CAUSE OF CONFLICT IN MULTICULTURAL COMPANY IN THAILAND
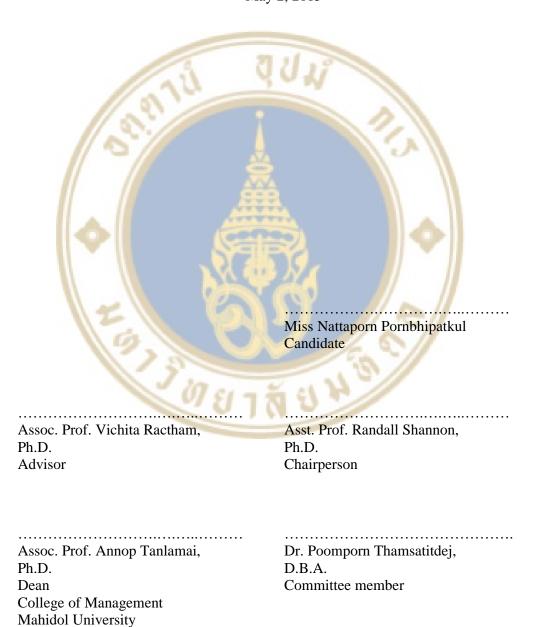
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CAUSE OF CONFLICT IN MULTICULTURAL COMPANY IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate factors that create conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand. The results of this study may be beneficial for multicultural companies to increase their efficiency in communication and understand people from different cultures. The quantitative research methodology is focused upon respondents who work in a multicultural company in the Bangkok area.

The results of the study show that leadership is the most important factor which can create causes of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

KEY WORDS: Multicultural, Conflict, Diversity, Leadership

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Research

Due to globalisation in trade and the growth of modern technology, there is more investment between countries and more multicultural companies interacting around the world. In addition, nowadays in Thailand, there are a great many foreign companies looking to invest in Thailand, which involve many foreign workers coming to work in Thailand. As a result, there are now many multicultural companies established in Thailand.

Multicultural companies are different from mono-cultural companies, in that they are more complicated because they have many people from different cultures displaying differences in norms, attitudes and behaviour. Thus, the effects of cultural diversity in multicultural companies are complex and powerful (White, 1999).

Although multicultural companies are more complicated than other companies, yet they have greater potentials and capabilities. Multicultural companies bring advantages to attracting and retaining human talent. When people from diverse cultural backgrounds work together, they gain competitive advantages and sustain the highest qualities of human resource (Adler, 1991). Moreover, they understand and can provide better services to their customers because people from diverse cultures have much greater potentials to understand other cultural environments, politics, legalities, and social and economic concerns. Multicultural companies also display better problem solving abilities; they have greater capabilities for avoiding consequences of grouped thinking (Janis, 1982).

Furthermore, large conflicts do occur in multicultural companies, because conflicts occur between individuals or social groups that are separated by cultural boundaries, such that they can be considered as cross-cultural conflicts (Avruch, 1998). There are always conflicts and problems between people from different cultures

within an organisation, and this problem plays an important role in organisational communication.

Multicultural conflicts within any company can create problems within the working environments, such as; disagreements, stereotyping and cultural clashes. Such conflicts will take effect upon communications and cooperation between colleagues, customers, or even suppliers, which involve concerns according to efficiency, understanding and the performance of the company.

1.2 Problem Statement

Multicultural companies have greater potential and the capabilities to combine human talent, more so than mono-cultural companies; however, there are cross-cultural conflict problems which may reduce the efficiency of companies. Therefore, to help companies to perform to their best, they must reduce such conflicts. Multicultural conflicts are not small problem anymore, because they can occur at any place and at any time when people from different cultures need to work together. To understand any associated conflicts occurring within a multicultural company, the issues of problems involve understanding the source of such causes of conflict. There are many researches from other countries which have discovered factors involving conflicts in multicultural organisations; however, researches pertaining to differences in culture, generally offer different results. Therefore, this study may find out the major factor that creates conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

1.3 Research Question

"What is the major factor that creates conflict in multicultural companies in   Thailand?"

1.4 Objective

This study aims to help multicultural companies to increase the efficiency of communication between people from different cultures. Moreover, it can help people to understand their colleagues, customers and vendors. Finally, efficiency in communication and understanding of the stakeholders should increase the performance deliveries within teams of the company and the company performance itself.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many factors which are the cause of conflicts within multicultural companies. This literature review is an attempt to try to find the causes and factors concerned with conflicts within multicultural companies, based upon theories and research findings.

2.1 Factors of Conflict

Cultural Dimensions Theory

Hofstede's theory describes four ways in which to analyse and understand other cultures, as follow (Reynolds & Valentine, 2011):

1. Individualism vs. Collectivism: is the degree that each person integrates into grouped society as they understand it. An individualistic culture focuses upon individuals over the group, whereas a collectivistic culture shares grouped values and focuses upon interests of the group more so than individual interests. The table below compares individualist cultures against collectivist cultures:

Table 2.1 A summary of individualist and collective culture (Kawar, 2012)

Individualist Culture	Collective Culture
Transaction oriented (focus on result)	Relationship oriented (focus on process)
Short-term gain	Long-term growth
Emphasis on content (fact, number)	Emphasis on context (experience, relationship)
Independent	Interdependent
Competitive	Collaborative
Direct, explicit communication	Indirect, circuitous communication
Personal accountability	Protection of face
Private offices	Open office plan
Linear time, impatient	Flexible time , patient

In Hofstede's theory (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) we can find differences between cultures involving many aspects that can cause conflict in multicultural companies. Elmer (1993) found that individualism and collectivism are major dimensional cultures that can explain cross-cultural differences in communication across cultures. In an individualistic culture, people have low-context and therefore their communication styles are direct, use active voice, and are explicit; whereas, the communication styles of a collectivistic culture involve indirect, passive voice, and are implicit. Communication styles thus affect understanding when dealing with conflict.

Boros, Mesle, Curseu & Emons, (2010) found that a horizontal collectivistic group has better cooperation than the vertical individualistic, because in horizontal collectivism people in groups feel that everyone is equal and connected. On the other hand, if members feel unequal and independent then the group tends to use more cooperative conflict-resolution strategies. In conclusion, a group that has a higher variety of individual-collectivism tends to have more conflict than a group that has a lower variety of individual-collectivism.

2. Power Distance: is the difference in levels of power which is oriented to hierarchy. In higher power distance cultures, persons with a higher level within an organisation have much greater power than lower levels when making decisions, but in low power distance cultures, the gap of power is not much. From the research, Asian cultures tend to be more high power distanced compare to Western culture.

3. Uncertainty Avoidance: is the tolerance of people with uncertainty. High uncertainty avoidance cultures do not like change, and prefer to remain stable, whereas low uncertainty avoidance cultures tend to accept change and new challenges.

4. Masculinity vs. Femininity: is the emotional roles played between masculinity and femininity. In masculine cultures social gender roles are clearly distinct, whereas in feminine social gender roles cultures tend to overlap.   Appelbaum & Shapiro (1998) found that cultural diversity plays an important role in a conflict group. Differences in cultural dimensions can cause mistrust and miscommunication, and bring conflict to the group. Moreover, a desire for harmony, different standards in social status and different emphasis upon group behaviour also create conflicts within multicultural groups.

Kawar (2012) found that there are difference impacts upon communication amongst people from difference cultures. As a result of research, many barriers can occur, wherein communication barriers are a result of differences between the multi-cultured.

Management Dimension

Leadership:

Leadership and management styles play an important role in conflicts within multicultural companies, because leadership can reduce or increase conflicts within an organisation. Canen & Canen (2008) found that management styles that support leaders in dealing with conflicts within a multicultural organisation should make them aware of cultural differences, so that they have the ability to deal with tensions between such and understand associated cultural diversities by recognising cultural identities. Moreover, leaders should communicate and show respect to other cultures, avoid stereotyping, and be empathic towards them. Finally, the most important leader should be a role model who displays openness and flexibility towards other cultures.

Lee & Rogan (1991) found that solution-oriented management styles and non-confrontation management styles both relate to collectivistic and individualistic cultures. From studies of collectivistic cultures, non-direct and non-confrontational styles of communication are suitable for dealing with conflicting situations, whereas

an individualistic culture is suitable for solution-oriented communication only. Thus, there is no best leadership style, but leaders have to find the best and most suitable way concerning their organisational culture.

Conflict Resolution:

One reason which is a highly likely cause of conflict within multicultural organisations stems from the different ways in which people from different cultures deal with the problems. Each culture has its own style of resolution. In many studies, it is found that there is a link between culture and conflict preference styles. Lather, Jain & Shukla (2010) compared differences between resolution of the East and West, and obtained the results in the following table:

Table 2.2 Conflict Resolution Style (Knuton , Smith, Han, & Hwang , 2002)

Country	Most Preferred Resolution	Second Preferred Resolution
United States of America	Competing Style	Dominating Style
China	Compromising Style	Avoiding Style
India	Accommodating Style	Avoiding Style
Malaysia	Integrating Style	Compromising Style
Korea	Compromising Style	Avoiding Style
Japan	Avoiding Style	Accommodating Style
Australia	Collaborator style	Accommodating Style

Knuton, Smith, Han & Hwang (2002) found that Asian people, such as Taiwanese, have a greater preference for avoiding face-to-face discussion of matters (intermediary indirect); whereas western people like Americans are more likely to deal with conflict through assertive and competitive styles. Additional research (Tinsley & Weldon, 2003) supports that American managers prefer to respond to conflict directly, whilst Chinese managers tend to choose an indirect method.

From the above study, it was found that Americans, who are characterised by individualism (express individual character and value individual achievement), are more direct, assertive, dominating and confrontational, because they focus upon tasks over relationships and agree with direct communication. However, when we compare this against Asians who are more collectivist, the results are different because many

Asian countries are influenced by Confucian teaching. Thus, the resolution style is more compromised and tends to avoid conflict, and therefore they use indirect methods to resolve conflicts. In collectivistic cultures people give importance to harmony, being peaceful, kindness, politeness, and interpersonal relationships.

Thailand was not in that study however, although Thai culture is collectivistic and is a culture more similar to those of China, Korea or Malaysia, than Western countries.

Language Diversity:

In multicultural organisations language is the key communication, because people in multicultural organisations are from different countries and have different mother tongues. Therefore, they must communicate using an international language (normally is English).

An international language can help facilitate and coordinate communication between members of different cultures and nations within a multicultural company. Therefore, using common language helps people to share communication, whereby all members within the organisation can use information and take a part in dialogue (Feely & Harzing, 2003).

Lauring & Selme (2010) found that English management communication has a strong positive relationship with a group and helps to build trust, because people share a common language. It also helps to increase frequency of communication within the organisation, creates understanding, and helps people to share and receive the same information (Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstfeld, 2005). However, finding English personal communication can also create negative association with a group conflict.

On the other hand, some organisations experience language diversity, and different national languages within the same work group can cause conflict because if some part of the group cannot understand the other language, then they may experience negative social interaction, such as being excluded from the communication or experience reduced communication frequency within the group. This can destroy group involvement and group trust, and create boundaries within the group.

2.2 Proposed Framework

This study divides cultural dimensions into 2 categories:

1. Cultural Dimension

From the literature review, causes of conflict occur from differences between cultural dimensions which create differences between people from different cultures, and bring conflict as a result (to the company).

2. Management Dimension

From the literature review, wrong management style, differences between conflict resolutions and many language diversities can also create conflict within a company.

Cultural Dimension	Management Dimension
- Individualistic Dimension - Power Distance - Uncertainty Avoidance - Masculinity Dimension	- Leadership - Conflict Resolution - Language Diversity

Conflict Result

Figure 2.1 Framework

2.3 Hypotheses Summary

According to the literature review and frameworks, there are 7 hypotheses as follow:

H1: There is a relationship between individualistic dimensions and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H2: There is a relationship between power distance and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H3: There is a relationship between uncertainty avoidance and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H4: There is a relationship between the masculinity dimension and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H5: There is a relationship between leadership and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H6: There is a relationship between conflict resolution and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H7: There will be different in language diversity to create conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study is to find causes of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand. Nowadays, there are many multicultural companies in Thailand due to investment of other countries in Thailand, although people from other countries also come to work in Thailand. When people from different cultures have to cooperate and work together, therefore conflicts will happen within a company.

In this study we focus upon causes of conflict in Thailand, because Thailand is a country that has a diversified culture in the working environment. The author could not find previous research about causes of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand, and therefore believes that this research may help people to understand multicultural situations in Thailand, and use these results to find out the real causes of problems.

3.1 Data Collection

Survey Method: Quantitative (Distribute questionnaire)

Sampling Size: 60 respondents

Sampling Frame: People who work in a multicultural company in Thailand; He/she has to work with people from different cultures (at least 10 people), and communicate with people from at least 3 different cultures.

Age: 20 to 60 years old

3.2 Questionnaire

General Questions

      In the first part of questionnaire, the general questions are about personal information and work information of the respondents. The questionnaire is multiple choice.

Specific Questions

      In this part, the questions are about factors which are causes of conflict in a multicultural company. The objective is to find the relationships between factors and conflict. The question is in the form of an interval scale, in order to indicate the level of agreement or disagreement. In this questionnaire, the author divides the degree of agreement and disagreement into 5 levels.

CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

This chapter represents the results of the data analysis of 60 respondents who work in a multicultural company. There are 3 parts, which are: 1) demographic information, 2) factor analysis, and 3) regression analysis. This study specifies a significance value of 0.05.

4.1 Demographic Information

Tables 4.1-4.3 below show the demographic information of 60 respondents, in terms of numbers and percentages. This study divided demographic information into 3 parts, which are: gender, age and work experience.

Table 4.1 Gender of respondents

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	21	35.00
Female	38	63.33
Not specific	1	1.67

Table 4.2 Age of respondents

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
20 - 30 years old	35	58.33
31 - 40 years old	23	38.33
41 - 50 years old	2	3.33

Table 4.3 Working experience of respondents

Working Experience	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than one year	7	11.67
1 – 3 years	26	43.33
4 - 10 years	22	36.67
More than 10 years	5	8.33

Table 4.1 divided genders into 3 groups, wherein the majority group is female measured at 63%, followed by male at 35%, and no specific gender at 2%. Table 4.2 divided the ages of the respondents into 3 groups, wherein the majority group was 20 -30 years old (59%), followed by 31 - 40 years old (38%), and 41-50 years old (3%). Table 4.3 divided work experience into 4 groups, wherein the majority of respondents had been working in a multicultural company for 1 - 3 years (43%), followed by 4 - 10 years work experience (37%), less than one year work experience (12%), and more than 10 years work experience (8%).

4.2 ANOVA Analysis

This study uses ANOVA analysis to test hypothesis 7 to prove that there will be different in language diversity to create conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand, or not.

Table 4.4 ANOVA the number of languages in the work environment influences conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

ANOVA

17.Overall I believe that I have conflict with my colleague from other cultures.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.309	6	1.718	1.979	.085
Within Groups	46.025	53	.868		
Total	56.333	59			

Table 4.4 shows ANOVA the test results concerning the number of language in the work environment and conflict in multicultural companies. The

significance value is 0.085, which is greater than 0.05, and therefore language diversity in the work environment is insignificant.

Table 4.5 Description of the different number of languages in the work environment influences conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

Descriptives

17.Overall I believe that I have conflict with my colleague from other cultures.

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum	Between- Component Variance
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
2.0		18	2.444	.9835	.2318	1.955	2.934	1	4	
3.0		13	1.923	.9541	.2646	1.347	2.500	1	4	
4.0		5	1.800	.8367	.3742	.761	2.839	1	3	
5.0		8	1.500	.5345	.1890	1.053	1.947	1	2	
6.0		5	2.000	.7071	.3162	1.122	2.878	1	3	
7.0		4	2.500	1.0000	.5000	.909	4.091	2	4	
8.0		7	2.857	1.2150	.4592	1.733	3.981	2	5	
Total		60	2.167	.9771	.1261	1.914	2.419	1	5	
Model	Fixed Effects			.9319	.1203	1.925	2.408			
	Random Effects				.1843	1.716	2.618			.1045

Table 4.5 shows that the mean score of 2 languages in the work environment is 2.444, whereas the mean score of 8 languages in the work environment is 2.857. Therefore, the lowest number of languages in the work environment and highest number of languages in the work environment are indifferent.

4.3 Factor Analysis

This study tests H1-H6 using factor analysis and multiple regression analysis.

Table 4.6 Total variance explains three variables that influence conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.796	46.601	46.601	2.551	42.513	42.513
2	1.177	19.616	66.217	1.411	23.519	66.032
3	1.005	16.742	82.959	1.016	16.927	82.959
4	.591	9.848	92.807			
5	.306	5.104	97.911			
6	.125	2.089	100.000			

Table 4.6 explains 6 components that influence conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand. The total variance of Eigen values is 1.005, which is more than 1, and at this point the cumulative percentage is 82.959%, which includes the 3 variables. Therefore, there are 3 possible variables that have a relation with conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.
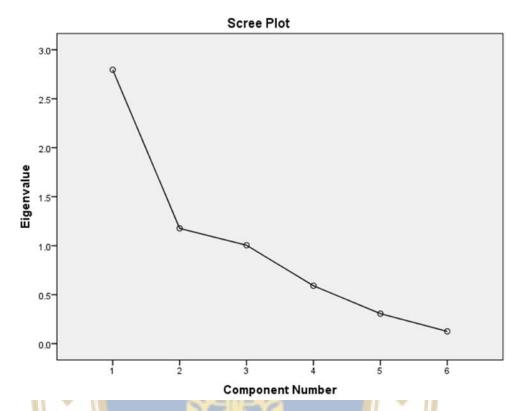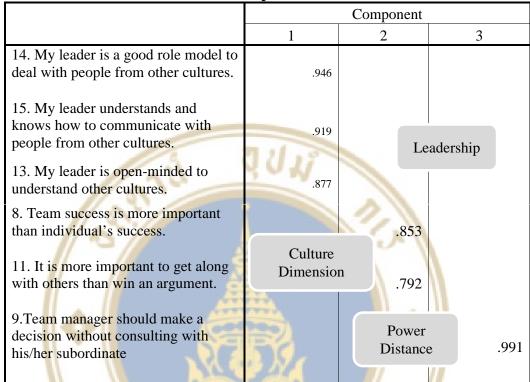
Figure 4.1 A screen plot of the three variables that influence conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand

Table 4.7 Rotation Component Matrix of the three variables that influence conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component		
	1	2	3
14. My leader is a good role model to deal with people from other cultures.	.946		
15. My leader understands and knows how to communicate with people from other cultures.	.919		
13. My leader is open-minded to understand other cultures.	.877		
8. Team success is more important than individual's success.		.853	
11. It is more important to get along with others than win an argument.		.792	
9.Team manager should make a decision without consulting with his/her subordinate			.991

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

Table 4.7 shows a rotation component matrix by cutting the components which are cross loading and have low scores; thus, uncertainty avoidance and conflict resolution are rejected. This table divided 6 components that influence conflict in multicultural companies into 3 variables, which are: leadership (H5), cultural dimensions (H1 and H4), and power distance (H2). Therefore after running factor analysis, there are 4 hypotheses left as follow:

H1: There is a relationship between leadership and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H2: There is a relationship between culture dimension and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H3: There is a relationship between power distance and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

H4: There will be different in language diversity to create conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

In the next step, this study tests these hypotheses using multiple regression analysis.

Table 4.8 ANOVA results of three variables that affect conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.889	3	4.963	6.706	.001[b]
	Residual	41.444	56	.740		
	Total	56.333	59			

a. Dependent Variable: 17.Overall I believe that I have conflict with my colleague from other cultures.

b. Predictors: (Constant), 9.Team manager should make a decision without consulting with his/her subordinate, Leadership, Culture Dimension

The results from multiple regression analysis show that 3 variables, which are leadership, cultural dimensions and power distance, are significant to create conflict in multicultural companies at 0.01, which is less than 0.05. Therefore this model is significant.

Table 4.9 Model summary of the three variables that influence conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.514[a]	.264	.225	.8603	.264	6.706	3	56	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), 9.Team manager should make a decision without consulting with his/her subordinate, Leadership, CultureDimension

This table shows that the value of adjusted R square is 0.225, and therefore this model can explain 22.5% of causes of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

Table 4.10 Coefficients of the three variables that influence conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.380	.769		5.697	.000
Leadership	-.587	.149	-.475	-3.953	.000
CultureDimension	.138	.178	.093	.777	.441
PowerDistance	-.065	.124	-.060	-.527	.600

a. Dependent Variable: 17.Overall I believe that I have conflict with my colleague from other cultures.

From the coefficients table there is only one variable that is a significant cause of conflict in multicultural companies, which is leadership. From the table, the significance value of leadership is 0.000, which is lower than 0.05, and the standardised coefficient of leadership is -0.475. In addition, cultural dimensions and power distance have a significance value of more than 0.05. Therefore leadership is considered as significant, whereas culture dimension and power distance are rejected in this model.

Table 4.11 ANOVA shows the results of the leadership variable being of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand

ANOVA[a]

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	14.263	1	14.263	19.664	.000[b]
Residual	42.070	58	.725		
Total	56.333	59			

a. Dependent Variable: 17.Overall I believe that I have conflict with my colleague from other cultures.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership

After dismissing insignificant variables there is only the leadership variable left. This table shows that the significance value of the leadership variable as a cause of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore leadership is considered as significant in this model.

Table 4.12 Model summary of leadership variables that influence conflict in

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.503[a]	.253	.240	.8517	.253	19.664	1	58	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership

The summary model shows the adjusted R square of the leadership variable as a cause of conflict in multicultural companies at 0.240, which means this model can explain 24% of causes of conflict in multicultural companies.

Table 4.13 Coefficients of the leadership variable that influences conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	4.629	.566		8.178	.000
Leadership	-.622	.140	-.503	-4.434	.000

Table 4.13 shows the significance value of leadership as a cause of conflict at 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and the standardised coefficients is -.503. Therefore, leadership is the most important variable that can create conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.

4.5 Result of Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.14 Result of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	There is a relationship between leadership dimensions and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.	Accepted
H2	There is a relationship between culture dimension and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.	Rejected
H3	There is a relationship between power distance and conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.	Rejected
H4	There will be different in language diversity to create conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand.	Rejected

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

This study investigated the causes of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand, and discovered which factors create such conflict. The results of this study are useful for multicultural companies in Thailand and people who work and communicate with people from different cultures, such as employees, customers and vendors.

From the frame work there are seven factors in the hypotheses, which comprise: five cultural dimensions, leadership, conflict resolution and language diversity. However, after testing the hypotheses there is only one variable that is significant towards conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand. From the results, leadership style is the most important factor.

Table 5.1 Factors and causes of conflict

Factor	Cause of conflict

Cultural Dimension
    - Individualism Dimension
    - Power Distance
    - Uncertainty Avoidance
    - Masculinity Dimension
	Differences in cultural dimensions.

Leadership	Leaders cannot manage diversity.
Conflict Resolution	Differences in problem resolution.
Language Diversity	Differences in language communication.

Among the seven factors, leadership style is the most powerful factor because if it is effective then it can be a compromise, and force and persuade people from different cultures to complete successful team work (Adler, Doktor & Redding,

1986). In addition, other factors display that diversity and differences are causes of conflict, but the leadership factor display that if a company has an effective leadership style, then the leaders can manage diversity and so conflict may not occur. Therefore, diversity and differences are not real causes of conflict. When leaders are open-minded about understanding other cultures, they can also understand and know how to communicate with others, thus building trust, reducing miscommunication and increasing harmony. Furthermore, conflict resolution problems, language diversity problems and cultural dimension problems can also be relieved by effective leadership.

5.2 Recommendations

From the results of this study, it is shown that leadership style is a cause of conflict in multicultural companies in Thailand. Therefore, to solve conflict problems a multicultural company must find out 'what the best leadership style is that can bring out the benefits of diversity and solve diversity problems'.

In a multicultural company, leaders need to develop openness to build trust, and so needed and desired information thus has the chance to emerge and evolve into conflict resolution. Leaders also need to acknowledge the cultural impact upon conflict and built upon it (Gardenswarlz & Rowe, 1993). Therefore, leaders have to be good listeners in order to understand people from different cultures and see their differences.

Abbassi & Hollman (1991) indicated recommendations for leaders in multicultural companies as follows:

To manage multicultural groups more effectively, leaders need to be aware of cultural differences, and they must communicate and show respect to other cultures, avoid stereotyping, and be empathetic to other cultures; focusing upon accommodating all unique cultures. Mechanisms that discover underlying cultural differences can be used to better manage them. Thus, leaders have to be open and flexible to the stage of collaboration.

The next step involves that a multicultural company has to know 'how to train leaders to be effective leaders'. After the company has discovered 'what the most

effective leadership style that is suitable for the company' is, the company then has to prepare and train its leaders to understand multicultural environments and develop their skills to cope with situations in the work environment. In addition, the most important thing concerning training is 'how to sustain leadership and continue developing leader skills to manage multicultural people'.

5.3 Limitations

Due to all respondents in this study being from the airline industry; the results of this study might change if the study is focused upon other industries. Therefore, this study could be further studied using other groups from multicultural companies.

5.4 Future Research

For future research, a study may focus upon each industry concerning multicultural companies, because differences in industries have different cultural working environments, and so the results of that study may offer changes. Furthermore, future research should focus upon companies in other cities in Thailand, and not only in Bangkok.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Conflict in Multicultural Company in Thailand

1. Gender

 [] Male   [] Female   [] Not specific

2. Age

[] 20-30   [] 31-40   [] 41-50   [] 51-60   [] More than 60

3. How long have you been working in multicultural company?

 [] less than 1 year   [] 1-3 years   [] 4-10 years   [] More than 10 years

4. How many nations or cultures are there in your working environment?

 [] less than 3   [] 3-5   [] 5-7   [] More than 7

5. How many people from different cultures I have to communicate with?

 [] Less than 10   [] 10-15   [] 15-20   [] More than 20

6. How many languages I have to use in my working environment?

 [] 2   [] 3   [] 4   [] 5   [] 6   [] 7   [] More than 7

7. How many languages in my working environment?

 [] 2   [] 3   [] 4   [] 5   [] 6   [] 7   [] More than 7

	Strongly Disagree →	Strongly Agree
In my opinion, my colleagues and I have a different opinion that		

8. My team success is more important than individual success.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My boss should make a decision without consulting with his/her subordinate.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Rules and regulations are important to me because they inform worker what they should do.	1	2	3	4	5
11. It is more important to get along with others than win an argument.	1	2	3	4	5

12. My colleagues and I have different conflict resolution styles.   1   2   3   4   5

13. My leader is open-minded to understand other cultures.   1   2   3   4   5

14. My leader is a good role model to deal with people from   1   2   3   4   5
    other cultures.

15. My leader understands and knows how to communicate with   1   2   3   4   5
    people from other cultures.

16. Overall I believe that I have conflict with my colleague   1   2   3   4   5
    from other cultures.