

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**INVESTIGATING THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
PERSONALITY TRAITS AND
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLE
AMONG EMPLOYEES DURING
PANDEMIC AT PEJABAT
SETIAUSAHA KERAJAAN NEGERI
PAHANG: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF
RELATIONSHIP QUALITY**

**KHADIJAH ATHIRAH BINTI HJ. MOHAMAD
SHAMSHUDIN**

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ABSTRACT

This research will investigate the relationship between personality traits, relationship quality, and conflict management style among employees during the pandemic at the Secretary of Pahang State Government. Based on the conflict management style, the researcher specifically expected that integrating, obliging, compromising, dominating, and avoiding styles would be related to extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism, which are the five-factor model of personality traits as well as the relationship quality. However, it is questionable how the pandemic crisis's conflict concerns affect personality traits and relationship quality. Based on researcher knowledge, there is limited research on conflict management in organizations during the pandemic because it rarely occurs in Malaysia. The researcher also looked at how relationship quality mediated the relationship between personality traits and conflict management style. To better understand the relationship, this study will develop a framework and analyze how well the model fits the data using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) method. A total of 214 respondents from the departments and units in the State of Secretary of Pahang State Government were selected to complete a questionnaire to provide the empirical data for the analysis. The purpose of this research determines how variables in the extended Theory of the Five-factor of Personality Traits and the mediating relationship quality can be tested as a predictor of the conflict management style. All hypotheses were supported in this study with the presence of the mediator showing that personality traits were significantly related to Conflict Management Style. The limitation of this research in terms of scope of research covers only focusing on the government sector during the pandemic.

Keywords: Conflict management style, Personality traits, Relationship quality

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Khadijah Athirah Binti Hj. Mohamad Shamshudin
Master of Science (Business Management)
Faculty of Business and Management
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the Study	3
1.3 Statement of the Problem	5
1.4 Research Objectives	8
1.5 Research Questions	9
1.6 Significance of the Study	9
1.7 Limitations of the Study	10
1.8 Definition of Key Variables	11
1.9 Conclusion	14
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	15
2.1 Introduction	15
2.2 The Study on the Conflict	15
2.2.1 Positive and Negative Effects of Conflict	17
2.3 Literature on Dependent Variables	21
2.3.1 Conflict Management Style	21
2.3.2 Theory 1: Rahim Model of Conflict Management (1983)	22

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

There is evidence that when the situation such as action taken by the government are related to levels of psychological wellness (Qiu et al., 2020), and the novelty of this situation invites an understanding of individual differences in how people cope with the pandemic. For example, nowadays, the world has turned into remote working or work from home concept wherever possible due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) an infectious disease caused by a severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Elengoe, 2020). When the pandemic outbreak happened back in the year 2020, the government and the policymakers took preventive steps and directive measures to sustain social movement and infection among the citizens (Alifuddin, 2021). Common action that has been taken globally was the implementation of lockdown. Since the World Health Organization (WHO) proclaimed COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020, the cases of coronavirus have surpassed millions, which has spread fast to more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. Countries in the Southeast Asia region are not inevitable from this pandemic. As of today, all ASEAN member countries have been affected by the expanding confirmed case (Energy, 2021). It not only poses issues to public health but also affects the government sector.

The COVID-19 epidemic has caused a crisis on a grand scale, with far-reaching social, economic, and environmental consequences (Bapuji et al., 2020). For most organizations in government sector, the effects of this pandemic in the most impacted countries are numerous and of unprecedented intensity. These uncertainties are much more challenging to handle for organizations because there has been little in-depth research on the subject, and the information provided is scant, fragmentary, and conflicting (Boiral et al., 2021). Furthermore, the pandemic in Malaysia has created an endemic situation of uncertainty and confusion about the risks to employees, the measures and best practices that organizations should implement, stakeholder pressures, recovery plans including