

Role of Servant Leadership Conglomerate Conflict Behaviour on Team Performance, Conflict Resolution Efficacy, and Turnover Intention in Tanzania's Higher Learning Institutions

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Abstract

This paper explores the intricate relationship between servant leadership, conflict management behaviour, and organisational outcomes in the context of Tanzania's higher learning institutions. Through a longitudinal study involving 800 respondents from four public universities, the research investigates the interplay between servant leadership and conflict management styles, specifically focusing on integrating and compromising behaviors. The study employed a comprehensive methodology, utilising questionnaires distributed over two waves with a one-year time lag. The findings revealed a positive correlation between servant leadership and integrating conflict management styles, specifically avoiding and accommodating. However, the anticipated correlation between integrating and compromising conflict behaviours in servant leadership is not confirmed. The study further examined the prevalence of cooperative conflict management patterns among Tanzanian university leaders, highlighting a combination of problem-solving and compromising strategies. A significant aspect of the research involved cluster analysis, which revealed distinct conflict behaviour patterns in Tanzanian universities. The result showed a preference for compromising and low-integrating (co-operative) patterns, as well as high-integrating and low-compromising (competitive) patterns. Notably, these patterns were not mutually exclusive, indicating a nuanced approach to conflict management. In the second part of the study, the paper delved into the impact of servant leadership's cooperative behaviour on team performance, conflict resolution efficacy, and turnover intention. The results affirmed the positive relationship between integrating and compromising conflict management styles and team performance, while forcing behaviour showed a negative correlation. Moreover, the study identified a negative relationship between accommodating and forcing conflict management styles and turnover intention. The paper concluded that servant leaders in Tanzanian universities adeptly combined different conflict management styles, mitigating the adverse effects of conflicts on team performance and turnover intention. Even though avoiding and accommodating conflict

behaviours were used together, problem-solving and compromising strategies were used a lot. This showed that servant leadership was used in a more complex way in Tanzanian higher education. The study contributed valuable insights into the dynamics of servant leadership, conflict management, and organisational outcomes, emphasising the need for a contextual understanding of leadership behaviours and their cultural implications.

Keywords: *Servant leadership, Combined Conflict Behaviour (CCB), team performance, resolution efficacy, turnover intention.*

1.0 Introduction

Currently, organisations rely on teamwork interaction to complete their duties and achieve their goals. In fact, employees continually contend with differences in interests, beliefs, or ideas during the contact process, which can lead to disputes. Conflict can be defined to be the dissonance between two or more parties (individuals or groups), if at least one of the parties is offended, or is hindered by the other (Elgoibar, Euwema, & Munduate, 2017). Conflict occurs when there are perceived incompatibilities between the interests of the two parties (Rahim, 2001, Rahim, Civelek, & Liang, 2018). Nevertheless, companies are noticeably underrepresented in the conflict management literature due to the limited attention given to these entities by conflict resolution experts (Melin, 2021). Naturally, conflict in organisations results from mixed motives and situations (Euwema et al., 2003). To minimize the negative impact of conflict on both enterprises and communities, it is advantageous for firms to take a proactive approach and carefully consider the necessary steps to achieve a Social Licence to Operate (SLO) which is one of the causes of conflicts in mining industries (Vanclay and Hanna, 2019; Veenker and Vanclay, 2021). Thus, understanding and selecting proper conflict management styles can pose challenges to leaders. Due to its mixed nature, conflict, if not timely and well managed, may escalate and disrupt the relationship between employees, spiral its negative impacts such as reducing employee performance, impairing resolution efficacy and increasing turnover intention.

In this process, conflict management becomes a key competency for managers and professionals (Euwema et al., 2004). Although some studies have explored the relationship between leadership style and the selection of conflict resolution techniques, a significant vacuum has existed in the lack of leaders' firsthand accounts of their experiences, reflections, and analyses in their decision-making process for conflict management styles Kowszyk,

Vanclay, & Maher, 2023). Moreover, selecting and properly blending different conflict management styles becomes essential for leaders, but they also need a relational leadership style (Avolio et al., 2009; Kowszyk, Vanclay, & Maher, 2023). After all, servant leaders, through behaving selflessly (Graham, 1991; Liden et al., 2008), are predisposed to create a long-term relationship with employees (Liden et al., 2008; Stone et al., 2004). Servant leadership refers to “an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader, emphasising leader[ship] behaviours that focus on follower development, and de-emphasising glorification of the leader” (Hale & Fields, 2007, p. 397). By behaving ethically, servant leaders would allow employees under them to interact more openly, fairly, and honestly with others (Liden et al., 2008). Arguably, this type of interaction allows employees to become more responsible and co-operative in resolving their differences, which can also foster employee performance, improve resolution efficacy, and reduce turnover intention.

Indubitably, leadership plays a crucial role in the process of enhancing employee performance, resolution efficacy and reducing turnover intention. Employees performance can refer to the ability of employees to deliver quality work and services of the required organisational standards whereas resolution efficacy refers to an individual belief that they can resolve conflicts of any kind whenever they arise (Alper et al., 2000; Jehn et al., 2008). Bandura (2000) suggests that individual efficacy beliefs are crucial in handling difficulties faced in the workplace. As such, servant leaders can find solutions to their problems and encourage efficacy by providing guidance, selecting less coercive conflict management styles, and properly blending them with the aim of reducing turnover intention. Turnover intention is an employee's voluntary decision to quit a business over a certain period of time (Tett & Meyer, 1993, Lazzari, Alvarez, & Ruggieri, 2022). In this regard, literature connects the cost of losing human capital, hiring and training new personnel, and diminishing service quality with turnover intention (Glebbeck & Bax 2004; Mitchell et al., 2001; Wright & Bonnett, 2007). Additionally, turnover intention constitutes a negative indicator of organisational effectiveness (Glebbeck & Bax 2004; Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Such a condition heightens the importance of leaders' competence as well as the ability to select and blend different conflict management styles to ease the turnover intention in the organisation and have a positive impact on resolution efficacy. Servant leaders accomplish this feat through empowering, being trustworthy, and behaving ethically (Liden, 2008). In the context of leadership, certain styles have been identified as more effective in

managing conflicts. These styles emphasise a process that is collaborative, multidimensional, and dynamic. Studies by Sfantou, Laliotis, Patelarou, Sifaki-Pistolla, Matalliotakis, and Patelarou (2017) highlights the importance of these qualities in conflict management. Moreover, servant leaders can be more inclined towards encouraging employees to adopt and use less coercive conflict management styles. The encouragement is achievable through self-confidence building (Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999), and can increase employees' willingness to co-operate fully in resolving their conflicts in addition to improving employee performance and resolution efficacy while reducing turnover intention.

Besides the voluminous existence of literature on conflict management styles, only a few empirical studies focus on how servant leadership can successfully manage conflicts in organisations. Previous research by Hunter et al. (2013) evidentially linked servant leadership with less withdrawal (turnover intentions and disengagement); however, they paid less attention to when and to what extent different conflict management styles can be combined to successfully manage conflict and reduce its negative impacts on team performance and resolution efficacy while reducing turnover intention. Regardless of leadership influence on selecting conflict management styles, the impetus should be on how culture determines conflict patterns. This study employed the Conglomerate Conflict Behaviour (CCB) or Combined Conflict Behaviour theory to clarify the selection of conflict management styles.

The paper argues that servant leadership can effectively and timely combine different conflict management styles especially less assertive styles to improve employee performance and resolution efficacy in addition to reducing turnover intention. Proper selection of conflict management styles creates a positive work environment amenable to fostering co-operation and readiness among employees to reconcile their differences, hence boosting team performance and resolution efficacy in addition to reducing turnover intention.

Servant Leadership

The concept of "servant leadership can be traced to Robert Greenleaf who defined a servant leader as a "servant first", one who must have innate feeling of service and not driven by the desire to lead (Greenleaf, 2002). Even though various scholars have come up with several definitions and characteristic, Liden et al. (2008) provided a comprehensive conceptualisation and extensive validity testing of the servant leadership

dimensions in terms of emotional healing, creating value for the community, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates first, and behaving ethically but without necessarily validating servanthood and relationship. Empirically, these dimensions have been linked to positive outcomes at individual, team and organisational level (job satisfaction and effective conflict management, team performance). It is evident that servant leadership is a unique leadership theory which can be used to explain the leadership process and outcomes (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2010). It has also been documented that employee attitudes towards the leader and to their job depend on effective conflict management (Irving, 2005), which servant leadership has a potential of delivering.

This study employed the servant leadership style because it contains the moral dimension which is not well explained in authentic and ethical leadership styles (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, servant leadership deals with the development and success of stakeholders within and outside the organisation. Moreover, servant leadership puts followers' individual interest first, and develop them to grow and become servant leaders themselves (Greenleaf, 1970; Liden *et al.*, 2008), which is unique from transformational leadership that emphasises on employees to achieve organisational goals (Graham, 1991; Smith *et al.*, 2004). Finally, servant leadership also includes aspects of altruistic and self-reflection behaviour (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008), which is also less expressed in transformational leadership theory.

Servant Leadership and Conflict Management Behaviour

Recently, research on servant leadership has gained popularity in various fields. Its definition stems from Greenleaf's ideas of servant leaders. Servant leadership emphasises on morality (Graham, 1991; Liden *et al.*, 2008) and humility, which help to cultivate servant leadership likely to guide participation, provide a socialised power motivation, and support work relationships (Morris, 2005). Consequently, the issue of employees' satisfaction is vital, hence the inescapable need of creating conducive work environment.

Empirically, servant leadership has been linked with many positive outcomes. Particularly, Irving (2005) reported a statistically significant positive correlation between servant leadership at the organisational level and team effectiveness at the team level. This positive correlation existed between the servant leadership's attributes of love, vision, empowerment, trust and humility, and the team's effectiveness. Irving's (2005) study infers

that servant leadership might have a positive relationship with effective conflicts management. Similarly, Yoshinda, Sendjaya, Hirst and Cooper (2013) report that servant leadership promotes individual creativity and collective innovation.

Thompson's (2002) study reported that, even though the institution studied was not a servant organisation according to Laub's schema, it nevertheless confirms that the perception of servant leadership positively impacts on job satisfaction. Another study by Hunter, Neubert, Witt, Penny and Weineberger (2013) linked servant leadership to less withdrawal (turnover intentions and disengagement). In Africa, Walumbwa and colleagues (2010) report partial mediation on the relationship between servant leadership and self-efficacy, procedural justice climate, and service climate. Conflict management styles can be defined as "patterned responses or clusters of styles that people use in conflict" (Hocker & Wilmat, 2010). However, conflict management styles are contingent since the pattern of relations might vary systematically and meaningfully in different situations, conflicts or (groups of) actors (Euwema & Van Emmerik, 2007). They should be based upon cultural/contextual factors such as; power base, gender and age (Al-ajmi, 2007; Al-Hamdan, 2009; Tsai & Chi, 2009, Elgoibar, 2017).

Although scholars have thus far developed five styles of conflict management, there is no single best conflict management style (Pierce & Gardner, 2002). This study, follows Van de Vliert, Euwema and Huismans' (1995) theory of Conglomerate Conflict Behaviour (CCB). Under this theory, conflict is "an individual's reaction to the perception that one's own and another party's current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously". Currently, emphasis is on the use of multiple modes of conflict. In the Western contexts, the most commonly reported assertive styles in use are force and problem-solving (Euwema et al., 2003). In serious conflict situations, the same person may mix force with problem-solving. Other applicable components of less forceful reactions might include compromise, accommodation and avoidance. Thus, the "term conglomerated conflict refers to the use of mixing of various degrees of several modes of conflict handling" (Van de Vliert et al., 1995).

Notably, the theory of CCB is more complex than other models and taxonomies (Euwema *et al.*, 2007) based on Blake and Mouton's (1970) conflict management grid. The complexity arises because theorists under the CCB convention use dual concerns, for example, concern for own and other's goals to conclude diverse of styles. What remain unknown are the styles that

servant leadership combines with in managing conflicts. The most important thing in the CCB theory is that, both co-operative and competitive patterns are not mutually exclusive. The co-operative pattern includes some elements of competitive pattern and, conversely, the opposite is true (Euwema & Van Emmerik, 2007, Garcia et al, 2017). Empirically, managers who blend different conflict management styles are more effective primarily because they can blend more different styles (Munduate et al., 1999) than those who do not. However, the amount of conglomeration differs because the co-operative style comprises relatively high levels of integrating and low application of force whereas competitive behaviour has relatively low integration but with a high level of force (Euwema *et al.*, 2007).

Servant leadership characteristics relate negatively with forcing behaviour, but it was positively associated with integrating and avoiding in church related conflicts (Iao-Man Chu, 2011). This study in the developing country's context of Tanzania, uses integrating and compromising approach because their combination can reduce the possibility of producing stagnation and compromising when playing a moderation role, thus making both styles appropriate and effective (Rahim et al., 1999). Moreover, the two styles help to minimise the use of dominating and avoidance techniques (Rahim & Bonoma, 1979). Against this backdrop, we hypthesise:

H1a: There is a positive relationship between servant leadership and integrating conflict management styles (problem-solving and compromising).

H1b: Integrating and compromising conflict behaviour of servant leadership are positively correlated

Conflict Management Styles and Employee Team Performance, Resolution Efficacy and Turnover Intention

The selection of the conflict management styles discussed thus far might have a positive or negative impact on specific employee-related outcomes. These outcomes include; satisfaction with conflict management styles, conflict resolution efficacy, team performance, and turnover intention. Previous literature highlights how individuals react to conflict. They offer two approaches namely;. individuals using single and individuals using a combination of styles (simultaneously or sequentially) styles. However, there is no single best conflict management style (Pierce & Gardner, 2002). Data suggest that mediators use the problem solving/settlement approach more than a transformative and facilitative approach, and the problem solving approach to be more effective in labor contexts (Kenny, 2019). Therefore,

this study applied the dual concern model conceptualisation to measure conflict management styles used by servant leaders.

The dual concern model describes five behaviours: forcing, avoiding, accommodating, compromising and problem-solving (De Dreu et al., 2001). The model also serves as contingency model under which researchers offer directions on how and when to use a certain strategy at the same time they offer “one-best-style approach”. Under such circumstances, forcing is destructive whereas integrating is a constructive way of handling conflict (Blake & Mouton, 1981; Burke, 1970; Fisher & Ury, 1981; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Rahim, 1992). Furthermore, the dual concern model, as a normative model, promotes integrating as the most effective style, particularly when linking outcomes and long-term effectiveness. Usually, forcing is non-co-operative, with risk of escalation and unilateral outcomes (Blake & Mouton, 1981; Burke, 1970; Fisher & Ury, 1981; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Rahim, 1992) primarily because integrating and forcing are antipodes (Tjosvold et al., 1999). As a result, parties usually try to achieve personal outcomes and simultaneously reach mutual agreements by combining co-operative and competitive aspects (Thompson & Nadler, 2000, Gacia et al., 2017, Elgoibar, 2017). Thus, the leadership styles that were found to be more effective were those that placed an emphasis on a process that was collaborative, multidimensional, and dynamic (Sfantou, Laliotis, Patelarou, Sifaki-Pistolla, Matalliotakis, Patelarou, 2017).

In Tanzania, the focus is on which styles servant leaders in managing conflicts might apply since they need to manage conflicts constructively, which requires them to employ various conflict approaches to managing conflicts in organisations (Munduate et al., 1999). The Conglomerate Conflict Theory (Van de Vliert et al., 1995), on the other hand, assumes that components in a conglomeration may occur simultaneously or sequentially to engender effectiveness (Euwema & Van Emmerick, 2007; Medina & Benitez, 2011). Combining different styles occurs because conflicts often arise mixed motive situations (Euwema et al., 2003; Euwema & Van Emmerik, 2007). Mixed motive situations are situations that pose a conflict between securing immediate benefits through competition and pursuing benefits for oneself and others through co-operation with other people (Komorita & Parks, 1995; Sheldon & Fishbach, 2011).

Since teamwork and conflict management styles are increasingly taking center stage in daily organisational life, measuring team performance has also been heightened. Scholars such as Jehn and Bendersky (2003) and Mathieu

and Schulze (2006) argue that conflict management is an important predictor of group or dyadic conflict relationship. Malingumu (2022) agrees that there is no single best conflict management style because some conflicts require a different strategy than the five mentioned styles (compromising, accommodating, avoiding, forcing, and collaborating). This study found that compromising and collaborating are most common, yet force is employed in some circumstances. Previous research has further shown that the process of managing organisational conflicts can help reduce the negative effect of conflicts by restoring fairness, process effectiveness, resource efficiency, working relationships, and satisfaction with parties (Thomas, 1992). Kayanda, and Tangi, (2022) indicates that, heads of schools employ several strategies such as utilising collaboration methods and organising stakeholders' meetings and discussions to address and problems to effectively manage conflict in secondary schools. Thus, choosing constructive conflict management style can improve the willingness of team members to work together. Meanwhile, leaders' application of constructive conflict management requires the utilisation of less coercive styles such as encouraging teams to adopt and use them. Such less coercive styles also allow leaders to engage employees in the process of making important decisions, as free, autonomous and integral members of the team, hence ensuring their co-operation with their leaders in achieving positive outcomes. In this regard, we hypothesise:

- H1a: There is a positive relationship between servant leadership and integrating conflict management styles (problem-solving and compromising).*
- H1b: Integrating and compromising conflict behaviour of servant leadership are positively correlated*
- H2: Servant leadership in Tanzania will be more inclined towards using co-operative than competitive pattern (problem-solving and compromising, low-key forcing)*
- H3a: Conflict management styles (integrating and compromising) will have a positive bearing on team performance.*
- H3b: Forcing conflict management behaviour will have a negative relation with team performance.*
- H 4: Conflict management styles (accommodating, avoiding and forcing) have a negative relationship with turnover intention.*

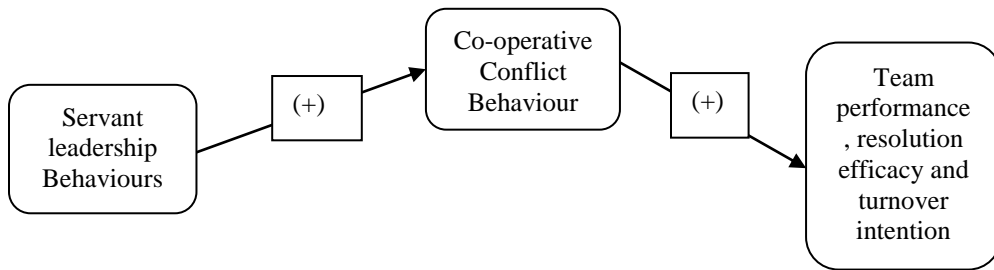


Figure1: The Conceptual Model Presenting the Relationship between SL, Co-operative behaviour, and CCB with Team performance, Resolution Efficacy, and Turnover intention

2.0 Method

Participants, Sample and Sampling Procedure

In two waves, with time lag of one year, a total of 800 respondents were invited from four public universities in Tanzania to fill out questionnaires. However, 361 questionnaires (45.13%) were returned during the first wave. Since our study was longitudinal, during the second wave another 361 questionnaires were distributed to the same respondents who returned the questionnaires (using unique code identifiers). This time 198 questionnaires (54.85%) were returned. At time one, respondents were requested to fill in all variables (servant leadership, and conflict management behaviour) in the questionnaire except team performance, whose data was collected during the second wave as an outcome. The respondents were then requested to rate their leaders on SL and conflict management behaviour. Also, they rated their perceptions for their group behaviour for team performance. To reduce the common method bias, introductory letter was used to explain the purpose of the study with respondents after getting their informed consent assured that their responses would be treated with utmost confidentiality and their voluntary participation remained anonymous. Moreover, the importance of integrity was explained by being open and honest about the kind of responses they provide. These self-reporting questionnaires for all variables required the respondents to rate all the items in the questionnaire personally by rating themselves and their leaders.

Measures

Perceived prevalence of servant leadership behaviour. The study used a multidimensional measure of servant leadership with 28 items developed by Liden et al. (2008). The scale had been previously used to measure the employees' perception of the prevalence of servant leadership behaviour in organisations and its relationship to employee satisfaction as an outcome.

This scale confirmed the prevalence and existence of servanthood traits in Tanzania's public universities and its correlation with employee outcomes such as; job satisfaction, resolution efficacy, and reduced conflict. The servant leadership emerged to be a significant predictor of subordinate organisational commitment and in-role performance with a Cronbach Alpha of .95 (Liden *et al.*, 2008)

Integrating Behaviour. The study applied a sub-scale of the Dutch test of conflict handling (DUTCH) developed by De Dreu *et al.* (2001) to assess the integrating conflict behaviour (7 items) after a factor analysis, Problem-solving (4 items) and compromising (3 items). The study computed these variables as one factor as exemplified by this sample item: "I stand for my own and the organization objectives and interest" (De Dreu *et al.*, 2001). Cronbach's alpha was .82.

Forcing Behaviour. A sub-scale of the Dutch test of conflict handling (DUTCH) (De Dreu *et al.*, 2001) was used to assess the forcing conflict behavior (4 items). A sample item is, "I fight for a good outcome for myself". The Cronbach's alpha was .88.

Co-operative behaviour. A co-operative pattern is characterised by high problem-solving and compromising but low forcing). This behaviour measured using the sub-scale of the DUTCH tests of conflict handling (De Dreu *et al.*, 2001). We used the measures of compromising, problem-solving and forcing was used. The Cronbach's alpha was .730.

Compromising. A sub-scale of the DUTCH was applied to test of conflict handling (De Dreu *et al.*, 2001) to assess the compromising conflict behaviour (4 items) as illustrated by this sample item: "I emphasize that we have to find a compromise solution". Cronbach's alpha was .87.

Problem-solving. Additionally, a sub-scale of the DUTCH was used to test of conflict handling (De Dreu *et al.*, 2001) used to assess the problems solving conflict behaviour (4 items). A sample item is "I examine issues until I find a solution that really satisfies me and the other party". Cronbach's alpha was .86.

Avoiding. Then a sub-scale of the DUTCH was used to test of conflict handling (DUTCH) (De Dreu *et al.*, 2001) to assess the problem-solving conflict behaviour (4 items) whose sample item is "I avoid a confrontation about our differences". The Cronbach's alpha was .85.

Yielding: Furthermore, a sub-scale of the DUTCH applied to test of conflict handling (DUTCH) (De Dreu *et al.*, 2001) to assess the yielding conflict behaviour (4 items). A sample item is “I try to accommodate the other party” with a Cronbach’s alpha was .85.

Team performance. The study also used a modified individual competence measure (Heilman, Block, & Lucas, 1992) with a three-item scale and a sample item for the scale of “This team is very competent”. The Cronbach’s alpha was .91.

Efficacy of conflict resolution. The efficacy of conflict resolution style was measured on a 10-item scale also developed by Jehn *et al.* (2008) to determine which styles were effective in managing the task and process as well as personal conflicts in an organisation (e.g. “Disagreements about relationships conflicts were easily resolved using integrating only”, “Disagreement about task clarity were usually resolved using integrating and forcing”) (Jehn *et al.*, 2008). The Cronbach’s alpha was .85.

Turnover intention. This item was measured using a four-item scale developed by Kelloway, Gottlieb and Barham (1999) as exemplified by the following sample item: “I am thinking about leaving this organisation”. The Cronbach’s alpha was .92.

Reliability and Validity of the items

To ensure consistency of the results, various items were tested within each component (Foster, 2001), and to ensure reliability, the study tested for the internal consistency of each item using Cronbach Alpha. Its value was not only positive and significant but also featured at 0.70 or >0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). The Cronbach Alpha coefficient for all the 51 items was .95, hence making the study’s instruments reliable. Also, the instruments validity was checked through co-sharing the instruments with colleagues. Thereafter, we piloted and analysed them accordingly. Consequently, we modified some of the items to fit the context for them to measure what they were supposed to measure.

3.0 Findings and Discussion

The preliminary analysis of the variables intercorrelations precedes factor analysis. Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations and correlations for all variables in the study:

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and Intercorrelations

Items	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
servant leadership wave1	3.4232	.75933										
Team performance wave2	3.9007	.72713	.34**									
Turnover intention wave2	2.4874	1.07424	.06	-.13								
Intergrating_LW2	3.3553	.47686	.42**	.31**	.10							
Compromising employee wave2	3.7183	.80690	.22**	.25**	.02	.13						
Forcing behaviour employee wave2	2.7132	1.13259	.11	-.04	.07	.17*	-.07					
Forcing behaviour leaders wave2	2.8258	.90610	-.27**	-.16*	.06	.18*	-.17*	.29**				
Problem solving leaders wave2	3.8182	.72160	.61**	.43**	.05	.59**	.173	.13	-.25**			
Yielding /accommodating behaviour employee wave1	3.3258	.87655	.42**	.22**	.159*	.75**	.07	.04	-.21**	.45**		
Avoiding behaviour leaders wave2	3.3636	.78596	.27**	.24**	.02	.78**	.11	.05	.03	.32**	.52**	

Notes: *Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed); **correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Factor Analysis on Integrating, Forcing Behaviour, Compromising and Problem-solving

To test our hypothesis, correlation and regression analyses were used. In this study, we examined leaders' conflict patterns in Tanzania (i.e. co-operative and competitive pattern conflict management behaviour). Factor analysis were conducted to determine which conflict behaviour can form integrating conflict management behaviour. After conducting factor analysis, it was realised that problem-solving and compromising are not loading in one factor as we predicted; rather, it was avoiding and accommodating that loaded as one factor. As such, we used the items of avoiding and accommodating to compute integrating behaviour. After factor analysis, our data earned a total variance of 69.1% with Eigenvalue >1. The rotation converged in 6 iterations, with Kaiser-Mayer Olkin sampling adequacy being 0.85, degree of freedom 190, $p < .001$, and the Bartlett test of sphericity was 273.378, as Table 2 clarifies:

Table 2: Factor Analysis on Integrating, Forcing Behaviour, Compromising and Problem-solving

ITEMS	INTER	FOB	COMP	PSBL
Qn.24:1. My supervisor avoids confrontation about their differences	.664			
Qn.24:2. My supervisor avoids differences of opinions as soon as possible	.709			
Qn.24:3. My supervisor tries to make differences loom less severe	.586			
Qn.24:4. My supervisor tries to avoid confrontation with the other	.726			
Qn.25:1. My supervisor gives in to the wishes of the other party	.806			
Qn.25:2. My supervisor concurs with the other party	.692			
Qn.25:3. My supervisor tries to accommodate the other party	.728			
Qn.25:4. My supervisor adapts to the other parties' goals and interests	.746			
Qn.22:1. My supervisor pushes his own point of view		.875		
Qn.22:2. My supervisor searches for gains		.817		
Qn.22:3. My supervisor fights for good outcome for himself		.809		
Qn.22:4. My supervisor does everything to win		.817		
Qn.23:1 My supervisor tries to realize middle of road solution			.788	
Qn.23:2. My supervisor emphasizes that we have to find a compromise solution			.790	
Qn.23:3. My supervisor insists that we both give in a little			.853	
Qn.23:4. My supervisor strives whenever possible towards a fifty-fifty compromise			.801	
Qn.21:1 My supervisor examines issues until he finds a solution that really satisfies him and the other party				.848
Qn.21:2. My supervisor stands for his own and other's goals and interests				.678
Qn.21:3. My supervisor examines ideas from both sides to find mutually optimal solution				.784
Qn.21:4. My supervisor works out a solution that serves his own as well as other's interests as good as possible				.822

Notes: INT= Integrating, FOB=Forcing behaviour, COMP= Compromising, PSB=Problem-solving behaviour

Servant Leadership and Integrating Conflict Management Behaviour

This paper examined the employees' perception of servant leadership conflict management behaviour on team performance, resolution efficacy, and turnover intention in Tanzania's higher learning institutions. Its hypothesis was divided into two components. As such, the findings are accordingly presented based on these two parts. The first part of the paper examined the relationship between servant leadership and integrating conflict management behaviour using one hypothesis which was divided into 1a and b. For hypothesis 1a, it was predicted that there was a positive relationship between servant leadership and integrating conflict management styles (avoiding and accommodating). The intercorrelation analysis between variables was used to obtain the findings. Our hypothesis 1a was confirmed ($r=.41, p < .01$) for all the universities under review though with different traits (leaders are integrating avoiding and accommodating, not problem-solving and compromising). For hypothesis 1b, we found integrating and compromising conflict behaviour of servant leadership to correlate. As such, Hypothesis 1b was not confirmed ($r=.13, p > .01$) for all the study universities. **See Table 1.**

Conflict Management Styles and Employee Team Performance and Turnover Intention

The second part examined the relationship between servant leadership co-operative behaviour and team performance, resolution efficacy, and turnover intention, which was completed by four hypotheses, that is, H₂, H₃, and H₄. H₂ Servant leadership in Tanzania will be more inclined towards using the co-operative than competitive pattern (problem-solving and compromising, low forcing). Hypothesis 2 was confirmed. Descriptive statistics shows that problem-solving ($M = 3.82$), compromising ($M = 3.71$) and forcing ($M = 2.71$). As was predicted, university leaders used a combination of problem-solving and compromising frequently in Tanzania. **See Table 1**

This study was also interested in behavioural conglomeration. Since integrating and compromising correlate, the study further conducted cluster analyses to establish conflict pattern of leaders in Tanzania's universities. Cluster analysis helped to examine the pattern of correlations between the measures (highly correlated) observed (DeCoster, 1998). Also, it helped to identify the natural groupings within the dataset (Cohen et al., 2003; Euwema & Van Emmerick, 2007; Elgoibar et al, 2017, Garcia et al, 2017, Malingumu, 2022). Consequently, we used a two-step cluster analysis to determine how many cluster patterns appear in our dataset. The result indicated that the two clusters offered the optimal fit for our dataset with the cluster quality (silhouette measure of cohesion and separation) being fair. Figure 1 indicates that leaders in Tanzania's universities are highly inclined towards heightened

use of compromising and low integrating (cluster2) co-operative pattern as well as high integrating, low compromising (cluster 1) which is competitive pattern. Implicitly, these patterns are not mutually exclusive. In other words, both patterns (in competitive and in co-operative) in the integration was relatively high.

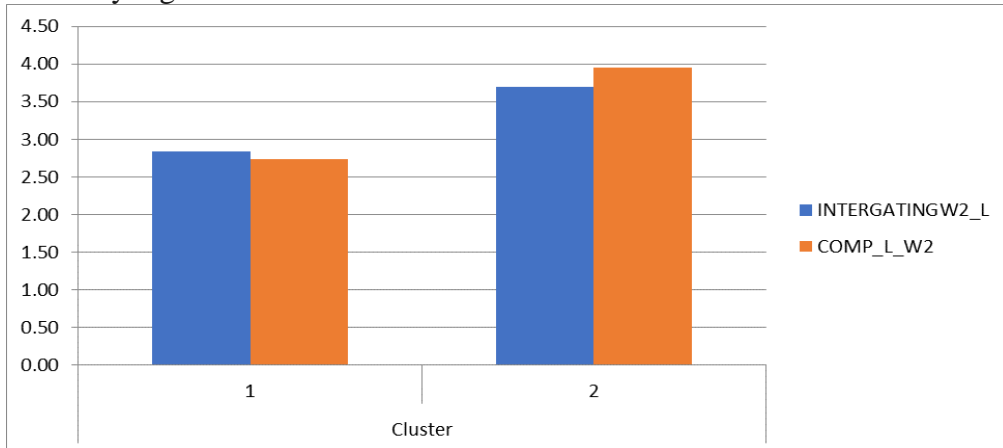


Figure 1: co-operative patterns of servant leaders in universities

Note: Cluster 1=Competitive pattern whereas Cluster 2= Cooperative pattern

Even though integrating comprises avoiding and accommodating, the findings after cluster analysis indicated that Tanzania's universities highly utilised problem-solving and compromising as the following results illustrate: Problem-solving ($M = 3.36$) in cluster 1 and ($M = 3.50$) in cluster 2; and for compromising ($M = 3.8$) in cluster 1 and ($M = 3.83$) cluster 2.

For hypothesis 3a, it was predicted that conflict management styles (integrating and compromising) would have a positive bearing on team performance. The results confirmed our hypothesis through correlation. The result indicated that integrating $r = .31^{**}$, $p < .01$; compromising $r = .25^{**}$, $p < .01$. And for hypothesis 3b, we had predicted that forcing would have a negative relationship with team performance. Our hypothesis was also confirmed since forcing $r = -.16^*$, $P < .02$. See Table 1.

Finally, for Hypothesis 4 that suggests a positive relationship between conflict management styles (when combining varyingly accommodating, forcing and avoiding) and turnover intention. The results confirm our hypothesis for two conflict management styles accommodating and forcing on turnover intention, that is, accommodating $r = .159^*$, $p < .05$, that is accommodating in a different direction) while forcing was negatively and significant $r = -.16^*$, $p < .05$; and avoiding $r = .06$, $p < .n.s$. See Table 1.

This study addressed the employee perception of the effect of servant leadership conflict management behaviour on team performance, resolution efficacy, and turnover intention in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. For the case of servant leadership and conflict behaviour, it emerged that servant leaders in Tanzania's universities integrate, avoid and accommodate; however, they are not using problem-solving and compromising as expected. Moreover, the study found out that the servant leaders integrating and compromising conflict behaviours also positively correlate. Van de Vliert et al.'s (1995) Conglomerate Conflict Behaviour theory to the effect that the merging of multiple conflict management styles lends credence to the study findings. Even though the study was conducted in higher learning institutions with academic and non-academic staff, the findings concur with those of Elgoibar's (2013, 2017) study conducted in Spain, who had concentrated on worker representatives in various organisations, who used several conflict management styles to resolve disagreements effectively. Such findings indicated that no single conflict management style fitting all scenarios; instead, a combination of different conflict management styles can help engender effectiveness. This scenario can result into a production of a defined behavioural pattern applicable in a particular context as the conflict patterns affirmed in this study (Elgoibar, 2013, Elgoibar et al, 2017, Garcia et al, 2017, Malingumu, 2022).

The second part of this study had examined how servant leadership can select and blend different conflict management styles to get positive results such as team performance. Servant leaders can select co-operative conflict management style that is, integrating and compromising, as cluster analysis and descriptive statistics comparing high and low means while blending different styles to improve team performance, resolution efficacy, and reduce turnover intention as illustrated in figure 1. These processes allowed servant leaders to set a stage for employees' willingness and readiness to co-operate in resolving their differences, hence improving team performance. This study's findings validate the CCB theory. Also, the study findings concur with Munduate et al. (1999) who found that combining different conflict management behaviour for effective conflict management in different contexts, such as in managerial behaviour in military peacekeeping (Euwema & Van Emmerik, 2007). The study findings also concurred with Elgoibar's (2013) research on worker representatives in organisations, which also confirms the same and supports the combination of conflict management behaviour at different degrees. Even though the current study did not hypothesise for other conflict management behaviours to positively correlate with servant leadership, servant leadership emerged to positively correlate

with all the conflict management behaviours such as yielding, problem-solving, and avoiding with the exception of forcing behaviour, with a negative correlation. Impliedly, servant leaders might choose to combine all other behaviours when they are faced with conflicts in a bid to improve the leader's effectiveness in conflict management, with the deployment of forcing conflict behaviour having a possibility of reducing the leader's effectiveness in managing conflict. Moreover, Malingumu (2022) concurs with the statement that there is no single best conflict management style; as the findings indicate that some of the conflicts do not require the five mentioned conflict management styles (compromising, accommodating, avoiding, forcing, and collaborating), but call for a different strategy to be addressed. In this study, it was observed that compromising and collaboration are the most commonly used, though in some cases, force is used. In the same line, our study concurs with Ronquillo; Ellis; and Toney-Butler (2023), who found out that the high incidence of employee turnover can be directly attributed to a failure to properly manage conflicts and to cultivate an environment that is conducive to positive growth and conflict resolution. The contention is that this occurs when a leader employs a conflict management strategy that does not involve collaboration.

Moreover, the current study confirmed that servant leaders have competency in selecting co-operative conflict management styles in line with Iao Man Chu (2011), who confirmed a relationship between servant leadership and integrating conflict management styles. Even though the current study was conducted in a different setting other than the church and in an African context, in this case universities in Tanzania yet confirms the same. This study, however, extends beyond Iao Man Chu's study by explicating styles that leaders in Tanzania use (that is, problem-solving and compromising). Apparently, the selection of a leadership is also informed by the prevailing cultural aspects, hence making such choices also contextual specifically in explaining the link and mechanisms under which integrating and compromising influence team performance. The study findings also corroborate with Orlan and DiNatale-Svetnicka (2013) who found out a significant positive relationship between compromising and collaborative styles in servant leadership but a negative relationship with competitive style. Additionally, the study was supported by Kayanda and Tangi (2022), who concluded that the heads of schools in Chato District employ several strategies to effectively manage conflict in secondary schools. According to the majority of respondents, common approaches include utilising collaboration methods and organising stakeholders' meetings and discussions to address and resolve problems. In addition, conflict resolution strategies

such as; teacher motivation, roundtable discussions, effective teacher communication, implementation of disciplinary measures, and issuing warnings to those responsible were employed.

H4 works assumes that two conflict management styles, i.e. accommodating and avoiding on turnover intention, that is, accommodating and avoiding servant leaders apply them increases turnover intention whereas forcing ended up with no impact; in fact, forcing was rather insignificant. These findings can be well-explained by cultural background and context under which conflicts happen. Even though we did not deal much with cultural connection, the findings set an alarm necessitating testing the variables by linking them to culture as supported by Hofstede (1980) cultural dimensions and Elgoibar (2013) and Elgoibar et al., (2017) who also confirmed that conflict behaviour in Spain was explained by cultural aspects and historical background.

4.0 Practical implications

Based on the results, the study indicated two practical implications. Tanzania's higher learning institutions should prioritise investing in leadership training programmes that specifically target the development of servant leadership attributes. This involves promoting comprehension of the integration, avoidance, and accommodation of conflict management techniques, as these have been recognised as common conflict patterns that servant leaders in Tanzania might employ. Furthermore, institutions should promote the adoption of cooperative conflict management ways by encouraging leaders to recognise the widespread existence of a favourable association between integrating and compromising conflict management styles and team performance. One such approach is to encourage the use of problem-solving and compromising techniques as effective methods to improve team cohesion and productivity.

5.0 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The study was conducted within the framework of Tanzanian public universities, and the findings may not be readily transferable to different cultural or organisational contexts. Leadership and conflict management behaviours may be influenced differently by cultural variances and organisational structures in distinct locations or types of institutions. The study was limited by the size of the sample and the pace at which participants responded. The study encountered difficulties in attaining a substantial response rate, as only 45.13% and 54.85% of the questionnaires were returned during the initial and subsequent phases, respectively. This had the

potential to affect the inclusiveness of the sample and the applicability of the results.

The study offered suggestions for three domains that could be explored in future research. Future research should prioritise the identification and examination of relevant elements that could mediate or moderate the relationship between servant leadership, conflict management approaches, and results. These variables may encompass factors such as; trust, communication efficacy, or organisational framework. Furthermore, it is recommended that future studies prioritise the examination of cultural elements, as they have been shown to have a substantial influence on leadership and conflict dynamics. Specifically, investigating the efficacy of cultural sensitivity training for leaders in improving their capacity to navigate diverse cultural environments within higher education institutions would be valuable. Furthermore, it is recommended that future study direct its attention towards examining the impact of organisational climate and culture on the correlation between servant leadership, conflict management, and employee outcomes. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of how these aspects interact has the potential to yield practical insights that may be used to implement effective organisational interventions and enhancements.

6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study delved into the intricate interplay between servant leadership and conflict management behaviours and their implications for team performance, resolution efficacy, and turnover intention within Tanzania's higher learning institutions. A set of hypotheses that sought to explain the connections between servant leadership, conflict management behavior, and organisational outcomes served as the basis for the investigation. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the dynamics of servant leadership and conflict management in Tanzanian universities. Notably, the servant leaders in these institutions demonstrated a propensity for integrating, avoiding, and accommodating conflict management styles, challenging the initial expectation of employing problem-solving and compromising approaches. Furthermore, the study uncovered a positive correlation between integrating conflict management behaviours, specifically avoiding and accommodating, lending support to the conglomerate conflict behaviour theory. Cluster analysis revealed two predominant conflict patterns among leaders, characterised by a heightened use of compromising and low-integrating (cooperative) behaviour as well as high-integrating and low-compromising (competitive) behavior. These patterns suggested a nuanced approach to conflict management, wherein

leaders strategically blended different styles to foster cooperation and improve team performance. The study's hypotheses were largely supported, affirming the positive impact of integrating and compromising conflict management styles on team performance. Conversely, forcing conflict behaviour exhibited a negative relationship with team performance. The examination of turnover intention revealed that accommodating and forcing styles were associated with increased turnover intention, emphasizing the importance of selecting appropriate conflict management strategies in organisational settings. Importantly, the study's findings align with existing literature, supporting the idea that no single conflict management style fits all situations. Instead, the combination of different styles can enhance effectiveness in resolving conflicts and improving organisational outcomes. The study contributes to the understanding of servant leadership in diverse cultural contexts, shedding light on the influence of cultural factors on leadership and conflict management choices. Thus, this research underscores the significance of servant leadership in guiding conflict management practices and highlights the need for leaders to adopt a flexible and context-specific approach. The patterns of conflict found and how they affect team dynamics have real-world implications for leaders and people who work in organisational development who want to improve performance and lower turnover in Tanzanian higher education institutions and maybe in other places with similar cultures.

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