Terms of Use

The copyright of this thesis is owned by its author. Any reproduction, adaptation, distribution or dissemination of this thesis without express authorization is strictly prohibited.

UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT AVOIDING BEHAVIOR IN CHINA: THE ROLE OF GOAL INTERDEPENDENCE AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

WANG LIN

MPHIL

LINGNAN UNIVERSITY

2012

UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT AVOIDING BEHAVIOR IN CHINA: THE ROLE
OF GOAL INTERDEPENDENCE AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

by
WANG LIN

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Business
(Management)

Lingnan Univeristy

2012

ABSTRACT

Understanding conflict avoiding behavior in China: The role of goal interdependence and behavioral intentions

by

Wang Lin

Master of Philosophy

It is a commonly held belief that people from collectivistic, large power distance or high-context cultures, such as China, tend to be less confrontational, which could be counter-productive in organizations. Contrary to this traditional view, this study posits that conflict avoidance can be constructive depending on the specific actions protagonists take. It adopts Deutsch's (1973) theory of cooperation and competition to understand conflict avoiding behavior between employees and their supervisors, indicating that people's perceptions of goal interdependence significantly influence their behavioral intentions that in turn predict their overt actions to avoid conflict. Specifically, it proposes that goal interdependence greatly affects employee behavioral intentions that lead to different avoiding behaviors that affect the important outcomes of productivity, relationship, and social respect within organizations.

A total of 110 participants from Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Shenzhen were interviewed from June 2011 to September 2011 by critical incident technique. Interviewees were first required to recall a concrete incident in which they avoided direct discussions with their supervisors when they had a disagreement. They then rated specific questions on the recalled incident using 7-point Likert-type scales. Results of the structural equation modeling and other analyses support the hypotheses and proposed theoretical model that goal interdependence affects the behavioral intentions of employees, which significantly influence employees' specific actions to avoid conflict, and finally determine outcomes. Research findings contribute to the literature of conflict management and also provide crucial implications for dealing with conflict avoidance in Chinese enterprises and perhaps in organizations in other countries.

Key words: Goal interdependence, behavioral intention, conflict avoiding behavior, supervisor-subordinate relationship, China

DECLARATION

    I declare that this is an original work based primarily on my own research, and I warrant that all citations of previous research, published or unpublished, have been duly acknowledged.

<div style="text-align: right">

_____

Wang Lin

Date

</div>

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL OF THESIS

UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT AVOIDING BEHAVIOR IN CHINA:
THE ROLE OF GOAL INTERDEPENDENCE AND
BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS
by
WANG LIN

Master of Philosophy

Panel of Examiners:

_____ (Chairman)
Dr. Chen Yifeng, Nancy

_____ (External Member)
Prof. Anne Marie Francesco

_____ (Internal Member)
Prof. Dean Tjosvold

_____ (Internal Member)
Dr. Wong Yui-tim

Chief Supervisor

Prof. Dean Tjosvold

Co-supervisor

Dr. Alfred Wong

Approved for the Senate:

_____
Prof. Jesús Seade
Chairman, Postgraduate Studies Committee

_____
Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER V

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the people who helped in the past two years. Needless to say, without their support, encouragement and patience this study would not have been possible.

My deepest gratitude goes first and foremost to my supervisor, Professor Dean Tjosvold, for his enlightening guidance, constant encouragement and impressive kindness. He has walked me through all the stages of the writing of this thesis, contributing his knowledge, insight and time. What I have learned from him is not only the knowledge on research, but also how to become a wonderful person. I would cherish all the memories with him.

Second, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the faulty in the Department of Management in Lingnan. Thanks Dr. Alfred, S.H., Wong for his instructions on the methodology of this study as well as his always patience and amiability. Thanks Dr. Nancy, Y.F., Chen, Crystal, X. R., Wu and previous MPhil student Cathy, Y., Guo for their generous help to my study and life. Thanks Fonsa, Y. F., Lau for her always warmth and help.

Third, I deeply appreciate my previous colleagues and classmates Cuiyun Liu, Huanyi Wang, Haibin Zhang, Ying Wang and Jinming Ma, since they contribute a lot on data collection for this study. In addition, special thanks should go to my friends Joe Wa, Ting Cao and Zena, Z. Y., Wu. They put their time and efforts to help me overcome the difficulties in life.

Last but not least, my thanks would go to my dearest parents and Allen Z. B., Wang for their loving consideration and great confidence on me all through these years.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is a social phenomenon that occurs across species, history, and cultures (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008；Keeley, 1996; Trivers & Hare, 1976) and is inevitable in any relationship (Gudykunst, 1994；Peng, 2002). Since organizations are structured by interpersonal relationship networks, conflict is strongly intertwined with organizations (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). Some scholars even concluded that organizations without conflict do not exist (Pondy, 1967).

The study of conflict has a long history, but the research in organizational behavior area mainly concentrate on proactive conflict and relatively little has been conducted about avoiding behavior. This study focuses on the conditions and dynamic structure of conflict avoiding behavior between employees and their supervisors. It sheds light on appropriate conflict management approach and develops insight into effective communication in supervisor-subordinate relationship.

This chapter first presents the background information and briefly explains the concepts leading to literature review. It then summarizes the study's objectives and significance.

Background

With the high-speed change of the world, conflict happens more frequently within organizations. The growing use of Internet and reducing application of

face-to-face communication easily creates misunderstanding and irritation (Friedman & Currall, 2003; Olekalns, Putnam, Weingart, & Metcalf, 2008). Moreover, the economic recession in Western countries increasing the pressure for workload, adaption, innovation and role conflict all around the world (Anderson, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2004; De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008；Janssen, 2003). In addition, many enterprises tend to use work team or project team for effective management, which increases task interdependency among employees and undermines traditional power relations (Pfeffer, 1997).

Furthermore, the free market philosophy, traditional Confucian values as well as socialist and communist ideology is encountered in today's China (Tjosvold & Leung, 1998). It stimulates more conflicts than ever before, meanwhile, making China quite unique in the world. Thus, realizing the value of conflict and getting to know how to manage conflict constructively is of great importance to both Chinese employees and their managers in organizations.

Conflict and conflict management

Conflict sounds harmful, especially in Chinese (Peng, 2003; Yu, 1997). People usually associate it with some destructive words, such as aggression, deviance, violence, and war (Mayer, 1995). However, the value of conflict in team building, innovation and decision making has been widely documented by empirical studies. Amason (1996) indicated that conflict can help top management teams to improve their decision quality without hurting consensus and affective acceptance among

team members. Similarly, Chen, Liu and Tjosvold (2005) suggested conflict can significantly contribute to organizational innovation. Moreover, Rahim (2010) proposed that conflict is necessary to stimulate organizational effectiveness.

Meanwhile, substantial evidence from previous studies also show that conflict itself is neither constructive nor destructive, which actually depends on how we manage it (Tjosvold, 2006; Tjosvold, Law, & Sun, 2006). Constructively managed conflict can help people explore the issues, understand the problems from diversified views, develop quality solutions and strengthen interpersonal relationships.

Perspective from social psychology

A variety of theoretical perspectives has been developed to explore how to manage conflict constructively. Blake and Mouton (1964)'s dual concern model has a very influential position in the literature of conflict management. In this model, they proposed five styles to manage conflict. Based on the theory of cooperation and competition, Deutsch (1973) indicated two major alternative approaches (i.e. cooperative or competitive) to manage interpersonal conflict from a social psychological perspective. Although the dual concern model is practical to identify possible effective approaches to manage conflict, the perspective from social psychology not only concentrates on the outcomes of conflict management approaches, but also includes the process which explains the conditions can lead to positive outcomes. Specifically, Deutsch argued that how people perceive their goal relationship with each other deeply influences the methods they approach conflict

which determine the outcomes.

Numerous studies in the past four decades have indicated that compared with competitive approaches, cooperative approaches usually generate more constructive outcomes (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 2000; Barker, Tjosvold, & Andrews, 1988; Tjosvold, Wong, & Wan, 2010; Deutsch, 1980). But we also notice that under some conditions, the cooperative approach which requires open-minded discussion for mutual goals cannot always be easily achieved. For instance, when the conflict generates considerable hostility or embarrassment, it may be difficult to have open-minded discussion, especially immediately. Thus, there should be other alternative approaches, such as conflict avoidance, which can make the outcomes of conflict constructive as well.

Conflict avoidance in China

Conflict avoidance is criticized for its inefficiency in the West, but it may be functional and appropriate in some circumstances in China (Jehn & Weldon, 1992; Kirkbride, Tang, & Westwood, 1991; Tjosvold & Sun, 2002; Wong & Tjosvold, 2010). Conflict avoiding behavior can be caused by complicated and even contrasting motivations and can lead to either positive or negative outcomes (Peng & Tjosvold, 2010；Tjosvold & Sun, 2002; Van de Vlitert & Kabanoff, 1990).

Previous studies identify avoiding as one approach in conflict management (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Thomas & Kilmann, 1978). But in fact, employees can adopt a variety of specific behaviors to avoid direct confrontation immediately, such

as giving each party some time to calm down, or asking help from the third party, or just obey the decision but they do not agree. The qualitative results of Friedman, Chi and Liu (2006) proposed "Americans appear to think with great subtlety about how to be direct, whereas Chinese appear to think with great subtlety about how to avoid conflict."

Culture plays an important role in conflict attributing and categorizing process (Choi, Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999；Gudykunst, 1994), and then leads to different preference in conflict management style (Gudykunst, 1996; Leung, Brew, Zhang, & Zhang, 2011; Peng, 2003). Chinese people are usually regarded as collectivist, because they have much concern about group interest and interpersonal relationships (Boisot & Child, 1996；Tse, Francis, & Walls, 1994；Tung, 1991). As part of the collectivist value, Chinese people tend to avoid conflict with each other in order to protect social face and harmony relationship (Adair, Okumura, & Brett, 2001; Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Ohbuchi & Atsumi, 2010). This cultural value is also reflected in some Chinese old sayings, such as "Harmony is valuable" and "If the family lives in harmony, all affaires will prosper" (Leung & Brew, 2009).

Moreover, according to Hofstede (1980), people of collectivistic cultures tend to be high-contextual. Studies suggest that China is a high-context society (Peng, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1985; Zhang, Farh, & Wang, 2011). High-contextual communication makes it difficult for people to separate conflict from the protagonists involved in it, leaving Chinese people prefer indirect and non-confrontational approaches in conflict situations as well.

In addition, Chinese are known for high power distance compared to Western employees, especially in the supervisor-subordinate relationship (Hofstede, 2001). Because of the long history of hierarchical society, Chinese employees respect authority and prefer to hide their opposite opinions and avoiding direct confrontation (Vollbrecht, Roloff, & Paulson, 1997). Thus, conflict avoiding behavior of Chinese employees requires further exploration.

Goal interdependence, intentions, and conflict approaches

Conflict happens as a process, or sequence of events with internal logic (Thomas, 1990). Understanding its dynamic structure and getting insights of its internal logic can help us better understand and manage conflict.

The behaviorists regard conflict management behavior as a direct and "black box" response to counterparty's behavior or the situation, but this perspective neglects the importance of cognition in shaping conflict management behavior (Thomas, 1992). People interpret conflict in fundamentally different ways, and their interpretation will drive their following behaviors. Deutsch (1949, 1973) proposed that how people perceive their goal relationships with each other greatly affects their following interactions, leading to different outcomes. This study will draw upon the cognitive perspective.

Thomas (1990) proposed a conflict process model, including the elements of conflict awareness, thoughts and emotions, intentions, behavior, and consequences. Comparing to the one proposed in 1976, he added intentions due to the inspiration

from Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980)'s cognitive model that suggested intentions intervened between the reasoning and actual taken behavior and that intentions are the most significant and immediate predictor to people's behavior. Peng (2007) did not find very significant causal relationships in her attempt to explore the direct relationship between goal interdependence and specific conflict avoiding behavior. Therefore, this study includes intentions as a critical step to the whole conflict management process.

Hypotheses

Deutsch (1949, 1973)'s theory of cooperation and competition as well as the conflict process model were combined in this study to understand the conditions and dynamic structure of diverse responses from Chinese employees to avoid conflict with their supervisors. Specifically, we hypothesize that perceived cooperative goals between employees with their supervisors promote cooperative intentions, which lead employees to adopt constructive approaches to avoid conflict. In contrast, those who believe they have competitive or independent goals with their supervisors induce competitive intentions and independent intentions, and then they are more likely to use destructive approaches to avoid conflict.

Objectives of this Study

This study sheds light on our understanding of conflict avoiding behavior between employees and their supervisors, which is particularly universal in Chinese

workplace. Conflict avoidance is a phenomenon with mixed outcomes and has not received sufficient attention and research it deserves, especially on how to make it constructive. In detail, this study focuses on four major types conflict avoiding behavior which are distinguished recently (Peng, 2007; Peng & Tjosovld, 2011), trying to get insights of underlying processes and effects on productivity, relationship and social respect of conflict avoiding behavior. Thus, the objectives of this study include:

First, explore the conditions and dynamic structure of different conflict avoiding behaviors;

Second, take the theory of cooperation and competition as lens to predict specific conflict avoiding behaviors;

Third, combine conflict process model to get insight of the underlying dynamic of conflict avoiding behavior;

Four, document the effects caused by different conflict avoiding behaviors on productivity, supervisor-subordinate relationship and social respect of work capacity.

Significance of this Study

This study makes some contribution to conflict management literature. First of all, although conflict is embedded in organizations has been widely accepted as well as substantial theories and practices on conflict resolution have been developed, conflict avoidance is normally regarded as one conflict management approach and the diversity of conflict avoiding behavior has only been explored by few studies, to

8

say nothing of empirical studies conducted in China where people inclined to smooth over conflicts to maintain interpersonal harmony. This study contributes to our understanding about conflict avoiding behavior in Chinese workplaces, especially the conditions and outcomes of different conflict avoiding behaviors. It also provides empirical support to our typology of conflict avoiding behavior in recent studies.

Moreover, this study adopts the theory of cooperation and competition as the framework to analyze the underlying mechanism of conflict avoiding behavior. In addition to test the generalization of this theory in conflict avoiding behavior, this study also combines Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980)'s cognitive model to develop deeper insight into conflict processes, namely, goal interdependence invokes relevant behavior intentions, which lead to different avoiding behaviors, and then results in outcomes that can be constructive or destructive. In addition, this study contributes a series of behavioral intention scale developed by us from field interviews as well as previous studies.

Finally, the findings in this study also have practical implications for both employees and supervisors in Chinese organizations. It can help employees take effective methods to communicate with their supervisors when open discussion is not appropriate. Meanwhile, the supervisors can benefit from this study by identifying the importance of cooperative goals in conflict management. In addition, the findings in this study may benefit the people who come from other collectivistic, large power distance or high-context cultures as well.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The first chapter introduced the background, objectives and significance of this study. In this chapter, we first review previous studies on conflict and conflict avoidance, and then introduce the theory of cooperation and competition as well as conflict process model, which builds the theoretical framework of this study. After that, we draw the conclusions from literature review and propose the hypotheses. Finally, a brief summary ends this chapter.

Understanding Conflict

Conflict has many parts and pieces, even if we focus on conflicts within organizations (Carnevale, 2008). Since the study of organizational theory cannot be complete without understanding conflict phenomena (Rahim, 2010), there are a large and growing body of literature on conflict and conflict management in the past few decades. However, it is still not a cliché to say conflict is inevitable in organizations and it can have useful functions when managed properly, because we still have not enough knowledge and skill to master conflict in the workplace. In our daily life, it is common to see conflict escalation due to poor conflict management skills within organizations (Geddes, 1994; Lee & Panteli, 2010; Neuman & Baron, 1997; Pruitt, 2008). Thus, there is a great need for us to realize the value of conflict and improve our conflict management skills (Rahim, 2010).

The definition of conflict

Although the research about conflict in organizational area has long history, there is still no agreement on a clear and generally accepted definition of conflict (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008; Tjosvold, 2006; Wall & Callister, 1995). March and Simon (1958, p.112) conceptually defined conflict as a "breakdown in the standard mechanisms of decision making". This definition regards conflict as a dark-side construct which blocks the decision process, but it is not very meaningful for research purpose, because it neglects the potential value of conflict.

Meanwhile, scholars also define conflict as opposite interests or outcome goals due to the scarcity of resources in organizations (Barki & Hartwick, 2004; Baron, 1990; Mack & Snyder, 1957). However, owning scarce resource does not mean people cannot approach conflict open-mindedly and allocate the scare resource fairly and efficiently (Poon, Pike, & Tjosvold, 2001; Tjosvold & Poon, 1998). Moreover, defining conflict as incompatible interests or goals confounds conflict with competition (Schmidt & Kochan, 1972). This confounding enhances the view that people understand conflict as a win-lose game and frustrates our confidence to manage conflict constructively, and also passively influences the way people approach conflict. In addition, this kind of definition is not very practical in organizations, since not every conflict necessarily includes opposing interests and goals; conflict often happens when people share a common goal but have different methods to realize it.

The above mentioned definitions narrow down the range of conflict in

workplace, whereas there are also some studies suggest a very broad definition of conflict. Pondy (1967) proposed conflict within an organization should be best understood as a dynamic process, including antecedent conditions, individual awareness, affective states, overt behavior and aftermath combined together. Similarly, Thomas (1990, p.653) defined conflict as a process which begins when the protagonist feels the other party has negatively influenced or is going to negatively influence the things he or she cares about. However, defining conflict as a process nearly includes everything that happens during a conflict episode, so it increases the difficulty for us to understand this phenomenon, especially in what conditions and by what approaches we can make conflict constructive.

To address the flaws in the above mentioned definitions, conflict can be defined as incompatible activities. Specifically, it refers to "an action that is incompatible with another action that prevents, obstructs, interferes, injures, or in some way makes the latter less likely or less effective" (Deutsch, 1973, p.10). Our study adopts this definition as well, because it clearly distinguishes the concepts of competition and conflict, which can help us realize the potential value and positive aspect of conflict. With this definition, competition implies opposing goal attainments between two interaction parties, whereas conflict can occur both in cooperative or competitive contexts. This distinction also gets considerable empirical support that conflict can either be perceived as a mutual problem to solve or a win-lose game between protagonists (Alper et al., 2000; Tjosvold, 2006; Tjosvold et al., 2006; Wang, Chen, Tjosvold, & Shi, 2010).

Classifying conflicts

Due to the possible positive effect of conflict, researchers make great efforts to explore the conditions in which conflict can be positive. One line of research indicates that the perceived type of conflict can result in the success or failure of a group (Amason, 1996; De Dreu, Van Vianen, Harinck, & McCusker, 1998; Jehn, 1995, 1997; Parayitam, Olson, & Bao, 2010). They divided conflicts into two categories: task conflict and relationship conflict. Task conflict refers to the conflict caused by "disagreements about the content of the tasks being performed, including differences in viewpoints, ideas and opinions" (Jehn, 1995, p.258), while relationship conflict refers to the conflict caused by "interpersonal incompatibilities which typically include tension, animosity, and annoyance" (Jehn, 1995, p.258). Several studies indicate that when the conflicts are generally related with task rather than relationships, people are more likely to approach the conflicts constructively with positive result (Amason & Schweiger, 1997; Simons & Peterson, 2000). However, De Dreu and Weingart (2003)'s meta-analysis founded both strong and negative correlations between task and relationship conflict and team performance and satisfaction. Task conflict is viewed as more related to cognition, whereas relationship conflict is more related to affection, but when conflicts take place, both cognition and affection are involved, so this classification is not very desirable.

In addition, classifying conflict as task conflict and relationship conflict is less practical as well. We cannot let relationship conflict just happen or avoid confrontation due to it is supposed to be destructive. The research about conflict

should help people confidently and skillfully to confront and manage conflict, instead of giving them excuse letting things just happen.

A meaningful distinction among conflicts is constructive and destructive conflicts, which classifies conflicts according to the consequences (Deutsch, 1973). Constructive conflict means that both protagonists are satisfied with the outcomes of the interaction and feel they have gained something from conflict, while destructive conflict refers to both protagonists are dissatisfied with the outcomes of the interaction and feel they have lost as the consequence of the conflict. This classification inspires us to explore the conditions as well as how to make conflict positive.

Besides making typology of conflict, researchers also concentrate a lot on goals, perceptions and actions of people to confront conflicts. Therefore, the following part is to introduce the theory of cooperation and competition that can help us understand the conditions and management approaches which lead to constructive conflict. Moreover, this theory does not only concern about the outcomes of cooperation and competition, but also about the social psychological processes which lead to those outcomes.

The Theory of Cooperation and Competition

This theory was initially developed by Morton Deutsch (1949, 1973, & 1985) and elaborated by David W. Johnson (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Numerous empirical studies have been conducted in Western and Eastern countries, and the

results of those studies provide robust support to the generalization of this elegant theory.

Deutsch argued that how people perceived their goals are related greatly influences the dynamics of their interactions, and these interactions in return determine the outcomes. Based on this theory, three types of goal relationship have been identified as cooperation, competition and independence in a given situation (Deutsch & Coleman, 2000).

In cooperation, people believe their goals are positively related and they can succeed together. When one party moves to their goal attainment, other parties move to their goals accordingly. With the belief that others' success will benefit their success, people tend to have open-minded discussion, help each other to succeed, and pool efforts to accomplish the mutual task.

In competition, people think their goals are negatively related and only one party can succeed in the interaction. One party moves to their goal attainment will decrease the possibility of other parties to realize their goals. Since one party's success means the other parties' failure, people with competitive goals tend to withhold useful information, compete for scarce resources and even attempt to hinder others' success.

In independence, people lack interdependence with each other, so one party's success is neither beneficial nor harmful to others' success, no matter directly or indirectly. Thus, people tend to focus on their own task, behave indifferently to others and do not want help or hind others' success.

15

The role of goal interdependence in conflict management

The theory of cooperation and competition provides us a useful framework to analyze conflict management. As Deutsch (1980, 1990) concluded, whether people emphasize cooperative goals or competitive goals deeply influences the dynamics as well as outcomes of conflict. Previous studies also support that goal interdependence is critical in conflict resolution (Deutsch, 1980; Pruitt & Syna, 1989; Tjosvold et al., 2010).

Based on this theory, Deutsch proposed two major alternative approaches (i.e. cooperative or competitive) to manage interpersonal conflict. In cooperative conflict management, since people believe they win or lose together, they would like to express their ideas and feelings directly, taking the viewpoints from others, showing the desire to resolve the conflict for mutual benefit and integrating ideas from both parties to develop a mutually satisfying solution (Tjosvold, 1998; Tjosvold, 2008). Thus, cooperative conflict management approach can develop integrated and high quality solutions as well as enhance collaborative relationship.

In contrast, in competitive conflict management, with the belief that only one party can get the final success, people usually have a closed-minded discussion or avoid a discussion; sometimes, they even force others' to accept their ideas. Therefore, the competitive conflict management approach leads to imposed decisions and fragmented relationship (Tjosvold et al., 2006; Tjosvold, 2008).

Many studies have indicated that compared with competitive conflict management approaches, cooperative conflict management approaches usually

generate more constructive outcomes (Alper et al., 2000; Barker et al., 1988; Deutsch, 1980; Zhang, Cao, & Tjosvold, 2011). Johnson and Johnson (1989)'s meta-analysis suggested that the cooperative process resulted in more productive, more favorable interpersonal relationships and more constructive resolutions.

The cooperative and competitive approaches indicate how the protagonists understand their relationship and intend to resolve the conflict. However, cooperative and competitive approaches are not specific actions (Tjosvold, 2008).

The role of goal interdependence in conflict avoidance

In certain situations, people choose to avoid conflict. Avoiding is also a critical approach to managing conflict. Ohbuchi and Takahashi (1994, p.1347) defined conflict avoidance as "refusing both overt recognition of a conflict and engagement in any active action toward its resolution", whereas Chen et al. (2005) defined it as the attempt to smooth over conflicts and minimize direct discussion about the conflict issue. This study follows Chen et al. (2005)'s definition.

Ohbuchi and Takahashi (1994)'s definition only describes the passive avoiding behaviors. Indeed, previous studies have suggested conflict avoidance as counter-productive and reinforce competitive conflict. However, conflict avoidance it is thought to be a "culturally correct" strategy in China and can be highly constructive in some situations (Zhang, Wei, & Leung, 2011). In addition, describing conflict avoidance as minimizing direct discussion is compatible with the studies on Deutsch (1973)'s theory; the scholars in this stream believe open-minded discussion

is one of the most significant characteristics to distinguish whether conflict is dealt with a constructive or destructive approach (Tjosvold & Tjosvold, 1994). In conflict avoidance, the protagonists may not have an open-minded discussion immediately when they perceive the conflict, but they seek a proper time to have it later; or they elaborate their ideas openly to a third party and ask a third party to report that to the counterparty. In these two situations, open-minded discussion also contributes a lot to make the conflict constructive. Thus, Chen et al. (2005)'s definition is more meaningful for research purpose.

Based on this definition, regardless of cooperative goals, competitive goals or independent goals, each of them can lead to conflict avoiding behavior. Previous studies also indicate that conflict avoidance is a complicated behavior that includes different motivations and actions, which cause different outcomes accordingly (Friedman et al., 2005; Peng & Tjosvold, 2011; Tjosvold & Sun, 2002). Therefore, getting insight into the protagonists' psychological process in conflict situations would be meaningful to understand this behavior.

The conflict process

Conflict process refers to "the sequence of events that occurs during a conflict and the manner in which events cause later events and outcomes" (Thomas, 1990, p. 656). Thomas's conflict process model is a useful framework for us to understand the dynamic structure of a conflict episode. In this model, he proposes conflict awareness, thoughts and emotions, intentions, behavior and consequences are the

elements in a conflict episode. In addition, he emphasizes the function of behavior intentions, since whether a conflict is constructive or destructive largely depends on the specific behaviors the protagonists take (Tjosvold, Poon, & Yu, 2005) and intentions have been widely used to predict a series of behaviors (Sheeran, 2002).

Intention means the decision to behave in some ways, which happens between protagonist's thought and overt behaviors (Thomas, 1990). Previous studies in conflict management always treat intention and behavior together, but it is not useful for us to get insight of the dynamic structure of conflict. For one thing, there are a lot of slippage occurs between the perception of conflict and actual behaviors which the protagonist take to handle conflict. For another, protagonists in a conflict must infer each other's intentions in order to decide how to respond.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the most effective and significant predictor of one person's behavior is the intention he or she hopes to perform (Sheeran, 2002). The theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and attitude-behavior theory (Triandis, 1980) provide an impressive support to this view. Furthermore, Thomas (1992) also admitted that he was strongly influenced by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975)'s cognitive model, which indicates that intentions intervene between cognitive reasoning and overt behavior. Therefore, it is useful to include behavioral intentions in the theoretical framework of this study.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggested that two types of reasoning shape people's behavioral intentions: rational/instrumental reasoning and normative reasoning.

Rational/instrumental reasoning evaluates the desirability of the probable outcomes, whereas normative reasoning evaluates the goodness of the act itself. These two types of reasoning are both within the attribution process of goal interdependence. Thus, in this study we propose that how people understand their goals are related significantly shapes their behavioral intentions to approach conflict. Specifically,

H1a: To the extent that employees have cooperative goals with their supervisors, they have cooperative intentions.

H1b: To the extent that employees have cooperative goals with their supervisors, they have few competitive intentions.

H1c: To the extent that employees have cooperative goals with their supervisors they have few independent intentions.

H2a: To the extent that employees have competitive goals with their supervisors, they have competitive intentions.

H2b: To the extent that employees have competitive goals with their supervisors, they have few cooperative intentions.

H2c: To the extent that employees have competitive goals with their supervisors, they have few independent intentions.

H3a: To the extent that employees have independent goals with their supervisors, they have independent intentions.

H3b: To the extent that employees have independent goals with their

supervisors, they have few cooperative intentions.

H3c: To the extent that employees have independent goals with their supervisors, they have few competitive intentions.

Conflict Avoidance in China

Conflict avoidance is prevalent in China and it appears to be more familiar to Chinese people than cooperative and competitive approaches (Chen et al., 2005; Friedman et al., 2006; Leung et al., 2011). In Chinese culture, people give interpersonal harmony high priority, which can exceed economic interests in certain situations. Thus, Chinese people are apt to smooth over conflict to maintain interpersonal harmony (Leung, 1997; Zhang et al., 2011). Even in the Western countries, conflict avoidance also happens when interpersonal relationship is highly emphasized (Leung, 1988; Folger & Skarlicki, 1998). However, how to avoid conflict may have diverse forms in the workplace. An employee can just obey his supervisor although he has different opinions, or he can find an appropriate opportunity to let his supervisor understand his concerns, or he also can seek support from a third party. But distinct behaviors accordingly lead to different consequences, which can either be constructive or destructive. Thus, this part tries to identify the conditions as well as the behaviors that can make conflict avoidance constructive.

Conflict avoidance in organizations

Some previous studies have attempted to identify the situations where people

tend to avoid conflicts. Rahim (2010) suggested that when the issue is trivial, potential dysfunctional effect of confronting the other party outweighs benefits of a solution and that a cooling period is needed; in these situations, an avoiding style is appropriate for conflict management. Moreover, Leung (1988)'s experiment concluded that conflict avoidance is more likely to happen to an in-group member than a stranger. Similarly, people are easy to avoid conflict when they have relational intimacy, because they try to prevent from hurting others' face and interpersonal harmony (Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Yokochi, Masumoto, & Takai, 2000).

Rahim and Bonoma (1979)'s model classifies conflict management into five behavioral styles named as integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising. Each conflict style is distributed over two dimensions: concern for self and concern for others. Regarding avoiding, they described it as low concern for the self and others and "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" style (Rahim & Magner, 1995, p.28). Thus, an avoiding person fails to satisfy both his/her own concern and the other party's concern. However, this typology is developed in the West; some cross-cultural studies propose that avoidance reflects concern for others in collectivistic cultures (Cai & Fink, 2002; Gabrielidis, Stephan, Ybarra, Pearson, & Villareal, 1997).

Conflict avoidance in collectivistic cultures

In a conflict situation, culture plays a vital role in shaping people's perception, attitude and conflict management approach (Leung et al., 2011; Leung & Tjosvold,

1998). It works as a frame in which people concentrate on some characteristics of a conflict situation, and then invoke certain psychological processes to judge this conflict situation (Mather & Yngvesson, 1981; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994; Zhang et al., 2011). In the past several decades, a large number of theoretical and empirical studies have been conducted to investigate how Chinese behaviors differ from Westerners in various social contexts. Among these studies, individualism-collectivism is a commonly used dimension to contrast Chinese and Western cultures and has considerable supporting evidence (Hofstede, 1980; Hui, 1988; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Triandis, Botempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988).

Generally speaking, in individualistic societies, people concern more about their personal goals and interests; while in collectivistic societies, people concern more about group interests and harmony (Hofstede, 1980). The individualistic and collectivistic cultural values affect a wide range of interpersonal communication. Specifically, individualism is related to direct communication style, whereas collectivism is related to indirect communication style. As most literature indicated, Chinese culture is relatively high on collectivism, so conflict avoidance is prevalent in China. Chinese people believe that avoiding conflict can protect interpersonal relationships, but a direct confrontation would destroy interpersonal harmony (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002).

Moreover, since previous studies indicate that people of collectivistic cultures tend to be high-contextual and China is a high-context society (Hofstede, 1980; Peng, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1985; Zhang et al., 2011), Chinese people have difficulty to

separate conflict from the protagonists involved in it. Thus, it makes Chinese people prefer non-confrontational approaches to cope with conflicts as well.

Conflict avoidance between employees and their supervisors in China

Besides individualism-collectivism, power distance is also a critical dimension to differentiate Chinese culture from others (Hofsetde, 1980). Power distance refers to the "extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofsetde, 1991, p.28). Valuing inequality of power distribution reinforces the supervisor-employee hierarchy. Obeying authority and fearing disagreement with leaders at higher level is the characteristic of large power distance cultures. In large power distance culture, employees are less open with their supervisors and afraid or at least do not want to express different opinions to their supervisors, so conflict avoidance happens more frequently (Peng, 2003; Ting-Toomy, 1988).

Previous studies indicate that countries dominated by Chinese culture are higher in collectivism and larger in power distance (Hofsetde, 1991). Chinese employees perceive larger power distance than the Western employees, so they try to be sensitive to protect supervisors' face and obey their decisions. Moreover, the higher status the other party occupies the higher intentions the employees have to avoid direct confrontation (Friedman et al., 2006).

Diversity of conflict avoiding behavior

Conflict avoidance is usually regarded as one approach in the West, but in China

people use various behaviors to avoid conflict. In an exploratory study by Tjosvold and Sun (2002), they identified two specific actions to avoid conflict, namely, outflanking and conforming and this distinction has received additional empirical support (Peng & Tjosvold, 2011). Outflanking refers to the protagonists try to influence the other party's decision through a third party, but avoiding face-to-face confrontation. Conforming represents the traditional image of conflict avoidance. Protagonists conform to others describe their behaviors as complying with the others' decision, restraining expressing opposite views and assisting to implement the decision.

Outflanking is quite distinct from conforming, because people who employ outflanking are usually highly goal-oriented and proactive, instead of passive and apathetical (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002). That means outflanking is more associated with cooperative approach, whereas conforming is more associated to a competitive approach or independent relationship.

In addition, the protagonists in a conflict situation may also choose to explore and find an appropriate opportunity to discuss the issue later. This behavior is labeled as delaying in previous study (Peng & Tjosvold, 2011). Delaying may provide a "cooling-off period" for both parties to release their intense emotions, or some time to collect information which is helpful to persuade the other party. Since this behavior is also goal-oriented and concerns long-term interpersonal relationships, we propose delaying is a cooperative approach as well.

Furthermore, emotionality of conflict cannot dissipate just because we avoid it,

so passive aggression is another prevalent conflict avoiding behavior in the workplace. It describes the situation where the protagonist expresses frustration in an indirect or subtle way to the other party, such as avoiding meeting the other party and lowering other's morale (Bond & Huang, 1986; Murphy, 2005). Since passive aggression is the result of releasing one's psychological frustration to the detriment of another, it should be a competitive approach.

Although these four types of conflict avoiding behavior do not include all the avoiding behaviors in the workplace, they are representative and have been described in previous literature. Moreover, since Sheeran (2002) in his review of intention-behavior relations suggested that if a researcher wants to know how people are going to behave, the best method is to ask people how they intend to behave. Based on the theory of cooperation and competition as well as the analysis of the specific avoiding behavior, we develop the following hypotheses:

H4a: To the extent that the employees have cooperative intentions, they use outflanking to avoid conflicts with their supervisors.

H4b: To the extent that the employees have cooperative intentions, they use delaying to avoid conflicts with their supervisors.

H5a: To the extent that the employees have competitive intentions, they use conforming to avoid conflicts with their supervisors.

H5b: To the extent that the employees have competitive intentions, they use passive aggression to avoid conflicts with their supervisors.

In addition, previous studies indicate that independent goals have similar effect on interaction as competitive goals (Deutsch, 1973; Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Thus, we propose:

H6a: To the extent that the employees have independent intentions, they use conforming to avoid conflicts with their supervisors.

H6b: To the extent that the employees have independent intentions, they use passive aggression to avoid conflicts with their supervisors.

Value of conflict avoidance

Traditionally, conflict management approaches without immediate open discussion are thought to be less effective (De Dreu & Van de Vlitert, 1997). However, in some situations, conflict avoidance can lead to desirable and effective outcomes as well (Zhang et al., 2011; Tjosvold & Sun, 2002). Regarding the four types of conflict avoiding behavior we just elaborated on above, since outflanking and delaying are more associated with cooperative approaches, whereas conforming and passive aggression are more associated with competitive approaches or an independent goal relationship, we propose that outflanking and delaying can generate positive effects on conflict resolution, whereas conforming and passive aggression have negative effects on conflict resolution. Moreover, previous studies also point out that the higher avoidance tendency in collectivistic cultures is due to the high concern for maintaining good relationship (Zhang et al., 2011). Thus, besides

productivity, we also include relationship with supervisor and social respect of work capacity to measure the outcomes of different conflict avoiding behaviors. Specifically, we propose that:

H7a: To the extent that the employees use outflanking to avoid conflict, they increase their productivity.

H7b: To the extent that the employees use outflanking to avoid conflict, they improve their relationship with their supervisors.

H7c: To the extent that the employees use outflanking to avoid conflict, they strengthen their social respect of work capacity for their supervisors.

H8a: To the extent that the employees use conforming to avoid conflict, they decrease their productivity.

H8b: To the extent that the employees use conforming to avoid conflict, they undermine their relationship with their supervisors.

H8c: To the extent that the employees use conforming to avoid conflict, they weaken their social respect of work capacity for their supervisors.

H9a: To the extent that the employees use delaying to avoid conflict, they increase their productivity.

H9b: To the extent that the employees use delaying to avoid conflict, they improve their relationship with their supervisors.

H9c: To the extent that the employees use delaying to avoid conflict, they

strengthen their social respect of work capacity for their supervisors.

H10a: To the extent that the employees use passive aggression to avoid conflict, they decrease their productivity.

H10b: To the extent that the employees use passive aggression to avoid conflict, they undermine their relationship with their supervisors.

H10c: To the extent that the employees use passive aggression to avoid conflict, they weaken their social respect of work capacity for their supervisors.

In conclusion, as shown in Figure 1, this study proposes that goal interdependence affects the intentions of conflict management behaviors; then these intentions influence overt conflict avoiding behaviors and these behaviors lead to outcomes. This model also argues that cooperative goals, competitive goals, and independent goals are antecedents that affect the outcomes of productivity, relationship with supervisor, and social respect of work capacity in conflict avoidance situations.

Hypothesized Model

Figure 1 Hypothesized Structural Model in This Study
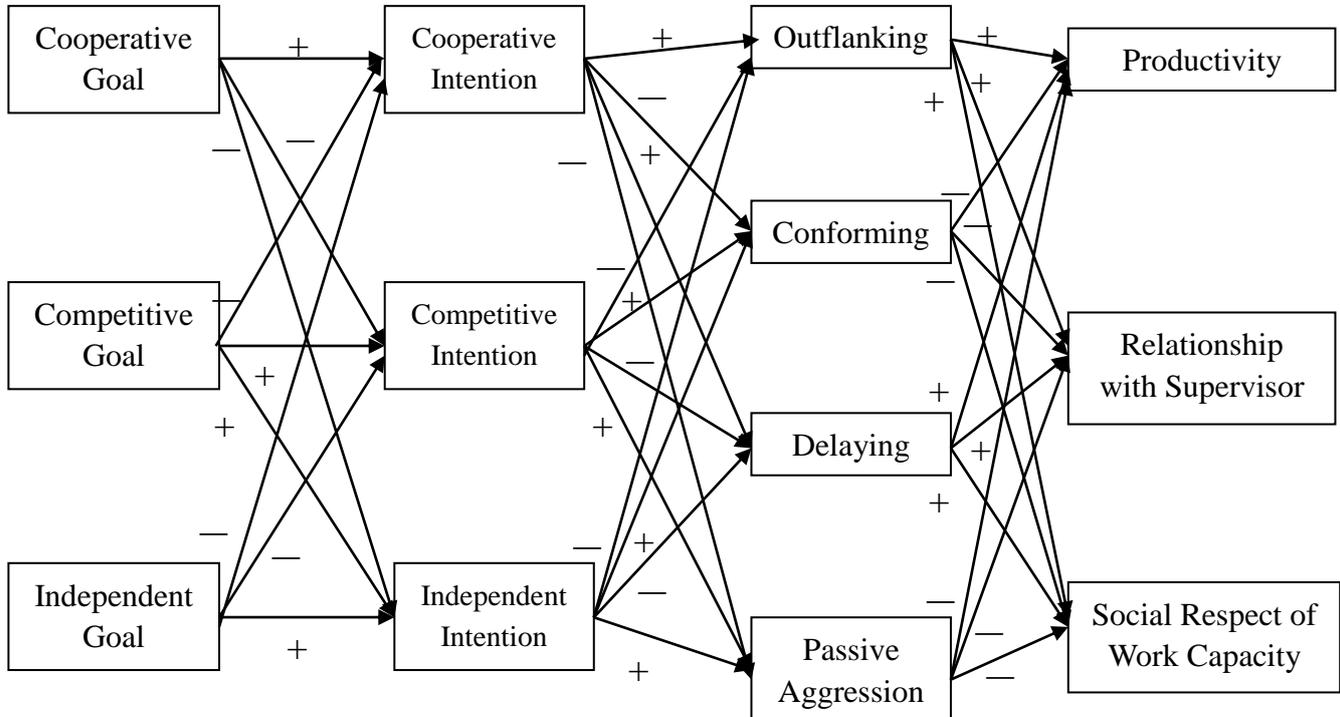
Summary

Conflict is embedded in organizations. Defining conflict as perceived divergence of interests or goals is not comprehensive enough to describe the conflict phenomena in the workplace; but defining conflict as a whole process of a conflict episode is not accurate to describe a phenomenon. Therefore, this study follows the definition that conflict as incompatible activities (Deutsch, 1973).

Previous studies have documented the value of conflict in organization on innovation, decision-making and team building (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 1998; Chen et al., 2005). Thus, how to make conflict play a positive role draws great

attention from both researchers and practitioners. This study adopts the theory of cooperation and competition to analyze the conditions and management approach that can lead to constructive outcomes. This theory indicates that how people interpret a perceived conflict relationship (i.e. cooperative goals, competitive goals or independent goals) significantly affects their approaches to managing conflict and thereby determines the outcomes. Based on this theory, two proactive approaches (i.e. cooperative approach and competitive approach) to managing conflict have been identified. Moreover, avoiding is also a prevalent approach to managing conflict, which refers to minimizing direct and immediate discussion about the conflict issue when people perceive it. Although conflict avoidance is usually regarded as counter-productive in previous literature, it can be highly constructive in some situations, especially in Chinese cultures. Due to the collectivistic culture and larger power distance, Chinese people are usually highly concerned for interpersonal harmony and this concern becomes more intense when the protagonists are in a supervisor-subordinate relationship; therefore, conflict avoidance in supervisor-subordinate relationships deserves more attention.

However, the motivations that lead to conflict avoidance can multiply and the actions to avoid conflict can be taken in different forms. Previous studies identify four typical conflict avoiding behaviors; they are outflanking, conforming, delaying and passive aggression. We combine Thomas (1990)'s conflict process model with the theory of cooperation and competition to form the theoretical framework of this study. Intentions have been demonstrated to be the best predictor of human behaviors

and intervene between cognitive process and overt behaviors, so we treat behavioral intentions as a critical step between perceived goal interdependence and overt avoiding behaviors. Specifically, we hypothesize that goal interdependence causes different behavioral intentions, and these intentions lead to conflict avoiding behaviors that result in different outcomes.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter II reviewed previous studies on conflict avoiding behavior as well as central theories and constructs; and then it summarized the hypotheses and proposed the hypothesized model in this study. To test the proposed model, I conducted interviews in the Chinese Mainland during the summer of 2011. This chapter describes the sampling, interview schedule, and data analysis.

The interview process had two phrases. A pre-test was conducted to ensure that participants would understand the scales' items in their translations. Five MPhil students at Lingnan University and five previous colleagues participated in the pre-test. According to their feedback and my supervisor's suggestions, I adjusted and refined the items. I then interviewed participants in Chinese Mainland from July to September 2011. The interviewees were recruited from my personal social network, including previous colleagues, business partners, former classmates, and friends.

Participants

The initial participants included 128 employees from Tianjin, Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen. In order to minimize the effects of respondents' confusion about the questions, I reviewed their responses before conducting the statistic analysis. Eighteen participants were excluded from this study: (1) one participant rated four for all the items; (2) one participant rated from seven to one and then back to seven;

(3) 16 participants did not notice the instructions in different parts of the scales. Specifically, their ratings in the scales of outflanking, conforming, delaying and passive aggression were inconsistent with their actually adopted behaviors in the incidents they recalled. After discussing with them, I found these inconsistencies were due to they did not notice the instruction to the overt behavior scales (i.e. please rate the following questions about your behavior in this incident.), so they just reported their behavior intentions. Therefore, we have reason to believe it is desirable to exclude these 18 participants. Finally, the sample size in this study included 110 participants.

As we know, the goal of survey research is to generalize the information gathered from survey to a population, and appropriate sample sizes influence the quality and accuracy of the research (Bartlett, Kotrlik & Higgins, 2001). Especially in the literature of factor analysis, considerable opinions and evidences about an adequate sample size have been proposed. Traditionally, the requirement for sample size is stated in terms of the minimum necessary sample size, N, or the minimum ratio p which is the quotient of N to the number of variables to be analyzed (MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang, & Hong, 1999). Gorsuch (1983) suggested that N should be no less than 100 and this view is supported by Kline (1979)'s study. As to the p ratio, Cattell (1978) recommended it should be in the range of 3 to 6; Gorsuch (1983) suggested 5 was the minimum. Therefore, 110 participants with p ratio 8.46 is an acceptable sample size.

Although not representative of all Chinese employees, their incidents can still

help us to understand the conflict avoiding behavior of Chinese employees (Table 1). Of the participants, 15 were from Beijing, 79 from Tianjin, nine from Shanghai, and seven from Shenzhen. 42 (38.2%) are male and 68 (61.8%) are female. Their average age was 27.7, with 14 (12.7%) below 25 years, 81 (73.7%) between 25 and 30 years old, 14 (12.7%) between 31 and 40 years old, and 1(0.9%) above 41 years old. Regarding the highest education level, 1 (0.9%) had a high school degree, 15 (13.6%) held college degrees, 76 (69.1%) obtained university degrees, and 18 (16.4%) had postgraduate degrees. The participants were from 76 organizations with 36 from state-owned companies, 47 from foreign-invested companies, and 27 from privately-owned companies. The average number of years they served in their current organizations was 3.8 years.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristic of Interviewees

		Number of Participants	Percentage
Gender	Male	42	38.2
	Female	68	61.8
Age	< 25	14	12.7
	25 - 30	81	73.7
	31 - 40	14	12.7
	≥ 41	1	0.9
Education Level	High School Degree	1	0.9
	College Degree	15	13.6
	University Degree	76	69.1
	Graduate Degree	18	16.4
Company Ownership	State-owned	36	32.7
	Foreign-invested	47	42.7
	Privately-owned	27	24.6
Position	Average employee	84	76.4
	Supervisor	11	10.0
	Manager	15	13.6

Interview Schedule

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was employed to develop the interview

structure (Flanagan, 1954). CIT has been regarded as a useful method to study complex interpersonal phenomena (Walker & Truly, 1992). It can help to moderate the errors when the interviewees need to summarize across several incidents to make responses in most surveys (Schwartz, 1999). Another advantage of CIT is that it can utilize both qualitative and quantitative analysis of interactions, combining rigor and vigor together (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990).

All the interviews were conducted in Chinese Mainland from July to September 2011. Each interview lasted from thirty minutes to one hour. The interviewees were first informed the object of this study was to investigate the conflict avoiding behavior of Chinese employees with their supervisors; they were also told that their responses would be assured confidential. After that, each of the interviewees was asked to describe a concrete, significant incident when they had disagreement or other kinds of conflict with their supervisors but chose to avoid direct discussion with him/her. Moreover, they were informed the conflict was defined as incompatible action, so it did not have to be a war against each other. As illustrations, they were advised like this, "For instance, you did not agree with the decision of your supervisor, but you only submitted to this decision without direct discussion; or you waited for an appropriate time or third party to let him know your concern. This situation could either be successful or unsuccessful."

After they described the settings, what happened and the results of the interactions, they were asked to rate specific questions on 7-point Likert-type scales according to the recalled incidents. Face-to-face communication is useful in rating

Likert-type scales process; because it can help participants understand the items. Moreover, face-to-face communication can make the participants be absorbed more in rating. 78 participants who joined the face-to-face communication usually have hard copies in their hands when I read the items in the scales and recorded their ratings. The other 32 participants took away the hard copies of the scales after describing the incidents, and then returned their responses in one or two days.

Measures included the scales of goal interdependence, behavioral intentions, conflict avoiding behaviors, and three outcomes of productivity, relationship with supervisor, and social respect of work capacity. Moreover, open questions were introduced through the interviews to help the interviewees recall the incidents and make sure they understand to rate the scales based on their immediate feelings during the interactions.

As the interview schedule was originally written in English, three bi-lingual MPhil students translated it into Chinese. To ensure the conceptual consistency, the questions were back-translated into English to check the possible deviations (Brislin, 1970). I discussed the differences with the back-translator and then made the pre-test. Based on the feedback from the pre-test, a few questions were rephrased for clarity and the final version of Chinese instruments has been developed. All the items for the scales are shown in Appendix I (English Version) and Appendix II (Chinese Version) has the interview schedule. The items printed in grey were not included in the factor analysis, since they lowered the reliability of the scales.

Scales

Goal interdependence

The 7-point Likert-scales (from 1=strongly disagree to7=strongly agree) for goal interdependence were developed from previous studies based on Deutsch's (1949, 1973) cooperation and competition theory (Alper et al., 1998; Liu, Tjosvold, & Wong, 2004; Tjosvold, 1995). Variables for goal interdependence indicated how the interviewees perceived the relationship between their goals and those of their supervisors in the recalled conflict incidents. The four items for cooperative goals measured the extent to which the interviewees assumed their goals and their supervisors' were consistent and positively related. A sample item for the cooperative goals is "In this incident, our goals went together." The five items for competitive goals measured the extent to which the interviewees assumed their goals and their supervisors' were incompatible and negatively related. A sample item for the competitive goals is "In this incident, my supervisor structured things in ways that favored his own goals rather than my goals." The six items for independent goals measured the extent to which the interviewees thought their goals and their supervisors' were not related. A sample item for the independent goals is "In this incident, my supervisor's success was unrelated to my success." The coefficient alphas for the cooperative, competitive, and independent goals scales were .98, .96, and .89 respectively.

Behavioral intentions

The scales for behavioral intentions were newly designed but based on our field investigations. Seventeen items were developed to measure the behavioral intentions of interviewees based on their perceptions of goal interdependence with supervisors. Seven items for cooperative intentions measured the extent to which the interviewees intend to work cooperatively with the supervisors. A sample item for the cooperative intentions is "In this incident, I wanted my supervisor to understand my concern." Five items for competitive intentions measured the extent to which the interviewees intend to behave competitively with the supervisors. A sample item for the competitive intentions is "In this incident, I wanted to undermine my supervisor." Five items for independent intentions measured the extent to which interviewees intend to work independently, not caring about the supervisors' reaction. A sample item for the independent intentions is "In this incident, I was unconcerned about my supervisor's thinking." The coefficient alphas for the cooperative, competitive, and independent intentions scales were .89, .98, and .94 respectively.

Conflict avoiding behaviors

Fourteen items were taken from previous studies (Oetzel et al., 2000; Peng & Tjosvold, 2011; Rahim, 1983) to describe four kinds of individual actions in avoiding conflict (i.e. outflanking, conforming, delaying and passive aggression). Outflanking means the interviewee resorted to the third party to make the supervisor understand his/her concerns. A sample item for outflanking is "In this incident, I

talked with my supervisor through another person." Conforming means the interviewee conformed to the supervisor's decision although they did not agree personally. A sample item for conforming is "In this incident, I agreed with my supervisor to end the conflict." Delaying means the interviewee waited for a better opportunity to talk with the supervisor. A sample item for delaying is "In this incident, I waited patiently for a better opportunity to discuss the problem with my supervisor." Passive aggression means the interviewee took passive but subtle actions against the supervisor. A sample item for passive aggression is "In this incident, I tried to make my supervisor feel guilty." The coefficient alphas for the outflanking, conforming, delaying, and passive aggression scales were .96, .98, .96, and .88 respectively.

Productivity

The three-item scale (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002) aims to measure the extent to which the interaction with the supervisor helped to solve the current issue effectively and efficiently. A sample item is "How much did you and your supervisor make progress on the task because of this interaction?" The coefficient alpha of this scale was .96.

Relationship with supervisor

The three-item scale (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002) was developed to measure the extent to which the interviewees felt their supervisors were reliable and hoped to develop long-term closer relationship with them. A sample item is "How much did

this incident make you feel more confident that you could work successfully with your supervisor in the future?" The coefficient alpha of this scale was .95.

Social respect of work capacity

Four items were developed from previous studies (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002) to measure the extent to which the interviewees felt that they and their supervisors dealt with the conflict by appropriate and professional approaches which displayed their good work capacity. A sample item for this scale is "Through this incident, my supervisor and I see each other as competent." The coefficient alpha of this scale was .97.

Table 2 Measures

Measures	Number of Items	Alpha
Cooperative Goals	4	0.98
Competitive Goals	5	0.96
Independent Goals	6	0.89
Cooperative Intentions	7	0.89
Competitive Intentions	5	0.98
Independent Intentions	5	0.94
Outflanking	4	0.96
Conforming	4	0.98
Delaying	3	0.96
Aggression	3	0.88
Productivity	3	0.96
Relationship with Supervisor	3	0.95
Social Respect of Work Capacity	4	0.97

<center>**Analysis**</center>

This study adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was first conducted to test whether the items in the newly designed behavioral intention scales would form one factor. Then the correlation analysis was used to make the initial test of the relationships among variables, i.e. how the goal interdependence related to the behavioral intentions, how the behavioral intentions related to different types of avoiding behaviors, and how the avoiding behaviors related to the three outcomes. Finally, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to further test the causal relationships among goal interdependence, behavioral intentions, conflict avoiding behaviors, and the outcome variables. For the qualitative data of the interviewees' narrative accounts on those critical incidents, we summarized four representative cases in the Results Chapter to portray the conflict avoiding behaviors in work settings in Chinese Mainland.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to form consistent measures of the three proposed behavioral intention scales, namely cooperative, competitive, and independent intentions. The extraction method in this study is Principle Component Analysis; the rotation method is Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Two rounds of EFA were conducted to develop the scales.

The original 17 items were included in the first-round EFA analysis, and three factors were extracted. Table 3.1 shows the results.

<center>43</center>

Table 3.1 First-round EFA for Behavioral Intention Scales

Rotated Component Matrix			
	Component		
	Coop	Comp	Ind
I wanted to show respect to my supervisor.	0.745		
I wanted my supervisor to feel supported by me.	0.621		
I wanted my supervisor to succeed.	0.431	-0.591	
I wanted to let my supervisor know my ideas.	0.857		
I wanted my supervisor to understand my concern.	0.882		
I thought it would be more useful to talk about this issue with my supervisor later.	0.816		
I hoped this issue could be discussed with my supervisor in future.	0.873		
I wanted to undermine my supervisor.		0.941	
I wanted to hinder my supervisor's thinking.		0.953	
I wanted to see my supervisor fail.		0.951	
I did not want my supervisor to succeed.		0.944	
I did not want my supervisor to improve his ideas.		0.894	
I did not care about whether my supervisor succeeded or failed.			0.875
I was unconcerned about my supervisor's thinking.			0.904
I did not want to help or hamper my supervisor' thinking.			0.896
I was only focused on my own ideas.			0.871
I cared about whether my supervisor accepted my ideas.			0.814

Note:
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Factor loadings lower than 0.4 were masked in this table.

Table 3.1 shows that the original items satisfactorily loaded on the proposed competitive intentions and independent intentions scales. Regarding the cooperative intentions scale, the third item "I wanted my supervisor to succeed." shared the same

factor as competitive intention. Thus, this item was deleted from the cooperative intentions scale. A second round EFA used same method as the first time. The outcome was that 16 items loaded in three distinct factors (Table 3.2) and the coefficient alpha of cooperative intentions scale improved to .92.

Table 3.2 Second-round EFA for Behavioral Intention Scales

Rotated Component Matrix			
	Component		
	Coop	Comp	Ind
I wanted to show respect to my supervisor.	0.750		
I wanted my supervisor to feel supported by me.	0.622		
I wanted to let my supervisor know my ideas.	0.861		
I wanted my supervisor to understand my concern.	0.886		
I thought it would be more useful to talk about this issue with my supervisor later.	0.818		
I hoped this issue could be discussed with my supervisor in future.	0.875		
I wanted to undermine my supervisor.		0.941	
I wanted to hinder my supervisor's thinking.		0.954	
I wanted to see my supervisor fail.		0.951	
I did not want my supervisor to succeed.		0.943	
I did not want my supervisor to improve his ideas.		0.897	
I did not care about whether my supervisor succeeded or failed.			0.875
I was unconcerned about my supervisor's thinking.			0.905
I did not want to help or hamper my supervisor' thinking.			0.897
I was only focused on my own ideas.			0.872
I cared about whether my supervisor accepted my ideas.			0.813

Note:
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Factor loadings lower than 0.4 were masked in this table.

Scale validation

To test the validity of the proposed measurement structure, namely whether the respondents' ratings would load on cooperative intentions, competitive intentions, and independent intentions as three distinct variables, especially that they are distinct from three types of goal interdependence and four types of avoiding behaviors, a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) was conducted by using AMOS 17.0.

This study compared the 13-factor model labeled M0 with seven alternative 12-factor models, one 11-factor model, one 9-factor model, one 8-factor model, and one single factor model to test the factorial structure of the items. The 12-factor models of M1, M2, and M3 were formed by merging three types of goal interdependence with their relevant behavioral intentions. There were some significant correlations between the behavioral intentions variables and avoiding behavior variables, competitive intentions merged with conforming to form M4, cooperative intentions merged with delaying to form M5 and competitive intentions merged with passive aggression to form M6. Then, competitive intentions and independent intentions were combined to form M7; three types of behavioral intentions were combined to form M8. In addition, four types of avoiding behaviors were combined to form M9. Next, three types of goals and behavior intentions were merged to one factor to form M10. Finally, all the factors were combined into one factor to form M11. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Confirmatory Factor Analyses

	d.f.	Modelχ²	Δχ²	IFI	CFI	RMSEA
Baseline 13-factor Model (M0)	1311	2042.2	-	.92	.92	.07
Combined cooperative goal and cooperative intention (M1)	1364	2632.5	590.3	.86	.86	.09
Combined competitive goal and competitive intention (M2)	1364	2771.6	729.4	.84	.84	.10
Combined independent goal and independent intention (M3)	1364	2530.7	488.5	.87	.87	.09
Combined competitive intention and conforming (M4)	1364	3067.7	1025.5	.81	.81	.11
Combined cooperative intention and delaying (M5)	1364	2588.3	546.1	.86	.86	.09
Combined competitive intention and passive aggression (M6)	1364	2362.1	319.9	.89	.89	.08
Combined competitive intention and independent intention (M7)	1364	2773.4	731.2	.84	.84	.10
Combined cooperative intention, competitive intention and independent intention (M8)	1375	3201.0	1158.8	.80	.79	.11
Combined outflanking, conforming, delaying and passive aggression (M9)	1385	3530.7	1488.5	.76	.76	.12
8-factor Model (M10)	1401	4171.6	2129.4	.69	.69	.14
One factor solution (M11)	1430	6778.1	4735.9	.40	.40	.19

Note:
In the 8-factor Model, cooperative goal, competitive goal, independent goal, cooperative intention, competitive intention and independent intention are combined into one factor.
N=110

Results of the confirmatory factor analysis indicated a good fit between the proposed 13-factor measurement model (M0) and the data, with an Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of .92, .92, and .07 respectively. As shown in Table 4, the

indicators demonstrated that the 13-factor model fit the data significantly better than the 10 alternative models. First, the model chi-squares of 10 alternative models were dramatically greater than that of the baseline mode1 (M0). Second, all the IFI and CFI of the alternative models were below .90, which is relatively lower than the baseline mode1 (M0). Third, RMSEA of the alternative models were all greater than .80, which indicated they did not fit the data well. Thus, we can conclude that there are three distinct measures of behavior intentions and we included these three variables in the following analyses.

Hypotheses testing

A few previous studies suggest that women prefer to avoid conflict more than men (Brewer, Mitchell, & Weber, 2002; Valentine, 1995). Thus, we first tested whether the gender of participants influenced specific actions they took to avoid conflict. The participants were divided into two groups according to gender (i.e. female and male) and then tested the differences of their responses.

Correlation analysis on the whole data set was then conducted for the initial hypothesis testing. Structural equation modeling was employed in the next step by AMOS 17.0 to explore the underlying causal relationships among goal interdependence (i.e. cooperative goal, competitive goal, and independent goal), behavioral intentions (i.e. cooperative intentions, competitive intentions, and independent intentions), avoiding behaviors (i.e. outflanking, conforming, delaying, and passive aggression), and outcomes (i.e. productivity, relationship, and social

respect).

A nested model test commonly adopted in causal model analysis was used to compare the hypothesized model (i.e. indirect model) with three alternative models. In the first alternative model (M1), goal interdependence impacts the avoiding behaviors directly, omitting the paths related to behavioral intentions. In the second alternative model (M2), goal interdependence and behavioral intentions together lead to avoiding behaviors. The third alternative model (M3) holds that goal interdependence has direct effects on both behavioral intentions and avoiding behaviors.

Summary

One hundred and ten participants from Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Shenzhen were interviewed from June 2011 to September 2011 by critical incident technique. Interviewees were first required to recall a detailed incident in which they avoided direct discussion with their supervisors when they had a disagreement, and then rated specific questions on 7-point Likert-type scale based on the recalled incidents. Scales included goal interdependence, behavior intentions, avoiding behaviors, and three outcomes of productivity, relationship and social respect.

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted to better understand the conflict avoiding behavior of employees. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was applied to confirm the items in newly designed behavioral intention scales were

clustered to three distinct factors. The results of a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) validated the distinctiveness of the three behavioral intention scales. Then the correlational analyses were conducted to make the preliminary test of the relationships among all variables in the hypothesized model. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was also used to explore the causal relationships among goal interdependence, behavioral intentions, avoiding behaviors, and the three outcomes. Regarding the qualitative analyses, some typical incidents were summarized to understand the conditions that led to different conflict avoiding behaviors in work setting. The next chapter elaborates how we analyzed the data collected from the interviews as well as the results of the data analyses.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The previous chapter described the quantitative and qualitative methods used to analyze the data collected from interviews. This chapter presents the empirical results of the data analysis. Specifically, it describes the gender difference analysis, correlational analysis, structural equation modeling analysis, and the implications of the results for the hypotheses. This chapter also includes a summary of typical cases.

Gender Difference Analysis

The one hundred and ten participants in this study included 42 (38.2%) male employees and 68 (61.8%) female employees. The effects of gender were examined to see whether it significantly affected the responses from interviewees. Previous studies proposed that women prefer to avoid conflict more than men and it seems conflict can cause greater anxiety and discomfort to women than men (Brewer, Mitchell, & Weber, 2002; Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Mujtaba, Chawavisit, & Pattaratalwanich, 2010). Therefore, we may assume that the responses could be accordingly different for male and female participants. An independent-samples t-test was conducted by SPSS 16.0 to exam the differences.

As shown in Table 5, the results did not show significant differences in goal interdependence, behavioral intentions, avoiding behaviors, and outcomes between male and female participants. Since the results do not indicate significant difference,

we merged the data from both sets of samples together.

Table 5 Results of Gender Difference Analysis

	t	d.f.	Mean difference	P Sig.
Cooperative Goals	1.83	108	0.77	0.07
Competitive Goals	-0.39	108	-0.16	0.70
Independent Goals	-0.23	108	-0.05	0.82
Cooperative Intentions	0.78	108	0.14	0.44
Competitive Intentions	-0.14	108	-0.06	0.89
Independent Intentions	0.23	108	0.06	0.82
Outflanking	-0.28	108	-0.12	0.78
Conforming	-0.88	108	-0.37	0.38
Delaying	0.29	108	0.11	0.77
Aggression	0.77	108	0.27	0.44
Productivity	0.77	108	0.28	0.44
Relationship with Supervisor	0.44	108	0.17	0.66
Social Respect of Work Capacity	0.72	108	0.27	0.47

Note:
t-test for Equality of Means
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

Correlational Analysis

Table 6 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations of all the variables in this study. The results provide initial support to the proposed model.

Specifically, for Hypothesis 1a, Hypothesis 1b and Hypothesis 1c, perceived cooperative goals between the employees and their supervisors significantly positively relate to cooperative intentions ($r = .55$, $p < .01$), significantly negatively relate to competitive intentions ($r = -.67$, $p < .01$) and independent intentions ($r = -.35$,

p < .01). So the correlation results support Hypothesis 1a, Hypothesis 1b and Hypothesis 1c.

Correlation results support Hypothesis 2a, Hypothesis 2b as well. Perceived competitive goals between the employees and their supervisors significantly negatively relate to cooperative intentions ($r = -.50$, $p < .01$), and significantly positively relate to competitive intentions ($r = .71$, $p < .01$). Contrary to Hypothesis 2c, competitive goals significantly but positively relate to independent intentions ($r = .30$, $p < .01$).

Since perceived independent goals between the employees and their supervisors are negatively and significantly related to cooperative intentions ($r = -.43$, $p < .01$) as well as positively and significantly related to independent intentions ($r = .46$, $p < .01$), Hypothesis 3a and Hypothesis 3c are supported. But Hypothesis 3b is not supported, because independent goals are positively but not significantly related to competitive intentions ($r = .04$, ns).

Hypothesis 4a does not receive support, since cooperative intentions are negatively but not significantly related to outflanking ($r = .12$, ns). While the results support Hypothesis 4b, because cooperative intentions are positively and significantly related to delaying ($r = .50$, $p < .01$).

Correlation results are consistent with Hypothesis 5a, Hypothesis 5b, Hypothesis 6a and Hypothesis 6b in that competitive intentions and independent intentions significantly and positively are related to conforming ($r = .55$, $p < .01$; $r = .21$, $p < .05$) and passive aggression ($r = .80$, $p < .01$; $r = .21$, $p < .05$).

53

Hypothesis 7a, Hypothesis 7b and Hypothesis 7c predicated outflanking could benefit productivity, relationship with supervisor and social respect of work capacity. However, the correlation results do not support this reasoning. Outflanking is only slightly positive but not significantly related to the outcomes ($r = .03$, ns; $r = .01$, ns; $r = .05$, ns). The correlations between conforming and three outcomes are significantly negative ($r = -.50$, $p < .01$; $r = -.54$, $p < .01$; $r = -.58$, $p < .01$), which supports Hypothesis 8a, Hypothesis 8b and Hypothesis 8c. Moreover, Hypothesis 9a, Hypothesis 9b and Hypothesis 9c are supported too, as delaying is significantly positively related to productivity ($r = .36$, $p < .01$), relationship with supervisor ($r = .34$, $p < .01$) and social respect of work capacity ($r = .48$, $p < .01$). Finally, Hypothesis 10a, Hypothesis 10b and Hypothesis 10c are also supported by the correlation results, as passive aggression is significantly and negatively related to productivity ($r = -.57$, $p < .01$), relationship with supervisor ($r = -.63$, $p < .01$) and social respect of work capacity ($r = -.59$, $p < .01$). The next chapter discusses the implications of these findings.

Table 6 Correlations among Variables

	Alpha	Mean	Std.D	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
(1)Cooperative Goal	.98	3.88	2.16	-												
(2)Competitive Goal	.96	4.26	2.02	-.87**												
(3)Independent Goal	.89	2.40	1.20	-.29**	.18											
(4)Cooperative Intention	.89	5.75	0.92	.55**	-.50**	-.43**										
(5)Competitive Intention	.98	2.70	2.05	-.67**	.71**	.04	-.43**									
(6)Independent Intention	.94	2.45	1.44	-.35**	.30**	.46**	-.38**	0.17								
(7)Outflanking	.96	3.50	2.16	.04	.03	0	-.12	-.10	-.12							
(8)Conforming	.98	3.37	2.14	-.59**	.63**	.16	-.40**	.55**	.21*	.02						
(9)Delaying	.96	4.97	1.97	.46**	-.43**	-.23*	.50**	-.39**	-.12	0	-.41**					
(10)Passvie Aggression	.88	3.37	1.77	-.66**	.67**	.06	-.36**	.80**	.21*	-.06	.50**	-.33**				
(11)Productivity	.96	3.67	1.87	.68**	-.71**	-.27**	.36**	-.47**	-.30**	.03	-.50**	.36**	-.57**			
(12)Relationship with Supervisor	.95	3.96	1.93	.76**	-.75**	-.24*	.40**	-.51**	-.38**	.01	-.54**	.34**	-.63**	.79**		
(13)Social Respect of Work Capacity	.97	3.93	1.88	.79**	-.78**	-.33**	.48**	-.53**	-.39**	.05	-.58**	.48**	-.59**	.87**	.86**	-

Note:

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

Structural equation modeling was used to explore the causal relationships among goal interdependence, behavioral intentions, avoiding behaviors and outcomes. We compared the hypothesized model with three alternative models to see whether the data fitted the hypothesized one best.

Model comparison

As shown in Table 7, χ^2 of the hypothesized model was 110.1 (d.f. = 37) and NFI, IFI and CFI were 0.90, 0.90, and 0.93, respectively. Since the usually critical value for model fit index is .90 (Bentler & Bonnett, 1980), the hypothesized model fitted the data quite well.

Although the hypothesized model shows a good fit to the data, three alternative models (M1, M2 and M3) are compared to explore whether a better model structure exists. The first alternative model (M1) omits the paths related to behavioral intentions. It proposes the direct effects from goal interdependence to avoiding behaviors. The second alternative model (M2) holds that both goal interdependence and behavioral intentions are antecedences lead to avoiding behaviors. The third alternative model (M3) supposes goal interdependence influences behavioral intentions and avoiding behaviors directly.

The results of model comparison show the superiority of the hypothesized model. Specifically, the hypothesized model has a distinct improvement on the chi-square indicator, since the χ^2 of M1, M2, M3 were 331.0 (d.f. = 48), 253.0 (d.f. =

36) and 162.1 (d.f. = 39) respectively. Moreover, the NFI, IFI and CFI of the three

alternative models are all lower than .90, which is below the critical value for model

fit index. Therefore, we can conclude that the hypothesized model fits the data best.

Table 7 Results of the Nested Model Analyses

	Chi-square	d.f.	$\Delta\chi^2$	χ^2/d.f.	NFI	IFI	CFI
M0	110.1	37.0	-	2.98	0.90	0.93	0.93
M1	331.0	48.0	220.9	6.90	0.50	0.53	0.51
M2	253.0	36.0	142.9	7.03	0.76	0.79	0.78
M3	162.1	39.0	52.0	4.15	0.85	0.88	0.88

Structural Equation Modeling analysis for the hypothesized model

The path coefficients in Figure 2 explore more specific findings and the findings

generally provide support for our hypothesized model. Specifically, cooperative

goals have significantly positive effect on cooperative intentions (β = .32, p < .05)

and significantly negative effect on competitive intentions (β = -.31, p < .05). These

results support Hypothesis 1a and Hypothesis 1b. However, cooperative goals only

have negative but not significant effects on independent intentions (β = -.14, ns), so

the results do not support Hypothesis 1c.

Results support Hypothesis 2b, since competitive goals have significant and

positive effect on competitive intentions (β = .46, p < .01). Regarding to cooperative

intentions, competitive goals have negative but not significant effect (β = -.16, ns).

Likewise, competitive goals have positive but not significant effect on independent

intentions (β = .10, ns). Thus, results do not support Hypothesis 2a and Hypothesis

2c.

Furthermore, results provide support for Hypothesis 3a and Hypothesis 3c as independent goals have significant and negative effect on cooperative intentions (ß = -.31, p < .01) as well as significant and positive effect on independent intentions (ß = .40, p < .01). But the results do not support Hypothesis 3b, since independent goals have positive and non-significant effect on competitive intentions (ß = -.13, ns).

Hypothesis 4a predicated the causal relationship between cooperative intentions and outflanking. In contrast to our hypothesis, cooperative intentions have significantly negative effect on outflanking (ß = -.28, p < .01). But the path coefficients support Hypothesis 4b in that cooperative intentions have significantly positive effect on delaying (ß = .44, p < .01).

Moreover, the results are consistent with Hypothesis 5a and Hypothesis 5b, since competitive intentions have significant and positive effect on conforming (ß = .46, p < .01) and passive aggression (ß = .80, p < .01).

However, the results do not provide support to Hypothesis 6a and Hypothesis 6b which proposed the causal relationships between independent intentions and conforming and passive aggression. As shown in Figure 2, independent intentions only have positive but not significant effect on conforming (ß = .07, ns) and passive aggression (ß = .09, ns).

Figure 2 Path Estimates for the Hypothesized Structural Model

Note: N=110; **p < .01; *p < .0
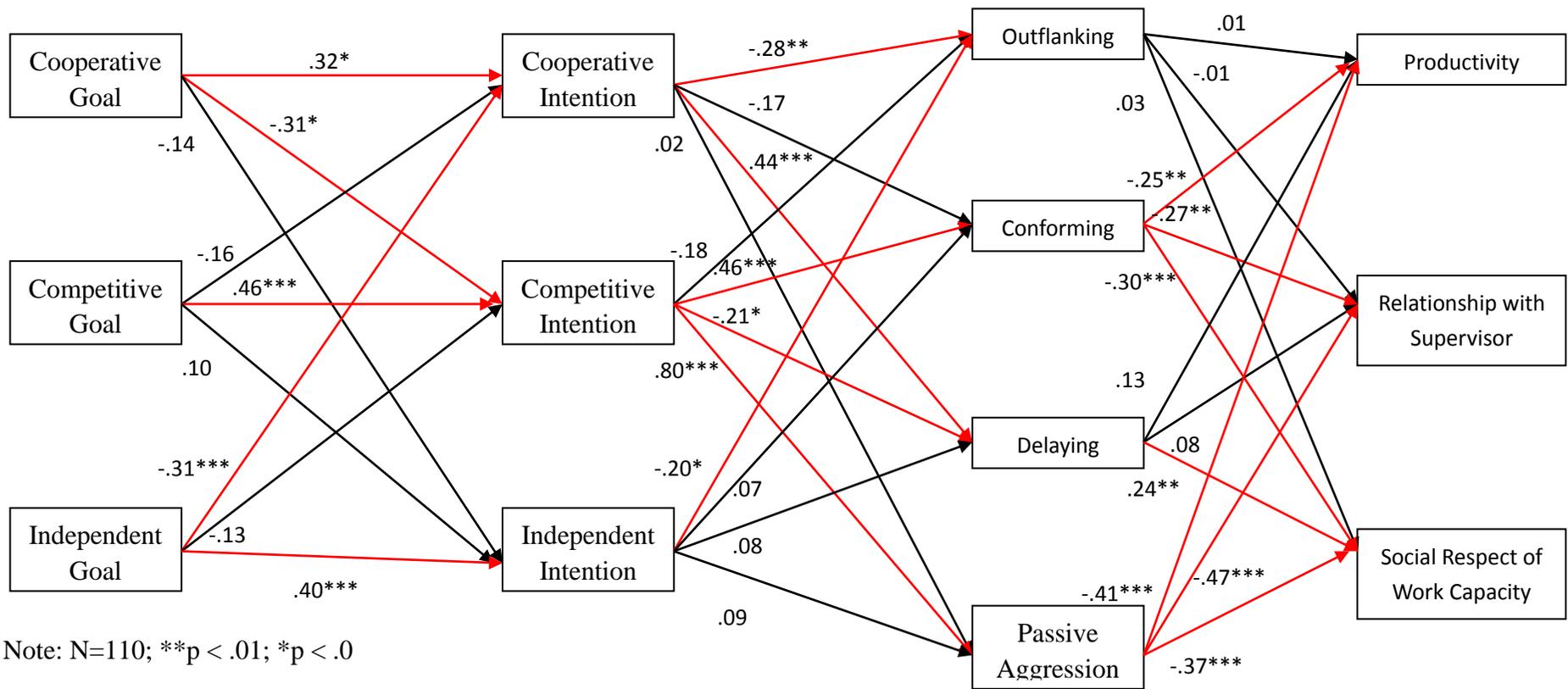
Hypothesis 7a, Hypothesis 7b and Hypothesis 7c do not receive supports from the results. Outflanking does not have significant effect on productivity (ß = .01, ns), relationship with supervisor (ß = -.01, ns), and social respect of work capacity (ß = .03, ns).

Results provide support for Hypothesis 8a, Hypothesis 8b and Hypothesis 8c. Conforming has significantly negative effects on productivity (ß = -.25, p < .01), relationship with supervisor (ß = -.27, p < .01), and social respect of work capacity (ß = -.30, p < .01).

Delaying has positive and significant effect on social respect of work capacity (ß = .24, p < .01), positive but not significant effect on productivity (ß = .13, ns) and relationship with supervisor (ß = .08, ns). Thus, Hypothesis 10c receives support, whereas Hypothesis 10a and Hypothesis 10b do not.

Finally, results support Hypothesis 10a, Hypothesis 10b and Hypothesis 10c. Passive aggression has significantly negative effects on productivity (ß = -.41, p < .01), relationship with supervisor (ß = -.47, p < .01), and social respect of work capacity (ß = -.37, p < .01).

The Discussion chapter elaborates on the theoretical and practical implications of these results.
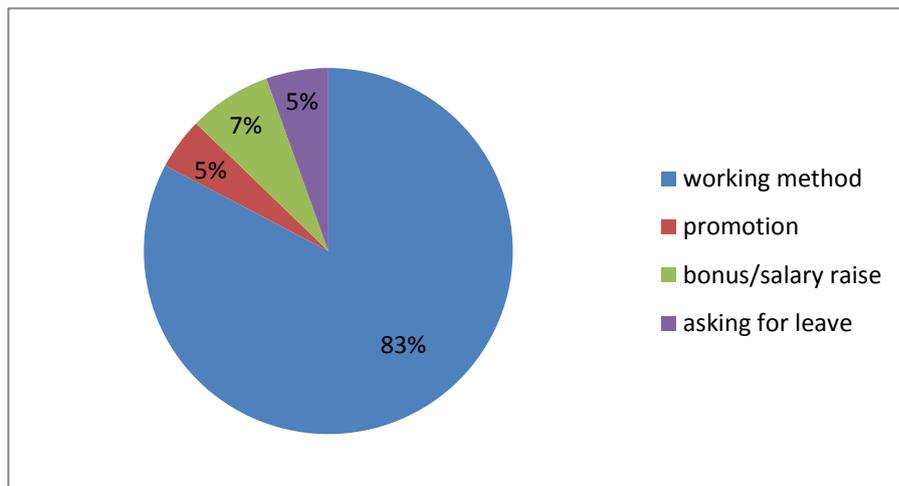
Summary of the Incidents

This study totally recorded 110 incidents from interviews. During the interview

process, we found these four types of avoiding behavior could not be totally separated; employees often adopted them in combination (Van de Vliert, Euwema, & Huismans, 1995). For instance, when employees conformed to the decision from their supervisor without agreeing, they typically had some passive aggression behaviors, such as complaining to colleagues or trying to make their supervisor feel guilty to release the psychological discomfort and even would ask for help from the third party. Thus, categorizing incidents through specific conflict avoiding behaviors seems not very practical. In this section, we attempt to explore the kinds of conflict issues that make conflict avoidance happen more frequently.

In the analysis of the conflict issues which people choose to avoid direct confrontation, it could be categorized into four categories, namely, working method (mentioned by 91 interviewees), promotion (mentioned by 5 interviewees), bonus/salary raise (mentioned by 8 interviewees) and asking for leave (mentioned by 6 interviewees). Figure 3 shows the types of conflict issues and their proportion in conflict avoidance incidents.

Figure 3 Conflict Issues in Conflict Avoidance Incidents

One research student helped me to code the incidents. At first, we worked separately to read and decide which category each of the incidents should belong to. She agreed with 107 out of 110 incidents of my original classification. Then we discussed the three cases which we had different views about classification and finally reached agreements.

Case Illustrations

The cases elaborated in this section explain the conditions and mechanisms of different conflict avoiding behaviors. This section presents five typical cases representing four types of avoiding behavior, namely, outflanking, conforming, delaying, and passive aggression. Because the results from correlational analysis and structural equation modeling are inconsistent to the relationship between cooperative intention and outflanking, two cases are introduced in the outflanking part for more insight into this avoiding behavior.

Outflanking I

Case 1 illustrates how cooperative goals might lead to cooperative intentions, and then induce outflanking behavior that finally promotes positive outcomes. A male staff of a state-owned joint-stock bank described a recent incident in which he did not agree with his manager's decision. He had worked in the Credit Card Department for nearly two years, specializing in customer service. His manager was just transferred from another department and all his experience in this bank was

about sales. Once in an informal meeting, they talked about how to send the new password envelops to the customers who forgot the password. The staff said only the VIP customers should be delivered by express, but the manager said that all the password envelopes should be delivered by express. Then, the staff said nothing because he was afraid to hurt the face of the new manager and he understood this manager did not know much about daily operation. Thus, he told this story to the supervisor who specialized in operation training and asked her for help. Then the training supervisor invited this manager to attend her training course and made the manager understand the staff was correct.

Outflanking II

Case 2 describes how competitive goals might lead to competitive intentions, and then also stimulate outflanking behavior with negative outcomes. A male store manager found the overtime pay to the employees in his store was lower than the amount they should get according to the company's regulation, so he tried to communicate this problem to the regional manager. However, the regional manager insisted his method to calculate overtime pay was also reasonable; moreover, this method could reduce the overtime pay and his region would get more profit. The store manager felt it was hard to change the regional manager's mind and this method would have negative influence on the company. Thus, he asked help from the HR manager in headquarters. After investigating by the headquarters, the HR manager notified the regional manager to change the overtime pay calculation

method as soon as possible.

Conforming

Case 3 is an incident about how competitive goals might cause competitive intentions, and then lead to conforming behavior with negative outcomes. A male project supervisor in a foreign-invested logistics company recalled an incident about the unfairness of bonus distribution. The project he was in charge of contributed much to the company, so the general manager in headquarters rewarded RMB 20,000 to the whole project team. However, the general manager in his branch held this money and rewarded the staffs he preferred under the table, even including the staffs not in this project team. The project supervisor was so angry and disappointed about that, but he feared the branch manager would take revenge on him if he queried this matter. He did hope the headquarters would know about that and punish his brand manager. Finally, he left this company seven months later.

Delaying

Case 3 illustrates delaying behavior which is the most frequently adopted one under cooperative intention, and usually leads to some positive outcomes. A male journalist worked in a state-owned newspaper office recounted an incident in their 2010 annual dinner. At that time, he was nominated as the performance organizer and in charge of performance rehearsal in his department. His manager suggested rehearsing a witty skit, but he preferred to have a group dance instead, because he had learned dancing since he was very young and did not have previous experience

in witty skits. But he did not reject the manager's suggestion immediately, because he found the manager was excited about that idea. Then, after communicating with other members in his department, he elaborated his idea to the manager during lunch-time because he thought lunch time was more relaxing. In addition, he showed his previous group dance video to the manager. After that, the manager began to express interest in his suggestion. Striking while the iron is hot, then he suggested the manager to join the group dance and he could arrange an easy but shinning role for her. The manager was very happy with this suggestion and encouraged him to rehearse the group dance. Their performance received very good feedback in the annual dinner and he felt the manager trusted him more after this interaction.

Passive aggression

Case 4 illustrates how competitive intentions caused by competitive goals that lead to passive aggression behavior that finally bring negative outcomes. A female staff from a foreign-invested freight forwarding company discussed avoiding conflict through passive aggression behavior. In order to facilitate communication, her manager wanted to transfer her work site from the company office to the factory of their client. But this female staff really did not like the working environment in the factory. In order not to irritate her manager, she accepted the change in work site but tried to find a way to return to the office. She made an excuse that she was sensitive to the air in the factory and such allergy could lead to blackout. Moreover, she complained a lot to her colleagues in the factory that the factory was too far from her

home, so she must leave in advance in order to catch the last bus. Finally, the manager felt guilty about her allergy and asked her back to the office after two weeks.

Summary

This chapter elaborated the methods and results of the data analysis. We conducted sample difference analysis, correlational analysis, and structural equation modeling to exam our hypotheses.

First, results of gender difference analysis did not indicate significant differences between male and female participants' ratings on variables. Moreover, the correlational analysis largely supported the hypotheses that cooperative goals significantly and positively related to constructive outcomes in some conflict avoidance situations. In addition, structural equation modeling further tested the causal relationships among goal interdependences, behavioral intentions, avoiding behaviors and the outcomes. The model fit indices demonstrated that the hypothesized model fit the data well. This chapter also conducted qualitative analyses including the analysis of conflict issues in conflict avoidance incidents and five typical cases to better understand the conditions and dynamic structure of specific conflict avoiding behaviors.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter overviews the results of this study and then discusses them in regards to the study's research questions. Specifically, it discusses issues on the relationships between goal interdependence and behavioral intentions and different conflict avoiding behaviors and their effects on productivity, relationships with supervisor, and social respect of work capacity. This chapter also proposes limitations, future research possibilities, and practical implications.

Summary of the Results

This study proposes a theoretical model of conflict avoiding behavior between Chinese employees and their supervisors within organizations, aiming to understand the conditions and dynamic structure of conflict avoidance and how to make conflict avoidance constructive. A series of statistical analyses were conducted to test the hypothesized relationships among variables.

Results support the theorizing that goal interdependence is a significant predictor of behavioral intentions that in turn leads to different avoiding behaviors that result in either constructive or destructive outcomes. In other words, in conflict avoidance situations cooperative goals between employees and their supervisors lead to constructive outcomes, whereas competitive and independent goals lead to less desirable outcomes.

Specifically, the results of the correlational analysis show that although independent goals and competitive intentions are not statistically significant, all other hypotheses on the relationship between goal interdependence and behavioral intentions are significant at the 0.05 level.

The correlational results further support the theorizing that cooperative intention leads to delaying and that competitive and independent intentions result in conforming and passive aggression. Yet the hypothesized relationship between cooperative goals and outflanking is not supported.

As to the relationship between avoiding behaviors and outcomes, the proposed significant and positive relationships between outflanking and outcomes were not supported as well, suggesting that outflanking is more complicated than our original assumption. Moreover, delaying is significantly and positively related to productivity, relationship with supervisor and social respect of work capacity; whereas conforming and passive aggression are significantly and negatively related to those outcomes. Therefore, the results of correlational analysis generally support our hypotheses.

Furthermore, the model indices from Structural Equation Modeling show that the hypothesized model fit the data well. In particular, three types of goal interdependence lead to three types of behavioral intentions respectively. Cooperative intention promotes delaying, whereas competitive intention results in conforming and passive aggression. Moreover, delaying has significantly positive effects on social respect of work capacity; while conforming and passive aggression have significantly negative effects on productivity, relationship with supervisor and

social respect of work capacity.

Surprisingly, cooperative intention has a significantly negative effect on outflanking, which is contrary to our hypothesis but consistent with the results of the correlational analysis.

Findings Testing the Hypotheses

Goal interdependence and behavioral intentions

Consistent with our expectations, correlational and path estimation results both demonstrated that goal interdependence is a powerful and immediate predictor to behavioral intentions. Three types of goal interdependence lead to three types of behavioral intentions. These results support Thomas (1990)'s conflict process model which emphasized the role of cognition in shaping people's conflict behavior since cognitive reasoning greatly determines people's behavioral intention and then overt behavior.

Cooperative intention and conflict avoiding behaviors

With cooperative intention, people tend to solve conflict constructively and use flexible approaches rather than direct discussion to let their supervisors understand their concerns. Previous studies suggested that outflanking is a constructive approach to avoid conflict; they indicate that protagonists who adopted outflanking to avoid conflict were highly proactive to get ideas implemented and resulted in reported improvement of performance and confidence (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002). However, the

result in this study is in contrast to the theorizing of a causal relationship between cooperative intention and outflanking. Our results show that cooperative intention had a significantly negative effect on outflanking.

One possible explanation for this unexpected result is that people can have distinct motivations for asking a third party for assistance. Specifically, when employees have a cooperative intention to approach conflict, they consider more about how to accomplish their mutual task. Thus, they usually ask help from someone who can communicate their concerns to the supervisors but would not hurt the relationship with their supervisors. However, when employees have competitive intention to approach conflict, they usually ask others to help them get their own ideas and plans implemented, so they normally ask help from the person they believe can help them overcome their supervisors or at least can put some pressure on their supervisors. Two typical cases summarized in Case Illustration section of Chapter 5 provide a good elaboration to these two kinds of situations. Case 1 described an incident that an employee perceived cooperative goals with his manager and he asked a training supervisor to let this manager know the correct operation process. Case 2 described an incident that a store manager had competitive goals with his regional manager and he asked help from the HR manager in headquarters to force the regional manager to accept his ideas.

Results support that cooperative intention makes people more likely to wait for an appropriate opportunity to solve conflict. This result is consistent with our previous findings that perceived cooperative relationship leads to a waiting strategy

in conflict avoidance situations (Peng, 2007). A "Cooling off period" was mentioned very frequently by our interviewees. They believed bad emotion could dissipate with the passing of time and then they could talk about the issues in a calm mood. Moreover, some interviewees suggested seeking a private talk or an appropriate opportunity to minimize the possible hurt to the relationships with their supervisors. In addition, when encountering conflict with supervisors, employees can use time to understand their supervisors' concern, reconsider their own opinions and then develop ideas on how to persuade their supervisors. Therefore, delaying can be regarded as a safe, courteous and flexible approach to avoid conflict.

Competitive intention and conflict avoiding behaviors

The results suggest that competitive intention makes people more likely to use conforming and passive aggression to avoid conflict. Conforming is the traditional image of conflict avoidance, but the results of our study show that conforming usually happens when the employees have competitive intention to solve conflict. With competitive intention, employees want to undermine their supervisors and see their failures, so they tend to withhold useful information and constructive suggestions. Thus, their overt behavior is agreeing to supervisors' decision and giving up their own opinions in order to prevent the conflict.

In addition, our results demonstrate that employees with competitive intentions in conflict avoidance situations tend to seek other channels to express their frustration. Interpersonal conflict is thought be a highly distressing event on mental

health (Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Schilling, 1989); the tensions cannot disappear just because people avoid conflict. Moreover, the stress nature of conflict becomes more serious when people plan to deal with conflict by competitive approaches. Our interviewees reported that they complained about the conflict issue to other colleagues, attempted to make their supervisors feel guilty or took other subtle approaches when they had to obey decisions they did not agree with. Sometimes, they even obeyed publicly and disobeyed privately (Hwang, 1998).

In conclusion, competitive intention stimulates the negative aspects of conflict avoidance. This finding confirms and develops the results from previous survey studies that competitive goals and avoiding conflict are related, indeed, competition leads to conflict avoidance (Barker et al., 1988; Tjosvold & Sun, 2002; Tjosvold, 1982).

Independent intention and conflict avoiding behaviors

Although independent intention is significantly and positively correlated to conforming and passive aggression, the path coefficients do not support their causal relationships. Independent intention only has significant negative effect on outflanking, but no significant effect on other behavior variables.

People with independent intention are not concerned with others' success or failure, so they may not want to waste energy to consider how to make the conflict constructively and just go with the flow. They may conform, wait or express their dissatisfaction in some situations but without strong desire to change the outcomes.

However, outflanking is a highly proactive behavior; people with independent intention may think there is no need to spend much effort to solve the conflict. Further research is needed to investigate this speculation.

Effects of conflict avoiding behaviors

Results support our hypotheses that different actions in conflict avoidance lead to different outcomes. This section discusses the effects of outflanking, conforming, delaying and passive aggression respectively.

First, results do not provide support for the hypotheses that outflanking has positive effects on productivity, relationship with supervisor and social respect of work capacity; the effect from outflanking in our proposed model is mixed. These results are not surprising, since outflanking can be caused either by cooperative intention or competitive intention as discussed above. People who use outflanking with cooperative intention try to make their supervisors consider the conflict issue comprehensively and improve decision quality, so outflanking can lead to a more thoughtful decision. Moreover, in this situation, supervisors often appreciate their effort and communication skill, which can strength employees' relationship with their supervisors and enhance their social respect. Participants reported that resorting to a mutually trusted third party helped the supervisors understand their ideas and led to a more intimate relationship as well as established their competent image, whereas people who adopted outflanking with competitive intention tended to force others to conform to their ideas, which usually led to ineffective outcomes. Moreover, since

the employees asked others to suppress their supervisors, it harmed their relationship with their supervisors and showed they lack the ability to get things done independently. As one participant said, asking help from upper level manager made her supervisor treat her as a whistleblower.

Second, results suggest the significantly negative effect from conforming, which is consistent with the findings from previous studies that conforming undermines relationships and performance in teams (Chen & Tjosvold, 2002; Tjosvold, 2008). The effect of conforming is similar to close-minded discussion which usually has a negative effect on productivity (Chen & Tjosvold, 2007; Tjosvold, 2008). Moreover, due to the psychological frustration caused by obeying what they do not like or agree with, conforming worsens interpersonal relationships and social respect. Some participants reported that conforming to the decisions they did not like made them less committed to the task and more dissatisfied with their supervisors.

Third, delaying was found to contribute to social respect of work capacity in this study. Since employees avoid immediate confrontation in order to prevent embarrassing their supervisors, it enhances the interpersonal respect and positive image on social skills. However, delaying has no significantly positive effect on productivity and relationship. One participant recalled that she waited to express her disagreement with the supervisor's decision until the meeting ended. Although her opinion improved the decision eventually, they had to organize one more meeting to change the decision. Thus, the results in this study perhaps can be interpreted as delaying can be highly constructive in some incidents, but it is still less effective than

direct confrontation in most incidents. When employees wait for a proper opportunity, time also elapse. Thus, delaying may postpone the progress or tighten the schedule. In addition, seeking an appropriate chance or carefully considering how to express one's opinions makes employees spend more effort on maintaining interpersonal relationships, so it may have a less positive effect on relationship than we expected.

Fourth, consistent with our hypotheses, results suggest that passive aggression has a significantly negative influence on productivity, relationship and social respect. As employees attempt to release their psychological discomfort by subtle deviant behaviors, passive aggression is a counter-productive approach to avoid conflict; it tends to deteriorate interpersonal relationships and social respect. One participant who used to complain about his supervisor to other colleagues said that his supervisor took vengeance on him when she learned of his complaints.

Limitations

The sample and research method limit the results of this study. First, 110 participants is a relatively small sample, which limits the validation and generality of the findings. Moreover, although interview is an effective method to explore unknown phenomenon, it makes collecting data from a wider sample difficult. Furthermore, this study only describes the employee's perspective on conflict avoidance incidents; we could get more meaningful results if we could collect data

also from the supervisor's perspective.

As to the internal validity, the data in this study are self-reported and thereby the interviewees may not accurately and objectively describe the incidents, although recent research suggests that self-reported data are not as limited as commonly assumed (Spector, 2006). Furthermore, the data among variables are correlational, which cannot provide direct evidence to the causal relationship among goal interdependence, behavioral intentions, conflict avoiding behaviors and outcomes. Additionally, the behavioral intentions scales adopted in this study were newly developed from field investigation. These scales should be improved through more empirical tests. Furthermore, other scales in this study are developed from the West. Although they have been tested in China, some researchers still doubt their viability, because the perception and understanding about some issues could be different for Chinese employees (Helms, 1992; Hofstede, 1993). If the results of this study can be duplicated in future, it could provide more direct support to our proposed model in this study.

Possible Future Research

This section identifies possible future research aspects. Future studies can collect data from both employees and their supervisors. Getting paired data from two perspectives can help us understand the dynamics of conflict avoidance more comprehensively and systematically.

Second, cases and statistical results in this study suggest the need to understand the antecedents and outcomes of outflanking. Outflanking can be caused by either cooperative intention or competitive intention and then leads to different outcomes. In order to better understand people's conflict avoiding behavior, outflanking could be divided into two categories: outflanking for mutual benefit and outflanking for self-benefit. This typology could enrich our understanding about outflanking and enhance the predictive power of behavioral intentions in conflict avoidance.

Third, in conflict avoidance situations, we speculate that when employees perceive they have competitive goals with their supervisors, besides significant competitive intention, perhaps they may also have to some extent cooperative intention. The path coefficients provide some suggestive evidence for this view: Competitive goals have negative but not significant effect on cooperative intention. In addition, some feedback from interviewees who reported a competitive goals incident also suggests that they hope to protect the supervisor's face and maintain their relationship since they still need to work together in future. This speculation requires further evidence to support.

Fourth, emotion is a factor we do not include in this study, but the important role of emotion in conflict management is drawing more attention from researchers. Emotions, like anxiety, depression and anger, can influence people's communication behavior and their expressed emotions in turn influence the other party (Bear, Weingart, & Todorova, 2011; Bodtker & Jameson, 2001; Olekalns et al., 2008). Therefore, future research could include emotions as antecedents to predict overt

conflict avoiding behaviors.

Fifth, as Spector and Brannick (1995) suggested, the most effective approach to overcome methodological weakness is to test the hypotheses by different methods. Developing an experimental study to verify the role of goal interdependence and behavior intentions on diversified conflict avoiding behaviors can provide direct support to the proposed theoretical model in this study, especially the causal relationship among variables.

Practical Implications

Our results suggest that conflict avoidance can be constructive if performed properly. However, employees may be distracted from their tasks to avoid conflict and may need to spend more effort to express their ideas. In addition, the qualitative analysis about conflict issues employees choose to avoid direct confrontation shows that working method takes the largest proportion. These findings suggest conflict avoidance relevant to task happens more frequently in the workplace.

Implications for supervisors

Our results when considered with other conflict management studies indicated that in conflict avoidance situations, cooperative goals between employees and their supervisors lead to constructive outcomes through delaying. In contrast, competitive and independent goals lead to less desirable outcomes through conforming and passive aggression. Therefore, the most important implication for supervisors is to

promote a constructive conflict management approach by creating strong cooperative goals. Supervisors can build cooperative goals through forming shared vision or providing shared rewards to their subordinates.

Moreover, when employees express their disagreements in an indirect way, they may well spend more effort than having direct discussion. Thus, supervisors should appreciate their high commitment and try to understand the concerns of their subordinates. Supervisors also need to create opportunities for the subordinates to express their concerns, which they may be afraid to elaborate in some situations.

In addition, supervisors should concern more about subordinates' feeling as well. They should help the subordinates release their discontentment caused by conflict avoidance.

These implications might not only be useful to Chinese supervisors, but also be illuminate to the supervisors who work in collectivistic, large power distance or high-context cultures organizations. They could benefit from these implications through overcoming the barriers of cross-cultural communication and developing high quality supervisor-subordinate relationship.

Implications for employees

Chinese employees often avoid confrontation when they perceive conflict with their supervisors. They believe it is useful to protect interpersonal relationship. However, our results show that conforming undermines relationship and social respect between employees and their supervisors; these results may be due to the

accumulation of dissatisfaction caused by relinquishing their own ideas. Therefore, employees should try to express their ideas in an appropriate way.

When the situation is not suitable to have open-minded discussion, delaying or outflanking might be alternative approaches to express different opinions. These actions can be surprisingly helpful to solve the problem and protect interpersonal relationships, if they are adopted properly. Specifically, adopting outflanking needs to concern the choice of third party to ensure he or she will not irritate the supervisor; and adopting delaying needs to notice the schedule of task and prepare to deal with the problems which the supervisor's decision might initiate.

Employees who work in collectivistic, large power distance or high-context cultures organizations can also apply these implications. It might help them to communicate more appropriately and effectively with their supervisors; as a result, they might gain social respect regarding their work capacity.

Conclusions

Conflict avoiding behavior has received little attention. This study sheds light on both theoretical and practical aspects of conflict avoidance. It theoretically combines the theory of cooperation and competition with conflict process model to explore the conditions and dynamic structure of different conflict avoiding behaviors. It proposes that goal interdependence can stimulate relevant behavioral intentions that lead to diverse conflict avoiding behaviors that give rise to distinct outcomes.

Moreover, this study also emphasizes the role of behavioral intentions to predict overt conflict avoiding behaviors.

Both quantitative and qualitative results generally support our hypotheses. Specifically, employees with cooperative goals with their supervisors tend to generate cooperative intention and use constructive approaches (i.e. delaying and outflanking for mutual benefit) to avoid conflict, which lead to positive outcomes in certain aspects. Employees who perceive competitive goals with their supervisors have competitive intention and destructive avoiding behaviors, such as conforming and passive aggression, to approach conflict and then generate negative outcomes. Employees with independent goals with their supervisors usually induce independent intention and less proactive behaviors towards the conflict issue, and thereby they just let things happen.

Contrary to the traditional views that conforming can protect interpersonal relationship, our results indicate that conforming has significantly negative effects on relationships, social respect and productivity. When the situation is not suitable to have open-minded discussion, resorting to a proper third party or waiting for a suitable opportunity can be constructive and culturally appropriate to deal with conflict in China. This study then suggests critical implications for both supervisors and employees who work in other collectivistic, large power distance or high-context cultures on how to avoid and manage conflict with each other.

Contact: Ms Wang Lin, Jessie
Tel: +8613821818781
E-mail: linwang@ln.edu.hk
MSN:xinrenwang@hotmail.com

Understanding conflict avoiding behavior in China: The role of goal interdependence and behavioral intentions

Interviewee: _____   Gender: _____   Age: _____
Education level: _____
Organization: _____   Years worked in this organization: _____
Position: _____
Ownership of the organization:
State Owned Enterprise
Joint Venture
Private firm
Others_____(please elaborate)

A. We are studying how people in the Chinese Mainland deal with conflict by avoiding direct discussion with their supervisors. We want you to recall and describe a concrete situation when you had disagreement or another conflict with your supervisor but you chose to avoid direct discussion with him/her. We define conflict as incompatible action, so it does not have to be a war against each other. For example, you did not agree with the decision of your supervisor, but you only submitted to this decision without direct discussion; or you waited for an appropriate time or third party to let him know your concern. This situation could either be successful or unsuccessful.

B. Please describe what happened, how you and your supervisor reacted, and the outcomes of this interaction.

[Scales]
Goals
 What were your objectives in this incident?
 (Record Verbatim)

 What were your supervisor's objectives in this incident?
 (Record Verbatim)

 Were they related so that both of you could achieve your objectives or only one could achieve his objectives? What led you to conclude that your objectives were related in this way?
 (Record Verbatim)

Please rate the following questions about your feelings at the beginning of the incident:

Cooperative goals

1. In this incident, the goals of my supervisor and I went together.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

2. In this incident, my supervisor and I 'swam or sunk' together.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

3. In this incident, my supervisor and I had common goals.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

4. In this incident, my supervisor and I sought compatible goals.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

Competitive goals

5. In this incident, my supervisor structured things in ways that favored his own goal rather than my goal.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

6. In this incident, my supervisor and I had a 'win–lose' relationship.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

7. In this incident, my supervisor liked to show that he was superior to me.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

8. In this incident, the goals of my supervisor and I were incompatible with each other.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

9. In this incident, my supervisor gave high priority to the things he wanted to accomplish and low priority to the things I wanted to accomplish.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

Independent goals

10. In this incident, my supervisor 'did his own thing'.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

11. In this incident, my supervisor's success was unrelated to my success.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

12. In this incident, my supervisor was most concerned about what he

accomplished when working by himself.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

13. In this incident, I liked to be successful through individual work.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

14. In this incident, I worked for my own independent goal.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

15. In this incident, I liked to get rewards through individual work.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

What did you intend when you perceived the conflict between you and your supervisor? (Record Verbatim)

What did you want to accomplish by avoiding a direct discussion?

(Record Verbatim)

Cooperative intentions

16. In this incident, I wanted to show respect to my supervisor.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

17. In this incident, I wanted my supervisor to feel supported by me.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

18. In this incident, I wanted my supervisor to succeed.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

19. In this incident, I wanted to let my supervisor know my ideas.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

20. In this incident, I wanted my supervisor to understand my concern.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

21. In this incident, I thought it would be more useful to talk about this issue with my supervisor later.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

22. In this incident, I hoped this issue could be discussed with my supervisor in future.

     Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal

Competitive intentions

23. In this incident, I wanted to undermine my supervisor.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

24. In this incident, I wanted to hinder my supervisor's thinking.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

25. In this incident, I wanted to see my supervisor fail.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

26. In this incident, I did not want my supervisor to succeed.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

27. In this incident, I did not want my supervisor to improve his ideas.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

Independent intentions

28. In this incident, I did not care about whether my supervisor succeeded or failed.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

29. In this incident, I was unconcern about my supervisor's thinking.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

30. In this incident, I did not want to help or hamper my supervisor's thinking.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

31. In this incident, I was only focused on my own ideas.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

32. In this incident, I cared about whether my supervisor accepted my ideas.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

Please rate the following questions about your behavior in this incident.

Outflanking

33. In this incident, I talked with my supervisor through another person.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

34. In this incident, I spoke to another person who would then influence my supervisor to change his idea.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

35. In this incident, I took our problems to my supervisor's boss since I believed he can solve it.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

36. In this incident, I turned to a friend who was trusted by both of us to solve the

conflict.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

37. In this incident, I identified the drawbacks in my supervisor's ideas in an indirect way.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

Conforming

38. In this incident, I agreed with my supervisor to end the conflict.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

39. In this incident, I gave up my opposing position to solve the problem.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

40. In this incident, I followed my supervisor's decision although I did not agree with it.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

41. In this incident, I accepted whatever my supervisor said.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

Delaying

42. In this incident, I waited until we were by ourselves to talk about the problem.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

43. In this incident, I waited patiently for a better opportunity to discuss the problem with my supervisor.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

44. In this incident, I was prepared to deal with the problems that my supervisor's decision might bring about without letting him know about it.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

Passive aggression

45. In this incident, I tried to make my supervisor feel guilty.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

46. In this incident, I tried not to see my supervisor.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

47. In this incident, I left the scene.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

48. In this incident, I said bad things about my supervisor behind his/her back.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

49. In this incident, I complained about the conflict to other colleagues.

<p align="center">Little 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A Great Deal</p>

Please rate the following questions about the effects after the incident was completed.

Productivity

50. How much did you and your supervisor make progress on the task because of this interaction?

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

51. How efficiently did you and your supervisor accomplish the task?

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

52. How effectively did you and your supervisor work on the task?

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

Relationship with supervisor

53. How much did this incident make you feel more confident that you could work successfully with your supervisor in the future?

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

54. To what extent did this incident make you more trusting of your supervisor?

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

55. To what extent did this incident strengthen your relationship with your supervisor?

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

Social respect of work capacity

56. This incident increased our respect to each other.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

57. Through this incident, my supervisor and I see each other as competent.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

58. Through this incident, my supervisor and I see each other as strong.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

59. Through this incident, my supervisor and I see each other as effective.

Little   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   A Great Deal

Thank you again for your participation!

联系人: 王琳
电话: +8613821818781
邮箱: linwang@ln.edu.hk
MSN:xinrenwang@hotmail.com

受访者姓名: ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿   性别: ＿＿＿   年龄: ＿＿＿   学历: ＿＿＿＿

单位名称: ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿   在该单位工作年限: ＿＿＿＿   职位: ＿＿＿

公司所有制: 国有企业   外资企业   私营企业   其他 ＿＿＿＿＿＿ (请注明)

A. 我们目前在研究中国内地员工是如何以避免当面讨论的方式处理与老板之间的冲突的。我们希望您回忆并讲述一件具体事例，在该事件中您与老板意见不同，或者有其他方面的冲突，但是您回避了与其的当面讨论。我们定义冲突为不一致的行为，而不一定是双方之间的斗争。比如您并不同意老板的某个决定，但是您并没有与老板当面讨论该问题，而只是服从该决定；或者，您等待一个合适的时机或者通过第三方让老板了解您的想法。该事件可以是成功的也可以是失败的。

B. 请描述当时发生了什么、您和老板分别是如何反应的以及最终结果。

【量表】
目标
　　在这件事中，您所期望达成的目标是什么？

　　在这件事中，您老板所期望达成的目标是什么？

　　您和老板所期望的目标是可以同时实现的还是只能让其中一个实现？您为什么会这样认为？

请您根据**事件开始时**的真实感受，评价您对下列说法的同意程度。评分范围为1~7 分。1＝强烈不同意；2＝不同意；3＝不大同意；4＝无所谓；5＝比较同意；6＝同意；7＝强烈同意

合作型目标

1. 在这件事中，我和老板的目标一致。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

2. 在这件事中，我和老板是同舟共济的关系.

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

3. 在这件事中，我和老板有着共同的目标。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

4. 在这件事中，我和老板所追求的目标是互相促进的。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

竞争型目标

5. 在这件事中，老板以他自己的目标为重而不理会我的目标。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

6. 在这件事中，我和老板之间是"你输我赢"的关系。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

7. 在这件事中，我的老板喜欢展示他相对于我的优越性。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

8. 在这件事中，我和老板的目标并不一致。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

9. 在这件事中,我的老板优先考虑他自己想做的事,而把我想做的事放在后面。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

独立型目标

10. 在这件事中，我和老板各行其是。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

11. 在这件事中，我老板的成功与我的成功无关。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

12. 在这件事中，我的老板极为关注其自己独立完成的工作。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

13. 在这件事中，我想要凭自身的独立工作获得成功，而不想依靠老板的帮助。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

14. 在这件事中，我为自己独立的目标而努力。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

15. 在这件事中，我想要通过自己独立工作而不是和老板一起获得奖励。

強烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　強烈同意

当您感受到与老板之间的冲突时，您打算如何去处理该冲突呢？

您希望通过回避当场讨论达到一个什么样的目的呢？

请您根据**感受到冲突时**的真实感受，评价您对下列说法的同意程度。评分范围为1~7分。1＝强烈不同意；2＝不同意；3＝不大同意；4＝无所谓；5＝比较同意；6＝同意；7＝强烈同意

合作型意向

16. 在这件事中，我想对我的老板表现出尊重。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

17. 在这件事中，我想让我的老板感到我对他的支持。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

18. 在这件事中，我希望老板取得成功。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

19. 在这件事中，我想让老板知道我的想法.

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

20. 在这件事中，我想让老板明白我的顾虑。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

21. 在这件事中，我认为稍后再和老板讨论这个问题会更有效果。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

22. 在这件事中，我希望我和老板将来会再次讨论这个话题。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

竞争型意向

23. 在这件事中，我想暗中破坏老板的成功。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

24. 在这件事中，我想阻碍老板的思路使其不把这项任务完成好。

　　　　　强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

25. 在这件事中，我想看到老板失败。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

26. 在这件事中，我不想看到老板取得成功。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

27. 在这件事中，我不想让老板改进他的想法进而取得成功。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

独立型意向

28. 在这件事中，我并不想关心老板是成功还是失败。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

29. 在这件事中，我并不想关心老板的想法。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

30. 在这件事中，我不想帮助或者阻碍老板进行思考。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

31. 在这件事中，我只想关注自己的想法。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

32. 在这件事中，我并不想在乎老板是否采用我的想法。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

请根据您在该事件中**实际采取的行动**评价您对下列说法的同意程度。评分范围为1~7分。1＝强烈不同意；2＝不同意；3＝不大同意；4＝无所谓；5＝比较同意；6＝同意；7＝强烈同意

求助第三方

33. 在这件事中，我通过其他人与老板讨论这个问题。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

34. 在这件事中，我与能影响老板改变主意的人进行沟通。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

35. 在这件事中，我将问题向老板的上级反应，因为我相信他能够解决这个问题。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

36. 在这件事中，我求助于老板和我共同信任的人来解决冲突。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

37. 在这件事中，我间接地指出我老板想法中的缺陷。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

无异议服从

38. 在这件事中，我以同意老板想法的方式来结束冲突。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

39. 在这件事中，我放弃了自己的反对立场来解决该问题。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

40. 在这件事中，尽管我不同意老板的决定，但是我会遵照他的决定做事。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

41. 在这件事中，无论老板说什么我都会接受。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

推迟沟通

42. 在这件事中，我等待，直到我和老板自发地讨论这个问题。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

43. 在这件事中，我耐心等待一个更好的机会和老板探讨这个问题。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

44. 在这件事中，我在老板不知情的情况下，准备好应对其决策可能会带来的问题。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

被动攻击

45. 在这件事中，我试图让我的老板觉得内疚。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

46. 在这件事中，我试图避开与老板见面。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

47. 在这件事中，我离席而去来表示我的不满。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

48. 在这件事中，我在老板背后说他的坏话。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

49. 在这件事中，我向其他同事抱怨和老板之间的冲突。

        强烈不同意   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 强烈同意

请您根据对该**事件结束后**的感觉为以下问题评分。评分范围为1~7分。

生产率

50. 通过这次互动，您和老板在该任务上取得了多大进展？

没有进展　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　非常大

51. 通过这次互动，您和老板完成该项任务的效率有多高？

非常低　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　非常高

52. 通过这次互动，您和老板进行该项任务时的合作有多有效？

非常无效　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　非常有效

与老板的关系

53. 您认为这件事在多大程度上使您对与老板将来的合作能够取得成功更有信心？

非常小　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　非常大

54. 您认为这件事在多大程度上让您更加信任您的老板？

非常小　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　非常大

55. 您认识这件事在大多程度上加强了您与老板之间的关系？

非常小　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　非常大

对工作能力的社会尊重

56. 通过这件事，这件事增强了我和老板之间的互相尊重。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

57. 通过这件事，我和老板都认为对方是称职的。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

58. 通过这件事，我和老板都认为对方是有能力的。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

59. 通过这件事，我和老板都认为对方办事效率很高。

强烈不同意　1　2　3　4　5　6　7　强烈同意

再次感谢您的参与！

References

Adair, W. L., Okumura, T., & Brett, J. M. (2001). Negotiation behavior when cultures collide: The United States and Japan. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86,* 371-385.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes, 50,* 179-211.

Alper, S., Tjosvold, D. & Law, S. A. (1998). Interdependence and controversy in group decision making: Antecedents to effective self-managing teams. *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes, 74,* 33-52.

Alper, S., Tjosvold, D., & Law, K. S. (2000). Conflict management, efficacy, and performance in self-managing work teams. *Personnel Psychology, 53,* 625–638.

Amason, A. C. (1996). Distinguishing the effects of functional and dysfunctional conflict on strategic decision making: Resolving a paradox for top management teams. *Academy of Management Journal, 39,* 123-148.

Amason, A. C., & Schweiger, D. M. (1997). The effects of conflict on strategic decision making effectiveness and organizational performance. In C. K. W. De Dreu & E. Van De Vliert (Eds), *Using Conflict in Organizations* (pp.101-115). London: Sage.

Anderson, N. R., De Dreu, C. K. W., & Nijstad, B. A. (2004). The routinization of innovation research: A constructively critical review of the state-of-the-science. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 25,* 147-174.

Barker, J., Tjosvold, D., & Andrews, I. R. (1988). Conflict approaches of effective and ineffective managers: a field study in a matrix organization. *Journal of Management Studies, 25,* 167-178.

Barki, H., & Hartwick, J. (2004). Conceptualizing the construct of interpersonal conflict. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 15,* 216-244.

Baron, R. A. (1990). Conflict in organizations. In K. R. Murphy & F. E. Saal (Eds.), *Psychology in Organizations: Integrating Science and Practice* (pp.197-216). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bartlett, J. E., Kotrlik, J. W., & Higgins, C. C. (2001). Organizational research: Determining appropriate sample size in survey research. *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal, 19(1),* 43-50.

Bear, J., Weingart, L. R., & Todorova, G. (2011). Can avoiding conflict be beneficial? A field investigation of gender, conflict avoidance, emotional labor, and emotional exhaustion. Paper presented at *IACM 2011 Istanbul Conference.*

Bentler, P. M., & Bonnett, D. G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structure. *Psychological Bulletin, 88,* 588-606.

Bitner, M., Booms, B., & Tetreault, M. (1990). The service encounter: Diagnosing favorable and unfavorable incidents. *Journal of Marketing, 54,* 71-48.

Blake, R. R., & Mouton, J. S. (1964). The managerial grid. Houston, Texas: Gulf Publishing.

Bodtker, A. M., & Jameson, J. K. (2001). Emotion in conflict formation and its transformation: application to organizational conflict management. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 12(3),* 259 – 275.

Boisot, M., & Child, J. (1996). From fiefs to clans and network capitalism: Explaining China's emerging economic order. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 41,* 600-628.

Bolger, N., DeLongis, A., Kessler, R. C., & Schilling, E. A. (1989). Effects of daily stress on negative mood. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 57(5),* 808-818.

Bond, M. H., & Huang K. K. (1986). The social psychology of Chinese people. In M. H. Bond (Eds.), *The Psychology of the Chinese People* (pp. 213-266). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Brewer, N., Mitchell, P., & Weber, N. (2002). Gender role, organizational status, and conflict management styles. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 13(1),* 78-94.

Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-translation for cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 1,* 185-216.

Cai, D., & Fink, E. (2002). Conflict style differences between individualists and collectivists. *Communication Monographs, 69(1),* 67-87.

Carnevale, P. J. (2008). Theory of conflict in the workplace: Whence and Whither. In C. K. W. De Dreu & M. J. Gelfand (Eds.), *The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations* (pp.435-444). New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

Cattell, R. B. (1978). The scientific use of factor analysis. New York Plenum.

Chen, G., & Tjosvold, D. (2002). Cooperative goals and constructive controversy for promoting innovation in student groups in China. *The Journal of Education for Business, 78(1),* 46-50.

Chen, G., Liu, C., & Tjosvold, D. (2005). Conflict management for effective top management teams and innovation in China. *Journal of Management Studies, 42(2),* 277-300.

Chen, N. Y., & Tjosvold, D. (2007). Guanxi and leader member relationships between American managers and Chinese employees: open-minded dialogue as mediator. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 24(2),* 171-190.

Choi, I., Nisbett, R. E., & Norenzayan, A. (1999). Causal attribution across cultures: Variation and universality. *Psychological Bulletin, 125,* 47-63.

Cocroft, B. K., & Ting-Toomey, S. (1994). Facework in Japan and the United States. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18,* 469–506.

De Dreu, C. K. W., & Gelfand, M. J. (2008). Conflict in the workplace: Sources, functions, and dynamics across multiple levels of analysis. In C. K. W. De Dreu & M. J. Gelfand (Eds.), *The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations* (pp.3-54). New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

De Dreu, C. K. W., & Van de Vliert, E. (1997). Using conflict in organizations. London: Sage.

De Dreu, C. K. W., Van Vianen, A. E. M., Harinck, F., & McCusker, C. (1998). Socio-emotional and task-related conflict in groups: Implications for contextual and task performance. Paper presented at the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Conference.

De Dreu, C. K., & Weingart, L. R. (2003). Task versus relationship conflict and team effectiveness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88,* 741-749.

Deutsch, M. (1949). A theory of cooperation and competition. *Human Relations, 2,* 129-152.

Deutsch, M. (1973). The resolution of conflict. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Deutsch, M. (1980). Fifty years of conflict. In L. Festinger (Eds.), *Retrospections on*

Social Psychology (pp.46-77). New York: Oxford University Press.

Deutsch, M. (1985). Distributive justice: A social-psychological perspective. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Deutsch, M. (1990). Sixty years of conflict. *The International Journal of Conflict Management, 1,* 237-263.

Deutsch, M., & Coleman, P. T. (2000). The handbook of conflict resolution. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Fishbein, M. (1980). A theory of reasoned action: Some applications and implications. In H. Howe & M. Page (Eds.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (Vol. 27, pp. 65-116). Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). Belief, attitude and behavior: An introduction to theory and research. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1980). Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior. Englewood Cliffs, New York: Prentice Hall.

Flanagan, J. C. (1954). The critical incident technique. *Psychological Bulletin, 54,* 327-358.

Folger, R., & Skarlicki, D. P. (1998). When tough times make tough supervisores: Managerial distancing as a function of layoff blame. *Academy of Management Journal, 41,* 79-87.

Friedman, R. A., & Currall, S. C. (2003).Conflict escalation: Dispute exacerbating elements of e-mail communication. *Human Relations, 56,* 1325-1427.

Friedman, R., Chi, S. C., & Liu, L. A. (2006). An expectancy model of Chinese-American differences in conflict-avoiding. *Journal of International Business Studies, 37,* 76-91.

Gabrielidis, C., Stephan, W. G., Ybarra, O., Pearson, V. M., & Villareal, L. (1997). Preferred styles of conflict resolution: Mexico and the United States. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 28(6),* 661-677.

Geddes, D. (1994). The relationship between negative feedback and increased organizational aggression. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Dallas, Texas.

Gorsuch, R. L. (1983). Factor analysis (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Associates.

Gottman, J. M., & Levenson, R. W. (1992). Marital processes predictive of later dissolution: Behavior, physiology, and health. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 63,* 221-233.

Gudykunst, W. B. (1994). Bridging differences: Effective intergroup communication. CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Gudykunst, W. B. (1996). Communication in everyday interpersonal and intergroup encounters. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 20(1),* 19-45.

Helms, J. E. (1992). Why is there no study of cultural equivalence in standardized cognitive ability testing? *American Psychologist, 47,* 1083-1101.

Hofstede, G. (1980). Culture's consequences. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hofstede, G. (1991). Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind. London: McGraw-Hill.

Hofstede, G. (1993). Cultural constraints in management theories. *Academy of Management Executive, 7,* 81-94.

Hofstede, G. (2001). Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hui, C. H. (1988). Measurement of individualism collectivism. *Journal of Research in Personality, 22(1),* 17-36.

Hwang, K. K. (1998). Guanxi and Mientze: Conflict resolution in Chinese society. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 7(1),* 17–42.

Janssen, O. (2003). Innovative behavior and job involvement at the price of conflict and less satisfactory relations with co-workers. *Journal of Occupation & Organizational Psychology, 76,* 347-364.

Jehn, K. A. (1995). A multi-method examination of the benefits and detriments of intragroup conflict. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 40,* 256-282.

Jehn, K. A. (1997). A qualitative analysis of conflict types and dimensions in organizational groups. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 42,* 530-557.

Jehn, K., & Weldon, E. (1992). A comparative study of managerial attitudes toward conflict in the United States and the People's Republic of China: Issues of theory and

measurement. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Las Begas, NV.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1989). Cooperation and competition: Theory and research. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.

Keeley, L. H. (1996). War before civilization: The myth of the peaceful savage. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kirkbride, P. S., Tang, S. F., & Westwood, R. I. (1991). Chinese conflict preferences and negotiating behavior: Cultural and psychological influences. *Organizational Studies, 12,* 365-386.

Kline, P. (1979). Psychometrics and psychology. London: Acaderric Press.

Lee, J. Y. H., & Panteli, N. (2010). Business strategic conflict in computer-mediated communication. *European Journal of Information Systems, 19,* 196–208.

Leung, K. (1988). Some determinants of conflict avoidance. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 19(1),* 125-136.

Leung, K. (1997). Negotiation and reward across cultures. In P. C. Barley & M. Erez (Eds.), *New Perspectives on International Industrial/Organizational Psychology* (pp. 640-675). San Francisco: New Lexington Press.

Leung, K., & Brew, F. P. (2009). A cultural analysis of harmony and conflict: Toward an integrated model of conflict styles. In R. S. Wyer, C. Y. Chiu & Y. Y. Hong (Eds.), *Understanding Culture: Theory, Research, and Application* (pp. 411-430). New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

Leung, K., & Tjosvold, D. (1998). Introduction: Conflict Management in the Asia Pacific. In K. Leung & D. Tjosvold (Eds.), *Conflict Management in the Asia Pacific* (pp.335-344). Singapore: John Wiley & Sons (Asia) Pte. Ltd.

Leung, K., Brew, F. P., Zhang, Z. X., & Zhang, Y. (2011). Harmony and conflict: A cross-cultural investigation in China and Australia. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 42(5),* 795-816.

Liu, C., Tjosvold, D., & Wong, M. (2004). Effective Japanese leadership in China: co-operative goals and applying abilities for mutual benefit. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 15,* 730–749.

MacCallum, R. C., Widaman, K. F., Zhang, S., & Hong, S. (1999). Sample size in factor analysis. *Psychological Methods, 4(1),* 84-99.

Mack, R. W., & Snyder, R. C. (1957). Analysis of social conflict: Toward an overview and synthesis. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 1,* 212-248.

March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1958). Organizations. New York: Wiley.

Mather, L., & Yngvesson, B. (1981). Language, audience, and transformation of disputes. *Law & Society Review, 15,* 775-822.

Mayer, R. J. (1995). Conflict management: The courage to confront. Columbus: Battelle Press.

Mujtaba, B. G., Chawavisit, C., & Pattaratalwanich, P. (2010). Conflict management styles of law students in Thailand: A study of age and gender. *Journal of Global Business and Management, fall,* 14-32.

Murphy, T. (2005). Overcoming passive-aggression: How to stop hidden anger from spoiling your relationships, career and happiness. New York: Marlowe &Company.

Neuman, J. H., & Baron, R. A. (1997). Aggression in the workplace. In R. A. Giacalone & J. Greenberg (Eds.), *Antisocial behavior in organizations* (pp.37-67). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Oetzel, J. G., Ting-Toomey, S., Yokochi, Y., Masumoto, T., & Takai, J. (2000). A typology of facework behaviors in conflicts with best friends and relative strangers. *Communication Quarterly, 48(4),* 397–419.

Ohbuchi, K., & Atsumi, E. (2010). Avoidance brings Japanese employees what they care about in conflict management: Its functionality and "good member" image. *Negotiation & Conflict Management Research, 3(2),* 117-129.

Ohbuchi, K., & Takahashi, Y. (1994). Cultural styles of conflict management in Japanese and Americans: Passivity, covertness and effectiveness of strategies. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 24,* 1345–1366.

Olekalns, M., Putnam, L. L., Weingart, L. R., & Metcalf, L. (2008). Communication processes and conflict management. In C. K. W. De Dreu & M. J. Gelfand (Eds.), *The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations* (pp.81-114). New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

Parayitam, S., Olson, B. J., & Bao, Y. (2010). Task conflict, relationship conflict and agreement-seeking behavior in Chinese top management teams. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 21(1),* 94-116.

Peng, A. C., & Tjosvold, D. (2011). Social face concerns and conflict avoidance of

Chinese employees with their Western or Chinese managers. *Human Relations, 64(8),* 1031-1050.

Peng, C. Y. (2007). Conflict avoidance in cooperative and competitive relationships: A cross-cultural study between Chinese subordinates and Western superiors (MPhil Thesis). Lingnan University, HK.

Peng, S. (2003). Culture and conflict management in foreign-invested enterprises in China: An intercultural communication perspective. Germany: Peter Lang, AG.

Pinkley R. L., & Northcraft, G. B. (1994). Conflict frames of reference: Implications for dispute processes and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal, 37,* 193-205.

Pondy, L. R. (1967). Organizational conflict: Concepts and models. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 12,* 296-320.

Poon, M., Pike, R., & Tjosvold, D. (2001). Budget participation, goal interdependence and controversy: A study of a Chinese public utility. *Management Accounting Research, 12,* 101-118.

Preffer, J. (1997). New directions in organizational behavior. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Pruitt, D. G., & Syna, H. (1989). Successful problem solving in productive conflict management: Perspectives for organizations. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.

Pruitt, D. G. (2008). Conflict escalation in organizations. In C. K. W. De Dreu & M. J. Gelfand (Eds.), *The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations* (pp.245-266). New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

Rahim, M. A. (1983). A measure of styles of handling interpersonal conflict. *Academy of Management Journal, 26(2),* 368–376.

Rahim, M. A. (2010). Managing conflict in organizations. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

Rahim, M. A., & Bonoma, T. V. (1979). Managing organizational conflict: A model for diagnosis and intervention. *Psychological Reports, 44,* 1323-1344.

Rahim, M. A., & Magner, N. R. (1995). Confirmatory factor analysis of the styles of handling interpersonal conflict: First-order factor model and its invariance across groups. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 80,* 122-132.

Schmidt, S. M., & Kochan, T. A. (1972). Conflict: Toward conceptual clarity.

Administrative Science Quarterly, 17(3), 359-370.

Schwartz, N. (1999). Self-reports. *American Psychologist, 54,* 93-105.

Sheeran, P. (2002). Intention-behavior relations: A conceptual and empirical review. *European Review of Social Psychology, 12,* 1-36.

Simons, T. L., & Peterson, R. S. (2000). Task conflict and relationship conflict in top management teams: The pivotal role of intragroup trust. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85,*102-111.

Spector, P. E., & Brannick, M. T. (1995). The nature and effects of method variance in organizational research. *International Review of Industrial & Organizational Psychology, 10,* 249–274.

Spector, P. E. (2006). Method variance in organizational research: Truth or urban legend? *Organizational Research Methods, 9,* 221-232.

Thomas, K. W. (1990). Conflict and negotiation process in organizations. In M. D. Dunnette & L. M. Hough (Eds), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Vol. 3, pp.655-728). CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

Thomas, K. W. (1992). Conflict and conflict management: Reflections and update. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13,* 265-274.

Thomas, K. W., & Kilmann, R. H. (1978). Comparison of four instruments measuring conflict behavior. *Psychological Reports, 42,* 1139-1145.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1985). Toward a theory of conflict and culture. In W. B. Gudykunst & S. Ting-Toomey (Eds.), *Communication, Culture, and Organizational Processes* (pp.71-86). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1988). Intercultural conflict style: A face-negotiation theory. In Y. Y. Kim & W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Theories in Intercultural Communication* (pp. 213-235), Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Tjosvold, D., & Tjosvold, M. M. (1994). Cooperation, competition, and constructive controversy: knowledge to empower self-managing teams. In M. M. Beyerlein & D. A. Johnson (Eds.), *Advances in Interdisciplinary Studies of Work Teams* (Vol. 1, pp. 119–144). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Tjosvold, D. (1982). Effects of approach to controversy on superiors' incorporation of subordinates' information in decision making. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 67,* 189-193.

Tjosvold, D. (1995). Effects of power to reward and publish in cooperative and competitive contexts. *Journal of Social Psychology, 135,* 723-736.

Tjosvold, D. (1998). The cooperative and competitive goal approach to conflict: Accomplishments and challenges. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 47,* 285-313.

Tjosvold, D. (2006). Defining conflict and making choices about its management: Lighting the dark side of organizational life. International *Journal of Conflict Management, 17,* 87–95.

Tjosvold, D. (2008). Conflicts in the study of conflict in organizations. In C. K. W. De Dreu & M. J. Gelfand (Eds.), *The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations* (pp.435-444). New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

Tjosvold, D., & Leung, K. (1998). Conclusion: Conflict management in the Asia Pacific. In K. Leung & D. Tjosvold (Eds.), *Conflict management in the Asia Pacific* (pp.335-344). Singapore: John Wiley & Sons (Asia) Pte. Ltd.

Tjosvold, D., & Poon, M. (1998). Dealing with scarce resources: Open-minded interaction for resolving budget conflicts. *Group & Organization Management, 23(3),* 237-255.

Tjosvold, D., & Sun, H. F. (2002). Understanding conflict avoidance: Relationships, motivations, actions, and consequences. *The International Journal of Conflict Management, 13(2),* 142-164.

Tjosvold, D., Law, K. S., & Sun, H. (2006). Effectiveness of Chinese teams: the role of conflict types and conflict management approaches. *Management & Organization Review, 2(2),* 231-252.

Tjosvold, D., Poon, M., & Yu, Z. (2005). Team effectiveness in China: Cooperative conflict for relationship building. *Human Relations, 58(3),* 341-367.

Tjosvold, D., Wong, A. S. H., & Wan, P. M. K. (2010). Conflict management for justice, innovation, and strategic advantage in organizational relationships. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 40(3),* 636-665.

Triandis, H. C. (1980). Values, attitudes, and interpersonal behavior. In H. Howe & M. Page (Eds), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (Vol. 27, pp. 195-259). Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press.

Triandis, H. C., Botempo, R., Villareal, M. J., Asai, M., & Lucca, N. (1988). Individualism and collectivism: Cross-cultural perspectives on self-ingroup relationships. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 54,* 323-333.

Trivers, R. L., & Hare, H. (1976). Haploidploidy and the evolution of the social insect. *Science, 191,* 249-263.

Tse, D. K., Francis, J., & Walls, J. (1994). Cultural differences in conducting intra- and inter-cultural negotiations: A Sino-Canadian comparison. *Journal of International Business Studies, 24,* 537-555.

Tung, R. (1991). Handshakes across the sea: Cross-cultural negotiating for business success. *Organizational Dynamics, 19(3),* 30-40.

Valentine, P. E. B. (1995). Management of conflict: Do nurses/women handle it differently? *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 22(1),* 142-149.

Van de Vliert, E., & Kabanoff, B. (1990). Toward theory-based measures of conflict management. *The Academy of Management Journal, 33(1),* 199-209.

Van de Vliert, E., Euwema, M. C., & Huismans, S. E. (1995). Managing conflict with a subordinate or a supervisor: Effectiveness of conglomerated behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 80,* 271-281.

Vollbrecht, J. L., Roloff, M. E., & Paulson, G. D. (1997). Coercive potential and face-sensitivity: The effects of authority and directives in social confrontation. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 8(3),* 235-251.

Walker, M., & Truly, E. (1992). The critical incident technique: Philosophical foundations and methodological implications. In C. Allen & T. Madden (Eds.), *Winter Educators' Conference Proceedings: Marketing Theory and Applications* (Vol 3, pp.270-275). Chicago: American Marketing Association.

Wall, J. A. Jr., & Callister, R. R. (1995). Conflict and its management. *Journal of Management, 21,* 515-558.

Wang, Z., Chen, Y. F., Tjosvold, D., & Shi, K. (2010). Cooperative goals and team agreeableness composition for constructive controversy in China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 27(1),* 139-153.

Yu, X. J. (1997). The Chinese native perspective of Mao-dun (conflict) and Mao-dun resolution strategies: A qualitative investigation. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 7(1),* 63-82.

Zhang, X. A., Cao, Q., & Tjosvold, D. (2011). Linking transformational leadership and team performance: A conflict management approach. *Journal of Management Studies, 48(7),* 1586-1611.

Zhang, Y., Farh, J. L., & Wang, H. (2011). Organizational antecedents of employee perceived organizational support in China: a grounded investigation. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 23(2),* 422-446.

Zhang, Z. X., Wei, X., & Leung, K. (2011). Buying insurance for harmony: A relational risk perspective on conflict avoidance. Paper presented at the 24th Annual International Association of Conflict Management Conference, Istanbul, Turkey.