

Intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour: the role of coping strategies in multicultural workplaces

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to examine the effect of intercultural stressors – stemming from racial discrimination, language barriers and cultural value conflicts – on team innovative behaviours in multicultural workplaces. It also explores the way the employees cope with these intercultural stressors to enhance their innovation behaviours.

Design/methodology/approach – Quantitative methodology was deemed to be suitable based on the deductive nature of the study. Structural equation modelling was conducted on data collected from 540 randomly selected participants from different European countries through an online questionnaire. These participants primarily work in multicultural teams in construction industry, providing a diverse sample for analysis.

Findings – The results revealed a significant negative relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour, confirming the direct effect of stressors on team outcomes. However, problem-focused coping did not mediate this relationship, as there was no significant association between stressors and problem-focused coping, nor between problem-focused coping and innovation. On the other hand, emotion- and relation-focused coping strategies were found to play the role of a mediator, helping teams overcome the negative effects of intercultural stressors.

Practical implications – Organizations can enhance team innovation by highlighting the importance for the employees of being culturally knowledgeable and sensitive, in addition to promoting emotion- and relation-focused coping strategies among employees to manage intercultural stressors. Practical steps include fostering open communication about cultural challenges and creating supportive environments that emphasize relationship-building and emotional support among team members, as well as providing cultural sensitivity training to employees.

Originality/value – This study adds to the limited literature on how intercultural stressors influence innovation in diverse teams, highlighting the critical role of coping strategies. The findings offer empirical support for the importance of emotion- and relation-focused coping, particularly in multicultural settings, and extend the discussion on how teams can maintain innovation amidst cultural challenges.

Keywords Intercultural stressors, Team innovative behaviour, Problem-focused coping strategy, Emotion-focused coping strategy, Relation-focused coping strategy

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

The increasing globalization of industries has led to the formation of multicultural workplaces, where employees from diverse cultural backgrounds collaborate on team-based tasks. While diversity in teams is often associated with increased creativity and innovation, it also introduces challenges, particularly when cultural differences result in misunderstandings, conflict and



stress. Also, the more are these individuals' cultural differences at the workplace, the more it will be harder to innovate (Giorgi *et al.*, 2020).

Intercultural stressors refer to the psychological and emotional strain that arises from interacting with individuals of different cultural backgrounds, resulting in stress, anxiety and discomfort (Berry, 2006). These stressors can emerge from racial discrimination, where minority employees may feel excluded or marginalized; language barriers, which hinder effective communication; and cultural value conflicts, where differing beliefs, values and work styles create friction (Liu *et al.*, 2023a, 2023b). These stressors can have a profound impact on team dynamics, potentially stifling collaboration, creativity and, ultimately, innovation. Team innovation, defined as the collective ability to develop novel and useful ideas, is crucial for organizations aiming to remain competitive in today's fast-paced global markets (Amabile, 1996). Whereas team innovative behaviour refers to the generation, promotion and realization of new ideas within a team to improve processes, products or services (West and Farr, 1990). In increasingly multicultural workplaces, sustaining team innovative behaviour has become a significant challenge (Wang *et al.*, 2023). Team innovation is critical for maintaining competitive advantage, yet it is often undermined by intercultural stressors that disrupt communication, trust and collaboration (Leifels and Zhang, 2023). Understanding how to protect and enhance innovative behaviour in diverse teams is therefore essential for organizational success. Therefore, realizing how intercultural stressors impact team innovative behaviour is critical in understanding the team innovativeness, specifically in dynamic industries where innovation drives competitive advantage, such as construction (Oladinrin *et al.*, 2023).

Despite the existence of a common understanding of the challenges introduced by diversity, there is still an inadequate understanding of how intercultural stressors affect a team's innovation (Liu *et al.*, 2023a, 2023b; Leifels and Zhang, 2023; Wang *et al.*, 2023). Most of the previous research on workplace stress have concentrated on individual outcomes such as job satisfaction, mental health and productivity (Pieterse *et al.*, 2013), with limited focus on team dynamics in diverse contexts. Also, research investigating the relation between intercultural stress and team outcomes has largely focused on team performance or cohesion, with team innovative behaviour being an underexplored phenomenon (Stahl *et al.*, 2010). A recent trend of studies that focus on intercultural stress potential influence on team creativity and innovation is currently emerging in literature. For example, Afsar *et al.* (2021) emphasized the importance of cultural intelligence in enhancing innovative work behaviour, which is mediated by various variables such as job engagement and interpersonal trust. This is a clear highlight of the importance of intercultural dynamics on creativity, although more empirical research is required to fully understand the mechanisms. Additionally, Hülshöger *et al.* (2009) found that, although diversity might inspire creativity, the existence of stressors such as cultural conflicts may either limit or boost team innovation, based on how they are coped with the stressors. This highlights the concept that intercultural stress may be a hindrance or a booster for creativity, depending on team dynamics and coping techniques.

Teams have assumed an increasingly essential role in nurturing innovation due to their ability to combine diverse skills, experiences and perspectives (West, 2002). However, the process of team innovation presents significant challenges, often requiring teams to deal with conflicts, coordinate efforts and integrate various perspectives into cohesive solutions (Anderson *et al.*, 2014). This complexity is further amplified in teams with a multicultural nature, where intercultural conflicts may obstruct collaboration and smother creativity (Afsar *et al.*, 2021). Thus, this study aims to provide insights on this gap in literature by examining how intercultural stressors influence a team's innovative behaviour.

Examining the mediating role of coping strategies in the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovation is another original contribution the study tries to investigate. Coping strategies refer to the cognitive and behavioural efforts used by individuals or teams to handle stressors that they perceive as challenging or overwhelming (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). These strategies have been presented in different classifications and terminologies. Among the most studied and common collective coping strategies are: problem-focused strategy, which involves actively tackling the source of stress; emotion-focused strategy, which aims to adjust the emotional response to stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). This multi-level strategy differs significantly from previous research, which frequently focuses on individual coping strategies or team performance results in isolation (Liu *et al.*, 2023a, 2023b). The importance of coping strategies stems from their critical role in team dynamics because coping strategies assist teams in overcoming stressors such as cultural conflicts, communication challenges and performance expectations, which ultimately impact outcomes such as team creativity and performance (Chan *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, this study broadens the conceptual framework of collective coping strategies by including relation-focused coping, a relatively new field of study in the team dynamics literature. Relation-focused coping concentrates on maintaining and improving social relationships to lessen the effects of stress (Badi, 2024). The study aims to gain fresh insights, with this new coping strategy inclusion, into how team cohesiveness and interpersonal relationships might reduce the negative effects of stresses generated by cultural differences within the team on team's innovativeness. In multicultural workplaces, it will be even more crucial, where the capacity to overcome cultural differences is a critical factor in team performance (Chun *et al.*, 2006). Hence, the following research questions were formulated:

- RQ1. How do intercultural stressors affect team innovative behaviour in multicultural work environments?
- RQ2. Do coping strategies mediate the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour, and in what ways?

To anchor the study, we adopted two complementary theoretical frameworks. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional theory of stress and coping provides a dynamic perspective on how individuals and teams appraise and manage intercultural stressors, emphasizing the role of coping mechanisms. In parallel, the input–process–output (IPO) model (Ilgen *et al.*, 2005) offers a structured understanding of how external inputs, such as intercultural stressors, affect team outputs like innovation through internal processes, particularly coping strategies. Together, these frameworks offer a comprehensive lens to examine the complex relationship between stress and team innovative behaviour. Theoretically, this study contributes to the limited understanding of multicultural team innovation by highlighting the mediating role of collective coping strategies. Practically, the findings offer organizations actionable insights on fostering innovation by promoting emotion- and relation-focused coping strategies to help teams better manage cultural challenges.

To sum it up, this study advances theory by examining coping strategies as mediators between intercultural stressors and team innovation, addressing a critical gap in multicultural team research. Practically, it highlights how organizations can enhance innovation by promoting emotion- and relation-focused coping strategies to better manage cultural challenges in diverse teams.

2. Literature review

2.1 Team's intercultural stressors

Intercultural stressors, such as racial discrimination, language barriers and cultural value conflicts, are becoming increasingly significant in multicultural workplaces

(Liu *et al.*, 2023a, 2023b). These stressors refer to the psychological challenges and tensions that arise from interactions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Berry, 2006). At the team level, these stressors can disrupt communication, erode trust and foster conflict (Stahl *et al.*, 2010).

In multicultural teams, racial discrimination may manifest as implicit biases or exclusionary behaviours, creating a toxic environment where marginalized team members feel undervalued (Cox and Blake, 1991). This sense of alienation can prevent team members from fully engaging in collaborative efforts (Pieterse *et al.*, 2013). Language barriers, another key intercultural stressor, hinder the team's ability to communicate effectively, often resulting in misunderstandings, inefficiencies and frustration (Lauring and Selmer, 2012). In high-stakes, team-based environments, poor communication can derail the team's ability to develop new ideas or problem-solve effectively, both of which are essential to team innovation (Hülshager *et al.*, 2009). Cultural value conflicts, meanwhile, occur when team members have divergent expectations regarding work norms, decision-making processes or communication styles. These conflicts can generate friction and reduce the team's cohesion and trust (Berry, 2006).

While individual-level research on intercultural stressors has been extensive, studies at the team level are limited. The few existing studies tend to focus on team performance or cohesion rather than innovation. For instance, Stahl *et al.* (2010) found that while diverse teams often face more conflict, they also have the potential for greater creativity if they can successfully manage these intercultural stressors. However, little attention has been given to how intercultural stressors affect team innovation specifically, which is the focus of this study.

2.2 Team innovative behaviour

Team innovative behaviour refers to the collective efforts of team members to generate, promote and implement new and useful ideas (Anderson *et al.*, 2014). It is widely acknowledged as a key driver of organizational success, particularly in knowledge-intensive industries such as construction, technology and manufacturing (Amabile, 1996). However, team innovation is highly dependent on the team's ability to collaborate, share knowledge and navigate interpersonal challenges (Paulus *et al.*, 2018). Teams that can effectively manage diversity and leverage the unique perspectives of their members are often more innovative than homogenous teams (Hülshager *et al.*, 2009).

Multicultural teams, by nature, have access to a broader range of perspectives, experiences and problem-solving approaches, which can foster team innovation (Cox and Blake, 1991). However, the potential benefits of diversity can be undermined by intercultural stressors if teams are not equipped to manage these challenges effectively (Pieterse *et al.*, 2013). Intercultural stressors, such as language barriers and cultural value conflicts, can inhibit the free exchange of ideas, reduce psychological safety and foster divisions within the team (Edmondson, 1999). Intercultural stressors inhibit team innovative behaviour through several interrelated mechanisms. Drawing from the IPO model (Ilgen *et al.*, 2005), stressors act as negative inputs that disrupt critical team processes such as knowledge sharing, perspective taking and psychological safety, all of which are essential precursors to innovation (Edmondson, 1999). Specifically, racial discrimination undermines the trust required for open idea exchange, while language barriers impair the nuanced communication necessary for creative problem-solving (Lauring and Selmer, 2012). Cultural value conflicts create cognitive misalignments that hinder the integration of diverse perspectives into cohesive solutions. From a transactional stress theory lens (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984), intercultural stressors elevate perceived environmental demands beyond coping resources, leading to emotional exhaustion and withdrawal behaviours that directly impede innovative

engagement. Thus, the relationship between intercultural stressors and innovation is not merely direct but is also conditioned by the team's cognitive, emotional and relational capacities to manage these stressors.

As such, it is critical to explore not only the direct impact of intercultural stressors on team innovative behaviour but also the mechanisms through which teams can mitigate these negative effects.

2.3 Collective coping strategies

Coping strategies are the cognitive and behavioural efforts used to manage stressors. At the team level, coping is a collective process where team members work together to manage stress and maintain productivity (Badi, 2024). Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional theory of stress and coping posits that coping strategies can either alleviate or exacerbate the negative effects of stressors, depending on how effectively they are implemented. In this study, three types of coping strategies are examined: problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping and relation-focused coping.

Problem-focused coping involves actively addressing the source of stress, such as resolving conflicts, improving communication or altering the team's working environment (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). At the team level, this might involve structured problem-solving processes, conflict resolution mechanisms or task reallocation. Problem-focused coping is typically considered one of the most effective strategies for managing workplace stress, as it targets the root cause of the issue (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). However, recent studies have questioned its effectiveness in the context of multicultural teams, where deep-seated cultural differences may be less amenable to direct problem-solving (Stahl *et al.*, 2010).

Emotion-focused coping aims to manage the emotional response to stress, rather than addressing the source of the stress itself (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). In team settings, this may involve emotional regulation strategies, such as encouraging team members to express their frustrations in a constructive manner and fostering a supportive environment where team members can seek emotional support from one another. While emotion-focused coping can be effective in reducing emotional tension, it may also detract from the team's ability to address the underlying issues, which could undermine innovation if overused (Edmondson, 1999).

Relation-focused coping is a relatively new area of study in the field of team dynamics. This strategy emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationships and social support within the team as a buffer against stress (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). In multicultural teams, relation-focused coping may involve efforts to build trust, promote cultural understanding and improve communication between team members. By strengthening interpersonal bonds and fostering a cohesive team environment, relation-focused coping may help teams mitigate the negative effects of intercultural stressors and enhance innovation.

While there is evidence that coping strategies can play intermediary roles in the relationship between stress and team outcomes, few studies have explored this in the context of intercultural stressors and team innovation. Chan *et al.* (2014) noted that coping strategies, particularly emotion-focused and relation-focused coping, played a critical role in helping teams navigate stressful environments, but empirical evidence on their effectiveness in multicultural teams remains limited.

3. Conceptual framework and hypotheses development

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional theory of stress and coping, which views stress as a dynamic process involving

the interaction between individuals (or teams) and their environment. Stress occurs when the demands of the environment exceed an individual's or a team's resources. In this framework, intercultural stressors such as racial discrimination, language barriers and cultural value conflicts are seen as external demands that can hinder team innovation. The coping strategies used by teams – problem-focused, emotion-focused and relation-focused coping – are conceptualized as mediators that can either mitigate or exacerbate the negative effects of these stressors. Additionally, this study adopts the IPO model (Ilgen *et al.*, 2005), which conceptualizes teams as systems that transform inputs (such as intercultural stressors) into outputs (such as team innovative behaviour) through a series of processes (including coping strategies). The IPO model (Ilgen *et al.*, 2005) and the transactional theory of stress and coping (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of how intercultural stressors influence team innovative behaviour. The IPO model offers a structural lens by framing intercultural stressors as inputs that affect outputs (team innovative behaviour) through internal processes. The transactional theory enriches this process view by detailing how individuals and teams appraise stressors and select coping strategies, which serve as the mediating processes within the IPO framework. Thus, the transactional theory operationalizes the 'process' phase of the IPO model, explaining how teams cognitively and emotionally respond to stressors, ultimately impacting innovation outcomes.

By combining the IPO model with the transactional theory of stress and coping, this study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how intercultural stressors affect team innovative behaviour and the role of coping strategies over this relationship.

3.1 Intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour

The relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour has not been extensively studied in the literature, but there is substantial evidence suggesting that stress, in general, has a negative impact on creativity and innovation. Team innovation refers to the collective ability of team members to generate, promote and implement new ideas that can benefit the organization (Anderson *et al.*, 2014). For teams to innovate, they need a high level of collaboration, psychological safety and trust, all of which can be disrupted by intercultural stressors (Edmondson, 1999).

Intercultural stressors – such as racial discrimination, language barriers and cultural value conflicts – can significantly hinder team innovative behaviour by disrupting essential team processes. Drawing on the IPO model (Ilgen *et al.*, 2005), these stressors serve as negative inputs that impair critical processes like open communication, trust-building and psychological safety, all vital for fostering innovation (Edmondson, 1999). Given the collaborative nature of innovation, these stressors are likely to hinder a team's ability to work together effectively and create networks that are important to behave innovatively (Nasaj, 2021).

Recent empirical studies highlight this relationship. For instance, Wang *et al.* (2023) conducted a meta-analysis revealing that cultural diversity's impact on team creativity is contingent upon the team's ability to manage diversity-related challenges effectively. Similarly, Leifels and Zhang (2023) found that cultural diversity in work groups influences social resources and demands, affecting team dynamics and, consequently, innovation outcomes.

Furthermore, psychological safety plays a pivotal role in this context. A study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* demonstrated that team psychological safety positively influences employee innovative performance through enhanced communication behaviours (Li *et al.*, 2024). This finding aligns with the transactional theory of stress and coping (Lazarus and

Folkman, 1984), which posits that individuals' appraisal of stressors, and their coping mechanisms, significantly affect outcomes like innovative behaviour. Thus, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

- H1. Intercultural stressors have a negative significant relation with team innovative behaviour.

3.2 The mediating role of collective coping strategies

Intercultural stressors trigger coping mechanisms as individuals and teams appraise stressful situations and respond accordingly (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). In multicultural settings, exposure to stressors such as language barriers, discrimination and value conflicts leads team members to engage in coping strategies aimed at managing emotional reactions, resolving communication issues and building interpersonal relationships (Liu *et al.*, 2023a, 2023b). Coping strategies directly influence team innovative behaviour by shaping the emotional and relational climate within teams. Emotion-focused coping helps maintain psychological safety, while relation-focused coping strengthens trust and collaboration, both of which are critical for idea generation and knowledge sharing (Nasaj *et al.*, 2025a, 2025b). Moreover, proactive coping efforts are associated with higher levels of creative engagement and innovative performance in diverse teams (Li *et al.*, 2024).

Coping mechanisms play a pivotal role in moderating the negative impact of intercultural stressors on team innovative behaviour. Problem-focused coping seeks to directly address stressors, such as clarifying communication misunderstandings or establishing shared team norms, although its effectiveness may be limited when cultural differences are deeply rooted (Stahl *et al.*, 2010). Emotion-focused coping, by regulating team members' emotional reactions to perceived exclusion or conflict, helps maintain psychological safety and reduces emotional exhaustion (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Relation-focused coping specifically counters intercultural stressors by strengthening interpersonal bonds, fostering trust and encouraging mutual support among team members (Badi, 2024). These coping strategies allow teams to reframe intercultural challenges as manageable rather than overwhelming, thus preserving the conditions necessary for collaborative innovation.

Problem-focused coping involves actively addressing the source of stress by finding solutions or making changes to the environment (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). Recent research indicates that this coping style can enhance psychological well-being and mitigate the negative effects of stress. For instance, Cho and Choi (2024) found that problem-focused coping mediated the relationship between emotional clarity and mental health outcomes, suggesting its role in promoting adaptive functioning. Additionally, Iddrisu *et al.* (2023) demonstrated that problem-focused coping positively influences employees' sense of control and mastery, which are critical for innovative behaviour. Furthermore, Liu *et al.* (2023a, 2023b) highlighted that proactive coping strategies in multicultural teams facilitate mutual understanding and task integration, thereby supporting innovative behaviour. These findings highlight the potential of problem-focused coping to mediate the impact of intercultural stressors on team innovative behaviour.

In the context of team-level dynamics, problem-focused coping strategies may include actions such as conflict resolution, process improvement or resource reallocation (Stahl *et al.*, 2010). These strategies aim to reduce the negative impact of intercultural stressors by directly tackling the issues that cause stress.

For example, if a team is experiencing conflict due to cultural value differences, adopting a problem-focused coping strategy such as structured conflict resolution could help the team navigate these differences and restore collaboration. Similarly, if language barriers are

hindering communication, a problem-focused strategy might involve implementing translation tools or developing a common language framework for team interactions. Problem-focused coping is often regarded as one of the most effective strategies for managing stress because it targets the root cause of the problem (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

However, empirical research on the effectiveness of problem-focused coping in multicultural teams is limited. Some studies suggest that while this strategy may be effective in homogenous teams, it may be less effective in diverse teams where the stressors are deeply rooted in cultural differences (Stahl *et al.*, 2010). The complexities of intercultural stressors – particularly those related to deep-seated values – may not always lend themselves to straightforward problem-solving approaches. Thus, the ability of problem-focused coping to mediate the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour remains an open question.

Based on this discussion, the study proposes the following hypotheses to test the mediation effect:

- H2A. Intercultural stressors have a significant relation with problem-focused coping strategy.
- H2B. Problem-focused coping strategy has a significant relation with team innovative behaviour.
- H2C. Problem-focused coping mediates the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour.

While problem-focused coping directly addresses the source of stress, emotion-focused coping aims to regulate the emotional response to stress (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). At the team level, this strategy may involve efforts to manage the negative emotions that arise from intercultural stressors. For example, team members may use emotion-focused coping to manage feelings of frustration or anxiety resulting from language barriers or cultural conflicts (Edmondson, 1999). Common emotion-focused coping strategies include venting, seeking emotional support from others or reframing the situation to reduce its emotional impact (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

In diverse teams, emotion-focused coping may help team members navigate the emotional challenges associated with intercultural interactions. By managing their emotional responses, team members may be better able to maintain positive relationships and continue collaborating on innovative tasks, even in the presence of stressors. However, there is also evidence to suggest that emotion-focused coping can be counterproductive if it leads to avoidance or denial of the underlying problem (Hülshager *et al.*, 2009). If team members rely too heavily on emotion-focused coping without addressing the source of the stress, it may undermine their ability to innovate in the long term.

Despite these potential downsides, emotion-focused coping is likely to play a role in mediating the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour, particularly in high-stress environments where managing emotional responses is critical to maintaining team cohesion (Chan *et al.*, 2014). Thus, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H3A. Intercultural stressors have a significant relation with emotion-focused coping.
- H3B. Emotion-focused coping has a significant relation with team innovative behaviour.
- H3C. Emotion-focused coping mediates the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour.

Relation-focused coping is a relatively new area of study that emphasizes the role of interpersonal relationships and social support in managing stress (Badi, 2024). In the context of multicultural teams, this coping strategy involves efforts to build trust, improve communication and foster interpersonal bonds among team members. Teams that engage in relation-focused coping are likely to create a supportive environment where team members feel comfortable sharing their perspectives, even when cultural differences create stress (Liu *et al.*, 2023a, 2023b).

Given the collaborative nature of innovation, relation-focused coping may be particularly effective in mitigating the negative effects of intercultural stressors. By fostering positive interpersonal relationships, teams can reduce the likelihood of conflict and enhance their ability to collaborate on innovative tasks (Stahl *et al.*, 2010) and facilitate building the needed networks to innovate (Nasaj and Badi, 2021; Nasaj *et al.*, 2022). In diverse teams, where cultural differences can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or conflicts, relation-focused coping can help team members bridge these divides and work together more effectively.

Moreover, relation-focused coping aligns closely with the concept of psychological safety, which has been shown to be a key driver of innovation in teams (Edmondson, 1999). Teams that feel psychologically safe are more likely to take risks, share new ideas and engage in creative problem-solving. By promoting a culture of trust and support, relation-focused coping can help teams maintain the psychological safety needed to innovate, even in the presence of stress.

Therefore, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H4A. Intercultural stressors have a significant relation with relation-focused coping.

H4B. Relation-focused coping has a significant relation with team innovative behaviour.

H4C. Relation-focused coping mediates the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour.

The overall proposed conceptual framework of the study is illustrated in Figure 1.

4. Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative methodology since it is suitable for deducing the nature of relationships among the research's variables (Saunders *et al.*, 2016).

4.1 Sampling and data collection

Data collection utilized a quasi-random sampling technique through an online survey distributed to employees working in multicultural teams across various countries in Europe, including Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. A professional data collection company, Cint.com, facilitated the process. To ensure that participants were working in multicultural organizational contexts, specific instructions were provided to the data collection company. Participants were screened and selected based on the criterion that they worked in teams composed of members from at least two different national, ethnic or cultural backgrounds. Multiculturalism was assessed through diversity in nationality, language and cultural values within the teams.

This study used a single respondent sampling method, as initially proposed by Van de Ven and Ferry (1980), which has been consistently used in recent research methodologies across industries, including the work of Talat and Riaz (2020), Badi (2024) and Nasaj *et al.* (2025a, 2025b).

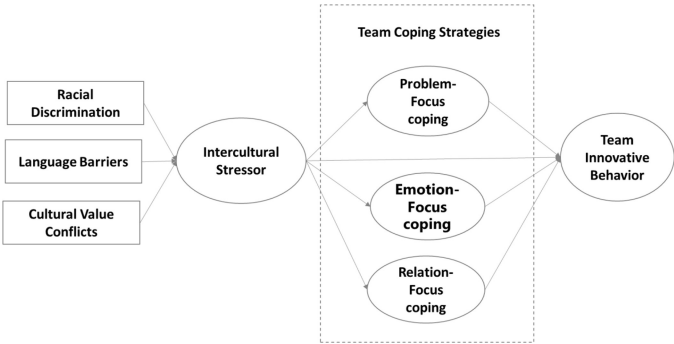


Figure 1. Conceptual framework
Source: Author’s own work

The rationale for selecting a single respondent from each organization, rather than surveying entire teams, was based on two key considerations. First, to capture diverse perspectives on intercultural stressors and their influence on team innovative behaviour across different organizations, it was more efficient to collect insights from key informants who could provide a comprehensive view of the team’s coping mechanisms. This approach helped avoid the potential homogeneity of responses that might arise from sampling multiple team members within the same organization. Second, the literature supports the efficacy of using a single respondent for studies that address complex, team-level phenomena, such as coping with intercultural stressors (Badi, 2024; Talat and Riaz, 2020). This method provided valuable insights into both team dynamics and the broader organizational context, crucial for understanding how teams manage stress and foster innovation in multicultural environments.

The survey was administered in May 2024 across several waves, with a total of 2,000 surveys distributed. Out of these, 764 responses were received, yielding a response rate of around 38.2%. According to Hair *et al.* (2019), a minimum of 200 usable responses is recommended for models of moderate complexity to achieve sufficient statistical power. In this study, after reviewing the submissions, 540 responses were deemed complete and suitable for analysis exceeding the recommended threshold and ensuring robust analysis. Table 1 provides an overview of the research participants’ profiles.

The study’s sample comprised 67.8% male and 32.2% female participants. In terms of age, the largest group was between 31 and 40 years (35.7%), followed by those aged 41–50 (25.6%). Regarding professional experience, 34.8% had 6–10 years of work experience, and 20.9% had over 20 years of experience. Educationally, 31.9% of respondents held a college degree, 28.1% had a higher diploma or bachelor’s degree and 15.4% held a master’s degree. Participants were distributed across several European countries, with the largest groups from the UK (26.5%), Germany (15.0%) and Spain (13.7%). In terms of job levels, middle management (33.0%) and line management (19.1%) were the most represented groups. Organizations varied in size, with 37.6% working in firms employing 50–250 individuals and 35.2% in firms with fewer than 49 employees.

4.2 Questionnaire design and measurement items

All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (‘strongly disagree’) to 5 (‘strongly agree’). A five-point scale was selected to ensure ease of understanding and to minimize respondent fatigue, particularly considering the multicultural nature of the sample.

Table 1. Participants' profile summary

Variable	Item	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	366	67.8
	Female	174	32.2
Age	<24	30	5.6
	25–30	88	16.3
	31–40	193	35.7
	41–50	138	25.6
	>51	91	16.9
Experience	0–2 years	24	4.4
	3–5 years	111	20.6
	6–10 years	188	34.8
	11–19 years	104	19.3
	≥20 years	113	20.9
Education	High school graduate or less	119	22.0
	College degree	172	31.9
	Higher diploma/bachelor degree	152	28.1
	Masters	83	15.4
	Doctorate	14	2.6
Country	Germany	81	15.0
	Netherlands	57	10.6
	Norway	51	9.4
	Portugal	63	11.7
	Spain	74	13.7
	Sweden	71	13.1
	UK	143	26.5
Job level	Senior management	92	17.0
	Middle management	178	33.0
	Line management	103	19.1
	Senior staff	56	10.4
	Staff	111	20.6
Organizational size	1–49	190	35.2
	50–250	203	37.6
	251–4,999	119	22.0
	≥5,000	28	5.2

Source(s): Author's own work

This approach is supported by [Joshi et al. \(2015\)](#), who highlight that five-point Likert scales offer an effective balance between reliability, validity and simplicity when surveying diverse populations.

The construct of intercultural stressors in this study focuses on three key dimensions: racial discrimination, language barriers and cultural value conflicts, with a total of nine items as outlined by [Liu et al. \(2023a, 2023b\)](#). Racial discrimination was assessed by measuring instances of exclusion, offensive language or discriminatory behaviours in the workplace. Language barriers were evaluated by examining difficulties in communication, reading and understanding the common workplace language. Cultural value conflicts were measured based on employees' experiences of tension or discomfort due to conflicting cultural customs and practices in a diverse work environment. These dimensions provide a comprehensive understanding of the stressors that can impact team dynamics and innovation in multicultural workplaces.

The study explored three well-established collective coping strategies: problem-focused, emotion-focused and relation-focused coping strategies. The problem-focused coping strategy was measured using a scale developed by [Leprince et al. \(2019\)](#), which has been applied in the construction sector with robust reliability and validity results ([Badi, 2024](#)). This scale consists of two dimensions: analysis and information sharing (three items) and problem-solving (three items). To measure emotion-focused coping strategies, the study utilized a scale developed by [Ramadhana \(2020\)](#), designed to capture how teams manage emotional challenges and maintain morale in the face of adversity. This scale includes two dimensions: emotional openness (four items) and positive outlook (four items). For relation-focused coping, the study adopted a scale developed by [Badi \(2024\)](#), which has also demonstrated strong reliability and validity. This scale comprises two dimensions: social support (three items) and compensation (three items).

The team innovative behaviours construct was measured using a scale by [Litchfield et al. \(2018\)](#), which assesses innovation in technology-driven environments, aligning with the nature of this research. The scale includes five items that evaluate the frequency and extent of innovative behaviours within teams. Further details regarding the measurement items are provided in [Table A1](#).

Additionally, the questionnaire included a section for gathering participants' demographic information, such as organizational size, age, gender, work experience, job position and educational background. These characteristics may influence employees' workplace perceptions, potentially affecting their attitudes towards work processes, job satisfaction and performance ([Kirkman et al., 2004](#)).

4.3 Data analysis

Data analysis was performed via SPSS v23.0 and Amos v23.0 programs.

4.3.1 Common method bias. Evaluating for common method bias is essential, especially in self-reported surveys ([Fuller et al., 2016](#)). In this study, Harman's single-factor test, a widely used approach ([Podsakoff and Organ, 1986](#)), was employed for the analysis. The findings indicated that only 25.105% of the variance was explained by a single factor, which is well below the 50% threshold. Therefore, it can be concluded that common method bias is not a significant concern in this research.

4.3.2 Reliability and validity. The study assessed the reliability, adequacy and suitability of its constructs using several tests. First, both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) were used to assess internal consistency reliability. All constructs demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha and CR values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 ([Hair et al., 2019](#)). Additionally, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test was performed to evaluate sample adequacy and suitability of the data for factor analysis, resulting in a value of 0.928, which indicates good adequacy since KMO values closer to 1.0 suggest higher adequacy, whereas values <0.50 indicate low adequacy ([Morgan et al., 2004](#)). Moreover, the Bartlett test of sphericity was used to assess correlations and confirm the suitability of the data for factor analysis ([Hair et al., 2013](#)), yielding a Bartlett test of sphericity result of 0.000. Consequently, the variables are correlated enough to proceed with factor analysis. [Table 2](#) provides the correlation matrix and descriptive statistics of the research variables.

Factor analysis was utilized to confirm the validity of the variables within the study. Specifically, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted, using principal component analysis for extraction and varimax rotation. The results of the EFA, detailed in [Table A2](#), demonstrated that the items in the questionnaire aligned well with their respective constructs, achieving factor loadings above 0.45, as recommended by [Field \(2024\)](#).

Table 2. Reliability, validity and correlation analysis

Constructs	No. of items	Mean	SD	CR	Cronbach's α	1	2	3	4	5
Intercultural stressors	9	2.71	0.967	0.94	0.939	(0.797)				
Problem-focused coping	6	3.55	0.623	0.89	0.855	-0.001 (0.691)				
Emotion-focused coping	8	3.62	0.743	0.92	0.915	0.248*** (0.811)	0.504***			
Relation-focused coping	6	3.52	0.863	0.93	0.921	0.179***	0.530***	0.275*** (0.758)		
Team innovative behaviours	5	3.34	1.160	0.96	0.950	0.255***	-0.008	0.396***	0.321*** (0.902)	

Note(s): $n = 540$. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. AVE is shown in diagonal and between brackets
Source(s): Author's own work

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results, detailed in [Figure A1](#), indicate a strong model fit, with all indices meeting the recommended thresholds as recommended by [Kline \(2023\)](#). The χ^2/df ratio is 2.295. Both the CFI value of 0.948 and the IFI value of 0.949 indicate a high degree of model fit. The TLI value of 0.944 further supports a good fit. The RMSEA value of 0.049 denotes a close fit as well.

Additionally, assessments of both convergent and discriminant validity for the measurement scales were conducted. According to [Hair et al. \(2019\)](#), a minimum threshold of 0.5 was set as the criterion for acceptable outcomes. The procedure for evaluating discriminant validity involved comparing the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) with the correlations between the constructs. To establish discriminant validity, the square root of the AVE must be greater than the inter-construct correlations ([Hair et al., 2019](#)). As shown in [Table 2](#), the study successfully verified both convergent and discriminant validity.

To further validate the constructs used in the study, a Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT) analysis was conducted to assess discriminant validity, in line with recommendations by [Henseler et al. \(2015\)](#). The HTMT method is regarded as a more sensitive and robust approach for evaluating discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modelling (SEM), particularly in comparison to traditional methods like the Fornell–Larcker criterion ([Fornell and Larcker, 1981](#)). The results of the HTMT analysis are presented in [Table 3](#).

The thresholds used for this analysis were 0.850 for strict discriminant validity and 0.900 for liberal discriminant validity. As shown in [Table 3](#), all HTMT values fell below the most liberal threshold of 0.900, indicating that there are no issues with discriminant validity in this study.

4.3.3 Hypothesis testing. The study explores the relationships between collective AI anxiety and team innovative behaviour, focusing on the mediating role of coping strategies. To test the research hypotheses, SEM was used, using robust maximum likelihood estimation. While caution is necessary when modifying models, the inclusion of error covariances was guided by theoretical justification, as recommended by [Byrne \(2016\)](#) and [Hair et al. \(2019\)](#). Error terms were allowed to covary only where items exhibited conceptual overlap or similar wording, which could naturally result in correlated measurement errors. Such theoretically grounded modifications are accepted practices to improve model specification without compromising validity. The structural model is illustrated in [Figure 2](#).

The structural equation model fit indices demonstrated a good model fit: $\chi^2/\text{df} = 2.337$, CFI = 0.947, IFI = 0.947, TLI = 0.942, RMSEA = 0.050. The results of direct relations amongst the constructs are illustrated in [Table 4](#).

The results demonstrate that there is a negative significant relation between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour at 99% confidence level, and therefore *H1* is supported.

Table 3. HTMT analysis results

Constructs	Intercultural stressor	Problem focus	Relation focus	Emotion focus	Team innovative behaviours
Intercultural stressor					
Problem focus	0.005				
Relation focus	0.238	0.440			
Emotion focus	0.179	0.470	0.253		
Team innovative behaviours	0.244	0.014	0.369	0.301	

Source(s): Author’s own work

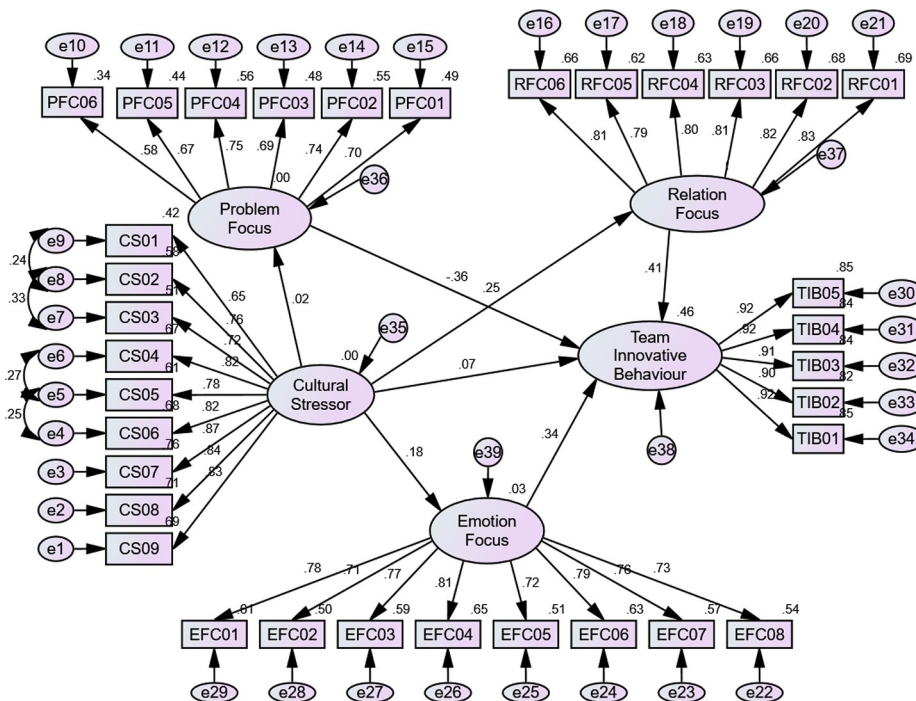


Figure 2. The structural model
Source(s): Author's own work

Table 4. SEM direct relations results

Paths		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p value
Intercultural stressors	→ Team innovative behaviour	-0.896	-1.184	-0.662	0.001**
Intercultural stressors	→ Problem-focused coping strategy	0.007	-0.043	0.056	0.794
Intercultural stressors	→ Emotion-focused coping strategy	0.134	0.063	0.213	0.001**
Intercultural stressors	→ Relation-focused coping strategy	0.214	0.135	0.298	0.001**
Problem-focused coping strategy	→ Team innovative behaviour	0.097	-0.009	0.204	0.077
Emotion-focused coping strategy	→ Team innovative behaviour	0.586	0.441	0.727	0.001**
Relation-focused coping strategy	→ Team innovative behaviour	0.614	0.513	0.718	0.001**

Note(s): *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.05$

Source(s): Author's own work

In terms of *H2A*, *H2B*, *H3A*, *H3B*, *H4A* and *H4B* that test the direct relations among the variables, the results illustrate that there are significant relations at 99% confidence level among all the variables; however, the relation between intercultural stressors and problem-focused coping strategy is not significant, nor between problem-focused coping strategy and team innovative behaviour. Therefore, *H2A* and *H2B* are not supported, whereas *H3A*, *H3B*, *H4A* and *H4B* are supported.

The bootstrapping technique (Preacher and Hayes, 2004) was applied to further examine the indirect effects between the variables, aimed at validating the mediating role of coping strategies. This method is recommended for analysing mediation effects (MacKinnon *et al.*, 2012; Hayes, 2017). Using 2,000 resamples, the bootstrapping process generated 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effects of intercultural stressors on team innovative behaviour. The results of these indirect relationships are presented in Table 5.

The results of the indirect relation between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour demonstrate that the indirect relation results between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour through problem-focus coping strategy were not significant. Therefore, H2C was not supported. Whereas the indirect relation results between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour through emotion- and relation-focus coping strategies have significant results, hence they have a mediating role over the relation between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour. So, H3C and H4C are supported.

5. Discussion of results

This study aimed to explore the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour and to identify the mediating role of problem-, emotion- and relation-focused coping strategies. The study’s findings revealed several significant insights that contribute to the growing body of literature on stress, coping and innovation in multicultural teams.

Firstly, the results demonstrated that intercultural stressors have a negative impact on team innovative behaviour. This finding is consistent with previous research that suggests stress can undermine the collaborative processes necessary for innovation (Nasaj, 2021; Stahl *et al.*, 2010; Hülshager *et al.*, 2009). In multicultural teams, stressors such as racial discrimination, language barriers and cultural value conflicts disrupt communication and trust, which are critical for building networks, generating new ideas and fostering creativity (Nasaj *et al.*, 2025a, 2025b; Nasaj and Badi, 2021). These stressors create tension within the team, reducing psychological safety and inhibiting the free exchange of ideas – both essential for innovation (Edmondson, 1999).

Although diversity has often been linked to creativity and innovation, the findings of this study highlight the complexities of managing diversity in practice. While diverse teams have the potential to generate more innovative solutions, they are also more prone to conflict and misunderstandings, particularly when cultural differences are not well-managed (Stahl *et al.*, 2010). This study extends these insights by empirically demonstrating that intercultural

Table 5. Indirect relations results

Paths	Lower bounds	Upper bounds	Two-tailed significance
Intercultural stressors → Problem-focused → Team innovative behaviour	−0.050	0.037	0.773
Intercultural stressors → Emotion-focused → Team innovative behaviour	0.076	0.192	0.001**
Intercultural stressors → Relation-focused → Team innovative behaviour	0.035	0.136	0.001**

Note(s): *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.05$
Source(s): Author’s own work

stressors can act as significant barriers to innovation in multicultural teams, reinforcing the importance of developing strategies to manage these stressors effectively.

Secondly, problem-focused coping was not found to mediate the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour. This result diverges from the traditional view that problem-focused coping is one of the most effective strategies for managing stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). In the context of multicultural teams, however, this finding suggests that direct problem-solving approaches may not always be effective in addressing intercultural stressors. One possible explanation for this finding is the complex and deeply rooted nature of cultural differences. Intercultural stressors – particularly those related to values, communication and identity – may not be easily resolved through problem-solving tactics such as conflict resolution or process adjustments (Stahl *et al.*, 2010). As a result, problem-focused coping may not adequately address the emotional and relational dimensions of these stressors. This aligns with previous research suggesting that while problem-focused coping is effective for addressing tangible stressors (such as task-related problems), it may be less effective for managing interpersonal and cultural stressors (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). Furthermore, the failure of problem-focused coping to mediate the stress–innovation relationship may reflect the limited agency that individual team members have in changing the structural or systemic factors that contribute to intercultural stressors. For example, resolving language barriers or addressing racial discrimination may require organizational-level interventions rather than individual problem-solving strategies.

Thirdly, emotion-focused coping was found to significantly mediate the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour. This finding suggests that managing the emotional responses to stress – such as frustration, anxiety or insecurity – can help teams navigate the challenges posed by intercultural stressors and maintain their capacity for innovation. While some studies have raised concerns that emotion-focused coping can lead to avoidance behaviours that undermine long-term outcomes (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004), this study highlights the potential benefits of emotion-focused coping in high-stress, multicultural environments. By regulating their emotional responses, team members may be better able to maintain interpersonal harmony and continue collaborating on innovative tasks, even in the presence of stressors. This finding aligns with the work of Chan *et al.* (2014), who found that emotion-focused coping helped professionals in high-stress industries manage their emotional well-being, enabling them to maintain productivity and performance despite stressful conditions.

Fourthly, the results also indicated that relation-focused coping mediates the relationship between intercultural stressors and team innovative behaviour. This finding highlights the importance of interpersonal relationships and social support in managing intercultural stressors within teams. Teams that engage in relation-focused coping – by building trust, fostering open communication and creating a supportive environment – are better able to navigate the challenges posed by cultural differences and maintain their innovative capacity.

This result aligns with Stahl *et al.* (2010), who found that diverse teams that actively manage their interpersonal relationships are more likely to benefit from their diversity in terms of creativity and innovation. Relation-focused coping appears to foster the psychological safety needed for team members to share new ideas and engage in creative problem-solving (Edmondson, 1999). By promoting a culture of support and mutual respect, teams can mitigate the negative effects of intercultural stressors and create an environment conducive to innovation.

Moreover, relation-focused coping reflects the collaborative nature of innovation in teams. Innovation often requires teams to integrate diverse perspectives, which can lead to

conflict if not managed effectively. Relation-focused coping helps teams navigate these conflicts by emphasizing the importance of interpersonal relationships and social cohesion, thereby enhancing their ability to network and collaborate on innovative tasks. This finding is consistent with research suggesting that high levels of team cohesion, trust and networking are critical for innovation, particularly in multicultural teams (Nasaj *et al.*, 2025a, 2025b; Hülshager *et al.*, 2009).

6. Conclusion

6.1 Limitations and future research

While this study contributes to the growing body of literature on intercultural stressors, team innovative behaviour and coping strategies, it also has several limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the study relies on self-reported data from a single point in time, which may be subject to response bias and does not allow for the examination of changes over time. Future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to better understand how coping strategies and team innovative behaviour evolve as teams experience and adapt to intercultural stressors.

Second, the study was conducted in the context of European workplaces, primarily within the construction industry. While these findings offer valuable insights into how intercultural stressors affect teams in this particular context, future studies should investigate whether these results generalize to other regions and industries. For example, it would be useful to examine how intercultural stressors play out in more knowledge-intensive industries, where the nature of work may amplify or mitigate the impact of stress on innovation.

Finally, the study focused on problem-, emotion- and relation-focused coping as mediators, but there may be other team-level processes that influence the relationship between stress and innovation. Future research could explore the role of other factors, such as cultural intelligence, organizational culture and individual global mindset, in shaping how teams cope with intercultural stressors and maintain their innovative capabilities.

6.2 Theoretical contributions

This study offers several important theoretical contributions. First, it extends Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional theory of stress and coping to multicultural team contexts, highlighting how collective coping strategies operate in response to intercultural stressors. Second, it integrates the IPO model (Ilgen *et al.*, 2005) with coping theory to provide a structured understanding of how external stressors impact team innovative behaviour through internal psychological processes. Third, by distinguishing the differential mediating roles of emotion- and relation-focused coping, the study refines the theoretical understanding of coping mechanisms in diverse team settings. Finally, it addresses a gap in the innovation literature by empirically demonstrating that intercultural stressors significantly impair team innovative behaviour, offering new insights into the stress–innovation relationship in multicultural environments.

6.3 Practical implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications for organizations seeking to foster innovation in multicultural teams. First, organizations must recognize that intercultural stressors can significantly undermine team innovative behaviour. To counter these effects, organizations should invest in training and development programs that enhance intercultural competence among team members, helping them navigate cultural differences more effectively. Such programs could include training on communication skills, conflict

resolution and cultural awareness, all of which can help reduce the stress associated with working in diverse teams.

Second, managers should be aware that traditional problem-solving approaches may not be sufficient to address the stress that arises from cultural differences. Instead, organizations should emphasize the importance of emotion- and relation-focused coping strategies. Managers can foster an environment of psychological safety by encouraging open discussions about cultural challenges and creating opportunities for team members to build stronger interpersonal relationships. For example, team-building activities and regular check-ins can help create a supportive team atmosphere, where members feel comfortable expressing their emotions and seeking support when needed.

Finally, organizations should consider implementing formal support systems, such as mentoring programs or peer support groups, that provide team members with additional resources for managing stress. These initiatives can help create a culture of support, where team members are more likely to engage in relation-focused coping and maintain the trust and cohesion necessary for innovation.

In conclusion, this study offers important practical insights for both researchers and policymakers. For researchers, the findings highlight the need to further explore coping strategies as dynamic mediators in multicultural team innovative behaviour research. For policymakers and organizational leaders, the results suggest the importance of developing training programs that promote emotion- and relation-focused coping strategies to enhance team resilience and innovation. Creating supportive environments that foster psychological safety, intercultural competence and effective communication can help mitigate the negative effects of intercultural stressors and sustain innovation in increasingly diverse workplaces. Future research should continue to explore how teams can effectively manage stress to unlock the full potential of diversity in driving innovation.

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Table A1. Measurement items

Constructs	Items	Source
Intercultural stressors	Racial discrimination	Liu <i>et al.</i> (2023)
	CS1: Have encountered name-calling or racist jokes	
	CS2: Feel isolated and ignored in the workplace	
	CS3: Have experienced frequent offensive and rude gestures	
	2. Language barriers	
	CS41: Communication in a common language is not easy for me	
	CS5: It is difficult for me to read and understand the common language	
	CS6: Nervous in obtaining information in a common language	
	3. Cultural value conflicts	
	CS7: Have problems with my team members because of different cultural customs	
Problem-focused coping	CS8: Get upset at my team members because they don't know my cultural customs	Leprince <i>et al.</i> (2019)
	CS9: Feel uncomfortable having to choose between my own and other ways of doing things due to different cultural backgrounds	
	<i>Analysis and information sharing</i>	
	PRO1: We think of solutions to solve the problems generated by AI anxiety. PRO2: We think of possible solutions to manage the AI anxiety situation	
	PRO3: We try to find possible ways of dealing with the AI anxiety situation	
	<i>Problem-solving</i>	
Emotion-focused coping	PRO4: We deal with the AI anxiety situation by adopting a work plan that we have discussed together	Ramadhana (2020)
	PRO5: We put simple and effective work strategies in place	
	PRO6: We implement the work plan we have collectively decided on to get out of the AI anxiety situation	
	<i>Emotional openness</i>	
	EMO1: We express our feelings and are truthful with each other	
	EMO2: We can share negative feelings such as sadness, anger and fear	
	EMO3: We show each other understanding and avoid blame	
	EMO4: We can share positive feelings such as gratitude, appreciation, humour and fun	
	<i>Positive outlook</i>	
	EMO5: We keep hopeful and confident that we will overcome difficulties caused by AI anxiety	
	EMO6: We encourage each other and build on our strengths	(continued)
	EMO7: We seize opportunities, take-action and persist in our efforts	
	EMO8: We focus on possibilities and try to accept what we cannot change	

Table A1. Continued

Constructs	Items	Source
Relation-focused coping	<i>Social support</i>	Badi (2024)
	RFC1: We can rely on strong leadership by the team leader to provide support and guidance	
	RFC2: We can rely on the support of colleagues and other organizational members	
	RFC3: We can access organizational resources to help our team through difficult times	Litchfield et al. (2018)
	<i>Compensation</i>	
Team innovative behaviour	RFC4: We try to help a team member facing difficulty with AI anxiety by compensating for some of his/ her actions	
	RFC5: We re-adjust our work plan by taking on the tasks of a team member facing difficulty with AI anxiety	
	RFC6: We adapt our work plan to deal with a team member's weaknesses with AI anxiety	
	TIB1: My team members often implement new ideas to improve the quality of our products and services	
	TIB2: My team members give a lot of consideration to new and alternative methods and procedures for doing their work	
	TIB3: My team members often produce new services, methods, or procedures	
	TIB4: This is an innovative team	
	TIB5: My team creates new ideas for difficult issues	
Note(s): Items were measured on a five-point Likert scale Source(s): Author's own work		

Appendix 2

Table A2. Exploratory factor analysis

Global
Knowledge,
Memory and
Communication

	Rotated component matrix ^a				
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
PFC01					0.718
PFC02					0.771
PFC03					0.712
PFC04					0.720
PFC05					0.670
PFC06					0.571
TIB01				0.883	
TIB02				0.889	
TIB03				0.874	
TIB04				0.882	
TIB05				0.882	
RFC01			0.799		
RFC02			0.798		
RFC03			0.784		
RFC04			0.784		
RFC05			0.807		
RFC06			0.813		
EFC01		0.765			
EFC02		0.735			
EFC03		0.793			
EFC04		0.804			
EFC05		0.676			
EFC06		0.779			
EFC07		0.750			
EFC08		0.759			
CS01	0.690				
CS02	0.808				
CS03	0.766				
CS04	0.838				
CS05	0.823				
CS06	0.843				
CS07	0.861				
CS08	0.839				
CS09	0.829				

Note(s): Extraction method: principal component analysis. Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization. ^aRotation converged in seven iterations

Source(s): Author's own work

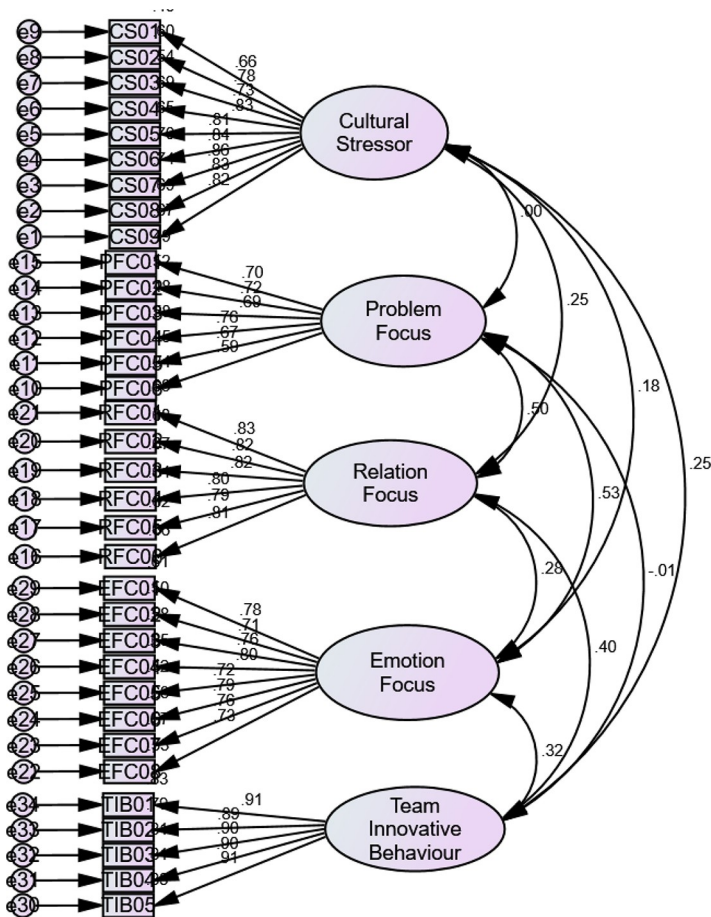


Figure A1. Confirmatory factor analysis
Source: Author's own work

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