

Introduction

The HEXACO model of personality (Ashton et al., 2004) has identified six basic personality traits including the Big 5 traits of extraversion (outgoing, sociable), emotionality (fearfulness, anxiety), agreeableness (patient, tolerant), conscientiousness (organized, disciplined), and openness (creative, unconventional), plus a sixth trait of honesty-humility (sincere, modest).

Similarly, research on conflict management (Rahim, 1983) has identified five different ways in which people tend to resolve conflict in various circumstances: collaborating, accommodating, competing, avoiding, and compromising.

The purpose of this study was to investigate potential relationships between the HEXACO personality traits and different conflict management styles that people use when interacting with their peers.

Hypotheses

- 1. Agreeableness** will be positively correlated with accommodating and compromising conflict management styles.
- 2. Emotionality** will be positively correlated with avoiding conflict management styles.
- 3. Extraversion** will be positively associated with accommodating and competing, and negatively correlated with avoiding.
- 4. Honesty-humility** will be positively correlated with compromising and collaborating conflict management styles.

Personality and Conflict Management Styles

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Table 1. Correlations between conflict management styles and the HEXACO personality traits.

	Extraversion	Honesty-Humility	Emotionality	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness
Collaborating	.30**	.15	-.05	.08	.02	.37**
Accommodating	-.04	-.06	.16	.39**	-.07	.16
Competing	.25*	-.32**	-.05	-.17	-.02	.14
Avoiding	-.07	.13	.30**	.26*	-.02	-.08
Compromising	.28*	.09	-.14	.11	.08	.33**

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Method

87 undergraduate college students recruited by email and social media completed an anonymous online survey (81% female, 16% male; 88.5% Caucasian, 8% African American; Age $M = 20.6$, $SD = 1.4$, range 18-23 years)

HEXACO Personality Traits

We used the 24-item Brief HEXACO Inventory (BHI; Vries, 2013) to assess extraversion, honesty-humility, emotionality, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness.

Conflict Management Styles

We selected 3 items from each conflict management style (collaborating, accommodation, competing, avoiding, and compromising) in the Rahim Conflict Inventory-II (Rahim, 1983) to measure how participants resolved conflict with their peers.

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Results and Conclusions

- **Extraversion** was positively associated with collaborating, competing, and compromising.
- **Honesty-Humility** was negatively associated with competing.
- **Emotionality** was positively associated with avoiding conflict.
- **Agreeableness** was positively associated with accommodating and avoiding styles.
- **Conscientiousness** did not predict conflict management styles.
- **Openness** was positively associated with collaborating and compromising conflict management styles.

These findings demonstrate that different personality traits are uniquely associated with specific conflict management styles.

Our hypotheses were partially supported, and some unanticipated correlations were found. Future research can continue to explore how conflict management styles might relate to other personality characteristics, or specific facets of the HEXACO personality traits.

References

- Rahim, M. A. (1983). A measure of styles of handling interpersonal conflict. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 26(2), 368-376. <https://doi.org/10.2307/255985>
- Vries, R. E. D. (2013). The 24-item Brief HEXACO Inventory (BHI). *Journal of Research in Personality*, 47(6), 871-880. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2013.09.003>