

## **Conflict Management Education at Universities in Asian Countries: An Interaction Effect between High-Context Orientation and Learning Motivation**

1. Research Purpose. University educators aim to develop collaborative conflict management skills rather than competitive or win-lose styles. However, because cultural norms can influence the development of conflict management skills, this aim may not be achieved in high-context Asian countries in which indirect communication is preferred. Furthermore, as global changes have led to a greater westernization in Asian countries, some of young Asians have developed more low-context orientations and prefer direct communication, which makes the situation more complicated. This study investigated the interaction effect between high/low-context orientations and learning motivation on the collaborative/competitive conflict management styles of Asian undergraduate students.

2. Method and Results. Data were collected by questionnaire from 162 Japanese undergraduate students (48.8% male; mean age = 20.49). The regression analyses indicated that there was a significant interaction effect between high-context orientation and learning motivation on collaborative and competitive conflict management styles. Learning motivation was found to have a positive effect on collaborative styles and negative effect on competitive styles in low-context oriented students, but learning motivation had a positive effect on competitive styles and no effect on collaborative styles (both well-motivated and demotivated students used the collaborative styles) in high-context oriented students.

3. Conclusion and Discussion. Conflict management education has straightforward effects on low-context oriented students by encouraging collaborative styles and discouraging competitive styles. However, there were more complicated effects found for high-context oriented students. They were able to become more accustomed to collaborative rather than competitive styles, and when demotivated, they made no attempt to change their accustomed styles. It was observed that highly-motivated students who realized they were too “collaborative” when resolving conflicts sought to modify their behavior by combining the collaborative and competitive styles. These results suggested that universities in Asian countries should localize conflict management education by adjusting the programs developed for Western cultures.