

The Role of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions in Conflict Management Strategies

Çatışma Yönetimi Stratejilerinde Duygusal Zekâ Boyutlarının Rolü

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Abstract

The emergence of conflicts is closely related to individual perceptions and emotions. The ability to correctly identify conflict areas and manage them effectively requires correctly understanding and comprehending people's emotions and the reasons that give rise to these emotions. This study, which includes employees of companies operating in the Kastamonu Organized Industrial Zone (Turkey), aims to examine the effects of emotional intelligence on conflict management strategies. A survey was conducted with 402 employees via emotional intelligence and conflict management scales. Correlation and multiple regression analyses were used in this study. Research findings have shown that emotional intelligence generally has a positive effect. While the dimensions of regulating emotions and using emotions positively affect competitive and avoidance-oriented strategies among conflict management strategies, evaluating others' emotions supports compromising strategies and negatively affects avoidance strategies. The only dimension that increases cooperation in conflict management is "using emotions". However, it has been revealed that focusing on one's own emotions prevents compromising strategies (behaviors). Emotional intelligence should be developed in the use of effective strategies in conflict management. Investment in the development of the emotional intelligence skills of employees by organizations and managers significantly contributes to maintaining and managing conflicts at an optimum level.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Management, Conflict Management Strategies.

Özet

Çatışmaların ortaya çıkışı bireysel algılar ve duygularla yakından ilişkilidir. Çatışma alanlarını doğru bir şekilde tespit edip etkili bir şekilde yönetebilmek, insanların duygularını ve bu duygulara yol açan nedenleri doğru bir şekilde anlamayı ve kavramayı gerektirir. Kastamonu Organize Sanayi

Bölgesi'nde (Türkiye) faaliyet gösteren şirketlerin çalışanlarını kapsayan bu çalışma, duygusal zekânın çatışma yönetimi stratejileri üzerindeki etkilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Duygusal zekâ ve çatışma yönetimi ölçekleri kullanılarak 402 çalışanla bir anket gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada kavramlararası ilişkilerin tespitinde korelasyon ve çoklu regresyon analizleri kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, duygusal zekânın genel olarak çatışma yönetimi üzerinde olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Duyguları düzenleme ve duyguları kullanma boyutları, çatışma yönetimi stratejilerinden rekabetçi ve kaçınma odaklı stratejileri olumlu yönde etkilerken, başkalarının duygularını değerlendirme boyutunun uzlaşma stratejilerini desteklediği, kaçınma stratejilerini ise olumsuz etkilediği belirlenmiştir. Çatışma yönetiminde iş birliğini artıran tek boyutun "duyguları kullanma" olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca, kişinin kendi duygularına odaklanmasının uzlaşma yönlü davranışları engellediği ortaya çıkmıştır. Çatışma yönetiminde etkili stratejilerin kullanımında duygusal zekânın geliştirilmesinin gerektiği değerlendirilmektedir. Örgütler ve yöneticiler tarafından çalışanların duygusal zekâ becerilerinin geliştirilmesine yatırım yapılmasının, çatışmaların optimum düzeyde sürdürülmesine ve yönetilmesine önemli katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygusal Zekâ, Çatışma Yönetimi, Çatışma Yönetimi Stratejileri.

1. INTRODUCTION

Current research shows that managers struggle with conflict more often than ever before, which is a significant problem. Conflict is causing more sick leave and resignations in organizations every year, which increases the costs of organizations (Vapiwala & Pandita, 2024). However, conflict is not a negative phenomenon in itself; its consequences depend on how it is managed. In this context, emotional intelligence is one of the most important factors on which conflict management strategies depend: cooperation or competition (Al-Hamdan et al., 2018; Başoğlu & Özgür, 2016; Dissanayake & Kodagoda, 2021).

Conflict is a disagreement about goals and how to achieve them. Most managers prefer to avoid conflict rather than managing it. However, constructive solutions can provide a compromise for both parties and benefit the organization (Naugler, 2024). The ability to recognise, understand and regulate emotions plays a particularly important role in whether conflicts escalate or turn into constructive solutions.

Conflict is an interaction between people who are interdependent by nature and based on the perception that something is not right or does not fit the situation (Folger et al., 2021). Inconsistencies and disagreements in the interaction between the parties pave the way for conflict (Rahim, 2023). Research shows that leaders with high emotional intelligence not only manage conflict more effectively, but also foster positive team communication, thereby improving performance (Ali et al., 2024; Olsson, 2024; Sintya et al., 2023).

Although previous research has widely acknowledged the importance of emotional intelligence in conflict management, it often overlooks the different facets of emotional intelligence that may

influence conflict resolution strategies (Dissanayake & Kodagoda, 2021; Santiago, 2024). For example, Santiago (2024) pointed out that there remain gaps in the underlying mechanisms and specific competencies of emotional intelligence, such as emotional regulation, empathy, or social skills.

Current research shows that emotional intelligence provides managers with significant advantages in resolving conflicts. However, these studies are generally based on managers' self-assessments (Schlegel et al., 2025). Studies show that self-awareness and self-regulation are found to be positively associated with empathy and social skills (Rahim et al., 2002). In addition, empathy and social skills are positively associated with problem solving strategy and negatively associated with bargaining strategy. As a result, dimensions of emotional intelligence may have relations with and effects on conflict management strategies. Pooya et al., (2013) indicates that emotional intelligence is negatively associated with problem solving and bargaining strategies and there isn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and control strategy. Since many antecedents may have an effect on conflict management styles further studies are needed to explore the influence of different factors on conflict management.

Therefore, it is of great importance for employees and managers to investigate emotional intelligence effects on conflict resolution. This study aims to fill the gaps by exploring how different dimensions of emotional intelligence affect employees' and managers' conflict management strategies, whether they are more cooperative or competitive.

The paper first provides a theoretical overview of conflict management and emotional intelligence and then analyses empirical evidence on their relationship. By examining the impact of the dimensions of emotional intelligence, this study aims to provide deeper insights into effective conflict resolution strategies in organisational settings.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Conflict Management

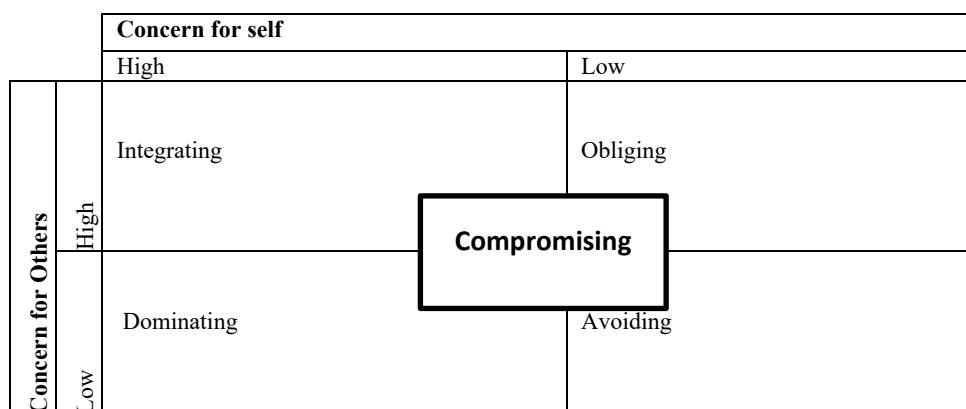
Since two or more people must be together, work in the same job, share resources, and compete in sharing scarce resources, conflicts are inevitable (Wienclaw, 2021). Causes of conflict in organizations can arise from many reasons such as status differences, differences in management styles, differences in interests, personality differences, new qualifications required by changing conditions, polarization in employee-employer relations, power struggles within the organization, functional interdependence between jobs, sharing of certain resources, differences in goals, differences in perception, uncertainty about the management area, and communication deficiencies (Koçel, 2023).

Researchers have proposed different conflict management models. According to Ruble and Thomas (1976), conflict management strategies are divided into five categories: competition, compromise, avoidance, accommodation, and collaborating. Table 1 presents these five interpersonal conflict management strategies and their explanations (Wienclaw, 2021).

Table1: Interpersonal Conflict Management Strategies (Wienclaw, 2021).

Conflict Style	Management	Motivation Self-Interest	Motivation (Opposite Party's Interest)	Explanation
1.Avoiding		Low	Low	Tendency to avoid or ignore conflict.
2.Accommodating		Low	High	Compromising one's own interests and adapting to the other party's wishes.
3.Competing		High	Low	Acting coercively to defend one's interests.
4.Compromising		Moderate	Moderate	A search for a solution that results in some concessions by both parties.
5.Collaborating		High	High	Focusing on meeting the best interests of both parties.

Rahim and Bonoma (1979), who presented a different model, determined the conflict handling and management styles of the parties within the framework of a model in their study. In their study, the researchers, based on the conceptualizations of Follett, Blake/Mouton and Thomas, distinguished the conflict-handling styles according to two basic dimensions. The first of these basic dimensions is the interest that the conflicting parties feel for their interests, and the second is the interest they feel for the concerns of the other party. The conflict management styles of the parties emerge as a result of combining these two dimensions (Rahim et al., 2002). The degree of interest that individuals feel for the interests and concerns of the parties during the conflict process is related to their emotional and cognitive perceptions and motivations. The conflict management styles that emerge within this framework are shown in Figure 1 below (Rahim and Bonoma, 1979).

**Figure 1:** Conflict management model developed by Rahim and Bonoma (Rahim and Bonoma, 1979).

According to this model, conflict management styles are determined as integrating, compromising, dominating-forcing, avoiding and compromising.

Integration is a conflict management style in which the parties prioritize mutual interests, openness and information exchange, and aim to reach an effective solution that can be accepted by both parties. This style is associated with problem-solving skills and can offer creative solutions (Sinha, 2008). In the compromising style, the individual's interest in the interests of the other party is higher than his/her interests. In this style, the individual focuses on reducing differences, increasing commonalities and satisfying the concerns of the other party, and tends to conform. In the

dominating or coercing style, the individual shows low interest in the interests of the other party and high interest in his/her interests. This style is a win-lose orientation and involves forcing behaviors to win. In the avoiding strategy, the individual's interest in both his/her own and the other party's interests is low. It is a style generally applied when the individual feels powerless in conflict and includes tendencies such as withdrawal, avoiding problematic situations, postponing problems or putting the responsibility on someone else. In the compromising style, the mutual interests of the parties are at a moderate level and both parties are inclined to give up some of their interests to achieve an acceptable result (Rahim et al., 2002; Rahim, 2023).

Conflict management can be defined as the process of reducing emotional tension, encouraging and maintaining conflict at a constructive level, and effectively handling conflict situations by enabling organization members to develop appropriate approaches to different conflict scenarios (Özduyan Kılıç and Duygulu, 2024). In other words, conflict management is: “The process of changing the severity and form of conflict to maximize the benefits of conflict and minimize its negative consequences” (Wienclaw, 2021).

Although conflict is seen as a source of inefficiency by traditional theorists, social system theories argue that conflict can provide positive change and development; however, if not managed effectively, it can lead to negative results (Muthumani and Kumar, 2023). Conflict is an inevitable part of human interaction. Conflict management and resolution are universal phenomena. Conflict management includes several procedures such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration, diplomacy and creative peacebuilding. Managing conflict does not necessarily mean preventing, reducing and ending conflict. What is important is to minimize functional disorders and improve constructive functions of conflicts (Ogele, 2022). Conflict management includes determining effective styles to minimize dysfunctional conflicts, in other words, conflicts that negatively affect organizational success, and to increase constructive functions of conflict to increase learning and effectiveness in an organization (Koçel, 2023). Resolving conflict is only a part of conflict management. Conflict management is a more comprehensive concept and also refers to a managerial skill necessary for personal and organizational success (Luthans, 2011).

Every individual has different personalities and unique ways in which they prefer how to react or interact with others. Jung, (1971) refers to the differences in behaviors result from personal inborn tendencies to use their minds in different ways. According to Luthans, (2011), emotional stability is among the basic “Big Five” personality traits. Furthermore, individuals prefer to evaluate the circumstances and make decisions based on their thinkings and feelings. If an individual high on thinking that shows his tendency to being an analytical person. On the contrary if he is high on feeling that refers to his subjective and emotional tendency. Generally perceptual errors exist behind unproductive conflict management processes. Attributing wrong causes to others’ behaviors may endanger relations in workplaces. Robbins & Judge, (2015) points out that individuals’ attitudes towards others and work are formed based on affective, cognitive and behavioral components. The emotions of individuals are among important factors shaping employees’ attitudes towards their colleagues and work environment. EI dimensions include recognizing self emotions correctly, managing disruptive impulses and moods, self-motivation towards personal and organizational goals, ability to understand others’ emotions correctly and managing

relationships with others. As a result for an effective conflict management, managers should emphasize on understanding employees' feelings those may shape their attitudes.

Conflicts are mostly associated with negative emotions. Emotions may be felt and expressed differently in different cultures. Because the way of displaying emotional responses is affected by culture due to unique interpretation and appraisal mechanisms accepted in different societies (Kamil Kazan, 1997). Different behavioral modes and coercive mechanisms are available in each social and organizational cultural environment (Mesquite & Frijda, 1992). For reasons originating from different cultures, the way emotions are displayed may have unique effects on conflict management strategies that can be implemented in organizations.

Also the organizational structures may influence conflict management styles. Warren, (2005) indicates that in hierarchical organizations the managers have a tendency to choose dominating style in conflict management due to their status power. Instead in congregational leadership structures the style of avoiding is mostly preferred in conflict management. Starting from 1970s matrix structure has emerged and gained attention as a response to solve problems with increasing complex and dynamic business issues. Sy & Côté, (2004) points out that in matrix structures misaligned goals may increase competition among employees and silo-focused employees do not cooperate. These challenges may cause more conflicts in matrix organizations. The researchers propose that efficient application of emotional intelligence components in matrix organizations may create solutions for interpersonal challenges.

2.2. Emotional Intelligence (EI)

EI can be accepted as a mixture of ability, personality and behavior. Salovey and Mayer were among the first to use EI term and defined it as "the ability to monitor one's own feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Kerr et al., 2006). As conflicts are emotionally charged human interactions, a conflict case may have an increased possibility of being resolved successfully by managing emotions effectively (Jordan & Troth, 2004). EI might help conflicting parties to readress conflict which promotes clarifying the real problem objectively (Johnson & Johnson, 2000). Positive moods may lead individuals towards more constructive conflict management (Chen et al., 2019).

According to the theoretical model developed by Mayer & Salovey, (1997) emotional intelligence is explained as a progressional model of intelligence. EI indicates the importance of individual competences of perceiving and expressing the emotions, integrating the emotion with knowledge and concepts, understanding, analyzing and controlling the emotions. Individuals with high EI levels have competency at using the knowledge obtained by feelings and managing those feelings and behaviors effectively (Atak, 2016).

Emotions are one of the most important elements of personality and greatly affect people's general well-being, playing an important role in decision-making processes. Emotions shape individuals' attitudes and behaviors positively, making it easier for them to achieve their goals (Amponsah et al., 2024). Managing emotions is as important as emotions. Goleman has made important contributions to this subject. According to Goleman (2000), the concept of emotional intelligence is the ability to effectively manage ourselves and our relationships. The discipline of emotional intelligence is located in different fields such as positive psychology, neuroscience and

organizational leadership (Haber-Curran, 2024). Research shows that emotional intelligence has different effects on life than IQ. Emotional intelligence includes the ability to understand, manage and use emotions and is directly related to emotional and interpersonal areas such as life satisfaction, stress management and social relationships. IQ is associated with logical reasoning, problem-solving and abstract thinking skills and plays a more prominent role in academic success and technical work (Gannon & Ranzijn, 2005).

According to Goleman's (2004) hybrid model, emotional intelligence consists of five basic dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Haber-Curran, 2024). These five dimensions and their explanations are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Dimensions, Definitions, and Characteristics of Emotional Intelligence (Haber-Curran, 2024).

Dimension	Self-awareness	Self-regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social skills
Definition	Ability to recognize and understand personal emotions, moods, and drives; and their impact on others	Ability to manage or redirect disruptive impulses and moods; think before acting	Passion for achievement beyond monetary rewards; persistent pursuit of goals	Ability to understand others' emotions and use that understanding to respond accordingly	Ability to manage relationships, build networks, and find common ground with others
Main characteristics	1. Self-confidence 2. Accurate self-assessment 3. Realistic understanding of strengths and weaknesses	1. Trustworthiness and integrity 2. Adaptability to change 3. Comfort with uncertainty	1. Strong drive for success 2. Optimism even when things are challenging 3. Commitment to organizational goals	1. Ability to develop others 2. Cross-cultural sensitivity Service-oriented mindset	1. Proficiency in building relationships and leading teams 2. Persuasiveness Effectiveness in driving change

People with high emotional intelligence can keep their emotions and reactions under control in negative situations, are aware of their shortcomings, are open to criticism, and are development-oriented (Özdemir & Özdemir, 2007). Research shows that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to be healthier, more resilient, and more successful both emotionally and socially. For example, it has been proven that individuals with high emotional intelligence generally have deeper insights (Wang, 2024). It has been determined that individuals with high emotional intelligence experience less loss of self-esteem and less decline in positive mood after negative state induction with the Velten method, and that there is a significant increase in positive mood after positive state induction, while there is no increase in self-esteem (Schutte et al., 2002). Emotional intelligence has a significant effect on work efficiency. In particular, self-confidence plays an important role in this effect. In addition, individuals who can manage themselves well and work honestly achieve more successful work results. For this reason, in organizations' search for new employees, competencies such as high social skills, leadership, communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork are prioritized (Tischler et al., 2002).

About the relationship between emotional intelligence and work efficiency and intercultural competence it was found that organizations accepting volunteers need strategies to develop emotional intelligence to increase the work efficiency of volunteers and improve the quality of their interactions (Vinickyte et al., 2020). Thus, the development of emotional intelligence can be achieved in interactions with foreign cultures and their productivity can be increased. Ain et al.

(2023), using the conservation of resources (COR) theory and social information processing (SIP) theory of emotional intelligence, determined that emotional intelligence weakens the relationship between information hiding and emotional exhaustion. In another study, it was determined that individuals with high emotional intelligence can be more resilient to negative effects by using their emotional capacities even in negative environments such as toxic leadership and can cope in a healthier way (Lopes & Soares, 2024). Therefore, it has been determined that individuals with high emotional intelligence are less sensitive to the negative effects of information hiding and that this can mitigate the decline in job performance. In short, according to many studies, individuals with high emotional intelligence have advantages in many areas such as emotional awareness, coping with stress, and success in social interactions, and these characteristics have been shown to positively affect their general life satisfaction and job performance.

Emotional intelligence also plays an important role in conflict management. Individuals with high emotional intelligence can manage conflict situations more effectively because of their emotional awareness and empathy skills, thus achieving healthier, more permanent and successful results in both their personal and professional relationships. In organizational conflicts, emotions are automatically activated. Emotional intelligence shapes behaviors within the organization and has great potential as a critical competency that contributes to the effective management of these behaviors. Emotional intelligence contributes to the creation of a healthier and more productive work environment both at individual and team levels (Winardi et al., 2021). Individuals with high emotional intelligence skills tend to prefer integration or compromise among conflict management strategies (Lee, 2003). Failure to adequately meet the needs of employees reduces their motivation and negatively affects their job performance (Alper Ay, 2024). The EI self-control dimension has a positive relationship with other dimensions of emotional intelligence namely empathy and social skills and those dimensions positively affect motivation (Rahim, 2023). Individuals who are highly skilled in managing their own emotions in teams are more likely to cooperate, and teams consisting of individuals with this characteristic have higher performance (Jordan & Troth, 2004). Emotional intelligence (EI) and emotional intelligence-based leadership (EIL) and their competencies are directly related to skills considered critical for peace leadership and include competencies such as self-awareness, adaptability, personal motivation, and reliability. Peace leadership draws attention to the importance of interpersonal skills that support strong relationships and the ability to work harmoniously and efficiently with others (Haber-Curran, 2024).

Emotional intelligence is important for conflict resolution and sustainable peace (Ari, 2024). Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior. All successful organizations need organizational citizens who help their colleagues, volunteer for additional tasks and overtime, do not complain about small issues, act according to the culture of the organization and the spirit of the team they work with, and avoid harmful conflicts (Alper Ay, 2018). For managers who have difficulty in conflict management, qualities such as being able to provide constructive conflict solutions and being calm and composed become even more important, which makes it inevitable for managers with managerial potential to have high emotional intelligence (Vapiwala & Pandita, 2024).

3. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

The main question of the research was determined as "Is there an effect of emotional intelligence on the conflict management behaviors of people working in industrial enterprises?" In this context, the main hypothesis is "H1: The emotional intelligence of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their conflict management behaviors." The research model was presented at Figure 2 below.

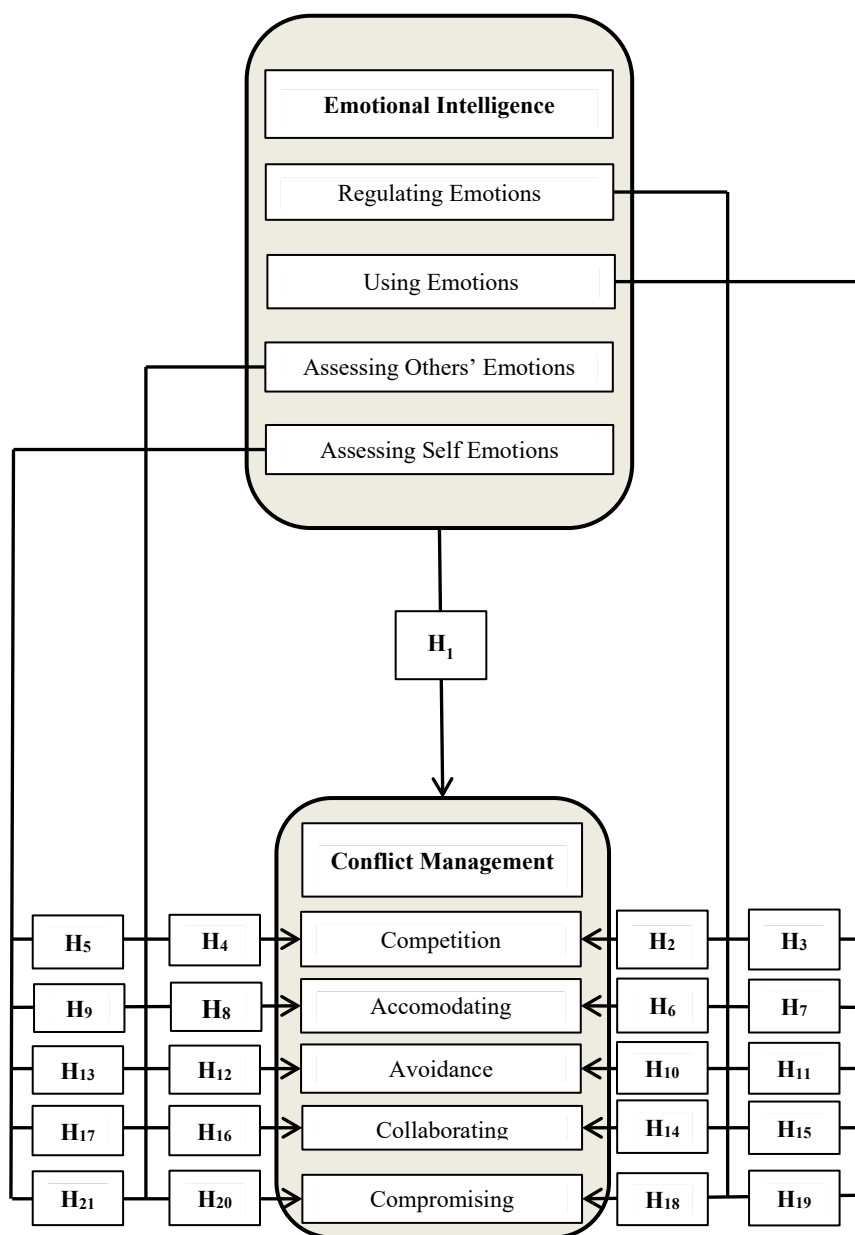


Figure 2. Research Model

As seen in Figure 2, a total of 21 hypotheses were determined according to the positive effects of emotional intelligence dimensions (Regulating Emotions, Using Emotions, Evaluating Others' Emotions, Evaluating Own Emotions) on competition, accomodating, avoidance, collaborating and compromising dimensions of conflict management, and the research model showing a total of 21 hypotheses was created. The hypotheses of the research are as follows:

- H1: The emotional intelligence of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their conflict management behaviors.
- H2: The level of emotional regulation of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards competition.
- H3: The level of emotional use of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards competition.
- H4: The level of evaluation of others' emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors toward competition.
- H5: The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their competitive behaviors.
- H6: The level of emotion regulation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accomodative behaviors.
- H7: The level of emotional use of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accomodative behaviors.
- H8: The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accomodative behaviors.
- H9: The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accomodative behaviors.
- H10: The level of emotion regulation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.
- H11: The level of emotional use of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.
- H12: The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.
- H13: The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.
- H14: The level of emotion regulation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their compromising-oriented behaviors.
- H15: The level of emotional use of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their compromising-oriented behaviors.

- H16: The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their compromising-oriented behaviors.
- H17: The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their compromising-oriented behaviors.
- H18: The level of emotional regulation of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards collaborating.
- H19: The level of emotional use of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards collaborating.
- H20: The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards collaborating.
- H21: The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards collaborating.

4. METHODOLOGY

Purpose: This study aims to examine the effects of emotional intelligence on conflict management strategies.

The sample and the universe of the research: This research was conducted on employees of various businesses operating in the organized industrial zone (OIZ] of Kastamonu province in Turkey. The businesses that constitute the universe of the research operate in the wood industry (wood), food, iron and steel, automotive, construction, aluminum and textile sectors. It was determined that the total number of employees during the period the research was conducted was 2335. Data were collected from participants determined by the convenience sampling method through face-to-face surveys. Convenience sampling method is an effective data collection process from a research population easily reachable to the researcher (Rahi, 2017). Although this method can be criticized for selection bias, in this research surveys were disseminated all employees by participating companies' human resource departments and the individual participation was voluntary. The sociodemographic characteristics of the sample can be seen at Table 4 in Findings section.

A total of 402 participants provided data through the survey and constituted the sample of the research. It was calculated that this number statistically represents the universe (Sekaran, 2003). Before the research, permission was obtained from the Karabük University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee (dated 19.06.2023 and decision no: 2023/05), and before the surveys were distributed, companies' management was informed and their consents were obtained through related human resource managements.

Instruments and Data Analysis: This study is a quantitative research. The relational screening model is used in this research. Relational screening model reveals what kind of a cause-effect relationship there is between the variables examined in the research (Kırcaali-İftar, 1999). Data were collected using a three-part survey. In the first part of the survey, 5 questions (gender, age, education, job title and experience) were used to verify descriptive statistics. The second part includes the Emotional Intelligence Scale. Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS-Wong and Law

Emotional Intelligence Scale) was developed by Wong and Law (2002). This scale was translated into Turkish and used by Hırlak et al., (2017). The scale consists of 4 dimensions and a total of 16 items. Hırlak et al., (2017) determined the reliability value of the scale as 0,919 in their research. The survey used a 5-point Likert scale in this research. The subdimensions were "assessing one's own emotions, assessing others' emotions, using emotions and regulating emotions" respectively (Hırlak et al., 2017).

The Conflict Management Scale in the third section consists of 5 subdimensions as competition, compromising, avoidance, accommodating and collaborating. The scale was developed by Ruble and Thomas (1976) and translated into Turkish and used by Sökmen and Yazıcıoğlu (2005). The reliability value of the scale was determined as 0,78 in above mentioned research. The items were administered by using 5-point Likert scale for assessing conflict management scores.

In analysis, after verifying descriptive characteristics, arithmetic means were examined to decide on the emotional intelligence levels and conflict management behaviors of industrial enterprise employees. Then Pearson Correlation test was performed to examine analyze the the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management behaviors. In the last stage regression analysis was performed to determine the impact of emotional intelligence on conflict management strategies.

The results of EFA for both emotional intelligence and conflict management scales were shared in Table 2. below.

Table 3. EFA Results for Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management Scales

	Emotional Intelligence Scale	Conflict Management Scale
Total Variance	81,798	87,745
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)	0,862	0,804
Bartlett's Sphericity Test	X ² =5763,361, p=0,000	X ² =5406,197, p=0,000
α	0,841	0,964

As can be seen in Table 3 above, the analyses determined that both the emotional intelligence scale and the conflict management scale were valid (Total Variance \geq 0,55, and reliable ($\alpha\geq$ 0,70) [67] Kalaycı, 2010]. The study's data were evaluated using descriptive statistical analyses, Pearson Correlation linear analyses, and multiple regression analyses, which were performed using the SPSS 22 statistical package program.

5. FINDINGS

Descriptive information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants is given in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Information About People Working in Industrial Enterprises

Variables	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	138	34,3
	Male	264	65,7
Age	20-30 Years	143	35,6

	31-40 Years	154	38,3
	41-50 Years	85	21,1
	Over 50 Years	20	5,0
Educational Status	Primary School	56	13,9
	Secondary School	72	17,9
	High School	213	53,0
	University	55	13,7
	Postgraduate	6	1,5
Position	Manager	7	1,7
	Middle Manager	12	3,0
	Technical Staff	13	3,2
	Worker	345	85,8
	Other	25	6,2

According to demographic characteristics, 65.7% of the participants were male, aged 31-40, 38.3% were between the ages of 31-40, 53% were high school graduates, and 85.8% were workers. It was also determined that the majority of the employees had a working period of less than 5 years and 5-10 years. Below Table 5 shows the reliability scores for the scales.

Table 5: Reliabilities of Scales and Participants' Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Conflict Scores

Variables	α	\bar{X}	SD	Min.	Max.
Regulating Emotions	0,966	3,653	1,301	1,00	5,00
Using Emotions	0,955	3,513	1,427	1,00	5,00
Assessing Others' Emotions	0,922	4,434	0,723	1,00	5,00
Assessing Own Emotions	0,826	3,681	0,936	1,00	5,00
Emotional Intelligence Total	0,841	3,820	0,674	1,69	5,00
Competition	0,966	3,648	1,327	1,00	5,00
Accommodating	0,929	2,447	1,342	1,00	5,00
Avoidance	0,933	2,260	1,413	1,00	5,00
Collaborating	0,910	3,577	1,380	1,00	5,00
Compromising	0,897	3,317	1,218	1,00	5,00
Conflict Management Total	0,964	3,050	0,622	1,33	4,53

When the scores related to the scales are examined in Table 5, the total mean of the emotional intelligence scale was determined as (\bar{X} =3.82). The scores that the participants received from the scale dimensions were determined as being able to regulate their emotions (\bar{X} =3.65), being able to use their emotions (\bar{X} =3.51), being able to evaluate others' emotions (\bar{X} =4.43) and being able to evaluate their own emotions (\bar{X} =3.68), respectively. The total score of the conflict management scale (\bar{X} =3.05) was determined as medium level. The conflict management dimension scores were determined as competing (\bar{X} =3.64), collaborating (\bar{X} =3.57), compromising (\bar{X} =3.31), avoiding conflict (\bar{X} =2.26) and accommodating (\bar{X} =2.44). In addition, it was determined that the reliability values of the emotional intelligence scale and conflict management scales used in the study were

quite high ($p>0.7$). Accordingly, it was determined that the participants had higher levels of being able to evaluate others' emotions and being able to evaluate their own emotions in terms of emotional intelligence dimensions. It was determined that the participants preferred competing, collaborating, and compromising more in terms of conflict management strategies.

Table 6 shows the Pearson correlation analysis findings to determine the relationships between emotional intelligence and conflict management.

Table 6. Correlations Between Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management

Pearson Correlation	Emotional Intelligence	Regulating Emotions	Using Emotions	Assessing Others' Emotions	Assessing Your Own Emotions
Conflict Management	0,633**	0,663**	0,592**	-0,145**	0,113*
Competition	0,762**	0,982**	0,449**	-0,025	0,166**
Accommodation	-0,021	0,036	-0,069	-0,024	0,012
Avoidance	0,077	0,158**	0,117*	-0,282**	0,041
Collaboration	0,726**	0,424**	0,931**	-0,089	0,153**
Compromising	-0,100*	-0,081	-0,091	0,113*	-0,125*

** $p<0,01$; * $p<0,05$

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When the Pearson correlation analysis findings in Table 6 are examined, it was determined that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management ($r= 0.633$, $p<0.01$). The competition and collaboration dimensions show a positive and strong relationship with emotional intelligence while compromising has a negative relationship with emotional intelligence. Regulating emotions and using emotions dimensions have significant and positive relationship with conflict management. The highest significant and positive correlation was found between regulating emotions and competitive conflict management behavior.

Simple and multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine the effect of emotional intelligence on conflict management. The following tables show the effects of emotional intelligence dimensions on the competition, accomodating, avoidance, collaborating and compromising dimensions of conflict management, respectively.

Table 7. Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Conflict Management

Variables	B	S.H	β	t	P
Constant	0,819	0,138		5,918	0,000*
Emotional Intelligence	0,584	0,036	0,633	16,373	0,000*
R=0,633	R²=0,401	Adj. R²=0,400	F=268,060; $p<0,01$		

* $p<0,01$

According to the analysis results; emotional intelligence has a significant effect with 40% impact power in determining conflict management strategies ($R^2=0,401$, $p<0,01$). The results of the

multiple regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of emotional intelligence sub-dimensions on competition, which is one of the dimensions of conflict management, are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Effect of Sub-dimensions of Emotional Intelligence on Competition Dimension

Variables	B	S.H	B	t	p
Constant	1,005	0,098		2,046	0,003*
Regulating Emotions	0,990	0,011	0,971	92,942	0,000*
Using Emotions	0,023	0,010	0,025	2,392	0,017*
Assessing Others' Emotions	-0,015	0,017	-0,008	-0,860	0,390
Assessing Own Emotions	0,002	0,013	0,002	0,180	0,857
R=0,983	R²=0,965	Adj. R²=0,965	F=2768,352; p<0,01		

*p<0,01

According to Table 8, the dimensions of emotional intelligence, regulating and using emotions, have a significant and strong effect on the competitive dimension of conflict management ($R^2=0.965$, $p<0.01$). The results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of the emotional intelligence sub-dimensions on the accomodating sub-dimension of conflict management are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Effect of Sub-dimensions of Emotional Intelligence on Accomodating Dimension

Variables	B	S.E	β	t	p
Constant	2,731	0,528		5,167	0,000*
Regulating Emotions	0,084	0,058	0,082	1,465	0,144
Using Emotions	-0,105	0,053	-0,111	-1,985	0,048*
Assessing Others' Emotions	-0,069	0,093	-0,037	-0,740	0,460
Assessing Own Emotions	0,023	0,073	0,016	0,311	0,756
R=0,108	R²=0,012	Adj. R²=0,002	F=1,180; p<0,05		

*p<0,01, **p<0,05.

According to Table 9, the dimension of emotional intelligence, “using emotions”, has a low-level significant effect on the accomodating dimension of conflict management ($R^2=0.012$, $p<0.05$). The results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of the emotional intelligence sub-dimensions on the avoidance sub-dimension of conflict management are given in Table 10.

Table 10. Effects of Sub-dimensions of Emotional Intelligence on Avoidance Dimension

Variables	B	S.E	B	T	p
Constant	3,943	0,530		7,441	0,000*
Regulating Emotions	0,157	0,058	0,144	2,711	0,007*
Using Emotions	0,017	0,053	0,017	0,321	0,748
Assessing Others' Emotions	-0,544	0,094	-0,279	-5,810	0,000*
Assessing Own Emotions	0,027	0,073	0,018	0,371	0,711

R =0,323	R ² =0,104	Adj. R ² =0,095	F =11,547; p<0,01
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*p<0,01

According to Table 10, the sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence, 'regulating emotions' and 'evaluating others' emotions', have a significant effect on the avoidance dimension of conflict management ($R^2=0.104$, $p<0.01$). The results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of the emotional intelligence sub-dimensions on collaborating, which is a sub-dimension of conflict management, are given in Table 11.

Table 11. Effect of sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence on collaborating dimension

Variables	B	S.E	β	t	p
Constant	1,090	0,198		1,452	0,005*
Regulating Emotions	0,022	0,022	0,021	1,039	0,299
Using Emotions	0,893	0,020	0,923	45,027	0,000*
Assessing Others' Emotions	0,048	0,035	0,025	1,371	0,171
Assessing Own Emotions	0,015	0,027	0,010	0,549	0,583
R =0,932	R ² =0,868	Adj. R ² =0,867	F =653,181; p<0,01		

*p<0,01

According to Table 11, the 'using emotions' sub-dimension of emotional intelligence has a significant effect on the collaborating dimension of conflict management ($R^2=0.868$, $p<0.01$). The results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of the emotional intelligence sub-dimensions on the compromise dimension of conflict management are given in Table 12.

Table 12. The Effect of the Sub-Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence on the Compromising Dimension

Variables	B	S.E	β	t	p
Constant	3,320	0,474		7,004	0,000*
Regulating Emotions	-0,040	0,052	-0,043	-0,773	0,440
Using Emotions	-0,036	0,047	-0,042	-0,756	0,450
Assessing Others' Emotions	0,183	0,084	0,109	2,182	0,030*
Assessing Own Emotions	-0,147	0,065	-0,113	-2,254	0,025*
R =0,184	R ² =0,034	Adj. R ² =0,024	F =3,467; p<0,05		

*p<0,05

According to the regression analysis results in Table 12, it was determined that the sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence, 'evaluating others' emotions' and 'evaluating one's own emotions', had a significant effect on compromise behavior ($R^2=0.184$, $p<0.01$).

The acceptance or rejection status of the overall research hypotheses is shown collectively in the Table 13. below.

Table 13. Research Hypotheses Test Results

No	Hypotheses	Results
H1	The emotional intelligence of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their conflict management behaviors.	Accepted (Lee,2003)
H2	The level of emotional regulation of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards competition.	Accepted (Al-Hamdan et al. 2018)
H3	The level of emotional use of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards competition.	Accepted (Al-Hamdan et al. 2018)
H4	The level of evaluation of others' emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors toward competition.	Rejected
H5	The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their competitive behaviors.	Rejected
H6	The level of regulation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accommodating oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H7	The level of emotional use of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accommodating oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H8	The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accommodating oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H9	The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their accommodating oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H10	The level of emotion regulation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.	Accepted (Chen et al. ,2019)
H11	The level of emotional use of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H12	The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.	Accepted (Shamoradi et al., 2014)
H13	The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their avoidance-oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H14	The level of emotion regulation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their collaborating-oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H15	The level of emotional use of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their collaborating-oriented behaviors.	Accepted (Jordan & Troth, 2004)
H16	The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their collaborating-oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H17	The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their collaborating-oriented behaviors.	Rejected
H18	The level of emotional regulation of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards compromising.	Rejected
H19	The level of emotional use of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards compromising.	Rejected
H20	The level of emotional evaluation of others of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards compromising.	Accepted (Turgut, 2023)
H21	The level of self-evaluation of emotions of employees in industrial enterprises positively affects their behaviors towards compromising.	Accepted (Chen et al. ,2019)

6. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to determine how employees in industrial enterprises with heavy working conditions exhibit strategies to manage conflict and what role their emotional intelligence plays in this process. In this context, the effect of emotional intelligence on behaviors related to conflict management was investigated. According to descriptive statistics participants were mostly male (%65,7), between 31-40 years old (%38,3), high school graduates (%53) and I worker position (%85,8). The managers' rate was % 4,7.

The mean of the scales show that participants mostly prefer to use competition (3,64), collaborating (3,57) and compromising (3,31) styles as conflict management strategies respectively. Also they seem mostly capable on all dimensions of emotional intelligence dimensions namely assessing others' emotions (4,43), assessing own emotions (3,68), regulating emotions (3,65) and using emotions (3,51).

Correlation analysis reveals that there is a significant and positive relation between emotional intelligence and conflict management (0,633). "Regulating emotions" and using emotions" dimensions also have significant and positive relationship with conflict management (0,663 and 0,592 respectively). In addition, "competition" and "collaboration" dimensions have significant and positive relations with emotional intelligence (0,762 and 0,726 respectively). The highest correlation values were found between "regulating emotions" and "competition" dimensions (0,982) and "using emotions" and "collaboration" dimensions (0,931). Significant and negative correlations were found between:

Emotional intelligence and "accommodation-compromising" dimensions.

Conflict management and "assessing others' emotions",

"Regulating emotions" and "compromising" dimensions,

"Assessing others' emotions" and "avoidance" dimensions,

"Assessing own emotions" and "compromising" dimensions.

The regression analysis reveals the facts below:

Emotional intelligence positively affects conflict management ($R^2=0,40$, $p=0,000$).

The "competition" dimension was affected by "regulating emotions" and "using emotions" dimensions of emotional intelligence.

The "accommodating" dimension was significantly affected by only "using emotions" dimension of emotional intelligence.

The "avoidance" dimension was significantly affected by "regulating emotions" and "assessing others' emotions" dimensions of emotional intelligence.

The "collaborating" dimension was significantly affected by only "using emotions" dimension of emotional intelligence.

The "compromising" dimension was significantly affected by "assessing others' emotions" and "assessing own emotions" dimensions of emotional intelligence.

The findings showed that emotional intelligence has a positive relation and significant effect on conflict management. Choosing the competition style in conflict management was found to be affected by regulating and using emotions dimensions. This mechanism can be explained by gaining better position in a conflict through the effective use of information gathered by "using emotions" ability in conflict management process. An individual can focus better on his own interests by acting more controlled and rationally rather than showing impulsive and instantaneous behavioral responses due to strong emotions.

The best solution in any conflict can be achieved through collaborating style which enables conflicting parties can focus their interests highly at the same time. Research shows that choosing this style was affected by “using emotions” dimension effectively. The ability to use the emotions includes perceiving own and others’ emotions appropriately and dealing with them. Learning from this process can help individuals managing relationships and continue to self motivation. This type of attitudes may produce win-win solutions for both conflicting parties.

The study findings support current research. In their research covering construction sector employees, Lawani et al. (2024) found a strong positive correlation between emotional intelligence leadership and “cooperation and compromise” style scores. Evans (2024), in his research examining negotiations conducted on international commercial disputes and conflicts, determined that negotiators with high emotional intelligence can build trust in their interlocutors, encourage cooperation and create a positive discussion environment thanks to these abilities. Those with emotional intelligence can engage in more successful interactions by actively listening to their interlocutors and clearly expressing their positions. In a study conducted on administrative staff at a university in Albania, it was determined that employees mostly preferred to apply “accommodation, avoidance and compromise” styles in conflict management and that emotional intelligence had a significant effect on conflict resolution styles (Shkëmbi & Treska, 2024). It was found that there was a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles (especially the integrative style) and innovation performance. Additionally, it has been determined that employees with high emotional intelligence can increase innovation performance by managing conflicts more effectively (Zhang et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

As a result, emotional intelligence has a positive effect on conflict resolution and management. It has been determined that emotional intelligence affects all conflict management strategies. However, it has been determined that its effect is stronger, especially in competition and cooperation strategies. The emergence of conflicts is closely related to individual perceptions and emotions. Being able to correctly determine conflict areas and manage them effectively requires correctly understanding and comprehending people's emotions and the reasons that cause these emotions to emerge. Research findings have shown that emotional intelligence generally has a positive effect. Among conflict management strategies, the dimensions of regulating emotions and using emotions positively affect competitive and avoidance-oriented strategies, while evaluating others' emotions supports compromise strategies and negatively affects avoidance strategies. The only dimension that increases cooperation in conflict management is "using emotions". However, it has been revealed that focusing on one's own emotions prevents compromising strategies. Investing in the development of employees' emotional intelligence skills by organizations and managers makes a significant contribution to keeping conflicts at an optimum level and managing them.

In conflict management, avoidance should not be preferred because it means ignoring or postponing the problems. Similarly, always showing a competitive style by focusing only on self emotions and interests is also harmful because it may result as ignoring the rights and interests of the other party. Emotions are important elements that affect individuals' thoughts and behaviors. An individual's ability to correctly understand and interpret his own and others's emotions allows

him to comprehend events and conflicts holistically. The results of the research contribute to a more comprehensive examination of managers' perspectives on conflict management.

There is no single and best way to resolve conflict. Solutions may vary to suit the needs of a particular situation. Therefore, effective conflict management often varies depending on the situation. In this regard, managers should know different options to solve problems (Wienclaw, 2021). Healthy social interactions can create a positive environment among employees and improve psychological health (Parent-Lamarch and Saade, 2024). Emotional intelligence enables employees to not only manage their individual emotional experiences but also to transform conflicts in the workplace into constructive outcomes. In this way, social participation supports organizational learning environment (.

This research has important implications both theoretically and practically. First, it provides new empirical evidence on the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies. The research provides evidence that employees with emotional intelligence are more effective in managing and resolving conflicts. Training and development of employees and managers to understand their own and others' emotions and to increase their emotional intelligence competencies and conflict management strategies will contribute to constructive conflicts and an effective, productive and peaceful work environment. Developing such training for organizational managers and HR management can make significant contributions to the organization.

This study was conducted on employees in industrial enterprises with heavy working conditions. This study investigated the effects of emotional intelligence and its dimensions on different conflict management strategies. Future research can contribute to the knowledge in this area by examining conflict management in depth in various contexts across different cultures and organizations.

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