

Impact of Conflict Management Styles on Employee Motivation and Organization Performance of Banking Industry of Bahawalpur in Digital Era

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Abstract

This study intends to examine the impact of conflict management styles on the employee motivation and performance of banking organizations in Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The study collected primary data using convenience sampling technique from 385 employees working under managers or supervisors in the banking sector of Bahawalpur. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the data and test the relationships among the variables. The results of the study indicate that integrating style of conflict management has insignificant impact on organization performance but positively influences the employee motivation. The accommodating and avoiding conflict management styles have a significant positive impact on the employee motivation and the performance of banking organizations in Bahawalpur. However, forcing conflict management style has an insignificant impact on employee motivation and organizational performance. Additionally, employee motivation is positively related to organizational performance. These findings suggest that organizations can improve their performance by using avoiding and accommodating conflict management styles and by enhancing employee motivation. The study provides valuable insights for banking organizations in Bahawalpur, Pakistan, and can also be useful for organizations in other industries and locations. The findings highlight the importance of effective conflict management and employee motivation in achieving organizational success.

Keywords: Conflict Management Styles, Employee Motivation, Organization Performance, Bahawalpur.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Chaudhry et al. (2022), conflict refers to a disagreement or struggle between two or more individuals or groups who have incompatible goals, interests, values, or beliefs. Conflict management is the process of addressing and resolving conflicts in a constructive manner. Effective conflict management involves identifying the sources of the conflict, understanding the perspectives and needs of all parties involved, and working to find mutually beneficial solutions that address everyone's concerns (Andreoni & Chang, 2019). The goal of conflict management is not necessarily to eliminate all disagreements, but rather to find ways to manage them in a constructive and positive manner that maintains relationships, promotes understanding, and leads to improved outcomes for all involved (Winardi et al., 2022).

When conflicts are not effectively managed, they can lead to reduced productivity, increased turnover, and decreased job satisfaction among employees. On the other hand, when conflicts are managed effectively,

they can stimulate creativity, promote innovation, and lead to better decision-making (Oyewobi et al., 2019). Effective conflict management can also contribute to a positive organizational culture that values open communication, collaboration, and constructive problem-solving. This can lead to increased employee engagement, improved teamwork, and better overall organizational performance (Khattak et al., 2021). While effective conflict management can have a positive impact on the banking industry, there are also several issues that can arise when conflict is not managed effectively (Saeed et al., 2014). It is important for banks to have effective conflict management policies and procedures in place to avoid these issues and promote a positive work environment. The banking industry in Pakistan, like any other industry, can face conflicts and disputes (Imtiaz & Kim, 2019). Conflict management is an essential aspect of any organization, and the banking industry is no exception. Effective conflict management is crucial for ensuring the smooth functioning of banks and promoting customer trust and loyalty (Akhtar et al., 2020). The adoption of conflict management

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styles can help build trust and promote customer loyalty, leading to better outcomes for the bank. According to Aqqad et al. (2019), when banks face conflict problems, it can negatively impact their performance in several ways. Conflict can lead to a breakdown in communication, mistrust, decreased productivity, increased turnover, and damage to the bank's reputation. For example, if customers are dissatisfied with the bank's services or feel that their complaints are not being adequately addressed, they may take their business elsewhere, leading to a loss of revenue for the bank. Similarly, if there is conflict between employees, it can lead to decreased productivity and increased turnover, as employees may become demotivated or choose to leave the organization altogether. Therefore, it is essential for banks to effectively manage conflicts when they arise. This can involve establishing a structured conflict resolution process and by adopting conflict management styles (Parayitam et al., 2021). The purpose of this study is to find the impact of different conflict management styles (integrating, accommodating, avoiding, forcing) on employee motivation and banks performance in Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conflict can arise in various settings, such as personal relationships, organizations, communities, and nations (Giao et al., 2020). Conflict management involves identifying the root causes of the conflict, understanding the needs and interests of all parties involved, and finding a mutually acceptable solution. Effective conflict management can lead to better relationships, improved productivity, and positive outcomes for all parties involved. (Ye et al., 2019). Effective conflict management is essential for the success of banks. Conflict in the banking industry can lead to a breakdown in communication, mistrust, decreased productivity, increased turnover, and damage to the bank's reputation. All these factors can negatively impact the bank's performance in several ways, including loss of revenue, decreased productivity, reputation damage, and increased risk (Hussein et al., 2022). On the other hand, effective conflict management can have a positive impact on bank performance. Banks that are able to manage conflicts effectively can benefit from improved customer satisfaction, increased employee engagement, reputation enhancement, and

risk mitigation (Berber et al., 2020). This study will investigate the impact of conflict management styles (integrating, accommodating, avoiding, forcing) on employee motivation and banks performance with in Bahawalpur region, Pakistan.

2.1 Theoretical foundation of the study

Theoretical foundation of conflict management styles on banks performance can be approached from different theoretical perspectives. One of the primary theories that can be used to understand this relationship is the contingency theory (Fiedler, 1964). Contingency theory posits that there is no one best way to manage conflicts, and the effectiveness of different conflict management styles depends on the context in which they are used. In the case of conflict management in banks, the context includes the size of the bank, the nature of the conflict, the culture of the organization, and the external environment. Therefore, the effectiveness of different conflict management styles will depend on these contextual factors. The choice of conflict management style depends on the nature of the conflict and the goals of the bank. However, regardless of the style used, effective conflict management can lead to a positive impact on the bank's performance. Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI): The TKI theory proposes five conflict management styles, including competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. The theory suggests that individuals tend to use a particular style in response to conflict based on their personality and situational factors (Thomas & Kilmann, 2012). The study used the Rahim's model for the conflict management. The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) is a tool used to measure individual conflict management styles in organizational settings (Rahim, 1983). The ROCI-II is widely used in research and has been validated in various cultural settings. The inventory has been found to be reliable and valid in measuring conflict management styles in organizational settings. The study employed the four management styles (integrating, accommodating, avoiding, forcing) as independent variables to investigate their impact on employee motivation and banks performance. The study also tested the influence of employee motivation on banks performance. Fig 1 displays the proposed research model.

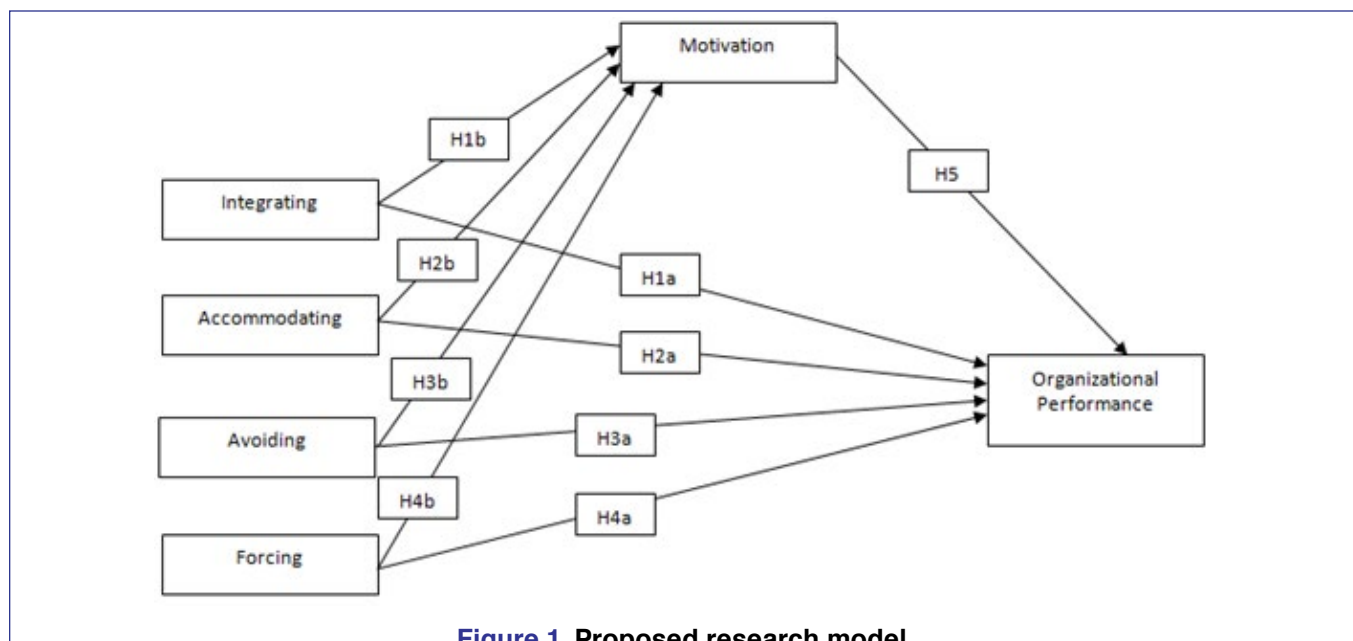


Figure 1. Proposed research model

2.2 Integrating

The integrating style of conflict management is a collaborative approach where both parties work together to find a mutually beneficial solution to their conflict (Alam, 2021). When it comes to the banking industry, the integrating style of conflict management can have a significant impact on performance. By using this approach, banks can avoid costly legal battles and negative publicity that can damage their reputation (Aqqad et al., 2019). There are some ways in which the integrating style of conflict management can positively impact banks' performance including improving customer relations, reducing employee turnover, avoiding legal costs, and enhancing organizational culture (Islam & Rimi, 2017). This hypothesis suggests that using the integrating conflict management style can lead to a range of benefits that ultimately improve the bank's overall performance. By working collaboratively to find mutually beneficial solutions, banks can avoid negative consequences such as customer dissatisfaction, employee turnover, and legal costs. Instead, they can foster a positive work environment that promotes teamwork, productivity, and a strong organizational culture. The integrating conflict management style can have a positive impact on employee motivation in several ways. This style emphasizes collaboration and mutual problem-solving, which may result in a happier workplace and more job satisfaction. Also, staff members are more likely to be inspired to work harder if they feel their issues are acknowledged and valued (Noermijati et al., 2019). Therefore, the following hypothesis are proposed.

H1a: *There is a significant impact of integrating style on organizational performance*

H1b: *There is a significant impact of integrating style on employee motivation*

2.3 Accommodating

Accommodating conflict management style is a cooperative and conciliatory approach to conflict resolution in which one party willingly gives up their own interests or positions in order to satisfy the interests or positions of the other party involved in the conflict (Khan et al., 2015). The accommodating conflict management style both positively and negatively affects the bank's performance, depending on the situation (Liu et al., 2020). On the positive side, accommodating can help maintain positive working relationships among employees and with customers. In a service industry such as banking, this may result in more client retention and satisfaction, which will enhance the performance of the bank.. However, if accommodating is used too frequently or in situations where it is not appropriate, it can have negative effects on a bank's performance (Gunkel et al., 2016). This study proposes that accommodating style significantly impacts the banks performance. The study also proposes that accommodating style can be a positive approach to employee motivation. If an employee has a minor issue that is important to them but not critical to the overall success of the team or organization, accommodating can help build trust and maintain positive working relationships. This can lead to increased employee motivation and engagement (Zhang et al., 2018).

H2a: *There is a significant impact of accommodating style on organizational performance*

H2b: *There is a significant impact of accommodating style on employee motivation*

2.4 Avoiding

According to Rahim & Katz (2020), avoiding conflict management style is a type of leadership style where a manager tends to avoid

or ignore conflicts that arise within their team or organization, rather than addressing them directly. Managers who adopt this style tend to prioritize maintaining harmony and avoiding tension and discomfort, even if this means not fully addressing issues that may arise. Avoiding conflict management style can significantly impact the performance of banks. In a banking environment, where conflicts can have significant financial and reputational consequences, avoiding conflict can lead to unresolved issues, lack of accountability, and delays in decision-making (Al Khajeh, 2018). This can ultimately impact the bank's performance, resulting in financial losses, regulatory penalties, and reputational damage. Additionally, avoiding conflict can hinder innovation and growth, as employees may be hesitant to suggest new ideas or take risks (Caputo et al., 2018). Avoiding conflict management style can significantly impact employee motivation. When managers avoid conflict, they tend to ignore or downplay issues, which can create a culture of ambiguity, uncertainty, and mistrust. This can lead to a decrease in employee motivation and job satisfaction, as employees may feel disengaged, undervalued, and unsupported (Asrar-ul-Haq & Kuchinke, 2016). Additionally, unresolved conflicts can impact employee performance, productivity, and collaboration, further impacting their motivation (Ho & Yeung, 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis are proposed.

H3a: *There is a significant impact of avoiding style on organizational performance*

H3b: *There is a significant impact of avoiding style on employee motivation*

2.5 Forcing

The forcing style is a competitive approach where one party tries to win or dominate the conflict, regardless of the other party's needs or concerns (Winardi et al., 2022). Managers who use the forcing style tend to prioritize their own goals and objectives over those of others and are often seen as aggressive or confrontational (Zhao & Liu, 2021). The forcing conflict management style can significantly impact the performance of banks. The forcing style can lead to negative consequences such as damaged relationships, resentment, and a lack of cooperation. In a banking environment, where trust and collaboration are critical, the forcing style can undermine teamwork and hinder the development of effective solutions to complex problems (Aqqad et al., 2019). Additionally, the use of the forcing style can damage the reputation of the bank and create legal and regulatory risks (Dhammika & Edirisinghe, 2018). The forcing conflict management style can significantly impact employee motivation. When managers use the forcing style, employees may feel disrespected, undervalued, and unsupported. This can lead to a decrease in employee motivation and job satisfaction, as well as lower productivity and collaboration (Popli & Rizvi, 2016; Sethibe, 2018). Additionally, the use of the forcing style can create a culture of fear, where employees are hesitant to express their opinions or suggest new ideas, further impacting their motivation (Musinguzi et al., 2018; Rehman et al., 2018). Thus, the following hypothesis are proposed.

H4a: *There is a significant impact of forcing style on organizational performance*

H4b: *There is a significant impact of forcing style on employee motivation*

2.6 Employee motivation

Employee motivation refers to the internal drive, enthusiasm, and commitment of employees to perform their work tasks effectively



and achieve organizational goals (Ozkeser, 2019). Motivated employees are more engaged, productive, and committed to their jobs, and are more likely to stay with the organization (Kalogiannidis, 2021). Organizations that invest in employee motivation strategies can benefit from increased productivity, improved performance, and better employee retention (Sitopu et al., 2021). Employee motivation leads to banks performance. Motivated employees can lead to higher levels of performance and better outcomes for the organization (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Motivated employees in banks can help to improve customer satisfaction by providing better customer service, offering more personalized solutions, and resolving issues more efficiently. As a result, the bank may experience an uptick in customer retention, repeat business, and good word-of-mouth recommendations (Girdwichai & Sriviboon, 2020). Moreover, motivated employees are more likely to stay with the bank for longer periods, reducing employee turnover rates and related recruitment and training costs. They are also more likely to exhibit positive behaviors, such as teamwork and collaboration, which can help to improve the overall culture and reputation of the bank (Al-bawaia et al., 2022). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H5: *Employee motivation significantly impacts the organizational performance.*

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The quantitative technique was employed for this research using survey questionnaire method. The data were collected using convenience sampling technique from the employees of all the public and private banks of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. A total of 460 survey questionnaires were sent to the employees of banking organizations in Bahawalpur via online platforms as part of this research. Out of those, 385 were received back in full form and ultimately considered for the measurement. The statistical analysis technique PLS-SEM was used using the analysis software SmartPLS. SmartPLS is a popular software tool used in the field of quantitative research, particularly in the area of structural equation modeling (SEM). It is designed to help researchers analyze complex data sets and test theoretical models.

4. FINDINGS

The measurement model was assessed using the examination of structural model assessment, which involves assessing the reliability and validity of the measurement model. This involves testing the internal consistency of the measurement items and assessing how well they measure the underlying constructs. The structural model assessment involves examining the relationships between the latent variables and testing the significance of the

relationships.

4.1 Measurement Model

4.1.1 Convergent Validity

The convergent validity was assessed using factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). Some of the factor loadings were below the cut-off value of 0.60 so, they were deleted. Table 1 shows that CR, AVE, and Cronbach's alpha values were above the recommended value of 0.70, 0.50, and 0.70 respectively (Hair et al., 2016).

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha, CR, and AVE

Variables	CR	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
Integrating	0.820	0.577	0.820
Accommodating	0.802	0.516	0.719
Avoiding	0.891	0.621	0.851
Forcing	0.870	0.771	0.706
Employee Motivation	0.915	0.672	0.818
Organizational Performance	0.901	0.819	0.782

4.1.2 Discriminant Validity

The Fornell Larcker criterion (FLC) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2015) was applied to measure the discriminant validity. The study shows that all the diagonal values are higher than the other correlation values. For HTMT, the values must be less than 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001). Table 2 shows that all the values were below than 0.90.

Table 2. HTMT

	AC	AV	EM	FO	IN	OP
AC						
AV	0.299					
EM	0.452	0.268				
FO	0.229	0.823	0.121			
IN	0.780	0.141	0.440	0.170		
OP	0.692	0.353	0.898	0.196	0.563	

4.2 Structural Model

The structural model in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) refers to the theoretical model that explains the relationships between the latent (unobserved) variables and the observed variables. It is the part of the SEM that specifies the causal relationships between the variables and is represented graphically using a path diagram (Steiger, 1990). The significance of the research model was evaluated through path coefficient, standard error and t-value using bootstrapping procedure. Table 3 shows that all the hypothesis were accepted except H1a, H4a, and H4b. Fig 2 displays the structural model.

Table 3. Hypothesis results

Hypothesis		Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (IO/STDEVI)	P Values	Decision
H1a	IN->OP	0.058	0.058	0.031	1.853	0.065	Failed to Accept
H1b	IN->EM	0.161	0.168	0.055	2.935	0.003	Accepted
H2a	AC->OP	0.392	0.391	0.045	8.781	0.000	Accepted
H2b	AC->EM	0.393	0.393	0.060	6.507	0.000	Accepted
H3a	AV->OP	0.181	0.176	0.033	5.460	0.000	Accepted
H3b	AV->EM	0.246	0.240	0.052	4.718	0.000	Accepted
H4a	FO->OP	0.030	0.033	0.034	0.889	0.375	Failed to Accept
H4b	FO->EM	0.038	0.026	0.071	0.530	0.596	Failed to Accept
H5	EM->OP	0.523	0.523	0.043	12.244	0.000	Accepted

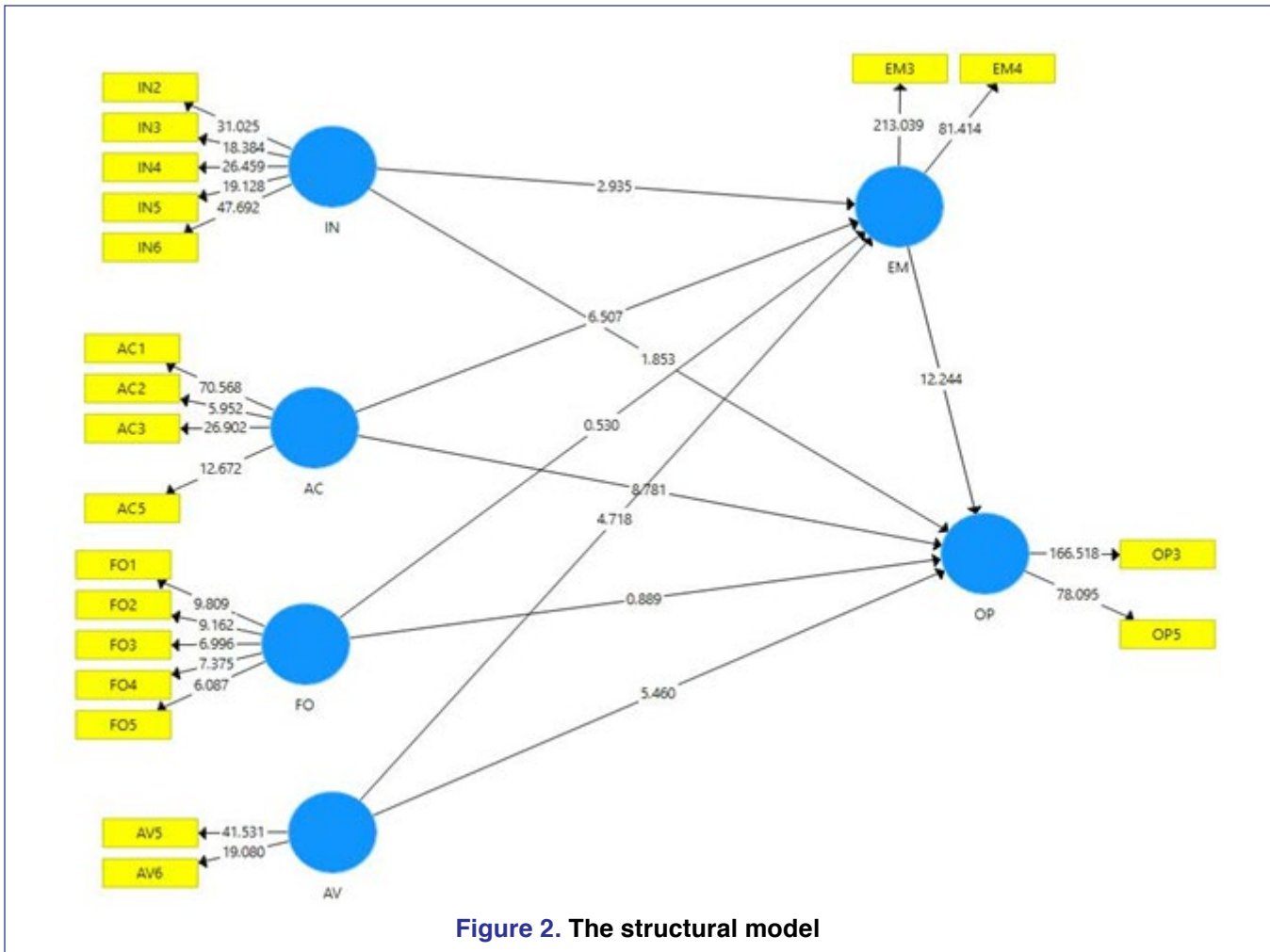


Figure 2. The structural model

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research is to find out how conflict management styles affect the performance of the Bahawalpur banking industry in Pakistan. The relationships between the variables were measured with structural equation modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS. The first research question of the of the present studies deals with the impact of integrating style on organizational performance. According to the statistical analysis integrating style of conflict management has insignificant impact on organization performance but significant impact on employee motivation. The present findings are consistent with some prior studies (Olukayode, 2017; Awan & Saeed, 2015). Keeping in view the managers' interest and subordinates interest leads to the effective resolution of conflict that is necessary for the smooth organizational functioning.

The effect of accommodating style on organizational performance is the second research issue addressed in the current investigations. Empirical evidence shows that an accommodating style of conflict management improves the employee motivation and organization performance as well. These results are in line with (Ajike et al. 2015; Osabiya, 2015). Both studies showed a substantial effect on organizational performance. Forcing style conflict management has substantial effect on the organizational performance and employee

motivation. Although a forcing style may improve organizational performance temporarily, it may have severe consequences for other employee outcomes in the long run. The fourth research question of the of the present studies deals with the impact of avoiding style on organizational performance. According to the empirical results avoiding style of conflict management is significantly related with the organizational performance. Concerning with employee motivation which has significant effect on organization performance.

There is a growing body of research that suggests that conflict management styles can have a significant impact on employee motivation and organizational performance. Integrating style involves finding a solution that meets the needs of all parties involved, which may increase employee motivation and job satisfaction. Accommodating style involves accommodating the needs of others while disregarding one's own needs, which may result in lower motivation and job satisfaction. Avoiding style involves withdrawing from the conflict and not addressing it, which may create tension and dissatisfaction in the workplace. Forcing style involves using power and authority to win the conflict, which may lead to reduced motivation and employee morale. Therefore, it is important for organizations to promote and encourage the use of these styles to create a positive work environment that fosters high levels of employee motivation and job satisfaction, leading to better organizational



performance. Digitalization can have a significant impact on conflict management and the performance of banks (Imtiaz et al., 2020; Zahir & Imtiaz, 2020). Banks need to embrace digitalization and leverage its benefits while also being aware of the risks and challenges associated with it. They need to invest in robust cybersecurity measures and compliance frameworks and provide their employees with the necessary training and resources to manage conflicts effectively. This will help banks to improve their performance and maintain their competitive edge in the digital era.

6. IMPLICATIONS

The implications of research on conflict management styles and organizational performance can be significant for Bahawalpur banks seeking to improve their overall effectiveness and productivity. Here are some potential implications. 1) the importance of effective conflict management: the research suggests that the way conflicts are managed within an organization can have a significant impact on its performance. Therefore, organizations need to focus on developing effective conflict management strategies and training their employees to use these strategies. Therefore, organizations need to develop a range of conflict management styles and encourage their employees to use the most appropriate style for a given situation. 2) the role of leadership: the research suggests that effective conflict management requires strong leadership. Leaders need to set an example for their employees by using effective conflict management strategies and creating a culture where conflicts are handled constructively. 3) the benefits of collaboration: the research suggests that collaboration is an effective conflict management style that can lead to better organizational performance. Therefore, organizations should encourage collaboration among their employees and create a culture that supports this approach. 4) the importance of training: the research suggests that training employees in conflict management can lead to better organizational performance. Therefore, organizations should invest in training programs that help employees develop the skills they need to manage conflicts effectively.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study is conducted in a banking industry so the findings cannot be generalizable to other contexts. The sample size may also be limited, which may affect the representativeness of the findings. The study has found a correlation between conflict management styles, employee motivation, and organizational performance, but it may not be possible to establish a causal relationship. Other factors that were not measured or controlled for may have influenced the findings. The study has used a cross-sectional design, which captures data at a single point in time. This may limit the ability to infer causality or track changes over time.

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