



DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED IT,  
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# NAVIGATING WORKPLACE CONFLICT

A case study of local and foreign employees at  
an international company in Tanzania

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## **Abstract**

In the era of global trade and professional ties across borders, understanding how individuals from diverse contexts frame and respond to workplace conflict is critically important. Researchers have found various variables with some correlation to preferred conflict management style. These include cultural background, personality traits and the effect of work roles. This case study examines the conflict management styles of 12 local and foreign employees at an international real estate development company in Tanzania through the lens of the Intercultural Conflict Style (ICS) model (Hammer, 2005).

The findings reveal that though nationality, ethnicity and race may influence individual's selection of conflict style, they may overlook complexities that are brought by individual's learned routines of thinking, such as transnational life, family, gender and religion. Further, they show how differences in cultural background as well as lack of awareness of others' conflict styles may usher in miscommunication and conflict.

The study contributes to enhancing the ICS model whilst enriching the literature on African organisational communication, particularly intercultural conflict management, which remains largely underexplored. It also offers recommendations for nurturing workplace relationships and productive conflicts (when conflicts happen), which might be of interest to companies with diverse staff.

## **Keywords**

Intercultural conflict, workplace conflict, culture, conflict management styles, Tanzania, Kenya, Germany, United States of America

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# 1. Introduction

Having people with diverse cultural experiences and perspectives work together means greater potential for conflict. In the workplace context, conflict has been regarded as an expressed struggle or disagreement among individuals who work together towards a common goal (Oetzel and Ting-Toomey, 2013). It can take place at various levels and be brought about by a variety of causes, including personal and interpersonal factors (Gunkel et al., 2016). Conflict is often associated with various, mostly negative, emotions which might be perceived and expressed differently by an individual or a group (Kozan, 1997; Thomas, 1992).

Organisational scholars have found several variables influencing individual's preferences to handling conflict (conflict management style), including cultural background (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000; Komarraju et al., 2008), personality traits (Shetach, 2009; Thomas and Kilmann, 1997), and the effect of work roles or conflict management strategies of supervisors versus subordinates (Lay, 1994; Berryman-Fink and Bunner, 1987; Sorenson and Hawkins, 1995).

Empirical research on conflict management in culturally diverse workgroups has shown how cultural value dimensions affect preferences for different conflict handling styles. For instance, Mohammed, White and Prabhakar (2008) investigate conflict management among French, British and Indian project managers in a multinational telecoms organisation. Their findings suggest a correlation between the managers' conflict strategies and Hofstede's (1984) cultural dimensions of individualism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. The influence of cultural background is also noted in Kozan (1989) and Yuan (2010). The former focuses on conflict styles of Jordanian, Turkish and North American managers. It finds that national

culture affords an all-embracing context – impacting the conflict management approaches of the managers through its influence on personality traits, behavioural norms, plus rules and procedures governing decision making. The latter compares conflict styles of American and Chinese employees in multinational organisations in china. Its findings demonstrate how routines, rules in these two differing contexts shape employee’s approach to conflict. For instance, American participants were more likely to employ confrontational strategies than Chinese participants. The common pattern underlying these studies and many other in the discourse is the focus on Western and Middle-Eastern contexts and also, cultural differences that are deeply rooted in nationality, ethnicity and race.

There are a few studies that have made contribution to the understanding of conflict management in multicultural workplaces in Africa. Gomes, Cohen and Mellahi’s (2011) case study explores interactions of South African and Congolese managers in a strategic alliance between Vodacom and Congolese Wireless Networks. It offers insights on how differences in national culture exacerbate interpersonal conflicts among the managers. For example, South African managers were more individualistic in their approach to tasks than Congolese managers. Du Plessis (2011) sheds light to tensions and contradictions experienced by members of multicultural teams in 21st-century South African organisations. She notes ‘individualistic versus collectivistic’, as described by Hofstede (1984), as one of the factors behind these paradoxes. Most of her participants had strong individuality while some perceived the idea of collectivity as important. This affected their ability to transform from a solo mindset to a team mindset, and vice versa. Again, these studies treat culture as a unitary construct – isomorphic with one’s country of origin, ethnicity and race.

This case study investigates how 12 local and foreign employees at an international real estate development company in Zanzibar (Tanzania), CPS Live Ltd., communicate ideas and deal with emotional upset when workplace conflict arises. The Hammer's (2005) Intercultural Conflict Style (ICS) model is employed to analyse the conflict management strategies of these employees. The ICS model, unlike other conflict inventories such as Conflict Mode Instrument (Thomas and Kilmann, 1974) and ROCI-II instrument (Rahim, 1983), is interculturally grounded. It allows to examine how conflicting parties engage in more "direct" versus "indirect" communication behaviour in discord. Also, how "emotionally expressive" versus "emotionally restrained" the parties are in sharing their feelings towards one another. This model, however, is problematic in the sense that it views culture as a unified entity (associated with national or ethnic identity). Also, most of the examples are drawn from the United States as well as European and Asian countries. By taking the dynamic constructivist's view of culture (Hong, 2009), this research highlights other cultural variables (e.g. transnational life, gender, family and religion) that supplement the ICS model. On the other hand, its focus on the Tanzanian context helps expand the knowledge base on conflict management in the African context.

The proposed research questions are as follows:

- (i) How do employees at the international real estate development company perceive workplace conflicts?*
- (ii) How do their cultural backgrounds influence the way they communicate information and ideas in conflictual interactions?*

The thesis is structured as follows: the next section offers a brief review of literature on conflict in culturally diverse workplaces, conflict management, the conceptualisation of the

ICS model and how it has been used to measure intercultural conflict management styles, the dynamic constructivist approach to culture, and other cultural dynamics emerged from the data. This is followed by an explanation of the methodology used to answer the research questions, plus findings. Finally, a discussion of theoretical contributions and practical implications of this study, as well as research limitations and future research direction are presented.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Understanding conflict in intercultural workplace contexts**

As globalisation accelerates, workplaces are becoming increasingly diverse. As such, a work context in which social identities, normative expectations and societal institutions must continually be negotiated is forged (Stohl, McCann and Bakar, 2013). This creates complexities and the likelihood of conflict. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is still no generally accepted definition of 'conflict' in the literature. Thus, this case study adopts a Wall and Callister's (1995, p. 517) definition of conflict "A process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party".

Stohl, McCann and Bakar (2013) argue that conflict in transnational teams stems from (i) a lack of awareness of important cultural differences, (ii) stereotypic views of the other, and (iii) the failure of team members to recognise, respect, or develop approaches to working with difference. This shows that communication is the key facilitating factor of conflict. Hall (1959) considered how intrinsically linked culture and communication are. That the essence of effective cross-cultural communication is rather about releasing 'right responses' than sending the correct messages. The vital aspect of conflict management is understanding mechanisms for learning about and from each other.

### **2.2. Conflict management**

Traditionally, conflict management strategy has been regarded as a way that leads to encouraging and creatively channelling conflict into effective problem-solving (Deutsch, 1973). The conflict management strategies are stated differently in literature though one can

notice some similarities in classifications. For example, Rahim (1983) categorises and measures conflict styles through the ROCI-II instrument, containing five styles based on individual's concern for self and other: *Integrating* (high self/other concern), *avoiding* (low self/other concern), *dominating* (high self/low other concern), *obliging* (low self/high other concern) and *compromising* (moderate self/other concern). Thomas and Kilmann's (1974) Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) measures individuals' behaviours along two dimensions: (i) *assertiveness*, the degree to which an individual attempts to serve their interests, and (ii) *cooperativeness*, the extent to which an individual attempts to accommodate the interests of others. The two dimensions can be used to define five specific conflict styles: *Competing*, *avoiding*, *compromising*, *collaborating* and *accommodating*. It is important to note that these two frameworks focus rather on personal traits.

Looking at cross-cultural studies of conflict management behaviour, there is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that conflict management strategies are also culturally grounded. Ting-Toomey et al. (2000), for instance, suggest that members of cultural communities learn from one another the attitudes, knowledge structures, behaviours and strategies for defining and responding to conflict situations. Holt and DeVore (2005) as well as Komarraju et al. (2008) argue that differences in individuals' orientation towards different cultural value dimensions, such as the set of aspects that characterise a society according to its apparent place within the continuum of patterns prescribed by the respective aspect, may be one promising explanation for cross-country differences in individual preferences for conflict management styles. This set up the premise for using Hammer's (2005) Intercultural Conflict Style (ICS) model for this study.

**2.3. The ICS) model**

The ICS model attempts to understand and assess conflict style based on an explicit identification of viable “etic” (i.e., culturally generalisable) patterns of cultural difference. The model defines conflict style as “the manner in which contending parties communicate with one another around substantive disagreement and their emotional and affective reaction to one another”. It is *conceptualised theoretically* within the “report” and “command” functions of communication (Reusch and Bateson, 1951). The report aspect involves information or message that is being transferred or discussed. The report function is concerned with anything that is communicable regardless of its accuracy. For Hammer (2005), the two dimensions are the core parameters within which individuals “interpret” each other’s motives, intentions and actions. He asserts that within a conflict dynamic, the “report” function focuses on contending parties’ approaches to disagreements while the “command” function anchors on how contending parties deal with the effective or emotional dimension of communicative interaction. He adds that the model is *contexted* in terms of a culture group’s preferred manner for dealing with disagreements and communicating emotion.

**Table 1**

*The Intercultural Conflict Style Model*

Direct	Discussion	Engagement
	Accommodation	Dynamic
Indirect	Emotionally Restrained	Emotionally Expressive

*Note: Adopted from Hammer (2005)*

The model includes four basic, cross-cultural conflict resolution styles: *Discussion*, *engagement*, *accommodation* and *dynamic*. He argues that *discussion style* uses direct strategies for conveying information or messages about disagreements and emotionally restrained or controlled approaches for dealing with emotional upset. The *engagement style* involves directness with an emotionally expressive demeanour. When it comes to *accommodation style*, individuals employ indirect strategies to problem solving coupled with an emotionally restrained approach. Finally, the *dynamic style* entails applying indirect messages to navigate conflicts alongside emotionally intense and expressive verbal and nonverbal communication.

The scholar also examines the model within two of the most dominant frameworks to organisational and national culture: Individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 1984) and high/low context (Hall, 1959).

He asserts that individualistic cultures tend to value straight talk and overtly express their needs and wants whilst individuals of collectivist cultures favour contemplative talk and discreetly voice their opinions and feelings. Thus, in conflict interactions, the former is rather “direct” and may employ more confrontational approaches for resolving conflicts. The latter, however, is “indirect” and tend to use conflict avoidance approaches as well as third-party intermediaries. Africans are higher on collectivism than individuals from North America and Europe (Hofstede Insights, 2021).

Hall (1959) maintained that in high-context (HC) culture, most of the information is already in the person or expected to be known by interlocutors and therefore, very little in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. However, in low-context (LC), individuals

communicate in an explicit, direct fashion to show their honesty and trustworthiness through clarity and specificity. Thus, persons in LC transactions tend to focus more on the verbal context and communicate in ways that are consistent with their feelings. Hammer (2005) supports Hall's concept by stating that in conflict conditions, LC negotiators may rather rely on confrontations and other direct verbal strategies whilst those of HC, on communication approaches that allow them to avoid confrontations and offering others. North Americans, Germans, Swiss, French people, Scandinavians as well as northern Europeans have been associated with LC, while Japanese, Chinese, Koreans and African Americans with HC (Hall, 1990).

But just looking at people's nationalities, ethnicities and race does not give us the full picture of 'culture' and neither are Western- and Middle-Eastern-centred examples, which basically limit our understanding of underexplored contexts, such as that of Africa. This underpins the decision to focus on the Tanzanian context and approach 'culture' through the lens of dynamic constructivist.

#### **2.4. Beyond the ICS model's view of 'culture': The dynamic constructivist approach**

The dynamic constructivist approach seeks to address how individuals actively construct their cultural representations and how they acquire more than one set of cultural representations in this globalising world (Hong, Morris, Chiu and Benet-Martínez, 2000; Hong and Chiu, 2001). Hong (2009) adopts similar approach to explaining culture. He defines culture as "networks of knowledge, consisting of learned routines of thinking, feeling and interacting with other people, as well as a corpus of substantive assertion and ideas about aspects of the world" (2009:4). He says conceptualising culture in this perspective allows to distinguish it

from a group of people and therefore, reduces the risk of essentialising the groups (race, ethnicity or nationality).

Using four postulates, Hong (2009) underscores how specific pieces of cultural knowledge become operative in guiding the construction of meaning from a stimulus. First, physical and human-made environments nurture the prevalence of knowledge. For instance, people who experienced different challenges in their upbringing may have distinctive networks of shared knowledge to cope with challenges. Second, the transmitting of this knowledge among members of a group and across generations reinforces the formation of culture. Third, as individuals continue to apply this knowledge, it becomes chronically accessible in their minds and therefore, establishes a mindset through which individuals derive meanings – which in turn shapes their cognition, effect and behaviour. This process the fundamental effect of culture. Fourth, upon being exposed to two cultural groups, individual can acquire the shared knowledge of both cultures.

Oyserman and Sorensen (2009) share similar view with Hong. Borrowing the term *syndrome* from Triandis (1996), they describe culture syndromes as networks of associated features that may, in different combinations, pervade several different societies. According to them, culture involves mindsets, practices and styles of engaging that represent the focus of our attention and that, the propensity for one or another to be cued differs across societies.

## **2.5. Other cultural dynamics considered**

The context of participants in the present study illustrated the importance of considering other cultural variables, apart from nationality, to understand their conflict management styles. The following part briefly engages literature to explain four cultural variables that emerged from the data: Transnational life, gender, family and religion.

### *2.5.1. Transnational life*

The concept of transnationalism offers a useful means of examining the development of “networks of knowledge” (Hong, 2009) that are not confined by the nation-state. Basch et al. (1994:6) described transnationalism as the "process by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement". Thus, ‘transnational life’ in this research is understood as having attachments, interactions and presences in two or more countries (Carling et al., 2021). Individuals who in diverse ways and for various reasons had/are settled in one country whilst engaging in cross-border practices are considered in this category.

### *2.5.2. Family*

Chafee, McLeod and Atkin (1971, p. 332) argued that “Family communication patterns help to guide children in their cognitive mapping of situations they ultimately encounter outside the family context”. They classified them into two categories: Oriented families and concept-oriented families. In the former, communication pattern focuses on creating harmony in the family, with parents applying avoiding strategies to conflicts and disputes. As such, their child’s expression of opinions – particularly those that might be in contrast to the parents’ – is limited. In the latter, parents allow their children to express their opinions and participate in discussions on various matters concerning family (McLeod and Chaffee, 1972). Studies, including that of Koesten and Anderson (2004), have shown that children from concept-oriented families obtain the communication skills that help them accept the opinions of others and defend their own ideas.

### *2.5.3. Gender*

The role of gender in shaping conflict-handling styles has been examined in the literature. Conrad (1991) uses five steps to examine conflict strategies of female and male supervisors. He finds no variation in the initial strategies taken by supervisors but in the follow-up strategies. He notes that female supervisors preferred more communicative strategies such as requesting, persuasion, and threat aversion before resorting to coercive approaches. Conversely, male supervisors were four times more likely to follow up with coercive approaches. Monroe et al.'s (1991) findings indicate that male subordinates preferred confrontation more often with female supervisors whilst female subordinates using avoidance more often with male supervisors. Berryman-Fink and Bunner's (1987) study as well as that of Soreson and Hawkins (1995) found that males were more competitive than females, and females were more compromising and communicative than male in conflict resolution style.

### *2.5.4. Religion*

Religion plays an important role in the lives of most Tanzanians, with the vast majority of them identifying as Christian or Muslim (World Faiths Development Dialogue, 2019). In their study of comparison between Australian Christians and Muslims, Wilson and Power (2004) noted that groups of Christians and Muslims with low religiosity preferred collaborating style. On the other hand, Muslims with higher religiosity preferred compromising style. Polkinghorn and Byrne (2001) analysed the influence of gender and religious affiliation on conflict styles in zones of prolonged conflict: South Africa, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Ireland. The findings illustrated that most religious groups favoured the avoiding style, with the exception of Bosnian Muslims.

## 2.6. Research aim

This case study aims to examine the association between employees' cultural backgrounds and conflict management styles adopted to deal with workplace conflicts. It employs the ICS model (Hammer, 2005) to determine employees' styles: *Discussion*, *engagement*, *accommodation* and *dynamic*. 'Cultural background' is rather understood through the dynamic constructivist's lens (Hong, Morris, Chiu and Benet-Martínez, 2000; Hong and Chiu, 2001) – an environment or environments where an individual can develop their identities and interpretation of meanings. Thus, the analysis considers the following cultural variables: Nationality, transnational life, family, gender and religion.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1. Research design**

To answer the research questions, this paper opted for case study as a research method. Yin (2003) suggests that “how” and “why” questions are likely to favour the use of case studies, when the investigator has little control over events and the focus is on contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. He defines case study as “An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13).

A single case design was adopted (Yin, 2003). An international real estate development company in the Zanzibar archipelago (a semi-autonomous territory of Tanzania), CPS Live Ltd., was selected as ‘case’ to explore whether the theory’s propositions are correct or whether some alternative set of explanations might be more relevant.

### **3.2. Sampling**

A pilot study was conducted to determine the feasibility of the approach. Considering time limitations, a convenience sampling was used. The researcher used her own social network to recruit two local employees working in international organisations in Tanzania. Semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2012) were carried out via Zoom. The pilot helped the researcher decide how best to run the research study, including taking the face-to-face approach rather than online as well as refining the interview guide.

In the main study, the sampling procedure aimed to ensure maximum variation amongst the participants. The recruitment of all participants was facilitated through snowball

sampling (Delvin, 2018; Given 2008). A friend of the researcher, working at CPS Live Ltd., helped to advertise the study to fellow colleagues. She also assisted to identify colleagues from various departments, representing diverse job positions and life contexts, to allow a wide variety of narratives to be analysed.

Twelve local and foreign employees from the company volunteered to take part in the study. They were nationals of four countries: Tanzania, Kenya, Germany and United States. Three of them were born in countries different than their nationalities: Interviewee A (British-born Tanzanian), Interviewee B (Tanzanian-born American), and Interviewee G (Filipino-born German). All of them were coming from different cultural backgrounds, and had dealt with intra- and/or inter-personal workplace conflicts. They also represented various career stages (from entry level up to senior management) as well as sectors (customer relationship management, property management, marketing, public relations, journalism, construction, security, environment, agriculture, catering, business, project management, sales, and creative arts). These background characteristics of participants allowed to increase the depth (as opposed to breadth) of understanding (Palinkas et al., 2015). Table 2 below outlines their biographical data.

**Table 2***Biographical data of participants*

INTERVIEWEE	JOB LEVEL	JOB SECTOR	ORIGINALITY	HAD PREVIOUSLY LIVED IN	SEX	AGE
A	Intermediate level	Customer relationship management	Tanzanian <sup>1</sup>	United Kingdom	Male	30
B	Senior management	Property management	American <sup>2</sup>	United States, Canada	Female	49
C	Middle management	Marketing, public relations	Tanzanian	Botswana, South Africa	Female	30
D	Senior management	Journalism	German	Germany	Female	50
E	First level management	Construction	Tanzanian	-	Female	29
F	Senior management	Security	Tanzanian	-	Male	43
G	Senior management	Environment, agriculture, catering	German <sup>3</sup>	Philippines, Germany, Southern America	Female	63
H	Senior management	Business, project management	German	Germany	Male	46
I	Senior management	Sales	Kenyan	Kenya	Male	34
J1	Intermediate level	Marketing, public relations	Tanzanian	Japan	Female	27
J2	Intermediate level	Marketing, public relations	Tanzanian	Cote d'Ivoire, South Africa, Italy	Female	28
K	Intermediate level	Creative arts	Tanzanian	-	Male	37

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<sup>1</sup> British-born Tanzanian

<sup>2</sup> Tanzanian-born American

<sup>3</sup> Filipino-born German

### **3.3. Data collection**

An interview guide, containing 13 questions, was developed (Appendix 1). The questions focused on individual's background as well as their experience with workplace conflict, including their understanding, perceptions and ways of dealing with it. To encourage respondents to discuss in detail whatever is relevant to the topic Kvale (1996), interview questions tactics were considered in the formulation of questions. The first four questions aimed at encouraging participants to describe their backgrounds in detail, including their age, gender, place of origin, languages, plus education and job levels. The rest of the questions sought to explore participants' perspective perceptions of and experiences with conflicts.

The data was collected between 1 – 6 March, 2022 through semi-structured interviews. They were conducted in an informal manner, allowing a room for flexibility and also, for participants to spontaneously reveal their perspectives on the topic as well as issues considered salient to them (Bryman, 2012). Follow-up questions were asked to get further information and clarification (Given, 2008). All except for one participant were interviewed in their place of work. This allowed the researcher to also observe the respondents in their natural setting (Given 2008).

Both individual and paired interviewing approaches were applied. The former accounted for ten interviews. In the latter, two people were interviewed together for the purpose of collecting information about how they perceive the topic as well as each other's conflict styles (Arksey, 1996). The pair seemed to have a strong bond, resulting from their working together as a team. Morris (2001) have suggested that paired depth interviews work better when the two interviewees already have a pre-established relationship such as friends, couples, families and co-workers. The nature and dynamics of relationship may allow them to

fill each other's memory lapses during the conversation and hence, provide more complete data (Morris, 2001; Seymour et al. 1995).

The length of interviews ranged from 15 to 35 minutes. The interviews were done mainly in English, and where participants felt comfortable to express their understanding of conflict management in the local language, Swahili was used.

### **3.4. Ethical considerations**

Ethical issues, including confidentiality, anonymity and the use of consent forms were considered (Diener & Crandall, 1978; Polonsky & Waller, 2005). Participants were invited to participate on a voluntary basis, with a clear understanding of the study objectives and what they were asked to do. The invitations were sent in advance to allow them to gather the information provided, ask questions, prior to voluntarily participating in the study. At the beginning of each interview, a consent form (Appendix 2) was shared with the respective respondent for them to read, understand and agree (sign). Respondents were made aware of the right to withdraw, at any time, from answering questions or the interview. To protect the confidentiality and anonymity of participants, names and other potential identifying information, such as their job titles, were removed from the analysis (respondents labelled with letters).

### **3.5. Analysis**

The English interviews were transcribed using a speech-to-text software (Otter), and reviewed by the researcher herself. Following that, she manually transcribed and translated the Swahili interviews (n=2). As described by Bryman (2016), this brought her closer to the data whilst encouraging her to identify key themes. Data investigation employed the content analysis method (Mayring, 2000; Schreier, 2012). Given (2008) considers qualitative content

analysis as useful in analysing perceptions, plus identifying both conscious and unconscious messages communicated.

The coding was done manually, and started during data collection. The researcher began to record preliminary words and phrases for codes in her field notes. After transforming the interviews into text, she began to perform open coding. This phase involved a close line-by-line reading of the data to uncover meanings and ideas behind it (Given, 2008). Traditional tools such as markers and sticky notes were employed to identify patterns and themes in participants' responses. This was guided by questions adapted from Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995). The latter were: What are participants' conflict styles? How, exactly, do participants employ their styles? How do participants perceive their styles? What does the researcher see from participants' responses? What did the researcher learn from their observations/field notes? In the second phase, research questions as well as theoretical framework (ICS model) were used to produce a set of theoretic codes (Glaser, 1992; Given, 2008). These were: The influence of individualism and low context dimensions, and the influence of collectivism and high context dimensions. These abstract concepts enabled the researcher to identify an emergent theme to generate richer interpretations. This was the role of other cultural dynamics: Transnational life, family, gender and religion.

## 4. Results

The employees' accounts of workplace conflicts as well as conflict management strategies are summarised in Table 3 below. Overall, all four conflict styles described in the ICS model (Hammer, 2005) were identified: *Discussion*, *engagement*, *accommodation* and *dynamic*.

The factors influencing these styles seemed to lie both within and outside the conceptualisation of the model. For instance, some Tanzanian employees used indirect approaches (*accommodation* and *dynamic*), which is consistent with Hammer's (2005) view of communication approaches in collectivistic and high context cultures. Furthermore, employees from countries that are high on the scale of individualism and low context such as Germany, the United States and Kenya preferred more confronting conflict handling style (*discussion*). Moving beyond the ICS model, the analysis revealed that nationality, ethnicity and race may not always be the determiners of individual's conflict style. This resulted from some patterns of complexity in participants' backgrounds, underscoring the role of other cultural dynamics (transnational life, family, gender and religion).

Therefore, the findings are presented in two themes. First, participants' conflict styles through the lens of ICS model (Hammer, 2005), which focus on national culture. Then, participants' conflict styles shaped by other cultural dynamics – as a way to supplement the ICS model.

**Table 3***Conflict reported by participants and their conflict management styles*

INTERVIEWEE	CONFLICT TYPE (PARTIES INVOLVED)	PARTICIPANT'S ACCOUNT OF THE NATURE OF CONFLICT	CONFLICT STYLE
A	Interpersonal (A + Peers)	Proposing a new approach to report writing	Accommodation
B	Interpersonal (B + Peer)	Differences in approach to an issue, compliance to regulations	Discussion
C	Interpersonal (C + Subordinate)	Disrespectful behaviour	Engagement
D	Intrapersonal	Where there is no clarity and transparency	Discussion
E	Interpersonal (E + Peer)	Old grudges	Accommodation
F	Interpersonal (F + Peers)	Compliance to regulations	Engagement
G	Interpersonal (G + Subordinates)	Time management	Engagement
H	Interpersonal (H + Contractor)	Rejection due to high price	Discussion
I	Interpersonal (I + Subordinate)	Property being sold at less than the new, agreed sale price	Discussion
J1	Interpersonal (J1 + Supervisor)	Lack of appreciation for the efforts involved	Dynamic
J2	Interpersonal (J2 + Supervisor)	Prejudice	Discussion
K	Interpersonal (K + Supervisor)	Domineering behaviour	Engagement

#### **4.1. Conflict styles through the lens of ICS model**

##### *4.1.1. The influence of individualism and low context dimensions*

Hammer (2005, 2009), associates the *discussion* style with individualism (Hofstede, 1984) and low context (Hall, 1959). He argues that individuals from such contexts tend to

favour objective facts and logically related recommendations or solutions. Thus, *discussion* communicators are direct and emotionally restrained. They value clarity in expressing one's goals or position as well as preserving a facade of calm. Hammer (2005, 2009) considers United States (European American), Australia and Northern Europe as exemplars.

The *discussion* styles of Interviewee B (American), as well as Interviewees D and H (Germans) seemed to be influenced by the said dimensions. They referred to themselves as 'direct' when dealing with conflictual situations at work. For them, this approach was essential in addressing misconceptions or misunderstandings that may result in a dispute:

*"I think the best way to avoid conflict is to be very straightforward, from the beginning and to be absolute transparent, and not to beat around the bush."*

(Interviewee D)

*"It's not my style to talk five minutes until I come to the point [...] I also like transparency. Of course, it's not for blaming a person but to understand what happened and if there was a mistake, then we also need to agree there was a mistake and how we can avoid to do it again."* (Interviewee H)

Interviewee B recalled her approach to a disagreement between her and a colleague. The colleague was upset with how B's team handled her report on an issue and subsequently, reported it in a negative manner on a public forum (WhatsApp group):

*"I immediately addressed her concern on WhatsApp group, saying that I apologise that she felt that way and asked her to come on a private, one-to-one basis so we can discuss and get her issue resolved."* (Interviewee B)

According to Interviewee B, the tension between them continued for a little while to the point where human resources department had to intervene. Though the situation was

upsetting, it was important for her to “keep calm” and let procedures shape the outcome the situation.

The *discussion* style of Interviewee I (Kenyan) can also be interpreted in the individualism dimension (Hofstede, 1984):

*“I prefer to be direct and to be clear [...] At the end of the day, I don’t like to leave much room for interpretation because I have had a lot of experience in my past where people had misinterpreted me because of my being indirect. That causes more chaos later on.”* (Interviewee I)

Though his country is not included in Hammer’s (2005, 2009) exemplars of discussion style, Kiambi and Nadler (2012) find that individualism is the most experienced cultural value in Kenya. Their study focuses primarily on public relations practitioners, but it sheds light on the need to re-examine whether there are cultural values that have emerged since Hofstede’s (1984) study.

#### *4.1.2. The influence of collectivism and high context dimensions*

In collectivistic and high context societies, such as Tanzania, people tend to act primarily in service of a wider group dynamic (Hofstede, 1991) and communicate in an indirect manner (Hall, 1959). They prefer to be less confrontational, and could even be willing to suppress their own opinions or interests in order to preserve harmony. *Accommodation* and *dynamic* styles (Hammer, 2005) fall under these dimensions.

*Accommodation* occurs when an individual applies indirect strategies to avoiding or solving disagreements whilst keeping their emotions in check (Hammer, 2005, 2009). The style favours ambiguity, stories, metaphors and use of third parties to avoid verbal confrontation between contending individuals (Hammer, 2005).

Some of Interviewee E's (Tanzanian) responses indicated the impact of collectivism and high context in her conflict style (*accommodation*). Referring to her conflict strategy as "people pleaser", Interviewee E realised that she tends to be less confrontational and always look for ways to "make peace", including neglecting her own feelings/concerns.

The *Dynamic* style involves the use of language elements such as strategic hyperbole, repetition of one's position, ambiguity, stories, metaphors, and humour along with greater reliance on third-party intermediaries for dealing with or solving a conflict (Hammer, 2005, 2009). Individuals who employ this strategy may define themselves as people who are good at repairing relations (Hammer, 2009). The latter research also suggests that *dynamic* communicators are skilled at observing behaviour and easy to display strong emotions.

Interviewee J1 (Tanzanian) appeared to utilise this approach when faced with disagreements at work. Talking about a tension between her and one of her line managers, she said:

*"It wasn't really a conflict or disagreement but the fact that she didn't really accept me in her department [...] I felt like she undervalued what I did [...] I'm too emotional. So, I was really upset and teared a little bit."* (Interviewee J1)

She further said that though she was unhappy with the situation, she avoided discussing it with this supervisor. The skill of 'repairing relations' was also observed in this participant, particularly through Interviewee J2's perspective:

*"[J1's] style is that she will try to get to a point of understanding and get us to work together [...] she will find a way to encourage us, to motivate us into doing the work together. We end up doing it the next day, no matter how mad someone is about the situation."* (Interviewee J2)

## 4.2. Conflict styles influenced by other cultural dynamics

### 4.2.1. Transnational life

Transnational living of Interviewee G (German) appeared to impact her conflict style. She was born in the Philippines, worked and lived in Southern America and Germany. The style she favoured was *engagement*.

*Engagement* is similar to *discussion* in the sense of direct communication but it pairs this form of directness with emotionally expressive comportment (Hammer, 2005). Individuals who apply this approach are rather comfortable with emotionally intense conversations, with the view that when each actor “puts their emotion on the table”, the resolution of the conflict is reasonably progressing (Hammer, 2009). G admitted that on one hand, living in Germany has influenced her being direct and on the other, her Filipino roots, has made her emotionally expressive.

The conflict styles of Interviewees C and J2 (Tanzanians), suggested the role of “networks of knowledge” from countries where they obtained their education. The former, who applied *engagement*, was enrolled in schools in Botswana and South Africa and the latter, a *discussion* communicator, was educated in Cote d’Ivoire, then South Africa and Italy. The South Africa and Italy are higher on the scale of individualism than Tanzania (Hofstede Insights, 2021). This could explain the direct approach applied by both participants.

Furthermore, Interviewee C seemed to value the role of transnationalism in conflict management. She realised that her “worst conflict cases” were with those who “haven’t travelled or been exposed”. She felt that they were unable to understand her.

#### 4.2.2. Family

This was one of the most frequently mentioned cultural facets by participants as they were justifying their preference for conflict style. Some respondents credited their approaches to conflict to their upbringing:

*“I grew up with six sisters, and being the only son, I learned that with conflict at the end of the day, you just have to approach it very directly [...] A lot of the conflicts that arose between my siblings was mostly because they were vague about things amongst each other [...] I learnt it the hard way whereby I never gave my sisters the opportunity to misinterpret what I say, for example, am I doing dishes? It’s either I’m doing it or I’m not.”* (Interviewee I – Kenyan, Discussion)

*“I was raised in a family where it’s just boys and I’m the only girl. So, they tend to bond more than I did with them. I was kind of alone, and my family from a very young age put us into boarding school. I was in boarding school from the age of 10 until 18. So, that upbringing made me very independent, very solid about things”* (Interviewee J2 – Tanzanian, Discussion)

*“My parents are very traditional in the Kigoma approach of diplomacy. We are very loud but not confrontational [...] So, I think that influenced the way I conduct myself at work as well.”* (Interviewee A – Tanzanian, Accommodation)

These three findings agree with McLeod and Atkin (1971) that family communication patterns can guide children to the path of establishing a mindset through which they can derive meanings. This includes how they approach various issues as well as express their opinions.

One participant attributed her maintaining the calm during conflictual interactions to marriage:

*“I don’t get triggered because I was married to a narcissist person for 23 years [...] And that’s how I learned and understood the coping mechanisms”*

(Interviewee B – American, *Discussion*)

She added that this experience plus post-divorce therapy helped her become more empathetic, sympathetic and highly professional.

Another one, Interviewee F (Tanzanian – *Engagement*), thought that his being a father of five affects his approach to workplace conflict. He shared that it has made him a “man of second chance” and encouraged him to directly communicate disagreements.

Interviewee K admitted that in disagreements, his emotions tend to be triggered by an exhibition of a domineering behaviour. For him, this stems from what he had experienced after the passing of his parents:

*“My father passed in 1994 then, my mom in 2001. From there, my brother and I practically raised ourselves up. We were very poor. We had to wash cars, do this and that [...] This is why I usually take offense when someone treats me arrogantly. I worked hard to be who I am today in terms of acquiring education, finding work and do some developments for myself.”* (Interviewee K – Tanzania, *Engagement*)

Though there seems to be no direct evidence to support these three findings, the dynamic constructivist’s view back it up (Hong, Morris, Chiu and Benet-Martínez, 2000; Hong and Chiu, 2001). The scholars argue that physical and human-made environments foster the development of knowledge. Thus, the strategies by Interviewees B, F and K can be argued to

have been influenced by their marriage (the former) and different challenges in their upbringing (the latter).

#### 4.2.3. Religion

One participant, Interviewee E, seemed to also be influenced by religion in her dealing with conflicts at work. She regarded herself as religious, devoted to the Roman Catholic faith (which is based on Christianity). Remembering a conflict between her and her peer, she said:

*“I had no idea he was that mad at me. I just knew that there was something I did wrong. Yes, I’m a human [...] I said nothing. I thank God I didn’t because it has somehow brought some peace.”* (interviewee E – Tanzanian, *Accommodation*)

This finding somehow agrees with Polkinghorn and Byrne (2001) as well as Wilson and Power (2004). That people who are more religious tend to prefer conflict avoidance strategies whilst seeking mutually acceptable solution (compromising).

#### 4.2.4. Gender

The analysis also found some hints of the influence of gender in individual’s preference for conflict style. One respondent noticed that a lot of conflicts she had experienced at work were with Tanzanian male subordinates who failed to take her seriously because of her gender and age. Thus, her approach had to be firm to define how she would like to be treated:

*“They feel that a woman shouldn’t be above them, like ‘why should I be taking instructions from a woman, this woman is younger than me.’ [...] So, a lot of times, I have always had to let them know where I stand, set boundaries real quick.”* (Interviewee C – Tanzanian, *Engagement*)

This finding can be interpreted in Mbillinyi (1993) and Meena et al's (2017). The scholars find Tanzania, like many other African countries, a patriarchal society where men's ideas and perceptions are valued more than those of women. Against this background, one can assume that behaviours of these male subordinates were influenced by this social system.

Furthermore, Interviewee C remembered applying communicative strategies with her male subordinate, including requesting and persuasion. When these failed to work, she turned to the human resources department (HR):

*"I had been trying to get him to do this or show up at work, because he just never showed up at work. Nothing I did was working, so I called the HR to intervene."*

(Interviewee C – Tanzanian, *Engagement*)

This finding agrees with Conrad (1991) plus Sorenson and Hawkins (1995) that pro-social communication is often adapted more readily and often by female supervisors in conflict management.

Interestingly, the style of Interviewee C's subordinate (Interviewee K) plus some of his responses seemed to agree with findings from Monroe et al.'s (1991). The scholars, examining the impact of gender upon the conflict behaviour of difficult subordinates, found that that male subordinates favoured confrontation more often with female supervisors. Recalling the tension between him and his supervisor (Interviewee C), which culminated in the HR involvement (as reported by Interviewee C above) and C resigning, he said:

*"It was a huge argument in the office, shouting, throwing out words [...] my feelings were hurt. I was furious. I reacted on the spot. I didn't wait for the next day or in the evening."* (Interviewee K)

## 5. Discussion

This case study clearly shows the influence of cultural background in individual's selection of conflict management style. Culture here is understood in the lens of dynamic constructivist (Hong, Morris, Chiu and Benet-Martínez, 2000; Hong and Chiu, 2001). That it is about “networks of knowledge”, involving learned routines of thinking, feeling and interacting with others and also, a body of fundamental assertion and ideas about views of the world (Hong, 2009).

Turning to findings, the concepts of individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 1984) and high/low context (Hall, 1959) explain some of the meanings behind different preferences as per what has been established by the ICS model (Hammer, 2005). For instance, some Tanzanian employees selected indirect conflict approaches (*accommodation* and *dynamic*), which is consistent with what has been described in the literature about African contexts – collectivist and high context (Hofstede, 1984; Hall, 1959; Hammer 2005, 2009; Gunkel et al., 2016). On the other hand, American and German employees favoured direct approaches (*discussion*), which can be attributed to their belonging to individualistic and low context societies (Hammer, 2005,2009). Some studies, including McSweeney (2002), have questioned whether national culture can systematically cause differences in behaviour between people from various countries, as proposed by Hammer (2005, 2009) as well as Hofstede (1984) and Hall (1959). McSweeney (2002) argues that culture is construct and therefore, has no direct measure. Instead, he proposes to engage with and apply theories of action that can cope with change, power, variety, multiple influences – including non-national variables. With this in mind, the researcher considered the influence of other cultural variables in conflict

management: Transnational lives, family, religion and gender. This allowed to avoid treating cultures as monolithic entities – associated with national, ethnical and racial groups.

The findings under the second theme explain some complexities that could not be interpreted in the lens of the ICS model (Hammer, 2005). For instance, one Tanzanian employee (Interviewee J2) seemed to prefer a direct approach to conflict management rather than what has been ‘assigned’ for African cultures (indirect) in the ICS model. Interviewee J2’s approach is explained in the ‘transnational life’ variable, where the influence of contexts from which she received education, such as South Africa and Italy is underscored. One German employee (Interviewee G) seemed to be direct though emotionally expressive during conflictual interactions. This finding is uncommon in individualistic and low context societies, however, if we look at where Interviewee G was born (Philippines) and other places she had lived before, such as South America, we can be able to connect the dots. All this underline dynamic constructivist’s view that culture does not reside in groups and thus, should not be treated as the essence of groups (Hong, 2009).

Theoretically, the latter findings indicate that the influence of dynamic cultural variables is still relevant in the ICS model (Hammer, 2005). Thus, they rather enhance the model than challenge it.

Further, one finding sheds light on the aspect of how differences in learned routines plus lack of awareness of others’ approach to conflict can provide a window for conflict to erupt. For instance, two employees – Interviewees C and K (Tanzanians, *engagement*) – reported an altercation between them that resulted in the former resigning. The environments that nurtured the prevalence of their knowledge differed. Interviewee C, who was influenced by her transnational life (Botswana and South Africa), thought that people who

“lack exposure”, such as Interviewee K, fail to understand her. Interviewee K, who related his conflict approach with his poor upbringing, believed that Interviewee C was unable to understand him because she was born into privilege. This indicates that they were oblivious of each other’s motivations, feelings and expectations. The finding agrees with Hammer (2009, p. 228) that “differences in the way we attempt to authentically interact with one another when we disagree and are frustrated may be misinterpreted as negative personal characteristics.”

Lastly, all employees perceived workplace conflict has positive effect on personal and professional growth. This is consistent with what Bolman and Deal (2003) have suggested; that conflict is unavoidable and may not always signify a problem in an organisation. Furthermore, Hoy and Miskel (2008) view conflict as a catalyst for positive change and essential for authentic relations, empowerment and democracy. It is important to note that only productive conflicts have been associated with positive gains (Stohl, McCann and Bakar, 2013).

## 6. Conclusion

This case study explores the conflict management styles of local and foreign employees at an international real estate development company in Zanzibar (Tanzania). The ICS model (Hammer, 2005) is used to detect the strategies. The findings reveal that though nationality, ethnicity and race may influence individual's selection of conflict style, they may overlook complexities of that are brought by individual's learned routines of thinking. We can only get the full picture when we look at other cultural dimensions. By taking the dynamic constructivist approach to culture (Hong, Morris, Chiu and Benet-Martínez, 2000; Hong and Chiu, 2001), this study highlights some salient culture facets apart from the national culture. These are transnational life, gender, family and religion. The findings contribute to enhancing the ICS model whilst enriching the literature on African organisational communication, particularly intercultural conflict management, which remains largely underexplored.

### 6.1. Practical implications

There are several practical suggestions can be drawn from the results of this study. Employees and administrators in international companies, especially in Africa, can consider the recommendations within their specific organisational contexts and adopt some of them to enhance communication and encourage productive conflicts (when conflicts happen).

First, understanding how others frame and respond to workplace conflict is utterly vital. To promote workplace relationships and productive conflicts, companies can consider emotional intelligence (EQ) training. Goleman (1995) argues that IQ contributes only 20% to life success and the rest is the result of EQ. Some studies have suggested that EQ impacts workplace relationships, including how employees manage stress and conflict. Druskat and

Wolff (2001) consider team emotional intelligence as more complicated than individual intelligence because teams interact at more levels. A team must attend to yet another level of awareness and regulation. When a member is not on the same emotional wavelength as the rest, a team needs to be emotionally intelligent vis-à-vis that individual.

Second, those who hold leadership positions, must be able to operate successfully to meet the subtle needs of team members. For instance, the ability to provide constructive feedback or communicate 'bad news' in a subtle way that the other party's face is preserved (Not feeling embarrassed or humiliated).

## **6.2. Limitations and recommendations for future research**

Limitations of the study included its dependency on self-reported data. Rigorousness can be questionable as respondents may have filtered information prior to sharing it. Frey et al. (2000, p. 96) argue that validity of self-reports is compromised when people "aren't able and/or willing to provide complete and accurate information." The researcher was cognizant that people's accounts may be different from what actually happened, for reasons related to their cognitive, emotional and interpersonal qualities.

Another limitation was the small sample size, which minimised the generalisability of the results. Participants represented only a small fraction of the company's staff, and just one intercultural workplace setting out of many in Tanzania and Africa as a whole. It is possible that employees in other contexts may have different factors that influence their preferences to conflict management.

The third one, the researcher effect may have ushered in some biases (Kvale, 1994; Oakley 2000). All except for one participant met her for the first time during the interviews.

This unfamiliarity between them may have affected their responses. The researcher attempted to create an environment where interviewees would feel safe and free to share their stories. But at the same time, it is possible that participants selected their narratives based on how they perceived their interactions with her.

Future studies on this matter should consider a bigger sample within the country examined, or even include more African countries and a statistical analysis. A mixed-methods approach, featuring surveys and in-depth interviews, can be taken. Surveys can provide a snapshot of diverse interpretations of conflict and facilitating factors, which may be useful in interviewing. It would be beneficial to conduct more paired interviews. They would help us gain a better understanding of how two actors perceive each other's conflict styles and also, enhance accuracy.

Additionally, the influence of other cultural aspects in conflict management styles (e.g. transnational life, family, religion and gender) could be further explored to offer the African-centric view whilst addressing the literature gap.

**Word count: 11,280**

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## 8. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Interview guide

1. Can you please tell me the following details: Age, gender and place of origin?
2. How many languages do you speak?
3. What is your level of education?
4. Which job level are you in?
5. Have you ever had an experience with conflict at work? How did you manage it?
6. How do you perceive workplace conflict? Is it a good or bad thing, especially in relation to the effectiveness of your company?
7. How did you intervene? Can you provide specific examples?
8. Do you feel that your cultural background affects the way you manage conflicts? (Reflect on your ethnicity, nationality, gender, race and/or religious belief(s)).
9. How do you communicate in conflict?
  - Do you maintain emotional calm and stability or allow your emotions to come out?
  - Do you express what you believe to be true directly to the other party or avoid to criticise their views for the sake of “not hurting their feelings”?
10. How do you perceive those who apply different approaches from yours?
11. What do you find challenging when being direct/indirect?
12. Do you feel that your cultural background impacts how you feel about that?
13. What is your preferred strategy in conflict resolution?

## **Appendix 2: Consent form for research participants**

### **What kind of project is this and why would you want me to participate?**

This research case study seeks to contribute to the understanding of how individuals from diverse contexts perceive and respond to workplace conflict. It does so by investigating how local and foreign employees at an international company in Tanzania communicate ideas and deal with emotional upset when workplace conflict arises. It employs an Intercultural Conflict Style (ICS) model by Mitchell Hammer<sup>4</sup> to learn how the cultural backgrounds of the employees influence their conflict management strategies and also, how they perceive workplace conflicts. The ICS is interculturally grounded with respect to how conflicting parties engage in more “direct” versus “indirect” communication behaviour in discord. Also, how “emotionally expressive” versus “emotionally restrained” the parties are in sharing their feelings towards one another. These cultural facets are crucial to the generation of meaning. Practically, this case study has the potential to inform organisations on the influence of cultural background on individuals’ preferences for conflict management styles, and how to encourage more constructive styles at the workplace.

Participants of this project will be local and foreign employees at an international company in Tanzania. The selection of participants is purposive (based on the researcher’s knowledge of the context).

*The Principal Investigator (person responsible) for this project is Suzana Aroko, a master’s student in communication at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.*

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<sup>4</sup> Hammer, M. (2005). The Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory: A conceptual framework and measure of intercultural conflict resolution approaches. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 675-695.

### **What happens during the study?**

Participants will be invited to take a semi-structured individual interview that lasts for about 30 minutes. Dependent on the participant's preference, the interview can be conducted face to face or online via Zoom. The interview will be audio-recorded following participant's consent and thereafter, transcribed and analysed. Ethical issues, including confidentiality and anonymity will be considered. At the beginning of each interview, a participant will be made aware of the right to withdraw, at any time, from answering questions or the interview. Further strategies to ensure their confidentiality and anonymity will be applied in the analysis, including removing names and other potential identifying information, such as job titles.

Some participants may be asked to participate in a further interview.

Where possible, the researcher will observe how a participant selects an approach for communicating with the other party when there are substantive disagreements and emotional response.

*The data collection period is from 1 – 6 March, 2022.*

### **Possible consequences and risks of participating in the study**

No immediate consequences or risks have been identified. It is not an objective of this study to collect personal information of a sensitive nature, but other personal information (e.g., your name) may be recorded (see information below regarding the safe keeping of such personal information). Please reach out directly to the Principal Investigator, using the contact information provided, should you have any concerns about consequences or risks of participating in the study.

### **What happens to the data/information collected about me?**

Any information collected for this study (interview transcripts, field notes, recordings, basic personal information) will remain strictly confidential, will only be accessible to the research team, and will be used for research purposes only. The information collected will only be used for research. Most of the data – the part used for analysis and supporting the research findings – will be carefully kept (for 10 years), with no one being able to access it. The data not used for analysis and without the participants' personal information will be destroyed right after the project is completed. All data will be anonymised as soon as possible following the data collection. Codes, rather than names, will be used in all published materials generated from this project.

The person responsible for your personal data is the Principal Investigator. According to the EU Data Protection Regulation, you have the right to access the information about you that is handled in the study free of charge and, if necessary, have any errors corrected. You can also request that information about you be deleted and that the processing of your personal data be restricted. However, the right to delete and to limit the processing of personal data does not apply when the data is necessary for the research in question.

### **Participation is voluntary**

Your participation is voluntary, and you can choose to cancel your participation at any time. If you choose not to participate or want to cancel your participation, you do not have to state why, nor will it affect you in any foreseeable way. If you wish to cancel your participation, please contact the person responsible for the study.

### **Responsible for the study**

The Principal Investigator (person responsible) for this project is Suzana Aroko, a master's student in communication at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Part of the research team

is also Dr. Amy Wanyu Ou from the Department of Applied Information Technology at the University of Gothenburg. Aroko can be contacted through [gusaroksu@student.gu.se](mailto:gusaroksu@student.gu.se) or + 255 (0) 766 332 732.

## **YOUR CONSENT**

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I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and my questions have been answered. I get to keep a copy of the written information about the research study.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (put a cross "X" on the line provided if you) understand the procedures described above and agree to participate in this study.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (put a cross "X" on the line provided if you) agree to the handling of my personal information as described in the information about this study.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Participant)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant

Date