

## Organizational Conflict Management Strategies in Public Organizations: A Systematic Literature Review

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### ***Abstract***

Conflict is unavoidable and natural organizational aspect. The purpose of this review is to identify the key determinants that shape conflict management practices in public organizations through a comprehensive review of existing literature using the systematic review methodology of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews (PRISMA). Searches were conducted on September 2023, from Emerald, Springer, and Google Scholar databases to discover relevant literature on conflict management strategies in the public domain. The findings indicate that integrating, compromising, avoiding, dominating, and accommodating are resolution strategies commonly used in the public sector. Thus, it is implicated that managers in public organization should prioritize effective conflict resolution techniques because effective conflict management improves communication, collaboration, decision-making, organizational performance, employee satisfaction, and promotes positive relationships while mitigating conflict's impact on individual well-being and organizational culture.

**Keywords:** Organizational Conflict, Conflict Management, Strategies, Public Organization

## Introduction

This paper evaluates research on conflict management practices in public organizations, focusing on key determinants that shape these practices. It aims to provide insights into effective governance and organizational dynamics, contributing to the development of strategies for improved conflict resolution and organizational effectiveness. This section introduces the key concepts and outlines the structure of the study, setting the groundwork for the subsequent sections in the review.

### Background

Conflict is certainly one of the major organizational phenomena (Rahim, 2011). Organizations employ people who have to coordinate and work in harmony with each other to achieve goals and objectives. Workers seek guidelines from leaders as team members to establish good working relations. No doubt, these people are also part of a society where conflicts are likely to occur at home as well as at their workplaces. In multitudinous cases, these conflicts are obvious and necessary. Therefore, team members, contenders, and associations have to face conflicts while carrying out their operations (Akhtar et al., 2020). According to Smriti *et al.* (2021), conflict management is a crucial aspect of organizational behavior, as it is essential for human adaptability and survival in social relations due to its inherent nature. This study explores conflict resolution in public organizations, focusing on the fundamental elements that determine conflict treatment and resolution. It provides insights into the context and difficulties of conflict management in public organizations, highlighting the importance of understanding conflict strategies.

Conflict arises from human interaction when individuals perceive incongruity in goals, attitudes, values, or beliefs. Conflict is a normal part of team activity, indicating healthy dynamics. Effective conflict management depends on conflict management methods (Rahim, 2000; Easterbrook et al., 1993; Labovitz, 1980). Organizations, social units with hierarchies, departments, and individuals, are prone to constant conflict. Management must employ various conflict management strategies to prevent unmanageable levels (Thakore, 2013). Organizations form the foundation of modern society's social structure, allowing for the seamless flow of social life and complex relationships, necessitating complex investigation for conflicts (Paresashvili et al., 2023). According to Solaja (2018), organizational conflict refers to disagreements among individuals or groups within an organization over methods, goals, or to assert one's superiority over others. Furthermore, Taher and Gomes (2018) argue that conflicts within organizations are inevitable due to disagreements over workloads, communication issues, and individual differences, often resulting in forceful and unpleasant situations. These conflicts often result in forceful situations due to competition for supremacy, leadership style, and resource scarcity (Omisore & Abiodun, 2014). Thus, managements must understand conflict situations to decide whether to inspire or

resolve them, as 20% of their time is spent on conflict management categories (Hussein & Al-Mamary, 2019).

Consequently, conflict management strategies are crucial for handling conflicts, as poorly managed conflicts can lead to trust breakdowns and lost productivity. Unresolved conflicts can escalate into aggression. Most people do not resolve conflicts due to faulty skills or lack of understanding of the organization's conflict management strategies (Nwosu & Makinde, 2014). According to Smriti et al.(2021), conflict management involves interventions aimed at reducing excessive conflict or, in some cases, increasing insufficient conflict. Umana (2019) asserts that conflict is a natural part of organizational life, but effective conflict resolution strategies improves decision outcomes, task-related conflict, and group productivity by fostering constructive criticism and individual devil advocate roles. Furthermore, it enhances communication, time management, cooperation, and performance, reduce disruptions, and improve human relations. Rahim (2011) also asserts that constructively managing moderate conflict is crucial for organizational effectiveness, while most conflict reduction, resolution, or minimization recommendations pertain to functional conflict. Thus, effective conflict management strategies are crucial for leadership and leaders must display these skills to manage conflicts within their organizations (Henry, 2009).

Organizational conflict management reduces the negative elements of conflict and increases the positive conflict elements by use of various styles and techniques in managing the conflict(s) between and/or among individuals or groups (Mwaniki & Stephen, 2021; Omene, 2021). Effective conflict management in the workplace can mitigate negative outcomes such as low productivity, health-related stress, increased employee turnover, and litigation(Shapiro, 2014). Conflict management strategies constitute an important managerial responsibility and activity, and have a crucial impact on the organization's performance. Thus, organizations can develop many constructive conflict management strategies at various levels of the organization (Mohammed, 2020). It is very imperative for the management of the organization to understand their organization and know the strategy or method of conflict resolution to use to blend with the particular conflict situation (Tamunomiebi & Alechi, 2020). According to Opute (2014), managers have to be vigilant in the sense that they come up with the best possible solution that satisfies both the conflicting parties. With this regard, Chen et al. (2000) identified six factors affecting conflict management: face, inter-relation, seniority, power, credibility, and conflict severity. Sudhakar (2015) identified five conflict resolution techniques: avoiding/withdrawal, compromising, confronting/problem-solving, accommodating, and smoothing. International joint ventures use problem-solving compromising, forcing, and legalistic strategies. Le Nguyen and Larimo (2011) suggest that conflict management strategies in international joint ventures are determined by problem-solving, compromise, forcing, and legalistic approaches. Manso et al. (2021) found

communication breakdown as a significant factor in organizational conflict. Juozėnaitė (2023) suggested public relations practitioners can use conflict resolution styles like collaborating, accommodating, avoiding, compromising, and competing.

Despite the importance conflict management strategies, there is a shortages literature on factors that determine conflict management strategies in public organizations particularly based on systematic literature review. According to Smriti et al. (2021) the literature contains significant gaps in terms of sample size, population, and tools used to evaluate factors affecting conflict management. Moreover, the literature suggests conflict management strategies like mediation, improved communication, avoidance, accommodation, competition, compromise, and collaboration are used generally in organizations, but none is universally applicable, requiring further investigation. Thus, the purpose of this review is to provide insights into the key determinants that shape conflict management practices in public organizations through a comprehensive review of existing literatures.

#### Purpose of the Review

This review aims to evaluate conflict management literature in public organizations, identifying factors influencing methods. It provides a detailed overview of conflict management elements, contributing to understanding in the public sector. The study provides practical insights for public managers and policymakers to improve conflict resolution tactics and organizational performance.

#### Research question

This study addresses the following research question: What are the key determinants of conflict management practice in public organizations? By exploring this research questions, this review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the determinants that influence conflict management practices, enabling public organizations to develop more informed strategies to effectively address and resolve conflicts.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### Definition of Organizational Conflict

Conflict definitions vary among scholars, with different perspectives on organizational conflict. Conflict can be subjectively perceived and perceived differently, highlighting the complexity of understanding conflict. Scholars have provided diverse definitions of organizational conflict from various perspectives, but they share a common understanding. As an example, Corwin (1969) defined conflict as interpersonal or intergroup strain, actions such as disputes and information distortions, that violate organizational cooperation norms. Thomas (1990) also identifies conflict as the process that begins when one party perceives another is frustrated or about to frustrate their concerns.

According to Pondy (1967), conflict refers to antecedent conditions, affective states, cognitive states, and behavior, encompassing resource scarcity, policy differences, stress, tension, hostility, anxiety, and awareness. For Chaudhry and Asif (2015), conflict is a cohesive framework of behavior and perception among organizational members, triggered by feelings of depravedness and awareness of incompatibility with others. Conflict in organizations often arises from unclear roles and goals, leading to dissension, turnover, and lost productivity. Lack of clarity about job expectations is a leading cause of conflict (Chea, 2006). Conflict is a common occurrence in work teams, often involving hostility, aggression, and misunderstandings. It's an intentional behavior aimed at hindering another's goals (Thakore, 2013). Three interpretations exist: traditional view, human relation view, and interactionist view. Traditional view views conflict as negative, while human relation view sees it as a natural event (Solaja, 2018).

Daisy (2020) identifies three types of organizational conflicts: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and interdepartmental. Intrapersonal conflicts involve individual issues, while interpersonal conflicts focus on human interaction. Interdepartmental conflicts arise from organizational structures and require collaboration. Joseph (2016) categorizes organizational conflicts into intra-organizational and inter-organizational types, while Rahim (2011) identifies four types: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group, and intergroup. Moreover, organizational conflicts can be categorized into six types: interpretation, argumentation, value, interest, role, and personal. These conflicts can arise from economic, value, or power reasons. Resolving these conflicts can be challenging due to their reliance on beliefs (Ababio, 2022; Nordby, 2018). Organizational conflicts can also arise from structural issues, personal disagreements, and differences in objectives, roles, job descriptions, responsibilities, and overspecialization among employees (Opatha, 2015). Thus, from the given definitions, it can be concluded that conflict is not a single, universally accepted concept, as each individual has their own unique way of thinking and behavior in similar situations.

#### Organizational Conflict Management Strategies

Conflict management strategies involve coping with conflicting situations by implementing effective approaches to undermine dysfunctional implications and enhance functional aspects, ultimately improving organizational learning and effectiveness (Sehrawat & Sharma, 2014; Rahim, 2002). Conflict management strategies in organizations aim to minimize disruption and provide a satisfactory solution to incompatible goals. Organizations have various mechanisms to manage disagreements, with success measured by limiting conflict behavior and achieving a satisfactory outcome (Thakore, 2013). Conflict management is often defined as the individual response to disagreements (Somech et al., 2009), with motivation for resolution originating from Deutsch's cooperation-competition paradigm. Deutsch's cooperation-competition

paradigm outlines conflict resolution as either a cooperative (win-win) or competitive (win-lose or zero-sum game) approach, emphasizing mutual problem-solving and conflict resolution (Coleman et al. 2013). In more detail, organizational success relies on effective conflict recognition and management, which includes improved communication, organizational discipline, and considering life stages (Osijek, 2003). Popular conflict management strategies include integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising, with different terminologies used by scholars (Cheong, 2010). Follett (1940) and Blake and Mouton (1964) classify conflict resolution strategies as domination, compromise, integration, avoidance, and suppression. Thomas (1976) divides them into cooperative and forceful approaches, with five styles: avoidance, accommodation, competitiveness, collaboration, and compromising. Rahim and Bonoma (1979) propose self-concern and care for others as fundamental elements of conflict management styles. The dimensions of conflict resolution involve satisfying one's or others' concerns, with five strategies: integrating, obliging, compromising, dominating, and avoiding. Moreover, Robbins (2005) and Thompson (1990) propose a broader conflict resolution approach, including competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating, while Rahim (2002) lists five techniques including integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. The integrating style is widely recognized as the most effective conflict management strategy (Blake & Mouton, 1964), but avoiding and dominating styles can be beneficial depending on an organization's circumstances, as each study has unique individuals, organizational elements, and settings (Thomas, 1977; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Rahim, 2002)..

According to Gross and Guerrero (2000) suggest integrative conflict management is most effective, while avoiding and dominating strategies are considered ineffective. Rahim (2005) suggests integration and compromise styles for strategic issues, while Tjosvold and Sun (2002) suggest avoiding can preserve relationships. Tjosvold et al. (1999) suggest that cooperative goals and open-minded negotiation skills can facilitate the development of integrative conflict management strategies within organizations. Trust development reduces affective conflict in organizations (Tidd et al., 2004). Different styles of conflict management, such as dominating, integrating, forcing, and confronting, have different relational outcomes (Euwema et al., 2003). Effective conflict management requires a high positive score on the problem-solving index and a negative score on the negotiating index (Rahim 2002). The Schmidt and Kochan model suggests goal incompatibility motivates conflict, although the initial model's relationship form is not supported.

To conclude, previous studies on organizational conflict lack a clear definition of conflict management strategies. However, Rahim (2000) and Saeed et al. (2014) define it as a process aimed at minimizing negative effects and increasing constructive positive effects, thereby improving organizational effectiveness. This practice involves identifying and

effectively addressing conflicts. Furthermore, the existing literature suggests that various conflict management strategies, including, mediation, improved communication, avoidance, accommodation, competition, compromise, and collaboration, are used in organizations, but none are universally applicable, suggesting the need for further investigation into the most effective conflict management strategies in public organizations.

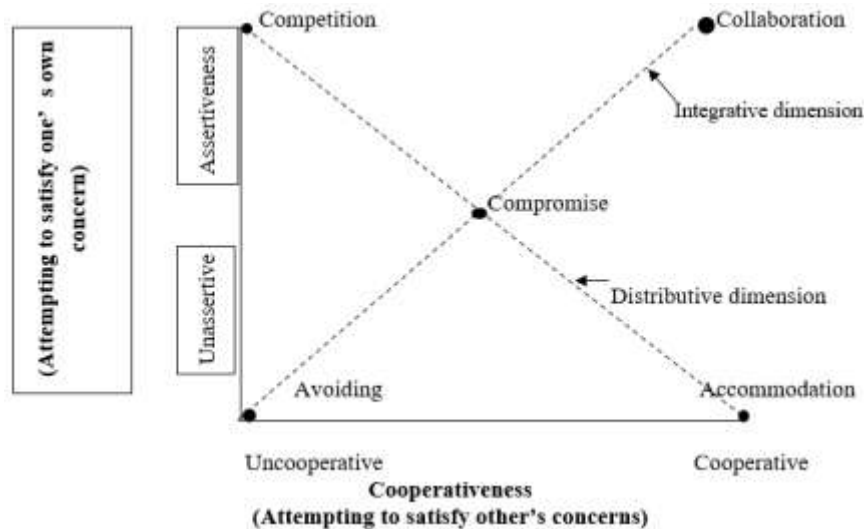
Overview of the existing theoretical models and frameworks related to organizational conflict management strategies

Throughout the years, various conflict management strategic models, such as the associative model, the confrontational (settlement) model, and the regulative model, have been established (Chea, 2006). According to Rahim and Magner (1996), conflict management approaches can be categorized into two, three, four, and five styles, with each style having its own unique characteristics and methods. The two styles are cooperation and competition, which were proposed by Deutsch (1949, 1990) and Tjosvold (1990). Non-confrontation, solution-orientation, and control are the three styles proposed by Putnam and Wilson (1982). Pruitt (1983) identified four styles: surrendering, problem solving, inaction, and contending. The five styles, as described by Blake and Mouton (1964), Follett (1926/1940), Rahim and Bonoma (1979), and Thomas (1976), include integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. In addition, according to Marziah et al. (2018), Thomas and Killman proposed five conflict management styles, namely competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating, in 1974. These styles have been widely favored and practiced. Thus, due to the cohesiveness of the model, the focus of this review is on the five styles of conflict handling. Moreover, the main reason for selecting the Thomas-Kilmann model specific to this study is that it is an integrative model that was developed in 1970 by Thomas and Kilmann that the model argues individuals can act either assertively or cooperatively during conflict situations. Depending on the degree of these behaviors shown, an individuals' response can then be mapped on the model. According to this model, there are five general positions a person can take based on their degree of assertiveness or cooperativeness during a conflict situation. Someone can be competing, collaborating, accommodating, compromising or avoiding.

Blake and Mouton's The Managerial Grid introduced five conflict management approaches in the late 1960s. These approaches, based on assertiveness and cooperativeness, include competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating modes. Interpersonal conflict resolution styles are classified into two categories: care for oneself and concern for others. These dimensions reflect an individual's self-satisfaction and desire to satisfy others' concerns. The scheme offers a comprehensive understanding of how individuals handle conflict

situations where their desires or concerns differ from others as shown in Figure 1.

Thomas also notes that these five modes can be organized in terms of the integrative and distributive dimensions, as discussed by Kilmann and Thomas (1975). This conflict-handling scheme offers a comprehensive approach to understanding how individuals handle conflict situations where their desires or concerns differ from those of another person.



**Figure 1. Five conflict-handling modes, adapted from Kilmann and Thomas (1975, p. 927)**

As discussed by Vesperi et al. (2021) from the work of Thomas and Kilmann (1974), each conflict-handling style is summarized as follows:

1. **Competing:** Competing is a power-oriented mode where one pursues their interests at the expense of others, using arguments, rank, or economic sanctions to win a position or defend their rights.
2. **Accommodating:** Accommodating is a cooperative approach where individuals prioritize the needs of others over their own, often involving self-denial and selfless generosity, obedience, or acceptance of different perspectives.
3. **Avoidance:** Avoidance is a tactic where an individual avoids conflict by avoiding his or her own concerns or those of others, often through diplomatic evasion, postponement, or withdrawal from a threatening situation.
4. **Collaboration:** Collaborating is assertive and cooperative, aiming to find solutions that meet individual concerns. It involves identifying needs, exploring disagreements, and learning from each other's intuitions.



5. **Compromising:** Compromising is a moderate approach aiming for a mutually acceptable solution, balancing competition and accommodation. It is an intermediate solution, requiring less exploration than collaboration. It can involve dividing differences or seeking quick solutions.

## Methods

A systematic literature review (SLR) was used in this investigation. SLR differs from typical story reviews in that it employs a repeatable, scientific, and transparent process, according to Tranfield et al. (2003). According to Routroy and Behera (2017), systematic reviews, as opposed to traditional or narrative reviews, take a more rigorous and well-defined strategy to reviewing the literature in a certain subject area. A systematic review, according to Palazzo and Vollero (2021), can be useful in managing the exploration of a large number of academic publications and permits the building of a sophisticated framework for the research concerns. The approach can also assist researchers and scholars in exploring the literature by taking into account its bibliographic aspects (Xu et al., 2020). Hiebl (2021) also highlights the importance of locating high-quality empirical research evidence in the evidence-based systematic review process.

As a result, the review adhered to PRISMA, which is a set of preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Adeyinka-Ojo, 2021; Okoli & Schabram, 2010; Randolph, 2009). This method was developed to deliver transparent, unambiguous, and reliable results, convey large volumes of information, and minimize bias (Sohrabi et al., 2021; Page et al., 2021). Furthermore, the PRISMA research method employed Boolean operators to create search terms based on the research questions and previously established inclusion/exclusion criteria (Page et al., 2021).

Moreover, Eligibility conditions are crucial in selecting the scope of studies in systematic reviews. They establish criteria for evidence eligibility and ineligibility, allowing readers to understand the review's scope and verify inclusion judgments. Criteria for report elements include dissemination year, language, and report status (Page et al., 2021; Higgins 2020). This systematic review focuses on organizational conflict management strategies, aligning with academic fields, original empirical research, and peer-reviewed articles, with a selection period from 2000 to 2023.

The study utilized databases like Emerald, Springer, and Google Scholar to identify relevant literature on conflict management strategies in the public domain, following the PRISMA framework's requirements. The PRISMA 2020 checklist requires authors to present full search strategies for databases, registers, and websites, including filters and limits. An integrative systematic review combines quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, providing a rich overview of diverse study approaches.

Keywords used in search include conflict management strategies, methods, approaches, techniques, models, and styles in public organizations. Searches were conducted on September 2023, from three databases using the search term "[All: conflict] AND [All: management] AND [All: strategies] OR [All: models] OR [All: styles] AND [All: organizational] AND [All: public domain]. Moreover, the selection of individual studies followed the PRISMA flow diagram (Page et al., 2021). The screening process generated 37 articles to be included in this systematic review, as indicated in Figure 2. That means, after completing this exceedingly difficult, time-consuming, and strict systematic evaluation, only 37 primary publications that were dedicated to the study question were preserved (Mallett et al., 2012). Because adopting a review technique is necessary for carrying out a thorough, systematic review (Xiao & Watson, 2019), The PRISMA flow diagram is used in Figure 2 to illustrate an overview of the article selection process.

Identification of studies via databases

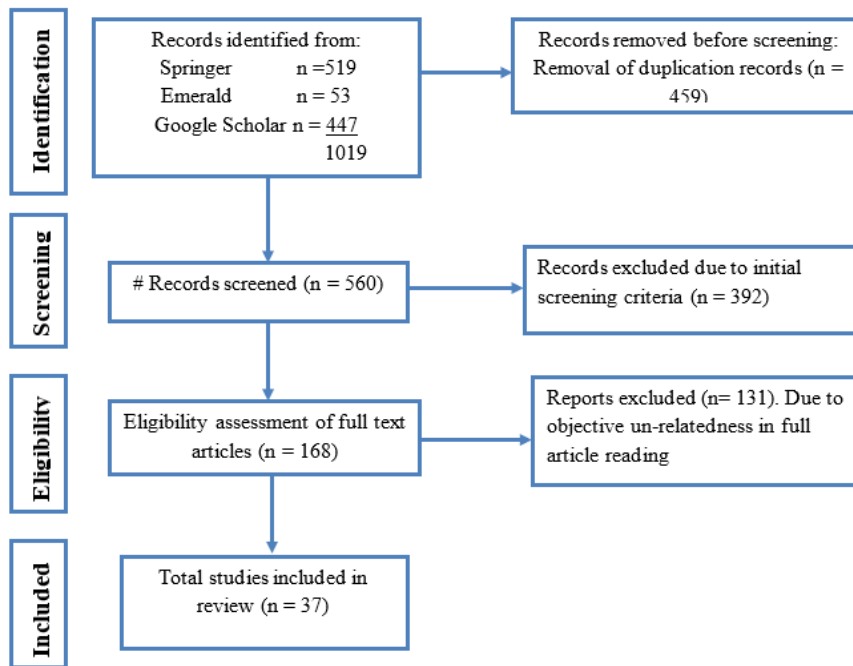


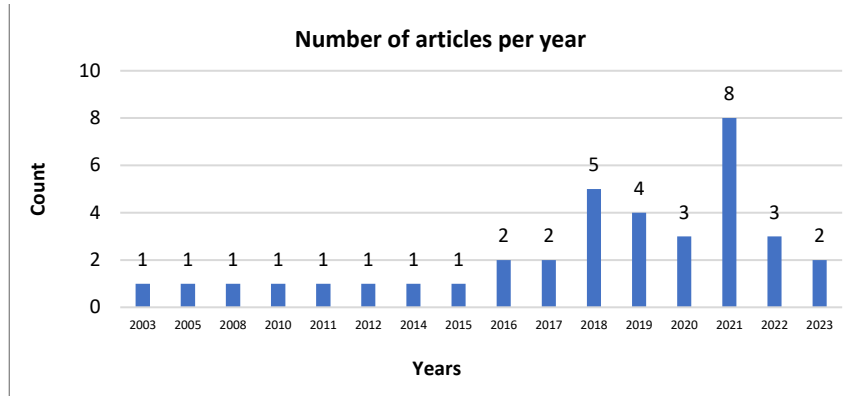
Figure 2. The PRISMA flow diagram for the systematic literature review

Results and Discussion

The 37 full-text articles considered for review were examined to extract the practices of organizational conflict management strategies in the public domain across the globe using descriptive and content analysis to summarize selected papers and identify themes. The following information was taken from each of these studies: author(s), title, year of publication, type of study, geographical context, and sector of public organization.

Characteristics of the Articles Under Review based on Year of publication

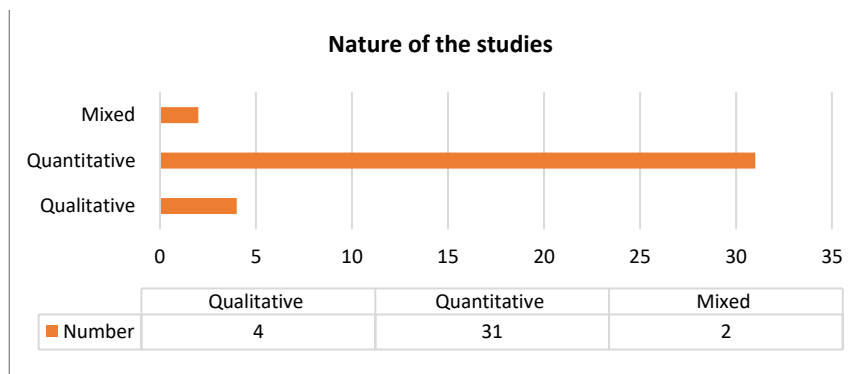
Regarding the number of publications per year, Fig. 3 shows that research in this field publication gradually grew from 2018 to 2021, with a slight decrease in 2020 and 2022. The number of published publications is smaller in 2023, accounting for 5.41% of the chosen research. However, remember that the latter year's releases are limited to the first half of the year. There needs to be a clear leader in this branch of research in terms of the output of the key authors responsible for the papers.



**Figure 3. Distribution of papers over the years**

Characteristics of the Articles Under Review based on the nature of the studies

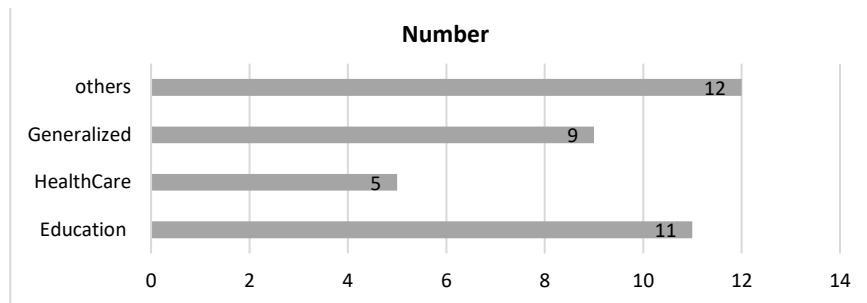
From the 37 eligible studies as indicated in figure 4, the majority employed quantitative studies, which account for 84% (31), and the rest, 13% (4) and 5% (2), were conducted using a qualitative and mixed approach, respectively. Therefore, the finding indicated that there is a shortage of qualitative and mixed research. It is consequently recommended that future researchers focus on those approaches, as they enable more excavation and a more comprehensive view.



**Figure 4. Nature of the studies**

Characteristics of the Articles Under Review based on the type of public organizations

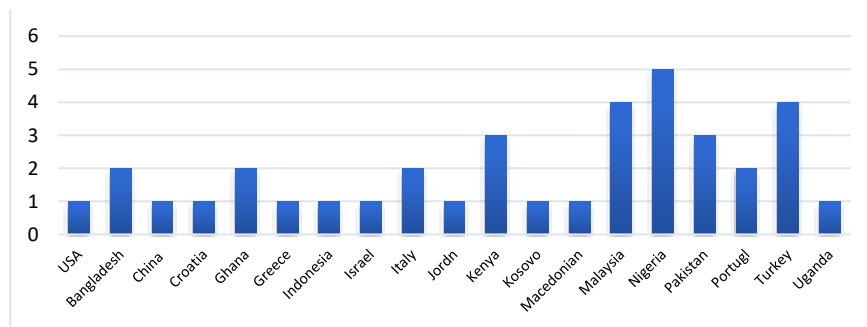
Figure 5 presents the results of the reviewed studies type of public organization wise; accordingly, 30% (11) of the studies were conducted in the educational type of organization, i.e., universities and secondary schools. While 14% (5) are conducted in public health organizations, mainly public hospitals, The large number of studies, or 32% (12), are focused on various public organizations such as agriculture, city authorities, construction, industry, microfinance, public banks, and insurance. However, 24% (9) of the studies were conducted on generalized public organizations that did not indicate a specific type of public organization. Therefore, as can be understood from the result above, there are still shortages of studies conducted at the global level by taking into account public organizations, particularly manufacturing, state-owned, and ministerial, while researchers are currently focusing on education and health.



**Figure 5. Nature of the studies by type of public organization**

Characteristics of the Articles Under Review based on the country

Based on the data obtained from the reviewed paper, it is clear that a majority of these research studies were in the Asia context, with 35% (13) (namely, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Jordan, Indonesia, and Israel). Meanwhile, 32% (12) of the studies analyzed correspond to the European context (specifically, Turkey, Portugal, Italy, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, and Kosovo), while 30% (11) and 3% (1) are from Africa and America, respectively.



**Figure 6. Nature of the studies by country**

Determinates of conflict management strategies in public organizations

The study identified five conflict management themes: integrating, compromising, avoiding, dominating, and accommodating. These themes were found in studies conducted globally, primarily in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the US. With the majority using the conflict management models developed by Thomas and Kilmann (1974) and Rahim (2002). As a result of these studies, it is possible to conclude that public organizations use dominating, integrating, compromising, accommodating, and avoiding strategies to deal with organizational disputes. Furthermore, as supplementary conflict management measures, few studies identified mediation and arbitration (Lipsky et al., 2020), reconciliation (Dogan, 2016; Turkalj et al., 2003), third-party involvement (Ester et al., 2021), issue solving (Akpapere, 2021; Çınar & Kaban, 2012), increased communication, and staff re-orientation (Ajai, 2017).

**Table 2 Selected studies**

Authors	Titles	Findings
Lipsky et al. (2020)	Organizational Conflict Resolution and Strategic Choice: Evidence from a Survey of Fortune 1000 Firms	Mediation and arbitration
Turkalj et al.(2003)	Conflict Management in Organization	Cooperation, integration, compromising, avoiding, and last dominating
Tatar et al. (2019)	Inter-Organizational Conflicts and Solution Strategies	Cooperation 1st, reconciliation, avoidance, compromise, and pressure
Shabani et al. (2022)	The Impact of Conflict Management Styles on Organizational Performance: A Comparative Analysis	Dominating style for conflict management while
Tabassi et al. (2019)	Conflict Management, Team Coordination, and Performance Within Multicultural Temporary Projects: Evidence from the Construction Industry	Avoidance and cooperative approaches
Yin et al. (2022)	Exploring the relationships between team leader's conflict management styles and team passion: From the emotional perspective	Cooperative
Hendel et al.(2005)	Leadership style and choice of strategy in conflict management among Israeli nurse managers in general hospitals	Compromise
Dogan (2016)	Conflicts Management Model in School: A Mixed Design Study	Reconciliation, followed by avoidance, integration, compromise, and domination
Valente & Lourenç (2020)	Conflict in the Classroom: How Teachers' Emotional Intelligence Influences Conflict Management	Integrating and compromising
Vespero et al. (2021)	Conflict management as an organizational capacity: survey of hospital managers in healthcare organizations	Collaborative style

Pinto-Moreira (2021)	Conflict management styles with peers at work: Gender and levels of education differences	Integrating and compromising styles
Anono & Ogollah (2018)	Effects of Conflict Management Strategies on Organizational Performance: A Case of the National Empowerment Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya	Collaborating, compromising and accommodating
Dell'Aquila et al. (2023)	A Tailored MOOC Fostering Intercultural Conflict Management in the Educational Context: Evidence from Italy	Dominating
Taher & Gomes (2018)	Exploring the Relationship between Conflict Management Style and Organizational Performance: An Empirical Study in the Organizations of Bangladesh	Integrating style
Gomathy et al. (2022)	The Effect of Human Relation in Solving Conflicts in an Organization	Integrating style
Maureen et al. (2021)	Conflict management strategies and organizational performance (A survey of microfinance institutions in Nairobi)	Accommodating, dominating, compromise, and collaborating
Ester et al. (2021)	The Effect of Conflict Resolution Strategies on Employee Performance in Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), Uganda	Negotiation, third party intervention, compromise
Igbinoba et al. (2018)	Survey datasets on the influence of conflict management strategies on academic staff productivity in selected public universities in Nigeria	Integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising
Taher et al. (2008)	Conflict Management and Its Impact on Organizational Performance: A Study on Some Industrial Enterprises in Bangladesh	Integrating style
Abazeed (2017)	Impact of Organizational Conflict Strategies on Organizational Commitment at Public Universities in the North Region of Jordan	Integration, dominance, compromising, and avoiding
Ud Din et al. (2011)	An investigation of conflict management in public and private sector universities	Integrating, compromising and avoiding styles
Khalid & Fatima (2016)	Conflict Types and Conflict Management Styles in Public and Private Hospitals	Obliging, integrating, compromising and avoiding conflict management
Binyanya (2021)	Conflict management styles and employee performance in hospitals	Compromising, avoiding and dominating styles
Asyraf Mohd Kassim et al. (2018)	Conflict Management Styles and Job Satisfaction: a Study Among Malaysian Public Universities' Academicians	Integrating, obliging, and compromising
Shih & Susanto (2010)	Conflict management styles, emotional intelligence, and job performance in public organizations	Integrating and compromising styles

Chandolia & Anastasiou (2020)	Leadership and Conflict Management Style Are Associated with the Effectiveness of School Conflict Management in the Region of Epirus, NW Greece	Compromise and Collaborative styles were frequently observed, followed by Smoothing and Forcing
Çinar & Kaban (2012)	Conflict Management and Visionary Leadership: An Application in Hospital Organizations	Problem solving, dominating, and compromise
Drakulevski et al.(2014)	Conflict Management Styles Among Managers in Macedonian Organizations	Compromising and avoiding styles
Yetunde et al. (2021)	Dominating Conflict Management Style and Quality of Work in Lagos State University Teaching Hospital	Dominating style
Chukwuemeka et al.(2021)	Effect of Conflict Resolution Strategies on Workers' Retention in the Public Sector	Compromising and avoidance
Kassim et al. (2018)	The mediating role of conflict management styles between organizational justice and affective commitment among academic staffs in Malaysian public universities	Integrating, and compromising
Yusufu & Otajele (2019)	Effect Of Conflict Management on Organizational Performance	Collaboration and conflict avoidance
Osabiya (2015)	Conflict Management and Resolution in Nigeria Public Sector	Compromise
Akparep (2021)	Organizational Conflicts and Performance Outcomes: The Perspective of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research — Savanna Agricultural Research Institute	Problem solving, improved communication, staff re-orientation, accommodating, and compromise.
Ajai (2017)	Assessment of conflict management strategies in public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria	Confrontational, compromising, setting up committee, free flow of communication between members of staff, proper school record keeping and dialogue

### Integrating Strategy

The integration style is a problem-solving approach that involves open communication, information exchange, alternative exploration, and examining differences to find a workable solution for complex issues (Rahim, 2002). Ozkalp et al. (2009) suggest that integrating one's own and others' goals is a balanced method that involves juggling multiple goals simultaneously.

The integrative conflict management style is the most effective, according to studies by Gomathy et al. (2022) and Taher et al. (2018). Conflict management strategies in Pakistani and Nigerian universities, including integrating, compromising, and avoiding, have a positive impact on academic staff productivity (Igbino et al., 2018; Ud Din et al. 2011). Pinto-Moreira (2021) found a higher prevalence of integrating and compromising styles among peers. Higher emotional intelligence

instructors use more integrating and compromising conflict resolution tactics (Valente & Lourenço's 2020). High-educated managers in complex organizations adopt a collaborative style (Vesperi et al., 2021), while team leaders prefer avoidance and cooperative conflict management methods, generating a favorable emotional climate and increasing team passion (Tabassi et al., 2019). The cooperative conflict management method generates a favorable emotional climate inside the team, which increases team passion (Yin et al., 2022).

#### Compromising strategy

Rahim (2002) suggests a give-and-take process for acceptable resolutions, particularly when opposing interests are incompatible or negotiating is halted. This method can be employed when alternative approaches are ineffective, consensus isn't reached, or a temporary solution is needed. Compromise is a conflict resolution tactic that involves a pact between disputing parties, requiring cooperation and commitment to find a solution. It is effective when both parties share common goals and have equal power. This approach encourages both parties to find acceptable solutions, contributing to a compromise solution that satisfies both parties (Laios & Tzetzis, 2005; Smith et al., 2000).

Conflict is a natural organizational aspect, and compromise is a resolution strategy used in the public sector (Akpapere et al., 2021; Binyanya, 2021; Maureen et al., 2021; Pinto-Moreira, 2021; Tatar et al., 2019; Anono & Ogollah, 2018; Igbinoba et al., 2018; Abazeed's, 2017; Ajai, 2017; Khalid & Fatima, 2016; Dogan, 2016; Ud Din et al., 2011). The experimental survey on conflict management in the public sector in Nigeria by Osabiya (2015) revealed that conflict resolution can be achieved through compromise between employees and management. Another study investigated the conflict mode choices of head nurses in general hospitals in Israel, examining the relationship between leadership style, conflict management strategy, and demographic characteristics. The study revealed that compromise is the most frequently employed conflict management strategy (Hendel et al., 2005). Thus, the compromising strategy is the second most used strategy in the public domain, according to the reviewed papers.

#### Avoiding strategy

Avoidance is a conflict resolution technique where individuals withdraw from a situation, avoiding both their own and other parties' concerns. It's useful for minor problems or a cooling-off period but inappropriate for significant issues, decisions, or quick action. It involves one participant withholding participation in disagreement (Reuver, 2006; Rahim, 2002). Smith et al. (2000) and Laios and Tzetzis (2005) suggest avoidance tactics, also known as the "withdrawing strategy," can delay peacemaking and gain an advantage over opposing parties. To boost performance and limit the negative effects of conflicts, organizations should create effective conflict resolution strategies. Conflict avoidance is the most commonly



used strategy employed in public organizations to minimize disputes ( Dell'Aquila et al., 2023; Binyanya, 2021; Maureen et al., 2021; Pinto-Moreira, 2021; Tatar et al., 2019; Yusufu & Otajele, 2019; Igbinoba et al., 2018; Abazeed, 2017; Dogan, 2016; Khalid & Fatima, 2016; Ud Din et al., 2011). According to the reviewed papers, avoiding style is another popular strategy used by public organizations.

#### Dominating strategy

Domination strategy involves grabbing one party's mind without concessions to reach a conflict resolution, forcing the other to accept their opinion, reflecting a situation where one party takes the other's view. Smith et al. (2000) and Rahim (2002) argue that a control strategy involves one party disregarding the needs and expectations of the other to achieve personal interests, often using algebraic methods. According to Shabani et al. (2022), public sector managers prefer the dominating style for conflict resolution, whereas the compromise style has the greatest influence on organizational performance. In public organizations, dominant styles are often utilized (Dell'Aquila et al., 2023; Binyanya, 2022; Maureen et al., 2021; Igbinoba et al., 2018; Abazeed, 2017).

#### Accommodating strategy

The accommodating style is a negotiation tactic where one party prioritises the needs of the other, often sacrificing their own interests to ease tensions. This style is useful when the other party is unfamiliar with the issue or if the outcome is crucial. This negotiation style is suitable for parties dealing with a weakness or maintaining a connection, but inappropriate for conflicts involving important issues or parties believing in their rights or wrongdoing (Rahim, 2002). Robbins and Judge (2017) highlight accommodating behavior as a willingness to prioritize the opponent's interests, characterized by lower assertiveness and higher cooperativeness. From the reviewed papers, accommodating strategies are also used in public organisations to handle conflicts (Akpapere et al., 2021; Maureen et al., 2021; Anono & Ogollah, 2018), even though a general analysis of selected articles indicates it is the least popular strategy in the public domain.

### **Implications for Public Organizations**

Effective conflict management improves communication, collaboration, and decision-making processes, resulting in better organizational outcomes. As a result, developing conflict resolution strategies in public organizations is critical for boosting organizational performance and increasing employee satisfaction. Furthermore, it promotes positive working relationships among employees and mitigates the detrimental impact of conflict on individual well-being and organizational culture. Thus, recognizing the importance of conflict resolution, managers can prioritize the implementation of appropriate conflict resolution techniques to resolve disagreements in a timely and constructive manner.

Moreover, conflict management holds immense importance in public organizations due to its impact on the overall functioning and success of these organizations. Due to diverse stakeholders, complex decision-making processes, and competing interests, this can all lead to conflict in public organizations. Thus, identifying effective conflict resolution aids in the resolution of disagreements, the improvement of communication and collaboration, the promotion of employee happiness and engagement, and the maintenance of a harmonious work environment. It also helps to increase organizational performance, productivity, and the achievement of organizational goals.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this review is to explore and analyze the various strategies employed by public organizations to effectively manage conflicts. Accordingly, conflict is a natural organizational aspect, and integrating, compromising, avoiding, dominating, and accommodating are resolution strategies commonly used in the public sector. Conflict management enhances communication, collaboration, and decision-making, boosting organizational performance and employee satisfaction. It promotes positive relationships and mitigates conflict's impact on individual well-being and organizational culture. Managers should prioritize effective conflict resolution techniques.

The review has various strengths, one of which is that it highlights the favored conflict resolution techniques in public organizations. Managers and organizational leaders in those organizations can apply the study's findings in their daily operations. The study also contributes to the corpus of knowledge by supporting previous findings and can be applied to other research methods or hypothesis testing. However, there are certain limitations to the research article, such as the use of a limited database, specified keywords, and limited articles.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This systematic literature review focuses on identifying the determinants organizational conflict management strategies, specifically in public organizations. It includes studies and articles from peer-reviewed journals as well as other credible sources. The review encompasses various aspects of conflict management, such as organizational conflict management strategies, the types of conflicts commonly encountered in public organizations, the existing theoretical models and frameworks related to organizational conflict management strategies. It is crucial to note, however, that this assessment is restricted by its dependence on current research and may miss recent innovations or special contextual elements influencing conflict management in public organizations. Furthermore, the review has limitations, such as employing specific keywords to choose publications from the Springer, Emerald, and Google Scholar databases, limiting the reach to only three databases; therefore,

the scope of further investigation can explore other databases and compare their findings to this finding.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors have disclosed no potential conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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