

## Repositório ISCTE-IUL

---

Deposited in *Repositório ISCTE-IUL*:

2018-12-06

Deposited version:

Publisher Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Peng, Q. & Silva, M. G. (2018). Research on conflict management: a case study about small work groups in China. In XXVIII Jornadas Luso-Espanholas de Gestão Científica. Guarda: Instituto Politécnico da Guarda.

Further information on publisher's website:

--

Publisher's copyright statement:

This is the peer reviewed version of the following article: Peng, Q. & Silva, M. G. (2018). Research on conflict management: a case study about small work groups in China. In XXVIII Jornadas Luso-Espanholas de Gestão Científica. Guarda: Instituto Politécnico da Guarda.. This article may be used for non-commercial purposes in accordance with the Publisher's Terms and Conditions for self-archiving.

---

### Use policy

Creative Commons CC BY 4.0

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a link is made to the metadata record in the Repository
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

---

## **RESEARCH ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY ABOUT SMALL WORK GROUPS IN CHINA**

Qingyang Peng, [Qingyang.Peng@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:Qingyang.Peng@iscte-iul.pt), Southern Medical University, China and Instituto  
Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE–IUL), Portugal  
Maria Gabriela Silva, [gabriela.silva@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:gabriela.silva@iscte-iul.pt), Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE – IUL),  
Business Research Unit (BRU – IUL)

### **ABSTRACT**

This research is focused on a qualitative case study about conflict management in small work groups in China. Data were gathered in companies that have their offices in four Chinese cities, including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Bozhou and Fuyang. 74 informants from 26 work teams participated in this study. Participants were asked to recall events happened in their teams through face-to-face interviews. This case study aims to understand what types of conflict people experienced in their teams, the strategies people adopted to deal with conflicts and the orientations that emerge in the conflict management process. Overall, results show that the most common type of conflict is relationship conflict. With regard to conflict management styles, integrating and compromising styles are more frequent among managers, whereas avoiding, obliging and dominating styles are more frequent among subordinates. Overall, most of orientations are constructive. Furthermore, the findings were interpreted based on the Chinese culture.

**KEY WORDS:** Organizational conflict, intra-group conflict, conflict management styles, Chinese culture.

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Conflicts naturally occur in teams and organizations (Neck, Houghton & Murray, 2017). Conflict is unavoidable in all cultures, but every culture has its own way to manage it (Hanif, Khan, Adeel & Shah, 2016). Back to precious studies of organizational conflict, many studies have been conducted in Western countries. However, few studies have been conducted in China. Thus, it's essential to get a better understand of group dynamics in this country.

Contributing to fill in the gap, this study aims to analyse intra-group conflict in Chinese small work teams. In order to do it, the present case study aims at answering three research questions: Which type of conflict did emerge in small work teams? What type of strategies did people adopt to deal with conflicts? What kind of orientations did people adopt to handle conflicts?

### **2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS**

## **2.1 DEFINITION OF SMALL WORK GROUP**

Work teams are defined as “*interdependent collections of individuals who share responsibility for specific outcomes for their organizations*” (Sundstrom et al., 1990: 120). With regard to the size of work teams, one typology of work group is the small work group. According to the duration of existence, small work group can be divided into permanent formal group and temporary formal group. In this thesis, we were focused on permanent formal groups which have long life spans. Permanent formal groups have various forms, such as production, service, management, project, action and performing, and advisory (Sundstorm *et al.*, 2000).

Although some scholars believed that work teams and work groups should be distinguished (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993), in this thesis, the labels “group”, “team” and “department” will be used interchangeably, because they refer to the same thing (Sundstrom et al., 1990).

## **2.2 DEFINITION OF CONFLICT**

According to Deutsch (1973: 10), “*a conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur. The incompatible actions may originate in one person or group; such conflicts are called interpersonal or intergroup conflict*”. Thomas (1992: 265) defined conflict as “*the process which begins when one party perceives that another has frustrated, or is about to frustrate, some concern of his*”. Katz and McNulty (1994: 1) argues that “*a conflict situation exists when there are at least two parties involved who are interdependent, who are experiencing strong emotions, who seemingly hold incompatible outcomes or beliefs, and at least one of the parties recognize the incompatibility and perceives this to be problematic*”. Rahim (2001: 18) analysed different views of conflict and defined conflict as “*an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities (i.e., individual, group, organization, etc.)*”.

Organizational conflict can be classified into different types, such as intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group, intergroup, intra-organization and inter-organizational conflicts. In this thesis, we focused on intra-group conflict. Intra-group conflict refers to the conflict between people who work in the same department or team at the workplace. Such a conflict may occur as a result of incompatibilities or disagreements between some or all members of a group or between group members and its leaders (Rahim, 2001).

## **2.3 TYPES OF CONFLICT**

Generally speaking, there are three main types of conflict in organizations, task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict.

### **Task conflict**

Task conflict refers to a clash between individuals about the direction, content, or goals of a work assignment. Task conflict is related with group performance. According with Jehn's (1995) study of intra-group conflict, high levels of conflict interfered with group performance, because of confusions over responsibilities and time management problems. Later, Jehn (1997) argued that moderate task conflict generally improves group performance, but it can be dysfunctional when it includes strong negative emotion, such as anger, defensiveness, and perceptions that it is not resolvable. More recently, studies show that high task conflict

and low task conflict have different outcomes for individuals in groups. For instance, high task conflict can lead to disagreements that may raise negative emotions such as resentment, anger, and aggression. On the contrary, low levels of task conflict have the most positive effect on organizations by stimulating creativity, healthy competition, and critical thinking among the individuals discussing the various ways to approach a task (Neck et al., 2017).

### **Relationship conflict**

The concept of relationship conflict was initially introduced and defined when there are interpersonal incompatibilities among group members (Jehn, 2014). Relationship conflicts involve disagreements among group members about interpersonal issues, such as personality differences or differences in norms and values (Wit et al., 2012). According to Jehn (1997) relationship issues are related with interpersonal relationships among co-workers, including problems that members had with others' personalities or dispositions.

Relationship conflict has negative outcomes on organizations. The negative reactions associated with relationship conflict arouse uncomfortable feelings and dejection among members, which inhibits their ability to enjoy each other and their work in the group (Jehn, 1995). Pelled (1996) states that relationship conflicts made organizations' productivities decreased as perceived by team members. In addition, De Dreu and Weingart (2003) also mention that the effect of relationship conflict was detrimental to group performance and member satisfaction. In a recent paper, Meier *et al.* (2013) focused on the effects of relationship conflict on mood and the result provided evidence that relationship conflict was positively related to negative mood.

### **Process conflict**

Process conflict refers to conflict about how task accomplishment should proceed in the work unit, who is responsible for what, and how things should be delegated. Process conflict includes disagreements about assignments of duties or resources. Jehn's (1997) data show that high levels of process conflict interfered with performance by allowing group members to work at cross-purposes, by creating inconsistencies in task roles in the group, and by generating time-management problems that sometimes resulted in failure to meet deadlines. Thatcher *et al.* (2003) also noted that the process conflict was negatively related to group spirit and performance.

## **2.4 ORIENTATIONS TO CONFLICT**

Constructive conflict is a conflict with productive consequences. In other words, the participants are all satisfied with their outcomes and feel that they have gained as a result of the conflict. In contrast, destructive conflict is defined as a conflict with destructive consequences. In other words, the participants are dissatisfied with the outcomes and feel they have lost as a result of the conflict.

Weitz and Sandy (1995) mention some of the benefits of constructive conflict: Conflict can often act as a source of novelty for the relationship, forcing it into new terrain that, if handled successfully, can strengthen the interpersonal relationship and cultivate greater trust, communication and relationship satisfaction.

On the contrary, dysfunctional conflict usually hinders organizational performance and decreased productivity. This conflict orientation is characterized by competing individual interests over-riding the

overall interest of the business. Frequently, managers withhold information from one another (Omisore & Abiodun, 2014). Furthermore, Deutsch (1973) states that in a destructive conflict process, individuals compete, trying to defeat others and ultimately there would be only a winner, that is, other parties will always lose something.

Nowadays, constructive and destructive conflicts are also known as functional and dysfunctional conflict. When conflict is functional, it is mainly task oriented and focused on judgmental difference about how best to achieve common objectives (Amason, 1996). This type of conflict is also called cognitive conflict. When conflict becomes dysfunctional, it tends to be emotional and focused on personal incompatibilities or disputes (Amason, 1996).

## **2.5 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

In the field of conflict management strategy, the earliest and most influential experts were Blake and Mouton (1964). They studied conflict on two-dimensional space – the abscissa is defined as "caring people" and the ordinate as "concerned with production" - , and distinguished five conflicts management strategies: problem-solving, smoothing, forcing, withdrawal, and sharing.

Later, the five-factor model proposed by Thomas (1976) has also been widely influenced. He defined two dimensions to determine conflict strategies: to meet one own interests and to meet the interests of others. The desire to meet one own interests depends on the pursuit of individual goals with arbitrary or not arbitrary degree. The wish to meet the interests of other people's desire depends on the degree of cooperation. On this basis, Thomas proposed five strategies to resolve conflicts: avoiding, forcing, accommodation, cooperation, and compromise.

Rahim *et al.* (2002) developed the conflict management styles and stated that there are five specific styles of handling conflict. These styles are: Integrating (high concern for self and others); Obliging (low concern for self but high concern for others); Dominating (high concern for self and low concern for others); Avoiding (low concern for self and others); Compromising (intermediate in concern for self and others).

## **3 CHINESE BUSINESS CULTURE**

### **3.1 HOFSTEDE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS IN THE CHINESE CONTEXT**

Hofstede (2001: 9) defined national culture as *the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others*. Hofstede (2011: 8) proposed six culture dimensions:

- (1) *Power distance, related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality;*
- (2) *Uncertainty Avoidance, related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future;*
- (3) *Individualism versus Collectivism, related to the integration of individuals into primary groups;*
- (4) *Masculinity versus Femininity, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men;*
- (5) *Long Term versus Short Term Orientation, related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past;*

(6) *Indulgence versus Restraint, related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life*".

Each country has been positioned relative to other countries through a score on each dimension. However, researchers prefer Hofstede five-dimension framework than six-dimension, because of its clarity, parsimony, and resonance with managers (Kirkman et al., 2006). In order to understand culture differences in China, we will summarize the Chinese culture characteristics using Hofstede's (1980) five cultural dimensions:

### **High score in power distance**

The power distance remains high in business and in society in general. This means that people are less willing to challenge authority which is likely due to old communism beliefs which still have a strong influence on people's behaviour.

Research shows that, in countries with large power distance culture, employees are unlikely to express their concern to colleagues and managers, because they try to avoid direct conflict with others. They believe that they should learn to be obedient in the workplace (Hofstede, 1991).

Scholars find that in countries with high power distance, the way in which people interact in organizations is affected by the interaction between employees and supervisors. People are less open to show their emotions or feelings, they usually hide their emotions when they face their supervisors and do not want to be treated directly in conflict situations (Huang *et al.*, 2005). In a contextual simulation study of employee's inhibition, Wei and Zhang (2010) found that the higher the tendency of employees to be distant from their supervisor, the more they are reluctant to express different objections to the decision-making of the superior.

### **Collectivist culture**

Chinese businessmen tend to stay with the same partners or suppliers to keep loyalty and not deteriorate relationships. Lu *et al.* (2006) mentioned that countries with high collectivist culture emphasize obedience, harmony and coordination.

Studies show that in most collectivist cultures, direct confrontation of another person is considered rude and undesirable. The word no is seldom used, because saying "no" is a confrontation; "you may be right" and "we will think about it" are examples of polite ways of turning down a request. At the same time, the word yes should not necessarily be inferred as an approval, since it is used to maintain the line of communication: "yes, I heard you" is the meaning it has in Japan". Thus, culture is more often a source of conflict than of synergy (Hofstede, 2005).

### **High score in masculinity**

China is a masculine society. It means that promotion, money welfare and objective career success are more important than the success of subjective things, such as personal satisfaction (Briscoe et al., 2012). In a highly competitive work environment, employees are willing to accept challenging work even if there is a personal/family sacrifice.

### **Low score in uncertainty avoidance**

Many scholars have different views on uncertainty avoidance dimension in China. Recent studies suggest that China is in the low score of uncertainty avoidance, which means that Chinese people are more disgusted

with risk and tolerance of ambiguity (Fang, Zhao and Worm, 2008).

### **High score in long-term orientation**

Chinese people are focus on long-term orientation, such as stability and job security (Hofstede, 1980). Chinese employees also focus on long-term career goals rather than immediate benefits. For example, the Chinese people will not reject management's decision because they are afraid that this may affect their future career opportunities. They also focus on maintaining long-term relationships, which provides mutual beneficial in the future (Shen, 2006).

## **3.2 CHINESE GUANXI CULTURE**

Guanxi culture can be regarded as a typical and unique culture characteristic in China. The Chinese word "Guanxi" refers to networks of informal relationships and exchanges of favours that dominate business activity throughout China and East Asia. It is an ancient system based on personal relationships. Guanxi is one of the major dynamics in the Chinese society where business behaviour revolves around Guanxi. It is widely recognized that Guanxi is a key business determinant of firm performance because the life blood of the macro economy and the micro business conduct in the society is Guanxi network (Luo, 1997).

Gong and Suzuki (2013) did a quantitative study about Guanxi actions in China and Japan. The results show that collectivism has strongly associated with relationships, especially with close relationships. In the collectivism society, Guanxi determines who are in the group and who are out the group, and people's attitude about the relationship between in-group and out-group is totally different. They share more long-term orientation, mutual trust, loyalty and reciprocity with members of the in-group than with members of the out-group. Zhang and Pimpa (2010) also mention that in collectivist societies, people only establish relations with reliable partner, and relationship orientation is only applicable to network of insiders rather than network of outsiders. Thus, understanding Guanxi and establishing it as a foundation for business activities is a key in Chinese business culture.

To sum up, China is a country where business relations are highly socially embedded and Guanxi plays a pivotal role in the shaping and advancement of daily business operations. Specifically, in a business context, Guanxi occurs through individual interactions first; then it is applied on a corporate level (Gu, Hung & Tse, 2008).

## **3.3 THE GREAT IMPACT OF THE CHINESE TRADITIONAL CULTURE ON CHINESE BUSINESS CULTURE**

Many scholars believed that Confucius theory has a great influence on Chinese business culture. Chen (2000) concludes that the wheel of Equilibrium and Harmony proposed by Confucius has been running in the Chinese society for over two thousand years and continues to influence Chinese behaviours in the contemporary age. Rarick (2007) proposes that current managerial values, beliefs, and practices are strongly influenced by its Confucian tradition. Leadership under the Confucian tradition emphasizes a holistic concern for the welfare of employees, and harmony plays an important role in groups, teamwork, and self-sacrifice. At the same time, Confucian leaders are frugal and demand loyalty and dedication to the organization. They

expect employees to work tirelessly for the good of the group, the organization, and the nation. Zakić (2010) noted that Confucianism is more about an act or a way of life. Confucianism also influenced the way China did business.

Some incidents happened in Chinese companies show that employee' behaviours and ideas for handling conflict are deeply affected by the impact of traditional Chinese culture. For example, Liu's (2010) study about conflict management in a Chinese oil company found that the Chinese traditional culture emphasizes "tolerance", "moderation" and "harmony". It means that employees usually choose to avoid conflict, rather than an open and direct way to show the conflict they experienced. Employees tried to control and constrain their emotions and behaviour to handle conflicts.

Furthermore, Leung (1997) points out that the motivation behind the conflict avoidance is to keep harmony. There are two motivations for maintaining harmony in Chinese society: one is to prevent the loss of relations, the second is to promote relationships. Driven by the first motivation, people maintain harmony as a means to protect themselves from the interests of self and thus avoid the conflict with others. On the contrary, if they are motivated by the promotion of relations, people want to build a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship. Here they avoid conflict, because they believed that confrontation will destroy the relationship between each other.

#### **4 RESEARCH METHOD**

A case study about team dynamics was studied in some Chinese organizations. From October to December 2016, we went to four cities in China, including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Bozhou and Fuyang. We investigated 26 teams in different types of companies, including private company, international company, government company and family company. We were able to interview one to two thirds of the members in each work team. To collect data, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 74 team members (38 males and 36 females). The average age was 31 years old and participants occupied different positions in their organizations, including frontline workers, technicians, assistant managers and managers.

To conduct the interviews, we adopted the critical incident technique. The guideline used to run the interviews include questions about the informant and his team, with an emphasis on recalling stories or events happened in their teams. In this research, the content analysis technique was used to interpret interview data. All interviews were recorded and transcribed in Chinese. 20 interviews were transcribed from Chinese to English. Three categories and respective subcategories were defined: (1) type of conflict (task conflict, relationship conflict and process conflict), (2) orientation to conflict (constructive or destructive), and (3) styles of managing conflict (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising).

#### **5 FINDINGS**

In order to present the findings, we advance some knowledge about four incidents following the categories presented in the methodology chapter.



## 5.1 INCIDENT A

### Description

The incident A was generated in a property agency company and recalled by two female office clerks, Jenny and Lisa. The team was running a project to provide intellectual property services to customers.

There was a conflict between two employees, Krystal and Lily. Krystal was a fresh woman in the company, and Lily was a manager assistant who had higher position than Krystal. Lily was afraid of being replaced by Krystal because Krystal did a good job in her work and she may be promoted to a higher position. So Lily did something to let Lily make mistakes at work.

### Type of conflict

The conflict between Krystal and Lily seems to be a relationship conflict. As Jenny said:

*“Lily was our supervisor. At that time, Krystal usually did a good job in her work performance, and our former manager usually praised her at the meeting. And there was a signal to say, if our manager praised someone, he or she would be promoted quickly. Besides, we all know that her uncle was one of senior managers in our company, so there was a rumour in our department that she would replace Lily as our supervisor. (...)Once, our former manager asked Lily to tell Krystal to send an important email to our customer as soon as possible, but Lily told Krystal that she should send an important email two days later, not as soon as possible. Unfortunately, what Krystal did affected the company’s work performance, our manager was very angry and gave Krystal punishment that cutting her bonus and giving her a bad performance appraisal. (...) Later, Krystal found that Lily deliberately hurt her, Krystal told the fact to our manager, but our manager did not believe that Lily would behave like that, and we all knew that Lily didn’t like Krystal, and later, Lily didn’t admit her mistake, so Krystal was very sad and depressed, (...) Krystal told me that maybe Lily didn’t like her, Lily didn’t want to work with her. So I think it is the reason why Krystal left our company.”*

From what Jenny said, the conflict between Krystal and Lily was a relationship conflict, because Lily tried to prejudice Krystal without work reasons. It seems that Lily didn’t like to work with Krystal and Lily did something to let Krystal make mistakes at work.

### Styles to manage conflict

Other team members kept quiet about the conflict between Krystal and Lily. As Jenny said:

*“Although our manager held a meeting with all employees in our department to discuss this issue, we all said that we didn’t know what happened. (...) you know, if we discussed their conflicts at the meeting, we may feel very embarrassed, because we didn’t want to stand on either side and offend anyone, we should protect ourselves, you know, we work together every day(...).”*

Lisa also kept quiet about this issue. As she said:

*“(...) Actually, I didn’t want to discuss this issue at the meeting, it’s none of my business, and we were not very familiar with her. Besides, we’d better not comment on others’ issues at the meeting, especially others’ conflicts, if we offended our colleagues, it was not very good. So no one helped her, the reason was that we were afraid of upsetting Lily, you know, she was our supervisor; if we helped Krystal, it would affect our relationship with Lily, because we all knew that Lily didn’t like Krystal, and later, Lily didn’t admit her mistake, so Krystal was very sad and depressed(...).”*

From these two narratives, it is possible to conclude that other team members chose the avoiding strategy to deal with the conflict between Krystal and Lily, because when the manager asked other members to talk about this issue, everybody kept quiet and no one wanted to talk about it. Consequently, the conflict was not well resolved.

### **Orientation of conflict**

From the interviews, it is obvious that the orientation of conflict is destructive. As Jenny said:

*“Lily didn’t admit her mistake, so Krystal was very sad and depressed. Later, Krystal resigned and left our company (...). Although Krystal’s uncle persuaded her to stay in the company, she made her mind to leave, because she said that if she continued to work in our company, she would not be happy anymore.”*

From Jenny’s discourse, we understand that Krystal resigned and left the company. It means that the team lost a member. Their conflict couldn’t be resolved because other team members kept quiet about this issue.

## **5.2 INCIDENT B**

### **Description**

Incident D was recalled by Jeff, the director of the marketing department, in a mechanical and electrical equipment company, when his team was running a marketing development project.

There was a conflict between Nick and his colleagues. Nick was promoted as a district manager. But his colleagues didn’t accept him and no one wanted to work and cooperate with him, because Nick’s education level was lower than their colleagues.

### **Type of conflict**

The type of conflict was a relationship conflict. As Jeff said:

*“(…) Well, I can tell you something about a conflict between my employees. One year ago, there was an employee called Nick. Although Nick graduated from the secondary school, he is very clever and hard-working, so he usually did excellent sales performance. Then after two months, Nick was promoted as a district sales manager. (...) But Nick’s colleagues had higher education degree, most of them graduated from famous universities. Actually, some employees didn’t accept Nick as a supervisor. And I noticed that his colleagues didn’t like him and were unwilling to talk with him. Once, when he wanted to do a marketing investigation plan with a colleague, that guy told me that he didn’t want to work with Nick. Nick felt upset and unhappy. He came to my office and asked me how to deal with it.”*

From what Jeff said, there was a relationship conflict between Nick and his colleagues. Nick was promoted as a district manager, but Nick has lower education level than his colleagues, thus, some employees didn’t accept Nick as a supervisor, an employee even didn’t want to work with Nick. So it was an interpersonal conflict between employees.

### **Styles to manage conflict**

As a director, Jeff used the integrating strategy to manage the conflict between Nick and other employees.

*“After talking with Nick, I asked Nick and his colleagues to talk about this issue, I learned that Nick liked his*

*job very much, but he was confused that why his colleagues didn't like to work with him. And Nick's colleagues said that Nick's management and sales abilities were excellent, but they felt very embarrassed and awkward because they have higher education level than Nick, they believed that they can do better than Nick, so they didn't accept Nick as their supervisor. (...) As a director, I think I should resolve their conflict. So I organized everyone to have a meeting together. The topic of that meeting was about a new strategy for employees, called job promotion through competition, I think it should be applied in our company. This new strategy was, the first requirement of a sales manager was the sales ability, after that, you should have good management skills, we should not emphasize too much about education level. Because at that time no one did better job in sales than Nick, so Nick still could be a sales manager. In addition, our HR department would do the work assessment and performance appraisal once a year, promotion through competition would be applied in our company. So every employee has opportunities to be a manager. Then, I asked all employees in my department whether they would accept it or not and listened to their opinions. Finally, everyone agreed with my suggestion."*

From how Jeff managed the conflict between Nick and his colleagues, we can conclude that the style of managing conflict is integrating. Jeff organized all employees to have a meeting and reached an acceptable solution, applying "job promotion through competition" rule at work.

### **Orientation of conflict**

The orientation of conflict was constructive. As Jeff said:

*"After the meeting, I talked with Nick and told him that I believe he could do better and better, as time went by, he got along well with his colleagues. (...) Later, Nick became the sales champion in our department. After that, other employees admired him and accepted him as a supervisor, because I noticed that nobody came to me and said that he or she didn't accept Nick as a supervisor, and they worked well together. Later, I gave Nick some university enrollment brochures and encouraged him to get a MBA degree, and Nick will go to study next year. From my point of view, it is better that Nick should get a higher education degree so that other team members will accept him. It is good for him and our team work. (...) Now, our team has become more motivated because everyone wants to work with Nick".*

To conclude, due to Nick's effort and Jeff's new rule of "promotion through competition", other team members wanted to work with Nick and accepted him as a manager. Thus, the orientation of conflict was constructive.

## **5.3 INCIDENT C**

### **Description**

Incident F was recalled by Henry, a quality inspector, in a house property company, when the team was running a house property measurement project.

There was a conflict between Henry and his colleague Jack. Henry was a freshman, Jack had higher education level and seniority than Henry. Once, at the meeting, Henry pointed out that Jack's calculation method was wrong in the presence of all employees, which made Jack feel angry and embarrassed. Then, they quarrelled with each other and Jack left the meeting room.

### **Type of conflict**

Initially, the conflict between Henry and Jack was task conflict, but later, the conflict became relationship conflict. As Henry said:

“Once, during our meeting, I found that our colleague’s calculation method was wrong. Let me introduce that colleague, his name was Jack. Jack took responsibility of calculation, because he graduated from a famous university and has been working in our company for 10 years. We all respected and admired him. He made a lot of contributions for our company. At first, I couldn’t believe that his calculation was wrong, but I did a lot of calculation and the result showed that his method was wrong. So during that meeting, I said that Jack’s calculate method was wrong. But Jack was so angry and, immediately, he said to me, ‘you are a freshman in our company, why you make me so embarrassed in presence of all employees in our department?’ I have been working here for a long time, my calculation method was definitely right! (...)Then I said to him, ‘sir, I know you are very excellent, but please let me explain my thought, I think your calculation method was wrong, because I think that we should use another method ... What I said doesn’t mean that I don’t like you.’ But he was so angry and left our meeting room immediately. I felt very upset, I just wanted to tell him the correct calculation method, even though I was a fresh man at that time, and I thought everyone was free to explain his/her own ideas at the meeting. (...) Then we didn’t talk with each other for a week.”

From Henry’s narrative, the conflict between Henry and Jack was a task conflict, because since the beginning they have different ideas about their task. Later, their conflict became relationship conflict. They quarrelled with each other at the meeting and Jack believed that Henry didn’t like him.

### **Styles to manage conflict**

Henry and Jack kept quiet about their conflict. Later, because of the manager’s intervention, the conflict was resolved well. As Henry said:

“Later, our manager knew this incident and organized all people in our department to have a meeting to discuss this issue. Our manager said to Jack: ‘when people have different point of view, it’s very common, we should listen to other’s ideas so that we can make more progress at work. We are a team, we have to work together, and I hope you can apologize for your behaviour.’ Jack said that actually he regretted to treat me like that, but he didn’t talk to me last week because he felt embarrassed. And he admitted that his calculation method was wrong. He apologized to me and we were still friends from then on.”

At the beginning, Henry and Jack chose the avoiding strategy. Later, the manager chose the integrating strategy to manage their conflict and brought all team members together to discuss that issue. After talking, Jack apologized to Henry and resolved their conflict. Furthermore, actually people feel free to discuss ideas and find solutions for problems. It may mean that the recalled episode would transform or reinforce an implicate norm that emphasizes the goodness of communication for successfully problem-solving activities.

### **Orientation of conflict**

The orientation of conflict was constructive. As Henry said:

“Finally, Jack admitted that his calculation method was wrong. He apologized to me and we were still friends from then on. Then we got together to discuss about the new calculation method, and our manager also unified our point of views, and do the relevant meeting notes for the future work.”

## **5.4 Incident D**

### **Description**

Incident G was generated from an office clerk, Jessica, in the government and enterprises client department, in a Telecom Company, when the team was responsible for a client consultant project.

The transcription showed that there was a conflict between Jessica and her colleague Emily. At first, Jessica and Emily were good friends. One day Jessica told Emily that she was unsatisfied with their supervisors and some strict rules of the company. Then, when they competed for the same position, Emily let someone to tell their manager that Jessica didn't like her supervisors. So Emily won the position. But Jessica kept quiet about this issue, because Emily was her supervisor at that time.

### **Type of conflict**

At first, the conflict between Jessica and Emily was relationship conflict. As Jessica said:

"I'd like to tell you an incident happened 6 months ago. I had conflict with my colleague. I have been working in our company for 3 years. When I entered the company, I worked in the sales department. At that time, I met a nice colleague, Emily. We worked in the same department, our relationship was very good. We usually hanged out together and shared our feelings with each other. As time went by, we became good friends. But I never expected that our friendship would be broken by an incident. (...) Six months ago, when we had a dinner together, I told her that actually I didn't like our company, because I thought that our working schedules was very busy, and our manager was not very nice, because she didn't care our feelings, she always gave us too much work to do. At that time, I regarded Emily as my best friend in the company, so I believed that she would not tell my secrets or feelings to others. Later, our supervisor resigned and left our company, so our manager decided to choose one person between Emily and me to take over this position. About work abilities and strengths, I was better than Emily. However, finally, I lost, Emily won the position. I was so confused because in my department, more people support me to take over this position. And later I knew that Emily found some employees to tell my secrets to our manager. (...) So I was very angry, I think Emily didn't like me, I couldn't make friend with her anymore."

The conflict between Jessica and Emily was relationship conflict, because the conflict happened in the process when they competed for the same position.

### **Styles to manage conflict**

Jessica chose to avoid their conflict. As Jessica said:

"Actually, I was very angry after that incident. Although I wanted to talk with Emily, I persuaded myself to give up, because at that time, Emily was my supervisor. On one hand, it would be better not to have conflict with Emily, because we were working together every day. On the other hand, even though I would tell the truth to our manager, no one would believe me (...) because all people thought that Emily and I were good friends. So I chose to keep away from Emily. From then on, I didn't hang out with her anymore."

From what Jessica said, we can conclude that Jessica chose the avoiding strategy to deal with the conflict, because Jessica kept quiet about that incident. Consequently, the conflict was not resolved.

### **Orientation of conflict**

The orientation of conflict was destructive. As Jessica said:

"Later, I met Emily only when we were working together. Actually our bad relationship didn't have any

influence on our work performance, because there were a lot of employees in our department ... 20 people, and you know, as a saleswoman, we usually spend a lot of time working with our customers. (...) Last month, I was transferred to the client department and that's where I am working now, because of my good work performance. So I don't meet her at work."

From what Jessica said, we realize that the orientation of their conflict was destructive, because they are not friends anymore. They are only together when the work requires it.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this chapter is to answer three research questions presented in the introduction chapter, which will return to the main objective of the study and discuss explanations of research questions in regard to Chinese cultural dimensions.

### **6.1 WHICH TYPE OF CONFLICT DID EMERGE IN SMALL WORK TEAMS?**

Findings show that there are 6 process conflicts, 12 relationship conflicts and 5 task conflicts. In this study, results provide the evidence that relationship conflicts are the most common type of conflict emerged in 26 Chinese small work teams. These findings corroborate Liang et al.'s (2014) study, which supports the idea that East Asian teams have more relationship conflict in the late stages of the team than North American teams. As a matter of fact, scholars found that relationship conflicts are inevitable in organizations, especially in the context of Chinese culture which is based on relationship and connections (Huang, 2012).

### **6.2 WHAT TYPE OF STRATEGIES DID PEOPLE ADOPT TO DEAL WITH CONFLICTS?**

Findings illustrate 8 avoiding strategies, 6 integrating strategies, 5 compromising strategies, 2 obliging strategy and 2 dominating strategy that people adopted to deal with the conflict. Overall, the first notable finding is that avoiding strategies are more adopted by 26 Chinese work teams for dealing with the conflict.

Moreover, concerning job descriptions of interviewees, the second surprising finding relates to different types of strategies adopted by people in different positions. The analysis suggests two links between conflict management styles and job positions. On one side, integrating and compromising strategies are more frequently adopted by middle managers or directors; on the other side, avoiding, obliging and dominating strategies are more frequently adopted by subordinates.

#### **Manager's interventions in handling intragroup conflicts**

Some Chinese scholars believed that team leaders play an irreplaceable role in managing team conflicts. Team leaders should identify types of conflicts and resolve conflicts effectively in order to improve team cohesiveness (Wan & Zhao, 2012). Studies about Chinese employees confirmed that integrating styles used by Chinese managers to handle conflicts can lead to positive results at the workplace (Chan et al., 2008).

Scholars also found that dominating and obliging styles, which may be adopted by managers, have no

significant positive effects for resolving conflicts. This may confirm that the Chinese people advocate “moderate” values proposed by Confucius. Moderate values advocate unbiased and compromised styles. For example, adopting dominating styles are only focused on personal interests, whereas obliging styles only meet the requirements of others. Hence, these two conflict management styles did not show positive effects on task conflicts and relationship conflicts in the Chinese culture context. From the managers’ perspective, the integrating approach which meets satisfaction of both parties can be a perfect solution to handle conflicts. Besides, compromise style which seeks to balance concerns of both parties can have a significant effect in reducing the negative effects of relationship conflict (Liu & Liu, 2008). Furthermore, Chinese managers rarely use the dominating style to manage conflicts because dominating style will be opposed by the majority of employees. Thus, managers prefer intervention on compromising styles to deal with the conflict in China (Tian, 2007). Yu et al. (2015) states that managers who adopt integrating styles to manage conflict emphasize cooperation goals and leads to a common exchange of information and open discussion, which will help to find new and mutually beneficial solutions. Integrating styles allow the parties to directly express their thoughts and feelings in order to integrate all views together to find a new solution.

### **Subordinate’s interventions in handling intra-group conflicts**

In order to understand the reasons why subordinates prefer avoiding, obliging and dominating strategies to manage conflicts in teams, we need to understand Chinese business culture. Based on Hofstede’s (1980) five cultural dimensions, the findings indicate that some styles of dealing with conflict are related with high power distance (Yao, 2014).

China is a country with large power distance, which means that people who have less power are more concerned about possible negative effects if they cannot properly handle conflicts with people who have higher status. In that case, people may avoid conflict with people at higher positions in the hierarchy, because their relationship is vertical (Ji, 2012). Further, researchers found that Chinese employees respect people who are older or have a higher position when solving conflicts (Wang et al., 2016). Given to the harmony of Chinese traditional culture, employees usually tend to sacrifice their own interests, especially when conflicts involve team members (Zhang & Zhang, 2012; Yu, 1997).

From the incidents above, we found some reasons why most Chinese team members prefer avoiding or obliging strategies to manage their conflict. First, Chinese work teams respect hierarchies and high power distance. Yao (2014) found that Chinese social groups has higher score in power distance than their Western partners, people respect hierarchies in organizations, people’s behaviours should be within their social ranks, which are influenced by authorities and rules. Dai (2007) stated that Western countries advocate individuality and self-worth. Therefore, the power distance of Western countries is small. By contrast, China is a collectivism country with higher power distance. Most of the organizational structures are similar to the Chinese government departments, which is a pyramid-style organizational structure with many layers. Second, the reason why people prefer avoiding or obliging strategies is that harmony plays an important role in Chinese social relations. Chen (2000) found that Chinese people prefer non-confrontational, avoiding and obliging styles in the process of conflict resolution. In China, people prefer avoiding conflicts in order to further their self-interests and avoid potential interpersonal problems with others (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002).

### **Chinese Guanxi culture**

These incidents also reflect that Chinese unique *guanxi* culture has great impact on Chinese work teams. *Guanxi* (connections) is developed in Chinese business networks when employees work with authorities,

suppliers, customers and associates (Ooi, 2007). Hence, Chinese people prefer cultivating trust and long-term relationships in their business practices. It implies that team members often choose to keep silent because they want to maintain the relationship with both, their supervisor and the colleagues.

### **Chinese high context culture**

In order to understand the deep reasons why Chinese subordinates usually adopt avoiding styles to deal with conflict in this study, we should also understand other Chinese cultural characteristics. Hall (1976) argued that culture is contextual and divided culture into high-context culture and low-context culture. China is a typical high context culture country where relationship between people is strong and information is widely shared by people. High context culture emphasizes “*group-identity orientation, covert communication codes, and maintain a homogeneous normative structure with high cultural demand/high cultural constraint characteristics*” (Ting-Toomey, 1985: 76). In this cultural context, Chinese people usually act as nothing happened when they are in troublesome situations or conflicts with others. If a person admits something happened, he or she must seriously take actions in time. Hence, people in high-context culture have to think twice and foresee what happens in the future before they take actions. Hence, people in high-context cultural situations often adopt non-confrontational, indirect approaches to deal with conflicts (Chen et al., 2000; Ting-Toomey, 1985). Researchers found that people in high-context countries prefer more conflict avoidance than those in low-context nations (Croucher *et al.*, 2012).

## **6.3 WHAT KIND OF ORIENTATIONS DID PEOPLE ADOPT TO HANDLE CONFLICTS?**

In terms of orientations of conflict, the findings indicate that there are 17 constructive and 9 destructive orientations of conflicts. Furthermore, in this study, it is visible that integrating, obliging and compromising styles are positive for managing the conflict, whereas avoiding and dominating are negative for dealing with the conflict in Chinese work teams.

Li (2012) states that the superior’s intervention strategy is mainly to deal with high power distance in Chinese cultural context. Respectful supervisors are suitable for dealing with various types of conflicts in organizations, especially when the involved parties in the conflict need to maintain good interpersonal relationships. If the supervisor adopts a mediator role in a conflict between the two sides, in a context of authority of the pressure and the traditional sense of fear, the instructions and solutions provided by the supervisor will be widely acceptable.

However, in terms of conflict avoidance, some Chinese scholars found that conflict avoidance is very harmful to solving relationship conflicts in China (Liu & Liu, 2008). Conflict avoidance approaches may have negative effects on conflict resolution when relationships between people are weak (Tjosvold & Sun, 2002).

## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

In this study, a case study about team dynamics was conducted in some Chinese work teams. The aim was to investigate the types of conflict people experienced in their teams, the orientations behind the conflicts and strategies people adopted to deal with the conflict. Results suggest that different types of conflicts can be



identified, and the majority types of conflict are relationship conflict. Concerning conflict management styles, results suggest that integrating and compromising styles are more frequently adopted by managers, whereas avoiding, obliging and dominating styles are more frequently adopted by subordinates. The findings could be explained by high power distance, long-term orientations, Chinese high-context culture, *guanxi* culture and some Chinese traditional cultural dimensions.

Overall the results highlighted in this study provide new insights about conflict management styles in Chinese small work teams. For example, some positive incidents provide suggestions for conflict management in small teams, which can be given to the companies that participated in this study. Furthermore, concerning the unique aspect of this study, all data were collected in Chinese work teams. Hence, the findings can help Western or international companies to better manage conflicts and cultural differences when they cooperate with Chinese work teams.

Two limitations should be mentioned in this study. First, data were sometimes not very rich, which did not allow the authors to draw precise conclusions. Second, incidents were rarely recalled by different team members. Considering further studies, researchers can fill in the gaps of limitations in the future. Richer interview data should be provided to ensure the abundance and preciseness of the study.

## 9 REFERENCES

- 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(1): 123-148.
- Blake, R.R., & Mouton, J.S. (1964). *The managerial grid*. Houston: Gulf Publishing Company.
- Briscoe, D., Hall, D., & Mayrhofer, W. (2012). *Careers around the World*, New York: Routledge.
- Chan, K.W., Huang, X., & Ng, P.M. (2008). Manager's conflict management styles and employee attitudinal outcomes: the mediating role of trust. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 25: 277-295.
- Chen, G.M. (2000). The impact of harmony on Chinese conflict management. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Communication Association, Seattle.
- Chen, G.M., Ryan, K., & Chen, C. (2000). The determinants of conflict management among Chinese and Americans. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 9: 163-175.
- Croucher, S.M., Bruno, A., McGrath, P., Adams, C., McGahan, C., Suits, A., & Huckins, A. (2012). Conflict styles and high-low context cultures: a cross-cultural extension. *Communication Research Reports*, 29(1): 64-73.
- Dai, Q.X. (2007). Conflict between the Western management theory and Chinese traditional culture. *Journal of Hunan University of Arts and Science*, 32(5): 29-31. (in Chinese).
- De Deru, C.K. W., & Weingart, L.R. (2003). Task versus relationship conflict, team performance, and team member satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(4): 741-749.
- Deutsch, M. (1973). *The resolution of conflict: Constructive and destructive processes*. Binghamton, N.Y.: Vail-Ballou Press, Inc.
- Fang, T., Zhao, S., & Worm, V. (2008). The changing Chinese culture and business behaviour. *International Business Review*, 17(2): 141-145.
- Gong, J.J., & Suzuki, S. (2013). An empirical investigation of culture and Guanxi actions between China and Japan. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 3(4): 375-380.
- Gu, F.F., Hung, K., & Tse, D.K. (2008). When does Guanxi matter? Issues of capitalization and its dark sides. *Journal of Marketing*, 72(4): 12-28.
- Hall, E.T. (1976). *Beyond Culture*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.

- Hanif, F., Khan, M., Adeel, M., & Shah, S.M. (2016). Impact of Intra-group Conflict on Group Performance-moderating Role of Cultural Diversity. *Universal Journal of Management*, 4(2): 72-78.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. London, UK: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Hofstede, G. (2005). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind intercultural Cooperation and its importance for survival*, London: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1): 1-26. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014.79>
- Huang, X., Van de Vliert, E., & Van der Veegt, G. (2005). Breaking the silence culture: Stimulation of participation and employee opinion withholding cross-nationally. *Management and Organization Review*, 1:459-482.
- Huang, J. (2012). The relationship between conflict and team performance in Taiwan: the moderation effect of goal orientation. *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, 23(10): 2126-2143.
- Jehn, K. A. (1995). A multimethod 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.A. (2014). Types of conflict: The history and future of conflict definitions and typologies. In T.J. International Ltd. (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict management research*: 3-18. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Ji, J. (2012). Chinese people's self-construal and its relationship with conflict management styles. *Public Personnel Management*, 41(5): 69-78.
- Katzenbach, J., & Smith, D. (1993). The discipline of teams. *Harvard Business Review*, 71(2): 111-120.
- Katz, N., & McNulty, K. (1994). Conflict resolution. Available at: <https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedFiles/parcc/cmc/Conflict%20Resolution%20NK.pdf.80>
- Kirkman, B., Lowe, K., & Gibson, C. (2006). A quarter century of culture's consequences: A review of empirical research incorporating Hofstede's cultural values framework. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 37: 285-320.
- Leung, K. (1997). Negotiation and reward allocations across cultures. In Christopher, P.E., & Erez, M. (Eds.). *New Perspectives on International Industrial Organizational Psychology*, San Francisco, CA: New Lexington.
- Li, Y.T. (2012). The study of conflict management strategies based on Chinese cultural context. *Journal of Foshan University (Social Science Edition)*, 1(30): 35-43. (in Chinese).
- Liang, L.H., Adair, W.L., & Hideg, I. (2014). When should we disagree? The effect of relationship conflict on team identity in East Asian and North American teams. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, 7: 282-289.
- Liu, X. (2010). Discussion on the Conflict of Employees in Chinese Petroleum Enterprises. *Business Management*, 22:81-83. (in Chinese).
- Liu, J., & Liu, S.B. (2008). Research on conflict management of Chinese TMTs: theories and evidences. *Economic Theory and Economic Management*, 2: 58-64. (in Chinese).
- Lu, H., Wang, F.Q., Wang, Y.S., & Wang, P. (2006). Team conflict management in the background of Chinese traditional culture. *China Academic Journal*, 2: 161-164. (in Chinese).
- Luo, Y.D. (1997). Guanxi: principles, philosophies, and implications. *Human Systems Management*, 16(1): 43-51.
- Meier, L.L., Gross, S., Spector, P.E., & Semmer, N.K. (2013). Relationship and task conflict at work: Interactive short-term effects on angry mood and somatic complaints. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 18: 144-156.
- Neck, C.P., Houghton, J.D., & Murray, E.L. (2017). Conflict and negotiation. In C.F. David (Eds.), *Organizational Behavior: A critical-thinking approach*: 238-262. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Omisore, B.O., & Abiodun, A.R. (2014). Organizational conflicts: Causes, effects and remedies. *International Journal of Academic*

- Research in Economics and Management Sciences, 3(6): 118-137.
- Ooi, C.S. (2007). "Un-packing packaged cultures: Chinese-ness in International Business", *East Asia*, 24(2): 111-128.
- Pelled, L.H. (1996). Demographic diversity, conflict, and workgroup outcomes: An intervening process theory. *Organizational Science*, 7: 615-631.
- Rahim, M. (2001). Nature of conflict. In M. Rahim (Ed.) *Managing conflict in organizations*: 17-33. Westport Connecticut, U.S.A: Quorum Books.
- Rahim, M.A., Psenicka, C., Polychroniou, P., Zhao, J., Yu, C., Chan, K., Susana, K., Alves, M., Lee, C., Rahman, M., Ferdousy, S., & Wyk, R. (2002). A model of emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies: A study in seven countries. *International Journal*, 10(4): 302-326.
- Rarick, C.A. (2007). Confucius on management: understanding Chinese cultural values and managerial practices. *Journal of International Management Studies*, 2: 22-28.
- Shen, J. (2006). Factors affecting international staffing in Chinese multinationals (MNEs). *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17: 295–315.
- Sundstrom, E., De Meuse, K.P., & Futrell, D. (1990). Work teams: Applications and effectiveness. *American Psychologist*, 45: 120-133.
- Sundstrom, E., McIntyre, M., Halfhill, T.R., & Richards, H. (2000). Work groups: From the Hawthorne studies to work teams of the 1990s and beyond. *Group Dynamics*, 4: 44-67.
- Thatcher, S.M. B., Jehn, K.A., & Zanutto, E. (2003). Cracks in diversity research: The effects of diversity faultlines on conflict and performance. *Group Decision and Negotiation*, 12, 217-241.
- Thomas, K. W. (1992). Conflict and conflict management: Reflections and update. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 13: 265-274.
- Tian, H. (2007). The comparison of conflict management models and management thoughts between Chinese and Western enterprises. *Journal of Social Sciences of Hunan Normal University*, 3: 101-104. (in Chinese).
- Ting-Toomey, S. (1985). Toward a theory of conflict and culture. In W. B. Gudykunst, L. P. Stewart, & S. Ting-Toomey (Eds.), *Communication, culture, and organizational processes* (pp. 71-86). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Tjosvold, D., & Sun, H. (2002). Understanding conflict avoidance: relationship, motivation, actions and consequences. *International Journal of conflict management*, 13(2): 142-164.
- Wan, T., & Zhao, Y. (2012). Research on team leader's role in conflict and conflict management. *Science and Technology Management Research*, 21: 140-143.
- Wang, N.N., Jiang, D.D., & Pretorius, L. (2016). Conflict-resolving behaviour of project managers in international projects: A culture-based comparative study. *Technology in Society*, 47: 140-147.
- Weitz, B.A., & Sandy, D.J. (1995). Relationship marketing and distribution channels. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 23(4), 305-320.
- Wei, X., Zhang, Z.X. (2010). Why does the organization lack inhibitory advice. *Journal of the World of Management*, 10: 99-121. (in Chinese).
- Wit, F.R. C., Greer, L.L., & Jehn, K.A. (2012). The paradox of intragroup conflict: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(2): 360-390.
- Yao, C. (2014). The impact of cultural dimensions on Chinese expatriates' career capital. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(5): 609-630.
- Yu, J.J., Jiang, S.F., & Zhao, S.M. (2015). A study on the relationship between the effects of the conflict management behavior and team learning behavior on employees' innovative behavior. *Science & Technology Progress and Policy*, 32(11): 143-148. (in Chinese).
- Yu, X. J. (1997). The Chinese "native" perspective on mao-dun (conflict) and mao-dun resolution strategies: a qualitative investigation. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 7: 63-82.
- Zakić, K. (2010). Basic characteristics of Chinese management from the intercultural point of view. *Megatrend Review*, 7(2): 253-272.
- Zhang, J. L., & Pimpa, N. (2010). Embracing Guanxi: The literature review. *International Journal of Asian Business and Information Management*, 1(1): 23-31.
- Zhang, Q., & Zhang, JB. (2012). Conflict types, resolution, and relational satisfaction: a U.S.-China investigation. *Intercultural*

Communication Studies, 3: 41-52.