

## 16. Orientations of Conflict Resolution in *Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women*<sup>1</sup>

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**APA:** Erdem Mete, D. (2025). Orientations of Conflict Resolution in Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (49), 310-322. **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17895170>

### Abstract

*Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women* (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022) is a collection of memoirs written by women authors who reflect on their experiences abroad. Memoirs on intercultural interactions can be seen as a resource for investigating topics related to intercultural communication. This study focuses on the orientations of conflict resolution as one of the subjects of intercultural communication. The aim of the paper is to find out the conflict resolution orientations of the women authors in the memoir collection according to the theoretical framework of Thomas's (1976) Conflict Resolution Orientations. Eight memoirs have been chosen among the collection of memoirs based on purposive sampling method and content analysis has been carried out. It has been found that the five different orientation types of conflict resolution, as suggested by Thomas (1976), which are Integration, Domination, Compromise, Neglect and Appeasement are displayed by the women authors in different situations. The emerging sub-themes have been found to be 'expressing admiration' and 'showing willingness to adapt' for Integration orientation; 'attempting to persuade' and 'expressing strong opinions about good and bad behaviour' for Domination orientation; 'compromising with officials' and 'compromising on negative attitudes towards home country' for Compromise orientation; 'making criticisms' for Neglect orientation; and 'accommodating to conversation style' and 'accommodating to dressing style' for Appeasement orientation. The most frequently addressed conflict resolution orientation in the memoirs is Integration and the least frequently addressed ones are Neglect and Appeasement. The women writers' conflict resolution orientations are discussed in light of the relevant research on intercultural communication. It has been concluded that more research should be carried out for investigating conflict resolution orientations in memoirs of intercultural encounters.

**Keywords:** Conflict resolution, memoir, intercultural communication, *Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women*

<sup>1</sup> **Statement (Thesis / Paper):** It is declared that scientific and ethical principles were followed during the preparation process of this study and all the studies utilised are indicated in the bibliography.

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest is declared.

**Funding:** No external funding was used to support this research.

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**Source:** It is declared that scientific and ethical principles were followed during the preparation of this study and all the studies used are stated in the bibliography.

**Similarity Report:** Received – Turnitin, Rate: 16%

**Ethics Complaint:** editor@rumelide.com

**Article Type:** Research article, **Article Registration Date:** 09.11.2025-**Acceptance Date:** 11.12.2025-**Publication**

**Date:** 12.12.2025; **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17895170>

**Peer Review:** Two External Referees / Double Blind

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## ***Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women Adlı Eserde atıřma özme Yönelimleri***<sup>3</sup>

### **Öz**

*Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women* (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022) adlı eser kadın yazarların yurtdıřındaki deneyimlerini yazdıkları bir anı koleksiyonudur. Kültürlerarası etkileşim deneyimleri üzerine yazılmış olan anılar, kültürlerarası iletişim konularını arařtırmak için bir kaynak olarak görülebilir. Bu arařtırma, kültürlerarası iletişimde alışılan konulardan biri olan atıřma özme yönelimlerine odaklanmaktadır. alışma, Thomas'ın (1976) atıřma özüm Yönelimleri Kuramı dođrultusunda anı koleksiyonundaki kadın yazarların atıřma özme yönelimlerinin ne olduđunu bulmayı amaçlamıřtır. Amaçlı örneklem yöntemine göre koleksiyondaki anılar arasından sekiz anı seçilmiş ve içerik analizi yapılmıřtır. Kadın yazarların anılarında, Thomas'ın (1976) kuramında öne sürdüđü beř atıřma özme yönelimi olan Entegrasyon, Baskınlık, Uzlařma, Aldırmama ve Taviz Verme'yi farklı durumlarda kullandıkları görülmüřtür. İçerik analizinde ortaya ıkan alt temalar Entegrasyon yönelimi için 'hayranlık ifade etme' ve 'adapte olmaya istek gösterme'; Baskınlık yönelimi için 'ikna etmeye alışma' ve 'iyi ve kötü davranıř hakkında katı görüşler ifade etme'; Uzlařma yönelimi için 'yetkililerle uzlařma' ve 'kendi ülkesine karşı olumsuz tutumlar hakkında uzlařma'; Aldırmama yönelimi için 'eleřtiri yapma' ve Taviz Verme yönelimi için 'sohbet şekline uyum sađlama' ve 'giyinme tarzına uyum sađlama' olarak bulunmuřtur. Anılarda en çok yer alan atıřma özme yönelimi Entegrasyon, en az yer alanlar ise Aldırmama ve Taviz Verme'dir. Kadın yazarların atıřma özme yönelimleri, ilgili kültürlerarası iletişim alışmaları ışığında tartıřılmıřtır. Kültürlerarası etkileşim ile ilgili anılardaki atıřma özme yönelimleri hakkında daha fazla arařtırma yapılması önerilmiřtir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** atıřma özümü, anı, kültürlerarası iletişim, *Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women*

<sup>3</sup> **Beyan (Tez/ Bildiri):** Bu alışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduđu ve yararlanılan tüm alışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiđi beyan olunur.

**ıkar atıřması:** ıkar atıřması beyan edilmemiřtir.

**Finansman:** Bu arařtırmayı desteklemek için dıř fon kullanılmamıřtır.

**Telif Hakkı & Lisans:** Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan alışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve alışmaları CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı altında yayımlanmaktadır.

**Kaynak:** Bu alışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduđu ve yararlanılan tüm alışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiđi beyan olunur.

**Benzerlik Raporu:** Alındı – Turnitin, Oran: 16%

**Etik řikayeti:** editor@rumelide.com

**Makale Türü:** Arařtırma makalesi, **Makale Kayıt Tarihi:** 09.11.2025-**Kabul Tarihi:** 11.12.2025-**Yayın Tarihi:** 12.12.2025; **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17895170>

**Hakem Deđerlendirmesi:** İki Dıř Hakem / ift Taraflı Körleme

## Introduction

The notion of conflict is defined as “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals” (Wilmot & Hocker, 2010, p. 11). This incompatibility also includes “values, expectations, processes between two or more interdependent individuals or groups” (Cupach & Canary, 1997, as cited in Martin and Nakayama, 2000, p. 290). Cultural differences play a role in intercultural conflict and when conflict is experienced, individuals handle it in different ways (Martin & Nakayama, 2000, p. 288). Thus, they can choose a certain tactic to manage and resolve the conflict. In terms of the link between culture and conflict resolution orientations, it has been argued that conflict resolution orientations are influenced by individualism and collectivism (Ting-Toomey, 1999, as cited in Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). However, it should be highlighted that “it is the compounding effect of a range of variables, including individual- and cultural-level factors, that result in one set of outcomes rather than another” (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009, p. 128).

Various theoretical frameworks of conflict resolution can be found in literature such as the Dual Concern Model (Blake & Mouton, 1964), Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Resolution Model (1974), Integrative Model of Conflict Resolution (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993) and Interest-based Conflict Management System (Oghenechuko & Godbless, 2018). Thomas (1976), whose model was used as the theoretical framework in this study, suggests five orientations in conflict resolution which are Integration, Domination, Compromise, Neglect and Appeasement. The degree of satisfying the concern of oneself and the other is different in each of the five orientations. In Integration orientation, both parties' concerns are integrated. Domination orientation signals a high concern for the desires of oneself and a low concern for the other. Compromise represents reaching an agreement which may not be satisfactory for the two parties. In Neglect orientation, neither one's own concern nor the other's is paid attention. Appeasement shows minimum concern for self and a maximum concern for the other. In the earlier model suggested by Thomas-Kilman (1974), the terms for the orientations are slightly different as Collaborating, Competing, Compromising, Avoiding and Appeasement, although they refer to the same five orientations proposed by Thomas (1976). The concern for one's personal needs is related to 'assertiveness' and the interest in the needs of others is referred as 'cooperativeness' in Thomas-Kilman's (1974) model.

Conflict has been largely studied related to organizational management (Burke & Greenglass, 1999; Jehn, 1997; Winardi et.al, 2021, Zarankin, 2008). There is a lack of research on conflict in memoirs from the perspective of intercultural communication. As Kim (2015, p. 8) points out, memoirs on intercultural interactions are one of the valuable “first-hand personal accounts” to do research on intercultural communication issues. The writers of the memoirs, as in this study, represent individuals “adapting themselves to the stresses of crossing cultures, and creatively and resourcefully crafting their own ways of life that transcends cultural categories” (Kim, 2015, p. 4). This paper claims that memoirs on intercultural interactions should be examined with an intercultural communication viewpoint in order to have an understanding on conflict resolution orientations and how they play a role in intercultural encounters.

In this study, memoirs representing a contrast of cultural value dimensions (Hofstede, 2011) were selected from the memoir collection titled *Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women* (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022). In Hofstede's classification, these values include Individualism vs. Collectivism, Large Power Distance vs. Small Power Distance, Masculinity vs. Femininity, Strong

Uncertainty Avoidance vs. Weak Certainty Avoidance, Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation and Indulgence vs. Restraint. The selected eight memoirs take place in Part III of the collection (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022), with the title *Travel as Education*. The women authors reflecting on their experiences in this section of the memoir collection are from India, Iran, Indonesia and Pakistan. They travelled to Europe or the United States. As stated in the collection (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022), “these locations not only represented the colonial metropole; they were also considered to have the best universities and training colleges run on a Western model” (p. 292). While most of these women writers took formal education in these institutions, some of them visited their children studying abroad or worked as a paid practitioner in their field.

It can be claimed that while traveling to a new cultural environment and facing new cultural values can cause conflict, experiencing this tension related to a new institutional and workplace environment can be an additional factor of conflict. The memoirs chosen with this viewpoint are 1. *Living and Learning in London* by Atiya Fyzee 2. *An Iranian Feminist Travels to France* by Sediqeh Dowlatabadi 3. *With Three Boys at an English Boarding School* by Begum Inam Habibullah 4. *At the University of Leeds* by Iqbalunnisa Hussain 5. *Oxford Diary* by Muhammadi Begum 6. *A Journalist in the Making* by Herawati Diah 7. *An Indian Nurse in Ohio* by Mehr al-Nisa, and 8. *Sixty Days in America* by Zaib-un-nissa Hamidullah. These memoirs reflect experiences of women from an Eastern culture traveling to a Western culture and experiencing Western educational institution models or workplace environments. Thus, conflict resolution orientations are likely to be observed in the selected memoirs representing contrasting cultural values as put forth by Hofstede (2011).

## Methodology

Deductive content analysis (Crabtree & Miller, 1992) was used in the study based on the theoretical framework of Thomas (1976). The five orientation types which are Integration, Domination, Compromise, Neglect and Appeasement were determined as the main themes of the analysis. A ‘coding agenda’ with a definition of themes and rules of coding was formed (Mayring, 2000). This initial coding scheme was used to assign deductive categories to textual data in a way that fits the theoretical framework (Mayring, 2000). The study used purposive sampling method to focus on eight memoirs for qualitative analysis. In purposive sampling, participants are selected according to a criteria relevant for the aim of the study (Andrade, 2021). As the first stage of purposive sampling, the study focused on the ‘Travel as Education’ section of the memoir collection. This section includes memoirs taking place in institutional settings. Therefore, the conflict experienced by the women writers, who already face the tension of living in a new culture, is likely to increase due to the differences in Eastern and Western models of education as well as workplace environments. Among the nine memoirs in this section, in order to focus on the cases which are likely to provide the most informative understanding of data (Lim, 2024), eight memoirs which represent a contrast of cultural value orientations (Hofstede, 2011) and therefore which are most likely to reflect on conflict situations were chosen as the data of the study. As the analysis proceeded with multiple readings of the data, the initial coding template was used and revised by two researchers until an agreement was reached on the identification and assignment of each sub-theme for ensuring reliability. Findings were reported both by a descriptive approach of presenting direct quotations from the authors’ reflections and providing interpretations with a perspective of intercultural communication.

## Findings and Discussion

Content analysis of the memoirs based on the subthemes that emerged related to the five main themes of conflict resolution orientation (Thomas, 1976) is presented below.

### Theme 1. Integration:

The 'Integration' orientation of conflict resolution is displayed in six writers' memoirs related to the sub-themes of 'expressing admiration' and 'showing willingness to adapt'.

#### Sub-theme 1A. Expressing admiration

Among the six authors who display an Integration orientation, five of them express their admiration about issues related to either the education system or way of life in the host country. It is seen that, especially related to education, they make comparisons between their home countries and the host country. Atiya Fyzee expresses her admiration about the girls' education level with these words "...the level of conversation has reached such a height that in India one cannot even imagine this. If only the men of our country were like these women." (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 296). Iqbalunnisa Hussain makes similar remarks by criticizing the education system in India after an observation of the lives of university students in Britain. She claims that the education system in India is "defective, narrow, and one-sided" (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 341). Her criticism about the education system in her country is not only about the intellectual development of students. In her opinion, education should also improve the "social, physical, moral and aesthetical senses" (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 341) as in Britain. Related to education, Muhammadi Begum suggests that the number of students and the time they spend to study in Britain should increase to be able to learn about the good qualities of life and try to establish the same when they return to India (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 350).

The 'Integration' orientation is characterized by a high desire to satisfy one's own concerns as well as a high desire to satisfy the concerns of others (Thomas, 1976), which is stated as high assertiveness-high cooperation in the Thomas-Kilmann (1974) model. All of the three writers travelled from India to England to study. Their intellectual backgrounds and experiences in the home and host countries enable them to have an objective observation about the differences in education systems in India and Britain. Their reflections are assertive criticisms towards the educational practices in their own countries which at the same time show a willingness to actively collaborate for taking good examples as models. Differences in cultural value dimensions also appear to have a role in the writers' adaptation process to the new cultural environment. For instance, the friendly relationship between professors and students in Britain is an atmosphere Iqbalunnisa Hussain wishes to see in India (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 339). This can be claimed to be a reflection on coming from a Large Power Distance society where "subordinates expect to be told what to do" rather than being "consulted", and older people, including teachers, are "both respected and feared" (Hofstede, 2011, p. 9).

The writers also show admiration about the ways of life in the host country. Atiya Fyzee is impressed by the cleanliness about the preparation and serving of food in Britain. She expresses this as "To accept English ways in a Muslim manner is a simple, easy, and effortless task. Then an excellent state of affairs can be achieved" (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 298). Zaib-un-nisa Hamidullah, on the other hand, has appreciation about the practicalities about cooking such as "ready-cooked dishes wrapped in foil" (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 377) and the convenience of market shopping in the United States. She

almost envies the American housewives and their way of life, stating that by witnessing their life style, one can understand that it “is possible to be a good wife and mother while at the same time being a good citizen” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 378). Similarly, Herawati Diah reflects on how she was amazed by the household facilities which make life so easy for the housewives (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 358).

It can be claimed that the writers’ expressions of admiration about ways of life in the host country, just like about education issues, are accompanied by implied or explicitly stated criticisms related to the ways of life in their home country and a longing for independence. Reflecting on the women’s way of life in Pakistan, Zaib-un-nisa Hamidullah questions who should be blamed for the tendency of the Pakistani women to be “self-centered” and “intellectually sleepy” while having “half a dozen servants” in their homes (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 377). She observes that when Pakistani women adapt themselves to the life in the US, they become energetic working women who pursue a career as well as doing all the housework themselves and who “have won their independence without having to fight for it”. Although their families are proud of their working daughters in the US, she has doubts on whether they will have the same attitude of supporting such “modern outlook” when they move back to Pakistan (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 378). This conflict is related to the fact that while they gain a consciousness of “I” in the Individualist society of the US, they will be part of a “We” consciousness in their Collectivist home country where opinions are “predetermined by in-group” such as the parents and family members (Hofstede, 2011, p. 11).

### **Subtheme 1B. Showing willingness to adapt**

Related to the ‘Integration’ orientation of conflict resolution (Thomas, 1976), three of the writers express their willingness to adapt to the new cultural norms in different ways. One way they show this is seen in their willingness to adapt their clothing style to the host culture in some meetings they attend in the host country. Atiya Fyzee makes observations regarding people’s reactions to her dressing style. She states that she continues to wear her Indian clothes and has no intention to give up wearing them although she willingly makes slight modifications. She comments as “And everyone appreciates the fact greatly that I have kept my ways in the English world and am setting a good example. Of course, I have modified the Fyzee charshaf a bit, which serves well instead of an English cloak.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 299). With respect to the high assertiveness- high cooperation element of the Integration orientation, Fyzee is assertive in defending her own view of clothing and not giving up totally her traditional attire, which is also a cooperative solution for her to integrate into the new culture.

Mehr al-Nisa, on the other hand, demonstrates her disposition for integration to the target culture with respect to developing a good relationship with the people from the host country, the US, where she works as a nurse. She explains her feelings on how she gets along well with the hospital staff as well as the patients. She shares her impressions about her colleagues’ reactions to her announcement of pregnancy by saying “They congratulated me delightedly and started taking good care of me in every way possible” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 369). The writer feels part of the community despite the difficulties she encounters. She stresses commitment which is an important feature of ‘Integration’ orientation (Rahim, 2002) as “As I cared for them, each service I performed made every corner of my heart glitter, and as a result of my sincere ministrations, the patients loved me” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 367). Although she is experiencing the stressful process of a new workplace environment as well as a new culture, she shows high concern for her own needs as well as for the others.

Another point with regard to showing willingness to adapt is how the writers show their eagerness to respond well to the people who display their sincere disposition to get to know them in the host country. Iqbalunnisa Hussain mentions about her experience with one of her professors at a dinner they attended in an English university. She says “What a contrast with the kind of airs we are accustomed to see in our professors” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 338). She was not expecting the principal to ask whether she would like her to be her partner for the dinner and felt both puzzled and impressed by the “initiative of forwardness” of the professor who wanted to find out her interests (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 339). Her confusion, while also linked to the Small/Large Power Distance dimension (Hofstede, 2011), can also be explained by experiencing a Weak Uncertainty Avoidance society where “ease, lower stress, self-control, low anxiety” are observed and “strict behavioural codes” are minimized in unstructured situations (Hofstede, 2011, p. 10).

On the whole, related to the ‘Integration’ orientation, it can be stated that the authors express opinions and behaviours which show a desire to adapt to the new society and show collaboration to be part of the new cultural environment. They make comparisons with their own cultures and display a critical stance towards issues which can be developed in their home country, as in the case of education. “Collaboration, empathy, objectivity and recognition of feelings” are observed in terms of the ‘Integration’ orientation (Martin & Nakayama, 2000, p. 296). Their willingness to adapt seems to be a reflection of an internal motivation and enjoyment of being part of a community which they are welcomed. In this sense, they show enthusiasm to be part of an Indulgent society where there is a “perception of personal life control”, “freedom of speech”, “higher importance of leisure” and “higher percentage of people declaring themselves very happy” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 16).

## **Theme 2. Domination:**

The ‘Domination’ orientation of conflict resolution is seen in four authors’ memoirs related to the sub-themes of ‘attempting to persuade’ and ‘expressing strong opinions about what is good and bad’.

### **Sub-theme 2A. Attempting to persuade**

In terms of the ‘Domination’ orientation, two of the authors attempt to persuade others about different issues. It is seen that, particularly with regard to ways of dressing and stereotyping, they make critical comments about the manners of people. Atiya Fyzee expresses her feelings about the clothing style of an Indian lady, like herself, living in Britain as “This lady is pretty, but unfortunately she wears badly tailored and tasteless, gaudy English clothes...” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 300). As she feels great displeasure about the situation, Fyzee intends to persuade the lady that she can continue wearing her traditional clothes without any problems (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 300). She asserts her dissatisfaction about the clothing issue among women of her own nationality, the Indian women living in the host country as “Why Indians make a spectacle of themselves in this way. I don’t know.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 300). It is observed that Fyzee (2022) tries to convince women from her own country to wear their traditional clothes rather than dressing awkwardly in Western clothes. She sees the insistence on dressing without aesthetics as a sign of not knowing how to adapt to the host country.

One of the writers, Sediqeh Dowlatabadi who is an Iranian journalist travelling to France, makes an effort to persuade some authority figures with regard to their stereotyped views which are related to her gender and religion. She reports a dialogue between her and an officer who is responsible for controlling passports of foreigners in France (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022). The male officer makes reactions in

astonishment as “My god! A Muslim Iranian woman has travelled alone from Tehran to France. How did your government permit you to leave?” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 319). She defends herself by being assertive as “If in all of Europe they view Iranians through your eyes, it would be good for me to turn back from here.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 319). Dowlatabadi also encounters a similar problem in Paris where she attends a lunch. When she observes that some people have stereotyped views towards Iranian women, she tries to persuade them about the progress of Iranian women in terms of education, and she explains this as “I was forced to give a long-winded explanation to each one that Iran has educated and intelligent women.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 322). The writer also recalls one of her experiences on clothing. At an invitation in Paris where the ruler of Iran, Ahmed Shah, is present, Dowlatabadi mentions the ruler’s reaction to her dressing as “... wouldn’t it have been better if you had put on some sort of chador like Turkish and Arabic women?” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 321). The writer responds as “My educational life is very simple and monotonous. Don’t you think that if they saw a foreign face, they wouldn’t pay attention?” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 321). It is seen that Dowlatabadi does not want to renounce what she thinks is right. She shows social attuning in this specific instance which is a competency to manage rapport (Spencer Oatey & Franklin, 2009). She tries to “claim common point of view” with the hearer and seeks empathy as a strategy of expressiveness and building rapport (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, as cited in Spencer Oatey & Franklin, 2009, p. 120).

The ‘Domination’ orientation is characterised by high assertiveness-low cooperation, in other words, a high concern for the needs of self and a low concern for the needs of others (Thomas, 1976). It is seen that both of the women authors verbally show assertiveness to defend their viewpoints in a way that displays a dominating attitude in their conversations.

### **Sub-theme 2B. Expressing strong opinions about good and bad behaviour**

Among the four authors demonstrating a ‘Domination’ orientation, three of them express their strong opinions about what is good and bad behaviour. These opinions are stated either verbally in the case of sharing opinions with someone else, or in the form of an internal monologue. Muhammedi Begum who lives in Britain as a student, has strong opinions about the qualities of people from her own country as well as those in the host country. She gives examples to the kinds of people who should be taken as a model or the ones whose behaviours shouldn’t be modelled. She draws attention to a discussion she had with her Indian friend on the subject of a comparison between Hindustani and English culture. Begum uses the expression “swallow-like humans who are in absolute awe of English culture” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 349) for the Indian people living in Britain who are in total admiration of English culture. She also criticizes such people as “To them, England is like a paradise on earth, etc. etc. They see nothing that is good in their own culture. Decrying their own cultures and society, they are thus base in their own eyes.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 349). She has such a harsh critical view about such people that she refers to them as “the crow that fancies itself a swan” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 349).

Atiya Fyzee also mentions her observations about the host country, drawing contrasts between Indian and British cultures. After observing British people in a boat house, she makes some criticisms about their eating and drinking habits as “All in all, a joyous spectacle, but some behaviour was very unacceptable. I pray that the influence of culture in our country is not of this type.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 301). It is apparent that Fyzee, as a foreigner living in the host country, has strong opinions about what she believes to be negative aspects of Western culture which shouldn’t be taken as a model.

Herawati Diah, the first Indonesian woman who graduated from an American university, states that she

is eager to learn about “the good virtues of America” but it does not mean that she would ignore what should be criticised (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 357). She believes that women should be educated but not necessarily for becoming doctors or lawyers. In her opinion, “Such professions are men professions; a woman is too soft of nature to indulge in a thing like that” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 359). She goes on by stating as “I still think that woman’s place is in the home, but her place is much more important now, and is of ever increasing social importance.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 360).

On the whole, the authors’ orientations to the ‘Domination’ dimension of conflict resolution show that living in the host country reinforces their opinions on what they see as important issues. They express their own viewpoints and show their stance, either verbally or as an internal monologue. As Kim (2015) points out, acculturation and deculturation is a crucial stage of the cross-cultural adaptation process. While acculturation is about acquiring “new cultural patterns”, deculturation is the “unlearning of some of the old cultural elements” (Kim, 2015, p. 5). The writers have a dominating attitude against deculturation due to their strong views related to certain issues. This may be related to the relatively short time they spent in the host country. After an experience of prolonged stay in the host country, as Kim (2015) claims “moral and ethical values about what is right or wrong” are likely to change (p. 5).

### **Theme 3. Compromise:**

The ‘Compromise’ orientation of conflict resolution is displayed in three authors’ memoirs related to the sub-themes of ‘compromising with officials’ and ‘compromising on negative attitudes towards home country’.

#### **Sub-theme 3A. Compromising with officials**

One of the authors displays ‘Compromise’ orientation related to an occasion where she was required to pay extra money. Sediqeh Dowlatabadi mentions this experience with a soldier on her journey from Iran to Europe. She rejects paying a fee to the soldier for leaving the country and the soldier shows a reaction as “What can we poor folk do? ... If respected people like you don’t help us out, then we have to steal.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 317). Although the writer feels forced to do what the soldier says, she also states her feeling of being impressed by his explanation as follows “I was moved by his words, which were obviously uttered in a truthful and sincere manner, and I helped him out.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 317).

#### **Sub-theme 3B. Compromising on negative attitudes towards home country**

Two of the authors reach a compromise in their discussions with people by showing understanding about negative viewpoints on home culture. Inam Habibullah attends an Eid celebration upon a fellow’s invitation, and she narrates an incident from her time at that place. In her conversation with one of the sons of the Indian host who had his education in England, she mentions her observation of him as “Talking to him, I realized that those who return to England from India prefer an English lifestyle.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 330). She adds his thoughts as “He told me that the heat in India is unbearable. What’s more, he added, it is unbecoming for an insightful individual to believe that one particular place is their homeland. The world has been created for humanity.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 330). Habibullah compromises in the discussion, after realizing that trying to persuade does not work. She concludes as “he did not see eye to eye with me on the issue” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 330).

Muhammedi Begum participates in a breakfast where she has a dialogue with a Hindustani gentleman who is married to an English woman. The gentleman declares his views regarding mixed marriage by saying that he's never been interested in marrying a Hindustani girl because of the inevitably mixed English and Hindustani manners of such a couple. (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 350). He describes these kinds of marriage as “half a partridge, half a quail,” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 350) which Begum regards as a troubling comment. She reconsiders this opinion internally by remarking as “My opinion is that the demands and complaints the Hindustani boys make are not misguided. They are kept away from Hindustani women in so many ways.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 350). It is clear that Begum seeks a compromise on the topic, which can be defined as a type of strategy to cope with the cultural conflict in daily conversations.

In sum, three writers show ‘Compromise’ orientation in occasions that they interact with people from their own cultures. As Rahim (2002) points out, compromising offers a “temporary solution to a complex problem” and it is used where “parties are equally powerful” (p. 219). The writers of the memoirs, in such circumstances, compromise by reaching a partial agreement.

#### **Theme 4. Neglect:**

The ‘Neglect’ orientation of conflict resolution (Thomas, 1976) is observed related to the sub-theme of ‘making criticisms’. Two authors make criticisms about people’s stereotypes towards their own culture, people’s way of life in the host country, the unfamiliar cuisine and bad manners of British people. They show their criticisms in the form of internal monologues.

#### **Sub-theme 4A. Making criticisms**

Atiya Fyzee feels disappointed about the stereotypes British people have about Indians. She says “If they meet an Indian who does not meet their stereotypical views, they are totally flabbergasted. I don’t know at which level they place Indians in their minds that everything about them is surprising!” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 299). She also states that she is “extremely disgusted” about the way British women dress themselves in order to look attractive and criticizes their waste of money on clothing which makes them “paupers” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 299). Additionally, Fyzee makes criticism about English people’s habit of eating too much by referring to a specific occasion in a sarcastic tone as “The English ate so much that God protect us” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 301). She also clarifies this matter by giving an example as “Their ignorance reminded me of this line of poetry: You believe that living is for eating” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 301).

Inam Habibullah also makes criticism about English food and some improper manners of English people by mentioning the events she witnessed. She complains about the lack of flavour in English meals as “And the food, I think, can’t but taste bad to a Hindustani.” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 331). She goes on as “You’ll often cut into a piece of meat and watch blood begin to ooze out. The people here declare it “juicy” and gobble it up (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 331). In addition to the food issue, Habibullah talks about a Hindustani party organized in a restaurant where she observes some inappropriate manners such as the strange stares of English people towards her and her friends. She describes the incident as follows “I hated the feeling of their gazes on us. Perhaps they were staring so intently because they saw us as some sort of wonder. Otherwise, it is considered very bad manners in England to stare at someone like this” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 331).

It can be concluded that the writers tend to employ the ‘Neglect’ orientation in cases where they complain in the form of an internal monologue, rather than stating their criticisms to others verbally. There is low assertiveness and low cooperation as characterised in this orientation (Thomas-Kilmann, 1974). Apparently, in the social occasions they take part, the writers are expected to follow the social norms and this causes avoidance in making explicit and verbal objections. Rahim (2002) states that ‘Neglect’ orientation is used when “the issue is trivial” and “potential dysfunctional effect of confronting the other party outweighs benefits of resolution” (p. 219). It is seen that the writers’ criticisms of issues related to the ‘Neglect’ orientation are more related to the daily life manners and habits observed about the members of the host culture. This is different from their more serious criticisms towards their own cultures seen in the ‘Integration’ orientation and towards cases where they need to defend themselves against stereotyped views displayed in ‘Domination’ orientation. Moreover, refraining from verbal criticism is a feature of high-context communication which is characterised by “self-humbling talk” as well as “nonverbal subtleties” (Spencer-Oatey & Franlin, 2009, p. 89), and members of collectivist cultures generally have the tendency to think that “harmony should always be maintained” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 11).

### **Theme 5. Appeasement:**

Two of the authors display ‘Appeasement’ orientation of conflict resolution (Thomas, 1976) related to the sub-themes of ‘accommodating to conversation style’ and ‘accommodating to dressing style’.

#### **Sub-theme 5A. Accommodating to conversation style**

Atiya Fyzee reflects on her experience with her British lecturers asking many questions about India. She says “But they lead the conversation in such a way and acquire the information that I am under the impression that they are only questioning me” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 297). Realizing that they actually know more about her country than her is a factor that makes Fyzee to be more careful in expressing her thoughts. She states “The truth is that they are very knowledgeable about India, so what can I say? When I sometimes express my thoughts and make a mistake, they tactfully refute it in the course of the discussion to show me the error” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 297). Although this situation is uncomfortable for her, she adds “Conversation and discussion with them lays the foundation of learning” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 297) and that is why she accommodates to this conversation style. Fyzee’s reflections can be explained by ‘emotion regulation’ which is related to managing rapport. As Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009) point out about resilience, “in intercultural interaction, people need to be able to handle criticism or embarrassment when things go wrong, and to bounce back if they lost face” (p. 117).

#### **Sub-theme 5B. Accommodating to dressing style**

Mehr al-Nisa talks about a memory with the doctor related to her dressing style when she starts working as a nurse in the US. The doctor warns her that she has to replace her traditional clothes with the suitable ones for the hospital, such as skirts (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 366). When al-Nisa wears modern clothes as required, she explains how she felt as “He was already used to wearing a suit, but I was feeling awkward in my skirt” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 366). She also adds “When I abandoned Indian clothes, the Americans stopped staring at me in surprise” (Lambert-Hurley et al., 2022, p. 366). It is seen that even if al-Nisa is willing to change her dressing style for the sake of accommodating to the workplace norms in the US culture, she feels slightly uncomfortable.

In ‘Appeasement’ orientation, there is low assertiveness and high cooperation (Thomas-Kilmann, 1974). In the occasions where the authors show this orientation, they feel uncomfortable about an issue but they try to accommodate to the host culture as much as possible. They make the effort to join discussions with their professors or change their dressing style. As Rahim (2002) states, it is appropriate to display this orientation when “you are dealing with a position of weakness”, “you are willing to give up something in exchange for something from the other party in the future” and “preserving relationship is important” (p. 219). Atiya Fyzee and Mehr al-Nisa’s reflections represent cases of student-teacher and manager-employee relationship which put them in a weak situation in terms of power issues. Being accepted by the new society and learning about the new culture can be claimed to be what they will gain in exchange.

## Conclusion

The study reveals that the writers display different orientations depending on the context and the complexity of the situation, which underlines the fact that contextual factors play a significant role in choosing a specific orientation for conflict resolution. Contrasting cultural values of the home and host cultures and face issues also appear to be factors influencing the conflict that the writers experience. Integration is found to be the most frequently addressed orientation type of conflict resolution. This can be explained by a high motivation to integrate into the new cultural environment, a willingness of the writers to attend to the concerns of both themselves and others, as well as a strong intention to learn about the new culture. The second most frequently displayed orientation is Domination, followed by Compromise. Neglect and Appeasement, on the other hand, are the least frequently referred conflict resolution orientations. This shows a general tendency of the writers to be assertive and critical towards conflict issues which are important and complex for them. Further research which focuses on memoirs about intercultural interactions to investigate conflict resolution orientations should be carried out.

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