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Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution Styles: A Quantitative Study with Practical Implications

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The purpose of the present study was to examine the link between emotional intelligence (EI) and the various conflict resolution styles (CRSs). Using Schutte et al.'s (1998: 167-177) self-report measurement and Thomas & Kilmann's (Kilmann & Thomas 1977: 309-325) MODE instrument, emotional intelligence and the preferred conflict resolution style (CRS) of the participants were measured in an online survey. The sample comprised 104 German students with a specialization in business whose average age was 22.2 years. The results of the ANOVA test showed that there was a significant correlation between the preferred style of avoiding and low EI values and that there was no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and the styles of accommodating, collaborating, compromising, or competing. However, there were indications for connections between high values in emotional intelligence and the styles of compromising and collaborating as well as low values in EI and the style of competing which were found using multiple regression. In addition, implications, limitations and further directions were addressed.

Keywords	Conflict, Conflict Resolution Style, Emotional Intelligence

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Glossary

ANOVA	analysis of variance
B	unstandardized regression coefficient
CRS	conflict resolution style
e.g.	exempli gratia (for instance)
EI	emotional intelligence
EQ-i	Bar-On emotional quotient inventory
H	hypothesis
IQ	intelligence quotient
M	mean
MODE	Thomas and Kilmann’s management-of-differences exercises instrument
MSCEIT	Mayer-Salovey-Caruso emotional intelligence test
N (or n)	sample size
R	range
R^2	multiple determination coefficient
SD	standard deviation
SE	standard error
TKI	Thomas and Kilmann’s (MODE) instrument
TMMS	Trait Meta-Mood scale

vs	versus

1 Introduction

"During these uncertain times, the need to manage conflict better has never been greater" (Liddle 2017: 4).

This quotation by the mediator and conflict expert David Liddle shows the importance of conflict management nowadays. Conflicts are not uncommon these days; they have become a permanent part of our society and seem to be growing in number and importance. No matter which area one focuses on, there are conflicts everywhere: in national and international affairs, in private life, in leisure activities and not least in politics. According to a study published by the CIPD in 2015, this also affects working life. As at least 38% of the 2,195 UK employees questioned experienced some kind of conflict at work within 2014 (CIPD 2015: 2).

Therefore, it is not only of essential interest for companies to understand conflicts, but also to be able to better assess individual employees in order to know how they deal with conflicts. This approach to conflicts can be divided into the following five conflict resolution styles (CRSs), according to Kilmann & Thomas (1977: 309): avoiding, competing, accommodating, compromising and collaborating. To ensure that companies are able to deal with conflicts and know how to handle the various conflict resolution styles, Liddle (2017: 124) believes that it can be helpful if organizations take a closer look at emotional intelligence (EI) and introduce it in all their areas of activity. According to the literature, there is still a debate on whether EI can be categorized as an ability or a trait. Salovey & Mayer (1990: 189), who were the first to use this term, believe emotional intelligence is an ability that helps to understand and better assess one's own emotions as well as those of others. That this skill is crucial in conflict situations becomes obvious when it is understood that a conflict depends not only on the existing communication, and the external circumstances but also on the personality of the people concerned; this personality also includes the emotional tendencies of an individual (Robbins & Judge 2010: 220-221).

Consequently, the question arises of how emotional intelligence and the various styles of conflict resolution are linked to each other. Answers to this question are provided, for instance, by Jordan & Troth (2002: 72), who confirmed with the help of their survey that there is an identifiable link between emotional intelligence and the different conflict resolution styles. Moreover, they found a positive correlation between EI and the CRS of collaborating and a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and the conflict resolution styles of competing and avoiding. Yet, these results do not always seem to be replicable, as other authors (e.g. Godse & Thingujam 2010: 80-81) only obtained the same results for some of the CRSs. Indeed, Godse & Thingujam (2010: 80-81) could not find a correlation between EI and the CRS of competing. Therefore, it seems reasonable to continue the research on this topic. Hence, the research question is as follows: How does the link between emotional intelligence and the various conflict resolution styles look like, and which implications can be derived for the working environment?

In order to gain a better understanding of this topic, the following pages will introduce the topic of conflict in more detail, as well as what the five conflict resolution styles mentioned above are. Furthermore, the concept of emotional intelligence, together with the controversies surrounding this topic, will be presented. The present paper is intended to help broaden the understanding of these issues and to give a suggestion of how to deal with them.

2 Theoretical Background

In this chapter, conflicts, the different approaches to them, and their occurrence in companies will be discussed in more detail. Further, the five different conflict resolution styles will be explained. In addition, the topic of emotional intelligence is going to be examined in-depth, as well as a current point of contention in the literature and the connection to practice. Finally, the topics of conflict and emotional intelligence will be combined; conclusions will be drawn, which will underlie the hypotheses for the present paper.

2.1 Conflict

Conflicts are often presented as adverse events (Hollmann 2010: 117). But is the world as black and white as we perceive it? Might there be cases in which conflicts are beneficial? Answers to these questions, the definition of conflict, different views in the literature, and how they relate to the working environment will be discussed in the following pages.

2.1.1 Definition

Conflicts in general - and especially conflicts in the working environment - are recently a widely discussed topic (Saundry, Adam, Ashman, Forde, Wibberley, & Wright 2016: 9). Considering the literature, ambiguities and a multitude of definitions can be seen. Berlew (1977, cited in Glasl 1999: 12) gives a broad definition: "A conflict is given when people disagree with each other"[1]. The problem with this statement is that it does not set boundaries concerning place and time. Most people disagree with each other on at least one point in time (Glasl 1999: 12).

According to Thomas (1976, cited in M. D. Dunnette 1976: 891), a conflict can be understood as a “process which begins when one party perceives that another has frustrated, or is about to frustrate, some concern of his”. This widely used definition (e.g. Robbins & Judge 2010: 218; Glasl 1999: 13; Carter 2006: 2; Wall & Callister 1995: 517)

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[1] Author translation from the original text: “Ein Konflikt ist gegeben, wenn man untereinander eine Uneinigkeit hat.”

is more concise than the one offered by Berlew but it is still very broad. Consequently, other authors try to specify the concept further (e.g. O'Rourke 2014: 305; Liddle 2017: 21). Werbik (1976, cited in Glasl 1999: 13) and Billmann (1978, cited in Glasl 1999: 13), for instance, define conflict as a state where "two parties (individuals, groups, institutions) pursue incompatible goals so that one party can only achieve its goal if the other party does not achieve their goal"[2] (Glasl 1999: 13). However, Glasl argues against this definition. He questions if a conflict exists when it is not clear if all parties perceive it as a conflict, i.e. if it is interpreted as a conflict by only one party or whether both parties perceive the conflict.

Glasl (1999, 14-15) offers a definition which combines different conceptualizations of conflicts, excluding what he considers weak points. He defines a

> social conflict as an interaction between actors (individuals, groups, organizations, …), whereby at least one actor experiences incompatibilities in thinking, imagining, perceiving and/or feeling and/or wanting with the other actor (or actors) in such a way that the realization is impaired by another actor (or other actors).[3] (Glasl 1999: 14-15).

Glasl stresses that there must be an interaction between two actors and the fact that at least one of them needs to experience incompatibilities. This incompatibility (in the various named areas) and a resulting reaction need to be present. Furthermore, at least one actor must see the failure of his expectations within the interaction as caused by the other actor. In addition, both sides need to recognize and experience the impairment (Glasl 1999: 15).

In this paper, a conflict is defined, based on Glasl's definition, as an interaction involving several individuals in which at least one experiences an incompatibility (whether emotional or cognitive, that is related to wanting, thinking, imagining, perceiving, etc.).

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[2] Author translation from the original text: "…wenn zwei Parteien (Personen, Gruppen, Institutionen) unvereinbare Ziele verfolgen, so dass eine Partei nur dann ihr Ziel erreichen kann, wenn die andere Partei ihr Ziel nicht erreicht."

[3] Author translation from the original text: "[Ein] sozialer Konflikt ist eine Interaktion zwischen Aktoren (Individuen, Gruppen, Organisationen, usw.), wobei wenigstens ein Aktor Unvereinbarkeiten im Denken, Vorstellen, Wahrnehmen und/oder im Fühlen und/oder Wollen mit dem anderen Aktor (anderen Aktoren) in der Art erlebt, dass im Realisieren eine Beeinträchtigung durch einen anderen Aktor (die anderen Aktoren) erfolge."

Consequently, individuals realise that they can not achieve their goals or own ideas due to the second party, triggering a conflict (adapted from Glasl 1999: 14-15).

2.1.2 Dysfunctional vs Functional Conflict

As seen in the previous chapters, difficulties or conflicts can be harmful. However, there are statements in the literature that contradict those perceptions by stating that conflicts can be helpful. Consequently, a differentiation between dysfunctional and functional conflicts seems appropriate.

Helpful, inspiring or successful conflicts are called **functional** (or creative conflict/healthy disagreement). Thus, employees push and interact with each other, which leads to better results. A prerequisite is that employees are willing to interact in this way and are open and honest with each other. If, on the other hand, conflicts are harmful or ineffective, they are classified as **dysfunctional**. Dysfunctional conflicts do not bring any additional value and are time- and energy-consuming. Moreover, if dysfunctional conflicts are not handled well, they can cause emotional, psychological and physiological harm (Liddle 2017: 24).

Hence, it seems reasonable for companies to promote functional conflicts. However, this point is controversial. While Robbins (1978: 71) believes that managers or supervisors should encourage low-level conflicts, Wall & Callister (1995: 526) warn against this. The latter argue that the risk of a consciously generated conflict level might be too high, and the benefits of functional conflicts could be short-lived. In addition, the authors highlight the possibility of escalations resulting in serious consequences, for instance, less stability, aggression, complexity increases, and employee’s productivity and motivation reduction (Wall & Callister 1995: 527).

2.1.3 Change in the View of Conflicts

As mentioned before, there are different perspectives on conflicts. This might be attributed to the fact that the view of conflicts has changed over the years. On the one hand, there are individuals who believe that conflicts should be prevented at all costs to generate a conducive environment. This is the position within the **traditional view of**

conflict. On the other hand, supporters of the **human relations view of conflict** argue to the contrary. In their opinion, conflicts are unavoidable and therefore, an inevitable consequence within groups. This view is shared by a third group, the followers of the **interactionist view of conflict**. However, they are additionally convinced that a group or a team can only interact well when conflicts are present and hence, see conflicts as a condition for productive results within the group (Robbins & Judge 2010: 219).

In the **traditional view of conflict**, conflicts are seen as exclusively negative. The conceptualization of it can be traced back to understandings on group behaviour, prevalent in the 1930s and 1940s. “Conflict, by definition, was harmful and was to be avoided” (Robbins & Judge 2010: 219). Therefore, the working environment is ideally characterised as conflict-free (O’Rourke 2014: 305). According to Robbins & Judge (2010: 219) this view seems to be outdated, even though many people still believe that conflicts are primarily harmful.

The **human relations view of conflict**, established between the 1940s and the 1970s, is about seeing a conflict as something natural within a company, and thus accepting it (O’Rourke 2014: 305). Moreover, within this approach, Robbins & Judge (2010: 219) state that conflicts can improve the outcome of a team. This is also confirmed by Liddle (2017: 25), referring to a metaphor where a team of robots, although they might be able to get along without conflicts, they would most likely not come up with any new ideas or innovations due to their commonalities.

The **interactionist view of conflict** goes even further. Companies’ executives and managers are called upon to provide a certain basic level of conflict because the proponents of this theory believe that this leads to more creativity, self-criticism and stability of a group. However, according to Robbins & Judge (2010: 220) not all types of conflicts are advocated. A distinction is made (see also chapter 2.2.1 for this) between functional and dysfunctional conflicts (Robbins & Judge 2010: 219-220). O'Rourke (2014: 305) builds on Robbins' idea (1978: 69) proposing that conflicts should be encouraged; otherwise one would come to a standstill and hence, would not be able to develop further. However, O’Rourke (2014: 305) also critically questions whether this is always beneficial. While the author is admitting that there is a possibility that conflicts can offer advantages, he tends more towards the opinion of Wall & Callister (1995: 526), who warn against consciously intensifying conflicts. In contrast to this, Robbins (1978: 69) goes even further, asserting that companies can only survive if a conflict brings change to which organizations have to adapt.

2.1.4 Conflicts in Organizations

As seen in the previous chapters, it is impossible to imagine the working environment without conflict (Kolb & Putnam 1992: 315) and yet, it is often regarded as a taboo subject, although it would be important to deal with conflict. It "is viewed by many as a destructive and damaging phenomenon - an unpleasant by-product of working life" (Liddle 2017: 3). Precisely for this reason and because people often perceive conflicts as a problem of others, but not as a problem of themselves, it is crucial for companies to deal with this issue. Otherwise, conflicts will turn out to be very costly and can permanently damage a company’s image (Liddle 2017: 89).

As seen in chapter 2.1.2, conflicts are not necessarily always negative but might also prove to be an opportunity. In this case, it is important to pass the message on to the employees and to stress that conflicts or difficulties are natural. Furthermore, it is indispensable to teach all levels of employees, not only how to resolve conflicts, but also how to deal with them (Robbins & Judge 2010: 218).

In the context of the working environment, there are thorough discussions about whether conflicts should be resolved when arisen (conflict resolution) or be encouraged to fully develop up to a certain point (conflict management) (Robbins 1978: 69-72). The first term refers to the dysfunctional conflict and the latter to the functional conflict from chapter 2.1.2. Consequently, the two terms “conflict resolution” and “conflict management” can not be regarded as synonyms. Robbins (1978: 69) argues for the interactionist view (see chapter 2.1.3) to be applied in practice since it is based on the assumption of a functional conflict and includes conflict management. This means that conflicts can be stimulated, but also resolved, depending on what the situation requires. The term “conflict management” includes conflict resolution but goes even further by also dealing with the conflict.

There are many different approaches to deal with conflicts in the working environment: peer review, conflict coaching, team conferencing, mediation, arbitration, conciliation, negotiation, etc. (Carter 2006, 16-20; Liddle 2017, 138; Kolb & Putnam 1992: 315). Two of the often-used approaches within the workplace environment will now be briefly introduced: mediation and arbitration.

Mediation is defined by Liddle (2017: 179) as “a voluntary, confidential and non-adversarial process of dispute resolution that generates win/win outcomes for the parties”. Mediators, who can be an external consultant or an internal employee, act as neutral support and assume a third-party role. However, they do not dictate the parties how to solve the conflict, but merely help both sides to come to a solution (Liddle 2017: 180-182).

In contrast, the role of the **arbitrator** as described by Robbins, Judge & Champbell (2010: 417) is "a third party to a negotiation who has the authority to dictate an agreement". Also different from mediation is the fact that it is either mandatory or voluntary for both parties. The advantage of arbitration over mediation is that it will always lead to a result; however, a possible disadvantage is that it will revive the conflict again during the arbitration or perhaps even at a later stage (Robbins et al. 2010: 417).

2.2 Conflict Resolution Styles

After a conflict has arisen, there are numerous ways to deal with it. Different models address the different approaches to conflict resolution. In order to describe these models in detail, the term "conflict resolution" should be examined first. Carter defines a conflict resolution approach as

> the method and manner in which a person attempts to eliminate or minimize a dispute between or among parties. Different individuals have different orientations toward resolving conflict. Thus, a conflict resolution approach is a combination of specific behaviours and specific orientations used to deal with a particular conflict situation. (Carter 2006: 4)

A more concise definition is offered by Sweeney & Carruthers (1996: as quoted in Holt & DeVore 2005: 167), as they describe conflict resolution as "the process used by parties in conflict to reach a settlement".

Based on both conceptualizations, in the present work, conflict resolution is understood as a procedure that describes the behaviours through which different parties find one or different solutions for exiting an existing conflict (adapted from Sweeney & Carruthers 1996: cited in Holt & DeVore 2005: 167; Carter 2006: 4).

As mentioned above, numerous models address conflict resolution. According to Holt & DeVore (2005: 168), the most known models are Thomas and Kilmann's Management-of-Differences Exercise (MODE), Hall's Conflict Management Survey (CMS), Rahim's Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventories I and II (ROCI-I and ROCI-II) and Renwick's Employee Conflict Inventory (ECI). Wood & Bell (2008: 127) also mention Sternberg and Soriano’s (1984: 115-126) model of conflict resolution styles.

Except for the concept of Sternberg and Soriano (1984: 117), all the aforementioned models describe the five different conflict resolution styles (CRSs) **compromising, collaborating, avoiding, competing** and **accommodating** (see chapter 2.2.1). Not all styles are equally labelled, but all are understood to be equivalent (Holt & DeVore 2005: 167-168). However, the compromising conflict resolution style is controversial. Authors such as Pruitt and Rubin (1986, cited in De Dreu, Evers, Beersma, Kluwer & Nauta 2001: 647) are less convinced of it and therefore describe it with the term "half-hearted". Contradictory to this, De Dreu et al. (2001: 665) believe "that conflict theory would improve by incorporating compromising as a separate conflict management strategy that is distinct from problem solving".

Sternberg and Soriano (1984: 117) have another approach to this topic and introduce a less-known model. This model provides the following seven possibilities: (1) physical action (goals achieved through violence), (2) economic action (goals achieved through economic superiority), (3) wait and see (a direct reaction is avoided/delayed), (4) accept the situation (by accepting, an attempt is made to make the best possible use of the situation), (5) step-down (the conflict is defused through reduced demands), (6) third-party intervention (a third-party helps to deal with the conflict) and (7) undermine esteem (the image of the opposing party with other, uninvolved parties shall be worsened).

The model of conflict resolution strategies used for this paper is Thomas & Kilmann's (Kilmann & Thomas 1977: 309-325) MODE instrument. Its use is attributed not only to its frequency in the literature but also because of its validity and reliability. The model will be explained in more detail below, and connections between resolution styles and gender will be addressed.

2.2.1 Thomas and Kilmann's Management-of-Differences Exercises (MODE) Instrument

In order to understand the instrument developed by Thomas and Kilmann (also known as TKI - Thomas Kilmann Instrument), it is best to first take a look at the origins of the conflict resolution models. Most models are based on the **Dual Concern Theory** by Blake and Mouton (1964, cited in Holt & DeVore 2005: 167), established in the 1960s, aiming to explain how to lead effectively (Bernardin & Alvares 1976: 84). Two motivational processes are critical to this theory, the thought of oneself and the thought of the other person. These dimensions are also called concern for production (concern for own goals) and concern for people (concern for other's goals) (Wood & Bell 2008: 127; Holt & DeVore 2005: 168). Crossing these two dimensions results in a 2x2 matrix, which represents the **Managerial Grid** by Blake and Mouton (see Figure 1). Within the matrix, the authors distribute values from 1 to 9; the higher the value, the higher the expression on the respective axis. Following this, five different leadership styles emerge (Molloy 1998: 3):

A value of 1,1 is called **Impoverished Management** (the values for concern for production and concern for people are low). A second style is known as **Country Club Management** and has values of 1,9 (the concern for the production is low, but the concern for people is high). The probably opposite of this corresponds with values of 9,1 (the concern for production is high, but the concern for people is low) to **Authority-Compliance** or **Authority-Obedience Management** (also called Produce or Perish Style). Another term, the **Middle-of-the-road management** (also called organization man management), is described as the middle way with values of 5,5 (the concern for both, for production as well as for people, have an average level). With the highest values 9,9 **Team Management** (also known as Teamwork or Team Style) gets described, which has a high concern for production as well as for people (Molloy 1998: 5; Koc, Kiliclar & Yazicioglu 2013: 97).

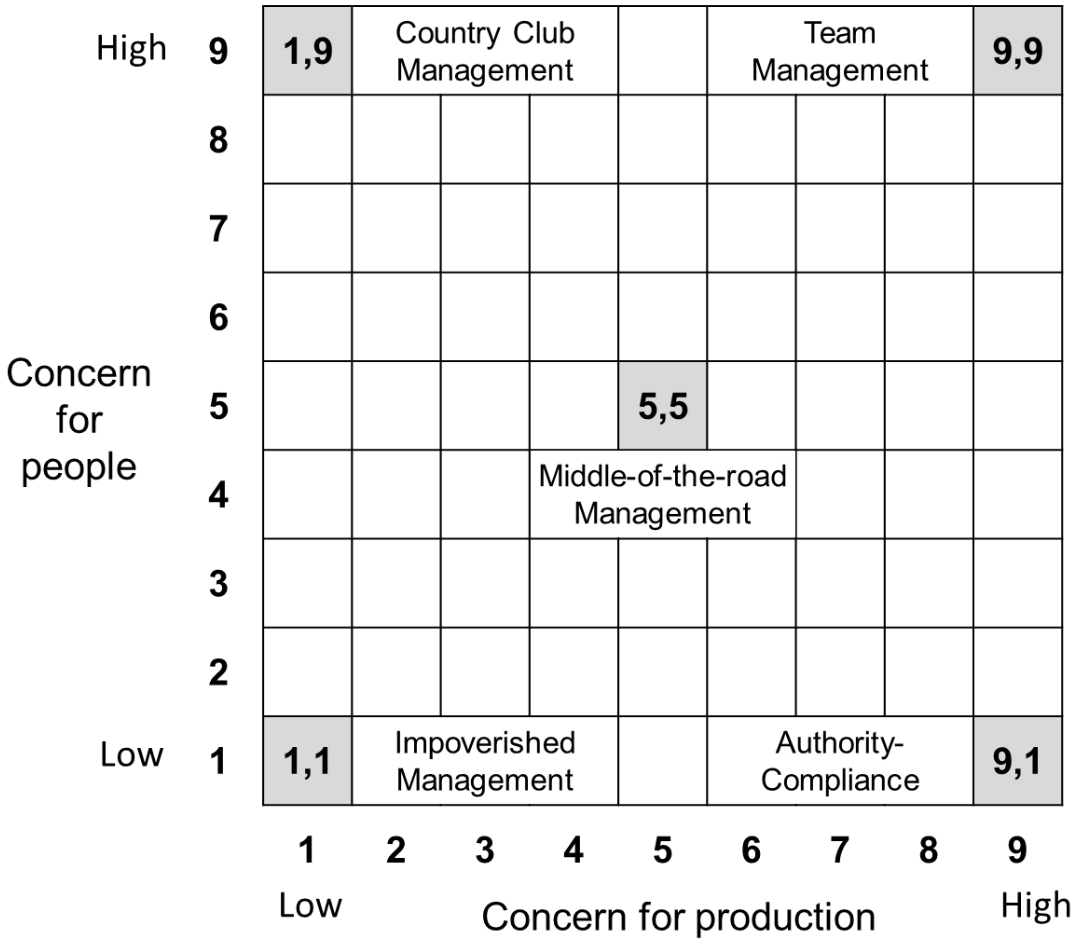

Figure 1. Blake & Mouton's Managerial Grid. Adapted from Molloy (1998: 4) and Koc, Kiliclar & Yazicioglu (2013: 97).

Based on this model, Kilmann & Thomas (1977: 309-325) developed their Management-of-Differences Exercises (MODE) instrument some years later (see Figure 2). Similar to Blake and Mouton’s (1964, cited in Holt & DeVore 2005: 167) model, Kilmann & Thomas proposed two dimensions oriented towards a person’s motives: assertiveness (concern for own goals) and cooperativeness (concern for other’s goals), resulting in various conflict resolution styles (Wood & Bell 2008: 127). Like in Blake and Mouton’s (Molloy 1998: 5) model, five styles are represented in Kilmann & Thomas’ model, which are similar in content, but are named differently (Holt & DeVore 2005: 168): avoiding, competing, accommodating, compromising and collaborating. These five different conflict resolution styles will be explained below.

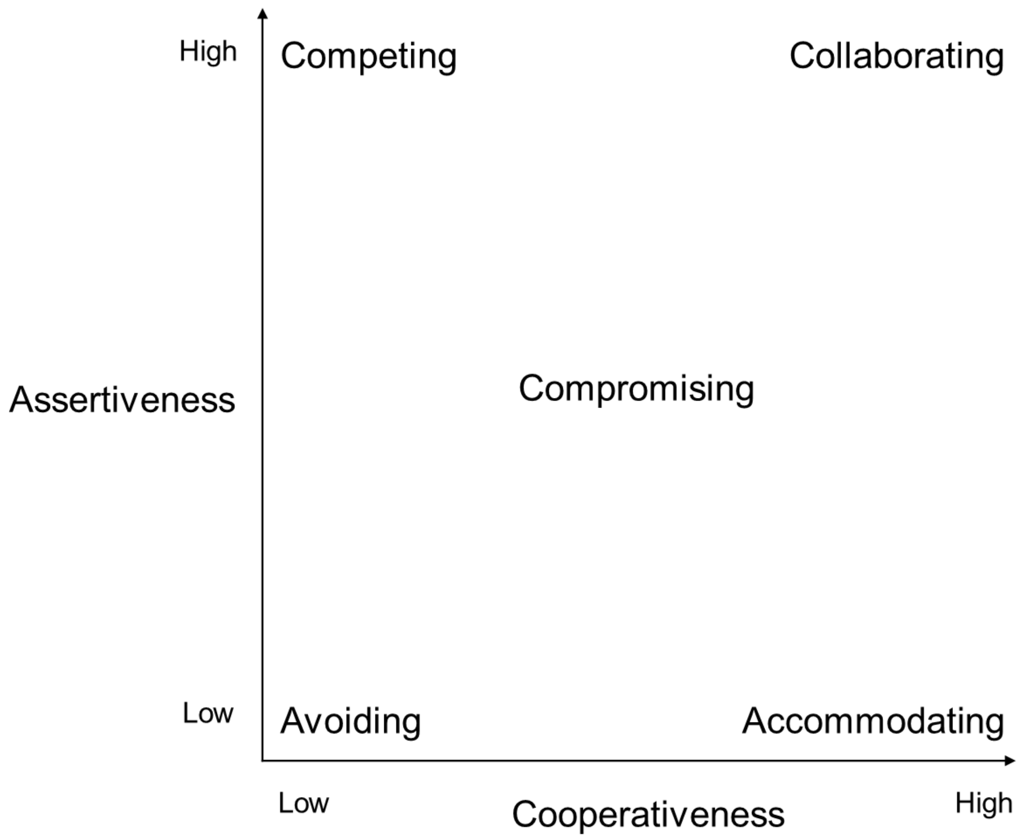

Figure 2. Thomas and Kilmann's Management-of-Differences Exercises (MODE) Instrument. Adapted from Thomas & Kilmann (1978: 1139); Wood & Bell (2008: 127); Holt & DeVore (2005: 168).

Avoiding refers to a passive style, where there is no communication about the existing conflict. Although one or both parties know that a conflict exists, they delay the conflict or simply ignore it (Carter 2006: 5). Individuals who use this style are characterized as uncooperative and unassertive (Thomas & Kilmann 1978: 1139). One example taken from the TKI, which represents the avoiding-style is "I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about" (Jones 1976: 250). Especially in Asian cultures, this conflict resolution style is prominent (Chua & Gudykunst 1987; Ting-Toomey 1988; both cited in Holt & DeVore 2005: 169). Holt & DeVore (2005: 169) assume that this is because in these cultures debating is not seen as respectful.

If individuals are only interested in their own wishes and completely ignore those of the other party, the MODE instrument speaks of **competing** (Carter 2006: 6). People who use this aggressive approach are described as uncooperative and at the same time as assertive (Thomas & Kilmann 1978: 1139). For instance, the TKI contains the statement "I am usually firm in pursuing my goals" (Jones 1976: 250). Acting competitive within a conflict can have both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it can seem useful if the other party has less power, and thus people with the competing style have more power or a better position to reach their goals. On the other hand, the other party might feel annoyed and may even want to take revenge to harm the others or to enforce their plans. This is especially dangerous when both parties have equal power, and the decisive behaviour is demonstrated by both parties. This kind of situation can escalate into a never-ending vicious circle in which the entire organization can be involved and damaged (Carter 2006: 7).

Accommodating represents the opposite style to competing. In this case, the affected party is cooperative but unassertive, which is also reflected in the matrix (Thomas & Kilmann 1978: 1139). In this passive approach, people comply with the wishes of their counterpart. This is often the case when the relationship with the other person(s) is more important than the actual argument. Carter (2006: 5) uses the example of a dispute between a married couple. This conflict resolution style will be chosen by one or both disputants if their marriage seems more important to them than the dispute they are currently facing. This is similarly described in a statement of the TKI: "If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views" (Jones 1976: 250).

Compromising is exemplified by the statement "I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us" in the TKI (Jones 1976: 250). People, whose conflict resolution style is compromising, score average values in cooperativeness as well as in assertiveness (Thomas & Kilmann 1978: 1139). These individuals take the wishes of their counterpart into account and value them, while keeping their own interests in mind. According to Carter "each side is partially satisfied and partially dissatisfied" (2006: 6). In addition, the author states that this style can have both positive and negative effects. On the one hand, it can have a positive impact if people within a conflict situation are willing to compromise, but on the other hand, it can also have a negative effect if people agree to compromise too quickly, as this can signalise to be weak.

The highest values in the matrix are achieved by using the **collaborating** (or sometimes also called “creative problem solving”) approach (Carter 2006: 8). Thomas and Kilmann describe people using this style as highly cooperative and assertive (1978: 1139). Shell (2001: 168) goes even one step further and states that people preferring this style enjoy negotiations as well as the interactive solving of challenging problems. Both is also evident from a TKI example: "I tell another my ideas and ask them for theirs" (Jones 1976: 250). In contrast to competing or accommodating, there can be two winners within this style, who realise their goals together and achieve a mutual satisfactory result from a possibly negative initial situation. Collaboration in conflict resolution requires not only imagination but also the ability and willingness to cooperate (Carter 2006: 8). Several authors agree that this is the best approach to achieve a good result within a team or a group and also to increase the mood and effectiveness within this team or group (e.g. De Dreu & Van Vianen 2001: 312). This is also supported by the work of Graesser, Fiore, Greiff, Andrews-Todd, Foltz, & Hesse (2018: 86) who conclude that collaborative problem solving is one of the most important abilities of our time, but that many people are lacking it.

2.2.2 Differences in Genders

A close examination of these presented conflict resolution styles reveals a connection between personal characteristics. Differences in styles were not only found in religion, e.g. Australian Muslims act primarily according to the compromising style, while Australian non-practising Muslims and Australian non-practising Christians prefer the collaborating style (Wilson & Power 2004: 69). However, these differences were also found in satisfaction within marriage - a study found that there is a high correlation between marital satisfaction and the collaborative conflict resolution style (Greeff & Bruyne 2000: 321) – and, especially, in gender-related topics (e.g. Brahnam, Margavio, Hignite, Barrier & Chin 2004: 197; Sutschek 2001: 69; Gbadamosi, Baghestan, & Al-Mabrouk 2012: 245).

In both studies, Brahnam et al. (2004: 197) and Gbadamosi et al. (2012: 245), the authors agree that men tend to the avoiding conflict resolution style. However, a study by Tezer & Demir (2001: 530), shows that men use the accommodating approach more than women. In addition, conflict resolution styles differ when the gender of the counterpart is different. Men tend to use a competing approach with other men and the avoiding approach when dealing with women. Among women, the above-mentioned authors disagree. On the one hand, Gbadamosi et al. (2012: 245) say that females prefer the competing approach, on the other hand Brahnam et al. (2004: 197) found the collaborative approach is the one favoured among women. In contrast, according to Nelson and Lubin (1991, cited in Holt & DeVore 2005: 172), the accommodating approach seems to be the one chosen by female US politicians. Whereas, Tezer & Demir (2001: 531) add that there is no difference in the conflict resolution style for women related to the gender of their counterpart. It seems that gender is not the only factor responsible for the preferred conflict resolution style since it can not explain the deviations.

According to a study by Chusmir & Mills (1989: 159), gender differences can be explained partly by hierarchical positions. The results of their study show that male and female managers working at comparable levels resolve conflict situations similarly, both at home and at work. Both genders are more competitive at work than at home and prefer the accommodating approach more in private than in professional contexts. These differences between situations at home and at work are explained by the authors arguing that in the private sphere, the role of authority disappears. They justify it since, in marriage, partners are normally treated as equals, concluding that differences in conflict resolution styles must be other than gender related (Chusmir & Mills 1989: 161). Similarly, Sternberg & Soriano (1984: 123) did not find any gender differences in conflict resolution styles in their study. This is also recognizable within other studies (e.g. Boucher 2013: 31; Vestal & Torres 2016: 27).

In conclusion, even though conflict resolution styles are linked to personal characteristics, it seems that gender is none of them. This leads to the question: which personal characteristics could be more decisive? One answer could be emotional intelligence, as some authors consider it to be a personality trait. Therefore, the next chapter will introduce and discuss the topic of emotional intelligence in more detail.

2.3 Emotional Intelligence

The field of emotional intelligence (EI) is relatively young, or at least it seems young in comparison to the field that deals with understanding conflicts. Since the 1990s scientists have been focusing more on this construct (Mayer, Roberts & Barsade 2008: 509). One of the first researchers to address emotional intelligence were Mayer and Salovey (Jordan & Troth 2002: 63). A few years later, other scientists like Goleman or Bar-On also presented their perspectives and findings on emotional intelligence (Goleman 2006: xiii; Bar-On 2006: 14). This led to different definitions of emotional intelligence. Among the many theories of EI, the three mentioned are the most widely known. This paper focuses on Mayer & Salovey's model as it is the base for the EI questionnaire used in this study (see chapter 3). However, Goleman and Bar-On's models will be briefly presented to illustrate the differences and to provide an overview.

Mayer & Salovey define emotional intelligence as the "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer 1990: 189). Affected by this are especially situations in working life (see chapter 2.3.3), and in dealing with friends and family (Asendorpf 2019: 110). Originally, Salovey & Mayer divided this concept into three categories (Salovey & Mayer 1990: 190-191), but in 2008 this was expanded and divided into the following four (see Figure 3): (1) "the emotional perception and identification", (2) "the use of emotional information in thinking", (3) "reasoning about emotions: emotional appraisal, labeling [sic], and language", and (4) "the emotion management" (Mayer et al. 2008: 511-513).

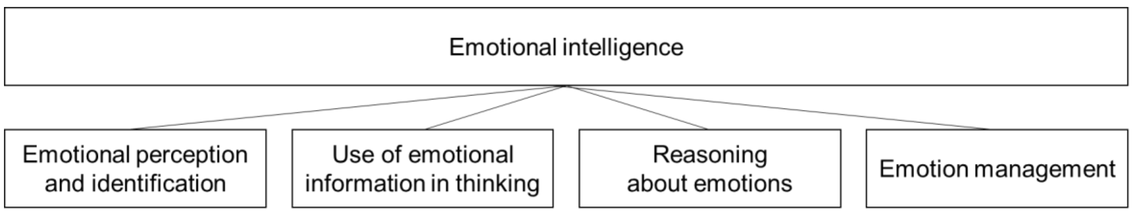

Figure 3. Emotional intelligence (adapted from Mayer et al. 2008: 511-513).

Emotional perception and identification can be understood as the ability to be aware of a person's own emotions as well as to show them to others accordingly. This aptitude also includes being able to distinguish between honest and dishonest emotions and their display as well as between precise and less precise emotions (Jordan & Troth 2002: 64).

The **use of emotional information in thinking** is about how to structure thoughts with the help of emotions and thus distinguish important thoughts from less important ones, including being able to change a perspective (Jordan & Troth 2002: 64). As well as the ability to let thoughts be influenced by emotions or to prevent this impact completely (Mayer et al. 2008: 512).

Reasoning about emotions describes being able to correctly assign your feelings to the appropriate category (i.e. labelling them) and thus understand your own or other people's emotions in the right context (Mayer et al. 2008: 512). Jordan and Troth (2002: 64) add the ability to understand when contradictory feelings are experienced parallelly and also when transitions from one feeling into another are perceived.

Emotion management refers to the way individuals deal with their feelings and how they can influence them. This can be done, for example, by establishing or dissolving a connection to a person’s emotions in certain situations. Thus, people who have this ability are more likely to connect with their emotions and thereby gain a motivational boost from negative emotions. On the other hand, people who have little control over their emotions are more likely to experience negative emotions without receiving any benefit from them (Jordan & Troth 2002: 64). Mayer et al. (2008: 513) state that there are positive outcomes from trying to modify the perception of a given situation, stressing that this self-control and a person’s own emotions are often needed in the workplace.

Reed (2005: 142) summarizes Mayer and Salovey’s model as “an ability-based model that measures how well people perform specific tasks and solve emotional problems in a controlled setting“.

Daniel Goleman has a slightly different view on emotional intelligence, asserting in 1995 that “emotional intelligence […] include[s] self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself” (Goleman 2006: xxii). In addition, he states that “there is an old-fashioned word for the body of skills that emotional intelligence represents: *character*” (2006: 285). Moreover, the author refers to five competencies modified by

Mayer and Salovey, which are reflected in emotional and social skills: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (Goleman 1998: 318). One of the differences between Goleman’s and Mayer & Salovey’s models is that the definition of Goleman is broader and includes more components. It "incorporates social and emotional competencies, including some personality traits and attitudes" (Jordan & Troth 2002: 64). Thus, the latter model includes not only abilities but also traits. This distinction between abilities and traits is further explained in chapter 2.3.2.

Bechara, Damasio, and Bar-On (2007: 274) define emotional intelligence as “a multifactorial cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies that influence our ability to cope with daily demands and challenges effectively“. In addition, the authors go even one step further and state that there is a robust link between emotional intelligence and social intelligence. In a later definition, Bar-On combines those two types of intelligence: “emotional-social intelligence is an array of interrelated emotional and social competencies and skills that determine how effectively individuals understand and express themselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands, challenges and pressures” (Bar-On 2010: 57). One can assume that for Bar-On, differing from the authors’ definitions presented above, the components of social intelligence play an even more significant role in the context of emotional intelligence.

The present paper adopts Mayer & Salovey’s (1990: 189) definition of emotional intelligence (see the beginning of chapter 2.3), since the used EI questionnaire is based on it (see also chapter 3.2). This model will be discussed in more detail. In addition, the reasons why emotional intelligence is conceptualized as intelligence will be presented, together with opposing conceptualizations (as a trait), and its relevance for working life.

2.3.1 Criteria for an intelligence

Can emotional intelligence be called intelligence at all? In case this is true, why? Which criteria must be fulfilled? Answers to these questions will be discussed below.

The origins of the definition of intelligence go back to the 16th century when the Spanish Juan Huarte de San Juan presented his criteria “(1) docility in learning from a master,

(2) understanding and independence of judgment; and (3) inspiration without extravagance" (Carroll 1993: 25). This definition influenced and inspired scholars in later years.

Mayer, Caruso & Salovey (2000: 269) developed Huarte de San Juan’s criteria and assert that the concept of intelligence should fulfil specific criteria which can be classified into the following three groups: "conceptual, correlational, and developmental".

The first criterion, **conceptual**, refers to intellectual capacity. However, this is not be confused with a person's favoured behavioural patterns, level of self-esteem or lack of intellectual achievement. In addition, intelligence measures should be feasible. Using the example of emotional intelligence, this would be the measurement of emotional capabilities (Mayer et al. 2000: 269-270). Different scores should reflect individual characteristics (Carroll 1993: 631). In the case of emotional intelligence, it can be assessed using the four categories mentioned above (see chapter 2.3). Furthermore, with the help of emotion management one can identify how well a person is in control of their own emotions (Mayer et al. 2000: 270).

The second criterion, **correlational**, is related to empirical approaches. On the one hand, intelligence must describe abilities that are closely related to each other and resemble the abilities included in other already accepted conceptualizations of intelligence. On the other hand, these abilities must be distinguishable from the abilities contained within other conceptualizations (Mayer et al. 2000: 270). Regarding emotional intelligence, this implies that the different abilities should be interrelated and similar to, but also differing from, the abilities of other conceptualizations of intelligence. Goleman agrees and states that emotional intelligence describes abilities that are at the same time supplementary and different from abilities of "academic intelligence", which corresponds to the intelligence quotient (IQ) (Goleman 1998: 317).

The third criterion, **developmental**, can be traced back to the findings of Binet & Simon (1905, cited in Fancher 1985: 71), who developed the first intelligence test. It relates to the development of intelligence over the years, which also develops with growing expertise (Mayer et al. 2000: 270). Regarding emotional intelligence, this means that younger individuals and especially children have fewer abilities than, for instance, adults.

A study by Mayer et al. (2000: 291) seems to confirm this process; their findings show that people develop emotional intelligence from the early stage of adolescence to young adulthood.

2.3.2 Trait EI vs Ability EI

As briefly mentioned above, there are different understandings of emotional intelligence. Brannick, Wahi, Arce, Johnson, Nazian & Goldin (2009: 1062) distinguish different ways of measuring EI. In recent years, there have been many discussions about whether it is more precise to use the concept of trait EI (measures based on self-reports) or to use the concept of ability EI, which is based on cognitive abilities. Especially Mayer, Salovey & Caruso (2000, cited in O'Connor & Little 2003: 1895) argue for the latter conceptualization asserting that emotional intelligence should be understood as a typical intelligence (see also chapter 2.3.1.).

As described in chapter 2.3, Mayer & Salovey's model is based on the conceptualization of the **ability** EI, since the authors define EI as an "ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought" (Mayer et al. 2008: 511). Mayer et al. (2008: 511) designed an instrument to measure EI, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (short: MSCEIT). The idea behind this construct is that problem solving by emotions and through emotions is part of EI (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso & Sitarenios 2003: 97). Petrides, Pita, & Kokkinaki (2007: 273) add that the measurement of the ability EI "concerns emotion-related cognitive abilities measured via performance-based test".

However, the same authors (Petrides et al. 2007: 273) conceptualize EI as a **trait**, as it "concerns emotion-related dispositions and self-perceptions measured via self-report". Thus, trait EI is easier to operationalize because it is measured by an individual's self-assessments (Petrides et al. 2007: 274). To measure trait EI a variety of tests are available. According to Brannick et al. (2009: 1063) they are also known under different names, e.g. "'mixed' or 'self-report' measures". Examples include the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) (O'Connor & Little 2003: 1896), the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) (Warwick & Nettelbeck 2004: 1092) and the self-report for emotional intelligence developed by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden & Dornheim (1998: 169).

The latter, however, builds on Mayer & Salovey's EI construct (Schutte et al. 1998: 169) and is used for the present paper.

Surprisingly, there is almost no correlation between the results of trait EI and ability EI (Warwick & Nettelbeck 2004: 1096-1098; O'Connor & Little 2003: 1893). In addition, Warwick & Nettelbeck (2004: 1096-1098) could not find a correlation between the ability EI (measured by MSCEIT) and variables of personality, whereas the trait EI test (they used the TMMS) showed a correlation with personality variables. These results were also found in a study by O'Connor & Little (2003: 1893), even though they used another test (EQ-i) for trait EI. O'Connor & Little argue that there is hardly any connection between the different instruments measuring EI, because the ability EI is related to the construct of cognitive abilities and the trait EI is related to the construct of personality. This would explain why in O'Connor & Little's opinion, the used EI test (in this case the EQ-i), although highly correlated with personality, did not show any significant correlation with cognitive abilities. The opposite is true for the MSCEIT; the researchers found a link between the ability EI and cognitive abilities but not between the MSCEIT and the construct of personality (O'Connor & Little 2003: 1901). Consequently, they see their results as an endorsement for Petrides & Furnham (2001: 444), who argue for an exact differentiation between trait EI and ability EI in future research.

2.3.3 EI in Organizations

Contrary to the disagreements in the literature described in the previous chapter, most authors agree that both, a certain set of skills and abilities are required to perform well at work (e.g. Robles 2012: 462; Goleman 2001: 21-22). But how do these skills and abilities exactly look like and what is valued by employers? According to a study conducted by Robles from 2011 to 2012, the soft skills most often desired are: "integrity, communication, courtesy, responsibility, social skills, positive attitude, professionalism, flexibility, teamwork, and work ethic" (Robles 2012: 462). This result partly (or at least in relation to the social skills that are part of the definition of EI according to Goleman) supports Goleman's view (2001: 21-22), that characteristics like intelligence, hard skills or technical abilities are important. But only in combination with a well-developed EI, people are able to achieve a high performance (Goleman 2001: 21-22). Focusing primarily on managers, Goleman states that there is a direct connection between "a company's success and the emotional intelligence of its leader" (Goleman 2001: 5). Even, if focusing on "normal" employees besides managers, who are, however, quite intelligent (he refers here to a study of star performers working for Bell Labs (Goleman 2006: 161)), there are differences within the group. Goleman (2006: 161) attributes this to EI and presents this as the basis for how well a person can motivate oneself and network. Contrary to these findings, Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts (2004: 388), state that there is hardly any proof of a connection between EI and a person's performance at work. Thus, they have a contrasting view on this topic. The authors explain that, on the one hand, much of the available literature on the subject is incomplete, i.e. in their opinion many authors base their anecdotal evidence for the connection between EI and work performance only on not published or internal studies. On the other hand, they attribute their contrasting view to the fact that the validity of some EI-measurements can only be traced back to an overlap with personality traits. Hence, they conclude that EI should not be a criterion for the selection of employees and that it should only be considered if the job description clearly requires it (Zeidner et al. 2004: 394).

On closer examination of the available literature, however, the opinion of Zeidner et al. (2004: 394) seems to be supported by a minority. And many authors support Goleman's view of a relationship between EI and performance at work and that it is, therefore, vital to pay attention to the EI of all employees, including managers (e.g. Caruso, Bienn & Kornacki 2006: 199-200; Mishra & Mohapatra 2010: 60; Cherniss 2001: 10; Fulmer & Barry 2004: 251). Jordan & Troth (2002: 69) distinguish, within EI between the ability to deal with one's own emotions, and the emotions of others according to their used EI scale. The authors were only able to find a correlation between performance and the handling of emotions when it concerns someone's own emotions. Jordan & Troth, therefore, did not find a link between performance and the ability to deal with the emotions of others.

Another aspect in the context of today's workplace is teamwork. A study by Luca & Tarricone (2001: 375) found a connection between harmony and functionality within a team and high EI. In addition, they showed that in teams where the level of EI is high, there is usually good communication, proper cooperation and effective conflict management. This link between EI and conflict management will be addressed in the following section.

2.4 EI and Conflict Resolution Styles

Luca & Tarricone's (2001: 375) research found a connection between EI and successful conflict management. The assumption that successful conflict management means that conflict resolution styles such as compromising and collaborating are primarily used in case of a conflict is also confirmed by other studies (e.g. Jordan & Troth 2002: 72; Zhang, Chen & Sun 2015: 469). Where does this connection come from? Some authors argue that interest, both in others and in oneself, depends on the situation and the personality (e.g. Wood & Bell 2008: 130; Van de Vliert 1997: 89; Sandy, Boardman & Deutsch 2006: 344). Based on the discussion in the previous chapters, this appears to be a convincing argument. The interest in another person and in oneself reflects the axes of the TKI (see chapter 2.2.1), and a high correlation between emotional intelligence (or at least in trait EI) and personality traits is already described in the previous chapter.

On closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that not all conflict resolution styles show a high correlation with EI. The study by Jordan & Troth (2002: 67), one of the first studies investigating the correlation between EI and conflict resolution styles, found that people who tend to use the conflict resolution styles avoiding or competing are more likely to have lower scores in emotional intelligence. This view is supported by Brackett, Warner & Bosco (2005: 210), who found that couples in which both partners show low EI scores are more likely to have conflicts than couples in which at least one person shows high EI values. In the authors' opinion, the harmony of a partnership depends on how well a person can deal with conflicts. In addition, they question whether couples, where both partners have low values in EI, would primarily tend to avoid conflict. Assuming that this poor conflict management is related to the CRSs of avoiding or competing, and based on the reviewed literature, the following hypotheses are derived:

H1: People who prefer the conflict resolution style of avoiding tend to score low in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.

H2: People who prefer the conflict resolution style of competing tend to score low in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.

Another CRS presented in the paper is accommodating (see chapter 2.2). In a study by Sunindijo & Hadikusumo (2014: 14) on Thai project managers and Thai project engineers, results show that people using this CRS tend to have higher scores in EI. However, it is explicitly stated that accommodating is not the conflict resolution style most used by people with high scores in EI. This is contradicted by the results of Morrison (2008: 981), who in a sample consisting of American nurses found that there is a negative correlation between high values of EI and accommodating. These results could suggest that people who prefer the CRS accommodating do not have high values in the EI. Godse & Thingujam (2010: 79), on the other hand, could not find a connection between EI and accommodation in their study. Similar results were found in the study of Jordan & Troth (2002: 71), teachers in Australia, who interviewed students (2002: 68). Since the target group of the present paper are also students from a western-oriented country, the following hypothesis is based on the findings of Jordan & Troth, and supported by Godse & Thingujam:

H3: There is no link between the conflict resolution style of accommodating and the scoring in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.

People who possess the ability of empathy or who can demonstrate high values in their EI are, according to Goleman (1998: 178), supposed to be able to handle situations where tension arises better, speak openly about disagreements and ensure a positive outcome for both parties in a conflict situation. Especially from the last point, the CRS collaborating can be derived. In this case, one of the persons is also concerned with creating a win-win situation for both sides (see chapter 2.2). This statement is supported by Jordan & Troth's study (2002: 72), where the authors found a correlation between high values in emotional intelligence and collaborative behaviour. Morrison (2008: 980) came to a similar conclusion in her research on nurses, and this was also the conclusion of Luca & Tarricone (2001: 375) as well as of Godse & Thingujam (2010: 78). Based on these findings, the following hypothesis can be assumed in the present paper:

H4: People who prefer the conflict resolution style of collaborating tend to score high in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.

There are disagreements concerning the conflict resolution style of compromising. Morrison (2008: 980) found a negative correlation between the compromising style and EI on two of the four scales used to measure emotional intelligence. In contrast, Zhang, Chen & Sun (2015: 466) found positive correlations between this behaviour in a conflict situation and high values in emotional intelligence. This statement is also supported by Shih & Susanto (2009: 156), who were also able to find, in their sample of 300 employees of the Indonesian government, a positive correlation between high values of emotional intelligence and the compromising style. Consequently, it is assumed that Morrison's findings are likely to be an exceptional case, which leads to the following hypothesis:

H5: People who prefer the conflict resolution style of compromising tend to score high in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.

How these above-presented hypotheses were tested, will be explained with the help of the used method in the next chapter.

3 Method

In order to describe the used method in more detail, this chapter will discuss the sample, the experimental design and the procedure as well as the used measures.

The goal of this quantitative survey is to investigate possible connections between emotional intelligence and the various conflict resolution styles. The data were collected with the help of an online survey using the TKI (for the measurement of conflict resolution styles) and the self-report for emotional intelligence developed by Schutte et al. (1998: 167-177). Both measurements were translated from English into German, retranslated by peers and any discrepancies were corrected before using them for the online survey. The corrected versions can be found in the online survey in appendix 1.

3.1 Experimental Design and the Sample

A total of 107 people participated in the present study from the 12th to the 22nd March 2020. One participant had to be excluded due to outlier values (see chapter 4.2) and two participants had to be excluded because they were not students, which corresponds to a sample size of n = 104. The reason for this exclusion was that the participants had to fulfil the prerequisite of being German students of a business degree programme. This target group was focused on to achieve a homogeneous sample. In addition, it is assumed that this will allow students to have similar qualifications and characteristics and use them as a basis when dealing with conflicts. To attract the right participants, an e-mail (see appendix 2) with the link to the online survey was sent to all students of business psychology at the Stuttgart Technology University of Applied Sciences by the dean of studies on the 12th of March 2020. Students received ½ credit hour as an incentive for their participation. In addition, they were able to send questions by e-mail at any time. Out of 104 respondents 93 were students of business psychology (89,4%). The average age of the participants was 22,16 years (SD = 2.98). In the study 93 females (89,4%) and 11 males (10,6%) participated; the gender distribution can be explained by the gender distribution of the degree programme.

3.2 Procedure and Measures

The survey (see appendix 1) was created with the software Unipark and divided into three sections: questions concerning emotional intelligence, questions concerning conflict behaviour and questions about sociodemographic data. After clicking the link in the e-mail, students were directed to a separate webpage where the survey took place. Next they were being welcomed, data protection rules were explained, the possibility to withdraw from the study at any stage was explained and again it was pointed out that each participant received ½ credit hour to complete the survey. In addition, it was mentioned that there were no wrong answers and that the participants could always ask any questions by email. Furthermore, the subject of the survey was described as a measurement of personality traits and behaviour in conflict situations. Neutral terms were used in order to avoid certain associations or to reduce the pressure from the students, which might have arisen when perceiving words like "intelligence".

When choosing a **measurement for emotional intelligence**, the first step is to decide whether the questionnaire is categorized as trait EI or ability EI (see chapter 2.3.2). For the present paper, the self-report for emotional intelligence developed by Schutte et al. (1998: 167-177) was selected. This was done not only for reasons of availability, but also because, although it functions as a measurement for the trait EI (Austin, Saklofske, Huang & McKenney 2004: 556), it is at the same time based on the principles of Salovey and Mayer (1990, cited in Schutte et al. 1998: 169), who see the EI as a clear ability (Mayer et al. 2003: 97). Furthermore, this is also a well-known test and is frequently used according to the literature (e.g. Petrides & Furnham 2000: 316; Ciarrochi, Chan & Bajgar 2001: 1110; Saklofske, Austin & Minski 2003: 711). The questionnaire includes 33 items, which are scored on a 5-level Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Examples are “I know when to speak about my personal problems to others“, or “Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living” (the complete questionnaire can be found in appendix 3). Out of the 33 questions 3 had to be recoded, because they were reversed-key items. Accordingly, by summing up all values, results for emotional intelligence can be achieved within the range of 33-165. In this context, 33 is the lowest possible value on the scale of emotional intelligence and 165 the highest. The test has good internal reliability and good validity (Schutte et al. 1998: 175).

In order to identify the different **conflict resolution styles**, Thomas and Kilmann's (Kilmann & Thomas 1977: 309-325) management-of-differences exercises (MODE) instrument was selected for the present study. This is a measurement that requires respondents to choose option A or B within 30 questions. Contents of these questions are behaviour patterns in conflict situations. An example of this is: "Option A: There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem", or "Option B: Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree" (the complete questionnaire can be found in appendix 4). In addition, it is stated that there is the possibility that none of these situations applies entirely to the individuals, but they should choose the option that best reflects their own behaviour. Participants are therefore assigned into one of the five different conflict resolution styles (avoiding, competing, accommodating, compromising or collaborating) according to two dimensions: assertiveness and cooperativeness (see chapter 2.2). Each of these styles can be assigned on a scale of 0 to 12, and the resulting frequencies are converted into percentile ranks[4] that indicate which is a person's dominant conflict resolution style. The choice for the MODE instrument is based on its high values of reliability and validity. Moreover, it was preferred to other instruments because it tends to accurately distinguish between different motives in conflict situations (Thomas & Kilmann 1978: 1144).

The last part of the survey dealt with **sociodemographic data**. The 104 participants were found to be exclusively German students, all of whom were pursuing a degree program in the field of business. The majority of these students was studying business psychology at the Stuttgart Technology University of Applied Sciences and had an average age of 22.16 years, *S.D*. = 2,98, ranging from 18-32 years.

The collected data were analysed using SPSS and R.

[4] There are different values for different populations for the transformation into percentile ranks. Since the sample consists exclusively of German students, the percentile ranks for a German reference group were used.

4 Results

The results will be divided into three parts. First, descriptive statistics will be presented. Second, the single factor analysis of variance will be used to explain in more detail how the relationship between emotional intelligence and the various conflict styles was calculated and what the prerequisites were. Third, the additional regression will be described in more detail as well as its conditions and the way they were tested are specified. All the following results were calculated with a significance level of α = .05.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The distribution of the 104 participants regarding the different conflict resolution styles is displayed in Table 1. Accommodating is the preferred CRS for 27 students, which represents the largest group of participants. This is followed by 24 participants whose dominant style is compromising, 23 students prefer competing, 18 students act mainly in the way of collaborating and 12 students behave dominantly avoiding.

In addition, the respondents had an average emotional intelligence of 124.10 (*SD* = 9.43) with a range[5] from 105 to 147. Divided into the different conflict resolution styles, the average values for emotional intelligence differ slightly (see Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics.

	Emotional intelligence				
Conflict resolution style	M	SD	Min	Max	N
Competing	122.35	7.98	108	138	23
Collaborating	125.94	10.36	105	139	18
Compromising	126.67	7.67	113	143	24
Avoiding	116.42	6.37	105	126	12
Accommodating	125.48	10.89	107	147	27
Complete sample	124.10	9.43	105	147	104

[5] According to Schutte, Malouff & Bhullar (2009: 122-125) there are test results with average values of emotional intelligence ranging from 117.54 up to 142.51.

4.2 Single Factor Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

In order to perform a single factor analysis of variance, the **prerequisites**, according to Field (2009: 359-360) must be tested beforehand. First, the measured values must be independent. This is fulfilled since no person has been assigned to two of the different conflict resolution style groups at the same time, and the answers could be traced back to the respondent's respective personality. Second, the dependent variable (emotional intelligence) has an interval level because it was measured using a Likert scale, which is assumed to be interval scaled as well. Third, the independent variable (dominant conflict resolution style) must be nominal data. This was ensured by evaluating each person's dominant conflict resolution style and assigning each person to one of the five groups, which were independent of each other. Fourth, the dependent variable must follow a normal distribution in the population across all groups (i.e. the different conflict resolution styles). This was checked by using a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which showed that the EI values were normally distributed across all groups ($\rho = .200$). Fifth, there must be no outliers in the present sample. According to a boxplot overview, one outlier was found (see appendix 5). As a result, this case was excluded, and the number of participants decreased from 105 to 104. Sixth, homoscedasticity (variances in the populations must be equally distributed) must be present. This equal variance could be assumed according to Levene's test ($\rho = .203$).

Since all the requirements of the ANOVA are fulfilled, its results can be used: According to the calculated ANOVA there are significant differences between conflict resolution styles regarding emotional intelligence, $F(4, 99) = 3.21$, $\rho = .016$, partial $\eta^2 = .115$. The latter can be interpreted as a medium effect, according to Cohen (1988: 368). In order to investigate these differences in more detail, five contrasts were calculated (see appendix 6). In each contrast, the means of one group were compared to the other groups' means. Since this is a combined contrast, i.e. five contrasts were formed, the results had to be corrected for multiple testing using the Bonferroni-Holm correction (Abdi 2010: 575-576). Thereby, only in the group of avoiding ($M = 116.42$, $SD = 6.37$) it was found that EI differs significantly from the other groups with a mean difference of 8.69 ($SE = 2.78$), $\rho = .005$ (see also Table 2). Accordingly, the other groups competing (mean difference = 1.28, $SE = 2.16$, $\rho = .400$), collaborating (mean difference = -3.22, $SE = 2.37$, $\rho = .266$), compromising (mean difference = -4.12, $SE = 2.13$, $\rho = .112$) and accommodating (mean difference = -2.64, *SE* = 2.04, ρ = .400) compared to each other had no significant results and also smaller contrast values. Additionally, no differences in gender could be found.

Table 2. Overview of the five calculated contrasts.

Mean of the following style compared to the other styles' means	Mean differences	SE	ρ
Avoiding	8.69	2.78	.005
Competing	1.28	2.16	.400
Accommodating	-2.64	2.04	.400
Collaborating	-3.22	2.37	.266
Compromising	-4.12	2.13	.112

Because of the significant distinction from the other CRSs, the first hypothesis can be supported. In addition, the third hypothesis can be supported. This is explained by the fact that the values for accommodating have not become significant. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis can not be accepted, but the null hypothesis is retained. In this paper, the third hypothesis is the null hypothesis (see chapter 2.4). Referring to these results, the other hypotheses (H2, H4, H5) are rejected (see Table 3).

Table 3. Overview of accepted and rejected hypotheses.

H1	People who prefer the conflict resolution style of avoiding tend to score low in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.	Accepted
H2	People who prefer the conflict resolution style of competing tend to score low in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.	Rejected
H3	There is no link between the conflict resolution style of accommodating and the scoring in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.	Supported
H4	People who prefer the conflict resolution style of collaborating tend to score high in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.	Rejected
H5	People who prefer the conflict resolution style of compromising tend to score high in the emotional intelligence scale compared to people preferring the other conflict resolution styles.	Rejected

4.3 Multiple Regression

Since there is a link between the conflict resolution styles and emotional intelligence, a multiple regression was calculated. The aim was to determine the extent to which the various CRSs can predict emotional intelligence. Again, for the calculation, prerequisites (Field 2009: 220-221) must be checked beforehand. First, the variables must be scaled correctly. The criterion (emotional intelligence) must provide an interval scale and, as explained above, this was achieved by using the Likert scale. Additionally, the predictors (conflict resolution styles) must also correspond to an interval scale level. To ensure this, the z-standardized frequencies of the individual conflict resolution styles were used. This means that for every participant it was calculated how often they chose each conflict resolution style in the survey. Values between 0 and 12 were obtained, which were afterwards z-standardized using SPSS. The usage of the z-standardized frequencies is justified by the fact that, compared to the percentile ranks, it can be assumed that these frequencies were measured on an interval scale level. Second, no outliers must influence the model. Using Cook's Distance, two values above .05 were found. As a result, they were excluded, leaving no more outliers.[6] Third, there should be no multicollinearity in the data. This could be assumed since SPSS already excluded one variable due to aliased coefficients. Thus, the predictor accommodating was excluded, since according to the third hypothesis, no link between accommodating and emotional intelligence was expected (see chapter 2.4). As a result, all values of the VIF were < 10, and all correlations showed values of $r < .7$ (see appendix 7). Fourth, a further prerequisite for the regression is homoscedasticity. This was assumed with the help of the scale-location diagram (see appendix 8) since the straight line appears quite horizontal and with unsystematically distributed values. Fifth, the condition of independence of the residuals is checked with the Durbin-Watson statistics. This showed a value of 2.48, which leads to the conclusion that no autocorrelation exists. Sixth, the residuals must be distributed normally. This assumption was met because the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed no significance, $\rho = .2$. In addition, this was confirmed by the normal Q-Q diagram in R, as well. Seventh, in order to calculate a regression, the variables should be in a linear relationship with each other. This could be assumed by using the diagram residuals vs fitted (see appendix 9), since the straight line showed only minor deviations, was mostly parallel to the x-axis and the values were distributed unsystematically. Eighth, the

[6] Therefore, a sample size of $n = 102$ applies for the regression.

independence of the values is given by the fact that the used values could be traced back to different individuals.

Since all requirements of the multiple regression are fulfilled, the results can be used: according to the calculated regression, the present model with R^2 = .154 has a moderate variance explanation according to Cohen (1988: 413). This means that the predictors (competing, collaborating, compromising, and avoiding) combined clarify 15.4% of the variance of emotional intelligence. Furthermore, the predictors forecast statistically significant the criterion variable emotional intelligence, $F(4, 97) = 4.40$, $\rho = .003$.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis for the Prediction of Emotional Intelligence.

Variable	Regression coefficients (B)	SE (B)	ρ
Constant	124.18	.86	< .001
Competing	-2.23	1.35	.103
Collaborating	1.40	1.11	.208
Compromising	.99	1.22	.421
Avoiding	-2.70	1.51	.077

In comparison to the complete model, the different coefficients of the regression are not significant and show lower values in the regression coefficients (see Table 4). Although these regression coefficients show weaker values, they indicate that the CRSs avoiding and competing have a negative link with emotional intelligence, whereas the CRSs collaborating, compromising and accommodating have a positive link. Indications of this can be also found in the correlations of the variables (see appendix 7), as the correlations between emotional intelligence and avoiding (ρ = .005), collaborating (ρ = .013) or compromising (ρ = .010) have become significant.

5 Discussion

In this chapter, the presented results will be interpreted, related to the theory presented in the second chapter and implications will be derived. In addition, limitations and a suggestion for future studies will follow.

5.1 Interpretation of the results

Similar to Jordan & Troth's study (2002: 72), a connection between conflict resolution styles and emotional intelligence was found. This connection is supported by the fact that the frequencies of the CRSs avoiding, competing, collaborating and compromising combined clarify 15.4% of the variance of emotional intelligence. However, in contrast to the mentioned paper, hardly any dominating CRSs were found to have a significant relationship with emotional intelligence.

As expected, a positive significant correlation between the style of avoiding and low EI values was found, supporting the first hypothesis. In this respect, the results of the present paper agree with the findings of the study by Jordan & Troth (2002: 72). Thus, this also provides an initial presumption on how the question (see chapter 2.4) asked by Bracket, Warner & Bosco (2005: 210), whether partners whom both have a low EI level tend to avoid conflict, could be answered. The regression also provided indications. Although the predictor avoiding was not significant, a negative regression coefficient indicated that for each additional choice of the avoiding conflict resolution style, the value of emotional intelligence is reduced by -2.69.

Surprisingly, there was no correlation between the style of competing and low scores on the EI scale, and thus, the second hypothesis could not be supported. Therefore, the results of the present study contradict the findings of Jordan & Troth (2002: 72). On the one hand, this could be because the sample was rather small, which is also reflected in the number of people (n = 23) whose dominant conflict resolution style is competing. On the other hand, the deviation could also be explained by the fact that Jordan & Troth (2002: 68-69) used a different measurement for emotional intelligence. Nevertheless, there are indications of similarities between the two studies. As with the CRS of avoiding, the style competing also has a negative regression coefficient, which can be interpreted similarly. As a result, each time a participant chose the CRS of competing, the value of emotional intelligence decreased by -2.23.

Similar inconsistencies between the studies are also apparent for the styles of collaborating (H4) and compromising (H5). Jordan & Troth (2002, 72), found that collaborating is linked to high values of emotional intelligence. According to Shih & Susanto (2009: 156), both the style of collaborating and the style of compromising, are associated with high values on the scale of emotional intelligence. The reasons for the deviations between these studies and the present paper can be again, the small sample with correspondingly small groups for each style (for collaborating n = 18 and for competing n = 24), and the fact that the mentioned authors used a different measurement for emotional intelligence. In addition, the literature for the CRS compromising was also not entirely in agreement. Not only is it generally questioned whether the compromising style should be included in the model of conflict resolution styles at all (see chapter 2.2), but also how it correlates with emotional intelligence (see chapter 2.4). Again, there are indications that there is at least a link between the conflict resolution styles and emotional intelligence; both styles (collaborating and compromising) have a positive regression coefficient. Consequently, this could be interpreted as follows: With each choice of one of these conflict resolution styles, the value of emotional intelligence has increased. For choosing a collaborating solution, the emotional intelligence increased by a value of 1.4 and for choosing a conflict resolution with the help of compromising it increased by a value of .99.

The third hypothesis, based on the prevailing disagreement in the literature, that there is no connection between emotional intelligence and the conflict resolution style of accommodating, could be supported. This is consistent with the results of the studies by Jordan & Troth (2002: 71) and by Godse & Thingujam (2010: 79). Furthermore, this theory is supported by the wide range (R = 40) of values of emotional intelligence, indicating that people, whose dominant conflict resolution style is accommodating, show quite different values among themselves in emotional intelligence. This could explain the different results found in the presented literature about the connection between EI and the conflict resolution style of accommodating (see chapter 2.4).

Moreover, as described in the literature (see chapter 2.2.2), no differences between the sexes could be found. Whilst, this could be because the male sample was rather small, the conclusion that gender does not appear to be a moderating or mediating variable is consistent with the findings of other authors (e.g. Sternberg & Soriano 1984: 123; Boucher 2013: 31; Vestal & Torres 2016: 27).

However, the existence of a moderation or mediation variable can not be clearly excluded. Since the regression model has become significant (ρ = .003), but the individual coefficients have not, the link between emotional intelligence and the different conflict resolution styles might be influenced by another variable. As briefly touched on in chapter 2.4, there is a connection between emotional intelligence and personality. This seems inevitably obvious, since (especially trait) EI seems to be related to the personality construct and trait EI correlates with personality variables (Warwick & Nettelbeck 2004: 1096-1098; O'Connor & Little 2003: 1893). Consequently, it could be assumed that the personality of the participants influenced the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution styles. This assumption is confirmed by the study of Ann & Yang (2012: 1022), who discovered that both personality traits, agreeableness and extraversion, act as moderating variables between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution styles. Alternatively, the moderating variable could be the nationality or origins of individuals and the cultures and values that have shaped them. As seen in chapter 2.4, there are different results for the conflict resolution styles depending on the country in which the studies were conducted. This is also supported by the fact that the way of solving conflicts differs according to nationality. For instance, Asian countries prefer the avoiding conflict resolution style more often than Western-oriented countries (see chapter 2.2.1). Another reason why only the model but not the coefficients have become significant could be the small sample size. Hence, it could be concluded that a larger sample might have had significant regression coefficients.

In summary, there is a significant negative correlation between the avoiding conflict resolution style and emotional intelligence. No significant correlation to emotional intelligence could be found among the other CRSs. However, there are indications that collaborating, and compromising have a positive relationship with emotional intelligence and competing has a negative one.

5.2 Implications

With regard to practice, and related to the results by Luca & Tarricone (2001: 375), who found that there is a connection between EI and successful conflict management, the exaggeratedly formulated question whether HR professionals and managers should only hire people with high values in emotional intelligence arises. This can be denied for several reasons. Firstly, in contrast to comparable studies (Jordan & Troth 2002: 72; Godse & Thingujam: 2010, 78; Zhang, Chen & Sun 2015: 469), no significant correlation between high values in EI and the preferred styles of collaborating or compromising could be found in the present study. Secondly, not all authors agree that there is a connection between EI and a person's performance at work (see chapter 2.3.3). Hence, Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts (2004: 394) state that EI should not be a criterion for the selection of employees. Thirdly, so far, no correlation has been found between the preferred style of accommodating and certain values in the scale of EI. Accordingly, individuals who prefer accommodating behaviour could also achieve high scores in the EI (but naturally also lower or moderate scores). Furthermore, it must be said that even though people with high values in EI are supposed to be able to handle tense situations better (Goleman 1998: 178), and people who prefer the collaborating and compromising styles are therefore good at dealing with conflict situations, these styles are not the preferred choice for every single situation, as "there is no single profile that works best for all negotiators" (Shell 2001: 170). This is also confirmed by Jordan & Troth (2002: 74), who state that especially the collaborating style proves to be energy- and time-consuming. Therefore, they refer to the application of this style especially when the result has an important meaning for a person. However, if the result is particularly important for the other party, they mention the use of accommodating and compromising styles.

Consequently, there is no "one size fits all" recommendation for the correct handling of conflicts, as the conflict itself, the given situation, the involved people, and the expected outcome always have an influence and are never the same. Thus, it is recommended that all employees, including managers, are trained and encouraged in the areas of conflict and emotional intelligence. Indeed, Mayer et al. (2000: 270) indicate that emotional intelligence can be improved (see also chapter 2.3).

5.3 Limitations and further research

In the following, the present study will be critically examined, and a suggestion for future research will be presented.

First, the selected measuring instruments can be questioned critically. The self-report for emotional intelligence developed by Schutte et al. (1998: 167-177) is criticized by Petrides & Furnham (2000: 318) for its rather limited psychometric quality. As a suggestion for improvement, the authors state that a factor analysis should always be carried out when using the measurement. For the present paper, however, Schutte et al.'s (1998: 167-177) standard evaluation was used, since the sample would also have been too small for the factor analysis.

Next, there is also criticism of the TKI. On the one hand, some authors argue that the conflict resolution style of compromising should not be included in this model (see chapter 2.2.1). On the other hand, participants did not receive an identical situation, but each of them could imagine their own conflict scenario. This may have led to distortions in the choice of conflict resolution style. As explained in chapter 2.2.2, the dominant conflict resolution style can be different depending on the situation a person is experiencing. As a result, there are different behavioural patterns when comparing private and professional scenarios. The imagination of a specific conflict situation in different contexts may, therefore, have influenced the results.

Furthermore, the translated measurements were not tested for validity in German. Although, they were retranslated by a peer and deviations were corrected, this can not replace the statistical quality criteria.

In addition, due to the sample consisting only of relatively young students, the implications for organizations may not always apply in the working environment. Reasons for this could be, that students have less experience than employees and accordingly their understanding and perception of conflict is less pronounced. Furthermore, it was explained in chapter 2.3.1 that emotional intelligence is a skill that develops with age and experience. This could mean that for some of the respondents, since they are still in their young adulthood, this ability is not yet fully developed and may still change. Consequently, the results of the survey could change.

Moreover, a further point of criticism of the sample is its size, as it appears to be too small. Therefore, it is proposed for future research to repeat the study with a representative sample (at least 1000 respondents reflecting the population of Germany, if the aim is to apply the results to Germany), since the present study focused on students and accordingly the average age and probably also their experience was rather low. Additionally, the nationality or the origin of a person could be queried as well, since this might affect the results as it is indicated in the literature (see chapter 2.4).

Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare the results when using different measuring instruments. As described in chapter 2.3.2, the literature distinguishes between trait EI and ability EI. In this context, it would be of interest to compare not only the results of both categories (i.e. trait EI and ability EI) of survey instruments but also within the same category. This consideration is also supported by Petrides & Furnham (2001: 444), who advocate that there should be a strict separation between trait EI and ability EI.

In order to avoid influencing the different situations that the participants were thinking about while answering the TKI questionnaire, it would be possible to interview individuals who have all experienced the same conflict. For this purpose, one approach could be focusing on conflicts in organizations. Conflicts seem to be unavoidable in this context, and this would ensure that all respondents imagine the same situation. Such a situation could be found, for instance, during the restructuring of the corporate culture, a merger or a general reorganization of the company.

Finally, it would be interesting to examine whether there is an influence on the relationship between emotional intelligence and the various conflict resolution styles through a moderating variable, as questioned above in chapter 5.1. This moderating variable might relate to a person’s personality or origin/nationality.

6 Conclusion

The present study shows that there is a correlation between emotional intelligence and behaviour in conflict situations in the researched sample. In addition, there is a significant correlation between low scores in EI and the preferred conflict resolution style of avoiding. It would be interesting to see how these values and relationships are represented in the total population of Germany (or any other country) and especially in the context of the working environment. Furthermore, the question should be clarified whether and to what extent the individual components of personality play a role in this. These insights could help to further develop the behaviour towards conflicts and the behaviour in conflict situations as well as the emotional intelligence of employees and managers. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that there is no unique solution for conflicts and their handling, and that the conflict itself, the external circumstances, the involved parties and the expected result must always be considered. Certainly, it is also helpful to be aware of the different levels of emotional intelligence of those affected, because as described above, there is a connection between emotional intelligence and the preferred conflict resolution style.

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Online Survey

PART 1: Emotional Intelligence

Bitte geben Sie für jede Frage den für Sie passenden Wert an.

Question number	Question	Answers Stimme gar nicht zu (1)	Stimme nicht zu (2)	Weder noch (3)	Stimme zu (4)	Stimme voll und ganz zu (5)
1	Ich weiß, wann ich mit anderen über meine persönlichen Probleme sprechen kann.	◻	◻	◻	◻	◻
2	Wenn ich mit Hindernissen konfrontiert werde, erinnere ich mich an Zeiten, in denen ich auf ähnliche Hindernisse gestoßen bin und sie überwunden habe.	◻	◻	◻	◻	◻
3	Ich erwarte, dass ich bei den meisten Dingen, die ich versuche, gut abschneiden werde.	◻	◻	◻	◻	◻
4	Andere Menschen finden es leicht, sich mir anzuvertrauen.	◻	◻	◻	◻	◻
5	Es fällt mir schwer, die nonverbalen Botschaften anderer Menschen zu verstehen.	◻	◻	◻	◻	◻
6	Einige der wichtigsten Ereignisse in meinem Leben haben mich dazu veranlasst, neu zu bewerten, was wichtig und was unwichtig ist.	◻	◻	◻	◻	◻

7	Wenn sich meine Stimmung ändert, sehe ich neue Möglichkeiten.	□	□	□	□	□
8	Emotionen sind eines der Dinge, die mein Leben lebenswert machen.	□	□	□	□	□
9	Ich bin mir meiner Emotionen bewusst, wenn ich sie erlebe.	□	□	□	□	□
10	Ich erwarte, dass gute Dinge geschehen.	□	□	□	□	□
11	Ich teile meine Emotionen gerne mit anderen.	□	□	□	□	□
12	Wenn ich eine positive Emotion erlebe, weiß ich, wie ich sie dauerhaft machen kann.	□	□	□	□	□
13	Ich arrangiere Veranstaltungen, die anderen Spaß machen.	□	□	□	□	□
14	Ich suche mir Aktivitäten aus, die mich glücklich machen.	□	□	□	□	□
15	Ich bin mir der nonverbalen Botschaften bewusst, die ich an andere sende.	□	□	□	□	□
16	Ich präsentiere mich auf eine Weise, die einen guten Eindruck auf andere macht.	□	□	□	□	□
17	Wenn ich in einer positiven Stimmung bin, ist es für mich einfach, Probleme zu lösen.	□	□	□	□	□
18	Durch den Blick auf die Mimik erkenne ich die Gefühle, die Menschen empfinden.	□	□	□	□	□
19	Ich weiß, warum sich meine Emotionen ändern.	□	□	□	□	□
20	Wenn ich in einer positiven Stimmung bin, bin ich in der Lage, neue Ideen zu entwickeln.	□	□	□	□	□
21	Ich habe Kontrolle über meine Emotionen.	□	□	□	□	□

22	Ich erkenne meine Emotionen leicht, wenn ich sie erlebe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	Ich motiviere mich selbst, indem ich mir einen guten Ausgang der von mir begonnene Aufgaben vorstelle.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24	Ich mache anderen Komplimente, wenn sie etwas gut gemacht haben.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25	Ich bin mir der nonverbalen Botschaften bewusst, die andere Menschen aussenden.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26	Wenn mir eine andere Person von einem wichtigen Ereignis in ihrem Leben erzählt, habe ich fast das Gefühl, dass ich dieses Ereignis selbst erlebt habe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27	Wenn ich eine Veränderung der Emotionen spüre, neige ich dazu, neue Ideen zu entwickeln.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28	Wenn ich einer Herausforderung gegenüber stehe, gebe ich auf, weil ich glaube, dass ich scheitern werde.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29	Ich weiß, was andere Menschen fühlen, wenn ich sie nur ansehe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30	Ich helfe anderen Menschen, sich besser zu fühlen, wenn sie am Boden sind.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
31	Ich nutze gute Laune, um mir selbst zu helfen, es angesichts von Hindernissen weiter zu versuchen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
32	Ich kann sagen, wie sich Menschen fühlen, wenn ich den Ton ihrer Stimme höre.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
33	Es fällt mir schwer zu verstehen, warum Menschen sich so fühlen, wie sie es tun.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART 2: Conflict Resolution Styles

Bitte wählen Sie für die folgenden Aussagen jeweils die Antwort, die Ihr Verhalten am ehesten beschreibt.

Question number	Question	Answers
34	A. Es gibt Zeiten, in denen ich andere die Verantwortung für die Lösung des Problems übernehmen lasse.	□
	B. Anstatt über die Dinge zu verhandeln, in denen wir nicht übereinstimmen, versuche ich, die Dinge zu betonen, in denen wir beide übereinstimmen.	□
35	A. Ich versuche, eine Kompromisslösung zu finden.	□
	B. Ich versuche, auf alle Bedenken eines anderen und meine Bedenken einzugehen.	□
36	A. Ich verfolge meine Ziele normalerweise entschlossen.	□
	B. Ich versuche möglicherweise, die Gefühle des anderen zu besänftigen und unsere Beziehung zu bewahren.	□
37	A. Ich versuche, eine Kompromisslösung zu finden.	□
	B. Manchmal opfere ich meine eigenen Wünsche für die Wünsche der anderen Person.	□
38	A. Ich suche konsequent die Hilfe des anderen, um eine Lösung zu erarbeiten.	□
	B. Ich versuche, das zu tun, was notwendig ist, um unnütze Spannungen zu vermeiden.	□
39	A. Ich versuche zu vermeiden, mir selbst Unannehmlichkeiten zu bereiten.	□
	B. Ich versuche, meine Position durchzubringen.	□
40	A. Ich versuche, das Problem zu verschieben, bis ich etwas Zeit hatte, darüber nachzudenken.	□
	B. Ich gebe einige Punkte im Austausch für andere auf.	□

41	A. Ich verfolge meine Ziele normalerweise entschlossen.	□
	B. Ich versuche, alle Bedenken und Anliegen sofort offenzulegen.	□
42	A. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass es sich nicht immer lohnt, sich über Unterschiede Gedanken zu machen.	□
	B. Ich unternehme Anstrengungen, um meinen Willen durchzusetzen.	□
43	A. Ich verfolge meine Ziele normalerweise entschlossen.	□
	B. Ich versuche, eine Kompromisslösung zu finden.	□
44	A. Ich versuche, alle Bedenken und Anliegen sofort offenzulegen.	□
	B. Ich versuche möglicherweise, die Gefühle des anderen zu besänftigen und unsere Beziehung zu bewahren.	□
45	A. Manchmal vermeide ich es, Positionen einzunehmen, die zu Kontroversen führen würden.	□
	B. Ich überlasse der anderen Person einige ihrer Positionen, wenn sie mir einige der meinen überlässt.	□
46	A. Ich schlage einen Mittelweg vor.	□
	B. Ich dränge darauf, meine Argumente vorzubringen.	□
47	A. Ich erzähle einem anderen meine Ideen und frage ihn nach seinen Ideen.	□
	B. Ich versuche, der anderen Person die Logik und die Vorteile meiner Position zu zeigen.	□
48	A. Ich versuche möglicherweise, die Gefühle des anderen zu besänftigen und unsere Beziehung zu bewahren.	□
	B. Ich versuche, das zu tun, was notwendig ist, um unnütze Spannungen zu vermeiden.	□
49	A. Ich versuche, die Gefühle des anderen nicht zu verletzen.	□
	B. Ich versuche, die andere Person von den Vorzügen meiner Position zu überzeugen.	□
50	A. Ich verfolge meine Ziele normalerweise entschlossen.	□
	B. Ich versuche, das zu tun, was notwendig ist, um unnütze Spannungen zu vermeiden.	□

51	A. Wenn es die andere Person glücklich macht, lasse ich sie vielleicht ihre Ansichten beibehalten.	□
	B. Ich überlasse der anderen Person einige ihrer Positionen, wenn sie mir einige der meinen überlässt.	□
52	A. Ich versuche, alle Bedenken und Anliegen sofort offenzulegen.	□
	B. Ich versuche, das Problem zu verschieben, bis ich etwas Zeit hatte, darüber nachzudenken.	□
53	A. Ich versuche, unsere Differenzen sofort aufzuarbeiten.	□
	B. Ich versuche, eine faire Kombination von Gewinnen und Verlusten für uns beide zu finden.	□
54	A. Bei anstehenden Verhandlungen versuche ich, die Gefühle des anderen zu berücksichtigen.	□
	B. Ich tendiere immer zu einer direkten Diskussion des Problems.	□
55	A. Ich versuche, eine Position zu finden, die zwischen meiner und der eines anderen liegt.	□
	B. Ich setze meine Wünsche durch.	□
56	A. Ich bin oft darauf bedacht, meine Wünsche zu erfüllen.	□
	B. Es gibt Zeiten, in denen ich andere die Verantwortung für die Lösung des Problems übernehmen lasse.	□
57	A. Wenn die Position des anderen wichtig für ihn ist, würde ich versuchen, seinen Wünschen nachzukommen.	□
	B. Ich versuche, die andere Person dazu zu bringen, sich auf einen Kompromiss einzulassen.	□
58	A. Ich versuche, der anderen Person die Logik und die Vorteile meiner Position zu zeigen.	□
	B. Bei anstehenden Verhandlungen versuche ich, die Wünsche des anderen zu berücksichtigen.	□
59	A. Ich schlage einen Mittelweg vor.	□
	B. Ich bin oft darauf bedacht, meine Wünsche zu erfüllen.	□
60	A. Manchmal vermeide ich es, Positionen einzunehmen, die zu Kontroversen führen würden.	□
	B. Wenn es die andere Person glücklich macht, lasse ich sie vielleicht ihre Ansichten beibehalten.	□

61	A. Ich verfolge meine Ziele normalerweise entschlossen.	□
	B. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass es sich nicht immer lohnt, sich über Unterschiede Gedanken zu machen.	□
62	A. Ich schlage einen Mittelweg vor.	□
	B. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass es sich nicht immer lohnt, sich über Unterschiede Gedanken zu machen.	□
63	A. Ich versuche, die Gefühle des anderen nicht zu verletzen.	□
	B. Ich teile das Problem immer mit der anderen Person, damit wir es ausarbeiten können.	□

PART 3: Sociodemographic Questions

Question 64: Wie alt sind Sie? ________________

Question 65: Welches Geschlecht haben Sie?

□ Männlich □ Weiblich □ Divers

Question 66: Was ist Ihre aktuelle Berufssituation?

□ Schüler*in □ Student*in □ Promovierende*r □ Auszubildende*r □ Angestellte*r

□ Selbstständige*r □ Beamte*r □ Arbeitssuchende*r □ Sonstiges:______________________

If respondents selected "Student*in", they continued with the next question, otherwise the survey was completed.

Question 67: In welcher Fachrichtung ist Ihr Studiengang angesiedelt?

□ Agrar- & Forstwissenschaften
□ Informations- & Telekommunikationstechnik
□ Ingenieurswissenschaften
□ Kultur- & Geisteswissenschaften
□ Kunst & Musik
□ Mathematik & Naturwissenschaften
□ Medien
□ Medizin & Gesundheit
□ Pädagogik & Lehre
□ Rechtswissenschaften
□ Sozial- & Verhaltenswissenschaften
□ Sprach- & Literaturwissenschaften
□ Wirtschaft & Management
□ Sonstiges:______________________________

Question 68: Sind Sie Studierende*r der Wirtschaftspsychologie an der Hochschule für Technik Stuttgart und möchten eine halbe Versuchspersonenstunde bekommen?

□ ja □ nein

If respondents selected "ja", they continued with the next question, otherwise the survey was completed.

Question 69: Wenn Sie eine Versuchspersonenstundenbescheinigung für die Teilnahme an dieser Studie erhalten wollen, geben Sie bitte jetzt die Kombination aus Buchstaben und Zahlen ein, die sich aus folgenden Daten ergibt:

- Die letzten beiden Buchstaben des Vornamens der Mutter (In Großbuchstaben, z.B. AN)
- Die Ersten beiden Buchstaben des Geburtsortes (In Großbuchstaben, z.B. NG)
- Der Tag Ihrer Geburt (im Format XX, z.B. 09)
- Anzahl der Geschwister (Anzahl, z.B. 1)
- Der Tag der Geburt Ihrer Mutter (im Format XX, z.B. 09)

Ending: Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme an der Umfrage! Sie können das Fenster nun schließen.

E-Mail to attract Participants for the Online Survey

Liebe Kommilitoninnen & Kommilitonen,

im Rahmen meiner Bachelorarbeit möchte ich mithilfe einer Online-Umfrage herausfinden, ob es einen Zusammenhang zwischen Persönlichkeitsmerkmalen und dem Verhalten in Konfliktsituationen gibt.

Hierfür brauche ich Eure Unterstützung!

Die Umfrage wird bis einschließlich 22. März 2020 online sein und dauert ca. 10-15 Minuten. Studierende der Wirtschaftspsychologie erhalten für ihre Teilnahme eine ½ Versuchspersonenstunde.

Zur Umfrage gelangt Ihr hier:
https://ww2.unipark.de/uc/HFT_Stuttgart_Studenten/4eb8/

Falls Ihr Fragen habt, könnt Ihr Euch gerne an mich wenden: 62sani1bwp@hft-stuttgart.de.

Vielen Dank für Eure Teilnahme und einen guten Start in das neue Semester!

Nina Sabo

Self-Report for Emotional Intelligence developed by Schutte et al. (1998)

Instructions: Indicate the extent to which each item applies to you using the following scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

1. I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.
2. When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.
3. I expect that I will do well on most things I try.
4. Other people find it easy to confide in me.
5. I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people.
6. Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.
7. When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.
8. Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living.
9. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.
10. I expect good things to happen.
11. I like to share my emotions with others.
12. When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.
13. I arrange events others enjoy.
14. I seek out activities that make me happy.
15. I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others.
16. I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.
17. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.
18. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.
19. I know why my emotions change.
20. When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.
21. I have control over my emotions.
22. I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.
23. I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.
24. I compliment others when they have done something well.
25. I am aware of the non-verbal messages other people send.
26. When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.
27. When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.
28. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.
29. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.
30. I help other people feel better when they are down.
31. I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.
32. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.
33. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.

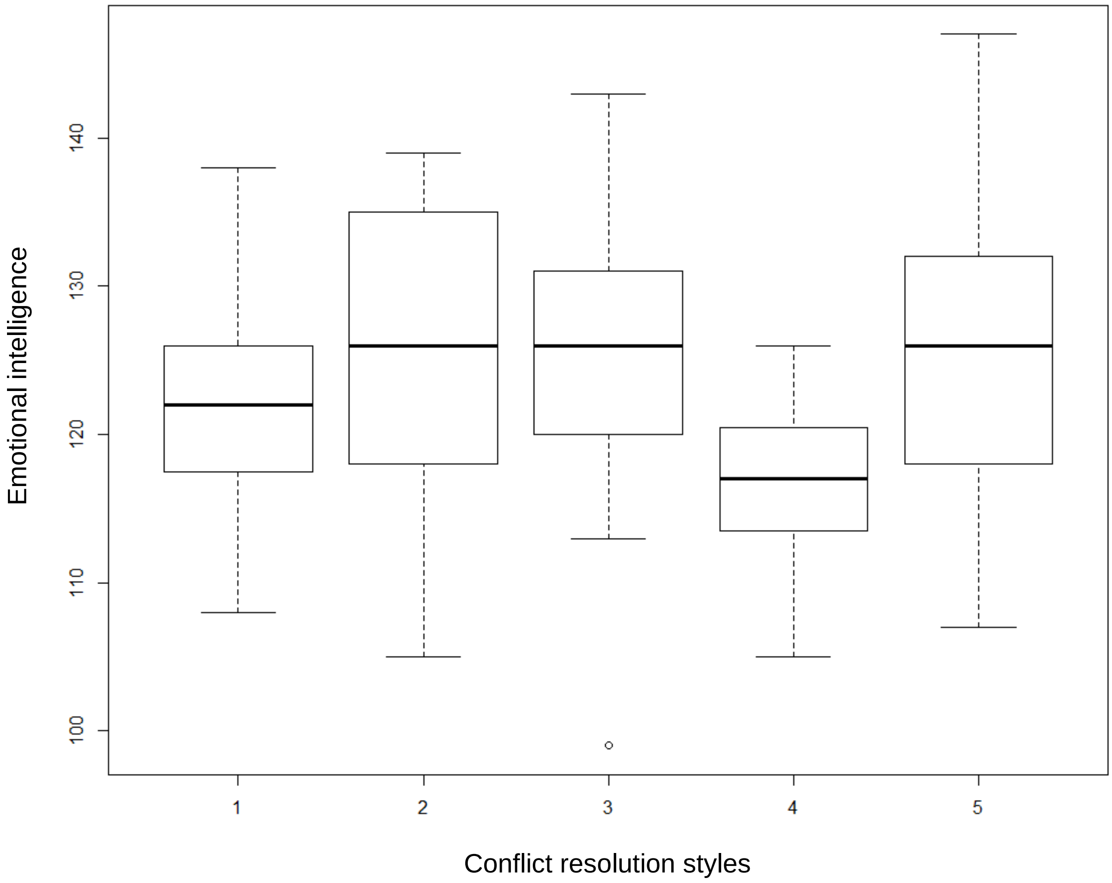
Thomas and Kilmann's (Kilmann & Thomas 1977) Management-of-Differences Exercises (MODE) Instrument

Instructions: Consider situations in which you find your wishes differing from those of another person. How do you usually respond to such situations? On the following pages are several pairs of statements describing possible behavioural responses. For each pair, please circle the "A" or "B" statement which is most characteristic of your own behaviour. In many cases, neither the "A" nor the "B" statement may be very typical of your behaviour, but please select the response which you would be more likely to use.

1. A. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
   B. Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree.
2. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
   B. I attempt to deal with all of another's and my concerns.
3. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
   B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
4. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
   B. I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.
5. A. I consistently seek the other's help in working out a solution.
   B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
6. A. I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.
   B. I try to win my position.
7. A. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think about it.
   B. I give up some points in exchange for others.
8. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
   B. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
9. A. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
   B. I make some effort to get my way.
10. A. I am firm in pursuing my goals.
    B. I try to find a compromise solution.
11. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
    B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
12. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.
    B. I will let another have some of their positions if they lets me have some of mine.
13. A. I propose middle ground.
    B. I press to get my points made.
14. A. I tell another my ideas and ask them for theirs.
    B. I try to show him the logic and benefits of my position.
15. A. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
    B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid tension.
16. A. I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
    B. I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.
17. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
    B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

18. A. If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.
    B. I will let the other person have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.
19. A. I try to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
    B. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
20. A. I attempt to immediately work through our differences.
    B. I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.
21. A. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's feelings.
    B. I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.
22. A. I try to find a position that is intermediate between mine and another person's.
    B. I assert my wishes.
23. A. I am often concerned with satisfying all my wishes.
    B. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving problems.
24. A. If the other's position seems important to them, I would try to meet their wishes.
    B. I try to get the other person to settle for a compromise.
25. A. I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.
    B. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
26. A. I propose a middle ground.
    B. I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all my wishes.
27. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.
    B. If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.
28. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
    B. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
29. A. I propose middle ground.
    B. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
30. A. I try not to hurt the other person's feelings.
    B. I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

Outliers in ANOVA



Conflict resolution style 1: competing

Conflict resolution style 2: collaborating

Conflict resolution style 3: compromising

Conflict resolution style 4: avoiding

Conflict resolution style 5: accommodating

Contrasts for ANOVA

	Conflict Resolution Style				
Contrast	competing	collaborating	compromising	avoiding	accommodating
1	-1	.25	.25	.25	.25
2	.25	-1	.25	.25	.25
3	.25	.25	-1	.25	.25
4	.25	.25	.25	-1	.25
5	.25	.25	.25	.25	-1

Collinearity Statistics and Correlations in the Multiple Regression

Collinearity statistics in the multiple regression

	Collinearity statistics	
Model	Tolerance	VIF
Competing	.41	2.44
Collaborating	.61	1.63
Compromising	.50	2.00
Avoiding	.33	3.05

Correlations in the multiple regression

		EI	Competing	Collaborating	Compromising	Avoiding
Pearson Correlation	EI	1.000				
	Competing	-.087	1.000			
	Collaborating	.221	.213	1.000		
	Compromising	.230	-.360	-.175	1.000	
	Avoiding	-.256	-.547	-.479	-.216	1.000
Significance (one-way)	EI	-				
	Competing	.191	-			
	Collaborating	.013	.016	-		
	Compromising	.010	< .001	.039	-	
	Avoiding	.005	< .001	< .001	.014	-
N		102	102	102	102	102

Diagram “Scale-Location” for the Multiple Regression

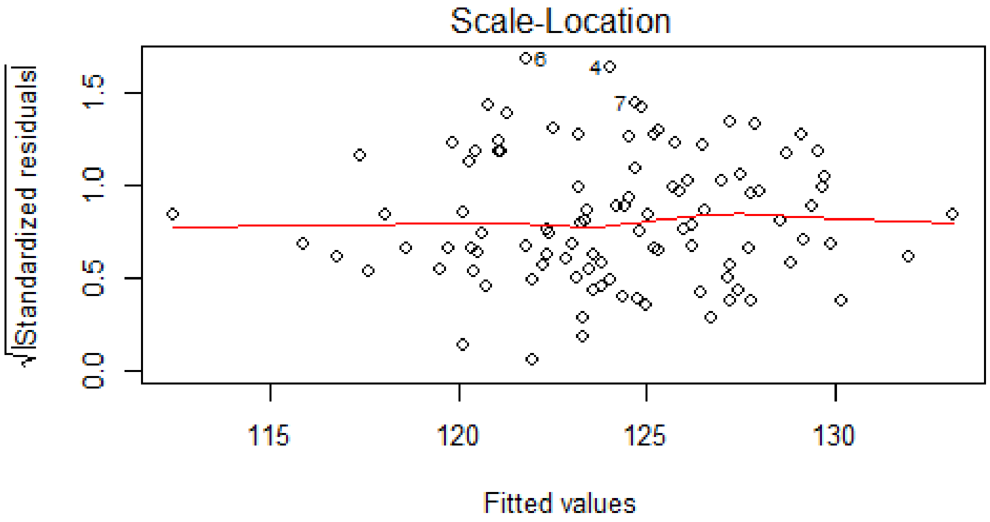


Diagram "Residuals vs Fitted" for the Multiple Regression