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**RELATIONAL ORIENTATION OF NEGOTIATORS:  
A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS ON NEGOTIATION OUTCOMES IN DYADIC NEGOTIATIONS**

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ANN-SOPHIE DE PAUW

Ann-Sophie.DePauw@vlerick.com

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ANN-SOPHIE DE PAUW  
Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School

**Contact: Ann-Sophie De Pauw**

Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School

Tel: +32 09 210 97 10

Email: [Ann-Sophie.DePauw@vlerick.com](mailto:Ann-Sophie.DePauw@vlerick.com)

## ABSTRACT

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This study investigates how negotiators' relational orientation, operationalised by their Relational Self-Construal (RSC), and their relationship strength affect negotiation outcomes in dyadic negotiations.

To measure this effect, participants are purposely assigned to dyads, according to their levels of relational orientation (high, low or mixed), and report on their relationship strength. They perform a simulated price negotiation exercise, with a buyer and seller condition, resulting in individual and joint economic outcomes and subjective value outcomes.

Results demonstrate a main effect of negotiators' relational orientation on subjective value outcomes. Negotiators from congruent dyads with low relational orientation, obtain lower subjective value negotiation outcomes, than negotiators from dyads with incongruent levels of relational orientation. No significant effect of negotiators' relational orientation on economic negotiation outcomes can be established.

Relational orientation of negotiators and the strength of their relationship does not interact in a significant way. Thus, whether negotiators are friends or strangers does not influence the effect of their relational orientation on negotiation outcomes.

**Keywords:** relational orientation, relationship strength, negotiating dyads, negotiation outcomes

## RELATIONAL ORIENTATION OF NEGOTIATORS: A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS ON NEGOTIATION OUTCOMES IN DYADIC NEGOTIATIONS

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Negotiation is a fundamental form of social interaction, which is necessary for anyone who must accomplish their social objectives in collaboration with others (Thompson & Hastie, 1990). Few areas in organizational behaviour have developed as rapidly, and profoundly, as the field of negotiation (Bazerman, Curhan, Moore, & Valley, 2000; Kramer & Messick, 1995).

Historically, the field has been dominated by a focus on *economic outcomes* (Buelens, Van De Woestyne, Mestdagh, & Bouckenooghe, 2008), defined as the explicit terms of an agreement (Thompson, 1990). Successful negotiations, however, build on both economic and relational capital and many scholars have criticized that the field offers a largely a-relational view of an inherently relational situation (Gelfand, Smith Major, Raver, Nishii, & O'Brien, 2006; Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1998; Valley, Neale, & Mannix, 1995), emphasizing autonomy, competition, and rationality over interdependence, cooperation, and relationality (Gray, 1994).

Consequently, a growing body of research argues for the importance of *relational capital* among negotiating parties (Curhan, Elfenbein, & Xu, 2006; Curhan, Elfenbein, & Kilduff, 2009; Gelfand et al., 2006). This relational capital is defined as including assets of mutual liking, knowledge, trust, and commitment to continuing the relationship. High performers are those that are able to negotiate with others and develop collaborative agreements, thus placing a high value in relational capital (Welbourne & Pardo-del-Val, 2009).

To acquire relational capital in negotiations, the *relational orientation* of negotiators can be especially crucial (Curhan, Neale, Ross, & Rosencranz-Engelmann, 2008). Although there has been some discussion of relational orientation in negotiation (e.g. Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993; King & Hinson, 1994), this important construct and its psychological and social processes has remained relatively ill defined in the field (Gelfand et al., 2006).

### Relational orientation as a self-definition

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Relational orientation involves primarily the concern for building and preserving relationships (Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1998). Relationally oriented negotiators tend to view relationships with the other party as continuous rather than episodic, thus emphasizing long term cooperation. They adopt flexible postures (with less resistance to yielding), and avoid relationship

impairing tactics. Being concerned with interdependence, cooperativeness and mutuality (vs. concern with independence, competitiveness and individualism), they tend to define themselves in relation to others (vs. in contrast to others) (Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993) and thus have a different self-definition or self-construal.

The self is a multidimensional, dynamic knowledge structure that organizes self-relevant information (e.g. Cross, Morris, & Gore, 2002; Markus & Wurf, 1987) and consists of multiple self-representations or self-construals that embody knowledge about oneself (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Self-construals reflect the extent to which the self is defined as being intertwined and connected to others and separate, unique and autonomous from others (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000). Singelis (1994) defined self-construals as a 'constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning one's relationship to others and the self as distinct from others.' Some self-construals are especially central, well-elaborated, and important to an individual; others are less important and are more peripheral (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Persons thus also differ markedly in the degree to which others are incorporated in their self-system (Cross & Madson, 1997).

We can distinguish independent and interdependent self-construals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). An independent self-construal implies that the person defines himself as autonomous, unique, abstracted from the social environment, and independent from others. For individuals with an interdependent self-construal, important relationships, group memberships, and social roles define the self. Individual characteristics, beliefs and attitudes are relatively less important in their self-definition. This interdependent self-construal is in turn subdivided in the collectivist interdependent self-construal, in which roles and group memberships are importantly self-defining, and the relational interdependent self-construal (RSC), in which close relationships are included in the self-space; when representations of the self are activated, representations of close others will be activated also (Cross, & Morris, 2003). The Relational Interdependent Self-Construal reflects a cognitive representation of the self as fundamentally interconnected to other individuals (Cross & Madson, 1997; Kashima et al., 1995). This cognitive representation guides the processing of information relevant to the self and exerts a dynamic impact on cognition (Cross & Madson, 1997; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999), emotion (Cross et al., 2002), motivation (Cross et al., 2000; Gardner, Gabriel & Hochschild, 2002) and behaviour (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Individuals with a prominence of this interdependent self-construal approach relationships differently than those with more independent self-construals. The needs and wishes of close others may strongly influence their thoughts and behaviours. In addition, they tend to take these wishes and opinions of close relationship partners into account when making important decisions (Cross et al., 2000).

Relationally oriented persons tend to have a prominent Relational Self-Construal (RSC), emphasizing their interdependence with others (Cross & Madson, 1997; Kashima et al., 1995). This self-construal embodies knowledge about oneself (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) and reflects the extent to which a person defines his self as being connected to others (interdependent) versus separate, unique and autonomous from others (independent) (Cross et al., 2000). Thus a person with a prominent RSC sees others as part of his definition of who he is (Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1995). In the context of negotiation, relational orientation refers to ‘the degree to which negotiators are cued or prone to focus on the importance of the dyadic relationship’ (Curhan et al., 2008).

## Relational orientation in negotiations

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Recent research suggests that the field of negotiation has large unexplored potential in determining the specific traits of negotiators, that predict consistent individual differences in negotiation outcomes (Elfenbein, Curhan, Eisenkraft, Shirako, & Baccaro, 2008). Given the inherently relational context of negotiation interactions and the fact that negotiation is an especially sensitive experience for the self, it seems intuitive that individual differences in relational orientation should have a real impact on behaviours and outcomes in negotiation (Amanatullah, Morris, & Curhan, 2008).

In the last two decades there has been a proliferation of research in social psychology on the self in general and the relational self in particular (Andersen & Chen, 2002; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Madson, 1997; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999). Despite these considerable theoretical and empirical developments, discussions of relational orientation have remained largely isolated from the field of organizational behaviour in general and the field of negotiation in particular.

Although relational orientation (RSC)<sup>1</sup> is related to other constructs in negotiation literature, such as *interpersonal orientation* (Rubin & Brown, 1975), *prosocial motives* (De Dreu, Weingart, & Kwon, 2000; Van Lange, 1999), *other concern* (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), *relationship orientation* (Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993), and *relationship preference* (King & Hinson, 1994), none captures its profundity. Unlike relational orientation, these constructs have not been implicated in cognition, motivation, emotion and behaviour, nor do they provide understanding of the conditions that lead relational concerns to be prominent or inhibited in negotiations (Gelfand et al., 2006).

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<sup>1</sup> In the remainder of this paper we refer to Relational Self-Construal (RSC) as relational orientation for reasons of conceptual clarity

Conceptualising negotiators' relational orientation at the level of the self-construal also allows researchers to draw upon the extensive research on the self to more clearly specify the mechanisms and processes that underlie the relations between this interdependence and negotiation outcomes (Cross et al., 2000).

In this vein, Curhan and colleagues (2008) have indicated that the concept of negotiators' relational orientation has important effects on the accumulation of both relational and economic capital in negotiations. Moreover, the accumulation of relational capital is a central goal for negotiators for whom relational orientation is central.

### Relational orientation and negotiation outcomes

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Negotiation outcomes can be grouped into two categories: economic and subjective value outcomes (Curhan et al., 2006; Thompson, 1990). *Economic outcomes* refer to the explicit terms or products of the negotiation, such as whether an agreement has been reached, how much joint benefit has been created, and how resources are divided or claimed by the individual parties.

*Subjective value outcomes* refer to the social, perceptual and emotional consequences of a negotiation. This subjective value consists of four interrelated dimensions: feelings about the instrumental outcome (i.e. terms of the deal), feelings about the self, feelings about the negotiation process, and feelings about the relationship. Subjective value is seen as distinct from any associated economic outcome (Miller, 1999), and is especially important as it may serve as a predictor of future economic value (Curhan et al., 2009). Focusing on good relationships can be an effective strategy in keeping up the cooperation necessary for greater economic returns in the long run.

However, researchers also theorize that negotiating dyads in which both parties hold highly relational goals or views of themselves are prone to relational accommodation. For the person with a high relational orientation, there may be times in which the 'unit' of decision making is not the self alone but rather the self and the relationship. As a result, these individuals may seek out resolution strategies that promote reconciliation and further harmony in the relationship (Cross & Madson, 1997). This dynamic will result in inefficient short-term economic outcomes (e.g. dollar amount) yet high levels of relational capital (e.g. trust and liking) (Curhan et al., 2008; Amanatullah et al., 2008). As the accumulation of relational capital is a central goal for negotiators with a high relational orientation, we thus expect a strong impact of negotiators' relational orientation in the first place on subjective value negotiation outcomes.

H1: Negotiators with a high relational orientation will attain higher subjective value negotiation outcomes than negotiators with a low relational orientation.

As relationally oriented negotiators focus primarily on the importance of the relationship with their negotiating partner and less on the pursuit of individual gain, a trade-off between subjective value and individual economic negotiation outcomes can take place. However, emphasizing interdependence with their partner, they will still engage in the search for a mutually beneficial economic outcome.

H2a: Negotiators with a high relational orientation will attain lower individual and higher joint economic negotiation outcomes than negotiators with a low relational orientation.

H2b: Negotiators with a low relational orientation will attain higher individual and lower joint economic negotiation outcomes than negotiators with a low relational orientation.

### Dyadic (in)congruency

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In the above hypotheses we implicitly assumed that the negotiating partners have similar levels of relational orientation, involving congruency. Yet, often, this may not be the case. As negotiation is a dyadic experience, in which the behavior of one's counterpart invariably affects one's own outcomes, incongruency of relational orientation between negotiators, will also be an important determinant of negotiation outcomes (Cross & Madson, 1997; Gelfand et al., 2006). Although the impact of negotiator congruency versus incongruency is little researched to date, indirect support for this effect can be found in negotiation literature (Mc Ginn and Keros, 2002; Thompson & DeHarpport, 1998), suggesting that dyadic incongruency will result in overall lower economic and relational capital than dyadic congruency. Based on this theoretical framework and recent research (Amanatullah et al., 2008; Curhan et al., 2008; Gelfand et al., 2006) we formulate the following hypothesis:



H3: In incongruent dyads negotiators' relational orientation will lead to overall lower economic and subjective value negotiation outcomes, compared to congruent dyads.

## Negotiation context and relational orientation

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To understand how relational orientation affects negotiation outcomes, scholars also have to answer the question under which conditions it will be prominent or inhibited in negotiations (Cross et al., 2000). Namely, negotiators will only make use of their relational orientation if it is appropriate and relevant in the specific negotiation context (Higgins, 1996). This idea that various characteristics of situations have the capability to restrict the expression and, therefore, criterion-related validity of individual differences is also referred to as situational strength (Meyer, Dalal, & Hermida, 2010). As such, features of the negotiation context can increase or decrease the use of this relational orientation (Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993; Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1995), even before the actual negotiation has started, affecting cognitions, tactics, and, ultimately, negotiation outcomes.

In literature, *'relationship strength'* is advanced as a critical feature of the negotiation context, affecting the use of relational orientation. Relationship strength can be operationalised by summing assessments of positive relationship characteristics that would predispose the negotiator to value ongoing interaction with the other party (Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1998). Negotiations among close friends or romantic partners focus on minimising conflict and prioritize the relationship (Fry, Firestone, & Williams, 1983; Thompson, Peterson & Brodt, 1996). Consequently, strong ties between negotiators will change their strategies, reducing negotiators' goals and aspirations. In particular, a strong tie between negotiators will make them lower their minimum price, based on the relationship ('I make a better price for a friend') (Tenbrunsel, Wade-Benzoni, & Bazerman, 1999). Furthermore, restricting the influence of strong ties on the matching process of negotiators increases the number of economically optimal agreements. Consequently, we formulate the following hypothesis:

H4: Relationship strength will moderate the effect negotiators' relational orientation exerts on negotiation outcomes.

We expect that the stronger the ties between negotiators are, the larger the effect of relational orientation on negotiation outcomes will be, independent of negotiators' levels of relational orientation within the dyad.

## METHOD

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### *Sample*

Research data are collected by means of a sample of graduate students at a leading European Business School. The use of students in simulated negotiation tasks is a widely accepted methodology in negotiation research (Buelens et al., 2008). Although this procedure is also criticized, the newness of the proposed research topic underpins the use of a student sample in a first stage to examine the hypotheses. We obtained data from 270 respondents (135 dyads), of which 126 dyads were integrated in further data analysis, after controlling for missing values. All participants received a confidential code that ensured them of anonymous data processing. The dyads consisted of both men (53%) and women (47%). Respondents' ages ranged from 17 to 46 years ( $M = 18.84$ ,  $SD = 2.14$ ).

### *Measures and procedure*

**Relational orientation.** In a first testing session all participants ( $n = 252$ ) filled out the RIC Self-Aspects scale (Kashima & Hardie, 2000). This self-report scale uses 10 sets of item triads to assess the relative strength of Relational Self, Individual Self and Collective Self, respectively. All responses are rated using a 7-point scale (1 = not like me, 7 = very much like me). The results on the Relational Self-Aspects subscale yielded the score for negotiators' relational orientation.

Participants were purposely assigned to dyads according to their relational orientation level, indicated by their score on the Relational Self-Construal subscale of the RIC scale. Consequently, three groups of dyads were created: 36 dyads consisted of negotiators with high relational orientation (score above the Median of 5.8), 47 dyads consisted of negotiators with low relational orientation (score below the Median of 5.8), and 43 dyads consisted of negotiators with high and low relational orientation. All participants reported the strength of the tie with their counterpart (1= very good friend, friend, or lover; 2= acquaintance or stranger).

**Negotiation simulation.** In a second session, participants negotiated an adaptation of the 'New Car Negotiation Task' (Thompson & Hastie, 1990), a multiple issue negotiation between a buyer and a seller, concerning the purchase of a new car. This task is similar to tasks used by other researchers (e.g. De Dreu, Steinel, & Koole; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). Negotiators were randomly assigned to a buyer or seller condition, within the dyads, and had to agree upon the repayment, warranty, and delivery date of a new car. Two of the three issues (repayment and warranty) were integrative or potential logrolling issues, enabling increase in joint value for both parties, and one

was a fixed-sum issue (delivery date) , where the parties' interests were diametrically opposed. The experimenter provided participants with specific negotiation instructions, a 'payoff schedule', and a short post-negotiation questionnaire to report the details of their agreement. Negotiators bargained face-to-face for a maximum of 20 minutes and were instructed not to exchange their instructions and pay-off schedules.

**Economic negotiation outcomes.** Participants negotiated for points, leading to economic outcomes: the variable, 'joint points', sums the points earned by the buyer and seller, defined as the *joint profit*, a measure of the integrative value of the negotiation. The variables 'points buyer' and 'points seller', sum the points earned by buyer and seller individually. Both variables are a measure for *individual profit*. An example payoff schedule, in which each party's payoffs were defined, is provided in Table 1. This schedule describes the points buyers and sellers could gain for each issue.

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Insert Table 1 here

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According to the payoff schedule, each negotiator could earn a maximum of 8000 points or a minimum of 0 points. One distributive (compromise) solution would be 2 weeks repayment, 18 months warranty, and 3 weeks delivery date, yielding each negotiator 2800 points. If negotiators were able to integrate their interests, called logrolling, and trade off the repayment and warranty issues, agreeing to an immediate repayment and a 30 month warranty (a long warranty rate is more important to the buyer; a short repayment period is more important to the seller), the amount of joint resources was increased by 30%, and the negotiators divided a total of 8000 points.

**Subjective value negotiation outcomes** were measured with the Subjective Value Inventory (SVI) (Curhan et al., 2006). This post-negotiation questionnaire contains 16 items on a 7- point Likert scale and consists of four subscales (Instrumental, Self, Process and Relationship) measuring:

- the value of negotiation *process* (fairness and voice)
- the *instrumental* outcome (outcome satisfaction and distributive fairness)
- the *relationship* (trust and establishing a good foundation for the future)
- the *self* (saving face and living up to one's standards)

Negotiators completed the questionnaire individually, which yielded a subjective value score for buyers (SV<sub>buyer</sub>) and for sellers (SV<sub>seller</sub>).

## ANALYSES AND RESULTS

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Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, alpha reliabilities and correlations for all variables assessed in the study.

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Insert Table 2 here

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We conducted a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with negotiators' relational orientation levels in the dyad (high vs. low vs. mixed) and relationship strength as factors and joint profit, individual profit, and Subjective Value (SV) as dependent negotiation outcome variables.

H1 predicted higher subjective value outcomes for negotiators with a high relational orientation. From the analyses a main effect of negotiators' relational orientation on the SV outcomes of negotiators was observed. We found a significant effect on the SV of the buyer with  $F(2,123) = 3.56, p < .05$ , and a marginally significant effect on the SV of the seller, with  $F(2,123) = 2.25, p = .08$ . We thus could confirm a difference in SV between the different levels of relational orientation. We performed post-hoc Scheffé tests to find which factor levels significantly differed from the others. Although buyers with a high relational orientation obtained higher SV ( $M = 5.13, SD = 0.66$ ), than those with a low relational orientation ( $M = 4.96, SD = .75$ ) and the SV of sellers with a high relational orientation ( $M = 5.33, SD = 0.72$ ) is higher than the SV of those with a low relational orientation ( $M = 4.96, SD = 0.58$ ), we could not find a significant difference in SV between negotiators with high and low relational orientation.

H2 stated that negotiators' relational orientation will affect economic negotiation outcomes. However, we found no significant main effects of negotiators' relational orientation on joint profit or individual profit.

The third hypothesis (H3) predicted that incongruent dyads, consisting of negotiators with dissimilar relational orientation levels, will attain lower economic and subjective value outcomes than congruent negotiating dyads. From the post-hoc test results we could conclude that negotiators from dyads with low relational orientation score significantly lower on the subjective value outcomes than negotiators from incongruent dyads (SVbuyers:  $MD = .39, SE = .14, p < .05$ ; SVsellers:  $MD = .23, SE = .13, p = .14$ ). Other non-significant results indicated that, for the seller, the subjective value in incongruent dyads ( $M = 5.18, SD = 0.59$ ) is higher than that in dyads with similar low relational orientation, but lower in than congruent dyads with similar high relational orientation. For economic

negotiation outcomes we can make no comparison between congruent and incongruent dyads, as no significant effect of relational orientation was observed.

Concerning the fourth hypothesis (H4), we observed no significant interaction effect of negotiators' relational orientation and the strength of their relationship. Thus, whether negotiators are friends or strangers does not influence the effect of their relational orientation on negotiation outcomes. Neither could a main effect of relationship strength on negotiation outcomes be observed.

## DISCUSSION

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Already two decades ago, researchers suggested that until relationships were studied by negotiation scholars, our ability to analyse real-world negotiations would always remain inadequate (Greenhalgh, 1987). However, it was not until the last decade that the field of negotiation has given increasing attention to the relationship between negotiating parties. The quality of the relationship was found to be important beyond the particular issues at stake and the resources being divided. This study aimed to contribute to the negotiation literature by disentangling the effects of negotiators' relational orientation and relationship strength on negotiation outcomes. Despite strong theoretical considerations and some studies in the same area of interest (Curhan et al., 2008; Gelfand et al., 2006), only a significant difference in subjective value (SV) outcomes between different negotiator levels of relational orientation could be confirmed. However, no proof of better SV outcomes for high relationally oriented negotiators, compared to low relationally oriented negotiator, was established. Neither did we find corroboration for the impact of negotiators' relational orientation on economic negotiation outcomes.

These results are inherently caused by the data analysis technique and its related assumptions. For the multivariate test procedures of MANOVA to be valid, three assumptions must be met: (1) independent observations, (2) the variance-covariance matrices must be equal for all treatment groups, and (3) the set of dependent variables must follow a multivariate normal distribution. The most basic violation of an assumption occurs when there is a lack of independence among observations (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2006). In our study, observations from individual negotiators are most likely not independent, as the data are hierarchically nested with observations at a lower individual level being nested within an upper dyad level. Observations of negotiators from the same dyad tend to be more similar than observations from different dyads (Kenny, Cashy, &

Cook, 2006) and consequently the assumption of independence is violated. If dependence is found among groups of respondents, then a possible solution is to combine those within the groups and analyze the group's averaged score instead of the scores of the separate respondents (Hair et al., 2006). We applied this technique for our data analysis, although we acknowledge that the multilevel technique of dyad analysis (Kenny et al., 2006), as an important tool for the estimation of dyadic models, would be more appropriate for our data. It allows us to test the degree of nonindependence and to disentangle both actor and partner effects of relational orientation on negotiation outcomes. We thus can make a distinction between the amount of variance in negotiation outcomes that is explained by the negotiator's own relational orientation on the one hand and his negotiating partner's relational orientation on the other hand. Once we have mastered this technique, we will repeat data analysis for this study and observe the implications on its results.

Taking a closer look at the negotiation case of our study, one can discern the integrative potential, based on the in-built possibility for negotiators to logroll two of the three issues at stake. This integrative potential exists primarily in multiple issue negotiations (Thompson, 1998), whereby, given a set of preferences, negotiating parties can maximize the joint gain available within the context of the situation. Higher joint gain is a product of an integrative solution (Kurtzberg, 1998). In our study, however, the negotiation instructions directed participants to aim at a maximization of the number of points gained for themselves. This might have led them to focus more on the distributive aspect of the negotiation, to the detriment of creating a win-win situation and integrative value with their partner. Since persons with a high relational orientation specifically focus on interdependence and rapport building with their partner, one could assume that these instructions have resulted in relationally oriented negotiators not making use of their relational orientation. In literature this phenomenon is referred to as relational orientation (RSC) accessibility, or the level of readiness with which relational orientation is used to respond to a stimulus or social situation (Bruner, 1957; Higgins, 1996). Namely, for relational orientation of a negotiator to be central, it is not only its availability (is it present or not) that is important, but even more its accessibility. Self-knowledge can be available in memory, but unless it is accessible, it will not be used to process information. Thus the more accessible relational orientation is, the more self-defining it is for an individual.

Although there are many factors that might affect relational orientation accessibility, situational contexts and individual differences are two broad classes of variables implicated in previous research (Cross et al., 2000). The accessibility of relational orientation for a person is an additive function of both individual and situational variables (Bargh, Bond, Lomabardi, & Tota, 1986; Higgins, 1989), leading to a specific overall accessibility strength (Higgins, 1996). In the literature,

'relationship strength' (Fry et al., 1983; Tenbrunsel et al., 1999; Thompson, et al., 1996), 'expectance of future interaction' (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Valley, Neale, & Mannix, 1995), and 'organizational and occupational lines' (Curhan et al., 2008; Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998) have been advanced as critical features of the negotiation context, affecting the use of relational orientation. In this study we have investigated relationship strength between negotiators as a situational moderator of the relational orientation - negotiation outcomes relationship. Although we found no significant effect of relationship strength, we suspect that it nevertheless is present but unobserved because of low judged usability or applicability of relational orientation by negotiators (Higgins, 1996). Namely, accessibility will not automatically translate into knowledge use. When persons feel that use of their relational orientation would be irrelevant, inappropriate, or not applicable to a specific context, they will not make use of it. Negotiators who anticipate a future cooperation are more likely to feel more dependent on each other, and are more motivated to develop a working relationship than negotiators who do not anticipate such a relationship (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). The time horizon of the simulated negotiation exercise was short-term, with no expectance of future interaction between the negotiators. This most probably discouraged negotiators to make use of their relational orientation as they deemed it not applicable for this one shot interaction, leading to non-observance of the relationship strength effect between negotiators.

#### **Limitations and suggestions for future research**

The findings in this study are subject to a number of limitations, pointing out the need for future research. First, we have studied the effects of negotiators' relational orientation in a multiple issue negotiation case with integrative potential. However, one can wonder whether these hypotheses would hold in a purely distributive negotiation case, where you can find another effect of relational orientation. Namely, in this situation negotiators will tend to focus on the division of available resources, whereas in an integrative bargaining setting they will be inclined to increase the joint gain available to the negotiating parties and show problem-solving behaviours (Walton & McKersie, 1966). We suggest that further research investigates the impact of relational orientation in different negotiation settings.

Second, participants self-reported on the strength of the relationship with their negotiating partner. However, their sense of being interconnected with one another and experiencing closeness will not automatically result in close behaviour with each other. Further research on the relational self in negotiations should address this matter by clearly discerning negotiators' inclination towards their partner versus actual close behaviour with their partner. We hypothesize that this behaviour

(resulting from a sense of being close with the other) most likely will exert a dynamic impact on the process and outcomes of the negotiation. The Inclusion of Others in the Self (IOS) scale (Aron, Aron, & Smollman, 1992), measuring two related components of closeness: 'feeling close' and 'behaving close' has potential to meet this concern, with 'behaving close' as a measure of relationship strength. Furthermore, future research should go beyond the scope of relationship strength as a critical contextual variable affecting the relational orientation – negotiation outcomes relationship, towards an investigation of the interplay between individual and situational antecedents of the accessibility and applicability of relational orientation and consequently also the effect of relational orientation on negotiation outcomes.

Third, we measured relational orientation with the RIC Self-Aspects scale of Kashima and Hardie (2000), which is developed in the field of social psychology. Another existing measure of relational orientation is the *Relational Interdependent Self-Construal (RISC) scale* (Cross et al., 2000). Despite the value of these instruments, there is still a critical need to develop and incorporate good measures of relational constructs into negotiation research (Gelfand et al., 2006). Future research should aim to develop a measurement instrument of relational orientation, specifically adapted to the context of negotiation.

Finally, our model tested the relationship between relational orientation on the one hand and negotiation outcomes on the other hand. A pertinent critique is the narrow focus of this design, as it largely overlooks the underlying mechanism through which this linkage occurs. We find negotiation research on relationships has studied the link between relationships and the negotiation process on the one hand (e.g. De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995; Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993), and between relationships and negotiation outcomes (e.g. Amanatullah et al., 2008; Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1998) on the other hand, but scholars have ignored the underlying mechanism through which this linkage occurs. Opening this 'black box' to study the underlying process and understand via which tactics and strategies negotiators' relational orientation impacts on negotiation outcomes is an important avenue for future research.



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APPENDICES

**Table 1**  
**Negotiators' payoff schedules for the adapted New Car Negotiation Task**

| Repayment             | Warranty         | Delivery date  |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <i>Buyer payoffs</i>  |                  |                |
| Instant (0)           | 6 months (0)     | 5 weeks (0)    |
| In 1 week (400)       | 12 months (1000) | 4 weeks (600)  |
| In 2 weeks (800)      | 18 months (2000) | 3 weeks (1200) |
| In 3 weeks (1200)     | 24 months (3000) | 2 weeks (1800) |
| In 4 weeks (1600)     | 30 months (4000) | 1 week (2400)  |
| <i>Seller payoffs</i> |                  |                |
| Instant (4000)        | 6 months (1600)  | 5 weeks (2400) |
| In 1 week (3000)      | 12 months (1200) | 4 weeks (1800) |
| In 2 weeks (2000)     | 18 months (800)  | 3 weeks (1200) |
| In 3 weeks (1000)     | 24 months (400)  | 2 weeks (600)  |
| In 4 weeks (0)        | 30 months (0)    | 1 week (0)     |



**Table 2****Means, standard deviations and correlations between study variables (N = 252)**

| <i>Variable</i>                | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>4</i> | <i>5</i> | <i>6</i> | <i>7</i> |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. Relational orientation dyad | n.a.     | n.a.      | (.81)    |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| 2. Relationship strength       | n.a.     | n.a.      | -.13     | (n.a.)   |          |          |          |          |          |
| 3. Individual profit Buyer     | 4632     | 852       | .046     | .064     | (n.a.)   |          |          |          |          |
| 4. Individual profit Seller    | 4606     | 901       | -.013    | .026     | -.35**   | (n.a.)   |          |          |          |
| 5. Joint profit                | 9238     | 1001      | .027     | .031     | .54**    | .60      | (n.a.)   |          |          |
|                                | 5.14     | .70       | .27**    | .022     | .45**    | -.12     | .27**    | (.84)    |          |
| 6. Subjective Value Buyer      | 5.11     | .63       | .12      | .012     | -.18*    | .35**    | .16      | .13      | (.79)    |
| 7. Subjective Value Seller     |          |           | 0        | 1        | 1800     | 600      | 5800     | 2.50     | 3.06     |
|                                |          |           | 2        | 2        | 6400     | 7200     | 10400    | 6.69     | 6.69     |
| Min.                           |          |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Max.                           |          |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |

Note Coefficient alphas are on the diagonal; \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

**Table 3**  
**Results of the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)**

| <i>Source</i>                                                  | <i>Dependent variable</i> | <i>SS</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Relational orientation dyad<br>(H1 – H3)                       | SV buyer                  | 3.34      | 2         | 1.67      | 3.56     | .03      |
|                                                                | SV seller                 | 1.77      | 2         | .87       | 2.25     | .11      |
|                                                                | Individual profit buyer   | 555434.92 | 2         | 412522.44 | .41      | .69      |
|                                                                | Individual profit seller  | 27032.90  | 2         | 277717.46 | .38      | .98      |
|                                                                | Joint profit              | 825044.89 | 2         | 13516.45  | .02      | .67      |
| Relational orientation dyad x<br>Relationship strength<br>(H4) | SV buyer                  | .01       | 2         | .00       | .02      | .98      |
|                                                                | SV seller                 | .09       | 2         | .05       | 2.38     | .10      |
|                                                                | Individual profit buyer   | 55.49     | 2         | 27.75     | .61      | .55      |
|                                                                | Individual profit seller  | 3.46      | 2         | 1.73      | .03      | .97      |
|                                                                | Joint profit              | 23.60     | 2         | 11.80     | .40      | .67      |