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# Negotiating Relationally: The Dynamics of the Relational Self In Negotiations

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## Keywords

## Comments

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Although negotiation research is thriving, it has been criticized as having an arelational bias—emphasizing autonomy, competition, and rationality over interdependence, cooperation, and relationality. In this article, we advance a new model of relationality in negotiation. Drawing on research in social psychology, we describe the construct of *relational self-construals* (RSC) and present a temporal model of RSC and negotiation. After delineating the conditions through which RSC becomes accessible in negotiation and conditions that inhibit its use, we discuss how RSC affects negotiators' pre-negotiation psychological states, early and later tactics, and negotiation outcomes. We illustrate a number of distinct relational dynamics that can occur based on the dyadic composition of RSC, each of which brings distinct benefits and costs to the negotiation table. Implications for the science and practice of negotiation are discussed.
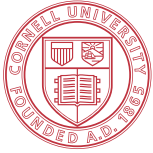
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**Negotiating Relationally:**
**The Dynamics of the Relational Self In Negotiations**

Research on negotiation is thriving. Over the last two decades, scholars have greatly advanced our understanding of basic psychological processes in negotiation, including negotiator cognition (e.g., Neale & Bazerman, 1991; Thompson & Hastie, 1990), motivation (e.g., De Dreu & Carnevale, 2003), and emotion (e.g., Allred, Mallozzi, Matsui, & Raia, 1997; Barry & Oliver, 1996; Morris & Keltner, 2000; Thompson, Medvec, Seiden, & Kopelman, 2001). Great strides have also been made in understanding complex social processes in negotiation, such as communication (e.g., Weingart, Prietula, Hyder, & Genovese, 1999), and power and influence (e.g., Ebenbach & Keltner, 1998; Mannix, 1994). Likewise, research has provided insights into the impact of the negotiation context—such as teams, third parties, and technology—on negotiation dynamics (e.g., Croson, 1999; McGinn & Keros, 2002; Thompson, Peterson, & Kray, 1995). Indeed, research is shedding new light on topics that previously were at a "dead end." For example, not long ago, personality was seen as lacking much explanatory value in negotiation, yet recently there has been a resurgence of interest on this topic (Barry & Friedman, 1998). More generally, few areas in organizational behavior have developed as rapidly, and with as much depth and breadth, as the field of negotiation (Kramer & Messick, 1995).

Nevertheless, research on negotiation has not gone without criticism. Numerous scholars have bemoaned that the field offers a largely arelational view of an inherently relational situation. In an early critique, Barley (1991) questioned whether findings, largely drawn from simulated negotiations between unacquainted participants, correspond to the dynamics of real world negotiations in which prior relationships figure so prominently. Later, Gray (1994) cogently argued that many of the field's meta-assumptions reflect an arelational bias— emphasizing autonomy, competition, and rationality over interdependence, cooperation, and relationality. Other scholars have echoed these sentiments, arguing that traditional negotiation research does not adequately capture relational dynamics in negotiation (Greenhalgh & Gilkey,

1993; Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1995; Kolb & Coolidge, 1991).  Yet despite this void, rich

theoretical and empirical work on relational constructs is still lacking in the literature.  As

discussed below, although there has been some discussion of relational orientation in

negotiation (e.g., Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993; King & Hinson, 1994; Rubin & Brown, 1975), this

construct has remained relatively ill-defined, and its constituent psychological and social

processes in negotiation remain unexplored.  In short, although criticisms regarding the

arelational nature of negotiation theory are certainly valid—and we suspect that many scholars

would agree with these arguments—they have nonetheless largely remained abstract, offering

little in the way of a concrete research agenda for the field.

        In this article, we advance a more comprehensive theory of relationality in negotiation.

At the core of our model is the construct of the *relational self-construal (RSC)*.  As we detail

below, 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 (e.g., Andersen & Chen, 2002;

Baldwin, 1992; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Chen, 2001; 2003; Chen, Lee-Chai, and Bargh, 2001;

Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000; Cross & Morris, 2003; Cross, Morris, & Gore, 2002; Cross &

Madson, 1997; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999; Kashima, Yamaguchi, Kim, Choi, Gelfand, & Yuki,

1995; Sanchez-Burkes, 2002).  In contrast to a view of the self as largely independent, RSC

reflects a cognitive representation of the self as fundamentally *connected* to other individuals

(Cross & Madson, 1997; Kashima et al., 1995).  It has been linked to an impressive array of

psychological processes, including attention, memory and inference (e.g., Gabriel & Gardner,

1999), emotional regulation and expression (e.g., Cross et al. 2000; Cross & Madson, 1997),

and motivation (e.g., Cross et al., 2000; Gardner, Gabriel, & Hochschild, 2002).  RSC has also

been implicated in a wide range of social processes that are aimed at cultivating and preserving

relationships, including partner choice, communication and self-disclosure, decision-making,

and behavior (e.g., Cross et al., 2000; 2002**;** Gabriel & Gardner, 1999).  Yet despite these far-

reaching and exciting theoretical and empirical developments, discussions of RSC have

remained isolated from the field of organizational behavior in general, and the field of negotiation in particular.

We begin filling this void by advancing a dynamic theory of RSC and negotiation. In what follows, we first define key terms regarding the self in order to provide necessary grounding for our model of RSC and negotiation. Next, we delineate the construct of RSC, and how it is implicated in cognitive, emotional, and motivational processes. Third, we present our integrative model of RSC and negotiation. Viewing negotiation through a temporal lens, we delineate the processes through which RSC becomes accessible in negotiation and the conditions that inhibit its use. We then illustrate the ways in which RSC affects negotiators' pre-negotiation psychological states, early and later tactics, and negotiation outcomes. As we will show, there are a number of distinct relational dynamics that can occur based on the dyadic composition of RSC, each of which brings distinct *benefits* and *costs* to the negotiation table. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of the model for negotiation theory and practice.

## Key Terms

The self is defined as a multidimensional, dynamic knowledge structure that organizes self-relevant information (Cross et al., 2002; Markus, 1977; Markus & Wurf, 1987). It is comprised of multiple self-representations—what have been termed self-schemas or *self-construals*—which embody knowledge about oneself, including "personality attributes, social roles, past experience, future goals, and the like" (Fiske & Taylor, 1991: 181-182). Some self-construals are especially central, well elaborated, and important to an individual; others are less important and are more peripheral (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

Although we possess a large repertoire of self-construals, social cognition scholars have long argued that only a limited number of these are in use at any point in time (Markus & Kunda, 1986; Markus & Wurf, 1987; McGuire, McGuire, & Cheever, 1986). More specifically, self-knowledge can be *available* in memory but unless it is accessible it will not be used to process

information.  *Accessibility* refers to the potential for stored knowledge to be used to respond to stimuli (Bruner, 1957; Higgins & King, 1981; Higgins, 1996).  The greater the accessibility of an attribute, the more self-defining that attribute is for an individual (Higgins, 1996; Higgins, Shah, & Friedman, 1997; Shah, Higgins, & Friedman, 1998).  The accessibility of self-construals can be derived from two distinct sources.  Self-construals are likely to become *chronically accessible* the more frequently and consistently individuals use such attributes to define the self.  Self-construals can also be *temporarily accessible* when strong features of a situational context impinge on an individual and temporarily increase accessibility of self-knowledge (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984).  Accessibility of a construct is an *additive* function of chronic and temporary accessibility (Bargh, Bond, Lombardi, & Tota, 1986; Higgins, 1989).  That is, the effect of accessibility in a particular situation depends solely on its *strength of accessibility*—the source of the accessibility, temporary or chronic, is irrelevant (Higgins, 1996).

Importantly, accessibility does not automatically translate into *knowledge use*.  Rather, there may be *inhibitory processes* that prevent knowledge that is accessible from being used, and call for more relevant knowledge to be used instead.  An important variable that influences whether stored knowledge will actually be used is the fit or *applicability* of the knowledge to the stimulus (Higgins, 1996).  As Higgins (1996: 154) explains, "The greater the overlap between the features of some stored knowledge and the attended features of a stimulus, the greater is the applicability of the knowledge to the stimulus and the greater is the likelihood that the knowledge will be activated in the presence of the stimulus."  Applicability involves an unconscious assessment of the relevance of an accessible construct to the context; if the knowledge structure is not relevant, it won't be used (Higgins, 1996).  For example, an individual for whom the construct of aggressiveness is accessible will not actually use that construct to guide thoughts, feelings, or behavior unless the stimulus has aggressive cues (i.e., it is applicable to the knowledge structure).  An exception to this rule, however, is if an individual has extremely strong accessibility of a construct; Very strong accessibility can compensate for weak

applicability (Higgins & Brendl, 1995).  Furthermore, individuals may also *consciously* decide not to use accessible knowledge if the accessible knowledge is deemed to have low "judged usability" (Higgins, 1996).  As Higgins (1996: 136) notes: "Even when stored information is activated because of its accessibility and applicability to a stimulus, it might not be consciously used if it is perceived as irrelevant or inappropriate."  Importantly, conscious processing due to judged usabilty occurs "*after* knowledge activation but *before* knowledge use" (p. 152; italics in original) (see also Devine, 1989, Kruglanski, 1989).

Finally, once they are in use, self-construals are a powerful regulator of human behavior. Self-construals have a critical influence on information processing about oneself and other people, affecting perception, memory, attributions, and inferences (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Markus, Smith, & Moreland, 1985).  The self also has a profound influence on emotion and affect regulation (Cross & Madson, 1997).  For example, self-construals determine what triggers individuals' emotional reactions to a stimulus event.  When an aspect of the self is affirmed through an event, positive emotions result, whereas when an aspect of the self is threatened, negative emotions follow (Higgins, 1987).  The self is also intricately tied to motivation and self-regulation. Self-construals direct our actions as we consciously or unconsciously engage in tactics to "self-verify" or confirm our conceptions of ourselves (Swann, 1987).  Individuals set goals that are consistent with their self-construals, engage in behaviors to fulfill those goals, and monitor their accomplishments very closely (Carver & Scheier, 1981).

## RELATIONAL SELF-CONSTRUALS

For much of the past century, research on the nature and consequences of self-construals has largely focused on the *independent self*—the conception of oneself as an autonomous and unique entity (Bakan, 1966; Parsons, 1949; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989).  Independent self-construals have been associated with a sense of personal agency, a focus on the self as separate from others, and a belief that the self is generally dissimilar to others (Shweder & Bourne, 1982).   In recent years, however, research has shown

that this prevailing self-construal provides a rather limited perspective on the nature and

consequences of the self.  In contrast to a focus on independence, a proliferation of research

has shown that individuals can emphasize the *relational* self—a view of the self as

fundamentally *connected* to other individuals (e.g., Andersen & Chen, 2002; Aron, Aron, &

Smollman, 1992; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Chen, 2001; 2003; Chen et al., 2001; Clancy &

Dollinger, 1993; Cross, et. al, 2000; 2002; Cross & Morris, 2003; Cross & Madson, 1997;

Gilligan, 1982; Kashima et al, 1995; Kashima & Hardie, 2000).  Rather than emphasizing

individual autonomy and promotion of one's own goals, in this self-construal, the priority is to

emphasize "connectedness to others and [to] behave in ways that promote and strengthen

existing relationships" (Cross, et al., 2002: 400).  Moreover, as detailed below, when

connections with others figure prominently in one's representations of the self, it is

relationships—and not one's personal attributes—that provide a critical framework through

which cognition, emotion, and motivation are regulated.  Table 1 summarizes the following

discussion of these relational cognition, emotion, and motivational processes.

**Table 1**
**Relational Self-Construal and Associated Psychological Processes**

| Components of RSC | Specific Relational Processes |
| --- | --- |
| Relational Cognition | • Connection with others is a primary focus of consciousness <br> • Cognitive attunement to others' verbal and nonverbal behavior <br> • Focus upon the similarity that one has with others <br> • Enhanced memory for relational events |
| Relational Emotion | • Connections are a source of positive feelings and self-esteem <br> • The inability to develop and affirm connections is a source of considerable distress and negative feelings <br> • Empathy and experience of others' emotions (i.e., emotional contagion) <br> • Reluctance to express emotions that thwart connections |
| Relational Motivation | • Desire to develop and preserve relationships with others <br> • Desire to help others achieve their goals and for mutual empowerment <br> • Use of behaviors to foster connections with others (e.g., self-disclosure) <br> • Self-regulation regarding connections (i.e., monitoring of relational accomplishments throughout interactions) <br> • Willingness to alter actions to meet relational goals |

**Relational Cognition.** As with other aspects of the self, RSC provides a framework

through which information is filtered, processed, and remembered. These processes are

referred to as "relational cognition," as they all implicate the self in connection with others.

When RSC is accessible, the connections one has with others are very salient (i.e., one's

thoughts focus on how much the self is connected with others), and individuals are more likely

to notice, encode, and process stimuli that have implications for their ability to cultivate a

connection with others (Cross & Madson, 1997; Cross et al., 2002). Accordingly, RSC

accessibility is related to an increased sensitivity to others' verbal and nonverbal behavior

(Jordan, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1988; Sanchez-Burks, 2002), and a heightened awareness

of others' goals and interests (Cross & Madson, 1997; Cross et al., 2000). As noted by Cross

and Madson (1997: 81), attentiveness to such information is helpful in the maintenance of

relationships with others, because "[once] one has carefully attended to another's thoughts and

feelings, one should be more likely to behave in a fashion that demonstrates empathy and

support." RSC is also related to an increased focus on the *similarity* that one has with others.

For example, Cross et al. (2002) found that people with RSC accessibility were more likely to

rate close others as being similar to themselves in terms of abilities, traits and beliefs. This

notion is also consistent with research that has shown that perspective taking increases the

overlap between representations of the self and others (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; see also

Davis, Conklin, Smith & Luce, 1996), which is likely to be higher among those with RSC

accessible. More generally, perceptions of similarity of the self and other affirm the connection

within a relationship, facilitate harmony, and affirm the value of one's own attributes (Cross et

al., 2002). Finally, consistent with enhanced memory functions of the self, research has shown

that RSC affects memory for relational events. For example, Cross et al. (2002) found that RSC

was related to the degree to which people recalled relational information about a target and the

degree to which they organized information about others in memory based on their

relationships.  Having a highly organized cluster of relational information enables individuals to notice, encode, and process relationship information with greater speed and ease.

**Relational Emotion.**  RSC is intricately related to emotional functioning, including the eliciting conditions of emotions (i.e., what triggers an emotional response) and the types of emotions experienced (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).  These processes are referred to as "relational emotion," since they are filtered through a focus on connection with others.  When RSC is accessible, connections with others are highly salient and can trigger positive or negative emotions.  In particular, the ability to develop and affirm connections with others is a major source of positive emotions and self-esteem for those with RSC accessible, whereas the *in*ability to develop and affirm connections with others is a major source of negative emotions (Cross et al., 2002).  For example, individuals with RSC accessible may feel considerable anxiety or distress as a result of conflict with a friend or lack of connection with an acquaintance with whom they expected a connection (Cross & Madson, 1997).  Indeed, thwarted connections can elicit anger and retaliation among those with RSC accessible.  For example, in situations wherein one expects another to behave relationally, yet the other does not reciprocate the relational efforts, individuals with RSC accessible are likely to behave in subtle, covert, but aggressive ways that conceal their true intentions—a phenomenon that has been referred to as *relational aggression* (Cross & Madson, 1997; Talbot, 2002).  Finally, RSC is also related to other emotional experiences.  For example, individuals with RSC accessible will have greater empathy for others' emotions, and may experience "vicarious" emotional experiences of others (i.e., "emotional contagion") (Cross & Madson, 1997).  Individuals with RSC accessible are also likely to avoid the expression of certain emotions that can thwart connections.  For example, unless others have reneged on their relational obligations (as discussed above), individuals with RSC accessible are likely to be reluctant to express negative emotions (e.g., anger) which might damage relationships (Cross & Madson, 1997).

**Relational Motivation.**  Lastly, RSC is also implicated in motivation and self-regulation. Connections with others become the framework through which individuals are motivated to action—processes that are referred to as "relational motivation."  RSC accessibility is positively associated with the desire to develop and affirm relationships, and is related to the use of tactics to foster connections with others (Cross & Madson, 1997).  For example, RSC accessibility is associated with personal self-disclosure, which helps to foster rapport (Cross et al., 2000). Moreover, RSC is related to motivations for "mutual empowerment"—a desire for mutual support and aid in relationships (Fletcher, 1996; Jordan, 1997; Kolb & Coolidge, 1991)—and is also associated with seeking to help others achieve their goals (Fletcher, 1996; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999).  For example, Cross et al. (2000) demonstrated that RSC is related to the willingness to take others' needs, opinions, and wishes into account when making an important decision.  Helping others succeed is often a goal in and of itself, leading to a sense of personal empowerment, even if doing so is at the expense of one's own needs (Fletcher, 1996; Kolb & Coolidge, 1991).  Finally, consistent with the self-regulatory function of the self, RSC is related to relational monitoring; individuals for whom RSC is accessible will monitor their relational accomplishments very closely throughout their interactions, and will change their actions in order to meet relational goals.  This is consistent with Surrey's (1991) argument that the relational self includes the capacity to consider one's actions in light of *others'* needs and feelings.

**Divergence from Other Constructs.**   While we have focused on the processes associated with RSC, it is worth noting what RSC is *not,* or in other words, how it diverges from other constructs in the literature.  For example, RSC is distinct from other aspects of the self that have been linked to culture, namely the individualistic and collectivistic aspects of the self (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999; Kashima et al., 1995; Kashima & Hardie, 2000).  For example, Kashima et al. (1995) empirically differentiated between three different dimensions of the self that are often confused in the literature: the *individualistic* dimension of the self, which refers to

the self as an independent, autonomous, and agentic entity; the *relational* dimension of the self,

which refers to the extent to which people regard themselves as emotionally connected to other

individuals; and the *collective* dimension of the self, which refers to the self in relation to a group

or collective.  The latter emphasizes group affiliation, in-group norms, and statuses defined by

collectives (E. Kashima & Hardie, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Triandis, 1989).  Data from five

countries showed that these three aspects of the self are indeed distinct constructs.

Constructs in the negotiation literature that also share some overlap with RSC include

interpersonal orientation (Rubin & Brown, 1975), prosocial motives (Van Lange, 1999), other-

concern (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), relationship orientation (Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993) and

relationship preference (King & Hinson, 1994).  All of these constructs share an emphasis on

being concerned about others, yet none capture the breadth and depth of RSC.  For example,

Rubin and Brown's (1975) "interpersonal orientation" refers to someone who is attuned to

variations in another's behavior.  This construct has some overlap with the *cognitive* component

of RSC, yet it is not conceptualized as an aspect of the self, nor does it have linkages to multiple

psychological processes.  Interpersonal orientation also includes extraneous elements not

related to RSC.  For example, the measure includes questions regarding individuals' willingness

to engage in unethical behavior (i.e., not buying something that was stolen) (Swap & Rubin,

1983).  Likewise, Greenhalgh and Gilkey's (1993) "relationship orientation," King & Hinson's

(1994) "relationship preference," and Kolb and Coolidge's (1991) consideration of a feminist

model of the relational self in negotiations share some overlap with RSC in that all are

concerned with cultivating relationships.  However, unlike RSC, these constructs have generally

not been implicated in information processing, emotions, motivation and self-regulation (see

Table 1), nor have they been linked to conditions of knowledge activation (e.g., temporary and

chronic accessibility, inhibitory processes).

Finally, prosocial motives (Van Lange, 1999) as well as other concern (in the dual

concern model, DCM; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986) share some aspects of the *motivational* component

of RSC in that they all emphasize concern for others.  Yet while concern for others' outcomes is one goal associated with RSC, the relational motivation component of RSC is broader in that it includes relational goals such as a concern for connection and the accumulation of *relational capital* in negotiation (discussed below), in addition to other motivational processes (e.g., self-regulation, relational monitoring, mutual empowerment).  As part of the self-system, RSC also captures other psychological processes that are not included in the DCM or social motive theory.  For example, the DCM and theory on prosocial social motives do not explicitly make predictions regarding the nature of relational cognition (e.g., tracking of verbal and nonverbal cues, enhanced memory for relational events) or relational emotion (e.g., emotional contagion, distress when connections are thwarted, relational aggression).  As we discuss below, with the RSC construct, we see how a refusal to establish a connection can be perceived as an affront to one's self-concept, thereby leading some negotiators to become angry and engage in relational aggression.  Finally, because RSC is grounded in dynamic theories of the self, our model of RSC and negotiation includes knowledge activation processes that are not included in these other models.  In this way, as we discuss below, we extend the DCM and social motives theory by providing an understanding of the conditions that lead relational concerns to be prominent or inhibited in negotiations.  More generally, RSC provides a complementary perspective that adds to existing constructs in the literature.

**Summary.**   In sum, there is substantial evidence demonstrating that RSC has implications for information processing, emotion, motivation, and resulting behavior.  Despite the wide-ranging theoretical and practical ramifications of RSC, however, scholars have not yet delineated how RSC influences complex and dynamic social contexts such as negotiation, and conversely, scholars studying negotiation have not drawn from the extant research on the nature of the relational self.  As we seek to show below, an integration of RSC theory and negotiation begins to address criticisms of the arelationality of negotiation theory and research, illuminates new phenomena that have yet to be examined in negotiation, begins to integrate

research on a variety of issues through a common set of principles, and ultimately has promise

for expanding the theory and practice of negotiation.

**The Dynamics Of Relational Self-Construals In Negotiation**

In Figure 1, we present our model of RSC in negotiations. In our model, negotiation is

viewed through a temporal lens which involves a series of stages: 1) pre-negotiation conditions

that affect the accessibility of RSC and inhibit its use, as well as the influence of RSC on

negotiators' pre-negotiation psychological states; 2) early stages of the negotiation, including

negotiators' first offers, initial concessions, and tactical behavior; 3) later stages of the

negotiation process, including the creation and claiming of value; and 4) resultant distal

outcomes of economic and relational capital, as well as compliance with agreements (cf. Barry

& Oliver, 1996). Although we first focus on the individual negotiator as the unit of analysis, we

later argue that RSC congruency between negotiators is an important determinant of the way in

which RSC ultimately affects negotiation outcomes.

**Figure 1**
**Negotiating Relationally: Dynamics of RSC in Negotiation**

| RSC Accessibility In Negotiation | Pre-Negotiation Psychological States and Initial Tactical Behavior | Later Tactical Behavior, Negotiation Outcomes, and Post-Settlement Compliance |
|---|---|---|

**Individual and Group Differences**
- Gender
- Culture
- Occupation/Organizations

**Chronic Accessibility of RSC**

**Temporary Accessibility of RSC**

**Situational Conditions**
- Negotiations with Friends, Spouses, Acquaintances

**RSC Accessibility Strength**

**Pre-Negotiation Psychological States**
- Negotiator Frames, Judgments, and Goals

**Inhibitory Processes**
- Lack of Relational Context
- Lean Communication Media
- Constituencies, Roles, and Instructions

**Initial Tactical Behavior**
- Initial Offers
- Concession-Making
- Relational Behaviors

**Later Tactics**
- Relational Behaviors
- Creating and Claiming Value

**RSC Congruency Between Negotiators**

**Negotiation Outcomes**
- Economic Capital
- Relational Capital

**Post-Settlement Compliance and Future Negotiations**

**RSC Accessibility and Inhibitory Processes**

Our model begins with a formulation of the factors that affect RSC use in negotiation contexts.  As seen in Figure 1, we posit that there are multiple factors that can increase chronic and temporary accessibility of RSC in negotiation.  However, consistent with literature on the processes leading to knowledge use, we illustrate that even if RSC is accessible, a number of inhibitory factors can suppress its actual use before a negotiation begins.

**Chronic accessibility of RSC in negotiations.**  As noted previously, chronic accessibility of a self-construal is a function of repeated experiences and roles that are enacted over time.  At the individual level, individuals who have had experiences and roles that have continuously reinforced RSC will have chronically accessible RSC.  Additionally, to the extent that experiences and roles are *shared*, there can also be group differences in chronic RSC accessibility.  This has been demonstrated for gender, with women generally scoring higher on RSC and its associated processes than men (e.g., Cross et al., 2000; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999).  In addition, although research shows that gender accounts for more variance than national culture in the relational self (Kashima et al., 1995), culture may also affect the degree to which RSC is chronically accessible.  Kashima et al. (1995) found that Koreans (males and females) were much more relational than other Pacific Rim groups, which is consistent with indigenous perspectives on the pivotal role of *woori* (connection between 'us') in Korean society (Choi, Kim, & Choi, 1993).  Likewise, the relational self is also emphasized in Latin America among males and females alike, reflected in the notion of "simpatía," or a concern with the socio-emotional aspects of interactions (Sanchez-Burks, Nisbett, & Ybarra, 2000; Triandis, Marin, Lisansky, & Betancourt, 1984).  Finally, group differences in RSC chronic accessibility may also arise along occupational and organizational lines.  In organizational contexts where there are strong and pervasive routines, practices, and norms that prescribe that it is important to develop strong connections with others (e.g., Southwest airlines, Gittell, 2003), RSC will be more likely to be chronically accessible.  Relational norms may also be strong in companies that have a strong

"climate for service" (Schneider, White & Paul, 1998), in which employees are expected to develop strong connections with potential customers.

**Temporary accessibility of RSC in negotiations.** Consistent with the social cognition literature, our model illustrates that certain negotiation conditions can temporarily increase accessibility of RSC. We posit that situations in which individuals are negotiating with close friends or romantic partners will temporarily increase the accessibility of RSC among negotiators. Such conditions—where there is a strong bond between negotiators and the expectation of ongoing interdependence—will make salient or "prime" the importance of connectedness to others and the desire to protect and maintain such connections; accordingly, the relational self is expected to be more accessible. More generally, we posit that the greater the strength of ties, the stronger the RSC accessibility in negotiations. For example, RSC accessibility is expected to be very strong in negotiations among lovers and close friends, moderately strong in negotiations among friends, and somewhat strong in negotiations among acquaintances who have to work together in the future. This is consistent with previous research that has shown that negotiations among romantic partners and close friends are especially focused on building solidarity, minimizing conflict and tension, and prioritizing the relationship over substantive outcomes (Fry, Firestone, & Williams, 1983; Schoeninger & Wood, 1969; Thompson, Peterson, & Brodt, 1996), as well as with research on expected future interdependence, which finds that negotiators become more concerned about others' outcomes in such conditions (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993).

In Figure 1, we denote that temporary and chronic sources of RSC combine additively (Bargh et al., 1986) for an overall strength of RSC accessibility, which will be related to a host of pre-negotiation psychological states, and in turn, early and late tactics, and ultimately negotiation outcomes. However, as noted previously, accessibility does not automatically translate into knowledge use. Before turning to a discussion of how RSC affects negotiators'

pre-negotiation states, we discuss factors that may inhibit the use of *accessible* RSC in

negotiations.

        **Inhibitory processes affecting accessible RSC in negotiations.** As discussed, an

important factor that influences whether a knowledge structure, such as RSC, is in fact used is

the degree to which there is a match between the features of the knowledge structure and

features of the situation. Even if RSC is accessible, when there is not a match, the knowledge

structure will not be used in that particular situation (Higgins, 1996). Accordingly, RSC is

relevant only in situations that are *applicable* to RSC—situations in which meaningful

connections are possible. It follows that when features of the negotiation context render such

connections *highly irrelevant*, RSC usage (and its associated psychological processes) will be

attenuated. This attenuation of RSC use is particularly important to consider for people for

whom RSC is high due to *chronic accessibility*. Our model posits that even when RSC is

chronically accessible, if there is a complete lack of relational context between negotiators, as in

one-shot interactions with strangers, RSC use is likely to be attenuated. RSC use is also likely

attenuated when the other negotiator has very little relational presence and communication is

highly restricted, as when negotiators are interacting over lean text media such as electronic

mail. As McGinn & Croson (2004) note, when communicating through email, negotiators have

little social awareness of their counterparts because this medium is low in synchronicity (i.e., is

low in feedback and has poor immediacy of the other party), and is highly restricted in terms of

conveying paralinguistic and relational cues. As a result, without explicit relational interventions

(e.g., to form connections), interactions over email tend to be highly impersonal (Moore,

Kurtzberg, Thompson, & Morris, 1999). Thus, in highly restricted relational contexts, accessible

RSC is expected to be attenuated.

        Indirect support for this proposition can be found in the negotiation literature. As

discussed previously, women have generally been found to have greater chronic accessibility of

RSC. Our model posits that negotiation conditions that render connections irrelevant or

impossible would reduce RSC usage and would possibly reduce gender differences in

negotiation.  Although there is no direct assessment of this proposition, in an exploratory

analysis, Stuhlmacher and Walters (1999) found that gender effects in negotiation were smaller

in studies in which there was no interaction outside of the experiment as compared to studies in

which future interaction could reasonably be expected.  Likewise in support of the notion that

restricted communication media attenuate RSC usage and thus should reduce gender

differences, another meta-analysis (Walters, Stuhlmacher, & Meyer, 1998) found that gender

differences were reduced in experiments involving matrix games, in which bargainers had little

direct communication, and were more pronounced in experiments involving explicit bargaining,

where face-to-face communication was allowed.  Consistent with aforementioned social

cognition research (e.g., Higgins & Brendl, 1995), however, it is worth noting that *very strong*

RSC accessibility can override weak applicability situations.  Thus, for example, we would

expect that in situations wherein individuals with chronically accessible RSC are negotiating with

friends or with people with whom they are highly interdependent—situations in which RSC

accessibility is maximized due to both chronic and temporary sources—accessible RSC would

*still* be used even if the other party has little relational presence (e.g., negotiations are taking

place through electronic mail).

Finally, consistent with Higgins's (1996) discussion of conscious processes and judged

usability, negotiators can also *consciously* choose to inhibit their accessible RSC if they judge

its use to be inappropriate.  For example, in situations where negotiators receive explicit

instructions from others (or perceive implicit demands) to "take up" a different self, the use of

RSC is likely to be actively inhibited.  Such demands are often linked to role-based expectations

that individuals have when negotiating for constituents.  For example, research has found that

negotiators who are representing others assume that their constituents want them to behave

competitively (Benton & Druckman, 1973; Diekmann, 1997; Gelfand & Realo, 1999; Gruder,

1971).  In other words, when negotiating for others, the situation can create strong alternative

implicit (or explicit) demands that can inhibit RSC use. Some support for this notion can also be seen in research on negotiation. For example, Riley and Babcock (2002) found that women were much less cooperative when they were representing mixed gender dyads others as compared to situations in which they were representing themselves, which could possibly be mediated by inhibition of RSC accessibility. More generally, directions given to negotiators, from constituents, supervisors, and even experimenters, can inhibit RSC use in negotiations.

With these contextual antecedents and moderators in mind, we now discuss the dynamics that occur when RSC, is, in fact, in use in negotiation (i.e., RSC is both accessible and is deemed relevant to the context). Consistent with theory suggesting RSC accessibility is a continuous variable (Higgins, 1996; Higgins & Brendl, 1995; Shah et al. 1998), we discuss how the strength of RSC accessibility affects negotiators' pre-negotiation psychological states and early tactics. We then discuss how both the strength of RSC and the congruency of RSC within dyads are related to later tactics, and ultimately, to negotiation outcomes.

**RSC and Negotiators' Pre-Negotiation Psychological States and Initial Tactical Behaviors**

We previously described how the relational self affects basic psychological processes such as cognition, motivation, and emotion. In this section, we expand this discussion by illustrating how RSC affects negotiators' cognitive frames, judgment biases, and goals prior to entering a negotiation. Whereas extant negotiation research often portrays negotiators as self-interested actors, we present a divergent view of negotiators—one that highlights relational frames and judgment biases and goals for the accumulation of relational capital.

**Relational frames and judgments.** Negotiation scholars have long argued that individuals construct mental representations of negotiations, or conflict frames, that help them make sense of negotiation situations. We argue that self-construals, which affect perception and are critical in lending meaning to social situations (Kilhstrom & Klein, 1994; Fiske & Taylor, 1991), will influence negotiators' conflict frames. This is consistent with the prevailing assumption in negotiation research that previously-developed knowledge structures are used as

individuals try to make sense of novel situations (Thompson, Neale & Sinaceur, 2004).  More specifically, when RSC is accessible, individuals are likely to view negotiations through what Pinkley (1990) termed relationship and cooperative frames—that is, they will perceive negotiations as opportunities to affirm and strengthen the relationship through cooperation.

In addition to cognitive representations of the specific negotiation situation, RSC will be related to construals of the *context* in which the negotiation is embedded.  Negotiators for whom RSC is accessible will perceive the context as *socially and temporally embedded*—that is, they will be more likely to perceive that the social context extends beyond the immediate dyadic relationship, and the temporal context is continuous and extends considerably into in the future (cf. Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993; Kolb & Coolidge, 1991) than negotiators for whom RSC is not accessible.  First, with regard to the social context, when RSC is accessible, negotiators will be more likely to perceive that they are connected to others with whom their counterparts are related, or in other words, they will construe that their interactions with their counterpart can also have ramifications for their relationships with others.  For example, in negotiations with an HR representative, those with RSC accessible may assume that what happens in that setting may have implications for their relationships with others associated with the representative.  Second, with regard to the temporal context, when RSC is accessible, negotiators are likely to view the negotiation with an eye for how it might affect their *future relationship* with their counterparts. Greenhalgh and Gilkey (1993), for example, found that relationship-oriented negotiators were more likely to regard interactions as "events within a long-term relationship" rather than to focus on the exigencies of the immediate transaction.  As a result, individuals with RSC accessible will be likely to believe that what happens in the current situation will be remembered in the future (cf. Greenhalgh, 1987). It is worth noting that the effect of RSC accessibility on temporal frames is independent from our hypothesis that conditions of future interdependence are linked to temporary RSC accessibility.  In the latter case, a situational condition serves as a 'stimulant" which activates stored knowledge, whereas in the former case, stored knowledge, once

accessible, then serves to filter and interpret information about the target situation.  The

difference, noted by Higgins (1996) is one in which the direction of influence is from the stimulus

to stored knowledge versus the direction of influence is from stored knowledge to perceptions of

the stimulus.  As Higgins (1996: 137) explains, "the same stimulus can function as a target and

a stimulant over time..a stimulus might first function as a stimulant and activate a construct..then

the stimulus might function as a target."

Finally, given that self-construals affect inferences and judgments (Fiske & Taylor, 1991;

Markus & Wurf, 1987), in our model we predict that RSC accessibility will affect negotiators'

judgments.  Numerous judgment biases have been identified in negotiation research, many of

which are competitive in nature (see Thompson et al., 2004, for a review).  A critical question,

then, is how does RSC change the nature of judgment in negotiation?  Put differently, what

biases are attenuated when RSC is accessible? Likewise, what biases are exacerbated when

RSC is accessible? Although a discussion of all judgment biases is beyond the scope of this

paper, we advance several propositions for future research.   For example, RSC accessibility is

expected to attenuate *fixed pie biases*, or "the erroneous belief that the other party's interests

are directly opposed to one's own interests when, in fact, they are often not completely

opposed" (Thompson et al., 2004, p. 19; Thompson & Hastie, 1990).  This bias is rooted in

faulty beliefs and judgments about another party—or what Thompson et al. (2004) refer to as

"other-perception biases"—and is linked to negotiators focusing on their own preferences rather

than their counterparts' (Bottom & Paese 1997; Thompson et al, 2004).  However, because

RSC accessibility is related to cooperative construals and a heightened awareness of others'

goals and interests (Cross & Madson, 1997; Cross et al., 2000), we expect that negotiators with

RSC accessible will be less likely to assume that others' interests are completely opposed to

their own at the start of negotiations, and will be more likely to gather accurate information about

their partner's interests over the course of negotiations.  Lending indirect support for this notion,

Cross and Morris (2003) found that individuals high on RSC were better able to discern others'

values and beliefs than were people low on RSC (see also, Greenhalgh and Gilkey, 1993).

RSC accessibility is also expected to attenuate *reactive devaluation* biases, wherein

concessions made are automatically devalued simply because they originate from the other

party (Stillinger, Epelbaum, Keltner, & Ross, 1990).  Because RSC accessibility is related to the

desire for connections and mutual aid and support (Fletcher, 1996), others' concessions are

more likely to be viewed positively—as an indication that the other is willing to sacrifice their

needs for the sake of the relationship.

At the same time, RSC is likely to also *exacerbate* certain judgment biases.  For

example, given their enhanced perspective taking, negotiators for whom RSC is accessible may

be more vulnerable to being influenced by the other negotiator, and therefore, may be

particularly susceptible to anchoring effects (Northcraft & Neale, 1987; Tversky & Kahneman,

1974) and/or others' communicated frames (De Drue, Emans, and van de Vliert, 1992).

Likewise, when RSC is accessible and one is focused on building relationships, negotiators may

be victim to certain "relational illusions."  For example, they may be overly optimistic about how

others feel about the relationship. This is consistent with Cross & Morris (2003) who showed

that individuals high on RSC tended to have illusions about others' feelings about the

relationship.  In addition, negotiators for whom RSC is accessible may unconsciously

(inaccurately) assume that *what is good for the other is good for the self*—even if it is in fact,

economically disadvantageous to the self—in effect, a reversal of the reactive devaluation bias.

In all, RSC is likely to reduce competitive judgment biases, but also may increase susceptibility

to other relational biases.

**Relational goals.**  Consistent with our discussion of relational motivation, RSC is also

expected to affect negotiators' goals.  Whereas economic capital has been the primary focus of

negotiation research, we argue that the accumulation of *relational capital* is a central goal for

negotiators for whom RSC is accessible.  Relational capital is similar to the notion of social

capital in sociology, which focuses on investments in social networks with expected returns

(Grannoveter, 1985; Portes, 1998).  However, while social capital theory typically focuses on the overall pattern of relationships among many individuals, in our model, relational capital focuses on the relational assets that accumulate within a specific dyadic negotiation relationship.  We define relational capital as including assets of mutual liking, knowledge, trust, and commitment to continuing the relationship.  Assets of *mutual liking* develop when negotiators develop a mutual attraction to each other.  Assets of *mutual knowledge* develop when negotiators come to an understanding of each other's perspectives and needs.  Assets of *mutual trust* develop when negotiators come to rely on each other to fulfill promises and see each other as predictable.  Lastly, assets of *mutual commitment* develop when negotiators develop a shared desire to continue the relationship into the future.  Importantly, in our view, goals for relational capital are not necessarily mutually exclusive with goals for economic capital.  Yet we posit that negotiators for whom RSC is highly accessible will be likely to weigh the accumulation of relational capital as more important than the accumulation of economic capital.

Goals for accumulating relational capital are expected to be reflected in concerns that negotiators have prior to the negotiation.  When RSC is accessible, negotiators are likely to be concerned with making a positive impression and avoiding making a negative impression upon the other negotiator in order to increase mutual liking and trust.  Negotiators will also desire to gain personal knowledge about the other negotiator, which serves to develop mutual knowledge. And consistent with our discussion of relational motivation, RSC accessibility is expected to be associated with pre-negotiation goals of helping the other negotiators to achieve their own goals, which fosters loyalty and commitment to the relationship.

**Initial offers, concessions, and relational tactical behavior.**   Figure 1 illustrates that RSC affects negotiators' tactical behavior in early stages of negotiations.  Tactical behaviors are behaviors with a strategic focus (Weingart & Olekalns, 2004).  When negotiators have as a principal goal the accumulation of relational capital, it follows that they will engage in tactical

behaviors that develop and enhance the connection with their counterpart and will avoid

behaviors that might threaten it (Cross & Madson, 1997; Greenhalgh, 1987).  Such relational

concerns will be manifested in initial offers, concession-making, and early relational tactics.

Specifically, negotiators who construe the situation through relational frames and

judgments and who are focused on developing mutual liking, knowledge, trust, and

commitment, will likely make initial offers that signal an interest in forming a connection with the

other party, and will refrain from making offers that convey a negative impression.  For example,

negotiators with RSC accessible will be less likely to state very high initial demands, as this

could be potentially harmful to the relationship.   Likewise, the tendency to put the relationship

first is likely to be reflected in individuals' willingness to make concessions early in a negotiation

in order to signal their interest in building and sustaining a connection with their counterparts.

This supported by Greenhalgh and Gilkey's (1993) finding that relationship-oriented negotiators

are willing to make concessions with their counterpart for the sake of the future relationship, and

is also consistent with research that has shown that RSC is associated with sacrificing one's

own desires in order to help others with whom one is developing a connection (Cross et al.,

2000; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999).  More generally, because of their longer time horizons,

negotiators for whom RSC is accessible will be willing to forego short-term economic gains for

the purposes of building relational capital (cf. Mannix, Tinsley, & Bazerman, 1995).

RSC accessibility is also expected to relate to tactical behavior that serves to increase

mutual liking, knowledge, trust, and mutual commitment to the relationship.  First, RSC will be

associated with personal information exchange—questions asked of the other negotiator as well

as the willingness to self-disclose personal information.  Self-disclosure is an important factor in

the development of intimacy and general satisfaction in relationships, as it conveys trust and

responsiveness to the other (Cross & Morris, 2003; Laurenceau, Barrett, & Pietromonaco,

1998).  This is consistent with research that has shown that individuals with RSC accessible

self-disclose more in "get-acquainted" tasks and, consequently, are viewed as more responsive

by their counterparts (Cross et al., 2000). Likewise, research has also shown that individuals with RSC accessible elicit and remember more personal information from others (Cross & Morris, 2003).

Second, RSC is expected to be related to relational tuning tactics, in which an individual intentionally or unintentionally matches another negotiator's nonverbal and paralinguistic behavior, tone of voice, and even speech tempo (also called social contagion, or mimicry; Thompson, 1998). This is consistent with research that has shown that RSC is associated with increased mimicry of partners' behaviors in non-negotiation contexts (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999; Sanchez-Burks, 2002; van Baaren, Maddux, Chartrand, de Bouter, & van Knippenberg, 2003). For example, Chartrand & Bargh (1999) showed that individuals who were high on perspective taking (i.e., being attuned to the behavior of one's counterpart, which is related to relational cognition, as discussed previously) were more likely to engage in behavioral mimicry. Likewise, Sanchez-Burkes (2002) showed that women, who we have argued are more likely to have chronic RSC accessibility, were more likely to engage in behavioral mimicry than European Americans. More generally, negotiators for whom RSC is accessible will make efforts to be *in-sync* (Blount & Janicik, 2003) in their personal styles and mannerisms. Being in-sync facilitates the smoothness of interactions and fosters liking and rapport (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999), which are key concerns among those with RSC accessible.

Finally, just as negotiators for whom RSC is accessible will likely engage in behaviors that help to develop and affirm a connection with the other, they will be unlikely to use tactics that could potentially damage the relationship (cf. Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993). For example, they will likely avoid *self-enhancement*, such as bragging about themselves or emphasizing other options that they have as alternatives (i.e., their BATNAS). Rather, RSC will lead to a focus on *relationship enhancement*—expressions of agreement, empathy with another's position, and enthusiasm about the interaction. Negotiators for whom RSC is accessible will

also be less likely to use distributive tactics, such as putdowns, threats and warnings, which imply separation from the ongoing relationship.

Although there is no direct evidence for these notions, research on negotiations with close friends and romantic partners—conditions that we argue increase temporary accessibility of RSC—offers some support for these propositions. Generally speaking, close ties among negotiators have been found to produce more concession-making, less competition, and more cooperative tactics (Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1998; Halpern, 1992; Schoeninger & Wood, 1969; Thompson & DeHarpport, 1998). For example, Fry et al. (1983) found that dating couples used fewer pressure tactics and were less willing to push hard for their own interests than were mixed-sex stranger couples. Likewise, Polzer, Neale and Glenn (1993) argued that negotiations among friends often involve a "politeness ritual" wherein negotiators want to appear modest, polite, and unselfish (Valley, Neale, & Mannix, 1995). Our model begins to provide an understanding for why these tactics might be used, showing how the relational self and its associated cognitive, motivational, and emotional processes may mediate the effects of close ties.

We have thus far discussed the initial tactical behaviors of negotiators with RSC accessible, who we argue strategically attempt to accumulate relational capital. Negotiation, however, is by definition a dyadic experience, in which the behavior of one's counterpart invariably affects one's own later tactics and outcomes. We posit that both the *strength of RSC accessibility* in dyads as well as the *congruency* of RSC between negotiators are important determinants of later relational dynamics and negotiation outcomes. Next, we first explore the impact of the strength of RSC accessibility in dyads on relational dynamics and outcomes. In this discussion, we assume that both members of a negotiating dyad have similar levels of RSC. We then examine the effect of RSC incongruency in dyads, highlighting likely relational dynamics and consequences when negotiators have *dissimilar* levels of RSC accessibility.

**RSC Accessibility Strength and Negotiation Outcomes**

A central prediction is that RSC will have a curvilinear effect on negotiation outcomes with negotiators who have moderate RSC accessibility strength attaining the most *overall capital*—i.e., both high relational and high economic capital—as compared to negotiators with low or high RSC accessibility.  We elaborate on these predictions below, discussing unique relational dynamics that are likely to transpire among negotiators with high, moderate, and low RSC accessibility, and how they lead to varying levels of economic and relational capital.

**Figure 2**
**RSC Dynamics in Negotiation**
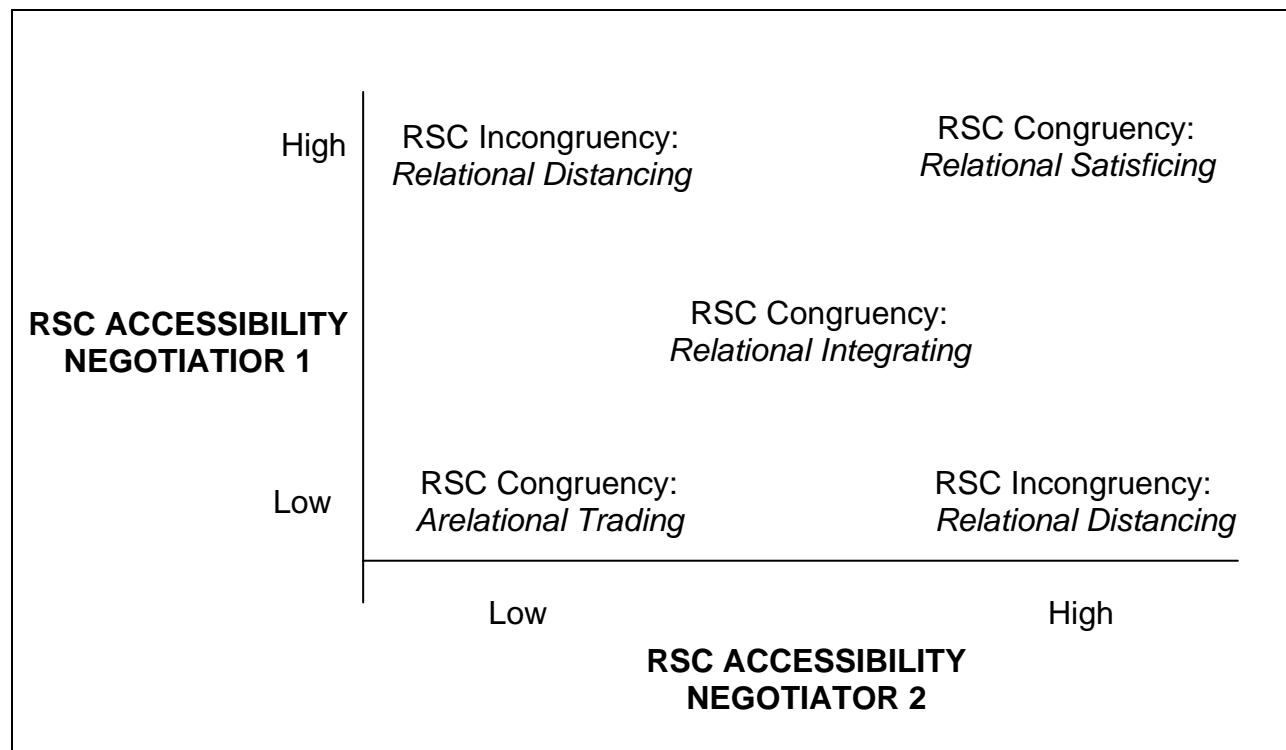


**High RSC Accessibility and Negotiation Outcomes.**  First, dyads in which both parties have very high RSC accessibility are predicted to experience what we call a *Relational Satisficing Dynamic*, as shown in Figure 2. These negotiators will likely engage in relational tactical behaviors, and they will tend to experience positive emotions given that the relational self is being affirmed and relational capital (i.e., mutual liking, knowledge, trust, and

commitment) is developing.  These positive emotions, in turn, are expected to strengthen RSC

accessibility and further enhance the negotiators' use of relational tactics (e.g., concessions,

relational tuning).  Due to the cyclical processes of positive affect and highly concessionary and

cooperative behavior, we expect that these dyads will build considerable *relational capital* by the

end of the negotiation.  However, we note that these dyads may not achieve very high individual

or joint *economic capital*, at least in the short run.  Negotiators with very high RSC accessibility

are expected to be intensely focused on the relationship, and thus relational issues are

expected to loom much larger than economic returns (cf. Greenhalgh & Gilkey, 1993).  Put

differently, although highly concessionary and cooperative behaviors are useful for the

development of relational capital, they are not necessarily effective at *creating value*—or

expanding the pie of resources.  Negotiators with very high RSC accessibility will also be averse

to appearing selfish and focusing on their own interests, and thus, are unlikely to *claim value*.

For these reasons, we argue that these dyads may not achieve very high individual or joint

economic capital.

Although future research needs to substantiate these notions, there is some indirect

support for the *Relational Satisficing* dynamic in literature on negotiations between close friends

or romantic partners, conditions we have argued temporarily activate strong RSC accessibility

among negotiators.  For example, Fry et al. (1983) found that couples achieved considerably

lower joint economic gain than strangers, and consistent with the dynamic discussed above,

they argued that low joint gain was due to concerns for the development and protection of the

relationship.  The dynamic of *Relational Satisficing* is also consistent with research by

Thompson et al. (1996) which found that negotiations among close friends produced fewer

integrative solutions than negotiations among strangers, possibly because close friends were

focused exclusively on maintaining solidarity and agreement on non-task issues and avoiding

disagreement on task-related issues (see also Schoeninger & Wood, 1969).  Finally, this

dynamic is consistent with research by Tenbrunsel, Wade-Benzoni, Moag, & Bazerman (1999),

who found that strong ties among negotiators can produce economically suboptimal agreements. We posit that it is possible to understand many of the above findings, at least in part, through a common mechanism, namely the strength of RSC accessibility and its associated processes.

**Moderate RSC Accessibility and Negotiation Outcomes.** Next, we examine the case in which RSC accessibility is moderately strong among negotiators. As seen in Figure 2, negotiators who have moderate RSC accessibility are expected to experience what we call a *Relational Integrating Dynamic.* As in dyads with high RSC accessibility, both negotiators in this condition will likely engage in relational tactics and will experience positive emotions as their relational selves are affirmed and relational capital develops. Such processes will engender later relational tactics that serve to further strengthen the relational capital they have accumulated. However, because these individuals do not define themselves as strongly in terms of relationships, they are likely be more mindful of other outcomes of the negotiation— namely the economic capital that can be achieved. In other words, as compared to high RSC accessibility dyads, these negotiators are unlikely to focus exclusively on the relationship, and will begin identifying ways to *create economic value* both for themselves and the dyad in later stages of the negotiation. In keeping with our RSC perspective, the creation of economic value in these dyads will likely have a distinctly relational character. For example, with their enhanced relational knowledge and understanding of each other's interests, these dyads will be in a good position to identify compatible issues, to recognize possible trade-offs, and to suggest ways in which both can benefit. Likewise, with their temporally embedded construal of the negotiation, they will be able to create mutually-satisfying trade-offs that capitalizes on different time perspectives (i.e., I'll give you this now if you will give me this later; Mnookin, Peppet, & Tulumello, 2000). We note, however, that in addition to creating value, negotiators in these dyads are expected to be more concerned with their own outcomes, and thus, will be more likely to *claim economic value* for themselves as well. Due to the cyclical processes of relational

tactics combined with value creation and claiming, we expect that these dyads will build considerable individual and joint relational capital and economic capital.

      **Low RSC Accessibility and Negotiation Outcomes.**  Lastly, we consider the case when negotiators have low RSC accessibility, arguing that it will result in what we refer to as an *Arelational Trading Dynamic*.  In this dyadic composition, both negotiators are likely to engage in arelational tactical behavior. That is, rather than engaging in relational behaviors that lead to the development of relational capital in later parts of the negotiation, they will focus instead primarily on material or economic aspects of the interaction and will engage largely in task-oriented exchange—for example, exchanging multiple proposals and offers in a rather non-relational manner, or discussing underlying interests regarding the material aspects of the negotiation.  Such heuristic trial and error (Pruitt, 1983; Tutzauer & Roloff, 1988) can help these negotiators *create value,* and consequently, we expect that congruency in low RSC accessibility can lead to high individual and joint economic capital.  This prediction is supported in part by Olekalns & Smith (2003), who found that individualistically oriented dyads achieved high joint value by engaging in the exchange of multiple issue offers.  Pinkley & Northcraft (1994) also found that task frames relate to high joint and individual profit. We would note, however, that although the *Arelational Trading* dynamic is generally expected to produce high economic capital, it is entirely possible that if in the course of interacting, negotiators shift from a task-oriented focus to a competitive focus, the dyad will achieve lower individual and joint gain.

     Moreover, although dyads that share low RSC accessibility are generally likely to develop economic capital, it is unlikely that they will develop as much relational capital, at least in the short run, as other dyadic compositions described above, given that they are not focused on the achievement of relational goals.  In other words, because low RSC accessibility negotiators will not be as focused on the relational aspects of their interactions, they will be less likely to develop outcomes that include relational components.  This is consistent with Pinkley & Northcraft (1994), who argued that task-focused disputants do not tend to have relationship

maintenance issues in their final settlements.  More generally, effects for negotiators with low

RSC accessibility are expected to be the *mirror image* of those with high RSC accessibility:

while low RSC negotiators are expected to accumulate relatively high individual and joint

economic capital and low relational capital, high RSC negotiators are expected to accumulate

relatively low economic capital and high relational capital.

**RSC Congruency versus Incongruency**

In the discussion above, we assumed that both negotiators in a dyad shared similar

levels of RSC accessibility.  Yet often this may not be the case, raising the natural question:

What relational dynamics and outcomes characterize such dyads? A key prediction of our

model is that dyadic incongruency of RSC will relate to lower joint economic and relational

capital than dyadic congruency, regardless of the negotiators' strength of RSC accessibility.

There is abundant evidence that incongruency in goals (e.g., Kristof-Brown & Stevens, 2001),

values (e.g., Adkins, Russell, & Werbel, 1994), and/or personality (e.g. Smith, 1998), is related

to higher conflict (Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997), lower communication quality (Gelfand,

Radhakrishnan, & Kuhn, 1996), and more negative perceptions of interaction partners (Adkins,

et al. 1994).  Incongruency is also related to lower trust, satisfaction, and commitment (Kristof-

Brown, Jansen, & Colbert, 2002; Meglino et al., 1989).   By contrast, congruency is thought to

be beneficial because it increases attraction and liking (Byrne, 1961; Newcomb, 1956; Tsui,

Egan & O'Reilly, 1992), contributes to individuals' positive social identity and self-esteem

(Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), and helps partners coordinate their behavior

according to a common set of expectations (Barsade, Ward, Turner & Sonnenfeld, 2000;

Triandis, 1959; Thompson & DeHarpport, 1998).

Building on this literature, we expect that dyads who have incongruent levels of RSC

accessibility—in which RSC is asymmetric between negotiators—will have lower perceptions of

similarity, experience more negative emotions, have difficulty coordinating their interactions, and

have lower trust and commitment, all of which is likely to thwart their ability to understand each

other's interests and make mutual trade-offs.  Our previous discussion of RSC accessibility also helps to understand further the negative negotiation dynamics that are expected to be associated with RSC incongruency.  For example, persons with strong RSC accessibility experience distress and negative affects when their efforts to develop a connection are thwarted (Cross & Madson, 1997), resulting in behaviors ranging from relational aggression to withdrawal from the interaction (Cross & Madson, 1997).  Regardless of whether aggression or withdrawal is chosen as a response, we argue that the ultimate result for both is the same:  Since neither of these behaviors leads to the creation of value, we predict that compared to congruent dyads, dyads with RSC incongruency will ultimately achieve lower individual and joint economic capital, and will also experience a further distancing of the relationship, leading to lower relational capital.  In addition, these dyads are likely to experience more *unequal* negotiation outcomes, with individuals high on RSC likely achieving lower outcomes than those low on RSC.  We refer to this phenomenon as a *Relational Distancing* dynamic, depicted in Figure 2.

Although there is little research that has investigated the impact of negotiator congruency versus incongruency, indirect support for this proposition can be found in the negotiation literature.  For example, Thompson & DeHarpport (1998) found that friends engaging in problem-solving tasks who were dissimilar in communal orientation obtained lower settlement outcomes compared to friends who both had either very high or very low communal orientation.  Our notion of *Relational Distancing* is also consistent with research by McGinn and Keros (2002), who found that in asymmetric dyads in which one party cooperated and the other was non-responsive, the cooperator reacted in one of two ways:  They either became angry and lashed out at the other party or they broke off from the interaction and sacrificed agreement.  Likewise, research has shown that prosocial individuals respond very competitively when dealing with non-cooperative individuals (Kelley & Stahelski, 1970; Van Lange, 1999).  Finally, the *Relational Distancing* dynamic is also indirectly supported by research on gender, which we have previously linked to RSC.  In situations where cooperation is expected but not forthcoming,

women have been found to react with anger and aggression (Mikolic, Parker, & Pruitt, 1997;

Rapoport & Chammah, 1965; Swap & Rubin, 1983; Tedeschi, Schlenker, & Bonoma, 1973).

**Post Settlement Compliance and Future Negotiations**

Negotiations are not always discrete, one-time events (Mannix et al., 1995), but rather

require compliance with agreements and the possibility of future interaction.  Thus, even if an

agreement is reached, it may fall through because one or both parties ultimately reneg on the

terms of their agreement (Barry & Oliver, 1996).  We predict that the relational dynamics that

transpire during the negotiation will affect negotiators' willingness to comply with agreements as

well as their interest in engaging in future negotiations.  For example, dyads in which RSC is

incongruent are expected to be less willing to comply with agreements and to engage in future

negotiations with their counterparts relative to congruent dyads.  As discussed, incongruent

dyads are expected to have experienced more negative emotions, have had more difficulty

coordinating their action and developing trust, and to have achieved lower joint economic and

relational capital, all of which should result in less commitment to agreements that have been

reached and less interest in engaging in future negotiations.  This is consistent with research

that has shown that incongruency in groups is related to lower commitment, motivation, and

turnover (see Kristoff-Brown, 1996, for a review).  It is also consistent with research by Allred et

al. (1997), which found that negotiators who experience negative emotions during negotiations

have less of a desire to interact with their partners in the future (see also O'Connor & Arnold,

2001).

In dyads in which RSC is congruent, we expect that negotiators' willingness to comply

with agreements and engage in future negotiations will be contingent on the amount of

economic and relational capital achieved as well as the strength of RSC accessibility in the

dyad.  Dyads with high RSC accessibility are expected to be more satisfied and willing to

comply with agreements to the extent they have achieved *high relational capital*, even if they

have not achieved significant economic capital.  If such negotiators are in markets where

opportunity costs and uncertainty about exploitation with other partners are high, this

accumulation of relational capital early on may ultimately lead to considerable economic gain

over the long run (cf. Tenbrunsel et al., 1999).  By contrast, dyads with low RSC accessibility

will be more satisfied and willing to comply with agreements to the extent that they have

achieved *high economic capital*, regardless of the relational capital that has initially developed.

Indeed, as noted by an anonymous reviewer, if there is an opportunity for on-going transactions,

high economic gain may ultimately make these negotiators more committed to maintaining their

connection in order to reap additional economic benefits (and possibly even strengthen RSC in

these dyads), and ultimately, they may also gain considerable relational capital over the long

run.

**Discussion**

Negotiation research, while thriving, has historically been criticized as having an

arelational bias—focusing primarily on autonomy, competition, and rationality rather than

interdependence, cooperation, and relationality.  Yet with few exceptions, little conceptual work

has been done to specify the precise nature of the construct of relationality or how it affects

negotiators' psychological states, tactics, and outcomes.

We sought to move beyond abstract critiques of arelationality and to provide a concrete

agenda for future research.  Drawing on literature on the social psychology of the relational self,

we advanced a more comprehensive model of relationality in negotiation.  We have shown that

in addition to certain individual and group differences in chronic accessibility of RSC, features of

the negotiation context can increase the temporary accessibility of RSC as well as inhibit is use.

We delineated how RSC is linked to negotiators' psychological states (frames, judgments, and

goals) as well as early tactical behavior, and we detailed unique relational dynamics—*Relational

Satisfying*, *Relational Integrating*, *Arelational Trading*, and *Relational Distancing*—that can occur

at the negotiation table based on the dyadic composition of RSC.  Our account clearly shows

that different forms of negotiating relationally bring distinct benefits and costs to the negotiation table which need to be balanced in the pursuit of relational and economic capital.

**Implications for theory and research.**   Our model of RSC in negotiation has the potential to expand negotiation theory by opening up new ways to look at previous research and by illustrating linkages across diverse areas in the field.  For example, we have begun to show how disparate areas such as negotiations with close others, gender differences, and differences across communication media can be seen, at least in part, through a common lens—the relational self.  Our model also expands negotiation theory by offering new avenues for research on age-old phenomena.  For example, we expand the focus on economic capital, which is prioritized in the field, to also include a focus on relational capital.  More generally, our model highlights the critical need to develop and incorporate good measures of relational constructs into negotiation research.  Fortunately, there are a number of existing measures of RSC that can be readily incorporated into negotiation research (see Aron et al., 1992; Cross et al., 2000; Y. Kashima et al., 1995; E. Kashima & Hardie, 2000), and the creation of new priming measures of the relational self would prove useful in this regard as well (cf. Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991, for examples of priming the collective self).  Yet other relational constructs that we advanced that are specific to negotiation need further research attention.  For example, our model illustrates the need to assign value to the dimensions of relational capital that we have articulated (mutual liking, mutual knowledge, mutual respect, and mutual commitment) in experimental and field studies.  Likewise, relational aggression—a construct that arguably represents a "downside" of RSC—should also be the focus of measurement in negotiation.

More generally, our discussion highlights the importance of re-examining existing negotiation constructs and theories through an RSC lens.  Future research will benefit, for example, from examining the dynamics of power in negotiation vis-à-vis RSC.   Although high power has been generally linked to self-interested behavior (e.g., Kipnis, 1972) and judgmental inaccuracy in conflicts (Ebenbach & Keltner, 1998), power in negotiation is likely to be used in a

more socially responsive way when RSC is accessible (cf. Chen et al., 2001).  This is consistent

with research by Chen et al. (2001), which found that individuals in positions of power who had

a "communal orientation" were more responsive to the needs of others.  Accordingly, it would be

interesting to examine how RSC moderates the effect of high power in negotiations.  We would

predict, for example, that having a high BATNA would be more likely to influence tactics among

negotiators with low RSC accessibility than negotiators with high RSC accessibility.  The latter

may be more reluctant to mentioning their BATNAs as leverage, as this could thwart the

development of relational capital.  Likewise, a relational perspective on cognitive biases in

negotiation might also prove fruitful.  Earlier we discussed how RSC might attenuate fixed pie

and reactive devaluation biases, but an equally important question is whether there are unique

biases that have heretofore not surfaced that might occur as a result of RSC accessibility.

In addition, as noted above, our model illustrates the importance of looking not only at

individual-level RSC, but congruency in RSC at the dyadic level in negotiation research.

Although there have been some scholars who have investigated congruency in negotiation

(e.g., McGinn & Keros, 2002; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994; Thompson & DeHarrport, 1998), many

models of negotiation have focused on the individual level of analysis without regard for the

nature of the dyad.  For example, the dual concern model (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), one of the

most widely discussed models of conflict management, focuses upon a single individual's

approach to conflict management.  Our analysis shows the necessity of looking not only at an

individuals' strength of RSC accessibility but also the congruency that exists (or lack thereof) in

order to better predict dynamics and outcomes of negotiations.  Moreover, future research

would benefit from examining factors that moderate the negative effect of RSC incongruity in

negotiation.  For example, in conditions where negotiators share superordinate goals, dyads

may be able to overcome the potentially negative effects of incongruity (Hunger and Stern,

1976; Sherif & Sherif, 1969).  Situations in which both negotiators have few alternative options

(e.g., each has a low BATNA) may also mitigate negative effects of incongruency, as negotiators will be more motivated to work together to find a good solution.

The theory also provides an alternative way to understand individual differences in negotiation. We have argued that individual differences are dynamic, and do not necessarily translate into behavior if they are not relevant to the context. For example, although women are generally higher on RSC than men, we argued that RSC will be inhibited under certain conditions, which should attenuate gender differences. Our focus shifts the discussion of gender differences in negotiation from stable traits, which are typically used to differentiate males and females, to social cognition—self-schemas that are dynamically accessible and are context-dependent. Future research may benefit from examining gender and other individual difference variables using a social cognition perspective (cf. Morris & Gelfand, 2004).

Finally, although we have been necessarily selective in our discussion of the potential that RSC has for negotiation research, an RSC perspective will also be useful in the field of OB more generally. Similar to the negotiation literature, the OB literature has been criticized as having an arelational focus (Fletcher & Jaques, 1999; see also Barry & Crant, 2000; Bradbury & Bergmann, 2000). We believe that an RSC perspective would benefit a wide range of OB phenomena—including emotional labor, leadership, organizational citizenship behaviors, and organizational culture. For example, RSC may be related to *emotional labor,* or the strain that people experience in roles where there is a constant requirement to meet the needs of and be responsive to others (e.g., service providers; Gross, 1998; Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli, 1993). People with RSC accessible may generally experience less strain than those with low RSC accessibility because they are more genuinely interested in developing relationships (cf., Pugh, 2002). At the same time, conflictual relationships with customers or clients may be the source of more stress among those with RSC accessible. RSC is also relevant for the study of organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ, 1988), as individuals with RSC accessible may be more willing to engage in interpersonally-oriented helping behaviors (Lee & Allen, 2002). RSC

is also relevant for leadership in organizations. Research and theory have begun to investigate the link between leadership and followers' self-concepts (Lord & Brown, 2004), and there is some evidence that a relational connection with one's leader is important for follower empowerment (Kark, Shamir & Chen, 2003), and effect that we would expect would be pronounced for those with RSC accessible. On the flipside, it would also be interesting to examine the impact of RSC accessibility on specific behaviors of leaders (e.g., transformational versus transactional approaches). Lastly, RSC may be implicated in macro phenomena such as organizational culture. For example, if the founder of a company has high chronic RSC accessibility, we might expect that the h/she may develop a *relational culture* which emphasizes cooperation, interpersonal sensitivity, and mutual empowerment.

**Implications for practice.** Our model begins to identify when and how relational issues become manifest in negotiation, and has the potential to enhance negotiation training. For example, the model of RSC and negotiation delineates conditions that are expected to either accentuate (e.g., negotiations with friends) or attenuate (e.g., negotiations over lean media) RSC in negotiations. Just as negotiators can be taught strategies for problem-solving, we believe that they can also be taught to be aware of the costs and benefits of various relational dynamics in negotiation. For instance, trainers can highlight the conditions that may foster a *Relational Satisficing* dynamic among negotiators, and teach strategies for developing economic capital in addition to relational capital. Likewise, they can highlight the impact of RSC incongruency in dyads and help negotiators to develop strategies to overcome these negative dynamics. More generally, we move beyond recommendations to "separate the people from the problem" (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991, p. 17) and instead, delineate specific dynamics that can occur when people are focused on relationality in negotiation. By including relational capital as a goal of negotiations that is on par with attaining economic capital, we also emphasize the importance of relationship maintenance as a legitimate goal about which negotiators should be concerned.

**Concluding remarks.**  Negotiation theory and research have historically been criticized as having an arelational bias.  Our model, grounded in the nature of the self, offers an enriched relational perspective on negotiation.  It helps us to understand diverse phenomena in negotiation, raises new questions for empirical investigation, and ultimately illuminates the complex dynamics of what it means to negotiate relationally.

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