

## **ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE AS PREDICTORS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES AMONG PASTORS OF THE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN TIMOR**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to test organizational communication and spiritual intelligence simultaneously as a predictor of organizational conflict management style in pastors of the Evangelical Church in Timor (GMIT). This study is a quantitative research, with multiple regression analysis techniques. The data collection technique was carried out using the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II from Rahim & Magner (1995) measuring the integrative dimension and the distributive dimension. The results of the partial findings also show that spiritual intelligence has an effect on organization conflict management styles in GMIT pastors. In addition, it is concluded that the existence or absence of the use of conflicts management styles among male and female pastors cannot use the gender variable as determining things. The findings may inform training programs for pastors and have practical implications for improving leadership practices and fostering a harmonious environment within religious organizations.

**Keywords:** Organizational conflict management style; organizational communication; spiritual intelligence

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Every organization, including the church, organizes its ministry according to its vision and mission, including the Evangelical Church in Timor (GMIT). Every organization is not spared from clashes, such as misunderstandings and differences of opinion that trigger conflicts.

The results of the pre-study show that there are various types of organizational conflicts in the ministry of the congregation such as conflicts between individuals, families and groups carried away in the ministry, church regulations that are understood differently, the implementation of a number of policies that are different from each other. This is in accordance with the classification of organizational conflicts, namely intrapersonal conflicts, interpersonal conflicts, intragroup conflicts and intergroup conflicts (Rahim & Magner, 1995). As organizational conflicts continue to develop, pastors seek to approach through conflict management styles to provide solutions.

The ways to resolve conflicts between the leaders of religious organizations also vary. One in 15 people prioritizes their own comfort over the assembly or the congregation, or leaves the conflict and the congregation, 4 people allow and postpone the conflict if the situation is not supported to be resolved in a short time. The other 10 people often involve the Daily Congregation Assembly (MJH), the Service Consideration and Supervision Agency (BPPPJ) and church leaders. As organizational conflicts continue to develop, leaders of religious organizations seek to approach conflict management styles to provide solutions.

Data from pre-research shows that some leaders of religious organizations in resolving organizational conflicts 62.52% use the right conflict management style. Meanwhile, there

are 34.4% of leaders of religious organizations who have a dominating and avoidant conflict management style that is still seen as ineffective in resolving conflicts.

This is supported by Abbasi et al. (2022) It is said to be an integration style that can help improve relationships and reduce conflict. Furthermore, Welch (2024), Awalluddin & Maznorbalia (2023) reveal that an integration style increases satisfaction with relationships, increases commitment and understanding between employees and leaders, helps overcome disrespect and bullying. According to To et al. (2021) and Taherian et al. (2022) The dominance style can cause conflicts to escalate, employees are not motivated and tend to be irresponsible.

On the other hand, it is often said that everyone's conflict management style is different when viewed based on gender. Women tend not to like the compromise style in conflict resolution (Rahim & Katz, 2020). In line with that Bordean et al. (2020) said feminine orientation is more likely to be associated with a handling style of avoiding conflict. Meanwhile, the findings of Zhang et al. (2015) also revealed that there are 5 styles of organizational conflict management, namely collaboration style, accommodation style, competitive style, avoidance style and compromise style.

According to Shoaib et al. (2022) and Alhamali (2019) the implementation of an effective conflict management style in an organization has a number of positive impacts, including increasing workforce performance. In line with that, Umar & Umar (2024) said that the right conflict management style results in a greater level of employee job satisfaction. An effective conflict management style needs to be carried out in an organization. This statement is supported by Aftab (2022) and Hastings et al. (2019), Taherian et al. (2022) and Zakaria et al. (2023) that significant benefits can be obtained through the application of a conflict management style, namely that the way employees work is more cooperative and harmony can develop, achieve higher organizational effectiveness, bring more successful results in managing interactions, foster employee creativity and generate innovation, increase commitment to the organization and strengthen the ability to build teamwork.

Factors that affect organizational conflict management styles are organizational culture, organizational temperament and communication (Alhassan et al., 2014). This statement can be understood because if a person has effective communication in the organization, they tend to resolve conflicts with the right conflict management style (Tehrani & Yamini, 2020). The study conducted by Sabda & Dewi (2021) found that organizational communication has an effect on conflict management style, namely encouraging individuals to manage conflicts effectively. Likewise, Gjerazi (2023) explained that effective communication affects the way of handling program practice conflicts in an organization.

Another factor that influences an organization's conflict management style is spiritual intelligence. This statement is supported by Tecchio et al. (2016) that individuals who have internalized spiritual values will color a person's management style in conflict situations. Meanwhile, Lubis et al. (2023) stated that a person with high spiritual intelligence is more likely to use the right conflict resolution style. This statement is supported by (Hasani et al., 2016) that in conflict situations, spiritual intelligence gives a person the ability to choose and formulate strategic decisions.

Organizational communication needs to be researched in order to create effective communication at all levels in the organization so that it is expected to have an impact on optimal working relationships, encourage creativity, increase a sense of belonging and high commitment to the organization (Hargie, 2016). Similarly, spiritual intelligence needs to be researched because it refers to the internal life of the human soul and mind as well as the understanding of phenomena in the outside world, including with a conflict management style. The intelligence of spirituality helps humans understand their lives and places in the

universe, as well as being well connected to the sacred and transcendent dimensions of their existence (Amram, 2022).

The purpose of this study is to test organizational communication and spiritual intelligence simultaneously as a predictor of organizational conflict management style in pastors of the Evangelical Church in Timor. This study contributes to the understanding of organizational dynamics within religious institutions by examining the simultaneous effects of organizational communication and spiritual intelligence on conflict management styles among pastors of the Evangelical Church in Timor. By testing these relationships, the research provides insights into how effective communication and spiritual awareness can influence conflict resolution strategies in a religious context. This contribution not only enhances the literature on organizational behavior and conflict management but also has practical implications for improving leadership practices and fostering a harmonious environment within religious organizations. Furthermore, the findings may inform training programs for pastors, emphasizing the importance of both communication skills and spiritual intelligence in managing conflicts effectively.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a quantitative research, with multiple regression analysis techniques. The sample was 130 GMT pastors. The majority of respondents are between 35-40 years old. The data collection technique is purposive sampling. Data is collected through the use of the inventory method in the form of a list of statements.

The data collection technique was carried out using 3 measuring tools, including: organizational conflict management style measured by the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROCI) II from Rahim & Magner (1995) measuring the integrative dimension and the distributive dimension. (ROCI) II consists of 27 items. Organizational communication is measured by the Organizational Communication Questionnaire (OCQ) from (Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974) which consists of 12 items and measures trust, influence, mobility, desire to interact, upward, downward, sideways, accuracy, summarizing, gatekeeping, overload and satisfaction modalities. Spiritual intelligence uses the Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI) of King (2009) revealing the existing dimension of critical thinking, the production of personal meaning, transcendental consciousness, the expansion of the conscious state. SISRI consists of 24 statement items. The three measuring tools are distributed online through gform and also fill in the format directly through the print out sheet from March 14, 2024 to April 18, 2024.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1.** Categorization of Variables

Variable	Dimension	Category	Frequency	Presentation
Organizational Conflict Management Style	Integrative	Low	0	0,00%
		Medium	59	45,38%
		High	71	54,62%
	Distributive	Low	0	0,00%
		Medium	130	100,00%
		High	0	0,00%
Organizational Communication		Low	0	0,00%
		Medium	71	54,62%
		High	59	45,38%
Spiritual Intelligence		Low	0	0,00%

	Medium	16	12,31%
	High	114	87,69%

Table 1 illustrates the use of organizational conflict management style (Y) for the integrative dimension in the high category, which is 71 or 54.62% in frequency, and the distributive dimension in the medium category, which is 130 or 100.00% in frequency. Organizational communication (X1) is in the medium category, namely 71 and 54.62% frequency and spiritual intelligence (X2) is in the high category with a total frequency of 114 or 87.69%.

### Hypothesis Testing

**Table 2.** ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	813.317	2	406.659	55.877	.000b
	Residual	924.272	127	7.278		
	Total	1737.589	129			

Based on table 2, it shows  $F=55,877$  and a significance value of 0.000 ( $p<0.05$ ). This means that organizational communication and spiritual intelligence are predictors of organizational conflict management styles simultaneously and very significantly.

**Table 3.** Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.684a	.468	.460	2.698	2.031

Table 3 shows that organizational communication and spiritual intelligence are simultaneously predictors and contribute to organizational conflict management styles by 46.8%, the rest are influenced by other variables not examined in this study.

**Table 4.** Regression Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	54.962	3.333		16.491	.000
	Organizational Communication	.369	.049	.494	7.545	.000
	Spiritual Intelligence	.188	.022	.551	8.419	.000

Table 4 shows that partially organizational communication is a predictor of organizational conflict management style. This can be seen from the calculated t-value of 7.545 and the significance of  $0.000 < 0.01$ . Likewise, spiritual intelligence is partially a predictor of organizational conflict management style, with a t-value of 8.419 and a significance of  $0.000 < 0.01$ .

### Discussion

The hypothesis that organizational communication and spiritual intelligence are simultaneously predictors of organizational conflict management styles in the leadership of

religious organizations in Timor is accepted. This means that organizational communication and spiritual intelligence are simultaneously or partially predictors of organizational conflict management styles in pastors of the Evangelical Church in Timor (GMIT). There are several possible reasons for the results of the research, including: first, some GMIT pastors consider that organizational communication is important to be strengthened with spiritual intelligence that continues to be lived in carrying out leadership duties in the organization so that they can use conflict management styles in dealing with problems. This statement is supported by (Hasani et al., 2016) saying that organizational communication and spiritual intelligence influence organizational conflict management styles. The findings are supported by the results of other findings that say the same thing by Listyono (2020), (Nawangarsi & Sutawidjaya, 2018), Lubis et al. (2023) and Hasani et al. (2016).

Second, basically GMIT pastors consider that effective organizational communication is supported by spiritual intelligence, meaning that the success of communication in an organization depends on the ability to understand and apply spiritual values so that it can encourage the use of conflict management styles more appropriately. This is supported by the results of the research (Uzun & Ayik, 2017) That said, individuals who are competent in organizational communication will be able to integrate the spiritual aspects related to conflicts to reach appropriate solutions. Research by Nordin et al. (2014) also said that organizational communication has an effect on organizational conflict management styles. Likewise, Lubis et al. (2023) show that proper organizational communication is accompanied by spiritual intelligence which can increase the effectiveness of using organizational conflict management styles.

The results of the partial findings also show that spiritual intelligence has an effect on organizational conflict management style, meaning that spiritual intelligence is a partial predictor of organizational conflict management style. The results of the study may be due to the fact that most leaders of religious organizations find values, meanings that have a clear purpose in their lives when they face conflicts so that it determines their conflict management style. This statement is supported by Alpisarrin et al. (2024) and Haryanto (2023) which also says that spiritual values provide an additional dimension to one's self-understanding, meaning and purpose in life and appropriate decisions in conflict situations. Another study from Canda et al. (2019) said that spiritual values used adaptively, help a person to choose the right way as a solution in a conflict. In addition, Ibrahim et al. (2022) state that individuals with spiritual intelligence are proven to be effective in reducing negative attitudes when facing conflict.

When viewed from the organizational conflict management style between male and female pastors in Timor, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in conflict management style from the perspective of gender. In other words, it can be concluded that the existence or absence of the use of conflict management styles among GMIT pastors cannot use the gender variable as a determining thing. This may be due to the fact that some pastors in using conflict management styles are not based on traits that refer to behaviors that are inherent in social and cultural views related to gender, but are suspected to refer more to the main roles, duties and responsibilities as pastors. Thus, even though the social structure in the NTT region adheres to a patriarchal culture as well, as the leader of religious organizations in Timor has been proven to have a conflict management style that is no different between men and women. The statement is supported by (Mukundan & Zakkariya, 2018) and (Kashif et al., 2024) which shows that the conflict management styles used cannot be differentiated solely because of the male and female genders.

The author's findings are not in line with the findings of Bordean et al. (2020) and Solanki & Desai (2015) who said that the organizational conflict management styles of men and women have differences, namely men tend to choose a dominating style and women

choose an avoidant style. It is suspected that the difference in findings from the study by Solanki & Desai (2015) is because the samples used were employees from various branches of Rajkot-India district; That is, a strong country adheres to a patriarchal social system, and places the social status of men higher than women. As employees in the area, women are usually in a more permissive position, avoiding conflicts when there is a conflict than men. In contrast to the leaders of religious organizations in Timor, both men and women, who in their daily status play a role as leaders, even though they are also in areas that adhere to patriarchal culture. Likewise, this applies to a study conducted by Bordean et al. (2020) on a sample of organizational workers in several small and medium-sized industrial sectors that produce products or services with the culture of the Northwest of Romania, which is still thick with a strong patriarchal cultural identity.

## CONCLUSION

The study reveals that organizational communication and spiritual intelligence are significant predictors of conflict management styles among pastors of the Evangelical Church in Timor (GMIT), with no differences observed between male and female pastors. It suggests that the synod should facilitate opportunities for pastors to enhance their communication skills and spiritual intelligence through communication forums and regular training sessions. Future research could focus on evaluating the effectiveness of specific training programs on these skills, utilizing longitudinal studies to track their impact on conflict management styles. Additionally, examining the role of communication forums in promoting collaboration and conflict resolution, conducting comparative studies across different denominations, and engaging in qualitative research with pastors could provide further insights into the integration of these concepts in conflict management practices.

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