
The influence of Emotional Intelligence in the choice of conflict resolution strategy

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this article is to examine the need for emotional intelligence (EI) in conflict resolution and workplace. Based on the review of emotional intelligence models, we aimed to comprehend the ability to resolve the effect of conflict and the process of regulation and processing of conflicts. Data were collected from a total of 280 university employees through Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i 2.0) and Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI). The results showed that the categories most frequently used by the participants were 'Accommodation', 'Avoidance' and 'Compromise'. Women are among those who have used this kind of conflict resolution most. Additional results revealed significantly higher EI levels in females, a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and social intelligence, positive emotional intelligence in the Social Sciences department, and the significant impact of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution styles. The present article reported the impact of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution models, including the role of administrative staff in the Albanian context.*

KEYWORD: *emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, employee, management style, wellbeing*

INTRODUCTION

Studies have found that individuals with greater levels of Emotional Intelligence achieve greater success in their professional lives (Sony & Mekoth, 2016; Coté & Miners, 2006; Sy et al., 2006; Dulewicz & Higgs, 1998), reduced job insecurities (Mairaj & Siddiqui, 2020; O'Boyle et al. 2010; Jordan et al., 2002) can lead to more effective leadership (Edelman & Van Knippenberg, 2018; Bratton et al., 2011; Prati et al., 2003; Higgs & Rowland, 2002) and improve team management and organizational performance (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015; Hwang et al., 2013; Salami, 2010; Jordan & Troth, 2004). People who have higher emotional intelligence can better handle stressors (Dirican & Erdil, 2019; Zeidner et al., 2004; Nikolaou & Tsaousis, 2002; Slaski & Cartwright, 2002)

and have more effective coping skills than those with lower EI (Ebstein et al., 2018; Bar-On et al., 2000). This study will look at how having Emotional Intelligence affects conflict resolution among Albanian university workers. We will use a lot of different sources and empirical evidence to make our analysis.

Emotional Intelligence and Conflict resolution

According to Guilford (1956), the intellect originates from the Latin “*intellectus*” (“*intus*” = inner and “*legere*” = to study), which means “*to study the inner*”; thus, it is typically associated with understanding and the ability to think, comprehend, and form a mental image of reality. The notion of Emotional Intelligence (EI) was initially proposed by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990 as they published their first scientific paper on the subject. In this paper, they characterized EI as a form of social intelligence distinct from general cognitive abilities. It involves the capacity to regulate and recognize emotions, *both in oneself and others*, and applies cognitive skills to effectively manage emotions. In a later series, the authors expanded their model and defined EI as: “*a person's ability to better understand, analyze and express his emotions; the ability to receive and / or create emotions that stimulate thinking; the ability to understand emotions and the cognition of emotions; and the ability to regulate emotions promotes emotional and intellectual growth*” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Both saw EI as part of human intelligence. Reuven Bar-On (1997) placed EI in the context of human psychology and defined it as “*a set of abilities, skills and unconscious abilities that affect a person's ability to effectively cope with the demands and pressures of the environment*” (Bar-On; 2010, p. 57). He proposed a model of non-cognitive intelligence that includes five large areas of abilities or competencies in the field of personality, and specific abilities that seem to contribute to success.

These, in their revised model, *include interpersonal skills, decision making, stress management, self-perception and expression*. Daniel Goleman (1998b, p. 317) was responsible for popularizing the concept and defined EI as “*the ability to recognize our own feelings and those of others in order to motivate ourselves and to manage emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships*”. Goleman questioned the classical concepts related to success, ability, and talent, since, in his opinion, excessive importance had been given to the intelligence quotient (IQ) as a unique indicator to classify people in intelligent/not intelligent and thus predict their future. For Goleman, EI is a potential capacity that determines learning of practical skills regarding five aspects: *self-awareness, motivation, self-control, empathy, and relationship with others*. Therefore, Goleman proposed a new model in terms of performance theory since, as he himself suggested, it has a specific application in the field of work and organizational structure, especially in terms of the ability to predict and any type of work (Goleman, 1998a). These models include *abilities, personalities, and characteristics* and they combine motivation, states of consciousness, social functions, and the ability to understand and manage emotions together. Researchers use the mixed model of EI more than other models, which is shown to be the most popular and acceptable model (Jiang et al.,2019; Olderbak et al.,2018; Livesey,2017; Mayer & Caruso; 2016; Mayer et al.,2004). An occurrence that has now been broadly addressed via means of the clinical literature is conflict management and psychological wellbeing (Mairaj & Siddiqui,2020; Foy et al.,2019; Saho &

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Saho,2019; Olderbak et al.,2018; Корнилова, & Chigrinova,2014; Desivilya et al.,2010). Conflicts are neither effective nor negative, they truly exist and arise in all areas. Therefore, know-how that they may usually be present, the essential factor is to cope with them. Conflict resolution styles are the behavioral patterns that individuals use when facing a conflict (Huan, & Yazdanifard,2012; Shih & Susanto,2010; Rahim et al.,2002). Individuals with a high level of EI work to maintain interpersonal relationships while those with lower levels of EI tend to report a greater use of negative conflict behaviors that can affect their interpersonal relationships. Researchers have traditionally differentiated between two dimensions in interpersonal conflict resolution styles: *concern for oneself and concern for others* (Rahim et al.,2002; Sternberg et al.,1984; Grace & Harris,1990; Blake & Mouton, 1964). The interaction of these two dimensions results in five different conflict resolution styles: *collaborative, competitive, compromised, avoidant, and accommodating*. According to research, there are significant relationships between EI and conflict resolution styles, and depending on the conflict, emotionally intelligent people can adopt various conflict resolution style (Olderbak et al., 2018; Salovey & Grewal,2005; Rahim et al.,2002; Grace & Harris,1990). Jordan and Troth (2002) suggested that people with higher EI levels are more likely to engage in more collaborative conflict resolution styles. Yu et al. (2006) found in the Chinese population that the higher the EI in the supervisor-supervised relationship, the more the integrative/collaborative style and the committed style when coping with conflicts. Kasik and Kumcağiz (2014), describe several skills that promote constructive conflict resolution: *observation*, referring to the ability to put oneself in the other person's shoes and try to understand their feelings and preferences (*emotional empathy*); *communication skills*, both about expressing ideas clearly and respectfully, and listening with attention and interest to the interlocutor (*active listening*); *creative thinking*, to be able to propose the right solution; *critical thinking*, involving self-criticism of self-deprecation and of unreliable sources of information (e.g. rumours); and *emotional skills*, which allow us to recognize negative emotions (especially anger) and control them. In relation to this last skill, it is very important to note that conflict creates an emotional state, but it also happens that people's emotions can be the basis of conflict. Therefore, the correct management of emotions acts as a barrier to conflict and for those who have already been created, this is the main factor in the resolution(Halperin & Tagar,2017). Scholars also argued that aggressive behavior that often accompanies conflict leads to feelings of anger(Umashakar & Charita,2014). It is an emotion associated with an unfulfilled desire that results from frustration. Therefore, a significant number of conflicts could be avoided if people developed some emotional skills. In the same line, other scholars say that the lack of development of emotional skills that allow empathy and the truth of another person, lack of self-control of behavior and ignorance of the emotional world affect the development and solution of conflict (idem). From the above, it can be concluded that EI sets the necessary standards for effective conflict management. Intelligent people consider their own feelings and those of others, distinguish between them, and use that information to guide their thinking and behavior (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The process of human emotions is very important when choosing between different types of conflict management. In relation to the application of these concepts in the workplace, conflict has been identified as an important aspect in the management and organizational structure since any type of organization is prone to conflict. Conflict is inevitable in the workplace so EI can easily help people choose the

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best conflict management style. Researchers have studied conflict in different organizations (Sloan & Geldenhuys, 2021; Yin et al.,2020; Chen et al.,2019; Chan et al.,2014; Ann & Yang,2012; Shih et al.,2010; Morrison,2008; Rahim et al.,2002). In a study of EI and social interaction, Schutte et al. (2001) found that people with high EI show greater empathy, greater self-control in social situations, interpersonal relationships, greater relationships with partners, etc. This result can be considered as important, since it shows that EI can be seen as a desirable quality that leads to social knowledge. The authors study supports Mayer et al. (2000) findings, who revealed that people with high EI may be more effective than their peers and, therefore, may be better at motivating people to achieve goals, objectives, and organizational tasks.

The dynamics between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution.

As Wood et al. (2020) argued, due to the connection between the emotional world, learning conflict resolution cannot be separated from other skills in human relations. However, not long ago, the study of emotions took a back seat to scientific research on conflict and negotiation (Mayer & Slavoye,1995). Although it is true that the last ten years have seen a real change in emotions, the number of research and studies on emotions in the process of conflict resolution has increased significantly (Morrison,2008; Jordan & Troth,2002). Existing research on the relationship between EI and conflict resolution has examined these relationships at the individual and group level. Hopkins and Yonker (2015) confirmed that there is evidence for a direct relationship between EI and effective conflict resolution; and many authors have found some relationship between a high level of EI and the ability to manage conflict effectively (Kumari, 2015; Shimoda et al.,2014;Jordan & Troth,2004;Jordan & Troth,2002.). As scholars argue (Walton & Hiddbard,2017; Gardner et al.,2011; Mavroveli et al.,2009; Brouzos et al.,2004) confirm the development of EI from childhood is an important and effective tool in the resolution of conflicts and therefore makes it possible to interact peacefully with others and to achieve goals. This evolutionary process is very important because a person can be powerful and have a lot of knowledge, but if he does not manage his emotions well, his performance will not be successful in everyday life. In fact, lack of impulse control, or the inability to control emotions, has been cited as the primary cause of job breakdown in successful leaders (McCall & Lombardo, 1983). Furthermore, the inability to manage emotions effectively can hinder the information processing needed to resolve conflicts constructively (Baron, 1991). At the individual level, Promis (2008) suggested that employees with low EI may not be able to perform well because they may not have the required skills of flexibility and strength required in times of crisis. As Sloan and Geldenhuys (2021) explained, it is not always easy to manage the emotions of others and, therefore, this disability can harm the work of employees. In fact, working is not only based on work, but also on social relations. Pekaar et al. (2020) stated that focusing on assessing and controlling the emotions of others can help performance, as employees can better understand the emotions of others and wisely use interpersonal skills at work to improve social relations. This, in turn, can be useful for managing conflicts and thereby increasing the efficiency of other projects. At the organizational level, according to Hopkins and Yonker (2015), conflict is part of organizing life and managing it effectively in the workplace is a constant challenge for employees. More effective conflict management will lead to better teamwork, better employee engagement, and better

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productivity; and behind the general strategy to achieve this is EI (Chan et al.,2014; Cote & Miners,2006; Jordan & Troth,2002). EI is very significant also in the team leadership since it enables the ability to have good relationships with others (Brackett et al.,2006; Schutte et al.,2001), to develop collective goals and subordinates (Edelman & van Knippenberg,2018) and understanding emotional climate within a group (Foy et al.,2019; Goleman et al.,2002). Based on Goleman`s findings, Yang and Mossholder (2004) suggested that a high level of team EI reduces conflict related to work and relationships at the team level. Schreier (2002) and Fulmer & Barry (2004) hypothesized that mediation through emotional intelligence will understand and resolve difficult situations effectively. Salami (2009) argues that people with high levels of EI may have fewer social conflicts or manage them better. Ayoko et al. (2008) also reported that groups with low climate EI (i.e., lack of empathy and emotion regulation) experience greater performance in social conflict. The same results were confirmed by the research of Liu & Li (2013). Therefore, managing a leader's emotions reduces the negative impact of interpersonal conflict on his or her team performance. Shih and Susanto (2010) found a positive relationship between EI and conflict management style especially the collaborative and compromised style within Indonesian government officials. Schlaerth et al (2013) confirmed that the more EI there is, the more opportunities there are for collaboration, accommodation conflict management styles, which are also in line with the conclusions of authors such as Chen et al. (2019), Başoğul and Ozgur (2016), Zhang et al. (2015), Chan et al. (2014), Hopkins and Yonker (2015) and Rahim et al. (2002).

Zeidner et al. (2004) concluded that people who manage their emotions well are more likely to use an introspective style and less accepting/receptive styles than those who do not manage their emotions well. Schutte et al. (2001) found that people with higher EI scores have high social skills. In the job-related field, therefore, through the ability to interact and communicate effectively with others, the employees will have a sense of acceptance and comfort in reaching agreement among their supervisors and be more effective in their task accomplishment. Hopkins and Yonker (2015) showed that the integrative style of conflict resolution ("*Collaboration* ") was predicted by "*Problem solving*" and "*Social responsibility*" subscales. '*Problem solving*' subscale was also predictive for the '*Compromised*' and '*Avoidance*' conflict management styles; "*Social Responsibility* " was true for the type of "Accommodator" conflict resolution style; and the '*Impulse Control*' and '*Self-Esteem*' subscales were predictors of the dominant style ('*Competitive*'). Recently, Trigueros et al. (2019) confirmed that various studies associate the ability to resolve conflicts with a better self-image, with a higher degree of qualities that make people more able to control emotions. The results are consistent with those of Baudry et al (2018), Schutte et al. (2017), Zeidner et al. (2011), Martins (2010) and Slaski & Cartwright (2003).

METHOD

The purpose of this paper is to study the dynamic interaction of emotional intelligence (EI) and conflict resolution in the workplace and how sociodemographic and work-place factors influence Emotional Intelligence and vice-versa.

Sample

The sample of the present work was composed of 280 administrative employees from the major Departments of the University of Tirana. Male participation is relatively high (n = 150) or 53% while women (n = 130) or 46%. Most of participants were from Tirana (54%) while other cities in Albania represent in different weights such as Durres (15%), Elbasan (12%), Vlora (11%), Korça (5 %) and Shkodra (3%). 86% of the participants had completed at least a master's degree and had more than 5 years of working experience in the administration; 9% of the participants had less than 5 years of work with a bachelor's degree and the remaining 5% hold a Doctoral Degree and more than 3 years of working experience. Most participants belong to the "Faculty of Social Sciences" (45%), followed by the "Faculty of Economics and Finance" (25%), the "Faculty of Law" (18%), the "Faculty of Medical Sciences" (10%) and the "Faculty of Arts and Humanities" (2%). A detailed view of this data collection can be found in the following Table.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample

		No. of participants	% of participants
Gender	Female	130	46
	Male	150	53
Location	Tirana	151	54
	Durres	42	15
	Elbasan	34	12
	Vlora	31	11
	Korça	14	5
	Shkodra	8	3
Education	Bachelor	240	86
	Master	25	9
	Doctorate	15	5
Working experience	up to 3 years	25	9
	3-6 years	15	5
	6-10 years	240	86
Hierarchical rank	D.1 (Head of dpt.)	28	10
	D.2 (Specialists)	182	65
	D.3(Admin. assist.)	70	25
Faculty	Social Sciences	126	45
	Economics and Finance	70	25
	Law	50	18
	Medical Sciences	28	10
	Arts and Humanities	6	2

Source: Author's elaboration on own's data

Instruments

Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i 2.0) Bar-On's (1997)

EQ-i is used to determine how a person's EI can affect people and the workplace. It is one of the most widely used EI measures in literature and one of the most respected and popular EI assessment tools in the world (Esnaola et al. (2017), Wood et al. (2009), Palmer et al. (2003), Wagner et al.(2003), Dawda& Hart (2000). The EQ-i is a self-assessment tool available in several languages, but not yet standardized in Albanian. Afore, the authors of the present work used an adapted version of the tool based on the reliability of the tool in the current sample. Bar-On has developed many versions for use with different people and different situations (Robles-Bello et al. (2020), Arifin & Yussof (2016), Zyl & Casper (2014), Kun et al. (2012), De Weerd & Rossi (2012), To the present study, we used the EQ-i 2.0 version as it is the most complete version of the original EQ-i. In general, the development of EQ-i 2.0 followed much of the same process as EQ-i: defining the goals of change (what needs to change and why); design changes to subscales and create new ones based on the latest EI research and practice using the EQ-i model; build and test applications; and conduct a normative analysis and post-analysis of the data to improve and validate the instrument (objective analysis, analysis and verification). EQ-i 2.0 focuses on emotional and social behaviors that are competent in relation to performance and success in life and work (Bar-On, 2002; Bar-On et al.,2000). The tool consists of 5 scales and 15 subcales that are described in the following table. EQ-i 2.0 consists of 133 items and its responses are measured on a scale of 5- Likert scores range from 1 (never/rarely) to 5 (always/almost always). The test requires about 30 minutes to be administered without interruption. The total raw score is converted to a standard score with 100 and a standard deviation of 15 (Bar-On, 2002). To evaluate the reliability of EQ-i 2.0 in the current sample, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated (Peterson,1995; Cronbach, 1951). The alpha coefficient of the total score was high ($\alpha= 0.91$). The score between the scales is also high, especially of "*social interaction*" and "*decision making*" at $\alpha= 0.87$, "*self-expression*" at $\alpha=.821$ and of "*stress management*" and "*self-awareness*" at $\alpha= .91$. Alpha coefficients obtained for the subscales were very high and consistent, varying between $\alpha=.90$ and $\alpha= .92$. To study the validity of the EQ-i 2-0- and a sample of participants, a factor analysis was performed.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

Thomas and Kilmann's (1977) TKI has been helping to understand how different types of conflict management mode affect interpersonal relationships for more than 40 years. These authors proposed a questionnaire that makes it possible to establish people's preference for using some form of conflict resolution styles in different situations of daily life. The TKI is a forced instrument that consists of 30-word types, namely 60 sentences, of which 25 are repeated; in which, in fact, the parts corresponding to item 7 are checked for each type. Each pair sets up a situation of conflict and refers to the judgment and concerns of people. The person must choose from each pair the statement that best describes what he or she considers to be their behavior during the conflict. Based on the interaction of the variables of assertiveness and cooperation, Thomas and Kilmann

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identified five types of conflict management strategies: accommodation, avoidance, competitive, collaborative, and compromised. To evaluate the reliability of the TKI, the McDonald Omega ratio was calculated, which for the present sample was equal to $\omega = 0.63$. To consider the reliability value acceptable thanks to the Omega ratio, it must be between $\omega = 0.70$ and $\omega = 0.90$ although scholars suggest that in some cases, scores starting from $\omega = 0.65$ may be acceptable (Katz, 2011). Therefore, according to this index, the reliability of TKI for the present sample is acceptable.

Data administration

For the collection of information in the current study, an official letter of introduction was sent to the Human Resources Department of the University of Tirana where we obtained permission to contact the participants among the selected 280 administrative staff. The participants were informed about the consent process, the aim, objective and importance of the study. The administration time of the questionnaire for each participant varies between 15 and 20 minutes.

Ethical Issues

Based on the approval of the Ethics Body at the Order of the Psychologist of Albania and the Rectorate of the University of Tirana, we started collecting data on the subjects in the study. A Detailed Informed Consent was presented to participants regarding the purpose, aim, general questionnaires guidelines, and expected outcomes. The protection of the confidentiality and anonymity of the subjects was carried out according to the ethical criteria of the Data Protection Law no.9887, amended in 2014 of the Republic of Albania and the European Act on Protection of Privacy and Personal Data regarding data treatment for research purposes.

RESULTS

Table 2 shows the results of the descriptive analysis of the dimensions of EI, specifying the global index (total EI), scales and sub-scales, to identify the scores of EI and meet the research objective. The total EI of the sample was 100.0 with a standard deviation of 14.98. This score is right in the middle of the average range (90-110 points), therefore, the score for this group is of the standard level, adjusted to the average found during the process of creating the standard for the test (Bar-On, 1997). In this regard, it must be kept in mind that excessive attention to personal emotions may not be adaptive and even not helpful to the research scores.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics, Means and Standard Deviations of EI

EI	N	Mean	SD
EI total	280	100,00	14,98
<i>Self-perception scale</i>	280	102,04	13,52
- Self-esteem	280	- 100,056	- 14,01
- Self-realization	280	- 101,00	- 14,98
- Emotional self-awareness	280	- 97,876	- 15,06
<i>Self-expression scale</i>	280	98,90	14,765
- Emotional expression	280	- 97,879	- 15,09
- Assertiveness	280	- 99,01	- 15,01
- Independence	280	- 96,67	- 14,89
<i>Interpersonal Scale</i>	280	98,89	13,87
- Interpersonal relations	280	- 103,05	- 13,76
- Empathy	280	- 96,87	- 14,61
- Social Responsibility	280	- 104,982	- 13,54
<i>Decision-making Scale</i>	280	101,001	14,08
- Problem resolution	280	- 100,25	- 13,87
- Reality testing	280	- 99,42	- 13,61
- Impulse control	280	- 103,56	- 14,08
<i>Stress-management scale</i>	280	99,87	13,987
- Flexibility	280	- 100,65	- 13,01
- Tolerance to stress	280	- 97,83	- 14,60
- Optimism	280	- 103,002	- 14,08

Source: Author's elaboration on own's data

Among the different scales for calculating total EI, the scale "Self-perception scale " has the highest score (M=102.04; SD=13.52), while "Interpersonal Scale" has the lowest score (M=98.89; SD=13,87). Regarding the subscales, "Interpersonal Relations " (M=103.05; SD=13.76) has the highest score while the lowest score concerns the subscale "Independence" of the Scale of Self-expression (M=96.67; SD= 14.89). Regarding "Stress management", it seems that for the current sample, "Optimism" subscale has the highest score (M=103,002; SD=14.08) while "Stress tolerance" has the lowest score (M=97). .83; SD=14.60). This means that for the present study participants, being "optimistic" is a repeated copying mechanism and that they also have a high degree of flexibility (accommodation). However, the group exhibits a poor tolerance to stress, which in turn can make them more vulnerable or depressed under demanding conditions. There is no significant difference between the scores of the different EI values (the closest to 10) or, between the number of participants, with a standard deviation between 15 and 20% of the mean. Table 3 shows details of conflict management styles as the "total EI" of EQ-i. The participants are divided into three different (EI high, moderate, and low) according to the score of distribution: between high and medium EI group, there are no great differences, with different scores based on high and low EI. The highest EI score is a "Compromising type" (M=56.07; SD=29.89). The

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lowest score was for "Accommodation Type" (M=44.08; SD=29.76). It means that people with high EI scores tend to find solutions that will try to make everyone happy, but they do not put the needs of others before their own. In the medium score EI style, the highest score regards the "Avoidance style" (M=51,09; SD=25,25) and the lowest score in the "Collaborative style" (M=43,65; SD=29,87). It means that a moderate EI person tends to avoid completely the conflict but, when they must take side, they do not like to please everyone. In the low EI scores profile, the highest scores reach in the "Competitive Style" (M=56,76; SD=30,65) while the lowest scores regard the "Accommodation Style" (M=32,04; SD=25,36). This means that low EI people fail to value other's perspective while they also put their own needs before others.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics, means and dev. standard of conflict management styles according to the total EI

EI	Conflict management style	N	Mean	Std
Total EI High	Accommodation	280	44,08	29,76
	Avoidance		46,65	27,06
	Collaborative		49,08	30,01
	Competitive		50,89	26,87
	Compromising		56,07	29,89
Total EI Moderate	Accommodation	280	47,98	27,54
	Avoidance		51,09	25,25
	Collaborative		43,65	29,87
	Competitive		48,87	27,39
	Compromised		43,98	28,65
Total EI Low	Accommodation	280	32,04	25,36
	Avoidance		52,09	28,03
	Collaborative		36,98	26,42
	Competitive		56,76	30,65
	Compromised		48,98	31,02

Source: Author's elaboration on own's data

To meet the purpose of studying the relationship between demographics (variables of gender and hierarchy), with EI and conflict management styles, t-tests were performed for the two independent variables. The other remaining variables of education level, and working experience are not in the aim of the present study.

The following table 4 shows the results of these analyses, considering gender as the comparison variable. Significant differences were found for females in the 'Self-Expression' and 'Interpersonal' subscales as well as the 'Emotional Self-Awareness', 'Emotional Expression' and 'Empathy' subscales. There is no significant difference in terms of conflict management between both genders.

Table 4. t-test for difference in means by gender (male vs. female)

	Mean male	Mean female	SD	t value	p value
EI total	100.00	98.09	1.675	-1.10	.45
<i>Self-perception scale</i>	98.89	100.04	1.765	-1.345	.36
<i>Self - expression scale</i>	96.87	98.96	1.78	-2.5	.46
<i>Interpersonal Scale</i>	98.05	103.76	1.68	1.54	.20
<i>Decision-making Scale</i>	102.89	99.87	1.57	1.68	.25
<i>Stress-management scale</i>	99.067	99.01	1.56	1.34	.35
Self-esteem	106.89	105.98	2.01	1.40	.48
Self -realization	98.94	99.02	2.67	-.40	.56
Emotional self-awareness	93.78	97.89	2.87	1.35	.74
Emotional expression	95.06	99.00	2.99	.80	.60
Assertiveness	100.00	99.02	2.67	1.30	.86
Independence	99.00	96.45	2.88	.75	.80
Interpersonal relations	101.45	99.00	2.80	1.01	.65
Empathy	98.88	100.03	2.60	2.34	.46
Social Responsibility	103.001	101.56	2.60	.50	.78
Problem resolution	99.67	100.15	2.97	.30	.95
Reality testing	96.78	98.87	2.65	.25	.85
Impulse control	100.21	100.07	3.00	1.34	.36
Flexibility	95.62	99.00	2.88	.67	.40
Tolerance to stress	99.01	100.54	2.78	.76	.50
Optimism	100.00	101.56	2.98	1.055	.68
Accommodation	51.03	48.96	4.87	.20	.96
Avoidance	58.25	55.01	4.981	.86	.67
Collaboration	45.68	41.00	4.28	.65	.89
Competitive	51.02	49.66	5.00	.35	.94
Compromised	50.89	59.20	5.01	.26	.98

Source: Author's elaboration on own's data

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Table 5. t-test for difference in means by discipline of work (social sciences, economics, and other departments)

	Mean other depts.	Mean Social Sciences	Mean Economics& Finance	SD	t value	p value
EI total	99.01	105.67	101.59	1.92	2.98	.35
<i>Self-perception scale</i>	99.88	104.35	100.02	1.99	2.80	.45
<i>Self-expression scale</i>	97.06	99.89	89.98	2.01	3.00	.67
<i>Interpersonal Scale</i>	99.00	98.78	92.54	2.006	1.99	.47
<i>Decision-making Scale</i>	99.139	97.87	95.09	1.87	1.95	.30
<i>Stress-management scale</i>	96.38	102.45	100.87	2.05	2.87	.66
Self-esteem	105.54	110.04	99.92	2	-3.25	.15
Self-realization	100.65	104.06	100.97	1.89	2.85	.42
Emotional self-awareness	98.15	100.45	99.56	1.56	1.86	.45
Emotional expression	99.01	99.05	98.87	1.65	2.00	.35
Assertiveness	96.89	97.07	99.00	1.54	2.03	.38
Independence	96.45	100.45	98.88	1.35	2.00	.46
Interpersonal relations	99.00	100.44	99.98	1.54	2.34	.44
Empathy	100.56	100.18	100.25	1.45	2.00	.47
Social Responsibility	102.54	99.76	98.09	1.54	2.45	.46
Problem resolution	97.88	96.05	99.00	1.55	2.056	.37
Reality testing	99.94	103.03	100.76	1.78	2.75	.48
Impulse control	101.94	100.55	99.98	1.65	2.56	.49
Flexibility	96.07	99.76	87.09	.87	1.09	.56
Tolerance to stress	99.76	103.05	102.98	1.98	2.01	.47
Optimism	96.54	99.99	100.76	1.56	2.00	.57
Accommodation	54.06	42.00	44.89	2.01	3.65	.55
Avoidance	55.87	51.01	45.79	1.98	2.05	.49
Collaborative	42.09	38.99	40.19	1.78	3.01	.54
Competitive	47.81	58.09	56.76	1.54	2.09	.47
Compromised	58.25	62.15	60.15	.98	2.65	.56

Source: Author's elaboration on own's data

Table 5 shows that there is a significant difference both in the total EI score and in the number of scales and subscales, in favor of the participants working in the "Social Sciences" department. It also shows that participants in this Department use '*Accommodation*' and '*Compromising*' styles more than other forms of conflict resolution compared to their colleagues in other sectors. It means that Social Sciences department employees are very tolerant when putting other needs in front of

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their own and they try to find a solution that generally pleases all parties. They are flexible and have good stress management skills.

The following table 6 introduces the Pearson correlations between study variables EI and conflict resolution styles. As it can be deduced, a positive relationship between the EI total and Accommodation conflict resolution style ($r_w=.567$), a positive relationship with the Competitive conflict resolution style ($r_w = .874$) and a strong and positive relationship between the EI total and Compromised conflict resolution style ($r_w= 1.034$) was found. These results are in line with our t-test and descriptive analysis.

Table 6. Pearson Correlations of EI and Conflict Resolution Styles

	(1) Accommodation	(2) Avoidance	(3) Collaborative	(4) Competitive	(5) Compromised
EI total	.567	.467	.169**	.874	1.034**
N	280	280	280	280	280

*** $p<0.01$ **, $p<0.05$ *, $p<0.1$ Source: Author’s elaboration on own’s data

To fully understand the impact of EI on conflict resolution style, we performed a linear regression. Referring to the correlation variables in the Model Summary, a value of 0.4 is considered significant. Starting from the analysis of the sociodemographic characteristics and the total score on the five EI scales, Table 7 shows the coefficients that result from the regression of each variable on each EI scale in an individual method. The present $R=.701$ which reveals a good variability and $R_{square}=.698$ reveals that there is enough influence between the EI and the Conflict Resolution Styles.

Table 7. Multiple Regression of EI and Conflict Resolution Styles

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Conflict Resolution Styles		Enter
a. Dependent Variable EI			
b. All requested variables entered			

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std.error in the estimate
1	.701 ^a	.698	.592		.754
a. Predictors: (Constant), Conflict Resolution Styles					

Source: Author’s elaboration on own’s data

Table 8. Logistic regression of sociodemographic and employment variables on conflict resolution

	(1) Accommodati on	(2) Avoidance	(3) Collaborati on	(4) Competitive	(5) Compromis ed
Female	3.765 (2.98)	3.187(2.987)	1.097(2.897)	2.987 (1.987)	2.456 (3.564)
Social Sciences	8.078*** (4.019)	3.807 (2.5674)	3.056(2.987)	11.925***(2.876)	3.452 (-4.056)

Standard errors are in parentheses *** p<0.1, ** p<.05* p<.1 Source: Author’s elaboration on own’s data

Table 9. Logistic regression of sociodemographic and work variables on total EI and scales

	(1) EI total	(2) Self- perception scale	(3) Self - expression scale	(4) Interpersonal Scale	(5) Decision- making Scale	(6) Stress- management scale
Female	1.8000 (1.678)	2.00065 (1.702)	3.087** (1.679)	3.987** (1.7658)	2.067 (1,654)	.546 (1.456)
Social Sciences	5.439** (1.765)	5.122*** (1.860)	5.1774** (1.987)	2.987 (1.708)	3.564** (1.978)	4.031**** (1.907)

Standard errors are in parentheses *** p<0.1, ** p<.05* p<.1 Source: Author’s elaboration on own’s data

Regarding the sociodemographic factor and choice of conflict management model, Tables 8 and 9 summarize the results of the regression of both variables. Both the Kaiser criterion and the Scree-

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test highlighted the presence of two main dimensions (EI and Conflict resolution styles) which generated almost 76% of the total variability. As can be revealed by the above tables, gender does not influence the choice of conflict resolution style. Regression analysis confirmed that the female administrative employees of the "Social Sciences " Department used the Avoidance and Compromised style and the Stress management style type more than the other styles.

DISCUSSION

As the aim of this paper, we proposed to know what the level of EI among the administrative employees in the University of Tirana is. Regarding the choice of conflict resolution model, there is no reference to determine whether the values obtained in the sample are "good" or not since people use different types depending on the time, although some are easier to apply than others. The most frequently used categories by the participants were "Accommodation", "Avoidance" and "Compromised" styles and the results of the current paper are in line with those of another research (Chen et al.,2019; Sahoo & Sahoo,2019; Chan et al.,2014; Bratton et al.,2011; Başoğul, & Özgür,2016;Hopkins & Yonker,2015; Kumari,2015; Umashakar & Charita,2014; Theory,2013; Shih & Susanto,2010; Wood et al.,2009; Morrison,2008; Prati et al.,2003; Rahim et l.,2002; Jordan & Troth,2002; Goleman,2001,Grace et al.,1990). Regarding gender, the results show that in the in the 'Self-Expression' and 'Interpersonal' subscales as well as the 'Emotional Self-Awareness', 'Emotional Expression' and 'Empathy' subscales. Results also show that women with high EI scores tend to find solutions that will try to make everyone happy (Avoidance style with the highest score; $M=51,09$; $SD=25,25$), but they do not put the needs of others before their own (Collaborative style with the lowest score; $M=43,65$; $SD=29,87$). The research of Cabello et al. (2016), Ożańska-Ponikwia (2015), Clarke et al. (2015), Theory (2013) and Noor et al. (2011) also show differences by gender and support for women in terms of Emotional Intelligence elements (empathy, expression, and interpersonal relations). Regarding the department, the Social Sciences department is the variable where we find the strongest results. There is a big difference both in the total score of EI and many scales (four out of five) and subscales (twelve out of fifteen), always in favor of the employees working in the field "Social Sciences". The people who work in this department are responsible for providing psychosocial help, internal staff services, laboratory, and assistance, managing human resources, IT services, accounting, and budgeting, etc. This is related to the influence of culture at the global level in the organization mentioned by Gunkel et al. (2014) and Bono & Barron (2008). The same result is consistent also with what was reported by Ayoko et al. al. (2021), Gunkel et al. (2014), Kaushal & Kwantes (2006), who found significant differences in the use of departments and sectors and supports the literature on the mediating role of cultural norms in the resolution of conflicts. In the present paper, cultural characteristics were addressed in the sociodemographic factor and our results did not reveal any significant differences, although further research may be needed to explore these dynamics.

Regarding the impact of EI on conflict management style, our results found a significant relationship between EI and the Compromised conflict management style ($r_w= 1.034$), a positive relationship between the EI total and Accommodation conflict resolution style ($r_w=.567$), and a

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positive relationship with the Competitive conflict resolution style ($r_w = .874$). The results obtained show that EI provides a significant and positive relationship with three the types of conflict resolution (“Accommodation”, "Competition", and “Compromising”). It is important to state that, although the variance described is large, all the regression coefficients show the impact that EI variables have on the Conflict resolution styles and the expected outcomes that will precede events in many significant situations.

CONCLUSIONS

Conflicts are a part of organizational life and managing them effectively in the workplace is a constant challenge for team leaders and HR. More effective conflict management will lead to better teamwork, better employee engagement, and better productivity. But to achieve this efficiency, one must be able to identify and resolve the conflicts that cause conflicts before they escalate, because people must resolve conflicts at their source. Greater interaction with employees to understand them better, and practicing appropriate conflict management practices, are two conflict management strategies for managers, and EI is the root of these strategies in general (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015.). Most research acknowledges the impact of EI on conflict management globally, but little is known about the specific dimensions of EI that are important in determining different types of conflict management. The overall aim of this study was to understand how EI contributes to the choice of preferred conflict management style.

Regarding EI, the results of this article show that there is a positive relationship between gender and EI ; in particular, women tend to have higher EI levels in the domains of 'Self-expression', Emotional sensitivity', and 'Empathy'. Compared to department working, a significant difference was found both in the total score of EI and in most of the scales and subscales of EQ-i 2.0, always in favor of the participants working in the department of " Social Sciences". Regarding conflict resolution styles, the styles most used by team leaders are "Accommodation", “Competitiveness” and “Compromising”. The choice of style does not seem to be fully related to gender, but being a female seems to have a good impact in the conflict resolution. Regarding the relationship between EI and conflict type, the results show that EI is closely related to the type of approval and support others. In quality of the part of EI, we find that the "Interpersonal relations” and “Stress management” subscales have a very good ratio and are very important in reporting the use of the EI. Keeping a balanced (accommodation and compromised) relationship at work and having healthy coping mechanisms (competitiveness) are also related to the general psychological wellbeing as they increase being assertive, better adapted, being motivated, having a positive tolerance to anxiety, better affect management and creating a positive teamwork.

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