

# THE EFFECT OF MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN CONFLICTS MANAGEMENT STYLES: MEDIATION OF CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND SELF-MONITORING

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## ABSTRACT

Conflict is an inevitable reality both in personal and in organizational life. For being inevitable, the conflict must be managed. Defined as a process that occurs when one party feels adversely affected by another (e.g., De Dreu, 1997) the conflict management styles can be analysed as a function of personality variables. In this respect the cultural intelligence, self-monitoring and self-interdependent seem to be relevant variables, since characterised by flexibility and interest in other aspects present in conflict management styles. In this study, we propose that cultural intelligence, associated with the self-interdependent and self-monitoring, can have a positive impact on the choice of most effective interpersonal conflict resolution styles. Being cultural intelligence an attribute of extreme importance, we still sought to determine how the quantity and quality of intercultural contact and self-interdependent present themselves as predictors of it. With a sample of 399 individuals, the proposed model suggests that high levels of cultural intelligence mediated by a high self-monitoring and self-interdependent positively affect and predict the conflict resolution styles adopted. Given the need to develop abilities aimed at increasing the skills of conflict resolution, this study adds to the existing literature new predictors, contributing to the welfare and performance of human resources, and consequently to success and organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Cultural Intelligence, Multiculturality, Conflict Management Styles, Self-Monitoring

JEL Classification: J24

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Characterized by the perception of interests, goals or opposing values (Putnam & Poole, 1987), the conflict is present in any type of social interaction. And, as the social interactions are becoming more complex, the greater the number of conflicting situations (Serrano, 2000, as cited in Cunha, Rego, Cunha, & Cabral-Cardoso, 2005). This is because all societies are characterized by a domestic multiculturalism. Domestic multiculturalism is related to the fact of individuals from the same society don't have the same qualities, as people differ in biological, physical and socio-cultural terms (Polat & Mettin, 2012). When we reflect on the interpersonal differences, the most common to occur are the identity, as the experiences, beliefs, age, gender, religion, social class, physical skills, professional experience, education

level, family and political and economic trends (Foxman & Easterling 1999). And it is the perception of these differences, or rather, this domestic multiculturalism, that is often at the root of conflicting situations. Culture, defined as a set of contents, modes of thought and behaviours (e.g., language, history, religion, customs, values) transmitted through the process of socialization (Almeida, 2012) is not assimilated in the same way by all individuals. Different perceptions of the same reality, different experiences, shape individuals, this is because the personality is influenced by the correlation between heredity and the environment where the individual is inserted. Thus, each individual will present different preferences or a bias in the way of conducting a conflict situation. That is, the strategic guidelines and the behaviours adopted by an individual depend on their personality characteristics (Cunha et al., 2005). The effectiveness of cultural intelligence, although addressed mostly in relation to multicultural contexts, is an attribute that can and must be parsed as a predictor of everyday situations, which do not necessarily imply a context characterized by cultural diversity. Thus, it is our objective to analyse the styles of conflict management in the light of cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence, characterized as a competence that increases the communicational effectiveness, performance, flexibility, satisfaction and adaptability to various situations, (e.g., Earley & Ang, 2003; Malek & Budhwar, 2013; Van Dyne, Ang, & Nielsen, 2007) will certainly have a positive influence on the adoption of the most effective styles depending on the type of conflict and depending on the characteristics of the other party involved. Moreover, personality is an antecedent of cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003), so the personality traits self-monitoring and self-dependent, when associated with cultural intelligence, may serve as predictors of positive conflict management. Firstly, because a high self-monitoring allows individuals to change their behaviour depending on the environment where they are (Snyder, 1974), secondly because the self-interdependent leads individuals to behaviours that emphasize their connection with others, strengthening existing relationships (Cross, Bacon, & Moris, 2000).

At the same time, the demand for high standards of multicultural competence (see Littrell & Salas, 2005; Morris & Robie, 2001) has become an extremely important factor for organizations, thus attributes like cultural intelligence begin gaining ground as core competencies. Some investigations have pointed to a positive relationship between intercultural contact and cultural intelligence (Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2006; Crowne, 2008; Gelfand, Imai, & Fehr, 2008). In addition, the intercultural contact is closely related to the concept of cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003) and theoretically, it is a notable precursor of it (Gelfand et al., 2008). As such it will be able to function as a predictor of cultural intelligence and its dimensions. In this way, it is also our goal to seek to understand how the quantity and quality of intercultural contact associated with the self-interdependent construct affect the levels of cultural intelligence.

Conflict management is a critical competence not only at the organizational level (Adler, 2008; Cai & Drake, 1998; Imai & Gelfand, 2010) but also at the social level. Cultural intelligence and the use of appropriate and effective conflict resolution strategies, have become of utmost importance, so the identification of predictors of both concepts become relevant to the social and organizational world.

## **2. CONFLICTS MANAGEMENT STYLES**

The conflict is “a perceived or real incompatibility of values, expectations, processes or outcomes between one or more parties on practical and/or relational issues “ (Ting-Toomey, 1994, p. 360). People are in conflict when the actions of a person interfere, block or, in any way, make the behaviour of someone else less effective (Tjosvold, 1997, p. 24). The

strategies used to deal with the conflict can be categorized according to the way in which two variables intersect themselves: desire to satisfy the interests of the counterparty, and desire to satisfy own interests (Cunha et al., 2005). From this intersection result five styles of conflict management (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979): integrating, avoiding, dominating, compromising, obliging. These authors identify each style of conflict management as a function of the degree of concern with self and the degree of concern with the others. The style integrating refers to a high concern with others and self. The focus of this style is cooperation, this being the most effective in conflict resolution. You seek the win/win situations in which the issues are discussed and resolved for the benefit of both parties. The views of the parties can be combined into a more comprehensive solution and consensus on the commitment. The avoiding style refers to low concern with self and the other - the individual seeks to avoid conflict and may even delay the matter until a more suitable occasion or can withdraw from the ominous scenario. The dominating style refers to a high concern with self and a low concern with the other. It is a style associated with authoritarianism, reflecting a concern to impose the self-interest. An individual with this style does everything to win or achieve is goal, often ignoring the needs of the other party. It can also be used when it becomes necessary to take quick decisions, sometimes imposed, unpopular or important (Rahim, 2002). The compromising style refers to an average concern with self and with the others. It is an intermediate style in which both parties give way to manage to win other things. Both parties have equal power, usually without time pressure. You tend to reach a temporary solution in which neither party feels totally satisfied, and in the base remain the assumptions for future conflicts. The obliging style refers to a low concern with self and a high concern with the other. The individual seeks to minimize the differences and focus the effort in solving the problem in the common points between them in order to satisfy the other party. Aims at peaceful coexistence and recognition of common interests. There is a process of generosity, goodness and obedience relatively to the other party (Rahim, 2002). Although these styles are often applied to organizational scenarios, it is possible to generalize them to scenarios that involve interpersonal interactions (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006).

Conflicts often result of conflicting interests, cultures or values. The choice of styles of conflict management depends not only on the negotiating situation, but also on the individual characteristics of each, in particular on the personality of the negotiators. This is the reason why the identification of personality traits that facilitate the adoption of more effective styles of conflict management, in particular the cultural intelligence, self-monitoring and self-interdependent, is fundamental.

### **3. CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE, SELF-MONITORING AND SELF-INTERDEPENDENT AS PREDICTORS OF THE CONFLICTS MANAGEMENT STYLES**

Earley and Ang (2003) were based on Sternberg and Detterman (1986) multidimensional model of intelligence and define cultural intelligence as an individual capacity that allows the individual to effectively work and manage the social interactions when he meets in different cultural scenarios. It is a specific form of intelligence focused on the ability to learn, evaluate and effectively behave in different situations characterized by cultural diversity (Ang, Van Dyne, & Koh, 2007). It's a multidimensional construct consisting of four dimensions: a) metacognitive, which refers to the awareness that individuals possess during interactions with individuals from different cultures; b) cognitive, which refers to the specific knowledge that you have about the standards, habits and conventions in new

cultural contexts; c) motivational, that captures the motivation that an individual has to learn more and act effectively in various situations; and d) behavioural, conceptualized as an individual flexibility in demonstrating appropriate actions with individuals of other cultural contexts (Van Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2008; Ward, Wilson, & Fisher, 2011).

Considering the defining characteristics of cultural intelligence and its dimensions, and applying them to a multicultural domestic setting, where all individuals, although of the same culture, have distinct values, beliefs, interests, behaviours and goals, it will be expected that individuals with high levels of cultural intelligence are able to organize their social behaviour, opting for more integrative styles and more cooperative relations, compared to those with lower levels of cultural intelligence (Imai & Gelfand, 2010). They are more likely to persist, even if negotiating becomes stressful and difficult, given their high motivation in different situations (e.g., Van Dyne et al., 2012). The metacognitive dimension promotes an active thinking about people and situations, unleashing a critical thinking about habits and beliefs and enables you to make an assessment and review of mind maps increasing, thereby, the ability of understanding (Van Dyne et al., 2008). Individuals with high levels of cognitive cultural intelligence have a deeper understanding of how people are shaped/influenced by the environment in the way of thinking and acting (Van Dyne et al., 2012). Similarly, high levels of behavioural cultural intelligence are essential in conflict management. Individuals with high levels of behavioural cultural intelligence can overcome the natural human tendency to rely on habits, demonstrating a behavioural flexibility in different situations, what includes a change of code and an adjustment to the negotiating context (e.g., Molinsky, 2007). Greater verbal flexibility increases communicational effectiveness; non-verbal flexibility allows you to demonstrate compliance with the standards, and is especially critical because it works as a “silent language” allowing interpret light indicators of sincerity, honesty, competence, etc. (Hall, 1959) fundamental in a negotiation process; and a greater flexibility in the act of speech demonstrates that you understand the communication standards, putting others at ease. In general, cultural intelligence enables individuals to change their behaviours in the face of the nature of the conflict and the requirements of the negotiation process. This change of behaviour, according to specific situations, is a factor of utmost importance during a conflict resolution, and the way individuals decide to change their behaviour (or not) is strictly related to the personality traits self-monitoring and self-interdependent, so its analysis as mediating variables in conflict management styles is presented as relevant.

According to Snyder (1974) individuals regulate their behaviour in order to introduce a specific Self according to situational cues, i.e., they differ in the way they present themselves in social situations. Some individuals are motivated to present an appropriate Self in different social situations while others are motivated to be themselves (Gainey, 2012). Individuals with a high self-monitoring are considered “the world’s chameleons”, willing to change their behaviour depending on the environment where they are (Snyder, 1974). Usually they are individuals who obtain more positive results at work, since they change their behaviour depending on the situation and have a higher likelihood of resolving the conflict through the integrating and compromising styles (Warech, Smither, Reilly, Millsap, & Reilly, 1998). These evidences are not restricted to an organizational scenario, because a high self-monitoring presents itself as a variable linked to a better interpersonal effectiveness (Warech et al., 1998). On the other hand, individuals who have a low self-monitoring seek to be themselves in different social situations (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000), appealing to introspection and focusing their attention on thoughts, beliefs and feelings. Thus, their behaviour is consistent even in different social situations, or at least similar, because they are motivated by dispositions, which do not differ from one situation to another (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000).

The self-construal is defined as the conception that the individual has of himself or self-image and is composed by the self-dependent and self-interdependent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). It is based on the way the culture at the level of communication with members of other cultures, cultural norms, values and the perception that the individual has of self, influences his behaviour (Oetzel & Bolton-Oetzel, 1997). Regarding self-interdependent, this measures the tendency to think of ourselves concerning our relationships with others. The basic principle of this concept lies in the premise that an individual is connected to another, in a way his self is defined, at least in part, in terms which refer to the membership of a particular group, to the existing relationships within that group, as well as to the social roles to play (Cross et al., 2000). To maintain and increase this interdependent vision of the Self, individuals tend to think and behave in ways that emphasize its connection with others and that strengthen existing relationships (Cross et al., 2000). In other words, the perception of our Self depends on the relationship we have with the others. This relationship with the interactions with others (Oetzel, 2001; Oetzel et al., 2001), makes individuals with an interdependent-self believe that their relation with the others are more important than focusing on the individual Self. Individuals seek to create harmonious relations through the adaptation and the help to the other, according to social rules and cooperative behaviours (Oetzel & Bolton-Oetzel, 1997). In this context Cross et al. (2000) reported that individuals who have a high self-interdependent characterize their important relationships as closer than individuals who have a low self-interdependent and, are more likely to take into consideration the needs and wishes of others in decision making.

Research linking these concepts simultaneously with the conflict management styles, are scarce, at least as far as we know. Stands out the study of Kaushal and Kwantes (2006), which sought to explore the influence of self-monitoring in conflict resolution styles. These authors found no relationship between the variables suggesting the application of a measure greater than the scale of 16 items of Warech et al. (1998). For its part, the study of Mehra and Schenkel (2008) showed that individuals who have a high self-monitoring tend to experience a greater degree of conflict. Oetzel et al. (2001), in his study on conflict management styles and self-construal, showed that the interdependent self is related to the style obliging and integrating. Other studies, such as Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) found that self-interdependent was also related to the style obliging.

According to the study of Gupta, Singh, Jandhyala and Bhatt (2013), self-monitoring is a significant predictor of cultural intelligence and its dimensions. The styles of conflict management adopted, are characteristic of the personality, therefore the personality trait self-monitoring, and cultural intelligence attribute, can predict the conflict management style. That is, it is expected that individuals with a high level of self-monitoring that adapt to the situation of conflict and act according to the needs of others preferably adopt integrating and comprising styles to the resolution of the conflict. On the other hand, those with lower levels of self-monitoring, denoting a stable behaviour and carefree face to the needs of the other, will tend to adopt the styles of dominating and avoiding (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006).

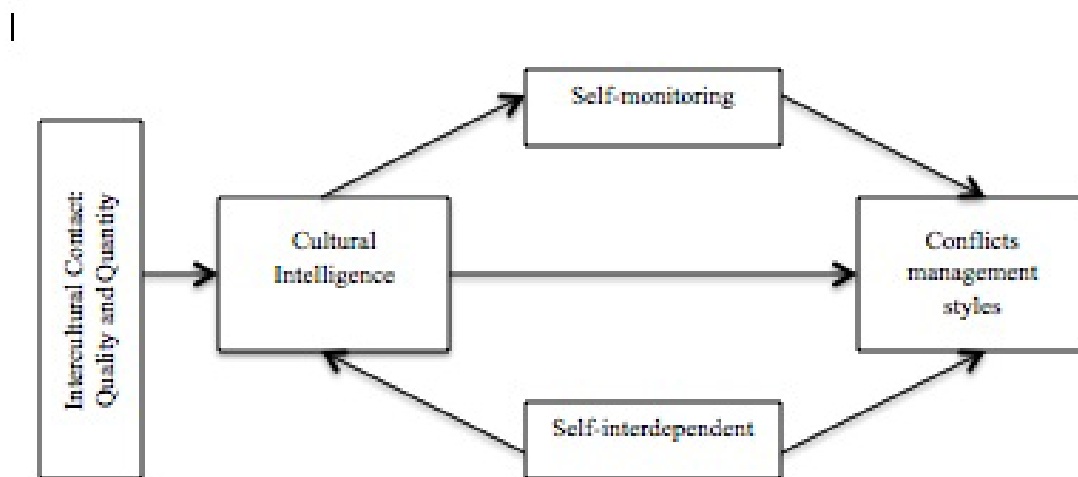
#### **4. THE ROLE OF THE INTERCULTURAL CONTACT**

Live and work in a society where cultural diversity is a reality, requires an awareness that there are different systems of values, rules, behaviours, inherent in different cultures, and that becomes indispensable to understand them better in order to be able to communicate and interact effectively (Rocha, 1991). Thus, during a social interaction, it is necessary that the individual is able to suspend the judgement of a situation until the various clues of the context can be interpreted (Triandis, 2006). In this way, situations of tension or conflict can

be alleviated if an individual is familiar with the cultural values and behaviour of the other (Holt, 2000). Crowne (2008) points out that the knowledge of cultural norms and values can increase if the individual develop an understanding of another culture through the experiences in this culture or by the degree of contact with individuals from other cultures. In this sense, the multidimensional exposure to various cultures allows an individual to become familiar with the products, norms, and values and make assumptions about another culture, what increases his levels of cultural intelligence. In general, the intercultural contact has been associated with increased cultural skills. If the intercultural contact allows individuals a greater confidence in their interactions, as well as greater openness to individual differences, then, you can also extrapolate this variable for contexts characterized by domestic multiculturalism. This is because, it allows the individual to communicate more effectively with people from different social and educational levels, different genders and ages, with different beliefs, goals and interests, i.e. allows him to handle multiple “cultures”. Some investigations have pointed to a positive relationship between intercultural contact and cultural intelligence (Ang et al., 2006; Crowne, 2008; Gelfand et al., 2008). In addition, the intercultural contact is closely related to the concept of cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003) and theoretically, it is a notable precursor of it (Gelfand et al., 2008). Therefore, it will be able to function as a predictor of cultural intelligence and its dimensions. The exposure to multiculturalism, being the way in which an individual learns and adapts to others, seems to be fundamental for the development of cultural intelligence, and, consequently, for the use of integrative conflict management styles, reason why the analysis of its correlation with both variables is of utmost importance.

To sum up, this study seeks to test a model which, on the one hand explores the effect of the quality and quantity of intercultural contact on cultural intelligence, and on the other the influence of cultural intelligence, self-monitoring and self-interdependent on the conflict resolution styles (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Proposed model



## **5. METHOD**

### **5.1 Sample**

This study used a convenience sample of 399 individuals (62.9% female and 30.8% male) from several regions of Portugal (22.3 % Alentejo and Algarve, 23.5% Beiras, Estremadura, Ribatejo and 8.2% foreigners - Portuguese speakers) and aged between 18 and 59 years ( $M = 26.40$ ;  $SD = 8.90$ ). Regarding to qualifications, participants are mostly graduates (46.9%).

As regards the degree of contact, 36.6% often interact with other cultures, 17% refer that is very often and 10.3% refer that interact all day with other cultures. Being that, these participants that interact since frequent to all day with other nationalities, 15.3% refer that the type of contact is with “Friends and Family”, 32.9% interact with “Friends, Family, Classmates and Neighbours” and 36.9% interact with “Friends, Family, Classmates, Neighbours Customers, Work Colleagues and Work Superiors”.

### **5.2 Procedures**

#### *5.2.1 Data collecting:*

The data were collected through an online questionnaire, elaborate on the Google Drive platform. The questionnaires contained a cover page with informed consent, ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of the data, and information to fill it in. The questionnaire remained available for a period of 4 months.

#### *5.2.2 Data analysis:*

The data were processed using the SPSS and AMOS programs (V. 20) and the significance level was assumed at 0.05. To examine the values of variables and descriptive analysis of hierarchical regressions we used SPSS program. The confirmatory factor analysis was performed by AMOS program aiming to evaluate the fit of the model and verify if this was consistent with the data.

### **5.3 Measures**

#### *5.3.1. Cultural Intelligence:*

The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS), adapted to the Portuguese population by Sousa, Gonçalves, Reis and Santos (2015), was originally developed in English by Van Dyne and colleagues (2008). This 20-item tool, rated according to a Likert-type scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree), is a multidimensional measure that includes four dimensions of “intelligence”: metacognitive (4 items, e.g., item 1: “I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds”), cognitive (6 items, e.g., item 7: “I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures”), motivational (5 items, e.g., item 11: “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures”) and behavioural (5 items, e.g., item 18: “I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it”). The Cronbach’s alpha for the Portuguese adaptation of the scale was 0.93; the alpha of the scale dimensions ranged from 0.86 to 0.89.

#### *5.3.2. Conflict Management Style:*

The participants answered the instrument developed by Simões (2008) based on the assumptions of the Rahim’s contingencial model (1983), demonstrating a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.80. This instrument consists of 30 items rated according to a Likert-type scale from 1 (rarely) to 7 (usually) contemplating the five conflict management styles: dominating (e.g., item 7: “I’d rather win than agree to compromise”), avoiding (e.g., item 2: “I’d rather avoid the person until the problem is solved by itself”), compromising (e.g., item 30: “If both give

in a little, we will have a solution easily”), obliging (e.g., item 25: “I agree immediately before there is discussion”) and integrating (e.g., item 12: “I try to act like a mediator and not an adversary”). The five scale dimensions showed acceptable levels of internal consistency, varying the alpha between 0.66 and 0.73.

### *5.3.3. Self-Monitoring*

We used the Self-Monitoring Scale (SMS) developed by Snyder and Gangestad (1986) and translated and tested for the Portuguese population for this study. The face validity was supported by translation and retranslation of four bilingual translators and subsequently adjusted for the final version. Participants rated the extent to which they regarded the statements as true or not, with respect to their behaviour. We used a Likert scale of 1 (not true) to 7 (totally true). In terms of reliability, the scale showed an internal consistency of 0.55.

### *5.3.4. Self-Interdependent*

The degree to which the individual includes his intimate relationships in his self-concept was measured through the version for the Portuguese population developed by Gonçalves, Gomes, Hipólito, Santos and Orgambídez-Ramos (2015) and demonstrate an internal consistency of 0.84. This value is similar to the original instrument *The Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (RISC)* developed by Cross et al. (2000), which show an alpha ranging between 0.85 and 0.90. The instrument consists of 11 items; two of which are inverted items (items 8 and 9). The participants were asked to assess to what extent they agreed or disagreed with statements associated with their intimate relationships, using a Likert scale, with a variation of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (completely agree). The definition of “intimate person” was provided as a guideline in the questionnaire. Based on the definition of Gonçalves et al. (2014), “intimate person” is defined as the person who is part of the emotional relationships of the individual, with whom he has a strong connection. In other words, the person with whom he has a strong relationship, not necessarily sweet. It includes loving, close friends, family, etc.

### *5.3.5. Contact level*

We measured both the quantity and the quality of contact. Participants were asked to indicate the kind of cultural experiences they had (e.g., vacation in another country, studying in another country, among others), the frequency of contact with other nationalities and, if it was the case, who they interact with. In terms of quantity of contact we asked “how often do you contact with other nationalities?”, considering the growing scale: 1 – Nothing frequent a 5 – All day. As to the quality of the contact, a scale was constructed taking into account the type of cultural relationship of individuals, i.e., participants should indicate the kind of relation they maintained with people of other nationalities, considering the following options: 1 - Friends; 2 - Classmates; 3 - Family; 4 - Neighbours; 5 – C-workers; 6 – Work Superiors; 7 – Customers; 8 – Not Applicable. On the basis of this question the quality of contact was operationalized in a growing range of degree of contact:

1. *Classmates and Neighbours* (individuals who have contact with other nationalities but without high level of affective relationship);
2. *Work* (individuals who maintain contact with people of other nationalities just at the professional level, including co-workers, managers and customers);
3. *Personal* (individuals who maintain contact with people of other nationalities only on a personal level and with a high degree of affective relationship);
4. *Classmates, Neighbours and Work*;



5. *Friends, Family, Classmates and Neighbours;*

6. *Contact with all;*

7. *No contact* (individuals who do not have any kind of contact with people of other nationalities).

In addition to the scales, items on the biographical variables (age, gender, employment status and educational level) were included, in order to characterize the sample.

## 6. RESULTS ANALYSIS

Table 1 shows the descriptive values (means and standard deviations) for each dispositional variable of the model.

**Table 1. Descriptive analysis of the variables cultural intelligence, self-monitoring and self-interdependent**

		<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Cultural Intelligence</b>	Metacognitive	5.20	1.03
	Cognitive	3.97	1.03
	Behavioural	5.12	1.11
	Motivational	4.92	1.10
	<b>M = 4.74; SD = 0.83</b>		
<b>Self-monitoring</b>		3.92	0.61
<b>Self-interdependent</b>		5.28	0.75
<b>Conflict Management Styles</b>	Obliging	3.13	0.94
	Avoiding	3.21	1.09
	Compromising	4.07	0.81
	Integrating	4.83	0.97
	Dominating	3.74	1.01

As regards the cultural intelligence, the cognitive dimension features the lower mean ( $M = 3.97$ ;  $SD = 1.06$ ) and the metacognitive dimension presents the highest mean ( $M = 5.20$ ;  $SD = 1.02$ ). These results suggest that, despite the individuals do not consider who possess a specific knowledge about the standards, habits and conventions in new cultural contexts; they seek to be more aware when they interact with individuals from another culture. As for self-monitoring and self - interdependent variables, it was obtained  $M = 3.92$ ;  $SD = 0.60$  and  $M = 5.28$ ;  $SD = 0.74$ , respectively. The self-interdependent mean suggests that individuals consider their Self as and, at least in part, belonging to a certain group. On the other hand, in terms of concern to behave appropriately, the sensitivity to the slopes of the environment and adapt the behaviour according to the environment, clears up that the self-monitoring mean is the core values of the scale.

In relation to conflict management styles, it turns out that the style integrating presented the highest mean ( $M = 4.83$ ;  $SD = 0.96$ ) and the style obliging the lowest mean ( $M = 3.13$ ;  $SD = 0.94$ ).

### 6.1. Hierarchical regression analysis

For the verification of the model, hierarchical regression analyses were carried out to explore what effects the quantity of contact, quality of contact and self-interdependent show on the cultural intelligence, and what was the effect of the three dispositional measures – cultural intelligence, self-monitoring and self-interdependent – on the conflict management styles.

At first, the quantity and quality of contact were introduced in block, using the *enter* method to verify the explanatory power of cultural intelligence. These predictors only explain 0.8% of the variance of the dependent variable ( $R^2 = 0.086$ ), showing a statistically significant contribution [ $F(2,398) = 18.721, p = 0.00$ ]. The explanatory weight of the quantity of contact is rather higher than the quality of the contact ( $\beta = 0.213, p = 0.00$  and  $\beta = 0.034, p = 0.49$ , respectively) (Table 2). Analysing the correlation between the quantity and quality of contact, we found that this also presents itself as weak ( $r = 0.266, p = 0.00$ ).

Table 2. Synthesis of the hierarchical regression for predict cultural intelligence

	Cultural Intelligence		
	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	$R^2$
QLC	0.213	5.676	0.086**
QC	0.034	.692	

Note: QLC - Quality of Contact; QC - Quantity of Contact;  $R^2$  = determination coefficient; \*\* $p < 0.001$

For its part, when the variable self-interdependent was introduced, using the stepwise method, the power of determination of these variables greatly increases and the quantity and quality of contact and self-interdependent explain 15% of the variance of the cultural intelligence. It must be emphasized that only when the variable self-interdependent was introduced in the proposed model, its explanatory power increased significantly ( $\Delta R^2 = 14\%$ ) (Table 3).

Table 3. Hierarchical regression for predict cultural intelligence – models

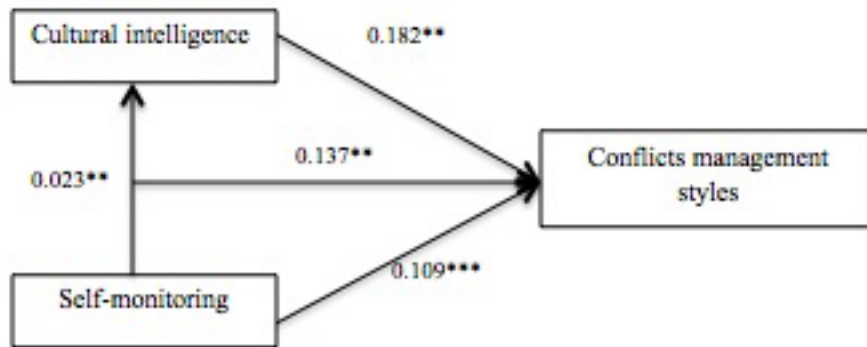
	Cultural Intelligence		
	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	$R^2$
QLC	0.051	1.052	0.012**
QLC+QC	0.275	5.713	0.086**
QLC+QC+SI	<b>0.259</b>	<b>5.583</b>	<b>0.153**</b>

Note: QLC – Quality of contact; QC – Quantity of contact; SI – self-interdependent;  $R^2$  = determination coefficient; \*\* $p < 0.001$

Secondly, we have examined the relationship between the cultural intelligence and conflict management styles mediated by self-interdependent and self-monitoring. It was observed that the self-interdependent only shows itself correlated with cultural intelligence ( $r = 0.261, p = 0.00$ ), being this correlation weak. In this way, we have removed this variable from the hierarchical regression analysis.

The two dispositional variables (cultural intelligence and self-monitoring) explain 13 % of the variance [ $F(3,398) = 19.212, p = 0.00$ ]. In Figure 2 are the mediation values.

Figure 2. Cultural intelligence mediated by self-monitoring to predict conflict management style



It is also denoted that the explanatory cultural intelligence weight in conflict management increases slightly when it is alone as independent variable ( $\beta = 0.182$   $p = 0.00$ ).

To understand how these variables behave in the proposed model, we have chosen to verify, first, what is the contribution of cultural intelligence about the self-monitoring and subsequently, what is the contribution of self-interdependent on cultural intelligence. At the level of the self-monitoring, cultural intelligence explains only 0.2% of the variance with a contribution of [F (1.398) = 9.235,  $p = 0.003$ ]. The preliminary analysis of correlations between variables indicated that self-interdependent was only correlated with cultural intelligence. To accomplish a linear regression with these variables we observed that self-interdependent only explain 0.7% of the cultural intelligence, with a contribution of [F (1.398) = 28.968,  $p = 0.00$ ] (Table 4).

Table 4. Synthesis of hierarchical regression for predict cultural intelligence and self-monitoring

	Cultural Intelligence		
	$\beta$	$t$	$R^2$
Self-interdependent	0.262	5.377	0.068**
	Self-monitoring		
	$\beta$	$t$	$R^2$
Cultural Intelligence	0.151	3.039	0.023**

In terms of contributions to the styles of conflict management, we used the only variables correlated and predictive in this relationship: cultural intelligence and self-monitoring. The four dimensions of cultural intelligence are only correlated with the integrating style of conflict management. The metacognitive dimension is the only one that presents a considerable percentage of variance of this style 11% ( $R^2 = 0.113$ ), [F (1.398) = 50.546,  $p = 0.00$  and an explanatory power of  $\beta = 0.336$ ,  $p = 0.00$ . The remaining dimensions showed very low regressions on the five conflict management styles.

About the contribution of the self-monitoring at the level of the conflict management styles, this explains 11% of the variance [F (1.398) = 48.435,  $p = 0.00$ ]. To explore which of the styles possessed a greater explanatory weight we found that the dominating and compromising strategies have a higher weight to the other ( $\beta = 0.280$ ,  $p = 0.00$  and  $\beta =$

0.264,  $p = 0.00$ , respectively). It should be noted that the integrating strategy has not reported as significant in this relationship ( $\beta = 0.041$ ,  $p = 0.41$ ) (Table 5).

Table 5. Synthesis of hierarchical regression to predict conflict management styles

	Self-monitoring		
	$\beta$	$t$	$R^2$
<b>Dominating</b>	0.280	5.816	0.079**
<b>Avoiding</b>	0.224	4.579	0.050**
<b>Compromising</b>	0.264	5.458	0.070**
<b>Obliging</b>	0.196	3.991	0.039**
<b>Integrating</b>	0.041	0.822	0.002

Power analysis of determination of the contact quantity and dispositional variables on conflict management strategies, shows that, just after the introduction of the variable self-monitoring in the proposed model, its explanatory power increases significantly ( $\Delta R^2 = 10\%$ ) (Table 6).

Table 6. Synthesis of hierarchical regression to the prediction of Conflict Management Style variable

	Conflict management styles		
	$\beta$	$t$	$R^2$
QC	0.042	-0.829	0.002
QC+CQ	0.186	3.592	0.033**
QC+CQ+SI	0.011	0.209	0.033**
<b>QC+CQ+SI+SM</b>	<b>0.312</b>	<b>6.521</b>	<b>0.128**</b>

Note: QC – Quantity of the contact; CQ- Cultural Intelligence; SI – Self-interdependent; SM – Self-monitoring;  $R^2$  = determination coefficient; \*\* $p < 0.001$

In terms of adjusting the model, the results showed a CMIN/DF of 9.152, not indicating a suitable adjustment of the sample model (Byrne, 2001). The remaining indicators used show a proper adjustment to the extent that the values CFI = 0.864 and GFI = 0.985 show values close to 1, and the values RMR = 0.032 and SRMR= 0.064 are close to 0. The RMSEA value is 0.143 and does not constitute a good adjustment indicator (Brown, 2006).

## 7. DISCUSSION

This article aimed to test a model where high levels of cultural intelligence mediated by a high self-dependent and self-monitoring, positively affect and predict the trend that an individual has to use effective conflict management styles according to the individual characteristics of those involved in the conflict.

In relation to the dispositional measures used to predict conflict management styles, we observed that cultural intelligence presents itself as a reasonable predictor of conflict management styles. When associated with the self-monitoring, its explanatory power decreases slightly. However, it must be emphasizes that the single dimension of cultural

intelligence that shows a decisive power in management conflict styles is the metacognitive dimension. This dimension reasonably predicts the integrating style. These results point to the importance, in interpersonal relationships, of the existence of cooperative reasons in individuals who exhibit high levels of intelligence, once the outcome in conflict situation will be more satisfying for both parties (Imai & Gelfand, 2010). Therefore, if individuals have a greater awareness of the other's individual differences during social interactions and behave in ways that emphasize their connection with the others, so, in situations of conflict, they will opt for strategies that benefit not only themselves but also the others and, perhaps more important, strengthening and simultaneously maintaining their relationship with the others. Self-monitoring has proved to be a predictor of styles of conflict management, with emphasis on a higher power in the dimension dominating. Our study is consistent with the study of Mehra and Schenkel (2008) and suggests that it may also exist some disadvantages to being a social "chameleon": individuals with a high self-monitoring use a more aggressive management conflict style than those with a low self-monitoring. Other studies that explored this relationship showed that these "chameleons" are better to deal with interpersonal issues and probably to use integrating and compromising strategies (Wareck et al., 1998) but, on the other hand, we found studies that did not find any relationship with the five conflict management styles (Kaushal & Kwantes, 2006). So, if it is considered that an individual with a high self-monitoring shows a special ability to focus on the others emotions, it would be expected that integrating strategies would stand out.

It was still our objective to understand how the quantity and quality of intercultural contact affects cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence is a dispositional measure that is not innate or immutable to the individual, on the contrary, it can be developed and improved according to the multicultural experience that the individual possesses, being this the basic factor that allows its development. In this sense, we have sought to understand whether the quantity and quality of intercultural contact predicts cultural intelligence. The results show that the explanatory power of these variables is very low and that only the quantity of contact shows a relevant weight to high levels of cultural intelligence. However, when we add the self-interdependent personality trait to this equation, we have seen that this variable shows a superior explanatory power of the cultural intelligence, compared to the contact variables. These results are relevant since they suggest that are not only the environmental aspects and contact with the multiculturalism that influence the cultural intelligence but also individual aspects. Being the self-interdependent a concept that is related to the national identity in terms of the emphasis that an individual puts in intra-group allegiance (Fernandes, Páes, & Gonzáles, 2005). We can concluded that it is not enough for an individual to contact daily with other cultures and have an affective or close relationship with others from a different cultural background if he doesn't consider this relationship important to the definition of his Self. It is important to consider that, although we have not found any relationship, it doesn't mean that the quality of contact is not important. Wood and Peters (2014) state that, through short-term visits to another country, the interactions with representatives of the country visited, promote the development of individual knowledge, by means of comparisons between the country of origin and the country visited. It also allows check prior assumptions through reflexivity. Besides, these visits allow you to develop the motivation and involvement needed in future cultural interactions. Thus, the quality of contact is a variable that should continue to be explored.

In the same line of reasoning, the importance that the self-interdependent shows in the relationship with cultural intelligence was relevant, since this measure of personality has more weight in the formation of cultural intelligence than the quantity and quality of contact. That is, it's not the frequent contact or an affective relationship with someone of another culture that will develop significantly cultural intelligence levels, it is necessary for

the individual to consider this relationship as important and meaningful for the formation of his identity.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study contributes to the literature of individual differences and conflict management, demonstrating that some individual differences that predict the styles of conflict management can lead to a certain ambiguity in understanding the behaviour that an individual may adopt in situations of conflict. Self-monitoring introduced itself as a dispositional controversial measure in relation to conflict management styles. On the one hand, it presents itself as an important predictor of conflict management, on the other hand has a greater weight in the choice of the dominating style in conflict situation. If an individual presents a greater ability to perceive its environment and draw clues that give him the ability to act according to it, one would expect that, in situations of domestic or cultural diversity, these individuals would show evidence of being more sensitive and skilled in managing these aspects. Future studies could contribute to this analysis, through aspects considered relevant to conflict management, such as, for example, the mimicry. The mimicry is an important factor in conflict resolution (e.g., Maddux, Mullen, & Galinsky, 2008; Swaab, Maddux, & Sinaceur, 2011) and varies according to levels of self-monitoring (Cheng & Chartrand, 2003). Also the multicultural personality (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001) may be a variable to consider in future investigations as to provide individuals a greater empathy, flexibility, openness, emotional stability and social initiative, being an important personality trait for the understanding of conflict management styles adopted. We suggest that a forthcoming analysis use the scale of intercultural conflict styles (Hammer, 2005) as this allows the comparison with groups of different cultures.

In general, the proposed model shows relevant aspects in relation to the importance that these measures of personality present in conflict management styles. Understanding the predictors of conflict management style and, in particular, to what extent the cultural intelligence promotes a most effective conflict management style, can contribute to outline fundamental skills training programmes in negotiation and decision-making processes, targeting not only the organizational success but also the personal success.

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