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Negotiation Styles and Culture: A Brief Overview of Existing Works on the Malaysian Negotiation Style

Umminasrah Othman*, Alisa Ibrahim, Baharudin Kadir

Email: unosma74@gmail.com, alisa@unikl.edu.my, baharudin@unikl.edu.my

**Corresponding author*

Abstract

This paper examines the negotiation styles and emphasises that intercultural negotiation cannot be treated the same way as intracultural negotiation. The complexity of intercultural negotiation is mainly due to cultural differences. Thus, a sketch description of two well-known theories on culture, the Hofstede Cultural Dimension and Hall Culture Model, is explained, appreciating their influences on negotiation styles. In addition, the segregation of eastern countries into one culture and the western countries into another has been associated with negotiation styles' preferences and, consequently, the results. The paper also discusses the origins of the negotiation style theory. It lays out how culture shapes negotiators' behaviour, which affects the outcome. The emergence of a third culture because of globalisation is highlighted, and a summary of existing literature on the Malaysian negotiation style is presented. Understanding one's negotiation style can prevent misunderstandings, enhance negotiation outcomes, and improve relationships with the parties involved.

Keywords: Culture, Collaborative, Negotiation, Styles.

Introduction

"Negotiation is an indispensable skill for any social creature" (Gratch, Nazari, & Johnson, 2016, p. 728). As such, the topics on negotiation and negotiation styles have been researched expansively. The importance of negotiation has become more evident because of globalisation, especially for businesses to expand their operations. Since the foundation to accomplish good deals is through negotiation, the importance of negotiation skills, including styles, must not be taken lightly as it helps to ensure constructive interactions with everyone (Caputo, Ayoko, Amoo, & Menke, 2019). More importantly, the need for negotiation is unlikely to lessen in the coming years.

However, facing opponents from different cultures in an international setting could be more complicated than meeting and discussing with someone from the same cultural background. The complexity of the situations is mainly attributed to cultural differences. Negotiators from distinct cultural backgrounds have the tendency to be biased toward their counterparts. The biased predicament, if not handled wisely may lead to misunderstandings and in the worst-case scenario, elicit conflicts. Many studies have proven that joint gains are lower in intercultural negotiations in comparison to intracultural negotiations mainly due to cultural diversions (Attapum & Thumawongsa, 2016; Fatehi & Choi, 2019). That is why many studies on negotiation ravelled the topic of culture, as culture is believed to be the root of differences in negotiation styles (N.J. Adler & Graham, 2017; Ghauri & Usunier, 2003), consequently influencing the outcome (Mama & Daniel, 2020; Palich, Carini, & Livingstone, 2002). Moreover, a cross-cultural negotiation imposes greater risks and consequences if it fails. Such situations make it crucial to understand the numerous negotiating styles to optimise the chances for a win-win outcome. In fact, the awareness of personal negotiating styles is the basis for a negotiator to become better (Miller, 2014). Once the negotiators appreciate the differences in

individual negotiation behaviours, they are more likely to act cooperatively instead of acting uncompromisingly.

This paper examines several previous studies that link culture with negotiation style. If these two elements are poorly understood, it may trigger several issues, including over-generalisation, misconceptions or bias, and in the worst-case scenario, it leads to a negotiation breakdown. Therefore, reviewing existing studies can help one attain an understanding of these issues better. Awareness and knowledge can prevent negotiators from making unwarranted assumptions to ensure smoother discussion progress and a positive negotiation outcome.

In addition, it helps other researchers to explore the study of negotiation styles and other subjects unrelated to culture. In other words, this study encourages others to look at the negotiation style beyond its relations to culture. It is crucial as globalisation has resulted in cultural dilution in which people today no longer belong exclusively to a single culture.

Moreover, this review will also disclose the most explored and the least researched areas of study, particularly in Malaysia. This reassessment of previous works also provides an opportunity to identify research gaps in this topic. Consequently, a new area of study contributes to the enrichment of the present literature. Further broadening of knowledge also leaves room for improvement in the practical aspects.

Literature Review

Negotiation – The Style – Culture Defined

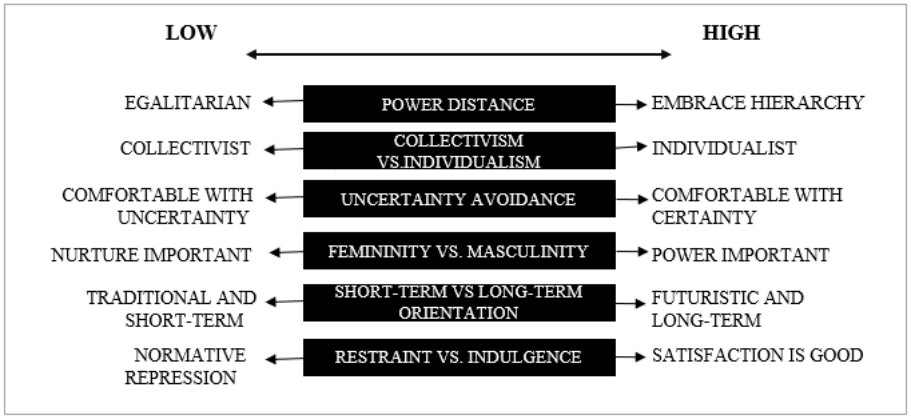
Negotiation is a process that involves at least two interdependent parties, trying to find a solution or settle a dispute that also necessitates resources (J. Brett, Behfar, & Sanchez-Burks, 2014). It occurs when two or more parties communicate with each other, revolving around a give-and-take pact, to reach an agreement in which the outcome should benefit all parties (Bouwman, van Thiel, van Deemen, & Rouwette, 2019; D'Agostino, Levine, & Sabharwal, 2020; Liu & Wilson, 2011; Lügger, Geiger, Neun, & Backhaus, 2015; Torres, 2011; Utomo & Idrus, 2011). Other researchers defined negotiation as deliberated dealings for personal advantage and economic interest (Aslani et al., 2016) or as an endeavour to resolve conflict (Sharif & Badlishah, 2016).

Negotiation style is the pattern of participants' behaviour when a negotiation is conducted (Neuliep & Johnson, 2016). It is sometimes referred to as a conflict style or strategy, although that does not necessarily mean that the parties are in dispute (Agndal, Åge, & Eklinder-Frick, 2017; Trippe & Baumoel, 2015). Instead, it suggests the discussion of parties concerned are aimed towards a joint settlement for disparate goals or standpoints (Fatehi & Choi, 2019). Scholars also describe the negotiation style as a conflict management style (Sharif & Badlishah, 2016) or a learning pattern of negotiating behaviour (Preuss & Wijst, 2017). Others defined it as strategies or tactics employed during negotiation that the negotiator can choose, although sometimes not his/her most preferred styles (Ogilvie & Kidder, 2008). Previous studies have suggested that an effective negotiation style helps improve negotiation outcomes (Malik & Mir, 2020).

Many definitions of culture are coined, among others, as the way a group of people thinks and acts and leads their lives in a similar pattern due to a similar approach in interpreting events (J. Brett et al., 2014; G Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). People from the same cultural group also have the tendency to use a similar communication style (Drake, 2001) as it is ingrained in the society's tradition in all aspects. The renowned guru of culture, Geert Hofstede (1984), interpreted it as how the mind of a group of people works or how the thinking pattern of the group is discrete from another group's way of thinking. In general, culture can be described as a common configuration of one's way of thinking and behaving, shaped by one's upbringing through socialisation.

Two Well-Known Theories of Culture: Hofstede and Hall

Scholars described culture through several theories. One of the famous and widely applied theories is Hofstede's culture dimension, which comprises: (i) Power Distance (PDI), (ii) Collectivism-Individualism, (iii) Uncertainty Avoidance, (iv) Femininity-Masculinity, (v) Short-Term-Long-Term Orientation (LTO), and (v) Restraint-Indulgence (Sochor, 2020). Power distance refers to the level of acceptance of the role of power in society. A higher score of power distance means greater acceptance of power inequality, while a lower score indicates less emphasis on the role of power (Gray, 2010). Individualism is when one's concern for oneself exceeds the concern for the group's priorities, goals, and rules, whilst collectivism is the opposite in which the group's interest prevails over individuals. Uncertainty avoidance refers to society's low tolerance of ambiguous situations; this dimension assesses the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertain circumstances and tries to avoid ambiguity. The masculinity dimension is when society appreciates the assertive behaviour of people, while femininity is when modest behaviour is more valued. Short-and-long-term orientation refers to the society's stance in terms of preserving its link to its past, present, and future. The Restraint-Indulgence dimension measures the level of control the society imposes on their impulses and desires, gleaned from their upbringing. An illustration of Hofstede's culture dimension is depicted in Figure 1.



(Source: Sochor, 2020)

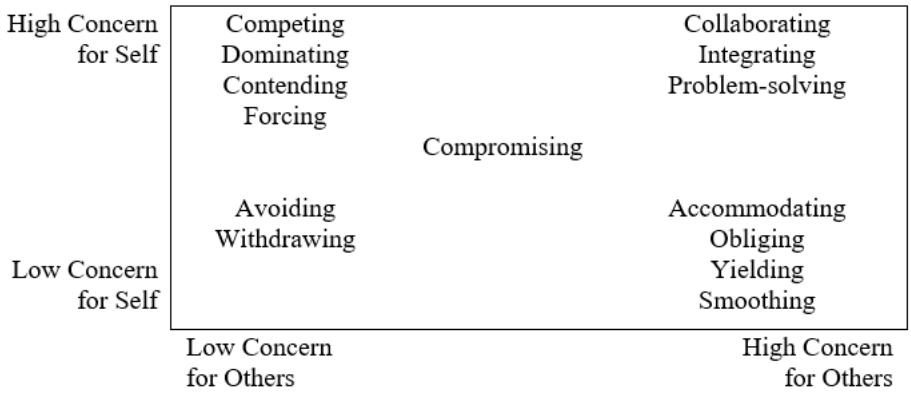
Figure 1: Overview of Hofstede's Culture Dimension

Edward Hall is another well-known scholar with extensive work on cross-cultural studies. He advised that while dealing with certain countries, the attention of "silent languages" should be drawn (Manrai, Manrai, Lascu, & Friedeborn, 2019). According to him, culture and communication reflect each other; how society communicates manifests the culture and vice versa. The two dimensions of Hall culture-communication are low-context and high-context. In the low-context communication style, the emphasis is on explicit and verbal messages. The messages are read in a simple and direct manner, focusing on the content and clarity of what is being said (E. Hall, 1959, 1976). In the high-context dimension, the focus is on implicit and non-verbal messages. Communication style is highly dependent on numerous factors of who and whom, why, when, where, and how the interaction takes place. Messages are read in a more complicated way; meanings are interpreted indirectly from the context (E. T. Hall & Hall, 1990; Kitayama & Ishii, 2002). Non-verbal cues, such as body gestures, facial expressions, and voice projections (tones), are connotations that carry significance (Potter & Balthazard, 2000; Volkema, Hofmeister-Toth, & Fleck, 2004).

Theories on Negotiation Style

The negotiation theory of the dual-concern model focuses on two dimensions: the degree of assertiveness and cooperativeness; it is the concern for "oneself" versus the concern for "others" (Shell, 2001). This model is closely related to Hofstede's individualism and collectivism concepts (Chang, 2014; Promsri, 2013). Originated from the Blake and Mouton 'Dual Concern' Model (1964), it was initially meant to address the handling of interpersonal conflict (Egan, 2016) through five different ways, namely forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and problem-solving (Riasi & Asadzadeh, 2015). It was later relabelled by Thomas (1974) based on the two-dimensional basis of 'Concern for oneself' versus 'Concern for others', and has paved ways to the development of other models in the literature (Abbasi, Gul, & Senin, 2018). Subsequently, the instrument was developed and named as the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) which categorised into five schemes that are competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating (Henry, 2012). The TKI was later complemented by others like the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROCI-2) with the five styles of integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising (Rahim & Magner, 1995). Another slightly different label was developed by Rubin, Pruitt, and Kim (1994), namely problem-solving, contending, and yielding. Although the modes of handling conflict or styles of negotiation are titled differently, they are based on the same foundation, that is, a schism between one's and counterparts' concerns.

The competing (dominating/contending/forcing) style is when a person has a very significant concern about his or her outcome but has an inconsequential concern about the results achieved by others. However, if a person does not care much about his or her outcome but has a very significant concern about his or her opponents' outcome, then he or she falls under the category of accommodating (obliging/yielding/smoothing) style. Whereas the collaborating (integrating/problem-solving) style is when an individual has a very high level of concern about his or her outcome and has the same level of concern for the other parties. However, if one has a very low level of concern about his or her outcome and the counterparts, it is categorised as avoiding style of negotiation (withdrawing). The other style is compromising in which one has a moderate concern for oneself and the partners. As illustrated in Figure 2, scholars labelled the same category of styles with a different name.



(Source : Ogilvie and Kidder, 2008)

Figure 2: The Different Labelling of Negotiation Style

The Association of Culture with Negotiation Style Approach and Outcome

In a global stance, studies on negotiation styles are broadly classified into a common category of competitive-cooperative and distributive-integrative, differentiating the Western against Eastern cultures (Benetti, Ogliastri, & Caputo, 2021) and associated with negotiating

behaviours (Abdullahi, 2020; Benetti et al., 2021; Lin & Miller, 2003). To begin with, scholars generally classify the Eastern countries under one culture and the Western countries under another culture. For example, China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, and Thailand are placed in the collectivist culture category, with a high-context communication style (J. M. Brett, 2000; Cai & Fink, 2002; Chaisrakeo & Speece, 2004; Henry, 2012; Osman-Gani & Tan, 2002). The United States of America (U.S.A) and most of the Western countries are categorised under the individualist culture with a low-context communication style (Adair & Brett, 2004).

Different cultures and diverse modes of communication styles are associated with negotiation styles in which the individualist, low-context society, tends to employ competitive and dominating styles during negotiations, while those in the collectivist group prefers cooperative and collaborative styles (Egan, 2016). The practised styles; ergo, influence the negotiation outcome; the individualist applies the distributive approach while the collectivist prefers the integrative approach (Henry, 2012; Osman-Gani & Tan, 2002). In the distributive bargaining style, one party wins at the expense of the other; it is a win-lose outcome, while in the integrative bargaining style; both sides mutually gain, it is a win-win situation (Tessema & Ready, 2009). The differences in the cultural dimension of collectivist-individualist, the communication styles, negotiation styles, and outcome approaches are in Table 1.

Table 1: The Differences in the Cultural Dimension of Collectivist-Individualist, the Communication Styles, Negotiation Styles, and Outcome Approach

Cultural Dimension	**Communication Style**	**Negotiation Style**	**Outcome Approach**
Collectivist	High Context	Cooperative	Integrative (win-win)
Individualist	Low Context	Competitive	Distributive (win-lose)

(Source: Adapted from Drake, 2001, and Benetti et al., 2021)

Methodology

The literature analysis was performed based on a coding strategy in which the collected descriptive data was sorted according to the identified terms: "culture" and "negotiation style". The method used is mainly research-based, with secondary data analysis. The literature includes research published in journals, websites, and specific chapters of e-books. The findings from the literature were analysed, that is, comparing and distinguishing them from a few angles. Subsequently, the data and findings were summarised. Conclusions were derived from the individual journal and the integration of all sources.

Results and Discussion

Division of the Western-Eastern Culture and Its Association with Negotiation Styles: Issues and Concerns

As explained earlier, scholars tend to segregate culture into two main categories, Western versus Eastern culture, and relate them to negotiation styles and consequently produce the outcome. However, to a certain extent, this notion is misleading and distorted from reality. Although culture is a dynamic aspect, globalisation, in a way, has accelerated cultural dilution in many aspects across continents.

Globalisation and The Third Culture

Globalisation has altered the national culture and identity of people. For example, Moore and Woodrow (2010) discovered many multinational companies developed a new culture, known

as the third culture. The characteristics of the organisations no longer fit into only one particular culture of employees. Organisational attributes are a combination of various cultures of the workforces. In another study, it is found that Japanese negotiators, who had experienced working in multinational companies, adapted their styles while negotiating with the Americans (Adair, Okumura, & Brett, 2001). In the same vein, the styles of Americans and Turks became more similar; the Turks adopted more of the Western principles. The Dutch's negotiation behaviour, on the other hand, had shifted more towards the Asians (Demiral, 2018). Hence, geographical border is no longer a good marker in classifying one's culture nor the best indicator to predict one's behaviour in a given scenario.

The same phenomenon also occurs in Asia. The Indonesian appeared to practise more of the 'Westernised' management style as the economy progressed (Gray, 2010). Yudhi, Nanere, and Nsubuga-Kyobe (2006) investigated the Indonesian education managers' negotiating style against their Australian counterparts, using Hofstede's cultural dimension. They found the differences in negotiation styles between the two cultures became narrower. They also observed the elements of divergence between the cultures and participants' negotiation styles. Besides, the Indonesian has adapted some of the Australian's culture and vice versa. Promsri (2013) discovered the Germans and Thais displayed collaborating style as their dominant approach while dealing with each other. Even the second style of preference for both is also the same, which is compromising. The convergence of each other's styles is mainly attributed to the globalisation process in which both sides were exposed to the partners' norms and cultures.

Intercultural negotiations are anticipated to intensify further in the future as the trend of globalisation increases. Therefore, the "simplified" idea of generalising Western-Eastern culture with the Competitive-Cooperative negotiation style must be carried out carefully to avoid misjudgements that can hinder the success of a negotiation.

Overgeneralisation and Contrasting Empirical Evidence

The division of the East-West cultural values can be overgeneralised. Many studies indicated that even within regions, numerous differences still exist, including in the negotiation aspect. De Mooij (2015) and Kemmelmeier et al. (2003), in their cultural-related studies, employed samples in the same country, which were European Americans, African Americans, and Chinese Americans. The findings yielded different results for each group of samples. In another study, Braslauskas (2020) assessed certain values between the Americans and the Germans, both in the individualist culture. His findings revealed a contrasting preference and practice. The Germans were more formal while doing business and during negotiations, whereby they should be addressed by their surnames; the title is important; and strictly no joking at the table. The Americans, on the other hand, preferred an informal atmosphere during interaction with partners, in which they could be called by their given name. Although countries in the West shared a number of similar values, not all issues are interpreted in the same manner. As an example, the Americans thought that compromise is important in negotiations, but the French viewed it as an indecent way to divert from the rules (Barkai, 2007). Thus, being in the same localities does not mean that one would value similar things as others who live nearby.

The effect of integrative-distribute practises towards negotiation outcomes, as elaborated earlier, are not always tally. Even before the millennia, J. M. Brett et al. (1998) found that the United States negotiators gained a better outcome than the Chinese counterparts, while Arunachalam, Wall Jr, & Chan (1998) found the opposite; the Hong Kong Chinese obtained a higher joint gain than the United States. A classic work of Fry, Firestone, and Williams (1983) found that dating couples (comparable to intracultural negotiation), attained lesser joint gains as compared to stranger dyads (comparable to intercultural negotiation) because the dating couples were too concerned about each other. This observation shows that being overly concerned over the other

parties' welfare can have a detrimental effect on the outcome, regardless of the negotiators' background.

Whilst dominating and avoiding styles are often associated with unfavourable consequences, Backhaus, Van Doorn, and Wilken (2008) findings were the opposite. Their study showed those two styles (dominating and avoiding) generated better outcomes. However, a problem-solving negotiation style (equal to the accommodating style) produced a negative impact, contrary to common belief. In addition, Ma (2007) discovered that competing styles could have a positive result while negotiating with Canadian but not with the Chinese. He noted that the Chinese negotiating styles were less predictable than the Canadian since the Chinese belong to a high-context culture, whereby their styles may vary depending on context and other factors. In another cross-cultural study, pairing negotiators from Japan, China, and Russia with those from the United States, France, and Brazil, it was found that the former would choose distributive strategies instead of the latter (Ramirez Marin et al., 2019). In a state of ambiguity, the United States businesspeople showed more of the integrative approach and less distributive strategies as compared to their negotiating partners from Qatar and China (Aslani et al., 2016). Hence, the correlation between cultural group-negotiation style and the outcome is not always true and does not necessarily apply in all situations.

The presumption that the West maintains contradictory values and norms than the East is a dangerous belief that may distort reality. There are certain practices and values interpreted alike by both. Emotion, for example, is perceived in the same way in all cultures. As Liu and Wilson (2011) accentuated, the expression of anger in a negotiation affected all negotiators in a similar manner, despite their cultural backgrounds. Not only that, Preuss and Wijst (2017) and Acuff (2008) analysed negotiation styles during different phases and concluded that negotiators did not stick to only one style. Dissimilar techniques were employed during opening offers, concession making, formality approaches, and handling manners. In other words, the adaptation of negotiation styles depends on various factors, especially context.

Samples and Research Techniques

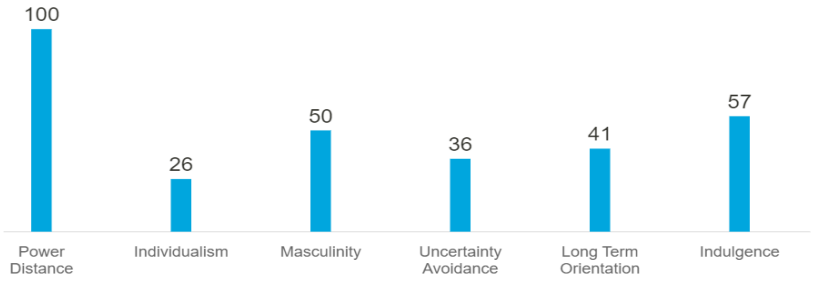
Many past studies on negotiations employed students as samples, conducted simulations and utilised laboratory experiments as the techniques. Using students as samples may not produce a significantly accurate result of the actual negotiation styles, as students' experience in negotiating may be limited. Besides, knowing they are in an experiment or a simulation with payment as an incentive influences their behaviour to some extent (De Mooij, 2015; Geiger, 2017; Liu & Wilson, 2011). Thus, this method can be misleading and produce inaccurate findings.

Furthermore, the literature showed that inexperienced negotiators are more inclined to exercise a distributive negotiation or a win-lose approach as compared to actual, experienced negotiators (Neale & Northcraft, 1986). For this reason, many scholars have advocated studies in real-life settings; to integrate theories with actual scenarios (Raiffa, 2002; Ready & Tessema, 2011; Sebenius, 2009).

A Brief Overview of The Malaysian Negotiation Style

Malaysia as Collectivist Culture

Scholars have categorised Malaysia as a collectivist society (Rose, Suppiah, Uli, & Othman, 2007), with attributes of caring for others, loyal to the group, and concern about relationships; the people work towards consensus, denounce aggressive manners, and try to avoid confrontation. The country's score on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions is 100 for Power Distance; 57 for Indulgence; 50 for Masculinity; 41 for Long Term Orientation; 36 for Uncertainty Avoidance; and 26 for Individualism, as shown in Figure 3.



(Source: Hofstede Insights, n.d)
Figure 3: Malaysia's Score on Hofstede's Cultural Dimension

A very high score of power distance (100) indicates that hierarchical order is very important to the people. A low score of 26 on individualism shows that Malaysia is a collectivist culture in which the group's orientation is prevalent over individual or personal. Given that the score for masculinity is 50, it cannot be established which value is more important to Malaysians; either success or caring/quality of life, or perhaps, Malaysians strive for both values in moderation. Malaysia scores 36 on uncertainty avoidance, a low score that means the society is more relaxed and flexible. Malaysia also has a low score on long-term orientation (41), indicating that it has a normative culture; respect traditions and focus more on the present rather than the future. In the indulgence dimension, Malaysia's score is relatively high (57), implying that the people have a positive attitude, are more inclined towards optimism, and enjoy life.

Past Studies on the Malaysian Negotiation Styles

Past studies on the Malaysian negotiation styles are predominantly related to cultural aspects, particularly on cultural dimensions and communication styles. Only a few researchers have studied negotiations in the business areas. Other than business scenarios, Aslani et al. (2016) commented that only limited research investigates the negotiation style in other types of negotiation settings. This is also true in the Malaysian context. The dearth of literature is especially in the public servant trade negotiations.

One of the examples of existing studies in the public sector is by Suppiah (2007) and Rose et al. (2007), which examined the conflict management styles among the managers. Their findings indicated that Malaysian managers in the public sector organisations generally practised accommodating styles. A few research in the education sector examined the negotiation styles of head teachers (Izham, Sahadila, & Hanim, 2017), the Muslim women's negotiation skills in an organisation (at the International College University of Malaysia) (Abdul Rahim, 2005), and leaders' negotiating styles in Malaysia's Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) (Sharif & Badlishah, 2016). Results of the studies revealed that Malaysian teachers/educators preferred cooperating and/or accommodating negotiation styles.

In the international business area involving private sector participation, Chang (2014) investigated the Malaysian and Taiwanese negotiation styles. His study disclosed that Malaysians were more concerned about long-term relationships, hence, adopted the accommodating style of negotiation. The Taiwanese emphasised more on immediate outcomes; thus, they applied the competitive style. Soo (2019) compared the Malaysian and the Chinese negotiation styles using the Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE)[1] model to measure cultural norms among the parties involved. He discovered that interdependent self-construal shaped the interaction goals of both sides, no matter the origin or nationality of the negotiators. These two studies involved negotiators from Asian countries, belonging to the same cultural background, that is, the collectivist. The studies demonstrated that in some cases, culture can be used as a guide in

[1] GLOBE is an expansion of Hofstede's cultural model – it extended Hofstede five cultural dimensions into nine.

predicting the negotiators' action, but in other circumstances, negotiators might not 'comply' with the 'expected' behaviour.

Other studies which involved the Malaysian private sector are intracultural in nature. In other words, those studies only obtained input from the Malaysian participants. For example, in the construction industry, the dominant negotiation style among Malaysian professionals to reduce conflict in project management affairs is the collaborative negotiation style (Idrus, Amer, & Utomo, 2010). Loo (2012) analysed the Malaysian Chinese negotiating traits in the business sector and discovered that although the Chinese values are embedded in their traits (such as being accustomed to indirect ways of saying 'no'; to save face (preserving dignity), cautious of time and numbers, risk-takers, and trusting), yet they were willing to adapt the Western norms and business practices. Although evidence shows that Malaysians prefer the collaborative negotiation style to deal with conflict, they are adaptable and flexible.

Contradictory findings were realised by Rad (2015) and Tessema and Ready (2009). Rad (2015) studied the Malaysia-Iran negotiation styles, and deduced that the Iranians preferred the collaborating, compromising, and accommodating negotiation styles, while the Malaysians favoured the competing and avoiding negotiation styles. This finding is not in line with many other findings, which demonstrated Malaysians did not opt for the competing and avoiding styles. Tessema and Ready (2009) found that both the Malaysians and the Americans cared about long-term relationships. However, it was the Malaysians who were more willing to accept a distributive outcome; a win-lose situation, whilst the Americans preferred an integrative result; a win-win outcome. This is also contrary to several previous studies, claiming that the Americans as individualists were more concerned about immediate outcomes instead of long-term relationships, and would choose the competitive styles, resulting in a distributive, win-lose outcome.

Upon realising that studies on the civil servants' negotiation styles in the international area are sparse, Mohd Hashim (2010) conducted a study on the Malaysian diplomats' negotiation styles. The scope of his study was on diplomatic negotiations, and the respondents consisted of retired and in-service Malaysian diplomats. Like most of the findings of similar studies, he observed that Malaysians preferred compromising and accommodative styles. Other than that, studies on the public sector negotiation style in the international trade area can hardly be found.

All in all, although Malaysia falls under the collectivist culture category, its people do not strictly adhere to the norms and traditions. In fact, in some situations, the Malaysians do the opposite. Moreover, most existing studies are on the Malaysian negotiation styles that focus on the private sector/businesspeople or intracultural aspects (for the public sector). Therefore, it is highly relevant and timely to study the civil servants' negotiation style in the aspect of trade. The proposed study can offer new insights and perspectives to facilitate a better understanding for all parties involved and subsequently improve the negotiation outcome.

Conclusion

Negotiation is no exception to anyone. As the world becomes more integrated due to globalisation, the negotiation magnitude is expected to escalate in the future, including via virtual modes. However, international negotiations are challenging because negotiators come from diverse backgrounds in which they exercise various negotiation styles. One's culture greatly shapes the differences in the negotiation styles and consequently impacts the negotiation outcome. As such, an inadequate understanding of the negotiators' negotiating style can lead to the collapse of the conducted negotiation.

As negotiations are the pathway to economic well-being, stability, peace and order, and ensuring lasting relationships with others (Lewicki, Saunders, & Barry, 2021), it is worthwhile to examine many other aspects of negotiation styles in various settings. Instead of continuously focusing on large economic countries, researchers should focus on the negotiation styles in the developing and emerging economic Asian countries, including Malaysia. The studies can focus on

negotiation styles in international trade, aiming to boost the country's economic growth[2]. In conclusion, a good understanding of negotiation styles can assist everyone involved in attaining better outcomes for the benefit of all: oneself, the organisation, and the country.

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