CHAPTER III
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature plays an essential part in the completion of a research study. It involves the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem. To carry out any research effectively, it is of prime importance to review the related researches. The planning and execution of any research study preceded by a thorough review of literature in the related fields helps in providing useful information. This chapter presents the review of related literature with regard to conflict management styles, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and personality types. The literature surveyed has been classified as under:

1. Conflict management styles and emotional intelligence
2. Conflict management styles and spiritual intelligence
3. Conflict management styles and personality types
4. Conflict management styles, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence
5. Conflict management styles, emotional intelligence and personality types
6. Gender differences
   i. Gender differences in conflict management styles
   ii. Gender differences in emotional intelligence
   iii. Gender differences in spiritual intelligence
   iv. Gender differences in personality types

The pictorial form of review of related literature has been given as under:
Conflict Management Styles and Emotional Intelligence

Conflict is an inseparable element of social and community life which is prevalent in organizational settings on a large scale. With the growing need and emphasis on workplace accord and efficiency, effective conflict management is becoming need of the hour and hence, increasingly popular. Conflict management requires such emotional skills as self-esteem, flexibility and acceptance to creative thought and behaviour (Ivshin, 2001). It has been found that group failure or success is influenced by the type of conflict (Tjosvold, Law, & Sun, 2006) and, hence, it is imperative to resolve conflicts. Research patterns indicate that conflict handling mode of an individual is related to his intelligence, especially emotional intelligence.

Malek (2000) studied emotional intelligence in regard to the collaborative conflict management style of 120 employed individuals in business and found out the correlation between the two variables significant.

Ivshin (2001) examined the relationship between three constructs- emotional intelligence, meaning of work and conflict management styles. The study showed
that there is statistically non significant correlation between the conflict management styles and emotional intelligence.

Jordan and Troth (2002) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and favored conflict resolution styles and tried to explore the implications of the same for human resource development as well as specific change in micro level organizational. The results revealed that when confronted with conflict, individuals who are higher on emotional intelligence show a preference for collaborative conflict resolution.

Rahim et al. (2002) examined the relationship of emotional intelligence dimensions including self-regulation, self-awareness, empathy, motivation, and social skills of supervisors with the conflict handling strategies, i.e. problem solving and bargaining of the subordinates in MBA students from seven countries. The findings of the study suggest that as far as correlations between the dimensions of emotional intelligence are concerned, self-regulation is positively associated with empathy and social skills; self-awareness has a positive association with self-regulation, empathy as well as social skills; empathy and social skills are positively related with motivation. As regards the correlations between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies, motivation dimension of emotional intelligence has a positive association with problem-solving conflict handling strategy but a negative association with bargaining conflict handling strategy.

Lee (2003) examined 290 faculty and staff at a selected college and found out that emotional intelligence, gender and position had an effect on the conflict management styles of faculty and staff members. The most preferred style of handling conflict used by faculty and staff members was the integrating style; the least preferred style was the obliging conflict management style. Along with this, the gender, academic rank, and position of the respondents also had an influence on emotional intelligence. There were significant interaction effects between level of emotional intelligence and age on conflict management styles of faculty and staff members. The results of correlation analysis depicted significant and positive relationships of both integrating and compromising styles with emotional intelligence.

Jordan and Troth (2004) explored the effectiveness of emotional intelligence for predicting individual performance, team performance, and styles of conflict
resolution. Results indicated that emotional intelligence indicators had a positive link with team performance. These emotional intelligence indicators differentially associated with methods of conflict resolution.

Kimball and Scot (2004) attempted to examine the relationship between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence of 739 employees engaged in seven districts in east United States. The results accomplished found a significant relationship between the various conflict management styles and emotional intelligence.

Morrison (2005) investigated the relationship of emotional intelligence with the preferred conflict handling styles in case of registered nurses. Results depicted a positive relationship between collaborative style of handling conflict and emotional intelligence. The results also depicted a negative relationship between the accommodating style of handling conflict and emotional intelligence.

Srinivasan and George (2005) studied the emotional intelligence and conflict management styles of 516 management students from business schools in Tamil Nadu. The study found that different conflict handling styles were demanded by different problems. Furthermore, students who are emotionally intelligent appear to be competent enough to apply the various conflict management styles as per the demand of the situation.

Ely (2006) conducted a study on civil servants of a selected local Government in Indonesia to investigate their emotional intelligence, conflict management styles and job performance. The results indicated that emotional intelligence and the integrating and compromising conflict management styles are correlated significantly and positively.

Henderson (2006) investigated the correlation of emotional intelligence with conflict management. The sample comprised of 229 college going students and 43 participants from various organizational settings. There was a positive correlation between scores of emotional intelligence and the use of the integrating conflict handling style. As regards the comparison of correlations of emotional intelligence with the five conflict handling styles, the highest significant positive relationship was between emotional intelligence and the integrating conflict handling style.
Kaushal and Kwantes (2006) conducted a study on the role of culture and personality in preference of strategy of conflict management. The conclusion of the present study established that cultural values and social beliefs have a role to play in predicting the choice of conflict resolution strategy of a person; however emotional quotient and self-monitoring are not instrumental for the same.

Majid (2006) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and styles of conflict management of the non-academic faculty working in UiTM Arau, Perlis. He found a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and the styles of conflict management. However, no significant differences were found between age, genders, educational qualification and working experience in both the variables, i.e. emotional intelligence and conflict management styles.

Yu, Sardessai, Lu, and Zhao (2006) attempted to investigate the relationship between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence of 227 working MBA students employed in China. They worked on the relationship between emotional intelligence of supervisors and interpersonal conflict handling styles of subordinates. The finding of the study was that emotional intelligence of supervisors had a positive significant influence on the dominating conflict handling style of the subordinates.

Gambill (2008) explored the relationship amid emotional intelligence and conflict management styles of Christian Clergy. The results of the study established insignificant correlations between emotional intelligence and certain styles of conflict management. The female clergy scored higher than the male clergy in emotional intelligence. The most preferred conflict management style of clergy was identified as the compromising style.

On (2009) conducted a research to identify the conflict management styles and emotional intelligence of property management staff, to find out the extent to which the demographic factors influence their conflict management styles and emotional intelligence and furthermore to find out the relationship between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence. Findings of the study show that the property management staff members’ performances in emotional intelligence were lower than the median except handling relationships and the majority of them tended to use integrating, followed by avoiding, obligating, dominating and seldom used compromising. Moreover, the integrating style of conflict management style was
positively correlated to handling relationships and total emotional intelligence score. The obligating and dominating conflict management styles were negatively correlated to self-motivation and total emotional intelligence score respectively. Also, compromising conflict management style was positively correlated with self-motivation.

Abas (2010) carried out a research to examine emotional intelligence and conflict management styles amongst workforce of the Human Resources Division and to further find out the correlation of emotional intelligence of supervisors reviewed by themselves and by their subordinates. This study also explored if there is any association between the emotional intelligence of the supervisors and conflict handling styles as accounted by their subordinates. Results indicated that the supervisors had the lowest rating on self regulation dimension of emotional intelligence, while they rated highest on empathy dimension of emotional intelligence. While managing conflicts with the supervisors, subordinates preferred to use integrating and compromising styles, whereas dominating style of conflict management was used the least. Results also depicted significant and positive relationships between emotional intelligence and integrating as well as compromising conflict management styles of the employees working in the Human Resource division.

Bankole (2010) conducted a study on the labour leaders of Lagos State, Nigeria to examine the conjoint and comparative effects of emotional intelligence and communication skill on conflict management behaviour. The results showed significant, combined effects of communications skill and emotional intelligence on the labour leaders’ conflict management skills, and that communication skill had a stronger significant effect on the conflict management behaviour of the respondents than emotional intelligence.

Di Fabio and Blustein (2010) assessed the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision conflict styles of Italian high school students. The non-adaptive conflict styles were best predicted by the intrapersonal dimension of emotional intelligence; the adaptability dimension of emotional intelligence was the best predictor of adaptive style of vigilance and the interpersonal dimension of emotional intelligence was associated with the non-adaptive style of decisional conflict.
The research carried out by Ellis (2010) focussed on the relationship of emotional intelligence and conflict management styles within a sample of MBA students at a small, private university. The results indicated significant relationships amidst emotional intelligence and conflict management styles.

Leung (2010) carried out a research on service personnel to investigate the strategies for conflict management and to explore their relationship with emotional intelligence. Results indicated that low EQ service personnel adopted only one conflict management strategy while high EQ service personnel were highly flexible to change their strategies of conflict management. The service personnel with high emotional quotient tend to choose compromising or integrating strategy of conflict management. They make use of their competitive benefit over the low emotional quotient service personnel and generate affluence for their own selves as well as others.

The findings of research conducted by Shih and Susanto (2010) on 228 Govt. employees from two local districts and one province in Indonesia indicated that emotional intelligence was an antecedent of conflict management style for integrating and compromising styles. Moreover, they illustrated the direct effects of integrating styles on job performance. This study also confirmed that integrating style partially mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of members at a selected local government in Indonesia.

Heris and Heris (2011) examined the relationship of emotional intelligence with conflict management strategies among physical education experts working in Tehran University. The findings of the study reveal a significant and positive correlation among emotional intelligence and dominance, restraint, collaborative and compromise conflict management styles; but there was no significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence and tolerance style of conflict management.

Abas, Surdick, Otto, Wood and Budd (2012) carried out a research to investigate emotional intelligence and conflict management styles among employees working in the Human Resources Division at a University in Malaysia. Particularly, the study aimed at examining the correlation of emotional intelligence of supervisors reported by themselves and by their subordinates as well as to explore the relationship between supervisors’ emotional intelligence and conflict handling styles as reported
by their subordinates. The results of correlation analysis assessed insignificant correlation between supervisors’ own ratings of emotional intelligence ratings and the ones assessed by their subordinates. Result of the survey also indicated that emotional intelligence of supervisors was related with the use of more integrating and compromising conflict management styles by the subordinates.

Aliasgari and Farzadnia (2012) conducted a study on 108 high school teachers to explore the relationship between their emotional intelligence and conflict management styles. Two questionnaires, i.e. “Siberia Shrink” for EI, and “Robbins” for conflict management styles were used for data collection. The result was interpreted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation, which revealed that there was a significant and positive relationship between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence.

Kumar (2012) conducted a study on the conflict resolution strategies in relation to emotional intelligence and organizational climate. He found that male Principals use more of competing and accommodating conflict resolution styles as compared to the females; and females use more of collaborating, compromising and avoiding conflict resolution styles as compared to their male counterparts. Out of 10 dimensions of emotional intelligence, only three i.e. empathy, self development and commitment were significantly correlated with collaborating conflict resolution style of male principals. Value orientation dimension of emotional intelligence was significantly correlated with accommodation conflict resolution strategy of male principals. Only one dimension of emotional intelligence, i.e. self-awareness was significantly correlated with only one conflict resolution style, i.e. avoidance. As regards the regression analysis, only self development dimension of emotional intelligence was a positive predictor of collaboration strategy of male principals; value orientation was a negative predictor and altruistic behavior was a positive predictor of accommodation conflict resolution strategy of male principals. In case of female principals, no dimension of emotional intelligence was found to be a significant predictor of any of the conflict resolution strategies.

Veshki, Jazayeri, Sharifi, Esfahani, Aminjafari and Hosnije (2012) studied the relation between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles in 300 female teachers using the correlation method. The findings revealed that some factors of emotional intelligence including emotion control, understanding the self and others’
emotion, optimism, and social skills had a direct relationship with cooperation and compromise conflict management styles. Also, there was an inverse significant relationship among all factors of emotional intelligence and certain conflict management styles including competitive, compromise and avoidant.

Schlaerth, Ensari and Christian (2013) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and constructive conflict management of 5175 participants. The results show that emotional intelligence is positively correlated with constructive conflict management. Further, the relationship was stronger for subordinates than leaders.

As is evident from a review of the studies above, there are mixed results on the relationship between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is an important predictor of conflict management style according to some of the research findings, though there are some studies which do not consider emotional intelligence to be related to conflict management styles.

3.2 Conflict Management Styles and Spiritual Intelligence

Conflict management style adopted by an individual depends upon the emotional intelligence (EQ) which comprises relationship skills. Furthermore, spiritual intelligence is another perceived index that helps a person choose his conflict management style. Spiritual intelligence facilitates a person to uphold both internal and external harmony; it is an essential personal endowment which helps a one to exhibit adoration in spite of the conditions whether constant worry or severe conflict. It therefore, can possibly be helpful in conflict management and serene co-existence in the society. Spirituality is related to workplace performance or effectiveness (Tischler, Biberman & Mc Keage, 2002). Brendan (2004) discussed the notion of spiritual intelligence for problem-solving, one of the central themes which underlies the concept of intelligence.

Truongson (2007) conducted a phenomenological work at the United Nations Global Compact. He conducted the study on spiritual-intelligence leadership and found out that conflict exists between unethical organizational leaders’ practices and tenets of spiritual intelligence leadership. The United National Global Compact (UNGC) was created to help participants resolve conflicting values and improve business performances of organizational leaders through the constructs of ethical
This phenomenological study explored how spiritual intelligence awareness or knowledge affected UNGC participants’ business decisions and its impact on the quality of leaders’ subsequent resolutions.

Rittle (2009) did a research on the role of spirituality in management of conflict. The researcher interviewed 10 participants in the Departments of philosophy and religion at a college in the Midwest. A series of standardized open-ended questions were used. The results of the data imply that spirituality is the core constituent of the cognitive process of individuals, and hence serves a vital role in the conflict management process.

Hosseini, Elias, Krauss and Aishah (2010) conducted a research to review the editorials about adolescence and the relation of processes in adolescence to spiritual intelligence and associated theories. They found that the notion of spirituality of the psychologists was extended by conceiving spirituality as a type of intelligence; they found that the association of spiritual intelligence with the rational cognitive processes such as goal accomplishment and problem solving was acceptable.

Satpathy (2010) did a descriptive research on spiritual intelligence from the Bhagavad-Gita for conflict resolution. He summarized that innumerable years even before the conceptualization and expansion of spiritual intelligence as a variable, Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita had narrated spiritual intelligence which is the talk of the present day researchers. Spiritual intelligence, which is the intelligence of the spirit, serves as a vehicle to procure complete personality and candor. With the assistance of this intelligence, we ponder upon the fundamental queries of our life and restructure our responses. Lord Krishna talked about the four dimensions of conflict in order to resolve the conflicts arising in Arjuna’s mind and stimulated his soul with the help of his spiritual conversation. Bhagavad-Gita teaches the wisdom that spiritual intelligence, which is non-physical and soul-stirring in nature, is the fine-tuning of rational faculty and helps to dissipate conflicts from one’s minds.

Review of the literature on conflict management styles and spiritual intelligence indicates that there is actually a dearth of studies pertaining to the relationship between conflict management style adopted by a person and his spiritual intelligence. This field has a lot of scope for further research.
3.3 Conflict Management Styles and Personality

The personality of a person is the determinant of individual behavior which consists of his needs, abilities and potentialities. Behavior is an outcome of personality, the way a person behaves when encountered in a conflict situation and the style of conflict management that he adopts is also dependent on his personality. Many research studies that have been conducted showing the relationship of conflict management styles and personality.

Shanmugam (1982) investigated the influence of Eysenck’s personality dimensions, namely extraversion, introversion, neuroticism and psychoticism on efficiency of conflict resolution on 900 school boys and showed mixed results. He grouped the sample into eight personality groups and found out differences in discrimination and generalization of conflict tasks.

Rahim (1983) did a correlational study between conflict management styles and personality types. He found 20 correlations between the five conflict management styles and the personality type preferences. Out of these, only seven confirmed a low association, indicating thereby that a significant relationship exists between personality and interpersonal conflict handling styles.

Nolan (1985) investigated the impact of personality type on the perception of inequity, the amount and type of conflict experienced and the behavioral strategy used for the management of conflict amongst the college students of a communication course. There were insignificant differences between the personality type and the conflict management styles of the sample.

Earnest (1992) conducted a descriptive co-relational study to find out the correlation between the conflict management styles and the personality type of the Directors and District Directors of a cooperative extension services. Results indicate that the directors and district directors preferred to use integrating conflict management style and majority of them were of thinking/judging personality style. Associations between conflict management styles and personality types indicated that those who were intuitive were more apt to use the integrating styles while those who favored sensing preferred to use the avoiding or compromising style. Administrators who chose the judging preference were more apt to avoid conflict situations. Gender and age did not have an effect on the preference of conflict management styles.
Earnest and McCaslin (1994) conducted a descriptive correlational research on 68 Extension District Directors within the Cooperative Extension’s North Central Region and found out that most extension district directors preferred the integrating style of conflict management and that relationships appeared between personality style and conflict management style. It was found that the District directors who preferred the intuitive, introvert, and perceiving personality types were more likely to use the integrating style of conflict management as compared to the District directors who preferred the sensing, extravert, and judging personality types. The thinking/feeling personality type did not have an effect on the preference of conflict management styles.

Garcia (1995) investigated program managers’ personality dimensions relative to their interpersonal conflict-handling orientation. Significant correlations were exhibited between program managers’ personality dimensions and conflict handling modes. The study indicated that individuals scoring high on feeling tend to handle conflict using compromising and accommodating styles whereas those high on the thinking end of the continuum more often chose to use the competing style of handling conflict. In addition, significant negative relationships existed among individuals with regard to feelings and preferences for assertiveness and distributiveness. Further, a positive relation was shown between feeling and cooperation.

Marion (1995) examined the relationship between personality type and conflict management style of senior administrators in community colleges. He found out that a relationship clearly exists between the personality and conflict management, with those scoring high on feeling tending to be less assertive, than those with strong sensing perceptions tending towards avoidance, and intuitive showing less avoiding and more assertive conflict behaviors. Females displayed marked differences from male counterparts in both personality and conflict mode instruments.

Antonioni (1998) examined the relationship between the Big Five personality factors (extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness and neuroticism) and five styles of handling interpersonal conflict (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising) amongst students. The results signified that conscientiousness, extraversion, openness, and agreeableness factors of personality have a significant positive correlation with integrating conflict management style.
Extraversion factor of personality has a positive correlation with dominating style, whereas agreeableness and neuroticism factors have an inverse correlation with dominating style of managing conflict. Further, openness, extraversion, and conscientiousness have a significant inverse correlation with avoiding style, whereas agreeableness and neuroticism factors have a positive correlation with avoiding style of conflict management.

Hodges (2000) assessed respondents’ personality type, preferred conflict resolution style, and team orientation to determine whether significant relationships exist among the variables. Results indicate significant differences in mean scores of team orientation among respondents with the same personality type, preferred interpersonal conflict resolution styles, or demographics. Personality affects behaviours in conflicts since neuroticism is correlated to avoidance conflict management style, and openness, extraversion, and conscientiousness are associated with compromise, collaboration, and accommodation conflict management styles.

Moberg (2001) worked on the relation of individual differences in one’s personality to one’s preferences for approaching and managing conflict in work settings. The study, conducted on managers and supervisors from public, government, and private sector organizations found that preferences for conflict strategies were found to relate to distinct patterns of personality dimensions.

Smith (2003) found out the relationship of personality profile and conflict management style of 1,532 pastors in East Texas. The findings of the study reveal that there is a relationship between pastors' personalities and their conflict management styles. Pastors who have dominance in personality tend to have a persuading conflict management style; pastors who are influencing in personality tend to exhibit a collaborating conflict management style; pastors who have steadiness in their personality tend toward a collaborating style of conflict management and lastly, those pastors who have compliance in personality tend to have a persuading conflict management style.

Landa-Gonzalez (2005) established the relationship between personality type and context independent conflict resolution behaviors of occupational therapy graduate students. Significant relationships were found between the feeling-thinking
and sensing-intuition personality types with the conflict resolution behaviors. Moreover, the demographic characteristics including gender, age, GPA and academic background also had an effect on conflict resolution behavior of the students.

Whitworth (2005) studied the relationship between personality factors and preferred conflict handling styles of female registered nurses. Results indicated that no relationship exists between the personality factors of female registered nurses and their preferred mode of dealing with conflict.

Barbuto Jr., Phipps and Xu (2010) conducted a study to find the direct and mediating effects of three variables, i.e. personality, conflict management styles and leader effectiveness. It was found that the integrating style of conflict management fully mediates the relation between neuroticism and leadership effectiveness. Further, the integrating conflict management style partially mediates the relation between conscientiousness and leadership effectiveness.

Ahmed, Nawaz, Shaukat and Usman (2010) conducted a study on 300 students and examined the relationship between traits of personality and the favored conflict handling style. The study included two traits of personality, i.e. extraversion and openness to experience as well as just two styles of conflict handling, i.e. avoiding and competing. Findings suggested a significant relationship between the personality type and the favored conflict handling style of the individuals.

The research studies related to conflict management styles and personality types conducted so far do not show consistency in the findings. More research needs to be conducted to see whether there is any relationship between conflict management styles and personality types.

### 3.4 Conflict Management Styles, Emotional Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence

Conflict resolution behaviour has been found to depend solely on certain individual competencies and skills. Among these are emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, creativity and self efficacy (Ekubo, 2008). van der Walt, Plessis and Barker (2006) have explored the role played by intellectual intelligence, measured in terms of IQ, adaptive capacity of emotional intelligence (EQ) and the intentional and significance-seeking capability of spiritual intelligence (SQ) in bridging the
differences between management and employees and concluded that a spiritual intelligence model of organizational communication can instrumental in bridging these differences.

Animasahun (2008) investigated the possible predictive estimates of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, self-efficacy and creativity skills on conflict resolution behaviour among the National Union of Road Transport Workers in the South-Western Nigeria. Results indicated a positive relationship among the variables and the four independent variables when taken together were significantly effective in predicting conflict resolution behaviour. Also, emotional intelligence made the highest contribution in predicting conflict resolution behaviour followed by spiritual intelligence, creativity and self-efficacy.

The research studies related to conflict management styles, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence indicate that not much research has been done taking conflict management styles, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence together. There is a dearth of research studies pertaining to conflict management styles, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence and hence a dire need of research is there to substantiate the effects of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence on conflict management styles.

3.5 Conflict Management Styles, Emotional Intelligence and Personality

It has been found by researchers that individuals having high emotional quotient tend to be more self-assured, creative, positive, flexible and more contented. Normally, as compared to their counterparts with low emotional quotient, the individuals with high emotional quotient are more successful at problem solving, cope with stress in a better way, have higher self admiration, fewer behavioural troubles, and better handling of their own emotions (Abraham, 1999; Hein, 1996). Even in highly stressful situations, it aids to find solutions to problems in a flexible and resourceful way. This, in turn, decreases the incidence of conflict. There is a need to recognize the determinants of the relation between emotional intelligence and conflict management strategy so that it is possible to identify the important factors which decide the preference of a suitable conflict management strategy (Leung, 2010).

Godse and Thingujam (2010) studied the relationship of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution styles in addition to personality. The study was conducted on 81 information technology experts who were working as software
professionals, engineers, consultants or specialists in software support and maintenance. Results indicated that on the whole, there was a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and integrating conflict resolution style. Also, taken as a whole, emotional intelligence and emotional control had a negative and significant relation with avoiding conflict resolution style. Lastly, the correlation between emotional intelligence and styles of conflict resolution was found to be significant in addition to personality.

Chan, Sit and Lau (2014) examined the conflict management styles of undergraduate nursing students. The study also examined the relation of emotional intelligence and implied theories of personality with the conflict management styles of students. There was a significant association of emotional intelligence with all the five styles of conflict management. Also, emotional intelligence was found to be a significant in predicting all the five styles of conflict management. The students scoring high on emotional intelligence used more of integrating, obliging, compromising and dominating conflict management styles. The students with lower emotional intelligence were liable to use more of avoiding conflict management style. A significant association was found between implicit theories of personality and only the compromising conflict management style.

Only two studies could be traced which shows the effect of both these independent variables, i.e. emotional intelligence and personality on the conflict management style of an individual in a single study.

3.6 Gender Differences

3.6.1 Gender differences in conflict management styles

There are several studies showing the effect of gender differences in the use of conflict management style (Holt and DeVore, 2005). Although, now there have been various researches testing for gender differences in organizational set-ups, there have been contradictory results for the same (Holt and DeVore, 2005; Putnam and Poole, 1987).

Rubin and Brown (1975) have found that women are more inclined towards cooperative orientation in resolving conflict than men; and that men tend to be more competitive in resolving conflicts than women.
Baxter and Shepard (1978) studied the sex role differences in terms of interpersonal conflict and found out that feminine persons disapprove of competition more than persons of masculine and androgynous identification.

Shockley-Zalabak (1981) found out that similar men and women managers do not appear to be different in the self reports on the use of their favored conflict management style.

Rahim (1983b) found that men are reportedly more obliging or accommodating as compared to women; and that women are reportedly more integrating or collaborative as well as avoiding as compared to men.

According to Chanin and Schneer (1984), men are more collaborative than women and men and women do not differ in the use of accommodation or avoidance conflict management style.

Rossi and Todd-Mancillas (1984) compared male and female managers’ preferences for using communication-based as opposed to power centered strategies for resolving employer-employee conflicts. The respondents were subjected to four different personal problems, results indicated no significant difference between males and females in one problem but differences did emerge in the other three situations with males reporting greater tendencies to rely on power and females reporting greater tendencies to use communication as a means of resolving conflict.

Cynthia and Claire (1985) conducted a research study on students from a preliminary interpersonal communication course at a large Midwestern State University. The sample comprised of 71 male and 76 female students. Results indicated that male and female students are different in the use of their conflict management styles.

Berryman-Fink and Brunner (1985) studied the gender differences with respect to interpersonal conflict management styles and found out that males were more likely than females to use a competing style, while females were more likely than males to use a compromising style. Also, subjects of both sex appeared more liable in using the accommodating conflict management style when dealing a conflict with the female subject.
Powell (1988) conducted a study on women and men in management and reported that gender disparities in the use of conflict management styles are more often prevalent amongst non-managerial samples than the managerial samples.

Rosenthal and Hautaluoma (1988) found out that women preferred accommodation and compromise as conflict management strategies rather than domination and competition in comparison to men.

Gayle and others (1991) examined sex-related differences in use of conflict management styles and found out that men were somewhat more competitive and women were somewhat more compromising, but no differences were observed in the selection of avoiding, accommodating and collaborating strategies.

Monroe, DiSalvo, Lewis, and Borzi (1991) conducted a research on the interactive effects of gender in conflict behaviors of difficult subordinates. They found that with female supervisor, male subordinates used relational leverage (confrontation) conflict management style more often. Further, while dealing with male supervisors, the female subordinates used avoidance conflict management style more often.

Korabik, Baril and Watson (1993) have reported that there are no differences in the self-reports on conflict management styles of male and female subjects with managerial experience and subjects having supervisory roles. They further found out that women were rated as being less effectual than men by their subordinates in using the dominating conflict management style. Further, men were rated as being less effectual than women by their subordinates while using the obliging conflict management style.

A research carried out by Sorenson, Hawkins and Sorenson (1995) revealed that gender was influenced by only one of the five conflict management choices. Male respondents scored higher on the obliging conflict management style than the female respondents.

Collins (2001) explored the development of conflict management research with respect to managers and their subordinates and factors affecting conflict management. Gender demonstrated a significant role in differences between subordinates’ behaviour in conflict. Organizational level (intrapersonal, intragroup
and intergroup), decision making processes and a conglomeration of conflict variables contributed to the way conflict is experienced and managed in workplace.

Brewer, Mitchell and Weber (2002) conducted a research to find the relationship between biological sex, role of gender, organizational status and conflict management behaviour of males and females in three related organizations. The individuals were controlled for biological sex and compared with other gender roles; the males rated utmost on the avoiding conflict management style, the androgynous individuals rated highest on the integrating style. As regards the organizational status, the individuals of upper organizational status rated higher on the integrating style, whereas the individuals with lower status reported more use of avoiding and obliging conflict management styles.

Rashid (2002) found out no relationship between gender and conflict management style used by members of the Council of Student Organizational Presidents.

Holt and DeVore (2005) carried out a meta-analytical research work on 36 studies of organization members. They found that males residing in individualistic cultures, including US reportedly used competing conflict management style higher, while females reportedly used higher level of compromise conflict management style.

Coffindaffer, Kavookjian, Scott and Bhanegaonkar (2006) examined the conflict management styles of pharmacy students and their relation to student characteristics including the gender and communication apprehension; and their association with student outcomes, i.e. overall course grade and patient counseling exercise grade. The results indicated that compromising conflict management style was the most prevalent; followed by avoiding, accommodating, collaborating and competing. Males probably used competing style significantly; while the females rated higher in the use of compromising style.

Baley (2007) investigated the relation between various organizational commitment levels of teachers, including compliance, identification, internalization and the various conflict management strategies used by them, including compromising, forcing, problem solving, avoiding and yielding. The questionnaire survey was administered to 418 teachers. The results of the study found that male teachers are more liable to use avoiding mode in solving conflicts as compared to
their female counterparts. With an augmentation in age, the teachers are more apt to use the problem solving conflict management strategies as compared to the younger ones. It was also found that both identification and internalization are significantly determine the use of two conflict management strategies, i.e. compromising and problem-solving.

Copley (2008) attempted to find the difference in conflict management style between male and female supervisors and found that the choice of conflict management styles is independent of the sex of the leader.

Thomas, Thomas and Schaubhut (2008) found out the conflict resolution styles of men and women at six levels of organization. Results indicated moderate effects for both level of organization as well as gender; slight interaction effects were found. There is a monotonous increase in the use of assertiveness styles including competing and collaborating with progression in organization levels; whereas there is a decrease in the use of unassertive styles including avoiding and accommodating. There is a curvilinear relationship of compromising conflict management style with the organization level, as it decreases at both the highest and lowest organizational levels. The strongest finding was that at all the six levels of organization, men attained significantly higher scores on competing style.

Nina and Sanja (2009) investigated the correlation of individual characteristics with conflict handling styles in employees of Croatian enterprises. They found that gender, marital status and parenthood were related significantly with the accommodating conflict handling style of respondents. Further, parenthood related significantly with the use of avoiding conflict handling style of the respondents. Finally, gender and parenthood related significantly with compromising conflict handling style.

Shweta and Jain (2010) conducted a study on aspiring Indian managers and attempted to explore the relationship between their gender and conflict resolution styles. Results of differential analysis revealed that irrespective of the gender, the preferred style followed by aspiring Indian managers was the accommodating conflict resolution style, followed by avoiding conflict resolution style,. Moreover, a significant difference was found in the use of competing conflict resolution style in both the male and female respondents. Further, male respondents were found to be more competing than females.
McIntyre (2013) conducted a descriptive quantitative study to determine the preferred conflict management styles as perceived by veteran, baby boomer, Generation X, and millennial generational law enforcement personnel. An additional objective was to determine if significant differences existed based on gender, years of experience, and educational level. The study supported the argument that there were differences in conflict management preferences with regard to gender.

The review of research indicates that there are gender differences in the use of conflict management styles. However, there are a few research studies which indicate that the gender of an individual has no role to play in the choice of their conflict management style.

In general, the results of empirical literature show that there is reasonable consistency in the conformity that whenever gender differences in the use of conflict style are found, men tend to involve in higher use of competing conflict management style (Holt and DeVore, 2005). The findings on the preferred style of women are more varied. Women tend to prefer compromising style (Holt and DeVore, 2005), or may use accommodation (Sone, 1981), or further might use the avoiding conflict management style (Cardona, 1995).

3.6.2 Gender differences in emotional intelligence

There are various studies whose findings have revealed that females are higher in emotional intelligence as compared to the males (King, 1999; Singh, 2002; Sutarso, 1999 and Wing & Love, 2001).

Petrides and Furnham (2000) conducted a research on 260 White participants to find gender differences in emotional intelligence as measured on the scale and self-estimated reports. The scores of females were higher than the males as regards the “social skills” factor of measured emotional intelligence. However, when the combined single reliable scale of the 15 aspects of self-estimated emotional intelligence was considered keeping the participants’ measured trait of emotional intelligence as constant, it was established that males believed to have higher emotional intelligence in comparison to the females. The correlation coefficients worked between the measured and self-estimated scores were normally higher for male participants as compared to their female counterparts. The results of regression analysis indicated that gender significantly predicted self-estimated emotional intelligence.
Ciarrochi, Chan and Bajgar (2001) measured emotional intelligence among 131 adolescents. It was found that adolescents’ emotional intelligence measured was higher in females as compared to the males. Further, emotional intelligence was positively related to various skills including skill to identify emotional expressions, extent of satisfaction with social support, quantum of social support, and mood management behaviour.

The findings of a study by Chu (2002) indicated that the level of emotional intelligence is higher for males as compared to the females. The apparent explanation for this research finding could be the fact that basically emotional intelligence deals with the management and expression of one’s emotions in addition to social skills.

Mandell and Pherwani (2003) examined gender differences in the emotional intelligence of managers. Statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) was reported with regard to emotional intelligence scores of male and female managers.

A study conducted by Mohanasundaram (2004) on emotional intelligence and achievement of primary level teacher trainees at Government College of Education, Thanjavur. The results revealed that there were insignificant differences in men and women teacher trainees with regard to their emotional intelligence.

The emotional intelligence of secondary teachers employed at D.Ed. College, Navapur, Maharashtra was assessed by Young (2004). The study attempted to explore the emotional intelligence level of secondary school teachers in relation to age and gender. The findings revealed that almost all the teachers under consideration were placed in the ‘low’ category of emotional intelligence. Further, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence of males and females.

Henderson (2006) conducted a study on emotional intelligence and conflict management style on college students and participants from organizational settings and found insignificant differences between the emotional intelligence scores for males and females.

Kaneez (2006) reported significant difference between men and women on several sub-scales of emotional intelligence including independence, assertiveness, stress tolerance and impulse control. The findings show that men score higher on assertiveness, show more self recognition about them, are more independent and show
greater management in accordance to the situations as compared to the women. The common observation in men is independence impulsive assertiveness.

Shah (2006) conducted a study on the upper primary students of Gujarat State to assess their emotional intelligence in relation to several variables. The major objectives of the study were to construct and standardize an emotional intelligence scale for upper primary school students of Gujarat State and to study the relationship of emotional quotient with sex, area, socio-economic status and IQ. No significant difference was found in the mean emotional intelligence scores as regards gender, socio-economic status, area, and intelligence.

Liang (2007) assessed the college and university faculty in Taiwan to find the relation between their emotional intelligence and personality type. Results revealed a significant relationship between faculty’s personality type and emotional intelligence skills and their age and emotional intelligence skills; but insignificant correlation was found between gender and emotional intelligence skills.

Ahmad, Bangash and Khan (2009) conducted a research study to investigate emotional intelligence among 160 males and females. The results revealed that males are higher in emotional intelligence as compared to females.

Gupta (2012) investigated the relationship of spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence with self-efficacy and self-regulation among college students. A significant difference was found between male and female college students in terms of emotional intelligence and all its dimensions, i.e. empathy, managing emotions, self-awareness, motivating oneself and handling relationships.

The researches reviewed above show that there are mixed results with regard to gender differences in emotional intelligence. Though some researchers have reported that males and females differ in their emotional intelligence abilities, there are others who have found out that there are no differences among them in emotional intelligence.

3.6.3 Gender differences in spiritual intelligence

Sreeja (2005) conducted a study on spirituality, emotional maturity, and quality of life among 42 male and 58 female university students. The results show that girls and boys differ significantly in spirituality; but not in emotional maturity and quality of life.
Gupta (2012) in her research on relationship of spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence with self-efficacy and self-regulation among college students found that there was insignificant difference among male and female college students with regard to spiritual intelligence and its dimensions except childhood spirituality.

Khadivi, Adib and Farhanghpour (2012) investigated the relationship of spiritual intelligence and self-esteem with students’ educational improvement. 357 third grade high-school students of Tabriz were selected. The study showed that the spiritual intelligence of boys and girls is the same.

Khoshtinat (2012) conducted a research on 400 students studying in the second semester of Ardabil Payame Noor University to find out the relationship between spiritual intelligence and religious (spiritual) coping. The analysis showed that there are significant differences among male and female students in spiritual Intelligence and its components including critical existential thinking; personal meaning production, interpretation, transcendental awareness and consciousness state expansion. Further, the female students scored significantly higher than male students in spiritual intelligence and all its components.

Smartt (2012) studied the relationship of spiritual intelligence with achievement of secondary students. The spiritual intelligence was measured on the SISRI-24. An inverse relationship between conscious state expansion and gender was noted. The males predicted lower scores on CSE than the females.

No more study could be traced out to show the differences among males and females in their spiritual intelligence abilities.

3.6.4 Gender differences in personality

Feingold (1994) examined gender differences in personality. It was found that males were more assertive and possessed somewhat higher self-esteem as compared to the females. With respect to the personality components of anxiety, extraversion, trust, and, tender-mindedness (or nurturance) in particular, females were higher than males. No remarkable sex differences were found in impulsiveness, social anxiety, activity, ideas (e.g., reflectiveness), orderliness, and locus of control. These differences among males and females in traits of personality were generally steady across ages, academic levels, years of data collection, and countries.
In a study by Costa Jr., Terracciano and McCrae (2001) on 26 cultures, self-reports of women reported them to be higher in agreeableness, neuroticism, warmth and openness to feelings while men reported themselves to be higher on assertiveness and openness to ideas. In contradiction the evolutionary theory predictions, the enormity of differences in gender were variable across different cultures. Also, in contradiction to calculations from the social role model, differences in gender were most prominent in European and American cultures where traditional sex roles are minimal.

Semykina and Linz (2007) conducted a research on 2600 Russian employees to evaluate the impact of locus of control and challenge-affiliation on earnings of two personality traits. It was found that there are significant gender differences with regard to personality traits. Men were found to be more liable to exhibit an internal locus of control and need for challenge, while women were found to be more liable to exhibit an external locus of control and need for affiliation.

Weisberg, DeYoung and Hirsh (2011) investigated gender differences in personality traits. The findings reveal that women have higher extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism scores than men.

The preference of conflict management strategy of an individual is influenced by certain features associated with human and inborn structural variables as well as the multifarious relationships between the determinants of the conflict. The conflict is induced by factors like emotional facets of a situation and the approach of stress management, which affect the choice of conflict management strategy alongwith the manner in which the strategy is employed (Leung, 2010). Hence the understanding of conflict formation and management of conflict can help in preventing conflicts. The classification of the determinants of conflict management can further demonstrate the importance of these determinants in effective management of conflicts.

An analysis of the review of studies related to the present research clearly indicates that many researches have been conducted on conflict management styles and emotional intelligence. Results of many studies reveal that there is significant positive relationship between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence. On the other hand, some researchers have found significant negative relationship between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence. Further, as regards
the relationship between these two variables, there are studies which have shown mixed results, i.e. both positive as well as negative significant correlations between different dimensions of conflict management styles and emotional intelligence while the results of some researches show significant differences between conflict management styles and emotional intelligence. Significant interactional effects between these two variables have been found. The results of regression analysis show non-significant as well as mixed results for conflict management styles and emotional intelligence.

The review of literature also shows that almost negligible work has been done on conflict management styles and spiritual intelligence. Only two studies could be traced out which relate conflict management styles to spiritual intelligence. No direct study could be traced out to show the relation between the variables of conflict management styles and spiritual intelligence. Further, the review of researches on conflict management styles and personality reveals that there are inconsistent results with regard to the relationship between these two variables.

Almost negligible work has been done on conflict management styles in relation to emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence, conflict management styles in relation to emotional intelligence and personality, conflict management styles in relation to spiritual intelligence and personality. In addition, to the best knowledge of the researcher, no single study could be traced showing the conjoint effect of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and personality types on conflict management styles. Hence, the investigator felt inspired to study the conflict management styles of undergraduates in relation to their emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence and personality types.