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Conflict Management in Multicultural Teams: Optimizing Intercultural Communication Based on *Wetu Telu* Local Wisdom Values

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Abstract
Multicultural teams within organizations are susceptible to potential communication failures, which may impede attaining organizational objectives. This research endeavours to investigate local wisdom values that possess the potential to serve as work culture values and conflict management solutions. The study employed a case study approach, interviewing religious and cultural leaders. Thematic analysis was applied for relevant triangulation. The findings indicate that the *wetu telu* local wisdom values in North Lombok present an opportunity for application in organizational conflict management. *Wetu telu* wisdom values can be integrated into training programs and human resource development policies to enhance intercultural communication and conflict management. Furthermore, *wetu telu*'s holistic approach can serve as a foundation for fostering a more inclusive and harmonious work environment, ultimately improving employee productivity and retention. Additionally, the findings encourage organizations to consider local wisdom an integral component of their organizational development strategy, particularly within globalization. Future research could employ a mixed methods approach to evaluate local wisdom-based approaches periodically and longitudinally.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Conflict Management, Human Resource Management, Local Wisdom, *Wetu Telu.*

1. Introduction

Globalization driven by information and communication technology development has precipitated a significant transformation in organizational structures (Alcon Andrades & Tordo, 2023). This advancement has enabled organizations to recruit talent from diverse locations and establish multicultural work environments. Contemporary work teams comprise individuals with varied religious backgrounds, cultures, values, and norms (Lu et al., 2024). Consequently, organizations are compelled to develop management strategies that are inclusive

and sensitive to cultural differences. Without an appropriate approach, such differences may engender conflicts and impede team productivity within the organization.

Organizations are expected to optimize intercultural communication to minimize the potential for conflict in multicultural teams (Sakr et al., 2023). Recognition and understanding of each team member's religious values and cultural norms are paramount in fostering harmony (Kim & Sebby, 2023). Organizations can leverage diversity as an asset to effectively achieve the organization's common objectives. The integration of diverse intercultural perspectives not only leads to enhanced problem-solving and creativity but also necessitates a commitment to inclusiveness and adaptability (Sivunen et al., 2023), resulting in the identification of more substantive solutions and a supportive work culture (Delemotte et al., 2022), although not necessarily in the permanent avoidance of conflict.

Conflicts in multicultural teams frequently arise from miscommunication caused by differences in language, communication styles, and cultural norms (Kalagy & Braun-Lewensohn, 2023; Lu et al., 2024). For instance, certain cultures may favour direct and assertive communication, while others prefer indirect and diplomatic communication. This disparity can lead to misunderstandings, wherein one party may perceive insult or disrespect while the other party remains unaware of the impact of their words or actions. Furthermore, divergent perceptions of time, hierarchy, or responsibility can exacerbate the situation. If not managed effectively, such conflicts can generate tension within the team, diminish collaboration, and ultimately reduce productivity.

Cultural value clashes constitute a significant source of conflict in multicultural teams. Each culture brings different values, such as individualism versus collectivism or short-term versus long-term orientation (Abravan et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2022). These values influence team members' decisions, solve problems, or address change. When these values are not understood or respected, conflicts can arise and disrupt team dynamics. Therefore, organizations must develop culturally sensitive conflict management approaches through intercultural training and inclusive values-based mediation to maintain team harmony and productivity.

Moral degradation exacerbated by consumerism and over-reliance on communication technologies has created new challenges (Cabañes, 2023) in managing conflict in multicultural teams (Minson & Dorison, 2022). Consumerism encourages individuals to focus more on self-interest and materialism, which can diminish empathy and concern for others (Trenerry et al., 2024). Reliance on communication technologies, such as instant messaging or email, often reduces direct, face-to-face interactions, essential for building understanding and trust between team members. Consequently, miscommunication becomes more frequent, and conflicts that could have been resolved with direct dialogue are exacerbated due to the lack of emotional nuance in digital communication.

Using communication technologies to facilitate coordination and collaboration can exacerbate multicultural team dynamics (Hayashi, 2023; McGreavy et al., 2022) if not implemented judiciously. For instance, social media and digital communication platforms frequently enable the disseminating of inaccurate or culturally biased information, which may intensify differences and precipitate conflict. Conversely, reliance on technology also diminishes the capacity of team members to develop interpersonal communication skills crucial in resolving conflict (Feitosa et al., 2022). Consequently, organizations must balance the use of technology with initiatives to promote in-person interactions and moral values that support collaboration, such as empathy, tolerance, and respect for differences (Hayashi, 2023). Without these efforts, conflict in multicultural teams will become increasingly challenging to manage, and team harmony and productivity will continue to be compromised. There is a necessity for wisdom values that can serve as a solution to multicultural team dynamics and be applied in managing team differences.

Local wisdom values, such as those embodied in the *Wetu telu* philosophy from Lombok, offer innovative solutions to address the complexity of conflict in multicultural teams (Sutama et al., 2025). *Wetu telu* emphasizes the principles of harmony, balance, and tolerance, which can serve as the foundation for building effective intercultural communication (Pajarianto et al., 2022) in multicultural teams. The principle of harmony encourages each team member to cultivate harmony within differences, while balance teaches the importance of valuing each individual's contribution without dominating or disregarding the other party. Tolerance, as a core value, enables

team members to accept and celebrate religious and cultural diversity as a strength rather than a source of division. Organizations can foster a more inclusive and cohesive work environment by integrating these values.

Applying local wisdom values such as *wetu telu* in the context of organizational communication, particularly in multicultural teams, presents distinct challenges. Firstly, these values must be adapted to maintain relevance in a broader multicultural team's global context and work culture without compromising their essence. Secondly, intensive education and socialization efforts must ensure all team members comprehend and appreciate these wisdom values. Thirdly, organizations should avoid romanticizing local wisdom and maintain a critical perspective regarding limitations or potential cultural biases. Nevertheless, with an appropriate approach, local wisdom values such as *wetu telu* can be a powerful tool for managing conflict, enhancing intercultural communication, and cultivating harmonious and productive multicultural teams.

This research examines integrating *wetu telu* values into multicultural teams' conflict management strategies and intercultural communication. These values are considered a holistic approach that can mitigate cultural differences and reduce conflicts frequently arising due to miscommunication or value discrepancies. Maintaining harmonious relationships among team members is crucial to establishing principles of equity and respect for individual contributions. Furthermore, team members are expected to cultivate an appreciation for diversity as a collective asset, thereby creating a more inclusive and effective conflict management framework.

The study also addresses the challenges of adapting *wetu telu* values to a complex global context, specifically how these local values can be translated into practices relevant to multicultural teams comprising individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This necessitates a participatory approach wherein all team members understand and apply these values. Potential biases or limitations in applying *wetu telu* values warrant consideration, such as the risk of idealizing local culture or incompatibility with global values. Consequently, this research aims to significantly contribute to creating a harmonious, productive, and responsive work environment in globalization dynamics.

Previous research on conflict management in multicultural teams has predominantly relied on Western or universal approaches (Desrayaud & Hurley, 2023), such as structural conflict theory or negotiation-based mediation models, which often neglect the local cultural context (Mudambi et al., 2023). In contrast, local wisdom such as *wetu telu*, developed by the Sasak people in Lombok, offers a unique perspective that is holistic and inclusive, emphasizing the value of harmony in work teams. However, initiatives to explore and integrate these local wisdom values into conflict management strategies have resulted in significant gaps in literature and practice. Consequently, the potential of local culture-based solutions that may be more relevant and effective in certain contexts, such as Indonesia or areas of high cultural diversity, has not been optimally utilized (Leifels & Zhang, 2023) as an alternative approach in multicultural team conflict management.

Although local wisdom values such as *wetu telu* offer significant potential for fostering harmony in multicultural teams, research specifically integrating these values in the context of globalization remains limited(Leifels & Zhang, 2023; Schnurr & Zayts, 2022). Globalization's multifaceted dynamics, including moral degradation due to consumerism and dependence on communication technology, have generated new complex challenges in managing intercultural conflict, particularly in work teams. *Wetu telu* values may present a relevant solution to address these challenges. However, there has been no systematic effort to adapt and evaluate the efficacy of such values in the face of modern realities such as digital miscommunication, individualism, and the erosion of in-person interactions (Mudambi et al., 2023; Syme & Hagen, 2023).

While extensive research on intercultural communication exists, it predominantly focuses on theoretical aspects, such as the development of models or conceptual frameworks, without substantial emphasis on practical implementation in real-world contexts (Liu et al., 2023), especially in mitigating conflicts in multicultural work environments (Men et al., 2023). These theories often do not account for the complex dynamics in the field, such as miscommunication due to language differences, conflicting values, or the influence of technology that diminishes direct interaction. Consequently, there is a disparity between the theory produced and the practical needs of organizations to develop effective and applicable solutions. Developing local values-based theories such

as *wetu telu* can provide concrete guidance for organizations in managing conflict and enhancing intercultural communication in the workplace.

2. Literature Reviews

Research on conflict management in multicultural teams, such as case studies in multinational corporations and international non-profit organizations, indicates that conflicts are frequently precipitated by cultural differences, miscommunication, and goal incompatibility (Desrayaud & Hurley, 2023). Variations in communication styles (high-context versus low-context) and work preferences (collectivist versus individualist) are common sources of tension in multicultural teams (Hofstede et al., 2010; Ting-Toomey, 2006). Furthermore, stereotypes, cultural biases, and insufficient intercultural understanding exacerbate conflict (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Wiseman & Koester, 1993). Most research continues to focus on universal or Western approaches to managing conflict, such as collaborative conflict management theory or formal mediation approaches.

While extensive research has been conducted on conflict management in multicultural teams, case studies that incorporate local wisdom as a solution remain limited. Most research emphasizes Western or global contexts, while the potential of local values, such as *wetu telu* from Lombok, has not been adequately explored. Indeed, local wisdom often encompasses principles pertinent to addressing conflict, emphasizing three-dimensional harmony (relationships with God, fellow humans, and nature), which can serve as the foundation for creating an inclusive and sustainable work environment.

Effective intercultural communication can enhance collaboration and innovation in multicultural teams. Proficient intercultural communication enables employees from diverse backgrounds to comprehend one another, exchange ideas, and work together harmoniously. However, significant challenges in intercultural communication frequently include stereotypes, cultural biases, and misunderstandings arising from differences in language, norms, and values (Hall, 1976; Ting-Toomey, 1999). Most research continues to focus on universal or Western approaches, such as communication technologies or cultural training, without considering the potential of local values as alternative solutions.

Although the challenges of intercultural communication have been extensively examined, case studies investigating the role of local wisdom in addressing these challenges remain limited. Local wisdom, such as the *wetu telu* values from Lombok, offers pertinent principles to enhance intercultural communication, including harmony, tolerance, and togetherness (Budiwanti, 2000). Wisdom values such as the spirit of tolerance in *wetu telu* can contribute to reducing stereotypes and cultural biases. In contrast, the value of togetherness can foster openness and collaboration among employees. However, few studies have assessed local values' efficacy in intercultural communication within modern work environments.

Nevertheless, integrating local wisdom can provide a more comprehensive and contextual approach to addressing the challenges of intercultural communication, particularly in the era of globalization that necessitates adaptation to cultural diversity. Consequently, a significant gap exists in the literature, specifically regarding the adaptation and integration of local wisdom into intercultural communication strategies in the work environment. This research addresses this gap by exploring the relevance of *Wetu telu* values in enhancing intercultural communication.

Case studies on local wisdom, such as research on Balinese values in the tourism industry, demonstrate that local values possess considerable potential to foster harmony in multicultural environments. Values such as togetherness, tolerance, and balance inherent in local wisdom can serve as a foundation for conflict resolution and the enhancement of intercultural collaboration. For instance, the Balinese value of togetherness has contributed to creating an inclusive and harmonious work environment in the tourism industry, where intercultural interactions occur frequently. However, these studies have been confined to local contexts and have not explored the adaptability of local values to global contexts, such as multinational corporations or international organizations. Indeed, local values such as *wetu telu* from Lombok, which emphasizes three-dimensional harmony (relationships with God, fellow humans, and nature), possess equal potential to cultivate harmony in multicultural teams across diverse industry sectors.

While local values such as *wetu telu* possess significant potential for fostering harmony in multicultural teams, their application in a global context remains limited. Most research on local wisdom continues to focus on localized contexts, such as the tourism industry or Indigenous communities. In contrast, its potential application in contemporary and global work environments has not been extensively explored. *Wetu telu* values, which emphasize harmony, tolerance, and balance, may serve as an innovative approach to addressing the challenges of conflict and intercultural communication in multinational corporations. This research aims to address this gap by examining the relevance of *wetu telu* values in promoting harmony within multicultural teams in a global context.

3. Theoretical Framework

Conflict Management Theory provides a pertinent framework for analyzing and managing conflict in multicultural teams (Ramirez Marin et al., 2019), specifically by identifying five conflict management styles: competitive, collaborative, compromising, avoidant, and accommodative. Within multicultural teams, conflicts frequently arise due to cultural differences, miscommunication, and goal incompatibility, necessitating adaptive and inclusive approaches (Desrayaud & Hurley, 2023; Shirish et al., 2023). *Wetu telu* wisdom values, such as harmony, tolerance, and togetherness, can shift conflict management styles from competitive (which tends to exacerbate tension) to collaborative (which promotes cooperation and joint problem-solving). The three-dimensional value of harmony (relationships with God, fellow humans, and nature) encourages employees to exhibit greater empathy and respect for differences. In contrast, the value of tolerance reduces defensiveness and increases receptiveness to discussion. By incorporating *wetu telu* values into conflict management practices, organizations can foster a more harmonious and productive work environment, wherein conflict is not avoided but managed constructively to achieve common objectives.

Intercultural Communication Theory proposed by (Ting-Toomey, 1999) emphasizes the significance of cultural understanding in reducing misunderstandings and enhancing communication effectiveness within multicultural teams. Key challenges in intercultural communication, such as stereotypes, cultural biases, and differences in communication styles (high-context vs. low-context), frequently serve as sources of conflict and tension in diverse work environments (Feitosa et al., 2022). *Wetu telu* wisdom values offer an innovative approach to address these challenges. By integrating *wetu telu* values into intercultural communication practices, organizations can foster a more inclusive and harmonious work environment, wherein cultural differences are transformed from barriers into strengths for achieving common objectives. This approach aligns with intercultural communication theory (Ting-Toomey, 1999) and enriches the perspective of intercultural communication by incorporating a holistic and contextual dimension of local wisdom.

Cultural Value Theory proposed by (Hofstede, 2009) elucidates how cultural dimensions, such as individualism versus collectivism, influence behaviour and interactions in multicultural teams. In a global context, the predominant individualist culture in many multinational companies often engenders a competitive work dynamic and diminished concern for group interests, potentially exacerbating conflict and reducing collaboration. *Wetu telu* wisdom values present a solution to counterbalance the dominant individualist culture. Integrating *wetu telu* values into organizational culture can facilitate the creation of a more balanced and inclusive work environment, wherein individualist and collectivist cultures can complement each other in pursuit of common goals. This approach enhances the understanding of cultural dynamics by incorporating a holistic and adaptive perspective of local wisdom.

Based on the aforementioned background, the research questions were formulated as follows: How can *wetu telu* wisdom values be integrated into conflict management and intercultural communication in multicultural teams in the era of globalization? Specifically, how are conflicts in multicultural teams influenced by various factors, what values in *wetu telu* wisdom are relevant to resolving conflicts and improving intercultural communication, and how can *wetu telu* values be adapted and implemented in conflict management and intercultural communication practices in multicultural work environments? This study aims to elucidate and analyze the potential integration of *wetu telu* wisdom values in conflict management and intercultural communication to foster a harmonious and productive work environment in multicultural teams.

4. Method

This research employed a qualitative methodology with a case study approach, as both were deemed most appropriate to explore an in-depth understanding of *wetu telu* wisdom values and their application in multicultural team conflict management. The case study approach was selected due to its capacity to facilitate a holistic and detailed examination of conflict in multicultural teams. The qualitative method was chosen for its ability to elucidate the meanings, perceptions, and experiences of informants related to *wetu telu* values and intercultural conflict dynamics, which cannot be quantitatively measured (J. W. . Creswell. & Poth, 2017; J. W. Creswell, 2014). This case study was conducted in North Lombok, a region rich in *wetu telu* local wisdom values that remain extant and are implemented in daily life. North Lombok was selected due to its high cultural and religious diversity, presenting the potential for intercultural conflict in both quotidian and professional environments, thus allowing for an exploration of how local values can be integrated into modern conflict management practices. The informants in this study comprised cultural and religious leaders in North Lombok, who were selected based on specific criteria (purposive sampling). Individuals with a profound understanding of *wetu telu* values, their role in community life, and comprehension of the spiritual dimension of *wetu telu* values were chosen.

Data was collected through two primary techniques: in-depth interviews and participatory observation. Interviews were semi-structured, utilizing open-ended guiding questions that enabled informants to express their thoughts and experiences comprehensively. The participatory observation was executed by directly engaging in community or organizational activities and observing how *wetu telu* values are practiced in daily life and the work environment. Data from interviews and observations were analyzed using thematic analysis, including Data Transcription and Organization. Interview and observation data were transcribed and systematically organized; Coding: Data were coded based on emerging themes, such as the values of harmony, tolerance, togetherness, and balance; Pattern Identification: Patterns and relationships between themes were identified to understand how *wetu telu* values can be applied in conflict management; and Interpretation: Findings were interpreted in the context of conflict management theory, intercultural communication, and cultural values.

5. Results

5.1. Overcoming Conflict in Multicultural Teams

Conflicts in multicultural teams frequently arise due to differences in communication styles, norms, and work expectations. For instance, employees from collectivist cultures tend to prefer working in groups and prioritize team interests over personal interests, while employees from individualist cultures are more independent and focused on personal achievement (Hofstede et al., 2010). These differences can create tensions, particularly when diverse work styles are not effectively managed. Furthermore, varying cultural norms affect how individuals express opinions or provide feedback. In high-context cultures like Japan, communication tends to be indirect and nuanced, whereas in low-context cultures like the United States, communication is more direct and explicit (Hall, 1976). This discrepancy in communication styles often serves as a source of miscommunication and conflict in multicultural teams.

Ineffectively managed conflict can negatively impact productivity and cohesion within a team. According to (De Dreu & Weingart, 2014), unresolved conflict can decrease job satisfaction, reduce collaboration, and increase turnover intention. In multicultural teams, conflict triggered by cultural differences can deteriorate employee relationships and create an unconducive work environment. For example, employees from collectivist cultures may feel disregarded or undervalued when coworkers from individualist cultures emphasize personal achievement. Conversely, employees from individualist cultures may feel constrained by strong group preferences in collectivist cultures. Therefore, it is imperative to identify and proactively manage these conflicts to prevent disruption of team dynamics.

Wetu telu wisdom values, such as harmony, tolerance, and balance, offer a comprehensive approach to conflict resolution in multicultural teams. Three-dimensional harmony (harmonious relationships with God, fellow

humans, and nature) can serve as a foundation for establishing an inclusive and respectful work environment (Budiwanti, 2000). For instance, the principle of tolerance can encourage employees to be more receptive to cultural differences and diverse work styles, while the concept of balance can facilitate the equilibrium between individual and group interests. Furthermore, a collaborative approach based on *wetu telu* values can mitigate tensions between collectivist and individualist cultures by creating opportunities for each team member to contribute according to their strengths. Organizations can foster more harmonious and productive multicultural teams by incorporating these values into conflict management practices.

This approach aligns with Conflict Management Theory, which posits that conflict can be managed through various strategies, such as collaboration, compromise, or avoidance. In multicultural teams, cultural differences frequently precipitate conflict due to variations in conflict management style preferences. Research indicates that conflict in multicultural teams often arises from disparities between collectivist and individualist cultures. *Wetu telu* values, such as togetherness and tolerance, can promote a collaborative approach to conflict resolution.

5.2. The Relevance of Wetu telu Values in Overcoming Organizational Conflicts

Wetu telu wisdom values, such as harmony and tolerance, significantly mitigate tension within multicultural teams. Harmony, as a fundamental principle of *wetu telu*, emphasizes the importance of establishing equilibrium in interpersonal relationships, including those within the professional environment (Budiwanti, 2000). In multicultural teams, the value of harmony encourages individuals to appreciate diversity and seek common ground rather than exacerbating conflicts. Concurrently, tolerance promotes accepting and respecting alternative perspectives, even when they diverge from one's own views. For instance, employees from collectivist and individualist cultures can develop an understanding of and adapt to each other's work methodologies, thereby reducing the potential for conflict. These values foster a more harmonious work environment and enhance mutual trust among employees.

The value of togetherness in *wetu telu* encourages employees to prioritize team interests over individual concerns. This principle aligns with collaborative conflict management theory, which emphasizes the importance of cooperative efforts to achieve mutually beneficial solutions. In multicultural teams, the value of togetherness can facilitate the transcendence of individual egos and promote more effective collaboration. For example, employees from individualist cultures can cultivate greater receptivity to colleagues' input, while employees from collectivist cultures may experience increased validation when the team acknowledges their contributions. Consequently, the value of togetherness mitigates conflict and strengthens team cohesion, ultimately supporting the attainment of organizational objectives.

The integration of *wetu telu* values in conflict management has a significant positive impact on achieving organizational goals. According to intercultural communication theory (Ting-Toomey, 1999), effective and harmonious communication in multicultural teams can increase productivity and innovation. *Wetu telu* values, such as harmony, tolerance, and togetherness, contribute to creating a work environment that supports open communication and collaboration. For instance, when employees perceive that they are valued and their opinions are considered, they are more likely to be motivated to contribute optimally. Furthermore, these values can also reduce turnover intention and increase employee retention, as employees from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to prefer harmonious and inclusive work environments. Thus, *wetu telu* values address conflict and support organizational sustainability and success.

(Ting-Toomey, 1999; Ting Toomey, Stella & Chung, 2012) Their theory emphasizes the importance of cultural understanding in reducing misunderstandings and improving collaboration in multicultural teams. It is pertinent that *wetu telu* values, such as tolerance and togetherness, assist employees in understanding and appreciating cultural differences, which enhances communication effectiveness and reduces conflict. Additionally, Cultural Adaptation Theory (Berry, 2013) elucidates how individuals and groups adapt to different cultures. This is relevant where *wetu telu* Values can be adopted by employees from diverse cultures, fostering a more harmonious and productive work environment and thereby improving intercultural communication to achieve organizational goals.

5.3. Adaptation of Wetu Telu Local Wisdom Values

Wetu telu values, such as three-dimensional harmony (harmonious relationships with God, fellow humans, and nature), offer a unique holistic approach to conflict management in multicultural teams. This three-dimensional harmony not only focuses on human relationships but also encompasses spiritual and environmental aspects, which are often neglected in conventional approaches (Budiwanti, 2000). In multicultural teams, this approach facilitates the creation of equilibrium between the interests of individuals, groups, and the work environment. For instance, harmony with fellow humans encourages employees to exhibit greater empathy and tolerance towards cultural differences. In contrast, harmony with nature emphasizes establishing a sustainable and conducive working environment for all parties. Consequently, *wetu telu* values provide a more comprehensive and profound perspective on managing conflict.

The values of balance and tolerance in *wetu telu* constitute essential foundations for fostering effective collaboration in multicultural teams. Balance emphasizes the significance of equilibrating personal and group interests, which aligns with collaborative conflict management theory. In practice, this value encourages employees to consider not only individual achievement but also contribution to the collective benefit of the team. Concurrently, tolerance underscores the importance of appreciating differences and embracing diversity as an asset rather than a source of conflict. For example, in a team comprising employees from diverse cultural backgrounds, tolerance can mitigate prejudice and enhance receptiveness to collaboration. Multicultural teams can cultivate more harmonious and productive work dynamics by integrating balance and tolerance.

Wetu telu values are relevant in the local context and can be adapted to address global and contemporary challenges in conflict management. According to cultural adaptation theory (Berry, 2013), local values can be integrated into global practices if adapted to the broader context. For instance, three-dimensional harmony can be adapted to create an inclusive work environment in multinational corporations, where employees from diverse countries collaborate. Furthermore, these values can serve as a solution to address the moral degradation and individualism increasingly prevalent in the modern era. By emphasizing the importance of togetherness, balance, and tolerance, *wetu telu* values can contribute to restoring work ethic and collaboration in multicultural teams. As such, these values are not only culturally relevant but possess significant global application potential. This context extends the cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede et al., 2010) that elucidates how cultural values influence individuals' perceptions and responses to conflict. Consequently, *wetu telu* values, such as balance and tolerance, can counterbalance dominant cultural values in multicultural teams, fostering a more harmonious working environment, particularly in managing conflict and enhancing intercultural communication.

Based on the research findings, conflicts in multicultural teams frequently arise due to differences in communication styles, norms, and work expectations, such as the preference for group work in collectivist cultures versus independence in individualist cultures. *Wetu telu* wisdom values, including harmony, tolerance, and togetherness, have demonstrated efficacy in reducing tensions by promoting openness to other cultural perspectives, increasing concern for team interests, and supporting the achievement of organizational goals. Moreover, adapting *wetu telu* values, encompassing three-dimensional harmony (harmonious relationships with God, fellow humans, and nature), balance, and tolerance, offers a holistic and inclusive approach to conflict management in multicultural teams. This approach addresses intercultural conflict and fosters a harmonious, collaborative, and sustainable work environment, which is relevant in both local and global contexts. The findings corroborate that integrating local wisdom values can serve as an innovative and effective solution in addressing complex challenges in the era of globalization.

6. Discussion

Conflict in multicultural team organizations often arises from differences in communication styles, norms, and work expectations. For example, the difference between collectivist and individualist cultures can create tension when group work preferences clash with individual achievement. These findings underscore the importance of understanding cultural dynamics in multicultural teams, especially in the context of globalization where intercultural interaction is intensifying. *Wetu telu* values, such as harmony and tolerance, can be a solution to

bridge these differences by creating an inclusive and respectful work environment. Poorly managed dynamics and conflicts have an impact on decreased productivity, team cohesion, and increased turnover intention, which shows the urgency to adopt an effective approach to conflict management. The values of *wetu telu*, especially the principles of balance and collaboration, offer a holistic framework for resolving conflicts. For example, the concept of 'three-dimensional harmony' (harmonious relationships with God, fellow human beings, and nature) can be applied to balance individual and group interests in multicultural teams. By integrating these values, organizations can reduce tensions between collectivist and individualist cultures, while promoting more effective collaboration. This finding is in line with Conflict Management Theory, which emphasizes the importance of collaborative strategies in resolving conflict. The values of *wetu telu*, such as togetherness and tolerance, support a collaborative approach that allows each team member to contribute according to their strengths. This not only helps to reduce intercultural miscommunication but also strengthens team cohesion. In the context of globalization, where multicultural teams are increasingly common, the adaptation of local values such as *wetu telu* can be an innovative solution to optimize intercultural communication and conflict management. Thus, the integration of local wisdom into modern management practices is not only relevant but also important for creating a harmonious and productive work environment.

The values of harmony, tolerance, and togetherness embraced by *wetu telu* not only help reduce intercultural tensions but also create a more inclusive and collaborative work environment. Harmony, as a core principle of *wetu telu*, encourages individuals to find common ground in differences, which is particularly relevant in the context of multicultural teams where cultural differences are often a source of conflict. For example, the value of tolerance allows team members to accept and appreciate different perspectives, reducing the potential for miscommunication and conflict. This is in line with intercultural communication theory which emphasises the importance of cultural understanding to enhance collaboration. The value of togetherness in *wetu telu* also has significant implications for conflict management. This principle encourages team members to put the interests of the group above personal interests, which is in line with the collaborative approach in conflict management theory. In multicultural teams, the value of togetherness can help reduce individual egos and facilitate more effective cooperation. For example, employees from individualistic cultures can learn to be more open to input from colleagues, while employees from collectivist cultures can feel more valued when their contributions are recognized by the team. Thus, the value of togetherness helps to reduce conflict while strengthening team cohesion, which ultimately supports the achievement of organizational goals. The integration of *wetu telu* values in conflict management also has a positive impact on organizational sustainability and success. According to cultural adaptation theory, the ability of individuals and groups to adapt to different cultures is key to creating a harmonious work environment. The values of harmony and tolerance can be adopted by employees from various cultural backgrounds, thus increasing the effectiveness of intercultural communication and reducing conflict. In addition, an inclusive and harmonious work environment can increase employee motivation, reduce turnover intention, and encourage innovation. Thus, the values of *wetu telu* are not only relevant as conflict resolution but also contribute to the achievement of organizational goals in an era of globalization that is full of cultural diversity and market competition.

Three-dimensional harmony—which includes harmonious relationships with God, fellow human beings, and nature—provides a distinctive framework for creating balance in multicultural teams. For example, harmony with fellow human beings encourages empathy and tolerance for cultural differences, while harmony with nature reminds us of the importance of creating a sustainable and conducive work environment. The approach helps to resolve interpersonal conflicts while paying attention to spiritual and environmental aspects, which are often neglected in conventional approaches. Thus, the values of *wetu telu* offer a more in-depth and comprehensive perspective on conflict management. The values of balance and tolerance in *wetu telu* are also an important foundation for effective collaboration in multicultural teams. Balance, which emphasizes the importance of balancing individual and group interests, is in line with collaborative conflict management theory. In practice, this value encourages employees to not only focus on personal achievement but also to contribute to the team's collective goals. Meanwhile, tolerance plays a key role in reducing prejudice and increasing acceptance of cultural diversity. For example, in a team with diverse cultural backgrounds, tolerance can help reduce tension and increase openness to cooperation. By integrating these values, multicultural teams can create a more harmonious and productive work dynamic. In addition, the findings also show that the *wetu telu* values are not only relevant in a

local context but can be adapted to address global challenges in conflict management. According to cultural adaptation theory, local values can be integrated into global practices if they are adapted to a broader context. For example, the concept of three-dimensional harmony can be adapted to create an inclusive and conducive work environment in multinational companies, where employees from different cultures can collaborate. In addition, *wetu telu* values such as togetherness, balance, and tolerance can be a solution to overcome the increasing moral degradation and individualism in the modern era. By emphasizing the importance of these values, *wetu telu* not only enriches the cultural dimension but also has significant global application potential in improving intercultural communication and conflict management.

7. Conclusion

This research demonstrates that conflicts in multicultural teams, which frequently arise due to differences in communication styles, norms, and work expectations, can be effectively addressed by integrating *wetu telu* local wisdom values, such as harmony, tolerance, and togetherness. These values mitigate intercultural tensions and foster openness, collaboration, and the achievement of organizational goals. *Wetu telu*'s holistic approach, encompassing three-dimensional harmony (harmonious relationships with God, fellow humans, and nature), balance, and tolerance, offers inclusive solutions that are pertinent in the context of globalization. The findings underscore the importance of exploring local wisdom as a source of innovative solutions to conflict management and intercultural communication challenges in the contemporary era. Although this research makes significant contributions, there are several limitations, such as being confined to one company or organization, necessitating cautious generalization of the findings to a broader context.

Adapting *wetu telu* values may require further adjustments in a substantially different organizational culture. Furthermore, this research primarily focuses on qualitative perspectives, necessitating complementary quantitative data to objectively measure the impact of integrating *wetu telu* values. The practical implications of this research are significant for multicultural companies and organizations. Firstly, *wetu telu* wisdom values can be integrated into training programs and human resource development policies of organizations or companies comprising multicultural teams to enhance intercultural communication and conflict management. Secondly, the *wetu telu* holistic approach can be the foundation for creating a more inclusive and harmonious work environment, subsequently increasing employee productivity and retention. Thirdly, the findings encourage companies to consider local wisdom as part of their organizational development strategy, particularly in the context of globalization. Finally, future research can continue exploring the adaptation of other local wisdom values in conflict management and intercultural communication, employing a mixed-methods approach (qualitative and quantitative) to measure the impact of local values integration more comprehensively. Longitudinal studies can also be conducted to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of local wisdom-based approaches.

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