

**Individualism-collectivism and Conflict Resolution Styles:
A cross-cultural study of managers in Singapore.**

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Abstract

Key words: Culture, conflict resolution, Singapore

The trend of global economy and Singapore' efforts to become a regional hub of business have together brought in many MNCs and expatriate managers into Singapore. Due to cultural and managerial style differences, these managers and their local colleagues have encountered various conflicts. Building on the theory of Hofstede's Individualism-Collectivism (I-C) cultural dimension as well as Rahim and Bonoma's conflict management model, the current study examines how national culture, organisational culture, and managerial factors influence may these managers' conflict resolution styles through an empirical study of 600 managers in Singapore.

The respondents were equally divided into four groups: Americans, Japanese, Chinese Singaporeans in MNCs and Singaporeans in local companies. The results show that although the I-C dimension did overall differentiate American managers from their Asian counterparts in their use of conflict resolution styles, the patterns of the relationship were often cursory. There was no clear line that separated the two camps. Some culture groups would often deviate from their expected culture values in handling conflicts. There were also considerable differences among various Asian culture groups. The findings suggest the phenomenon of culture regression. They also highlight the importance of introducing multi-culture groups instead of bi-polar, and multi-dimensional culture values instead of single I-C dimension for comparative studies.

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The trend of global economy and Singapore' efforts to become a regional hub of business have together brought in many MNCs and expatriate managers into Singapore. Due to cultural, social, economic and managerial style differences, these managers and their local colleagues have encountered various conflicts, some common to all organizations and others unique. How these managers may resolve conflicts in such a setting is a practically and theoretically interesting and significant question.

The current study aims to explore this question through an empirical examination of conflict resolution styles by managers from various cultural backgrounds in Singapore. It examines how national culture and organisational culture influence conflict resolution styles. Building on the theory of Hofstede's work-related cultural values as well as Rahim and Bonoma's conflict management model, this study will examine the relationship between national culture, managerial styles, and exposure to foreign culture on the one hand and conflict resolution styles of both Singapore and expatriate managers on the other.

Literature Review

Conflict resolution represents an important managerial duty. Research has shown that managers can spend as much as 20% of their time resolving conflicts (Thomas & Schmidt, 1976). The time spent managing conflicts may increase due to the increasing globalization of the world economy (Morris et al., 1998; Aguinis & Kraiger, 1996; Smith and Bond, 1993). These developments will require increased interaction among

individuals from various national backgrounds (Triandis, 1994). Accordingly, it would be helpful to know which conflict resolution tactics are preferred by people from a variety of different national backgrounds.

Differences in general cultural values have been proposed as one reason for differences in behavioural styles in conflict situations. Hofstede's (1980) four dimensions of cultural values, especially Individualism-Collectivism (I-C), have been widely applied as a theoretical framework for conflict management studies from a cross-cultural perspective. For example, Ting-Toomey (1988) observes that the dimension of I-C has been used as "a starting point to aid in the theorizing process of conflict face-negotiation"(p. 232).

Some researchers (Trubisky et al., 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1988) assume that the cultural variability dimension of I-C will influence members' selection of one set of conflict styles over others. Studies have repeatedly shown that, albeit the precise cultural boundaries on these differences are not well understood (Morris et al. 1998), measures of I-C account should dramatically separate U.S. managers from Asian managers. For example, in Hofstede's I-C data, the U.S. score (91) is far higher than those of Asian societies, which are relatively close together (e.g. 20 for Singapore and China, 17 for Taiwan, and 46 for Japan).

Subsequent studies have further investigated so-called "East-West differences" by comparing U.S. managers to a matched group in an Asian society (Morris et al., 1998). In general, individualistic nations, such as the United States, tend to give priority to personal goals and preferences, whereas collectivistic nations, such as China and Singapore, are more likely to give priority to the needs of the group (Ohbuchi et al., 1999; Morris et al., 1998; Ohbuchi & Takahashi, 1994; Trubisky et al., 1991). Specifically, collectivism is associated with indirect and passive

communication, such as the avoiding and obliging styles of handling conflict, emphasizing the value for passive compliance and for maintaining relational harmony in conflict situations, whereas individualism is associated with direct and active modes of expression, such as the competing and dominating styles of handling conflict, emphasizing the values of autonomy, competitiveness, and the need for control.

Cultural researchers have given several explanations for such cultural styles in conflict. People in individualistic cultures view interactions within relationships and groups as occurring between independent individuals, and thus, disagreements and conflicts are accepted as a natural and inevitable aspect of social life. In collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, people dislike social disorganization or disagreements.

For example, the Japanese have developed social structures, institutions, and customs for avoiding or reducing conflicts (Ohbuchi et al. 1999). The Japanese (collectivists) indicated a strong preference for avoiding tactics and were most concerned with maintaining social relationships and preferred avoidance tactics, whereas the Americans (individualists) showed a strong use of assertive tactics in conflict situations, with a greater concern for attaining justice for themselves and reported a preference for assertive tactics. Similarly, Schwartz (1994, quoted in Bresnahan, 1999) described Chinese in Singapore as "closest to the pure Hofstede conception of collectivism, high in conservatism and hierarchy, and low in autonomy and mastery" (p. 111). Yuen (1998) also notes that results from previous studies on conflict resolution studies in Singapore provide a picture of the style preferences of Singaporeans in handling conflicts. For example, both McKenna (1995) and Yeo (1995, cited in Yuen 1998) found substantial differences between the conflict management style of Singaporean managers and that of expatriate managers.

However, results from previous studies on cultural styles in conflict have not been consistent, some even turned out data that Morris et al. (1998) consider “not encouraging”. Some research, which correlated participants’ scores on I-C scales with conflict behaviours, found no relationship (Leung, 1988). Although a number of theorists have suggested that Asian managers are more disposed to an avoidant style than Western managers, however, given that ingroup/outgroup differences influence conflict avoidance, it is ambiguous whether Western culture or expatriate status was the key to the behavior of Western managers (Leung, 1988).

Morris and his colleagues (1998) suspect that the I-C construct may conflate a number of distinct values and attitudes and hence obscures relations between specific values and social behaviours. They note that the reliability of I-C scales has proved quite low, and in recent years Triandis (1995) and colleagues have shifted from the position that individualism versus collectivism is a unitary dimension of values.

Some empirical studies on culture’s effects on conflict resolution styles have also produced mixed results. For example, Peng and his colleagues (2000) find in their study of American, French and Chinese employees’ conflict resolution styles that in some cases, American acted more like Chinese and Chinese more like Americans. They attributed the mixed results to the phenomenon of “culture regression”, which suggests that despite people’s original cultural values, they may become more alike when mixed together for some time in a cross-cultural environment.

Some researchers also caution against the potential problems of the respondents’ bias in cross-cultural studies. As Leung (1997) points out, cross-culture research is one area that suffers from interpretive difficulties owing to the fact that the responses were not standardized before making cultural comparisons; higher scores in one culture may thus reflect differing response sets, such as acquiescence bias. The

evidence clearly suggests that not all highly collectivist cultures share the same tendency of avoiding, indirect and passive tactics (Ohbuchi & Takahashi, 1994).

How do national cultures and organizational cultures influence managers' conflict resolution styles? How well does I-C dimension separate American managers and their Asian counterparts? Do Asians behave in a monolithic way while handling conflicts? What underlies the difference that Asian respondents rely on passive compliance and avoiding styles more than comparable groups of U.S. respondents? When Americans are not purely American any more and Asians are not purely Asians as indicated by previous studies' findings, do their conflict management styles change accordingly? Those are some of the questions raised or left unanswered in previous studies that this study plans to examine in different contexts and among different groups of nationalities. Yuen (1998) observes that "while a lot has been written about Singapore's economic policies and development, there are few academic studies on social values and culture, not to mention the cognitive aspect of conflict (p. 124). This study tries to fill that void through an empirical study to offer a multi-dimensional explanation of culture and conflict.

Research Methods

Research design:

The research framework for this study is cross-cultural comparative research. The importance of comparative research has long been recognised. Among other merits, the most important strength of comparative research is its ability to test the impact of society on individual or organisational behaviours. However, it is more difficult to study societal-level influences than any lower-level influences, especially

the role of cultural factors. One obvious reason is that societal influences are a *constant in a single-society study* (i.e., taking the same value for everyone in the society), and thus cannot be observed within a single society (Zhu et al. 1996).

The most popular type of comparative studies is a two-nation/ two-culture comparison. This approach works fine if two nations or two cultural groups under comparison are found to be largely similar, suggesting the absence of societal influences. However, when significant differences are observed between the two nations, it becomes problematic to determine whether the differences are attributable to language, political system, cultural values, economic development, or some combination of these. In other words, nations differ on many dimensions. With only two nations under comparison, these multi-dimensional influences at the societal-level are confounded with each other and unidentifiable. Thus, one often has to make ad hoc speculations about the observed differences.

To find support for our hypotheses it is useful to not only compare U.S. and Asian managers, but also to observe managers in different Asian cultures that, while highly collectivist, have cultural heritages that lead us to expect conflict styles differing from each other. Therefore, this project used four groups for comparison: American managers, Japanese managers, Chinese Singaporean managers in MNCs and Chinese Singaporeans in local companies.

This conceptual framework provides a more holistic perspective to examine the conflict management in a cross-cultural setting. The independent variables in this framework are Hofstede's I-C dimension, cultures, management style, and length of exposure to local culture. Individualism-collectivism was operationalized by the respondents' native culture. The dependent variables are Rahim and Bonoma's five distinctive conflict management styles. A conflict situation is defined as the perceived

and/or actual incompatibilities of needs, interests, and/or goals between two interdependent parties (Trubisky et al., 1991; Ting-Toomey 1988).

Based on the above frame work, we developed the following five hypotheses to be tested:

H1: The more individualistic the cultural members are, the less likely they will be to adopt the avoiding style.

H2: The more individualistic the culture members are, the less likely they will be to adopt the compromising style.

H3: The more individualistic the cultural members are, the less likely they will be to adopt the obliging style.

H4: The more individualistic the cultural members are, the more likely they will be to adopt the integrating style.

H5: The more individualistic the cultural members are, the more likely they will be to adopt the dominating style.

Sampling:

The study consists of a survey of 600 managers in Singapore. The sample consists of four subgroups of managers: (1) 150 Americans, (2) 150 Japanese, (3) 150 Chinese Singaporeans in MNCs, and (4) 150 Chinese Singaporeans in locally-run enterprises. The sample composition is shown in Table 1.

---- Table 1 about here----

These groups represent three different national culture groups and four organisational cultures. The sampling frame used was the A.C. Nielsen Commercial Database in Singapore. The database contains more than 28,000 companies and is updated annually. All sampling and interviews were carried out by the A.C. Nielsen

commissioned by the authors. A random sample of companies in the manufacturing, finance and service industries was drawn from the database. For each selected company, the following selection procedure was adhered to:

- Telephone calls to the companies to identify the appropriate respondent through screening questions.
- The selected company was screened on industry and ownership (MNCs vs local companies)
- The individual respondent was screened on residential status (residents vs expatriates)
- To ensure random selection of qualified individuals, there was a screening question with a list of typical departments found in a company. The start point for department was randomized to ensure a spread of respondents from different departments

Appointments were then made with the selected respondent for a face-to-face interview by professional interviewers from AC Nielsen.

Scale construction:

This study used the items from the conflict management inventory of ROCI-Form C (Rahim, 1983) that measured five styles: avoiding, compromising, obliging, integrating, and dominating. These measurements have been used widely in cross-cultural conflict resolution studies. However, in cross-cultural research, it has been frequently found that scores of one cultural group are higher than those of another cultural group across all response categories (Ohbuchi et al., 1999; Leung, 1997). Cultural psychologists have regarded such differences as reflecting general tendencies in responding to questionnaire scales but not as reflecting actual cultural differences.

For example, it was found that in general, individualists tend to choose more extreme values on scales than do collectivists. To control statistically for such response tendencies, some researchers (Cropanzano et al. 1999; Morris et al. 1998; Leung, 1997) recommended the use of relative scores rather than raw scores in analyses of cross-cultural data. This was done by subtracting from the raw score for each item the mean of all the items on the focal scale, and dividing this by the standard deviation of items on the scale. This study adopted this approach and used standardized scores for comparison.

Findings

The survey data were first analysed by one-way ANOVA to compare the differences among the four groups. The results revealed significant effects by culture on all five conflict resolution styles. Overall, consistent with the findings from previous studies, our data separate the three culture groups along the line of individualism-collectivism continuum, with American managers on the one end and the Chinese Singaporean managers on the other (see Table 2).

--- Table 2 about here ---

The results of regressing conflict styles on country dummy variables further confirmed that Asian groups differed significantly from Americans. Except for the avoiding style, all three culture groups showed significant effects, either positive or negative, on the use conflict resolution styles. In other words, Asian cultures did significantly separate their members from their American counterparts (see Table 3).

--- Table 3 about here ---

However, in most cases, the individualistic Americans and their collectivistic Asian counterparts did not appear to take up neatly bi-polar positions. Asian

managers did not behave as a monolithic block. The patterns were often cursory with some culture groups deviated from their expected positions, especially in the case of the Japanese respondents. It is surprising to not that the Japanese managers, who scored in the middle of I-C scale leaning toward collectivism, were the most likely to deviate from their expected positions. In most cases, they even showed up on the extreme side as shown in Table 2.

Hypothesis testing:

H1 stated that the more individualistic the cultural members are, the less likely they will be to adopt the ***avoiding*** style. The hypothesis is supported. Overall, when confronted with conflicts, American managers, who were from the highest individualistic culture of all these groups, were less likely to adopt the avoiding style than the highly collectivistic Chinese Singaporeans. However, the trend is somewhat cursory as the Japanese managers, although from the lower-level individualistic culture, were the least likely to turn away from conflicts, even less so than the American managers.

H2 hypothesized that the more individualistic the culture members are, the less likely they will be to adopt the ***compromising*** style. The findings from this study do not support the hypothesis. Surprisingly, American managers in Singapore appeared to be more likely to compromise than Japanese managers and Chinese Singaporeans working in local companies. However, it was the Chinese Singaporeans working in MNCs who were the mostly likely to adopt this style.

H3 posited that the more individualistic the cultural members are, the less likely they will be to adopt the ***obliging*** style. However, the study turns out opposite results. Instead, it was the highly collective Chinese Singaporeans in both local and MNC companies who were less likely to adopt this style than the most individualistic

American managers. Again, the pattern was complicated by the unexpected high scores of Japanese managers. They turn out to be the most likely to resort to the obliging tactic, although they were considered less collectivistic than Chinese Singaporeans.

H4 stated that the more individualistic the cultural members are, the more likely they will be to adopt the *integrating* style. Although the data supported the hypothesis overall, once again the pattern looks cursory. The results confirmed that American managers were the most likely to adopt integrating style than their Asian counterparts, followed by Chinese Singaporeans working in MNCs. However, the Japanese managers, although from the medium level of individualistic culture compared with other cultural groups, were the least likely to use this style, even less so than the most collectivistic Chinese Singaporean managers.

H5 predicted that the more individualistic the cultural members are, the more likely they will be to adopt the *dominating* style. The results from this study fully supported the hypothesis. From Table 2, we can see that there was a clean pattern of line-up by these four cultural groups along the Individualism-collectivism continuum. American managers, who were from the highest individualistic culture of all these groups, were the mostly likely to resort to the dominating style than other cultural groups. Chinese Singaporeans working in local companies were the least likely to adopt such style with the Japanese managers taking up the middle position.

One interesting finding from this study was the differences between Chinese Singaporeans working in MNCs and their country-fellows in local companies. Although they were all Chinese Singaporeans sharing the same national culture, they differed considerably in their conflict resolution styles. For example, Chinese Singaporeans working in MNCs in some cases acted more like the individualistic

Americans than Chinese Singaporeans in local companies, suggesting that organizational cultures may have offset the influence of the national culture.

Similarly, the moderately collectivistic Japanese respondents in this study often took more extreme positions even than highly individualistic Americans. And the Americans sometimes were more likely to adopt some tactics, especially the obliging style, which were often considered to be the ones used by collectivistic culture members. These findings suggest the phenomenon of “culture regression” similar to what Peng and his colleagues’ (2000) found in their study.

To find supporting evidence for this assertion, we then ran the correlation analysis to see if there was any relation between the length of the expatriates’ exposure to the local culture and their conflict resolution styles. The results proved that the longer Americans worked in Singapore, the more likely they would resort to the obliging style, which happened to be the tactic that American respondents deviated significantly from their expected position. They were even more likely to use this style than their Chinese Singaporean counterparts. However, exposure to the local culture did not seem to have any significant effect on American managers’ other conflict resolution styles, which were more in line with their expected positions. (See Table 4).

--- Table 4 about here---

One area that has seldom been investigated is the differences among respondents with different managerial responsibilities in their preference of various conflict resolution styles. This study tries to address that issue by cross-tabulating respondents’ managerial positions with their conflict resolution styles. As Table 5 shows, the degrees of differences in conflict resolution styles varied considerably according to the respondents’ managerial positions. Statistically significant

differences existed mostly among senior managers across the four groups. In other words, senior managers seemed to be more likely affected by their culture values than their subordinates in using conflict resolution tactics. However, it should also be pointed out that the lack of statistically significant differences among lower-rank respondents across the four groups may be the results of relative small number of respondents in these positions.

--- Table 5 about here ---

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings from this study provide some research evidence that conflict management behaviour differs as a function of cultural values. They shed some new light on the relationship between cultural values and conflict management style, especially such a relationship in a cross-cultural environment. Some have confirmed findings of previous studies, and other have posed challenges.

Overall those findings are in line with previous findings and support the theoretical reasoning of this study. We have proposed hypotheses about distinct value dimensions underlying cultural differences in conflict resolution, which can be contrasted with previous arguments that cultural differences in both conflict styles are a function of a general Individualism-Collectivism dimension. Of the five hypotheses tested, three found solid support from the data, one was not supported, and one showed a reversed relationship. Overall, Individualism has been found to play a differentiating role in the adoption of avoiding, integrating and dominating styles in conflict management. Evidence about cultural differences in style and underlying values, can be of help to managers in MNCs who must interact as colleagues and resolve conflicts with managers from other cultures.

This study provides empirical evidence that the most cosmopolitan groups in every country have converged to a common global business culture. Japan is one the most modernized countries in the world. And Singapore is a newly industrialized country and is fast becoming a regional center where the East meets the West. Therefore our Asian participants are arguably among the most Westernized members of their societies, and yet they still differed quite markedly in their values from the U.S. participants. Hence, our data are consistent with the view by Morris and his colleagues (1998) that although the globalization process and the increasing exposure of various cultures may have affected people's culture values, even the most cosmopolitan sectors of these societies have not completely converged in their values and managerial behaviors.

However, similar to some previous studies, (e.g. Peng et al., 2000), this study has found mixed evidence on the relationship between cultural values as represented by the value of individualism and conflict resolution styles. Some findings from the current study raise some questions regarding the use of I-C dimension as the culture scale to measure different culture groups' conflict resolution styles.

The most surprising finding of this study is that American managers, the highest individualistic of the sample, are more likely to adopt obliging style than the lowest individualistic Chinese Singaporean managers. Even more perplexing is that Chinese Singaporean managers in MNCs were more like Americans than their own country-fellows working in local companies in adopting the compromising style.

The reason for Americans to behave more like Chinese Singaporeans, especially in the case of obliging style, is probably that they have more contact with Singaporeans and have stayed longer in Singapore. The findings from this study confirm the phenomenon suggested by Peng et al.'s (2000) study. The managers

surveyed may have experienced the “cultural regression,” with Americans becoming more obliging and Chinese Singaporeans becoming less so. In other words, the more members of different cultures mingle together, the more likely they are to regress from their extremes in cultural values to the middle or even the other side of the road. They may have over-reacted in order to “do as the Romans do.”

As for the differences between Singaporeans working in MNCs and local companies, we may assume that different organizational cultures in MNCs and local companies may have mediate the national culture effects. In other words, different organisational cultures may have separated Singaporean managers in MNCs from their country-fellows who work in local companies when using some conflict resolution styles. Most MNCs in Singapore are from the Western countries, especially the United States. Singaporean managers in these companies may have learned from their work the “common practices” in their companies in handling conflicts.

The results from this study show that cross-cultural differences in conflict management style cannot be reduced to a single value dimension running from individualism to collectivism. As Trubisky et al. (1991) suggest, while the individualism-collectivism dimension has been found to be a powerful theoretical dimension in differentiating clusters of cultures, future theorists must search beyond this dimension to explain other influencing forces, such as philosophical roots and religious foundations of the cultures, and their impact on a variety of communication phenomena (p. 79). Thus, although it is possible to describe cultures as being individualistic or collectivistic, the findings from this study support the arguments by some researchers that people are guided both by independent and interdependent self-construals, which are activated by different contexts, values, and social constraints (Bresnahan et al., 1999; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Singelis & Brown, 1995).

The findings from this study further highlight the importance of introducing multiple-country comparisons. We can not treat Asian cultures as a monolithic block, and merely look for “East-West” differences. The conclusion regarding culture’s effects on conflict resolution styles would be much “easier” if we had only use American managers as one group and Asian managers as another for comparison. We could have found a “clear-cut” line separating the two camps. However, as this study shows, there were considerably differences in conflict management styles by Asian managers depending on their organisational cultures as well as their national cultures.

As some cross-culture researchers (Chen, Ryan and Chen, 1999; Schwartz and Sagiv, 1995) point out, the dichotomatic classification of cultural orientation is often misleading, because it implicitly leads people to believe that the two cultural values are in polar opposition to one another. The conflict resolution styles of managers in Singapore proved to be fairly complex with some unexpected results. Chang (1996, quoted in Bresnahan et al., 1999) argued that the prevalent image endorsed in many studies of Chinese suppressing their individuality is misleading: To anyone familiar with the Chinese world, such a depiction borders on the ludicrous. Chinese are seldom quiet, they are often noisy; they are seldom meek, they are often competitive and argumentative; they are seldom passive, they are often active. But under the stricture of the "collectivist" metaphor, we can lose sight of the lively, competitive, and colorful aspects of Chinese culture, particularly as these are manifested in people's everyday verbal strategies. (p.8)

The results of this study further prove that it is useful to not only compare U.S. and Asian managers, but also to observe managers in different Asian cultures that, while highly collectivist, have cultural heritages that lead us to expect conflict styles differing from each other.

Recently, several scholars have argued that predicting communication style based solely on culture type does not accurately forecast how people are likely to behave. Regardless of their cultural membership, people have been shown to be more independent or interdependent depending on situational and relational variables and personal attributes (Bresnahan et al., 1999; Kim, Shin, & Cai, 1996; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Wiseman et al., 1995; Kim, 1993, 1994). The results of this study support these scholars' suggestion that it is important for future research not merely to look at national differences but also to consider other factors such as degrees/length of exposure to foreign cultures, organizational culture, foreign language proficiency, and managerial styles when studying cross-cultural conflict resolution styles.

Table 1. Composition of the Sample by Culture Groups and Managerial Positions

<i>By Culture Groups</i>		
Culture Groups	Percentage	N
Chinese Singaporean (MNC)	25.8	154
Chinese Singaporean (Local)	24.7	148
Japanese	25.1	150
American	24.4	146
Total	100	598
<i>By Managerial Positions</i>		
Managerial positions	Percentage	N
General manager	21%	128
Department manager	55%	334
Manager assistant	6%	33
Staff member	5%	27
Other	14%	85

Table 2. Conflict Styles by Cultural Groups
(Standardized mean scores)

Individualism Conflict style	Americans (High)	Japanese (medium)	Chinese Singaporean MNC (low)	Chinese Singaporean Local (low)
<i>Avoiding</i> H1. Supported	-.053	-.169	.063	.134
<i>Compromising</i> H2. Not supported	.150	-.311	.179	-.04
<i>Obliging</i> H3. Not supported	.239	.783	-.328	-.286
<i>Integrating</i> H4. Supported	.41	-.375	.01	-.037
<i>Dominating</i> H5. Supported	.275	-.002	-.111	-.189

Avoiding: F (3, 594) = 2.694, p < .05
 Compromising: F (3, 594) = 7.899, p < .001
 Integrating: F (3, 594) = 16.481, p < .001
 Obliging: F (3, 594) = 51.777, p < .001
 Dominating: F (3, 594) = 6.212, p < .001

Table 3. Conflict Styles Regressed on Culture Groups

Conflict Style Predictors	Avoiding	Compromising	Integrating	Dominating	Obliging
Japanese	-.082	-.216**	-.310**	-.122**	.266**
Chinese Singaporean (MNC)	-.003	-.018	-.136**	-.187**	-.212**
Chinese Singaporean (Local)	.049	-.10*	-.163**	-.203**	-.196**
Adjusted R ²	0.07	0.35	.065	.033**	.193**
F	2.37 (ns)	8.255**	14.925**	7.952**	49.135**
Note: Coefficients are standardized beta weights. The country variables are dummy variables with the Americans as the excluded category. All variables are standardized. *p < 0.5; ** p < 0.01					

Table 4. Years of Working by American Managers Correlated with the Conflict Resolution Styles

Conflict resolution styles	Years working in Singapore (Pearson's R)
Obliging	.161*
Integrating	.124
Compromising	-.096
Avoiding	-.111
Dominating	-.003

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 5. Conflict Styles by Managerial Positions and Cultural Groups
(Standardized mean scores)

Individualism		Conflict Styles	Integrating	Avoiding	Obliging	Domi- nating	Compro- mising
American	<i>General Manager</i>	.569**	-.058	.419**	.189	.097	
	Department Manager	.429*	.037	.213**	.465**	.219**	
	Manager Assistant	.175	-.105	.101**	.063	.025	
	Staff	.719	-.454	.130	.688*	.785	
	Overall	.410**	-.053*	.239**	.275**	.150**	
Japanese	<i>GM</i>	-.260**	-.109	.818**	.127	-.391	
	Dept M	-.524*	-.230	.710**	-.001**	-.268**	
	M Assist	-.288	-.138	.879**	-.045	-.341	
	Staff	.118	-.058	.710	-.701*	.046	
	Overall	-.375**	-.169*	.783**	-.002**	-.311**	
Chinese Singaporean (MNC)	<i>GM</i>	.318**	-.421	-.684**	.063	-.545	
	Dept M	-.0398*	.149	-.269**	-.059**	.261**	
	M Assist	.048	-.241	-.694**	-.366	-.201	
	Staff	.332	-.058	-.064	-.850*	.711	
	Overall	.010**	.063*	-.328**	-.111**	.179**	
Chinese Singaporean (Local)	<i>GM</i>	-.221**	.0439	-.058**	.018	-.018	
	Dept M	.0383**	.124	-.384**	-.244**	-.109**	
	M Assist	-.011	.225	-.316**	-.096	-.006	
	Staff	-.183	.338	-.051	-.585*	.465	
	Overall	-.037**	.134*	-.286**	-.189**	-.040**	

* p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

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