-dimensional construct. It has also been examined that there is an anchor between positive and negative conflicts along a

continuum. Finally, positive and negative conflicts have been considered as two separate constructs.

Mallen (1963) views manifest conflict as a uni-dimensional construct, he sees conflict simply as a struggle for power. Lusch (1967) defines channel conflict as “a situation in which one member perceives another channel member to engage in behaviour that is preventing or impeding him for achieving his goals.” Etgar (1979) states that conflict is present “when a component (channel member) perceived the behaviour of another component to be impeding the attainment of its goals or the effective performance of its instrument behaviour patterns.” These definitions are typical of early studies that viewed manifest conflict as a construct with mostly negative consequences. Lusch (1976), Brown, Lusch and Muehling (1983), and Frazier and Rody (1991) operationalized manifest conflict in their studies by measuring the frequency of disagreements. Brown and Day (1981) and Eliashberg and Michie (1984) also used frequency of disagreement to measure manifest conflict, but they added an additional dimension, intensity of the disagreement. These measures emphasized early researches’ view of conflict as an event that is destructive, i.e. more conflict is harmful to the relationship and less conflict is helpful to the relationship.

While many researchers considered the negative or dysfunctional side of conflict, Assael (1969) was one of the first to discuss the possibility of positive manifest conflict. He offered one of the first definitions of constructive or positive conflict, which he gleaned from the sociology literature. He stated conflict is

“potentially beneficial to the system when it brings about a more equitable allocation of political power and economic resources by the formation of new countervailing forces, and greater balance and stability within the system.”

One concept view of positive and negative conflict is a continuum of conflict that is centered upon an imaginary line (Rosenberg and Stern, 1970, 1971; Robicheaux & El-Ansary, 1975). This continuum represents the level or amount of conflict that exists in a relationship. Any level of conflict below the line results in favorable outcomes and is therefore considered as positive. Greater amounts or levels of conflict that fall above the imaginary line result in destructive outcomes and are therefore considered as negative. Positive conflict occurs simultaneously with cooperative behaviour, while negative conflict and non-cooperative behaviour would happen together in the worst situation.

A more recent view of manifest conflict considers positive and negative conflict as separate constructs, which means that one or both types could occur in

a conflict incident. The determination of which type occurs is based on the outcomes of the conflict incident. When the relationship deteriorates and disintegrates as a result of conflict, negative conflict has occurred. When the relationship improves after a conflict incident, positive conflict has occurred.

This concept of conflict was tested in a study of intra-firm conflict (Menon, et al, 1996). Positive and negative conflicts were tested as individual constructs, with separate antecedents and consequences. The findings supported the existence of the two types of conflict and indicated that the two types are negatively correlated.

Amason (1996) also hypothesizes that positive and negative conflicts are separate constructs. Unlike the results of Menon et al's (1996) study, however, the results of this study indicated that while the two constructs are correlated, they are not always negatively correlated. There are times when high levels of both positive and negative conflict exist.

Plank and Francis (2001) also find that there are two distinct types of conflict, and tried to determine a causal order between the two. The rationale is that high levels of positive conflict would eventually lead to negative conflict, but no evidence was found to support that hypothesis.

2.1.6 Conflict and Conflict Management Styles

Working under a moderate amount of conflict in conjunction with appropriate use of conflict management style is beneficial for the relationship of the parties. A well-known and widely used approach to measuring the different ways in which people deal with conflict is the Thomas-Kilmann (1974) conflict style instrument, they argue that not all the conflict can be best resolved in a win/win manner. Indeed, there are a number of different ways to deal with conflict and each of these conflict management styles can be positive regarding to different circumstances. For instance, a given conflict management style is effective depends on the requirements of the specific conflict episode and the skills with which it is used by the parties. In any given situation, a conflict management style may be more suitable than others.

2.2 Conflict Management Styles

Even though conflict appears to be a usual phenomenon in human experience, individual deals with conflict incident differently. In many studies regarding conflict, they pay a great attention in the way of people managing conflict.

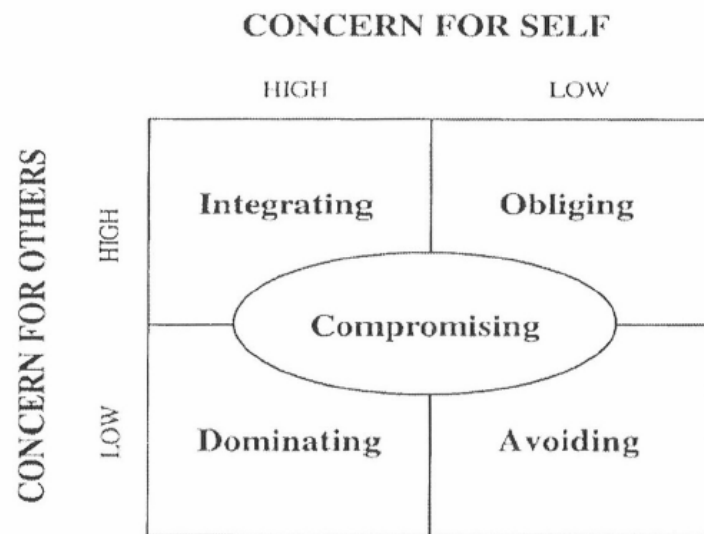
Conflict management styles are defined as the general tendency for an individual to display a certain type of conflict behaviour repeatedly and across situations (Cupach & Canary, 1997). Some researchers believe that people have preferences for certain conflict management styles which do not mean that they also feel that people use only those styles in every conflict incident that they come across. For instance, individual may adopt other conflict management styles as well. However, they tend to prefer certain conflict management styles over others and might see the use of other conflict management styles as more or less competent in different circumstances.

Scholars have used many instruments to capture conflict management styles in interpersonal and organizational perspectives. These instruments are similarly constructed, but many different models which involved specific terms in each model, are worked out by different researchers (e.g. Follett, 1926, 1940; Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas & Kilmann, 1974; Thomas, 1976; Rahim, 1983). Follett (1926, 1940) finds there are three major ways to deal with conflict which are domination, compromise, and integration. She also finds that avoidance and suppression will be used in handling conflict in organizations. Blake and Mouton (1964) firstly present a conceptual system for categorizing five modes for

handling interpersonal conflicts that is forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and problem solving. These conflict management styles are conceptualized by Blake and Mouton (1964), extended by Thomas and Kilmann (1974) and reinterpreted by Thomas (1976) and Rahim (1983). Thomas (1976) reinterpreted their system as he considered the intentions of a party and classifying the modes of handling conflict into five types. A party is cooperative if he or she is attempting to satisfy the other party's concerns whereas if the party is assertive, it is to say that he or she is attempting to satisfy one's own concerns. Pruitt's (1983) dual-concern model, concern for self and concern for others, suggests that there are four handling conflict styles that includes yielding, problem solving, inaction, and contending. However, he does not recognize compromising as a distinct conflict handling style.

According to Rahim and Bonoma (1979), and Rahim (1983), Blake and Mouton's (1964) model and Thomas's (1976) model are being reinterpreted on two basic dimensions: concern for self and concern for others. The first dimension explains the degree (high or low) to which a person attempts to satisfy his or her own concern. The second dimension explains the degree (high or low) to which a person attempts to satisfy the concern of others. It should be pointed out that these

dimensions describe the motivational orientations of a given individual during a conflict incident. Figure 2.3 shows the relationship of the five conflict management styles to the concern dimensions.



From M.A. Rahim, (2001), *Managing Conflict in Organizations*, Westport, CT: Quorum Books, p. 28

Figure 2.3. A two-dimensional model of the interpersonal conflict management styles

Using the two-dimensional model of behaviour, concern for self and concern for others, Rahim (1983a, 1986a) identified five conflict management styles: (1) integrating- high concern for both self and others; (2) obliging- low concern for self and high concern for others; (3) dominating- high concern for self and low

concern for others; (4) avoiding- low concern for both self and others; and (5) compromising- moderate levels of concern for both self and others. Rahim (1986a) proposes that “organizational participants must learn five styles of handling conflict to deal with different conflict situations effectively.”

Gross and Guerrero (2000) state that Rahim’s model focuses on specific behaviours that are enacted during the conflict incident, he is trying to find solutions that are satisfactory to both parties (integrating), using authority or interpersonal influence (dominating), giving into the wishes of the other party (obliging), trying to avoid disagreement or unpleasantness (avoiding), and proposing a “middle ground” solution (compromising). The summary of conflict handling styles and the situations in which these are appropriate have been presented in Table 2.1.

From M.A. Rahim (2002), Toward a theory of management organizational conflict, *The International Journal of Conflict Management*, Vol. 13 (3), p. 219.

Table 2.1. Interpersonal Conflict Management Styles and the Appropriateness

Conflict Style	Situation where appropriate	Situation where inappropriate
Integrating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issues are complex. 2. Synthesis of ideas is needed to come up with better solutions. 3. Commitment is needed from other parties for successful implementation. 4. Time is available for problem solving. 5. One party alone cannot solve the problem. 6. Resources possessed by different parties are needed to solve their common problems 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Task or problem is simple. 2. Immediate decision is required. 3. Other parties are unconcerned about outcome. 4. Other parties do not have problem-solving skills.
Obliging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You believe that you may be wrong. 2. Issue is more important to the other party. 3. You are willing to give up something in exchange for something from the other party in the future. 4. You are dealing from a position of weakness. 5. Preserving relationship is important. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issue is important to you. 2. You believe that you are right. 3. The other party is wrong or unethical.
Dominating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issue is trivial. 2. Speedy decision is needed. 3. Unpopular course of action is implemented. 4. Necessary to overcome assertive subordinates. 5. Unfavorable decision by the other party may be costly to you. 6. Subordinates lack expertise to make technical decisions. 7. Issue is important to you. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issue is complex. 2. Issue is not important to you. 3. Both parties are equally powerful. 4. Decision does not have to be made quickly. 5. Subordinates possess high degree of competence.
Avoiding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issue is trivial. 2. Potential dysfunctional effect of confronting the other party outweighs benefits of resolution. 3. Cooling off period is needed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issue is important to you. 2. It is your responsibility to make decision. 3. Parties are unwilling to defer, issue must be resolved. 4. Prompt attention is needed.
Compromising	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Goals of parties are mutually exclusive. 2. Parties are equally powerful. 3. Consensus cannot be reached. 4. Integrating or dominating style is not successful. 5. Temporary solution to a complex problem is needed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One party is more powerful. 2. Problem is complex enough needing problem-solving approach.

2.2.1 Integrating (Problem Solving) Conflict Management Style

Integrating style (high concern for self and others) is associated with problem solving, is the diagnosis of and intervention in the right problems, which indicates a win-win solution. Rahim (1992) claims the requirement to use of this style involves openness, exchanging information, looking for alternatives, and examination of differences to reach an effective solution acceptable to both parties.

Gross and Guerrero (2000) find that integrative style is positively associated with perception of effectiveness, relational appropriateness, and situational appropriateness for both self and other perceptions. Friedman et al. (2000) point out that this style also associates with a lower level of task (positive) conflict. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) find problem solving is more effective than other conflict handling modes in attaining integration of the activities of different subsystems in an organization. Pruitt and Carnevale (1993) provide some evidence from laboratory studies that problem solving style is the best in managing social conflict. However, it should be noted that, integrating is just one way to manage conflict.

Applications This style is appropriate for dealing with the strategic issues

pertaining to an organization's objectives and policies, long-term planning, etc. This is useful for effectively dealing with complex problems. This style is appropriate when one party cannot solve the problem on his or her own, in which blending ideas is needed to come up with a better solution to a problem. It is also useful in utilizing the knowledge, skills, information, and other resources possessed by different parties. The parties define or redefine a problem and to make effective alternative solutions for it; and/or to implement a solution effectively, commitment is needed from parties. This can be done when there is enough time for problem solving.

2.2.2 Obliging Conflict Management Style

Rahim (1992) states that obliging style (low concern for self and high concern for others) is related to an attempt to play down the differences and emphasizing commonalities in order to satisfy the concern of the other party. Therefore, the obliging party neglects his or her own concern to satisfy the concern of the other party.

O'Connor (1993) observes that "the obliging style is characterized by a high

concern for maintaining the relationship even at the cost of not achieving the goal. This style is useful when a person believes that the issue is much more important to the other party than oneself” (p. 84). Gross and Guerrero (2000) find that it is generally perceived as a neutral style. However, Friedman et al. (2000) explain that obliging can be a positive conflict management style where the stronger an individual tends to resolve conflict by means of obliging, the lower the opportunity to experience relationship (negative) conflict and extensive stress. Again, Rahim (1983) concludes that the obliging style is another way that people manage conflict is validated.

Applications This style is constructive when a party is not familiar with the issues involved in a conflict incident or the other party is right and the issue is much more important to the other party. This style may be used as a strategy provided that a party is willing to give up something with the hope of getting some benefit from the other party as a return. The style may be appropriate when a party is in a weak position or believes that maintaining relationship is important. Nevertheless, obliging style may become inappropriate if the issue involved in a conflict is important to the party and the party believes that he or she is right. It is also inappropriate when a party believes that the other party is wrong or immoral.

2.2.3 Dominating Conflict Management Style

Dominating style (high concern for self and low concern for others) is identified with win-lose orientation or with forcing behavior to win one's position (Rahim, 1992). A dominating or competing party concerns to achieve his or her objective, as a result, the needs and expectations of the other party often are ignored by the dominating party. A party will demonstrate dominating behaviour or commanding behaviour when he or she has a more strong power or a dominant position in the negotiation process (Dabholkar, Cathey, & Johnston, 1994). Some individual may achieve his or her own goals at the expense of another. In this situation, Thomas (1976) points out that conflict issue itself may become less important while the attitude to winning the other becomes more important.

Rahim (1992) states that "dominating may mean standing up for one's rights and/or defending a position that the party believes to be correct" (p. 25). Dominating conflict management style may resolve a conflict incident sooner, but is more likely to be one-sided, short-sided, and short-lived solution (Rahim et al., 1999). Moreover, Gross and Guerrero (2000) find that individual perceived this style is inappropriate when used by others but more effective when they use it combined with integrating style. However, the dominating style can increase

levels of conflict and stress for the one employing this style. Friedman et al. (2000) say that the use of dominating style could lead to higher levels of relationship (negative) conflict. Rahim (1983) suggests that dominating style is employed by individual in various conflict incidents.

Applications Dominating management style is suitable when the issues involve in a conflict is important to the party or an unfavorable decision by the other party may be harmful to this party. For example, a manager may use this conflict management style if the issues involve routine matters or speedy decision is required. A manager may have to use dominating style to deal with subordinates who are very assertive or they do not have ability and expertise to make such technical decisions. This is also an effective mean in dealing with the implementation of unpopular courses of action.

This style is not suitable when the issues involved complex issues in conflict and there is enough time to make a good decision. When both parties are equally powerful, applying dominating style by one or both parties may lead to impasse. They may be able to break the deadlock provided that they change their conflict handling styles. This style is also inappropriate when the issues are not important to the party. Moreover, subordinates who possess high degree of competence may

not like a supervisor who uses this dictatorial style.

2.2.4 Avoiding Conflict Handling Style

Avoiding style (low concern for self and others) is coupled with withdrawal, postponement or sidestepping situations and will lead to a lose-lose scenario. An avoiding person fails to satisfy his or her own concern as well as the concern of the other party. The party may avoid conflict instinctively or deliberately. The party may unwilling to confrontation the conflict, instinctive withdrawal occurs. In contrary, he or she may want to maintain the relationship by avoiding conflict, the party may show deliberate withdrawal behaviour.

Rahim (1992) mentions that “this style is often characterized as an unconcerned attitude toward the issues or parties involved in conflict. Such a person may refuse to acknowledge in public that there is a conflict to be dealt with” (p. 25). This style often serves to prolong an unsatisfactory situation that warns by Rahim et al. (1999), which support by Gross and Guerrero’s (2000) findings that the avoiding style is perceived generally as ineffective and inappropriate. Friedman et al. (2000) find that this style increases the level of

stress and conflict in the workplace. Therefore, one may increase relationship (negative) conflict when one attempts to avoid conflict. Although there are many studies find that the avoiding style is often an inappropriate style to use, people do utilized this style while managing conflict.

Applications This style may be used when the potential negative effect of confronting the other party outweighs the benefits of the resolution of conflict. This may also be used to deal with some unimportant or minor issues, or it may be used when there is a need for a cooling off period before a complex problem can be effectively dealt with as well. However, this style is inappropriate when the issues are important to a party. This style is also inappropriate when it is the responsibility of the party to make decisions, when the parties are unwilling to wait, or when prompt action is required.

2.2.5 Compromising Conflict Management Style

Compromising style (intermediate in concern for self and others) involves give-and-take whereby both parties give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision (Rahim, 1992). It is often known as a no-win/no-lose scenario

that involves a give-and-take relationship in which some of one's goals are achieved while maintaining the relationship (Rahim, 1983).

Rahim et al. (1999) find that when integrative situations cannot be found, it is expected that the compromising conflict management style would be most preferred by the people. Gross and Guerrero (2000) agree and suggest that this style fits somewhere near the midpoint of the appropriateness and effectiveness dimensions. Rahim (1983) tell that compromising style is validated as a style that people exercise in conflict incidents.

Applications This style is of use when the goals of the conflicting parties are mutually exclusive or when both parties are equally powerful and have reached an impasse in their negotiation process. In the cases that consensus can not be reached, the parties need a temporary solution to a complex problem, or other styles have been used and found to be ineffective in dealing with the issues effectively, compromising style may be applied in these occasions. This style seems most appropriate for avoiding protracted conflict.

Compromising style is not appropriate for dealing with complex problems which in deed problem solving approach is needed. Unfortunately, it is not difficult to find that management practitioners use this style to deal with complex

problems frequently, as a result, they fail to recognize actual problems and formulate effective solutions regarding to these problems. This style may be inappropriate if a party is more powerful than another and believes that his or her position is right as well.

2.2.6 Summary of Rahim's (1983) Conflict Management Styles

Many researches show that Rahim's (1983) five conflict management styles are appropriate ways to identify conflict management styles use by the individuals. Rahim (1985) find out that there is a relationship between role and the conflict management styles and concludes that each of these conflict management styles, depending on the situation, is an appropriate way to manage conflict given that it. Rahim's (1985) idea is compatible to many researchers that individual may have preferences for certain conflict management styles but it does not mean that they refuse to use other available conflict management styles under different circumstances. This idea shares the same principle of contingency theory of management.

2.3 Contingency Theory of Conflict Management Styles

Rahim (2002) states that many management scholars now agree that there is no one best approaches to make effective decisions, to lead and to motivate subordinates. The contingency approach (also called situational approach), which is the trait of contemporary management, has replaced the “one best” approach. Consider, for example, the decision theory of leadership, which states that each of the five leadership styles (1=Autocratic...5=Participative) is appropriate depending on the situations. There two determinants proposes in the theory, the quality of the decision which is the extent to which it will affect important group processes and; acceptance of the decision which is the degree of commitment of employees needed for its implementation. The theory suggests that the leader should adopt autocratic style when the decision quality and acceptance are both low. On the contrary, if the decision quality and acceptance are both high, the leaders should use participative style. Therefore, it appears that effective leadership depends upon matching leadership styles with situations. Failure to match these two determinants will lead to ineffective leadership.

Taking lead from the contingency approach in the managerial aspects, it is possible to develop a contingency theory of conflict management. For example, in

a conflict situation characterized by low decision quality and acceptance, the dominating style may be justified. In the reverse condition, high decision quality and high decision acceptance, integrating style is the most appropriate conflict handling mode to be used.

The strategies of conflict management are consistent with the contemporary leadership theories in organizations that consist of Fiedler's (1967) contingency theory of leadership, House's (1971) path-goal theory of leadership, and Vroom and Yetton's (1973) decision theory of leadership. According to these theories, there is no one best style for dealing with different situations effectively; one style may be better than others under certain circumstances. Therefore, management scholars nowadays accept the argument that there is no one best approach to make decisions, to lead and to motivate.

The traditional approach only concentrated upon a general response of individual but not recognizes the effect of other environmental and human components. Recently, other researchers indicate that conflict could be managed functionally provided that one conflict handling style may be more appropriate than the others depending on the situations (cf. Khoo, 2005; Hart, 1991; Thomas, 1977; Rahim, 2001).

Rahim (2001) believes that the conflict management approach is in fact consistent with the contingency or situational theories of leadership. The theory of conflict management is flexible in terms of the situations or natures to be considered in selection and application of a conflict management style. A style is considered to be appropriate for a conflict situation if it leads to effective formulation and/or solution to a problem.

Although some behavioural scientists suggest that integrating or problem solving style is the most appropriate style to manage conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Likert & Likert, 1976; Burke, 1969), it also indicated by others that, for conflicts to be managed functionally, one style may be more appropriate than another depending upon the situations (Rahim, 2001; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Thomas, 1977). In general, integrating and to some extent compromising styles are appropriate for dealing with the strategic issues (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). The use of integrative conflict handling style is associated with higher level of effectiveness of an organization (Likert & Likert, 1976). Burke (1969) also suggests that the confrontation (integrating) conflict handling style is strongly related to the ultimate effectiveness of conflict management. On the other hand, Burke (1969) believes that ineffective management of conflict is related to the

application of forcing (dominating) and withdrawing (avoiding) handling style.

2.4 Individual, Relational and Organizational Characteristics, and Conflict Management Styles

Conflict management styles use by the individual does not constrains to certain styles, such selection of styles depends under different circumstances. Although there is no constrain for an individual to use certain types of conflict management styles in the conflict incidents, still there are personal preference in certain conflict management styles over other styles. Individual may think that use of other conflict management styles as more or less effective in different situation.

Researchers interest in understanding and predicting conflict management styles have frequently examined the potential for stable, dispositional, organizational structure, individual difference variable to explain stylistic preferences. In Nauta and Sanders's (2000) study identify that conflict behaviour will be affect by individual, relational and organization determinants of the individual. The study shows that individual personality, perceived

interdependence, and organizational strategy are each related to the conflict behaviour of the members.

2.5 Individual Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

There are considerable studies in examining the extent to which personality relates to conflict management styles. Bell and Blakeney (1977); Jones and Melcher (1982); Jones and White (1985); Sternberg and Soriano (1984); Pilkington, Richardson, and Utley (1988) have examined the relation of conflict management style to Murray's (1938) motivational needs such as needs for achievement, power and affiliation. The relation of Jungian psychological types (1923, 1971) such as sensation, intuition, thinking and feeling, these four functions into two pairs of opposites, and conflict management styles is investigated by Chanin and Schneer (1984); Kilmann and Thomas (1975); and Mills, Robey, and Smith (1985). There are researchers who try to predict conflict management style with Machiavellianism, that is a person's tendency to deceive and manipulate others for personal gain, by Jones and Melcher (1982), and Jones and White (1985); with dogmatism, which is a person's belief or doctrine that this person thinks it is reliable and is not disputed or doubted, by Jones and Melcher (1982); locus of

control, refers to a person's generalized beliefs concerning who or what influences things along a bipolar dimension from internal to external control, by Kabanoff (1987); and Type A tendencies, given that the person is living at a higher stress level, by Baron (1989).

Moberg (2001) reveals the research in the conflict management aspects focusing on the extent to which personality relates to conflict management style by choosing the view of personality such as motivational needs, dogmatism, locus of control, and Type A tendencies. Moberg (2001) is interested in further study on conflict management styles, in his study, the relation of individual differences in personality and attitude managing conflict by linking conflict strategy to five-factor model, which consists of neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, is examined using a participant group of managers and supervisors from the population of different industries. Moberg (2001) finds that "the convergence of theoretical concepts manifested empirically in the present study offers an integrative framework for relating contemporary models of personality and conflict style" (p. 64).

These studies demonstrate that conflict management behaviour is partly rooted in differences of individuals and the overwhelming majority research are

conducted using extant views of personality that preceded the recent emergence of personality's Five-Factor Model (FFM).

2.5.1 Five-Factor Model

Upon the mutuality of the theory and research in view of personality, it gradually converged on five broad factors that appear to explain a majority variance of behaviour (Moberg, 2001, John & Srivastava, 1999). These "Big Five" factors represent orthogonal clusters of intercorrelated behaviours of human beings. (Moberg, 2001; John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae & Costa, 1999; Norman, 1963; Wiggins, 1996; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1997; Winter & Barenbaum, 1999) that are stylistic in nature (Winter & & Barenbaum, 1999) and have empirical evidence across participants, raters, instruments, and data sources (John & Srivastava, 1999). Five-Factor Model generally converges on neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

John and Srivastava (1999) provide a brief definition to each personality dimension. Neuroticism involves a sense of emotional instability and negative affect; extraversion implies an emotionally positive, energetic approach to

interpersonal and material events; openness suggests a tendency toward originality, creativity, and cognitive complexity; agreeableness expresses a prosocial orientation toward the group; and conscientiousness reflects responsibility or a socially prescribed impulse control (Moberg, 2001). Because conflict management style is a form of interpersonal behaviour, in this dissertation, it is proposed that only the interpersonal personality factors of the Big Five, i.e. extraversion and agreeableness, have an impact upon conflict management behaviour. John and

Extraversion The meaning of extraversion has steadily evolved from an early emphasis on unreliability, impulsivity and social insensitivity to contemporary views as stress social facility, ambition, energy, enthusiasm, dominance, and positive affectivity (Watson & Clark, 1997). Extraversion is thought to strike for individual predispositions and view one's actions as positive, emotionally satisfying and effective. Snyder and Ickes (1985) suggest that such predispositions will be expressed in settings where trait-based behaviours are significant and reward. Thus, an individual with extraverted tendencies may show enthusiastic, energetic and positive behaviours where social approval or positive outcomes are likely to follow. In terms of conflict management styles,

extraverted person is expected to interpersonal strategies that allow for the expression of their predisposition toward interpersonal behaviour (Moberg, 2001). Standing on extraversion is considers to express one's degree of comfort with social interaction, preference for social engagement and positive affectivity. Thus, one would rationally expect extraverted person to relate more positively to conflict strategies that rely on interpersonal efforts to reach a solution, such as solving a conflict directly, dominating in the conflicting issue or compromising to reach an agreement. Conversely, one would expect less extraverted person to prefer strategies that minimize social interaction such as avoiding and obliging (Nauta & Sanders, 2000).

Agreeableness Graziano et al. (1996) characterizes the Big Five factor, agreeableness, as the personality dimension that is the most concerned personality with interpersonal behaviour. Agreeableness reflects individual differences to be kind, considerate, likable, cooperative and helpful (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997), and has summarizes as a contrasting tendencies to be “friendly” against “hostile” (Moberg, 2001). Costa and McCrae (1992) characterize person with high agreeable is sympathetic, helpful and cooperative; and person with low agreeable is antagonistic, doubtful and competitive. It should be emphasizing that neither

low nor high agreeableness is inherent to be better in all situations. Costa and McCrae (1992) point out that willingness to fight for one's interests may be important in some situations (e.g. hard bargaining). Because agreeableness tends to be an interpersonal factor that is expressed when cooperation and consideration are important, absence of agreeableness would be reflected in a lack of concern for the other's goals. Low agreeable persons would be expected to adopt a conflict strategy in which one attempts to dominate, achieve one's own goals, or win at another's expense (Moberg, 2001). In Putnam and Wilson's (1982) model, low in agreeableness would be expected to correspond to the dominating strategy. Conversely, person that high agreeableness would be expressed through concern for another's outcome and reflected in preference for the compromising and/or integrating strategies.

2.6 Relational Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

Relational determinants refer to characteristics of the relationship between the property and facility management employees and their clients. An important relationship characteristic is interdependence that is the degree to which the parties perceive that they need each other to perform their work and reach certain

outcomes (McCann & Ferry, 1979; Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

Interdependence can be subdivided into three constructs by Nauta and Sanders (2000). The first in place, both parties can feel more or less dependent on each other for exchanging resources and/or reaching certain outcomes, this refers to the degree of interdependence (McCann & Ferry, 1979; Kelley & Thubaut, 1978; Thompson, 1967). Second in place, the type of interdependence between parties can be positive or negative, depending on whether the parties perceive their respective goals and activities as compatible or incompatible (Alper et al., 1998; Deutsch, 1990; Janssen, Van de Vliert & Veenstra, 1999). Third in place, the distribution of interdependence can be equal or unequal. In the case of unequally distributed interdependence, one party experience that he or she is less dependent upon the other party than vice versa, which implies that they perceive a power advantage over the other party (cf. Nauta & Sanders, 2000; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Pfeffer, 1981; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

2.6.1 Degree of Interdependence

Thompson (1967) argues that when both parties are highly interdependent,

they should coordinate their goals and activities by informal and organic means, for instance informal communication, instead of formal and means like rules and procedures. When both parties are strongly interdependent, there are more issues to exchange and talk about between the parties. When the parties are only weakly interdependent, it means that both parties can perform without the need to coordinate with the other party. Rubin et al. (1994) argue that high interdependence is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, people who are highly interdependent will realize that they need each other now and in the future for their goal achievement, which increases the likelihood of constructive problem solving behaviour. On the other hand, high interdependence increases the likelihood of disagreement of interests, because the parties have to deal with a greater amount of coordination issues.

2.6.2 Type of Interdependence

Deutsch's interdependence theory (1949, 1973, 1980) argues that the way in which people believe their goals are related is an important variable affecting the dynamics and outcomes of their interaction. He points out that individual belief about how their goals are related drastically affect their expectations,

communication, exchange, problem solving, and productivity. Therefore, he identifies three perceptions of goal interdependence in cooperation (positive), competition (negative), and independence. There is cooperation goal interdependence when both parties want each other to pursue their goal effectively in order to reach their goals mutually. In contrast, people may perceive competitive goal interdependence when their goals are incompatible, therefore, if one wins, the other lose. If goals of both parties are unrelated, it is say to be independent goal interdependence which means that success of one party is neither failure nor success for the other parties. Simply speaking, when both parties are achieving a compatible goal, then they are positively interdependent, they are with negative interdependence if vice versa (Janssen et al., 1999; Nauta & Sanders, 2000; Alper et al., 1998).

Positive and Negative Interdependence Alper et al. (1998) suggests that cooperative goal interdependence facilitates the constructive discussion of various views. When parties perceive positive interdependence, there is a high potential for them to reach an agreement that serves their goals (Nauta & Sanders, 2000; Lax & Sebenius, 1986). Perceptions of positive interdependence are assumed to foster effective conflict management for three reasons which suggests by Deutsch

(1973). Firstly, the members may move toward their goals as a consequence of the actions of other members. Thus, they will develop a willingness to allow someone's action to be substitutable for their own actions, which is known as substitutability. Next, when they have move toward their gals as the resultant of others' actions, they will develop positive attitudes toward each other which is positive cathexis. Finally, they will facilitate each other in their goal attainment, the will be receptive to information, suggestions and ideas provided by other members that is the inducibility. These ideas are support by research that parties with strong positive interdependence are more open-minded, scrutinize and understandable to other's disagreement and positions, engage in more integrative and less distributive conflict behaviour, create higher-quality solutions, and develop more positive attitudes toward each other (e.g. Deutsch, 1973; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson et al., 1981; Tjosvold, 1990, 1991; Tjosvold, Wedley, & Field, 1986). A conflict is assumed to have effectiveness potential when the parties perceive their respective goals as positively interdependent. For instance, the perceived mutual exclusivity of activities is accompanies by perceptions of positive relation between the attainment of one's own and the others' goals such that the parties either stand or fall together (Janssen et al., 1999). While for parties with negative interdependence may perceive negative conflict of interests, and

this may lower the concern for the other party. Janssen et al. (1999) suggest that in case of negative interdependence, conflict issues are accompanied by a perceived negative relation between the attainment of one's own and the others' goals that if one party win, the others lose.

Positive Interdependence and Conflict There is conflict when parties perceive mutually incompatible activities. The conflict may be positive or negative. Positive conflict occurs when there are disagreements about the work to be done including issues such as allocation of resources, application of procedures, and the development and implementation of policies. Suggested by Amason (1996), positive conflict is can improve affective acceptance between the parties.

Negative conflict is due to identity-oriented issues (Janssen et al., 1999), therefore, the differences in personal or group beliefs and values. Jehn (1995) states that disagreement in personal matter, typically includes tension, animosity, and annoyance between the parties, do not related to the task itself directly.

Perceptions of positive interdependence motivate individual to engage in constructive and cooperative conflict behaviour such as problem solving, compromising and obliging when one party who has a high concern for the outcomes of the other party. While for negative interdependence evokes

destructive conflict handling style and it increases the likelihood of competitive conflict behaviour such as dominating and avoiding.

2.6.3 Distribution of Interdependence

An unequal distribution of interdependence implies that there is a power difference (power advantage) in favour of the less dependent party (Nauta & Sanders, 2000; Lawler, 1993; Pfeffer, 1981; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). People who perceive a power advantage over the other party tend to control the behaviour and outcomes of the other party. In case of parties with incompatible goals, people perceiving a power advantage over the other party tends to use he or her power to serve own goals at the expense of the goals of the other party. People who perceive a power advantage will therefore show dominating behaviour and will avoid to obliging behaviour which was demonstrated by several studies (e.g. Bacharach & Lawler, 1981; Dwyer & Walker, 1981; Hamner & Baird, 1978; Lawler, Ford & Blegen, 1988; McAllister, Bazerman & Fader, 1986; Olekalns, 1991).

2.7 Organizational Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

Organizational structure involves the design of the organization and how the organization operates. According to Merron (1995), organizational structure refers to how and organization utilizes its human resources to achieve the organization's goals. Duncan (1997) views the organizational structure as being linked to the organization's goals and needs. The basic elements of organizations are purposes, participants, acquisition and allocation of resources to accomplish goals, structural forms to divide and coordinate activities, and reliance on certain members to lead and manage others (Shafritz & Ott, 2001).

Although many authors have suggested that the interpersonal behaviour of employees is partly rooted in the structural characteristics of the organization (e.g. Baron & Kreps, 1999; House, Rousseau & Thomas-Hunt, 1995; James & Jones, 1976; Van de Vliert, 1998), research on this issue is still rather limited (House et al., 1995; Samson & Whybark, 1998). Among the various organizational characteristics that may affect the interpersonal behaviour of the individuals, therefore influence the organizational strategy, namely, the overall goal of the organization, which describes how the organization tries to compete with other organizations (Nauta & Sanders, 2000; Baron & Kreps, 1999; Bowman & Asch,

1996; Miller & Roth, 1994; Porter, 1980, 1985; Skinner, 1974; Wheelwright, 1984). The organization strategy of an organization is the integration of various organizational characteristics, such as structure, culture and technology. The strategy of an organization determines from how the organization is designed; how goals, activities, and people are divided over units; what type of communal norms and value are developed; and what kinds of production technologies are existed (Nauta & Sanders, 2000; Baron & Kreps, 1999; Chandler, 1962; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Porter, 1980; Skinner, 1974; Smith & Reece, 1999; Thompson, 1967).

Organizational strategies vary on a continuum from competing solely on low cost by offering cheap standard products or services made in high volumes with low variety, to competing on high customer service by offering expensive customized products or services made in low volumes with high variety (cf. Nauta & Sanders, 2000; Porter, 1980, 1985; Slack et al., 1998; Smith & Reece, 1999). Nauta and Sanders (2000) point out that a low cost strategy implies that the organization put its emphasis efficiency and cost minimization where an efficient way of organizing means that work processes are standardized and automated. The goals and activities of employees are coordinated in mechanistic and formal

ways, for instance, rules and procedures lay down for the exchange of resources between the parties. Employees are low in participation in decision making processes. Their job nature is relatively low in autonomous, simple and routine, such that a limited amount of communication is needed to coordinate the activities with other employees. Therefore, it is likely that these employees will show passive conflict behaviour, such as yielding and avoiding, when they come across with conflicting interests with other parties (cf. Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994).

Nauta and Sanders (2000) also state that a high customer service strategy implies that the organization emphasizes to adapt to “exotic” customer demands, in so doing, the organization is trying to maximize revenues by asking high prices for products or services that satisfies unique customer demands. Such customer-oriented strategy means that work processes cannot be standardized as the nature of activities are usually constantly-changing and unpredictable. Therefore, goals and activities have to be coordinated in organic and informal ways, that is, employees constantly discuss about the exchange of resources between the parties. They take the active role to participate in decision-making processes, and to perform high-autonomous, complex and non-routine jobs,

consequently, communication takes a significant part of the jobs of employees. As a result, when they encounter conflicting interests with other parties, the employees show active negotiation behaviours, such as problem solving and contending.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study is designed to explore the preferences for conflict management styles (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising) by property and facility management employees in different conflict incidents (positive and negative) in Hong Kong. In addition to that, the effects of difference in individual personalities, such as extraversion and agreeableness, on the selection of conflict management styles are evaluated in this study. Other factors, such as perceptions of high interdependence, perceptions of positive interdependence and power advantage of the employees, are also examined to determine how they might influence preferences for different conflict management styles. Different organization strategies, low cost strategy and high custom service strategy, are assessed as it is one of the critical variables for the manipulation of conflict management styles of the employees.

This chapter presents the methodology employed in this study; firstly, the proposed model for this study is developed. Secondly, the research questions and

hypotheses are given. Thirdly, this chapter provides a description of the participant sample being used. Fourthly, a description of the instruments being used for the data collection is offered in this chapter. Follow with the explanation of procedures used to implement the study. Finally, the methods of data analysis are identified in this chapter.

3.1 Development of Model

Before considering the theoretical and empirical support for the individual hypothesis, it is important to understand many scholars have concluded that there are similarities in characteristics and tendencies in conflict, together with the antecedents and outcomes of conflict behaviour. There are limited researches being carried out with regards to conflict management styles in the property and facility management industry. Based on the above discussion, a proposed model is developed as shown in Figure 3.1.

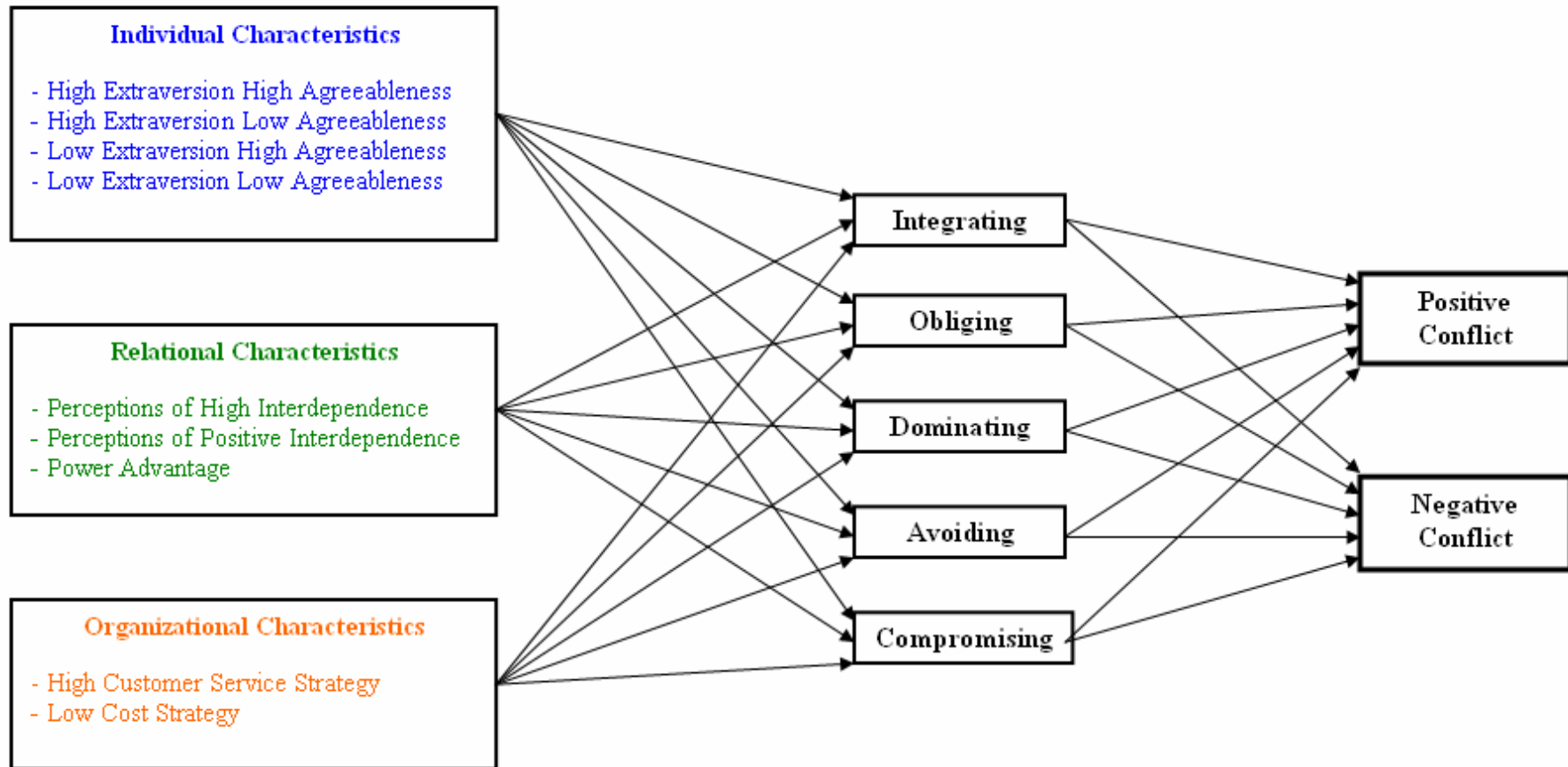


Figure 3.1 Proposed model for the relationship among different determinants and conflict management styles and relationship between manifest conflict and conflict management styles

3.2 Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study is aimed to investigate two research questions. The first research question intends to find out the relationship between conflict management styles (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising) and nature of conflict (positive and negative). The second research tries to explore the effects of different (individual, relational, and organizational) determinants on the preference of conflict management styles of the property and facility management employees. These questions are as follows:

Question 1: Is the conflict management style chosen by the party associated with the levels of conflict (positive or negative) that are apparent in a conflict incident in the property and facility management industry?

Question 2: What are the effects of individual characteristics (extraversion and agreeableness), relational characteristics (degree of interdependence, type of interdependence, and distribution of interdependence), and organizational characteristics (low cost strategy, and high customer service strategy) on determining conflict management styles of the property and facility management employees?

3.2.1 Hypothesis 1: Conflict Management Styles and Manifest Conflict

Research question 1 tries to investigate the relationship between conflict management style and nature of conflict incident, which leads to the formation of hypothesis 1.

The proposed model is a process model that serves to examine behaviours and outcomes in a particular conflict incident. In hypothesizing that conflict management styles determine the type of manifest conflict that is exhibited, this model corresponds in theory with the two process models discussed earlier (Pondy, 1967; Thomas, 1976).

The behaviour chosen by an individual when he or she is involved in a conflict incident will be determined in part the manner in which conflict is manifested. The manner in which conflict is managed is deemed important for decades. Thus the individual strategies for conflict management are important to the study of conflict. The proposed styles of conflict management in respect to the manifest conflict are shown as Figure 3.2.

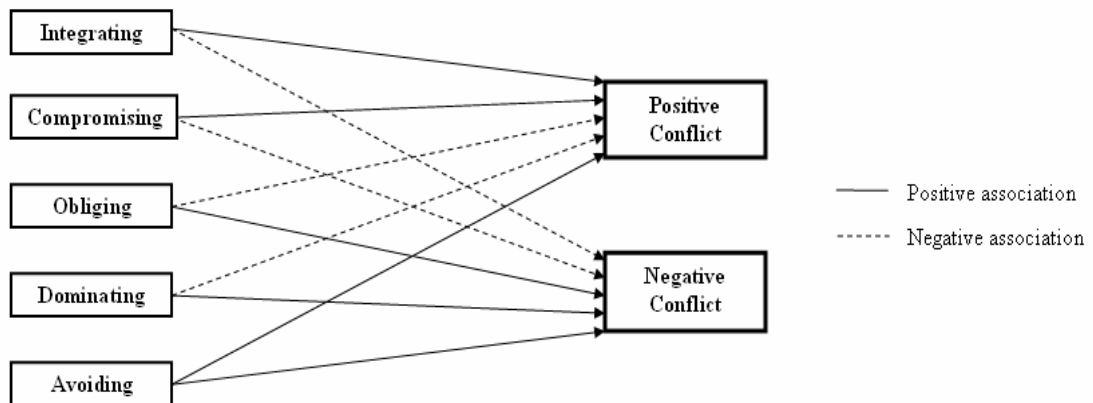


Figure 3.2 Proposed relationship between conflict management styles and manifest conflict

Hypothesis relating to Integrating Management Style and Manifest Conflict

The integrating management style shows behaviour of high concern for self and high concern for others (Rahim, 1983; Rahim & Magner, 1995). According to the relationship between the property and facility management employee and his or her client, it may quick and easy to induce conflict between them. However, if the employee wants the conflict incident to be handled in a way that both parties can achieve a win-win situation, he or she may raise out some suggestions or recommendations which lead to the satisfactory outcome. These proposal concerns in the conflicting issue to find out a proper solution to both of the parties but not on personal issues. Thomas (1976) states that if the client recognizes that

the employee is keen on creating solutions that benefit both parties, the client may feel less threatened by the incident and respond with similar behaviour.

Integrating conflict management style is the only style in which neither one of the party do not seek to achieve his or her goal on the expense of the other party. Using integrating conflict management style in a conflict incident can reduce role conflict, maximize profit, increase satisfaction, minimize misperception, and improve communication between the parties (Thomas, 1976). Therefore, based on this constructive interaction should cause a positive perceive outcome in a conflict incident, the corresponding hypothesis is:

H 1a: Integrating conflict management style is positively associated with positive conflict and negatively associated with negative conflict.

Hypothesis relating to Obliging Management Style and Manifest Conflict

Obliging conflict management style will be used when one party have low concern for self and high concern for the other party (Rahim, 1983; Rahim & Magner, 1995; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979). This will associate with a win-lose situation in the conflict incident. The other party may achieve his or her goal in

the expense of the party with low concern for self.

In some circumstances, when there is a conflict incident, if the employee does not give up all the issues that incompatible with those of the client, then the client may withdraw the service to other company. In this situation, the employee may perceive pressure from the company to satisfy the client in the form of price cutting or provide additional service without extra charge. Once the client gets concession from the employee successfully, he or she may ask for further price reduction or additional service in the future, which cause further stress on the employee. Therefore, such issue leads to the following hypothesis:

H 1b: Obliging conflict management style is negatively associated with positive conflict and positively associated with negative conflict.

Hypothesis relating to Dominating Management Style and Manifest Conflict

Individual using dominating conflict management style attempts to force the other party to comply with his or her wishes in the conflict incident. The party using dominating conflict management style is high concern for self and low concern for other party (Rahim, 1983; Rahim and Magner, 1995; Rahim &

Bonoma, 1979). When dominating management style is being used, a suspicious and antagonistic behaviour associates with a win-lose situation occurs.

The interaction between the employee and the client will become rude when the employee need to sacrifice his or her will, with anger and/or frustration that past from the previous conflict incident, or pressure from his or her supervisor to resolve the conflict incident in the favour position of the client in ignorance of his or her feelings. Consequently, the client encounters an impolite response from the employee, he or she may then feedback in an irritated way which worse the situation. For instance, the latent conflict issues will advance to active conflict in such cases (Thomas, 1976). Hence, it leads to the following hypothesis:

H 1c: Dominating conflict management style is negatively associated with positive conflict and positively associated with negative conflict.

Hypothesis relating to Avoiding Management Style and Manifest Conflict

Avoiding conflict management style will be used when the party is neither concern for self nor for other (Rahim, 1983; Rahim and Magner, 1995; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979). The party will demonstrate instinctive or deliberate withdrawal

behaviour to avoid conflict. Thomas (1976) finds out that, using avoiding management style to deal with inter-department conflict, the conflict incident will be settled in a less satisfactory way.

The employee will using this conflict management style and he or she feels frustrated that he or she does not has power to alter the relationship with the client. If the conflict incident continue and intensify, frustration will grow accordingly until there is as emotional explosion. This explosion of the employee does not construct to positive outcomes of the positive conflict but to negative conflict. However, taking into consideration of Chinese collectivism, Chinese usually apply passive conflict management style such as avoidance to handle frustration. Chinese tends to avoid conflicts in order to protect social face such that others will not experience to be challenged or questioned (Leung, 1997; Ting-Toomey, 1988). Thus, the hypothesis on this issue is:

H 1d: Avoiding conflict management style is positively associated with positive conflict and negatively associated with negative conflict.

Hypothesis relating to Compromising Management Style and Manifest Conflict

Compromising conflict management style is concessions that make by both

parties (Rahim & Magner, 1996; Thomas, 1976). The parties show high concern for self and high concern for other (Rahim, 1983; Rahim & Magner, 1995; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979). Both parties may gain some and give up some of his or her considerations when making the best possible solution. Integrating and compromising conflict management styles show similar outcomes in a conflict incident and these outcomes are beneficial to both parties (Dant & Schul, 1992). When any one or both of the party want to maintain a long-term relationship, integrating management style will be used. In contrast, to maintain a relatively short-term relationship, compromising conflict management style will be applied. Thomas (1976) argues that true solution will be form if and only if integrating management style is being used. In reality, compromising conflict management style may create some additional latent conflict issues or sources of frustration between the parties.

When the employee come across with a conflict incident, if he or she applies compromising conflict management style, then he or she would compare his or her best possible outcome with the client's one. As both parties cannot attain everything that they desire, the employee may give priority to the essentials of the outcome to find out the top priority element. Respecting to the willingness of

the employee to give up some of the essentials, the client may give up some of his or her essentials. This gaining and giving up some of the essentials, both parties will have a positive perception of the outcome which generate the hypothesis of:

H 1e: Compromising conflict management style is positively associated with positive conflict and negatively associated with negative conflict.

3.2.2 Hypotheses 2 - 6: Different Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

Research question 2 intends to examine the relationship between the preference of conflict management styles and different determinants such as individual, relational, and organizational characteristics of the property and facility management employees. Therefore, it generates four hypotheses in respect of the four determinants: Hypothesis 2 relates to personality (extraversion and agreeableness) and conflict management styles; Hypotheses 3, 4 and 5 study the relationship between conflict management style and (a) perceptions of high interdependence, (b) perceptions of positive interdependence, and (c) power advantage, respectively; and Hypothesis 6 analyzes the effect of organizational

strategies (low cost, and high customer service) on the selection of conflict management styles.

Hypotheses relating to Individual Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

Blake and Mouton (1964, 1970) propose the two factors model in explaining conflict behaviour of concern for the production of results and concern for people for managerial conflict incidents. But later in 1970, Blake and Mouton suggest that the concerns and the resulting conflict management styles can also be apply to people and to social conflicts other than managerial conflicts. Rubin et al. (1994) defines self concern as “placing importance on one’s own interests in the realm under dispute,” and other concern as “placing importance on other’s interests feeling responsible for the quality of other’s outcomes” (p.30). Some scholars label the dimension as assertiveness, “attempting to satisfy one’s own concerns,” and cooperativeness, “attempting to satisfy others’ concerns.” (Van de Vliert & Euwma, 1994, Thomas, 1976, 1988; Thomas & Pondy, 1977). For example, individual with a strong concern for both parties’ outcome tends to use problem solving, whereas, individual with strong concern for one’s own outcome

but a weak concern for others' outcome leads to the use of contending style.

Extraversion is positively related to the degree to which people show concern for their goals, and that agreeableness is positively related to the degree to which people show concern for other's goals. In line with the dual concern model (Blake & Mouton, 1964, 1970; Rahim, 1983, 1992, 2002; Rubin et al., 1994; Van de Vliert, 1998, Janssen & Van de Vliert, 1996), the hypotheses are formulated as follow and show in Figure 3.3:

Hypothesis 2: In a conflict incident, individual with combination of high extraversion and high agreeableness shows integrating behaviour (H2a); individual with combination of low extraversion and high agreeableness shows obliging behaviour (H2b); individual with combination of high extraversion and low agreeableness shows dominating behaviour (H2c); individual with combination of low extraversion and low agreeableness shows avoiding behaviour (H2d); and individual with combination of high extraversion and high agreeableness shows compromising behaviour (H2e).

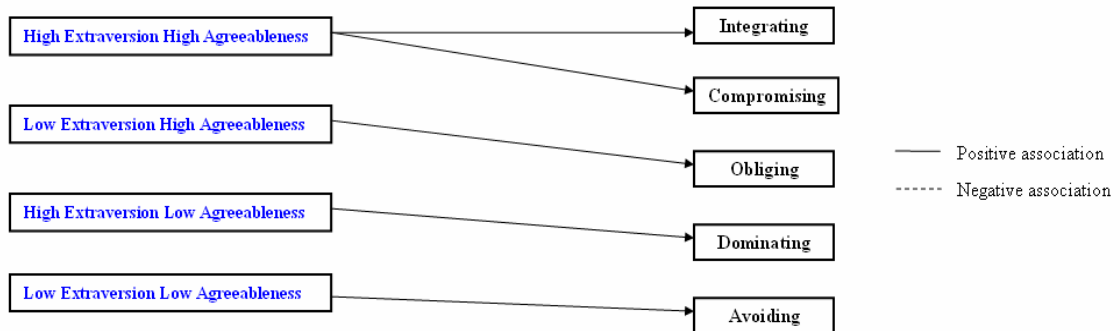


Figure 3.3 Proposed relationship between conflict management styles and individual characteristics

Hypotheses relating to Relational Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

Interdependence is the key element of relational characteristics, it determine the character of the relationship between property and facility employees and their clients; and the relationship between relational characteristic and each of the conflict management style are shown in Figure 3.4. Rubin et al. (1994) state that individual who are highly interdependent will realize that he or she need each other in performing the task now and in the future. Van de Vliert and Euwena (1994) suggest that when individual perceive a high degree of interdependence, he or she will use active styles of conflict management such as integrating, compromising and dominating. In contrary, if the individual perceive a lower

degree of interdependence, he or she will adopt passive management styles like obliging and avoiding. The following hypotheses are formulated regarding to high interdependence:

Hypothesis 3: In a conflict incident, individual perceives high interdependence is positively associates with integrating conflict management style (H3a), dominating conflict management style (H3b), and compromising conflict management style (H3c); while he or she is negatively associates with obliging conflict management style (H3d) and avoiding conflict management style (H3e).

When both parties perceive compatible goals to be achieved, they are positively interdependent (Deutsch, 1973). When the employee perceive a positively interdependence, he or she will tends to reach an agreement with the client to attain their goals mutually. Individual having high concern for the outcomes of the other party will encourage cooperative conflict behaviour as suggested by Thomas (1976, 1988), and Thomas and Pondy (1977). Therefore, for employee who shows concerning the outcomes of the client are associates with positive interdependence. While for low concern to client's outcomes will associate with

negative interdependence. Hence, the following hypotheses are formulated:

Hypothesis 4: In a conflict incident, individual perceives positive interdependence is positively associates with integrating conflict management style (H4a), obliging conflict management style (H4b), and compromising conflict management style (H4c); whereas he or she is negatively associates with dominating conflict management style (H4d), and avoiding conflict management style (H4e).

When there is a power distance between both parties, it will be said that there is an unequal distribution of interdependent within the parties (Pfeffer, 1981; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Individual who perceive a power advantage tends to control or dominate the behaviour of the other party. In addition, individual who have an advance position are likely to attain his or her goals at the expense of other party goals. Employee who possesses positional merit or expertise will show dominating behaviour whereas employee who have a weak position will use obliging conflict management style. Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

Hypothesis 5: In a conflict incident, individual with power advantage over the other party is positively associates with dominating conflict management style (H5a) while he or she is negatively associates with obliging conflict management style (H5b).

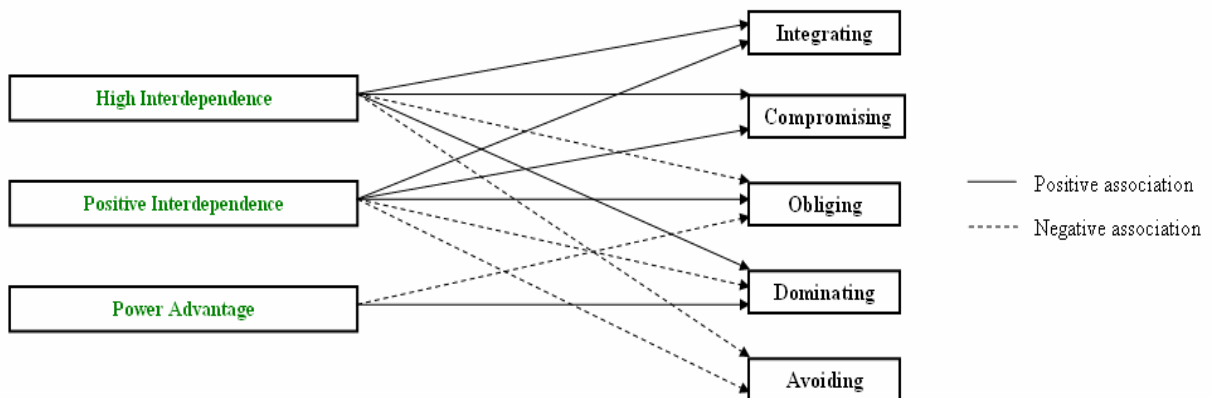


Figure 3.4 Proposed relationship between conflict management styles and relational characteristics

Hypotheses relating to Organizational Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

Other than the personality differences of the individual and interdependence which relates to the job nature affect the preference of conflict management styles, organizational strategy that used by the property and facility management companies also varies the selection of conflict management style by their employees. For company that tries to compete on low cost strategy, by providing

cheap and standard services, emphasizes on efficiency and cost minimization. Employees that working in such type of companies are seldom have chance to participate in decision making activities but simple and routine tasks. These employees tend to demonstrate passive conflict behaviour (Nauta & Sanders, 2000), such as obliging and avoiding. On the other hand, companies using high customer service strategy, by offering unique customer service, do not have standardized process. The employees are active in exchanging information and resources, and participating decision making activities. Therefore, these employees show active conflict management behaviour, such as integrating, dominating, and compromising conflict management styles in the conflict incidents.

Hypothesis 6: In a conflict incident, individual's company with a high customer service strategy is positively associates and low cost strategy is negatively associates with integrating conflict management style (H6a), dominating conflict management style (H6b), and compromising conflict management style (H6c); while company with high customer service strategy is negatively associates and low cost strategy is positively associates with obliging conflict management style (H6d), and avoiding conflict management style (H6e).

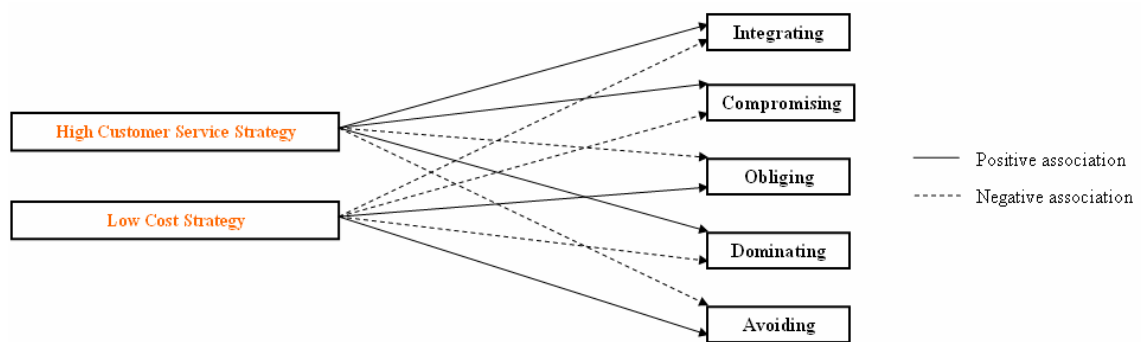


Figure 3.5 Proposed relationship between conflict management styles and organizational characteristics

3.3 Rationale of Methodology

The intention of this research is to examine the relationship between conflict and conflict management styles, and to test the relationship between each conflict management style and personality, interdependence, and company strategy. By understanding these two relationships, employees can handle conflicts with their client better and more efficient as many researches keen on investigating the correlation of conflict and conflict management, the application of each conflict management style. This is agreed by many researchers that proper managing conflict can create positive outcomes such as organizational learning and quality relationship between parties.

There are two approaches for research, qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative research approach can produce informative and quality samples, however, due to time limit, it does not involve large amount of samples for research (Ng, 1995). For the other research approach, quantitative research can maximize the data in terms of precision, systematization, repeatability and comparability (Tucker et al., 1991). By consideration in time limit in this research and to facilitate comparison, quantitative methodology is adopted in this research. Questionnaire is being used for analysis in this research.

3.4 Selection of Methodology

Questionnaire is selected to collecting data from respondents. Questionnaire can be sent to large amount of respondents depending on the sample size. If the research required a large sample size, more respondents are needed. Hence, questionnaire can allow large sample size (Li, 2006). In addition, questionnaire can achieve efficiency as they can send to the target respondents in a period of time, and then return back to the researcher on time. In term of bulk production of questionnaire and sending the questionnaire to the respondents pool by pool, printing and transportation costs can be reduced (Li, 2006). Finally, qualitative research required time for the researcher to reach, to ask questions and wait for

the answers from the respondents. Unlike to this method, quantitative research approach only requires the researcher to give the questionnaire to the respondents and time is given to them for the completion of questionnaire. After that, questionnaire will be returned at the agreed time, therefore, time can be saved.

Nevertheless, there are some drawbacks in using questionnaire. If the response rate is low, even the sample size is large, the reliability of the result may reduce. According to different perceptions of the respondents, they may interpret the questions in different way or even misunderstand the questions which lead to inaccurate data. Consequently, this will affect the reliability and quality of the data. Lastly, respondents may hide their true feeling when answering the questions which hinder the reliability of the research. These problems can be rectified by setting clear guidelines for answering the questionnaire and getting consent from the respondents to ensure the response rate.

Questionnaire is chosen to be the tool to collect data for this study. The questionnaire designs in this study consists of six sections, explicitly conflict, conflict management styles, personality, interdependence, and organizational strategy assessment instruments, and demographic section. This questionnaire set will be sent to the target group to acquire data for this research.

3.5 Population and Sample

In order to carry out the examination of relationship between conflict and conflict management styles together with the correlation between the preference of conflict management styles and three distinct characteristics of the employees in the property and facility management industry. Property and facility management companies therefore will be the focus of this research. Property and facility management companies are search from the list from The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, The Hong Kong Institute of Facility Management, and the Association of Property and Facility Managers, however, there is no information about the property and facility management companies provide by The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors. Therefore, the samples for this research are identified from the companies listed from The Hong Kong Institute of Facility Management (<http://hkifm.org.hk>) and the Association of Property and Facility Managers (<http://www.apfm.org.sg>). Forty companies are randomly selected from the lists (see Appendix 8). They are being selected because these companies offer different organizational structures and company strategies for comparison. Questionnaires are sent to electronic mails of the target group together with a brief of the aims and purpose of this research, and instruction of answering the

questions in the questionnaire is stated in the electronic mails.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

Survey research is defined as the “use of a systematic method to collect data directly from respondents regarding facts, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours of interest to researchers, and the analysis of these data using quantitative methods” (Shi, 2000). According to Wimmer and Dominick (2000), a survey is a research method used to gain a large amount of data on a certain group of people who are representative of some larger group of people of interest to the researcher. Survey research is highly constructed and often very detailed. This structure allows the researcher to study a variety of people in realistic settings, which makes it possible to obtain a great deal of information on the representative population (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000).

To facilitate the response rate, the respondents are requested to complete the online English survey instrument. Approximately twenty minutes was required for respondents to provide the information requested. The respondents are asked to answer seven items to investigate the nature of conflict incident (for details,

please refer to Ch 3.8.1); thirty-five items of the Rahim Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) to identify the conflict management styles that use by the respondents in the conflict incident (for details, please refer to Ch 3.8.2); sixteen items on the Big Five personality measurement to identify the personality combination of the respondents (for details, please refer to Ch 3.8.3); sixteen items for the measurement of interdependence that perceives by the respondents (for details, please refer to Ch 3.8.4); and four items to find out the organizational strategy that adopt by the respondents' companies (for details, please refer to Ch 3.8.5). In addition, the respondent is asked for age, gender, position and demographic questions. Failure to complete any question on the instrument render the respondent's data unacceptable for use in the research. The questionnaire was administered through a electronic survey which is used commonly by researchers. In this survey, the questionnaire is embedded in the e-mail and e-mail messages are sent inviting potential respondents to complete the questionnaire.

There are numerous advantages and disadvantages to electronic surveys. The advantages include environmental friendly for eliminate the use of paper works; less expensive to send questionnaires online that to pay for postages or for interviewers that incurs transaction costs; easier to make changes to questionnaire

and to copy and sort data; faster delivery to recipients for few seconds only, rather than in days as with traditional postage, and without geographic implications; numbers of study shows that response rates with electronic survey are higher than with paper surveys or interviews; respondents may answer more honestly with electronic survey than with paper surveys or interviews (Oppermann, 1995); respondents can answer and return surveys with hours as per the speed of network; the chance of missing survey reduce; and finally better confidentiality (Carr, 1991).

The implications of electronic surveys are that population and samples are limited to those with access to computer and online network; online networks are open to access, therefore, difficult to ensure anonymity and confidentiality; and potential technical problems with hardware and software.

3.7 Layout of Questionnaire

A cover letter is embedded in the electronic mail (e-mail) for the invitation of participation. It aims to explain the objectives of this research and purpose of questionnaire. The cover letter for the questionnaire is attached in Appendix 1.

The questionnaire consists of six sections. Section 1 is to measure the intention and preference of the respondents to use the five conflict management styles. Rahim's Organizational Conflict Inventory –II (ROCI-II) is decided to be used in this questionnaire. There are seven items for the assessment of each of the conflict management styles. Please find the layout of section 1 in Appendix 2.

Section 2 is to identify the nature of conflict incident and level of conflict that encounter by the respondents in the property and facility management companies in Hong Kong. Jehn's (1992) measure of positive and negative conflict is used in this research. For the layout of section 2, please refer to Appendix 3.

In section 3, degree, type, and distribution of interdependence will be measured. In this research, an instrument set develop by Van der Vegt (1998) is used. Sixteen items are divided into three subsections for assessing different dimensions. For the layout of section 3, please refer to Appendix 4.

Two of the personality Big-five factor, extraversion and agreeableness are being assessed in Section 4. Levels of extraversion and agreeableness of the respondents are evaluated by a instrument that develops by Buchanan (2001), there are totally sixteen questions, nine for extraversion and seven for agreeableness. Please refer to Appendix 4 for the layout of section 5.

Section 5 is to identify the strategy that adopted by the respondents' company. Nauta and Sanders (2000) develop an instrument to measure low cost strategy, and high customer service strategy. Layout of section 5 can be found in Appendix 6.

The last section, section 6, is a demographic section that uses to obtain respondents age, gender, position, firm size, year of experience in property and facility industry and etc. Appendix 7 shows the layout of section 6 in this questionnaire.

3.8 Instrumentation

3.8.1 Conflict

Instrument Jehn (1992, 1995, 2001), and Shah and Jehn (1993) develop a set of scales to measure conflict in a group setting. The scales attempts to measure three types of conflict, including negative conflict, which is the emotional conflict between the members of a group. The second type of conflict that the instrument seeks to measure was positive conflict, which is disagreement about the work the group is trying to perform. The third type of conflict is process conflict, which is

disagreement over the method by which the work is completed, including work division and responsibility.

The instrument discusses above have attempted to measure conflict in the inter-organizational environments of franchisers and franchisees, as well as manufacturers and dealers, in an intra-organizational setting, and in a group setting. However, each scale has something in common. Each seems to define conflict from a negative aspect only. These definitions do not correspond with the recent findings (Amason 1996; Menon, Beharadwaj, and Howell 1996) that indicate that conflict is comprised of two separate constructs, positive conflict and negative conflict.

A scale developed by Jehn (1992) for her doctoral dissertation research measures both positive and negative conflict. Four items attempted to measure negative conflict and reflect the understanding that negative conflict becomes personal and negative very quickly. Three items attempted to measure positive conflict and indicated the awareness that positive conflict involves disagreement about the conflict issue and remains impersonal. Jehn (1993) scale measures both positive and negative conflict and has been shown to be sufficiently reliable. This seven items scale is the only scale found that measured both, and will be

used in therefore be used in this study. The seven items used to measure conflict are listed below:

- PC 1 - How many disagreements over different ideas were there between you and this person during this conflict incident?
- PC 2 - How many differences about the content of the decision were there between you and this person during this conflict incident?
- PC 3 - How much tension was there between you and this person during this conflict incident?
- PC 4 - How many general differences of opinion were there between you and this person during this conflict incident?
- NC 1 - How much anger was there between you and this person during the course of this conflict incident?
- NC 2 - How much person friction was there between you and this person during this conflict incident?
- NC 3 - How much of a personality clash was there between you and this person during this conflict incident?

Reliability Jehn (1994) use the scale in a study of group conflict. The coefficient alpha for the negative conflict scale in the Jehn (1994) study is 0.89 and the coefficient alpha for the positive conflict scale is 0.85. Amason (1996) also used the scale in study of group conflict, he assesses the scale using

exploratory factor analysis and find that the four negative conflict items produces a reliability coefficient of 0.86, while positive conflict items produces a reliability coefficient of 0.79. The two factors together explain over 70 percent of the total variation in the seven items.

3.8.2 Conflict Management Styles

Instrument The Rahim's Organizational Conflict Inventory –II (ROCI-II) is originally designs to measure conflict with superiors and subordinates. Currently, there are three forms available for the measurement of management styles for interpersonal conflict with superiors, subordinates and peers which are Form A, Form B and Form C, respectively. In this study, superiors version (Form A) is being adopted which consists of thirty-five Likert items reflecting five conflict management styles.

The ROC-II (Form A) distributes across five subscales that measure the integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising styles of managing conflict with one's client. There are seven items for each conflict management style and each item has a 7-point scale (Where 1=Strongly Disagree; 3=Neither

Agree Nor Disagree; 7=Strongly Agree), and when scoring the scale, the responses to the items within each subscale are averaged. Higher scores on each subscale thus indicate greater use of that style of managing conflict with one's client.

Integrating is associated with openness, exchange of information and examination of differences to reach an effective solution that is acceptable to both parties. Obliging is associated with an attempt to play down the differences and emphasize commonalities to satisfy the concern of the other party. Dominating is associated with forcing behaviour with a win-lose orientation. Avoiding is associated with withdrawal, buck passing or sidestepping situations. Compromising is associated with sharing, whereby both parties give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision. To obtain scores, the seven items for each component were summed separately and a mean for each component of conflict management style was calculated. The thirty-five items used for the scale are listed below:

INTER 1 - I tried to investigate an issue with this person to find a solution acceptable to us.

INTER 2 - I tried to integrate my ideas with those of this person to come up with a decision jointly.

- INTER 3 - I tried to work with this person to find solutions to a problem which satisfied our expectations.
- INTER 4 - I exchanged accurate information with this person.
- INTER 5 - I tried to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.
- INTER 6 - I collaborated with this person to come up with decision acceptable to us.
- INTER 7 - I tried to work with this person for a proper understanding of problem.
- OBLIG 1 - I tried to satisfy the needs of this person.
- OBLIG 2 - I accommodated the wished of this person.
- OBLIG 3 - I gave in to the wishes of this person.
- OBLIG 4 - I sometimes helped this person to make a decision in his favour.
- OBLIG 5 - I allowed concessions to this person.
- OBLIG 6 - I went along with the suggestions of this person.
- OBLIG 7 - I tried to satisfy the expectations of this person.
- DOMIN 1 - I held on to my solution to problem.
- DOMIN 2 - I used my influence to get my ideas accepted.
- DOMIN 3 - I used my authority to make a decision in my favour.
- DOMIN 4 - I argued my case with this person to show the merits of my position.

- DOMIN 5 - I used my expertise to make a decision in my favour.
- DOMIN 6 - I was generally firm in pursuing my side of the issue.
- DOMIN 7 - I sometimes used my power to win a competitive situation.
- AVOID 1 - I attempted to avoid being "put on the spot" and tried to keep my conflict with this person to myself.
- AVOID 2 - I avoided open discussion of my differences with this person.
- AVOID 3 - I tried to stay away from disagreement with this person.
- AVOID 4 - I avoided an encounter with this person.
- AVOID 5 - I tried to keep my disagreement with this person to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.
- AVOID 6 - I tried to avoid unpleasant exchanges with this person.
- AVOID 7 - I avoided an argument with this person.
- COMP 1 - I gave some to get some.
- COMP 2 - I tried to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.
- COMP 3 - I won some and I lost some.
- COMP 4 - I tried to play down our differences to reach a compromise.
- COMP 5 - I proposed a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.
- COMP 6 - I negotiated with this person so that a compromise can be reached.
- COMP 7 - I used "give and take" so that a compromise can be made.

Reliability Reliability estimates for the five scales of conflict management styles and Pearson's correlations between their five scaled are shown in Table 3.1. These reliability estimates indicate that the scale has an acceptable level of reliability.

Rahim and Magner (1995) test the instrument again using five different samples. The goodness-of-fit index provides by structural equation modeling ranges from 0.82 to 0.89 while adjusted goodness-of-fit index ranges from 0.78 to 0.87. The results provide evidence of both the convergent and discriminate validities of the subscales in diverse samples.

	Test-Retest	Cronback Alpha	Spearman-Brown Reliability	Guttman Lambda	Kristof's Unbiased Reliability
Integrating	0.83	0.77	0.73	0.77	0.77
Compromising	0.60	0.72	0.67	0.73	0.73
Obliging	0.81	0.72	0.71	0.73	0.72
Dominating	0.76	0.72	0.71	0.73	0.72
Avoiding	0.79	0.75	0.71	0.76	0.76

Table 3.1 Reliability Scale Analyses (Rahim, 1983)

3.8.3 Individual Characteristics

Instrument The relationship between the “Big Five” factors of personality (Barelds & Luteijn, 1999; Hendriks, 1997; Hendriks, Hofstee & De Raad, 1999; Hofstee, De Raad & Goldberg, 1992; Hofstee & Hendriks, 1998; McCrae & John, 1992; Perugini & Ercolani, 1998; Van der Zee, Buunk, Sanderman, Botke & Van den Bergh, 1999; Wiggins, 1996) and conflict management styles is examined. The Big Five model is being used for three reasons. Firstly, this model is acknowledged currently as a general and broadly accepted model for describing individual differences. Secondly, although the Big Five model has frequently been applied to the study of social interaction, it has seldom been applied to the study of conflict management style. Finally, personality factors are assumed to be related to social motives (McClintock, 1977; Messick & McClintock, 1968) where social motives refer to the desired distribution of outcomes between oneself and other people, and such motives have been proved to influence conflict management behaviour (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995).

The Big Five personality factors (individual characteristic) of the employees was measured by a questionnaire developed by Buchanan (2001), which consists of forty one items, as only extraversion and agreeableness are being tested in this dissertation, only sixteen items are used, nine items for the measurement of

extraversion and seven items for the measurement of agreeableness of the individual as listed below:

- EXTRA 1 - I see myself as the life of the party.
- EXTRA 2- I see myself as skilled in handling social situations.
- EXTRA 3 - I see myself as don't like to draw attention to myself.
- EXTRA 4 - I see myself as make friends easily.
- EXTRA 5 - I see myself as know how to captivate people.
- EXTRA 6 - I see myself as don't talk a lot.
- EXTRA 7 - I see myself as feel comfortable around people.
- EXTRA 8 - I see myself as have little to say.
- EXTRA 9 - I see myself as keep in the background.
- AGREE 1 - I see myself as respect others.
- AGREE 2 - I see myself as insult people.
- AGREE 3 - I see myself as believe that others have good intentions.
- AGREE 4 - I see myself as accept people as they are.
- AGREE 5 - I see myself as get back at others.
- AGREE 6 - I see myself as cut others to pieces.
- AGREE 7 - I see myself as have a good word for everyone.

Reliability The reliability of scales is acceptable that the Cronbach's alpha for extraversion and agreeableness is 0.88 and 0.76, respectively (Buchanan, Goldberg, & Johnson, 1999).

3.8.4 Relational Characteristics

Instrument For the measurement of interdependence, sixteen items developed by Van der Vegt are used (1998). This analysis exposes the three theoretically distinguished notions of the degree, type, and distribution of interdependence. The details of the items as shown in below:

- HIND 1 - For doing my job, I need information from this person.
- HIND 2 - For doing this person's job, he needs information from me.
- HIND 3 - I am very dependent on this person for doing my job.
- HIND 4 - This person is very dependent on me for doing his job.
- HIND 5 - To do my job well, I have to collaborate closely with this person.
- HIND 6 - To do this person's job well, he has to collaborate closely with me.
- PIND 1 - When this person reaches his goal, it becomes easier for me to reach my goals.
- PIND 2 - It is favourable for me which this person is successful.
- PIND 3 - When this person reaches his goals, it becomes more difficult for me to reach my goals.
- PIND 4 - What this person wants to reach correspond with what I want to reach.
- PIND 5 - Things get better for me when this person excels in his work.

PIND 6 - When this person excels in his work, things get worse for me.

PWADV 1 - For doing the job, this person more strongly depends on me than that I depend on this person.

PWADV 2 - For doing the job, I need more strongly information from this person than this person need information from me.

PWADV 3 - I am very dependent on this person for doing my job.

Reliability The reliabilities of degree and type of interdependence are sufficient (Nauta & Sanders, 2000). The average alpha coefficient for the perceptions of high interdependence is 0.81 while for perceptions of positive interdependence, the average alpha coefficient is 0.84 (Nauta & Sanders, 2000).

3.8.5 Organization Characteristics

Instrument For the assessment of kinds of service being offered by the organization to their client, company strategy, four items that set up by Nauta and Sanders (2000) are used. This explores two from of company strategies including low cost strategy and high customer service strategy as shown in the following:

ORGC 1 - Our company competing with others solely on low cost

service.

ORGC 2 - Our company emphasis on efficiency and on minimizing costs as much as possible.

ORGH 1 - Our company competing with others on high customer service.

ORGH 2 - Our company emphasis on high quality service that satisfy unique customer demands.

3.9 Analysis of Data

Hypothesis 1 seeks to examine the relationship between the independent variables, which are the five conflict management styles, and one dependent variable, which is the manifest conflict, at a time. Hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 aim to study the relationship between individual, relational and organizational characteristics at the independent variables to each conflict management style.

Data is gathered from the respondents by collecting the questionnaires. The data from the responses are analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 11.5 (SPSS 11.5) software program. In the questionnaire, the ranking of each questions range from 1 to 7, except for the section asking for the perceptions of high and positive interdependence of the respondents. The respondents are request to give a ranking in answering each question. Then, the scores are

calculated in each of the conflict incident (positive or negative); five conflict management styles (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising); personality (extraversion and agreeableness); interdependences (degree, type and, distribution); and organizational strategy (low cost, and high customer service) in a spreadsheet.

Computation of Cronbach's Alpha to establish the reliability of the five dependent variables used in this study (conflict management styles, personality, degree of interdependence, type of interdependence, distribution of interdependence, and organizational strategy).

The arranged data will be used to carry out two analyses for the examination of the research objectives. The first analysis seeks to study if there is any significant relationship between conflict and conflict management styles for research objective 1. The other analysis tries to test if there is any significant correlation between each conflict management styles and personality, correlation between conflict management styles and interdependence, and correlation between conflict management styles and company's strategy for research objective 2. Linear regression is being use to test these relationships.

3.9.1 Analysis 1 (Research Objective 1)

In section, the relationship between the nature of conflict and the five conflict management styles will be examined. The relationship is study in two folds, positive conflict and conflict management styles, and negative conflict management and conflict management styles.

In investigation of correlation between positive conflict and conflict management styles, the average scores of positive conflict subscale and each of the conflict management styles subscale, namely integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising, are calculated. For the examination of relationship between negative conflict and conflict management styles, the average scores of negative conflict subscale is computed in a similar manner. Linear regression will be used to examine if there is any significant relationship between the variables. The regression equations to test for these relationships are shown as following:

Positive Conflict and Conflict Management Styles The first dependent variable to be tested is positive conflict and the five conflict management styles served as the independent variables. The regression equation is expressed as:

$$PC = \beta + \beta_1 \text{INTER} + \beta_2 \text{OBLIG} + \beta_3 \text{DOMIN} + \beta_4 \text{AVOID} + \beta_5 \text{COMP} + \varepsilon$$

Where PC = Positive conflict

INTER = Integrating conflict management style

OBLIG = Obliging conflict management style

DOMIN = Dominating conflict management style

AVOID = Avoiding conflict management style

COMP = Compromising conflict management style

Negative Conflict and Conflict Management Styles Negative conflict is the second dependent variable and the preferences for each conflict management styles of the employees served as independent variables. The regression equation is expressed as:

$$NC = \beta + \beta_1 \text{INTER} + \beta_2 \text{OBLIG} + \beta_3 \text{DOMIN} + \beta_4 \text{AVOID} + \beta_5 \text{COMP} + \varepsilon$$

Where NC = Negative conflict

INTER = Integrating conflict management style

OBLIG = Obliging conflict management style

DOMIN = Dominating conflict management style

AVOID = Avoiding conflict management style

COMP = Compromising conflict management style

3.9.2 Analysis 2 (Research Objective 2)

In analysis 2, the correlations between each conflict management styles and different characteristics will be examined. There are three characteristics, firstly, the individual characteristics of the respondents including extraversion and agreeableness. Secondly, relational characteristics of the respondents regarding to their conflicting parties consists of degree of interdependence, type of interdependence, and distribution of interdependence. Lastly, organizational characteristics of respondents' company, for instance, low cost strategy and high customer service strategy.

To carry out these five relationships, the average scores of the three characteristics, extraversion subscale, agreeableness subscale, perceptions of high interdependence subscale, perceptions of positive interdependence subscale, power advantage subscale, low cost strategy subscale, and high customer service strategy subscale, are calculated. To test whether or not there is any significant relationship between the variables, linear regression will be used. The regression models to examine these relationships are shown as follow:

Integrating Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics

Integrating conflict management style is the dependent variable and the three

characteristics are the independent variables. The regression equation is expressed as:

$$\text{INTER} = \beta + \beta_1 \text{HEHA} + \beta_2 \text{HINT} + \beta_3 \text{PINT} + \beta_4 \text{ORGH} + \beta_5 \text{ORGC} + \varepsilon$$

Where INTER = Integrating conflict management style

HEHA = High extraversion and high agreeableness

HINT = Perceptions of high interdependence

PINT = Perceptions of positive interdependence

ORGH = High customer service strategy

ORGC = Low cost strategy

Obliging Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics

Obliging conflict management style is being test as the dependent variable in this regression. The regression equation is expressed as:

$$\text{OBLIG} = \beta + \beta_1 \text{LEHA} + \beta_2 \text{HINT} + \beta_3 \text{PINT} + \beta_4 \text{PW} + \beta_5 \text{ORGH} + \beta_6 \text{ORGC} + \varepsilon$$

Where OBLIG = Obliging conflict management style

LEHA = High extraversion and high agreeableness

HINT = Perceptions of high interdependence

PINT = Perceptions of positive interdependence

PW = Power advantage

ORGH = High customer service strategy

ORGC = Low cost strategy

Dominating Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics

Dominating conflict management style as the dependent variable will be tested in the fifth regression. The regression equation is expressed as:

$$\text{DOMIN} = \beta + \beta_1 \text{HELA} + \beta_2 \text{HINT} + \beta_3 \text{PINT} + \beta_4 \text{PW} + \beta_5 \text{ORGH} + \beta_6 \text{ORGC} + \varepsilon$$

Where DOMIN = Dominating conflict management style

HELA = High extraversion and high agreeableness

HINT = Perceptions of high interdependence

PINT = Perceptions of positive interdependence

PW = Power advantage

ORGH = High customer service strategy

ORGC = Low cost strategy

Avoiding Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics The

sixth dependent variable to be tested is avoiding conflict management style. The regression equation is expressed as:

$$\text{AVIOD} = \beta + \beta_1 \text{LELA} + \beta_2 \text{HINT} + \beta_3 \text{PINT} + \beta_4 \text{ORGH} + \beta_5 \text{ORGC} + \varepsilon$$

Where AVOID = Avoiding conflict management style

LELA = High extraversion and high agreeableness

HINT = Perceptions of high interdependence

PINT = Perceptions of positive interdependence

ORGH = High customer service strategy

ORGC = Low cost strategy

Compromising Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics In

the last regression, compromising conflict management style is the dependent variable. The regression equation is expressed as:

$$\text{COMP} = \beta + \beta_1 \text{HEHA} + \beta_2 \text{HINT} + \beta_3 \text{PINT} + \beta_4 \text{ORGH} + \beta_5 \text{ORGC} + \varepsilon$$

Where COMP = Compromising conflict management style

HEHA = High extraversion and high agreeableness

HINT = Perceptions of high interdependence

PINT = Perceptions of positive interdependence

ORGH = High customer service strategy

ORGC = Low cost strategy

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to identify the preference of conflict management styles in different conflict incidents and to examine the relationships between conflict management styles and individual, relational, and organizational characteristics of the property and facility management employees.

In this chapter, the reliabilities of instruments are tested first. Following that are the results of the analyses. Linear regression analysis is used to test the proposed hypotheses. In this study, there are seven separate regressions model being tested. Two regression models try to answer research question 1 and the rests seek to answer research question 2. The results of these models will be reported in the following section.

4.1 Response Rate

Out of the 250 surveys that are electronically mailed to the property and

facility management companies, 187 are deliverable and 44 are completed (24%).

The discrepancy between mailed surveys and deliverable surveys are due to failure of maintaining up to date member information and some of recipients do not have mail account and/or do not have access to network. In addition to that, inaccurate recording of individual electronic mail (e-mail) address can result in undeliverable surveys. The limitations of electronic survey are addressed in Chapter three.

4.2 Preliminary Analysis

Reliability of instruments is tested to ensure the consistency, stability or dependability of the measures (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2002). Therefore, Cronbach's alpha coefficients are calculated for every instrument used in this study. The internal consistency reliability coefficients for all the scale are satisfactory, ranging from 0.71 to 0.94, as they all > 0.70 . Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, and ranges of observed scores are obtained for all the study variables. These statistics are reported in Table 4.1 for the entire sample.

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics for the study variables for the entire sample

Instrument	Alpha	Mean	SD	Range in Data
<i>Manifest Conflict</i>				
Positive conflict subscale	0.90	5.08	1.29	2-7
Negative conflict subscale	0.83	2.88	1.44	1-7
<i>ROCI-II</i>				
Integrating CMS subscale	0.94	5.44	1.14	2-7
Obliging CMS subscale	0.80	3.02	0.92	1-6
Dominating CMS subscale	0.84	3.08	0.98	1-6
Avoiding CMS subscale	0.86	3.02	1.03	1-6
Compromising CMS subscale	0.92	5.34	1.01	2-7
<i>Big-Five Factor</i>				
Extraversion subscale	0.73	4.26	0.84	1-7
Agreeableness subscale	0.84	4.56	1.06	1-7
<i>Interdependence</i>				
High interdependence subscale	0.78	3.20	0.89	1-5
Positive interdependence subscale	0.79	4.69	0.91	1-7
Power advantage	0.71	2.92	0.80	1-5
<i>Organizational Strategy</i>				
Low cost subscale	0.88	4.47	1.05	1-7
High customer service subscale	0.72	5.81	0.82	4-7

4.3 Regression Analysis 1 – Research Objective 1

4.3.1 Conflict and Conflict Management Styles

In this section, the result of the questionnaire will be demonstrated. The first regression model test the association of the conflict management styles with

positive conflict. The first model (Model 1) uses positive conflict and the second model (Model 2) uses negative conflict as the dependent variable, respectively, while conflict management styles are use as independent variables. Table 4.2 reports the coefficients of the variables that attain from the regression models.

Table 4.2 Results of regression analysis for conflict and conflict management styles

	Model 1 - Positive Conflict		Model 2 - Negative Conflict	
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)
<i>Constant</i>	1.508		2.633	
<i>Conflict Management Style</i>				
Integrating	0.579	0.510 ***	-0.077	-0.061
Obliging	0.201	0.144	0.248	0.158
Dominating	-0.114	-0.087	-1.296	-0.882
Avoiding	-0.396	-0.316	1.873	1.343 *
Compromising	0.255	0.200	-0.326	-0.230
<i>Model Summary</i>				
R ²		0.846 ***		0.719 ***
Adjusted R ²		0.826 ***		0.683 ***
* p < 0.1 ** p < 0.05 ***p < 0.01				

An examination of the relationship between nature of conflict (positive and negative) and conflict management style (integrating, obliging, dominating,

avoiding, and compromising) demonstrates some outcomes that are consistent with the literature and the hypotheses (H1 and H2).

Positive Conflict and Conflict Management Styles (H1) Integrating and compromising conflict management styles give the same direction that they are positively relate to positive conflict as predicted in the hypothesis (H1a and H1e, respectively). The finding for integrating conflict management style is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level in Model 1 (see Table 4.2) which indicates that when the employees encounter with positive conflict, they tends to use integrating conflict management style to create win-win scenario; while for the finding of compromising conflict management style is not significant. There is inverse relationship between positive conflict and dominating, and avoiding conflict management styles which communicate to the literature and the hypothesis (H1c and H1d, respectively). These outcomes seem to indicate that as the level of positive conflict increase, use of these conflict management styles by the employees decrease. An unexpected finding in Model 1 is that the obliging conflict management style is positively related to positive conflict, however, such finding does not have sufficient significance. According to the results of regression of Model 1, the relationship between positive conflict and conflict

management style can be formulated as follow:

$$PC = 0.510*INTER + 0.144*OBLIG - 0.087*DOMIN - 0.316*AVOID + 0.225*COMP + 1.508$$

Negative Conflict and Conflict Management Styles (H2) The outputs of the regression model (Model 2) show that obliging and avoiding conflict management styles are positively associated with negative conflict that match with the literature and the prediction in the Hypothesis 2 (H2b and H2d, respectively). The property and facility management employees choose to use avoiding conflict management style to deal with negative conflict incident which is supported by the significance of this conflict management style at $p < 0.1$ level in Model 2 (see Table 4.2). The direction of integrating and compromising conflict management styles is negative as predicted in the H2a and H2e, respectively. However, the findings of both conflict management styles are not significant, therefore, they are not supported. Surprisingly, the result of the regression model shows that dominating conflict management style is positively correlates to negative conflict that is different from what the hypothesis (H2c) has predicted. The following shows the equation of negative and conflict management styles regarding to the results in Model 2:

$$NC = -0.061*INTER + 0.158*OBLIG - 0.882*DOMIN + 1.343*AVOID - 0.230*COMP + 2.633$$

4.4 Regression Analysis – Research Question 2

The regressions for Hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 aim to find out the correlation between conflict management styles and personality (extraversion and agreeableness); degree of interdependence (perceptions of high interdependence); type of interdependence (perceptions of positive interdependence); distribution of interdependence (power advantage); and organizational strategy (low cost strategy and high customer service strategy), respectively.

The dependent variables for Model 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising conflict management styles, correspondingly while personality, interdependence, and company strategy are the independent variables in these five models. The regression results of these models are described in Table 4.3. According to the table, the some of the results are correspond to the scholars' explanation and to prediction in the hypotheses.

Table 4.3 Results of regression analysis for conflict management styles and individual, relational, and organizational characteristics

	Model 3 - Integrating CMS		Model 4 - Obliging CMS		Model 5 - Dominating CMS		Model 6 - Avoiding CMS		Model 7 - Compromising CMS	
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)
<i>Constant</i>	-0.287		4.714 ***		2.370 *		4.483 ***		4.645	
<i>Individual Characteristics</i>										
High extraversion and high agreeableness	0.295	0.239 **							0.465	0.422 ***
High extraversion and low agreeableness					0.543	0.408 ***				
Low extraversion and high agreeableness			-0.136	-0.136						
Low extraversion and low agreeableness							0.292	0.261 *		
<i>Relational Characteristics</i>										
High interdependence	0.425	0.221 **	-0.116	-0.075	-0.075	-0.045	0.058	0.033	0.003	0.002
Positive interdependence	0.277	0.222 **	-0.305	-0.300 ***	-0.346	-0.321 ***	-0.233	-0.205	0.304	0.272 ***
Power advantage			0.405	0.309 ***	0.321	0.230 **				
<i>Organizational Characteristics</i>										
Low cost strategy	-0.269	-0.249 **	0.360	0.412 ***	0.216	0.232 **	0.247	0.253 *	-0.283	-0.294 ***
High customer service	0.494	0.321 ***	-0.388	-0.303 **	-0.283	-0.207 *	-0.451	-0.314 **	0.230	0.162
<i>Model Summary</i>										
R2		0.748 ***		0.647 ***		0.687 ***		0.548 ***		0.73 ***
Adjusted R2		0.715 ***		0.59 ***		0.636 ***		0.488 ***		0.695 ***
* p < 0.1	** p < 0.05	***p < 0.01								

4.4.1 Integrating Conflict Management Style and Different

Characteristics

As expected, the employees with high extraversion and high agreeableness personalities show a preference to integrating conflict management style, and the finding is significant at $p < 0.01$ level in Model 3 (see Table 4.3). Therefore, the hypothesis of individual having high extraversion and high agreeableness characters are positively associates with integrating conflict management in a conflict incident (H2a). In addition, the results indicate that employees perceiving high and positive interdependence leads to the use of integrating conflict management style which is consistence to the hypotheses (H3a and H4a, respectively). These hypotheses are supported by the significance of these two independence variables at $p < 0.05$ level (see Table 4.3). There is positively correlation between high customer service strategy and integrating conflict management style, given that the finding is significant at $p < 0.01$ level (see Table 4.3). On the other hand, when company compete with others by offering low cost service, the employees have a tendency not to use this conflict management style which is indicated by a negative direction in the low cost strategy in Model 3, provided that the result is significant at $p < 0.05$ level (see Table 4.3), for instance,

H6a is supported. The outcomes give rise to the relationship between integrating conflict management styles and difference characteristics and expresses in this formula:

$$\text{INTER} = 0.239*\text{HEHA} + 0.221*\text{HINT} + 0.222*\text{PINT} - 0.249*\text{ORGC} + 0.321*\text{ORGH} - 0.287$$

4.4.2 Obliging Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics

Regarding to Model 4 (see Table 4.3), the results illustrate that obliging conflict management style is positively correlates to company using low cost strategy and negatively associates with company offering high customer service strategy. These two variables are significant at $p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$ level (see Table 4.3), correspondingly, therefore, H6d is supported. Hence, the uses of obliging conflict management style use by the employees are determinate by their companies' strategy. There is an inverse correlation between perceptions of high interdependence and obliging conflict management style as per the prediction (H3d), the finding is not significant, however. In the provision of the regression results, although the directions of perception of positive interdependence, and power advantage are opposite to the prediction in H4b and H5b, respectively, both

findings are significant at $p < 0.01$ level in Model 4 (see Table 4.3). The correlation between obliging conflict management style and different determinates can be expressed in the follow equation:

$$\text{OBLIG} = -0.136 * \text{LEHA} - 0.075 * \text{HINT} - 0.305 * \text{PINT} + 0.405 * \text{PW} + \\ 0.412 * \text{ORGC} - 0.303 * \text{ORGH} + 4.714$$

4.4.3 Dominating Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics

From the results in Model 5 (see Table 4.3), employees who are highly extraversion and low in agreeableness have preference in choosing dominating as a resort to handle conflict. The finding is significant at $p < 0.01$ level, for instant H2c is supported, personality of high extraversion and low agreeableness is one of the indicator of dominating conflict management style. If an employee have power advantage over the other conflicting party, he or she has a leaning to use dominating conflict management style when deal with the other party. This proposition (H5a) is supported by the result that significant at $p < 0.01$ level in Model 5 (see Table 4.3). When the employee and the other conflicting party are highly dependent to each another to carry out the task, the employee shows active

conflict management behaviour, such as dominating as per the prediction (H3b). The test demonstrates a negative direction in perceptions of high interdependence which is contradictory to the prediction, thus, H3b is not justify. One of the conditions for the application of this conflict management style is that the goals of employee is different from the one's of conflicting party which predict in H4d, the result illustrates that this hypothesis is supported at $p < 0.01$ level (see Table 4.3). Both low cost, and high customer service strategy give reverse results in respect to the predictions of H6b, but, the findings proved to be significant at $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.1$ (see Table 4.3), respectively. The following formula is form according to these results:

$$\text{DOMIN} = 0.408*\text{HELA} - 0.045*\text{HINT} - 0.321*\text{PINT} + 0.230*\text{PW} + \\ 0.232*\text{ORGC} - 0.207*\text{ORGH} + 2.370$$

4.4.4 Avoiding Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics

Accordance with Model 6 (see Table 4.3), employees' company competing with others by provide low cost service is positively associates with avoiding conflict management, and for offering high customer service is negatively correlate with this style as mention in H6b, the significance of results at $p < 0.1$

and $p < 0.01$ level (see Table 4.3) indicate that this hypothesis is supported. Moreover, employee who are not outgoing and agreeable have a propensity to show avoidance behaviour when he or she come across with a conflict incident (H2d), in which, the result clarify that it is significant at $p < 0.1$ level (see Table 4.3). When the goals of the employee are compatible with those of the client, he or she will choose to handle the conflict by means of avoidance, the result support this proposition with a negative direction in the model, however, the finding is not significant. Observe from the result, employee perceives a high interdependence correlates with the adaptation of avoiding conflict management. The relationship between interdependence and avoiding conflict management style can be expressed as:

$$\text{AVOID} = 0.261*\text{LELA} + 0.033*\text{HINT} - 0.205*\text{PINT} + 0.253*\text{ORGC} - \\ 0.314*\text{ORGH} + 4.483$$

4.4.5 Compromising Conflict Management Style and Different Characteristics

The relationship between compromising conflict management style and different characteristics is tested by regression. From Model 7, it is finds that the

correlation between compromising conflict management style and personality shows significance where significant level is < 0.01 (see Table 4.3), therefore, H2e is supported. This indicates those employees who are high in both extraversion and agreeableness will resolve the conflict by means of compromising conflict management style. Other factors that lead to this conflict management style are employees' perceptions of high (H3c) and positive interdependence (H4c), both of them are positively associate with this style, where the latter one is significant at $p < 0.01$ level (see Table 4.3) and the former one is not significant. The last affecting factor is the organizational strategy, low cost strategy is negatively correlates with compromising conflict management style while high customer service strategy is positively associates with this style, and the significant levels are $p < 0.01$ (see Table 4.3) and not significant, correspondingly. Consequently, H6d is partially supported. The relationship of these variables can form the following equation:

$$\text{COMP} = 0.422*\text{HEHA} + 0.002*\text{HINT} + 0.272*\text{PINT} - 0.294*\text{ORGC} + \\ 0.162*\text{ORGH} + 4.645$$

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, discussion will be made according to the analysis from the previous chapter. Firstly, discussion will be made for the results of analysis 1 (research objective 1). The relationship between conflict (positive or negative) and conflict management styles (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising) in the property and facility management industry will be discussed.

After that, the relationship between each conflict management style and different characteristics, 1) personality: combination of extraversion and agreeableness, 2) interdependence: degree, type and distribution, and 3) company strategy: low cost and high customer service, will be examined.

5.1 Discussion of Analysis for Research Objective 1

Individual may shows a preference on certain conflict management styles

which are suggest by many literatures, it is crucial to understanding what kinds of conflict (positive or negative conflict) exists in the property and facility management industry and the ways in which the people respond to each conflict is different. This research would like to explore whether or not there is any linkage between positive conflict and conflict management styles as well as any connection between negative conflict and conflict management styles.

To investigate these relationships, two prepositions are state for research objective 1. It proposes that there are associations between five conflict management style, namely integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising, and two forms of conflict, namely positive and negative. Integrating and compromising conflict management styles are two of the conflict management styles that expect to be positively associates with positive conflict and inversely associates with negative conflict. Conversely, the remaining conflict management styles, obliging, dominating and avoiding, are predicted to be positively correlate with negative conflict and negatively correlate with positive conflict. However, the result highlight that there is only one significant relationship between conflict and conflict management style that is integrating conflict management style is positively correlates with positive conflict. Therefore,

integrating conflict management style will be used as the level of positive conflict increases.

There is possible rationale to give explanation why many of the predicted hypotheses between conflict and conflict management styles do not receive support in this study. Conflict management styles may not be antecedents of conflict as proposed. Within the stage of conflict, conflict management styles may serve as the symptoms of positive and negative conflict for employees and clients to perceive conflict in the conflict incidents (Toms, 2004). This possibility can become one of the future researches that discuss in the chapter 6.

5.2 Discussion of Analysis for Research Objective 2

One of the purposes of this research is to examine that to what extent the individual, relational, and organizational determinates will affect the preference of conflict management styles of the property and facility management employees. Results of the research reveal that employee preferred certain types of conflict management style are indeed simultaneously influence by personality, interdependence, and company strategy.

Firstly, according to the literature on individual characteristics, individual with high extraversion (concern for own goals) personality attempts to use active conflict management styles such as integrating, dominating, and compromising conflict management styles. While for person with high agreeableness (concern for others goals), they will use integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict management styles. For the one who have a combination of low extraversion and low agreeableness, he or she will apply avoiding conflict management style to deal with the conflicting issues. From analysis 2, employees appear to have a combination of high extraversion and high agreeableness is positively correlate to integrating ($\beta = 0.239, p < 0.05$; see Table 4.3, Model 3) and compromising ($\beta = 0.422, p < 0.01$; see Table 4.3, Model 7) conflict management strategies. One of the indicators of dominating conflict management style is a combination of high extraversion and low agreeableness of the employees ($\beta = 0.408, p < 0.01$; see Table 4.3, Model 5). The findings show that obliging and avoiding conflict management styles do not associate with combination of low extraversion and high agreeableness, and high extraversion and low agreeableness, respectively.

Secondly, relational characteristics consist of degree, types, and distribution of interdependence between the conflict parties. If conflicting parties need each

other to achieve the goals (high interdependence), this will lead to the use of integrating, dominating, and compromising conflict management styles by the employees when they come across with conflict incidents. If both parties' goals are in the same attitude (positive interdependence), the employees will use integrating, obliging or compromising conflict management style to handle the conflict issue. When the party have a power advantage over the other party, the one with more power tends to use dominating conflict management style, whereas obliging conflict management will be used if vice versa. As expected in the prediction, employee and conflicting client that dependent very much on each other to perform their task (perception of high interdependence), employee will show a tendency to use integrating conflict management style ($\beta = 0.221$, $p < 0.05$, see Table 4.3, Model 3) when he or she encounter a conflict incident. Contrary to the expectation, the rest of the conflict management styles are found to be not dependent on employees perceiving high interdependence with the conflicting parties. Positive interdependence perceives by the employees lead to integrating ($\beta = 0.222$, $p < 0.05$; see Table 4.3, Model 3) and compromising ($\beta = 0.272$, $p < 0.01$; see Table 4.3, Model 7) conflict management styles. From the results, employees and conflicting parties with non-compatible goals is positively associate with dominating conflict management style ($\beta = -0.032$, $p < 0.01$; see

Table 4.3, Model 5). Unexpectedly, perceptions of positive interdependence is inversely correlates with obliging conflict management style ($\beta = -0.300$, $p < 0.01$; see Table 4.3, Model 4). Results show that there is no relationship between positive interdependence and avoiding conflict management style. Perceiving a power advantage by the employee encourages the use of dominating conflict management style ($\beta = 0.230$, $p < 0.05$; see Table 4.3, Model 5). Although power disadvantage of employee is predicts to be positively linked to obliging conflict management, the findings demonstrate that power advantage over the conflicting party will adopt this conflict management strategy ($\beta = 0.309$, $p < 0.01$; see Table 4.3, Model 4).

Thirdly, there are two types of organizational characteristics, they are low cost strategy and high customer service strategy. Many researches propose that low cost strategy is positively associates with obliging and avoiding conflict management styles, while for high customer service strategy is positively relates to integrating, dominating, and compromising conflict management styles. In analysis 2, it illustrates that low cost tactic applies by the employees' company influences obliging conflict management style ($\beta = 0.412$, $p < 0.01$; see Table 4.3, Model 4) and this style is negatively correlates with high customer service

strategy ($\beta = -0.303$, $p < 0.05$; see Table 4.3, Model 4). In contrary, integrating conflict management style is negatively and positively relates to low cost ($\beta = -0.249$, $p < 0.05$; see Table 4.3, Model 3) and high customer service strategies ($\beta = 0.321$, $p < 0.01$; see Table 4.3, Model 3), correspondingly. For compromising conflict management style, it shows similar results as integrating conflict management style, but only company offering low cost service is proved to be significant ($\beta = -0.294$, $p < 0.05$; see Table 4.3, Model 7). For dominating and avoiding conflict management styles, the former one is directly influences by low cost strategy ($\beta = 0.230$, $p < 0.05$, see Table 4.3, Model 5) while the latter one is negatively correlates with high customer service tactic ($\beta = -0.314$, $p < 0.05$; see Table 4.3, Model 6) as expected.

5.2.1 Individual (Personality) Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

Conflict management styles use in a conflict incident is partly determines by personality differences of the employees. The interpersonal factors of the Big Five personality characters, extraversion and agreeableness, are the indicators of

different conflict management styles. In addition, this also consistent to the dual concern model of Rubin et al. (1994), extraversion and agreeableness are in respect to the constructs of “concern for own goals” and “concern for other’s goals,” respectively, according to the model. From the result of analysis 2, employee’s personality with a combination of high extraversion, in other term concern for own goals, and high agreeableness, which is concern for other’s goals, are likely to demonstrate the preference towards integrating and compromising conflict management styles in the property and facility management industry in Hong Kong. The reason for this phenomenon is that employees with this combination of personality characters will take an active role to confront the disagreements with the other conflicting parties. They are eager to play down their differences, to propose different feasible options, and to agree on a mutually accepted solution by both parties in order to reach a win-win situation.

In the other scenario that the one outweighs his or her goals from the others goals, employee who are high in extraversion and low in agreeableness, implies that this employee have a favour in controlling the other party in the conflict incident by using dominating conflict management strategy. This result explains that extravert employees attempt to control the conflicting issue by referring to

the achievement of their own goals and do not address or concern the other's goals due to their uncooperative and competitive individuality. Subsequently, a win-lose situation will be created as the outcome to this conflict episode.

However, the findings do not support the hypotheses of low extraversion combines with high agreeableness leads to obliging conflict management style, where low extraversion combines with low agreeableness causes the application of avoiding conflict management style. These two results may due to other factors such as intrinsic Chinese culture, impression to supervisors and/or clients, and pressure from supervisors and/or their clients. Firstly, Hong Kong is Chinese society that is very much influence by Chinese culture, therefore Chinese values of harmony and filial piety. The Chinese value of harmony would naturally lead to preference of the passive conflict management styles, namely obliging and avoiding conflict management styles (Westwood et al., 1992). The other reason for the unexpected results is that no matter there is what kind of conflict, positive conflict or negative conflict, encounter by the employees with their clients. This will give an adverse impression to their supervisor because they may have in their mind that property and facility management industry as a servicing industry, they duties is to satisfy their client whatever request by them rather than having

argument with them. Pressure will be exerted by the supervisors to the subordinates if there is a conflict incident between the employees and the client, instructions may be given from the supervisors to the subordinates for peaceful settlement for the maintenance of good and long-term relationship. Pressure is given for the settlement of conflict by passive means such as obligation and avoidance. For this reason, the employees tend to obey or accept the clients' arguments or avoid arguments between them in order to please their supervisors in workplace and their clients, for exchange of good relationship or even promotion in jobs.

5.2.2 Relational (Interdependence) Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

When both the employees and their clients recognize that they need each other to perform their works, there will be likelihood that the employee will use constructive conflict management styles such as integrating, dominating, and compromising conflict management strategies in the conflict incidents. However, these only partially support the theoretical prediction that increase in level of interdependence perceive by both parties, they will have a preference to use

constructive conflict management styles by the reason that they know they need each other now and in the future. Instead high interdependence perceives by the employee fosters integrating conflict management style from the result.

Other than the positive correlation between high interdependence and integrating conflict management style, there is a proposition that increase in interdependence between the parties promotes dominating conflict management style, because a high interdependence implies that both the parties interact frequently to do their work, therefore this increases the probability of the rises of conflict issues. Unexpected that it does not have receives support from the analysis to this theoretical prediction. This may because the relationship between the service provider and the client is simply a seller and buyer relationship, they do not necessary to have much interdependence in order to reach certain outcomes in this industry, they can perform without the need to coordinate with the other side, therefore there is weak interdependence between the parties. This phenomenon can explain if there is a vast choice of service providers for the client. In this industry, there is more supply that demand of service. Service provider is therefore more dependent upon the client than vice versa. If the clients only have few alternatives of service providers, the clients will rely or dependent

on them, that is an increasing interdependence between the service provider and the client. An important determinant of high dependence upon others is having few alternatives (Emerson, 1961, 1972; Lawler, 1993).

Opposite to the relationship between degree of interdependence and conflict management styles, there is a significant correlation between type of interdependence and each conflict management style. Indeed, perceptions of positive interdependence by the employee serve as a more important predictor of conflict management styles in the property and facility management industry than the perceptions of high interdependence. When both parties, employee and client, are achieving a compatible goal, there is a high potential for them to reach an agreement to serve their goals. This encourage of constructive and cooperative conflict management style for instance integrating and compromising. The employees have the favour to use these conflict management styles because they concern for the goals of the other party, in other terms that they also concern for their own goals since both parties goals are compatible. These prepositions receive support form the results in this research. Having compatible goals is one of the predictor of integrating and compromising conflict management styles.

In the case that, the goals of the employee is different from that of the client,

they are with negative interdependence. The results in analysis indicate that negative interdependence is associated with dominating and avoiding conflict management styles, such results support the literature. When the employee and the client perceive a negative conflict of interests, they may lower the concern for the client's goals by the employee since the employee is competing with the client to achieve his or her goals.

According to the study of Bacharach & Lawler (1981), the findings show that one party having a power advantage over the other party inhibits them from using the obliging conflict management style, but power advantage fosters them to use active conflict management styles such as dominating style. The latter one is supported in this research. For the employee perceiving a power advantage, such as positional advantage and resources advantage, over the other party, he or she tends to control the behaviour and outcomes of the other party to achieve his or her own goals. Some may argue that the client side should perceive more power than the property and facility management company. But there is an exception, if the client relies very much on the low cost or high quality services offered by the management company in which, he or she cannot find a suitable substitute for this company. In this situation, there is less power difference in favour of the client,

such reliance may give lead to the use of passive conflict management style by client and active conflict management style by employee.

Referring to the result in analysis 2, it shows that even if there is a power advantage perceive by the employees, they still attempt to use obliging conflict management style to deal with the other conflicting parties. The reason for this is that, the conflicting party is the client, the employee as the service provider ought to satisfy the need of his or her client, and otherwise the employee may be put in a difficult position to carry out his or her job, since the client should be the dominate party ultimately.

5.2.3 Organizational (Company strategy) Characteristics and Conflict Management Styles

An observation from this research is that the strategy of an organization point out the influence to conflict management styles. Integrating conflict management style is positively correlates with high customer service strategy and negatively links to low cost strategy. The reason is that companies that provide high customer service to their clients try to satisfy the unique demand of their client,

such fit-in service can be provided through standardized working processes, these include many constantly change activities to match with the unpredictable demand for their client (Nauta and Sanders, 2000). Therefore, these companies can ask for high prices for their service in Hong Kong. In order to maintain a good and sustainable relationship between the companies and their client, the employees will demonstrate active and confronting conflict management style, integrating conflict management style, to handle the conflict with their client when these parties encounter conflicting interests.

In contrary, for companies adopting high customer service to their client, they will hinder the use of passive conflict management style, such as obliging and avoiding conflict management styles, because by doing so the parties may hind some of their feelings and conflicting issue which has a possibility to be raise in the next conflict incident, their relationship will affect in return. However, these two conflict management styles, obliging and avoiding conflict management styles, are positively related to low cost strategy as prediction. Unlike the high customer service strategy that offer high customized service that made in low volume and high variety to their client, companies using low cost strategy attempt compete with others on cheap and standardized service that made in high volume

and low variety to their client (cf. Porter, 1980, 1985; Smith & Reece, 1999).

These type of companies usually have less bargaining power when compare with their client, therefore the employees of these property and facility management companies have a tendency not to confront the conflicting issues with their client to avoid affective relationship between them.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the findings of the research study and a discussion of their implications. This chapter is divided into four sections, first, a summary section that reviews the results of the analyses on the hypotheses. Second is a discussion of the implication of this research. Third, limitations of the research as it are undertaken and finally, suggestions for possible future study.

6.1 Summary

There has been a great deal of change property and facility management industry from time to time. Property and facility management companies in Hong Kong have expended the boundary of this industry. Property and facility management companies as a service providers have expose to different client by offering them diversify. A more dynamic communication between the companies

and their clients are promote in order to up-date and put in more added value service to enhance the sustainability of the companies in the property and facility management industry in Hong Kong. This will increase the interaction between the property and facility management employee and the client. Consequently, frequent interaction will increase the chance of rise of conflict between the parties. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the relationship between conflict and conflict management style as well as the factors that determinate each of these conflict management styles.

Data is collected from the respondents, property and facility management employees, on nature of conflict that they encounter with their client, their preference of conflict management styles, their personality, the interdependence between the employees and their client, and the employee's company strategy, are used to investigate these relationships. Examinations have been carried out in order to achieve the objectives of this research.

The objectives of the research are stated as follows:

Research Objective 1: To examine the use of various conflict handling styles under different conflict incidents.

Research Question 2: To determine the effects of different parameters (individual, relational and organizational) on the selection of conflict management styles by the property and facility management employees in Hong Kong.

6.1.1 Research Objective 1

Research objective 1 aims to find out the correlation between two form of conflicts, positive and negative, and five modes of conflict management styles, integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. Only the relationship between integrating conflict management style and positive conflict is significant in analysis 1. The findings illustrate that, there is no significant effect of other conflict management styles, namely obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising, on the conflict, either positive conflict or negative conflict in the property and facility management companies in Hong Kong.

6.1.2 Research Objective 2

For research objective 2, the effects of individual (personality), relational

(interdependence), and organizational (company strategy) on the preference of conflict management style of the employees who work in the property and facility management industry.

The findings in the examinations of this relationship demonstrate that there are significant correlations between combination of high/low extraversion with high/low agreeableness of the employees and conflict management styles; between perceptions of high interdependence, perceptions of positive interdependence and power advantage, and conflict management styles; and between low cost/high customer service strategy and conflict management styles.

For example, a combination of high extraversion with high agreeableness of the employee, perceptions of high and positive interdependence by the employee, and high customer service of employee's company are positively correlates with integrating conflict management style.

To conclude, these three characteristics determinate the preference of conflict management styles of the employees in handling conflict.

6.2 Implication of Research

This research's result has the potential to provide the property and facility management employees with a wide range of opportunities to solve some of challenges they will be facing with their client in the workplace. The employees may find difficulties in dealing conflict issues with their client, if the conflict issues do not handle properly, this will bring adverse effect on their relationship and job performance of the employees. This research illustrates that integrating conflict management style should be used by the employee as there is an increase in positive conflict between the employees and their clients. Employees attempt to use this conflict management style to deal with positive conflict can create a win-win situation between the parties. The return to this is that, it can improve or strengthen the relationship between the employees and the clients in order to create a long-term relationship.

Furthermore, the findings in personality of the employees, interdependence between both parties that perceive by the employees, and the organizational strategy of the employee's companies that offer to their clients, illustrate that these characteristics of the individual employee are the important determinate of conflict management style. For example, employee having a combination of high

extraversion and high agreeableness, having high interdependence with his or her client, having compatible goals with his or her client, together with offering high customer service to his or her client leads to integrating conflict management style. Therefore, understanding these characteristics from this research allows better understanding on the preference of conflict management styles of the employees. Whatever what type of conflict is discovered, employees with preference of the appropriate conflict management style to deal with this conflict incident can be identified by the three determinates.

6.3 Limitation of Research

In this research, there are some limitations. The insufficiencies are stated for further improvement in future research.

6.3.1 Response Rate

The response rate of this research is 24%. Out of the 250 surveys that are electronically mailed to the property and facility management companies, 187 are deliverable and 44 are completed. The sample sized of only 44 respondents used

in this research may be me sufficiently representative of all the issues raised for a vast property and facility management industry. Thus, it may be difficult to draw a concrete conclusion about the preference certain conflict management styles of the property and facility management employees regarding to different conflict, and the influences of various determinants in each of the conflict management style. Even though this research offers more profound information and observation about conflict management styles adopted by the employees, and the effects of different determinates on conflict management styles, it is not substantial to drawing any generalization due to small sample size being used.

6.3.2 Accuracy of Data

Accuracy of data is one of the limitations. Different members in the targeted companies may have different understanding in the meaning of questions or different interpretation of questions in the questionnaire. Without a thorough understanding of the questions, the respondents may not give the accurate ranking in answering the questions. Other reason for low accuracy of data is that some respondent may hide their true feeling when answering the questions, they may want to give a good impression to the researchers, and however, this will affect

the truthfulness of data in return. to complete this long questionnaire that consist of more than eighty questions in totally, respondents normally need about twenty minutes or even more to complete this questionnaire, given that they answer the question with thorough understanding. It is possible the respondents may answer the questions without careful thinking or in rush towards the end of the questionnaire as it takes to long time to complete the questionnaire. Consequently, this may reduce the level of accuracy of the data.

6.3.3Time

Time is limited in working out this research. Only 250 targeted electronic mails of different company are randomly selected as this research only considers the companies with member electronic lists. It is due to time limitation. If extension of time limit is given to this research, more potential electronic mails of the members of the property and facility management company can be identified. In addition, companies without staff electronic mail list can be sough, and then printed questionnaire can be sent to these companies. By introducing more companies, for instance increase the sample size, can increase the validity and reliability of the data analysis and the result.

6.4 Recommendation for Future Research

There are several areas of future research that can be carried out by using the current data set. First, according to the previous chapter, conflict is not shown to be a determinant of conflict management styles since only integrating conflict management style is significantly associated with positive conflict. There is a possibility that conflict management styles may be an outcome of conflict.

Additional studies should be undertaken to investigate the effect of gender, ages, length of working experiences, educational background, and position of individual on conflict management styles. There may be significant effects of age, gender, years of working experience and etc on the preference of conflict management styles in addition to personality, interdependence and company strategy. For example, Truslow (2004) finds out that male and female have significantly different conflict management styles. Male are more likely to prefer competitive and compromising conflict management styles while female have a greater preference for compromising and collaborative conflict management styles.

In conclusion, this research is largely exploratory as it investigates the various conflict management styles and nature of conflict in the property and

facility management industry. Future research using different methods are needed to test and refine the propositions or to discover new findings.

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Appendix 1 Covering Letter for the Questionnaire Survey

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION

“A Study of the Relationship between the Conflict Management Styles and Conflict”

Dear Sir / Madam:

I am Chu Wai Fan studying in Department of Real Estate and Construction at the University of Hong Kong. I will conduct a research project on “A Study of the Relationship between the Conflict Management Styles and Conflict” in the Property Management Industry in Hong Kong and would like to invite property management professionals to participate. I am presently conducting a study of property management professionals to identify ways to management conflict between clients and themselves. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in this regard.

Please complete the reply slip below to indicate whether you do decide to participate in this research. All data collected will be used solely for academic purpose and identity of individual will not be revealed without their consent. Participation is entirely voluntary and if you have any queries about the survey, please feel free to contact me at 9661 5918 or email me: fannychu@hkusua.hku.hk. If you want to know more about the rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties, the University of Hong Kong (2241-5267). Thank you in advance for your assistance, it is greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Chu Wai Fan, Fanny
Department of Real Estate and Construction
The University of Hong Kong

Appendix 2 Section 1 of Questionnaire (Conflict Management Styles)

I am conducting research on relationship between property management company and its client. Your input on your experiences with your client is very important to me. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey.

- Please do not put your name on this questionnaire. All information that you provide will be anonymous.
- Note: there are no right or wrong answers, just your perceptions and ideas about your experiences with your client
- Your participation in this important study is greatly appreciated. I thank you in advance for your input.

Section 1. In answering the question below, please think of a representative of property corporation with whom you interact on a regular basis. Now please think of the most recent conflicting experience you had with this person in which there was conflict. Realizing that conflict is an inevitable element in normal relationship. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Strongly Agree		
1. I tried to investigate an issue with this person to find a solution acceptable to us.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
2. I tried to satisfy the needs of this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
3. I attempted to avoid being "put on the spot" and tried to keep my conflict with this person to myself.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
4. I tried to integrate my ideas with those of this person to come up with a decision jointly.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
5. I gave some to get some.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
6. I tried to work with this person to find solutions to a problem which satisfied our expectations.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
7. I avoided open discussion of my differences with this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
8. I held on to my solution to a problem.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
9. I tried to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
10. I used my influence to get my ideas accepted.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
11. I used my authority to make a decision in my favour.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
12. I accommodated the wishes of this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
13. I gave in to the wishes of this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
14. I won some and I lost some.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
15. I exchanged accurate information with this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
16. I sometimes help this person to make a decision in his favour.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
17. I allowed concessions to this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
18. I argued my case with this person to show the merits of my position.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
19. I tried to play down our differences to reach a compromise.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
20. I proposed a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
21. I negotiated with this person so that a compromise can be reached.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
22. I tried to stay away from disagreement with this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 2

23. I avoided an encounter with this person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. I used my expertise to make a decision in my favour. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. I went along with the suggestion of this person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. I used "give and take" so that a compromise can be made. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. I was generally firm in pursuing my side of this issue. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. I tried to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
29. I collaborated with this person to come up with decisions acceptable to us. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
30. I tried to satisfy the expectations of this person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
31. I sometimes used my power to win a competitive situation. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
32. I tried to keep my disagreement with this person to myself in order to avoid hard feelings. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
33. I tried to avoid unpleasant exchanges with this person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
34. I avoided an argument with this person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
35. I tried to work with this person for a proper understanding of a problem. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

This is the end of Section 1.

Appendix 3 Section 2 of Questionnaire (Nature of Conflict)

Section 2. Still thinking of a recent conflicting experience you had with this person, please answer the questions below by checking the response that best represent that experience.

	None		A Little		A Great Deal
1. How much anger was there between you and this person during the course of this conflict incident?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
2. How many disagreements over different ideas were there between you and this person during the conflict incident?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
3. How much personal friction was there between you and this person during the course of the conflict incident?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
4. How much of a personality clash was there between you and this person during this conflict incident?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
5. How many differences about the content of the decision were there between you and the person during the conflict incident?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
6. How much tension was there between you and this person during this conflict incident?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>
7. How many general differences of opinion were there between you and this person during this conflict incident?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/>

This is the end of Section 2.

Appendix 4 Section 3 of Questionnaire (Relational Characteristics)

Section 3. Please think about the dependence between you and this person. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagreement				Strongly Agree		
1. For doing my job, I need information from this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
2. For doing the job, this person more strongly depends on me than that I depend on this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
3. For doing this person's job, he needs information from me.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
4. I am very dependent on this person for doing my job.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
5. This person is very dependent on me for doing his job.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
6. For doing the job, I need more strongly information from this person than this person need information from me.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
7. To do my job well, I have to collaborate closely with this person.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
8. To do this person's job well, he has to collaborate closely with me.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Strongly Agree		
9. It is favourable for me which this person is successful.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
10. When this person reaches his goal, it becomes easier for me to reach my goals.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
11. When this person reaches his goals, it becomes more difficult for me to reach my goals.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
12. What this person wants to reach correspond with what I want to reach.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
13. Things get better for me when this person excels in his work.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
14. When this person excels in his work, things get worse for me.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>

This is the end of Section 3.

Appendix 5 Section 4 of Questionnaire (Individual Characteristics)

Section 4. Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please answer the following statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

	Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Strongly Agree		
I see myself as:							
1. ... the life of the party.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
2. ... skilled in handling social situations.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
3. ... don't like to draw attention to myself.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
4. ... make friends easily.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
5. ... know how to captivate people.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
6. ... don't talk a lot.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
7. ... feel comfortable around people.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
8. ... have little to say.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
9. ... keep in the background.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
10. ... respect others.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
11. ... insult people.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
12. ... believe that others have good intentions.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
13. ... accept people as they are.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
14. ... get back at others.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
15. ... cut others to pieces.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
16. ... have a good word for everyone.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>

This is the end of Section 4.

Appendix 6 Section 5 of Questionnaire (Organizational Characteristics)

Section 5. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements with regards to your understanding on your company strategy:

	Strongly Disagree				Neither Agree Nor Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. Our company competing with others solely on low cost service.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>		
2. Our company emphasis on efficiency and on minimizing costs as much as possible.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>		
3. Our company competing with others on high customer service.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>		
4. Our company emphasis on high quality service that satisfy unique customer demands.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>		

This is the end of Section 5.

Appendix 7 Section 6 of Questionnaire

**Section 6. Now please tell us a little about yourself and your company. This is for statistical purpose only.
All information is strictly confidential**

1. How old is your organization? _____ years.
2. What is your estimated number of employees in your company currently? _____
3. How many years have you worked in property management industry? _____ years
4. How many years have you worked for your current company? _____ years
5. What is your current title? _____
6. How long have you known this representative? _____ years and/or _____ months
7. You are Male Female
8. Your age _____
9. Education level you have achieved
 Secondary School or Equivalent
 Vocational/Technical School or College
 University Graduate
 Postgraduate or Professional Degree

This is the end of the Questionnaire. Thank you very much for your help.

Appendix 8 List of Companies

Jones Lang LaSalle

CB Richard Ellis (Property) Ltd

DTZ Debenham Tie Leung Project Services Ltd

Tactful Building Co Ltd

Funing Property Management Ltd

Urban Property Management Ltd

Samson Wong & Associates Property Consultancy Ltd

Synergis Management Services Ltd

ACE Engineering Ltd

Oasis Well Ltd

Pontiac Land Property Ltd

Newman & Goh Property Consultants Property Ltd

Knight Frank Estate Management Property Ltd

Outocoz Property Services Property Ltd

LKN Development Property Ltd

Chan Kok Hong Property Consultants P/L

ILand Property Consultant Property Ltd

Robert Khan & Co Property Ltd

Realty Int'l Associates Property Ltd

Chambers Property Management Services Pte Ltd

Yenom Industries Property Ltd

Kirin Properties & Services

The Ascott Group Limited

Exceltec Property Management Property Ltd

Pentagon Property Consultants Property Ltd

Halley Services Property Ltd

Colliers International Asset Management Property Ltd

CPG Facilities Management Property Ltd

Centerpoint Properties Ltd

Propmag Management Services Property Ltd

Suntec City Management Property Ltd

Far East Organisation Centre Property Ltd

Global Real Estate Services Property Ltd

Focal Property Services

First Boston Property Consultants Property Ltd

Lock Property Consultants

Ted Development Corporation Property Ltd

A4 International Property Ltd

Sentosa Development Corporation

Lawson David & Sung Surveyors Ltd

Appendix 9 Raw Data for Section 1 of Questionnaire

Section 1. In answering the question below, please think of a representative of property corporation with whom you interact on a regular basis. Now please think of the most recent conflicting experience you had with this person in which there was conflict. Realizing that conflict is an inevitable element in normal relationship. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements:

		Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree			Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
inter1	1. I tried to investigate an issue with this person to find a solution acceptable to us.	0	2	4	3	7	11	17
oblig1	2. I tried to satisfy the needs of this person.	8	10	11	8	4	3	0
avoid1	3. I attempted to avoid being "put on the spot" and tried to keep my conflict with this person to myself.	6	9	12	12	4	1	0
inter2	4. I tried to integrate my ideas with those of this person to come up with a decision jointly.	0	0	0	12	13	11	8
comp1	5. I gave some to get some.	0	0	5	3	11	17	8
inter3	6. I tried to work with this person to find solutions to a problem which satisfied our expectations.	0	2	1	7	8	14	12
avoid2	7. I avoided open discussion of my differences with this person.	13	11	11	2	7	0	0
domin1	8. I held on to my solution to a problem.	5	17	8	7	4	3	0
comp2	9. I tried to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.	0	0	5	7	12	14	6
domin2	10. I used my influence to get my ideas accepted.	5	9	12	13	4	1	0
domin3	11. I used my authority to make a decision in my favour.	7	6	12	8	9	2	0
oblig2	12. I accommodated the wishes of this person.	6	7	16	7	6	2	0
oblig3	13. I gave in to the wishes of this person.	14	8	11	7	4	0	0
comp3	14. I won some and I lost some.	0	2	1	8	10	15	8
inter4	15. I exchanged accurate information with this person.	0	0	5	6	12	12	9
oblig4	16. I sometimes help this person to make a decision in his favour.	3	13	10	13	4	1	0
oblig5	17. I allowed concessions to this person.	5	11	14	7	5	2	0
domin4	18. I argued my case with this person to show the merits of my position.	9	13	13	2	7	0	0
comp4	19. I tried to play down our differences to reach a compromise.	0	1	3	6	9	17	8
comp5	20. I proposed a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.	0	0	4	6	12	14	8
comp6	21. I negotiated with this person so that a compromise can be reached.	0	1	6	5	14	13	5
avoid3	22. I tried to stay away from disagreement with this person.	7	6	12	8	9	2	0

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avoid4	23. I avoided an encounter with this person.	4	7	18	4	10	1	0
domin5	24. I used my expertise to make a decision in my favour.	4	12	11	8	9	0	0
oblig6	25. I went along with the suggestion of this person.	9	13	9	3	8	2	0
comp7	26. I used "give and take" so that a compromise can be made.	0	1	2	5	10	15	11
domin6	27. I was generally firm in pursuing my side of this issue.	2	8	18	5	10	1	0
inter5	28. I tried to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.	0	1	5	7	10	9	12
inter6	29. I collaborated with this person to come up with decisions acceptable to us.	0	0	5	3	16	11	9
oblig7	30. I tried to satisfy the expectations of this person.	2	11	8	13	8	2	0
domin7	31. I sometimes used my power to win a competitive situation.	8	10	10	6	7	3	0
avoid5	32. I tried to keep my disagreement with this person to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.	7	10	10	8	9	0	0
avoid6	33. I tried to avoid unpleasant exchanges with this person.	8	10	10	6	7	3	0
avoid7	34. I avoided an argument with this person.	6	17	7	7	4	3	0
inter7	35. I tried to work with this person for a proper understanding of a problem.	0	0	5	3	11	12	13

This is the end of Section 1.

Appendix 10 Raw Data for Section 2 of Questionnaire

Section 2. Still thinking of a recent conflicting experience you had with this person, please answer the questions below by checking the response that best represent that experience.

		None		A Little			A Great Deal	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NC 1	1. How much anger was there between you and this person during the course of this conflict incident?	10	8	5	13	4	4	0
PC 1	2. How many disagreements over different ideas were there between you and this person during the conflict incident?	0	0	6	13	7	9	9
NC 2	3. How much personal friction was there between you and this person during the course of the conflict incident?	13	13	4	3	7	4	0
NC 3	4. How much of a personality clash was there between you and this person during this conflict incident?	12	12	7	5	5	2	1
PC 2	5. How many differences about the content of the decision were there between you and the person during the conflict incident?	0	3	4	4	13	8	12
PC 3	6. How much tension was there between you and this person during this conflict incident?	0	3	4	7	10	15	5
PC 4	7. How many general differences of opinion were there between you and this person during this conflict incident?	0	5	3	6	12	9	9

This is the end of Section 2.

Appendix 11 Raw Data for Section 3 of Questionnaire

Section 3. Please think about the dependence between you and this person. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements:

		<u>Strongly Disagreement</u>			<u>Strongly Agree</u>			
		1	2	3	4	5		
hint1	1. For doing my job, I need information from this person.	5	5	16	14	4		
pw1	2. For doing the job, this person more strongly depends on me than that I depend on this person.							
hint2	3. For doing this person's job, he needs information from me.	2	8	20	10	4		
hint3/pw3	4. I am very dependent on this person for doing my job.	2	11	21	9	1		
hint4	5. This person is very dependent on me for doing his job.	5	8	12	16	3		
pw2	6. For doing the job, I need more strongly information from this person than this person need information from me.							
hint5	7. To do my job well, I have to collaborate closely with this person.	3	3	17	19	2		
hint6	8. To do this person's job well, he has to collaborate closely with me.	3	5	9	17	10		
		<u>Strongly Disagree</u>		<u>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</u>			<u>Strongly Agree</u>	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
hint1	9. It is favourable for me which this person in successful.	2	4	1	15	10	7	5
hint2	10. When this person reaches his goal, it becomes easier for me to reach my goals.	1	4	0	17	9	9	4
hint3	11. When this person reaches his goals, it becomes more difficult for me to reach my goals.	0	0	3	19	5	12	5
hint4	12. What this person wants to reach correspond with what I want to reach.	0	3	3	15	13	6	4
hint5	13. Things get better for me when this person excels in his work.	0	2	5	12	16	8	1
hint6	14. When this person excels in his work, things get worse for me.	0	2	2	14	14	9	3

This is the end of Section 3.

Appendix 12 Raw Data for Section 4 of Questionnaire

Section 4. Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please answer the following statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

		Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree			Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I see myself as:								
E1	1. ... the life of the party.	3	2	3	11	18	3	4
E2	2. ... skilled in handling social situations.	1	3	2	8	16	13	1
E3	3. ... don't like to draw attention to myself.	1	8	13	2	9	7	4
E4	4. ... make friends easily.	1	0	5	11	15	9	3
E5	5. ... know how to captivate people.	0	3	2	14	15	8	2
E6	6. ... don't talk a lot.	4	11	9	6	7	5	2
E7	7. ... feel comfortable around people.	0	4	2	9	16	9	4
E8	8. ... have little to say.	3	8	9	11	6	6	1
E9	9. ... keep in the background.	2	10	13	6	6	7	0
A1	10. ... respect others.	1	2	3	5	8	15	10
A2	11. ... insult people.	0	5	5	8	8	16	2
A3	12. ... believe that others have good intentions.	0	3	4	14	11	10	2
A4	13. ... accept people as they are.	1	1	5	11	12	10	4
A5	14. ... get back at others.	3	13	14	2	5	3	4
A6	15. ... cut others to pieces.	1	1	8	9	8	14	3
A7	16. ... have a good word for everyone.	3	2	8	8	13	6	4

This is the end of Section 4.

Appendix 13 Raw Data for Section 5 of Questionnaire

Section 5. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements with regards to your understanding on your company strategy:

		Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree			Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
orgc1	1. Our company competing with others solely on low cost service.	1	6	8	8	13	7	1
orgc2	2. Our company emphasis on efficiency and on minimizing costs as much as possible.	0	6	4	8	7	14	5
orgh1	3. Our company competing with others on high customer service.	0	0	0	6	12	18	8
orgh2	4. Our company emphasis on high quality service that satisfy unique customer demands.	0	0	0	2	12	15	15

This is the end of Section 5.

Appendix 14 Linear Regression Model of Positive Conflict and Conflict Management Styles

Variables Entered/Removed(b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	COMP, AVOID, OBLIG, INTER, DOMIN(a)	.	Enter

a All requested variables entered.

b Dependent Variable: PC

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.920(a)	.846	.826	.53745

a Predictors: (Constant), COMP, AVOID, OBLIG, INTER, DOMIN

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	60.495	5	12.099	41.886	.000(a)
	Residual	10.976	38	.289		
	Total	71.472	43			

a Predictors: (Constant), COMP, AVOID, OBLIG, INTER, DOMIN

b Dependent Variable: PC

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.508	1.288		1.171	.249
	INTER	.579	.178	.510	3.255	.002
	OBLIG	.201	.192	.144	1.050	.300
	DOMIN	-.114	.689	-.087	-.166	.869
	AVOID	-.396	.618	-.316	-.640	.526
	COMP	.255	.203	.200	1.257	.216

a Dependent Variable: PC

Appendix 15 Linear Regression Model of Negative Conflict and Conflict Management Styles

Variables Entered/Removed(b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
2	COMP, AVOID, OBLIG, INTER, DOMIN(a)	.	Enter

a All requested variables entered.

b Dependent Variable: NC

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	.848(a)	.719	.683	.81014

a Predictors: (Constant), COMP, AVOID, OBLIG, INTER, DOMIN

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	63.969	5	12.794	19.493	.000(a)
	Residual	24.940	38	.656		
	Total	88.909	43			

a Predictors: (Constant), COMP, AVOID, OBLIG, INTER, DOMIN

b Dependent Variable: NC

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
2	(Constant)	2.633	1.941		1.356	.183
	INTER	-.077	.268	-.061	-.286	.777
	OBLIG	.248	.289	.158	.857	.397
	DOMIN	-1.296	1.039	-.882	-1.248	.220
	AVOID	1.873	.931	1.343	2.011	.052
	COMP	-.326	.305	-.230	-1.068	.292

a Dependent Variable: NC

Appendix 16 Linear Regression Model of Integrating Conflict Management Styles and the Three Characteristics

Variables Entered/Removed(b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
3	ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, HEHA(a)	.	Enter

- a All requested variables entered.
b Dependent Variable: INTER

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
3	.865(a)	.748	.715	.60646

- a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, HEHA

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
3	Regression	41.491	5	8.298	22.562	.000(a)
	Residual	13.976	38	.368		
	Total	55.468	43			

- a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, HEHA
b Dependent Variable: INTER

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
3	(Constant)	-.287	1.202		-.239	.813
	HEHA	.295	.133	.239	2.223	.032
	HINT	.425	.177	.221	2.397	.022
	PINT	.277	.116	.222	2.391	.022
	ORGC	-.269	.104	-.249	-2.576	.014
	ORGH	.494	.150	.312	3.283	.002

- a Dependent Variable: INTER

Appendix 17 Linear Regression Model of Obliging Conflict Management Styles and the Three Characteristics

Variables Entered/Removed(b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
4	ORGH, PW, LEHA, PINT, ORGC, HINT(a)	.	Enter

a All requested variables entered.

b Dependent Variable: OBLIG

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
4	.805(a)	.647	.590	.58891

a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, PW, LEHA, PINT, ORGC, HINT

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
4	Regression	23.544	6	3.924	11.314	.000(a)
	Residual	12.832	37	.347		
	Total	36.376	43			

a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, PW, LEHA, PINT, ORGC, HINT

b Dependent Variable: OBLIG

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
4	(Constant)	4.714	1.259		3.743	.001
	LEHA	-.136	.101	-.136	-1.342	.188
	HINT	-.116	.178	-.075	-.652	.518
	PINT	-.305	.108	-.300	-2.833	.007
	PW	.405	.140	.309	2.898	.006
	ORGC	.360	.094	.412	3.807	.001
	ORGH	-.388	.146	-.303	-2.658	.012

a Dependent Variable: OBLIG

Appendix 18 Linear Regression Model of Dominating Conflict Management Styles and the Three Characteristics

Variables Entered/Removed(b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
5	ORGH, PW, PINT, ORGC, HINT, HELA(a)	.	Enter

a All requested variables entered.

b Dependent Variable: DOMIN

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
5	.829(a)	.687	.636	.59067

a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, PW, PINT, ORGC, HINT, HELA

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
5	Regression	28.287	6	4.714	13.513	.000(a)
	Residual	12.909	37	.349		
	Total	41.196	43			

a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, PW, PINT, ORGC, HINT, HELA

b Dependent Variable: DOMIN

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
5	(Constant)	2.370	1.329		1.782	.083
	HELA	.543	.145	.408	3.756	.001
	HINT	-.075	.179	-.045	-.419	.678
	PINT	-.346	.108	-.321	-3.197	.003
	PW	.321	.138	.230	2.318	.026
	ORGC	.216	.101	.232	2.127	.040
	ORGH	-.283	.150	-.207	-1.884	.067

a Dependent Variable: DOMIN

Appendix 19 Linear Regression Model of Avoiding Conflict Management Styles and the Three Characteristics

Variables Entered/Removed(b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
6	ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, LELA(a)	.	Enter

- a All requested variables entered.
b Dependent Variable: AVOID

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
6	.740(a)	.548	.488	.73770

- a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, LELA

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
6	Regression	25.044	5	5.009	9.204	.000(a)
	Residual	20.680	38	.544		
	Total	45.723	43			

- a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, LELA
b Dependent Variable: AVOID

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
6	(Constant)	4.483	1.646		2.723	.010
	LELA	.292	.161	.261	1.809	.078
	HINT	.058	.216	.033	.269	.789
	PINT	-.233	.141	-.205	-1.652	.107
	ORGC	.247	.127	.253	1.949	.059
	ORGH	-.451	.183	-.314	-2.466	.018

- a Dependent Variable: AVOID

Appendix 20 Linear Regression Model of Compromising Conflict Management Styles and the Three Characteristics

Variables Entered/Removed(b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
7	ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, HEHA(a)	.	Enter

a All requested variables entered.

b Dependent Variable: COMP

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
7	.855(a)	.730	.695	.56013

a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, HEHA

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
7	Regression	32.295	5	6.459	20.587	.000(a)
	Residual	11.922	38	.314		
	Total	44.217	43			

a Predictors: (Constant), ORGH, HINT, PINT, ORGC, HEHA

b Dependent Variable: COMP

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
7	(Constant)	1.645	1.110		1.481	.147
	HEHA	.465	.123	.422	3.792	.001
	HINT	.003	.164	.002	.021	.984
	PINT	.304	.107	.272	2.836	.007
	ORGC	-.283	.096	-.294	-2.940	.006
	ORGH	.230	.139	.162	1.653	.106

a Dependent Variable: COMP