

NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN BRITISH AND DUTCH MANAGERS: CULTURAL  
VALUES, APPROACHES TO CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, AND PERCEIVED  
NEGOTIATION SATISFACTION.

by

Nathalie van Meurs

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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted, either in the same or different form, to this or any other university for a degree.

Signature:.....

## Abstract

The present research investigates cultural values, approaches to conflict management, and perceived negotiation satisfaction in manager samples from the UK and the Netherlands. Three studies (total N = 412) were conducted, of which Study 1 and 2 pertained to the development of the measure and Study 3 was used to conduct the main analysis. The research focus centres around the following main objectives: a) refinement of conflict management models and instruments; b) profile analyses of Dutch and British conflict management approaches using Schwartz's (1992, 1994) Value Types to explain observed differences, and c) testing of a model describing interrelations between cultural values, approaches to conflict management, conflict context, and perceived negotiation satisfaction.

Previous research on conflict management modeled conflict behaviour on the basis of a concern for self vs. concern for others matrix, which incorporated communication styles. The present research distinguishes between the underlying concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles to predict perceived negotiation satisfaction. Furthermore, conflict management dynamics are investigated by comparing the ratings of own vs. other team's conflict management approach. In-group vs. out-group differentiation was dependent on the social desirability of the conflict management approach in question. Dutch managers associated themselves less and British managers more with a concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding, and Indirect communication, whereas British managers associated themselves more and Dutch managers less with these approaches.

Results for cultural values showed that the main difference between Dutch and British managers concerned a higher score for Dutch managers on Self Transcendence and a higher score on Self Enhancement for British managers. Self Enhancement mediated the effect for nationality for Dominating strategy. Furthermore, Self Transcendence predicted a concern for Clarity, a Problem Solving strategy, and a Consultative communication style. Nationality as predictor of Concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style was not mediated by Value Types. Suggestions are made for future research exploring the role of Uncertainty Avoidance at the individual level. Success and Comfort were predicted by own and other team's Conflict Management Approach, additional to cultural value types and contextual variables. National differences were observed for particular predictors of perceived negotiation satisfaction.

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*Zing; vecht, huil, bid, lach, werk, en bewonder. Niet zonder ons\*.*

*Ramses Shaffy, 1970*

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\* Sing, fight, cry, pray, laugh, work, and admire: Not without us.

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*Preface*

The present thesis examines conflict management approaches in an intercultural context. At the onset of this research it was not foreseen to what extent intercultural conflict would come to the forefront of current affairs since 2001. Conflict has been part and parcel of human interaction. Within organisations, managers may spend up to 20% of their time trying to resolve conflicts (Thomas & Schmidt, 1976). Through technological advances and globalisation, contact between culturally diverse people within and between organisations increased substantially (Morris, Williams, & Leung et al., 1998; Smith, 1983), no doubt making conflicts more complex and time consuming to resolve.

Theories of conflict management are a reflection of a western perspective, which is criticised for being culture bound (e.g., Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Smith & Bond, 1998). A subsequent focus on comparisons of West vs. East provided valuable insights but nonetheless neglected other cultural samples (Van de Vijver & Leung, 2000). The present thesis adopts a European perspective on conflict in an organisational context, as there is little knowledge about management practices of European organisations (Child, Faulkner, & Pitkethly, 2000), and much of the conflict research has relied on (business) students and laboratory experiments.

Managers from the Netherlands and Britain feature in the present comparison; both are North-Western European countries, relatively similar with respect to individualism, power, and hierarchy relations but differing with respect to the endorsement of ego goals (career, money) vs. social goals (care for relationships and physical environment) and the avoidance of uncertainty (Ashkanasy, Trevor-Roberts, & Earnshaw, 2002; Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1994; Szabo, Brodbeck, Den Hartog, Reber, Weibler, & Wunderer, 2002).

Both samples of managers came from the same multinational: A Dutch/British oil company that was set up approximately a century ago. Headquarters are located in both London and The Hague, with departments such as Marketing, H.R., and Finance mirrored in both locations. The organisation claims equality between the two headquarters. The Dutch and British



side work closely together and managers are thus required to travel to and sometimes live in both locations. Because most of the global offices are located in either the London or The Hague office, managers also often interact with offices in North America, Africa (Nigeria), and the Far East.

For the purpose of the study, managers were selected on the basis of their nationality (Dutch vs. British) and their job level (managerial). Data was collected at three sessions during 2000-2001. Although the organisation did not sponsor the present research some restrictions applied. Study two and three were subject to regulations under the Data Protection Act. This meant that Human Resource managers of each department (e.g., Marketing, Exploration and Production, etc.) had to be informed of the nature of the research, and only some agreed to cooperate. Names of managers were randomly selected by a computer and questionnaires were sent by the company's mailroom; the list of names was not disclosed.

One of the consequences of these restrictions involves a self-selection of candidates at the individual level (where respondents decide to participate or not) but also at the departmental level (where HR managers decide that staff within their department are subjected to the chance of being sent a questionnaire). Whether response rates were substantially affected by the regulations of the Data Protection Act was not clear cut, as in Study 1 (no restrictions) a response rate of 29.5% was obtained, whereas response rates for Study 2 was 40% and for Study 3 was 18%, both were subject to the Data Protection Act. For all studies, an email announcing the questionnaire and its importance to the company was sent out two weeks before the main mail out. The questionnaire mail out was then followed up by a reminder urging the respondent to participate. Although there is no clear explanation why response rates differed for study 2 and 3, the low response rate for study 3 may be due to several factors: At least two other surveys were taking place at the same time, and the present survey was conducted in the summer thus people may have been away or less inclined to spend time filling in a questionnaire. Taking these circumstances together the sample size for the final main study was satisfactory and certainly adequate for the statistical analyses conducted.

Following this preface, chapter one is a more detailed analysis of the importance of studying culture, in particular how culture can affect the individual psyche and subsequent behaviours. As such, the first chapter delineates the definition of culture, highlighting the conceptual and methodological problems that arise when introducing culture as a variable and presenting the multi-dimensional value classifications along which groups from different cultures can be organised. Specifically, Schwartz' circumplex value model, which claims universality, is presented and adopted as a measurement of different cultural differences.

Chapter two tackles conflict, and more specifically the way that conflict is dealt with interculturally. Current methodologies of conflict research being unsatisfactory, a more refined approach to conflict and its outcomes is proposed.

Chapter three is an assessment of intercultural communication theories as part of the refinement of conflict management strategies as described in chapter three. Intercultural communication theories lean heavily on the West vs. East contrasts. An alternative perspective is the focus on uncertainty and anxiety by Gudykunst (1985, 1998, in press). A more specified interpretation of Gudykunst's extensive theory is proposed.

Culture, conflict and communication are closely linked as each contributes to the constitution of the other. As such, a revision of Gelfand and Dyer's (2000) model of intercultural conflict is proposed to represent the relationship between culture, conflict, communication, and outcomes of the conflict situation. When congruence between in- and out-group conflict management approach exists, it is expected that the outcome of the conflict, or more specifically, Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction will increase. Chapter four is an outline of the hypotheses proposed for testing in chapters five and six.

Chapter five describes the three studies that were conducted: Study 1 and 2 mainly concern the development of the measure, whereas the data of study 3 was used for final structure and reliability testing and also for the main data analysis as described in Chapter Six. Discussion and suggestions for further research are finally presented in chapter seven.

*"Everyone is kneaded out of the same dough but not baked in the same oven." -Yiddish Proverb*

## **Values as indicators of culture**

### **1.1. Introduction**

International migration and international interaction are at a peak due to globalisation (e.g., international mergers, trade integration, joint ventures), the ease of travel, and the pressures of conflict or persecution in one's home country (Martin, 2001). Even disregarding international migration, due to an advancement in travel and technologies, more and more people from different cultures are working together. People are thus functioning in multicultural societies and working environments, sometimes referred to as a 'global village', cooperating and communicating with people who have values different to their own.

When people with different cultural backgrounds meet, it appears there is a continuous battle between a curiosity for the new and a defence of what is familiar (e.g., Hall, 1976). People are being made aware of their cultural group membership and its difference from other cultures. What is perceived as an insult in one country (e.g., being moved out of one's hotel room without notice – North America) may be viewed as a compliment in others (the guest is treated as one of the family - Japan). This relativity of norms affects not only the day-to-day interactions, but also the interpretation of supposedly objective observations of those who try to make sense of the world by mapping human behaviour. For social psychologists it has been a reason to alert fellow researchers to the need for the inclusion of culture as a variable (e.g., Fiske et al., 1998), since general psychological research has been culture blind (i.e., it does not pay attention to the cultural context in which it is rooted) and culture bound (i.e., many theories and findings cannot be used in, or apply to, other cultures). Berry (1999) drew the conclusion that a different approach to the analysis of human behaviour was required. It became evident that a bridge between the subjectivity of the subject and the objectivity of the research was required, which subsequently motivated researchers to develop frameworks that could identify cultural patterns within samples.

The following chapter will review the development of cultural frameworks, first by addressing the definition of culture and its relevance to psychological research, and secondly by comparing studies assessing cultural measures, in order to establish applicability of cultural values as a useful tool for measuring culture in the present study.

## **1.2. The study of cultural groups: importance, definition, and application.**

The definition of culture as an observed variable has been a topic of debate, since culture is used to describe something about which the concerned disciplines (e.g., social psychology and anthropology) do not yet have consensus. “The concept [culture] is unclear, ... it has been frequently and variously defined, and ... no single definition is embraced even by all anthropologists, in whose discipline the concept is central” (Segall, 1984, p. 153). Perhaps this is one of the reasons why culture has not been included in mainstream psychological research as much as other variables, such as gender. The need for further ‘unpackaging’ of the term will be discussed and a purposeful definition will be proposed.

### **1.2.1. General psychology: Can one size fit all?**

General psychology adheres to the Platonic assumption sometimes referred to as the principle of "psychic unity". This implies that all mental functioning can be attributed to a "presupposed...processing mechanism inherent...in human beings, which enables them to think..., experience..., act..., and learn" (Shweder, 1990, p. 4). This mechanism is believed to be fixed and universal, as it exists within each individual. However, once one commences to learn, cultural issues come into play, even in cognitive psychology. “Traditionally, culture was defined behaviorally, in terms of actions, rituals, and customs. One imagined people in a culture; culture (like the group) was something *out there*. [Researchers] have become to conceive of culture more in cognitive terms, as a [cognitive structure] in people’s heads” (Miller & Prentice, 1994, p. 451). Fiske et al. (1998) argue that social psychology cannot ignore culture in its analyses due to the fact that ‘basic’ psychological processes, such as self-enhancing biases, characterising of the self, the ‘fundamental attribution error’, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic rewards, avoidance of cognitive dissonance, and moral development, “depend substantially on cultural meanings and

practices” (p. 915). They concluded that cultural differences effectively make any psychological generalisations void, or at least applicable only in the region of the research: “social psychology must consider the idea that psyche and social relations are culturally contingent” (p. 963). To ignore culture empirically when performing social research and then treat the outcomes as conclusive universal evidence, is to omit an essential variable, which subsequently affects the generalisations of the results.

Culture is thus a crucial component of the psychology of human behaviour. "In explanatory importance and generality of application it [culture] is comparable to such categories as gravity in physics, disease in medicine, evolution in biology" (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952, p. 3). The comparative approach has had a long history in the behavioural sciences, particularly in the comparison of cultures, but organised and cooperative research on cultures started to take shape only in the mid 1960's (Berry, 1969). The (cross) cultural perspective had become a visible force in psychology both conceptually and methodologically (Lonner, 1999). The main difference between general and (cross) cultural psychology is that in the latter's “process of extending the range of variation as far as possible, researchers are confronted with differences in behaviour patterns that fit neither Western “common sense” notions about behaviour nor their formal and almost entirely Western theories” (Lonner & Adamopoulos, 1997, p. 53). As mentioned in the introduction, much of the social psychological research has been conducted in North America, potentially making many of the findings valid for that culture only. However, in order to facilitate more universally valid comparisons, an agreement on its definition became a much debated issue.

### **1.2.2. Culture as a predictive variable in research**

The word ‘culture’ is derived from the Latin word *cultura*, from the verb *colere*, which means ‘tending’ or ‘cultivation’. ‘Culture’ was used to describe the perfection of the individual, according to the values of the elite, which was also the older meaning of ‘civilisation’ (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). The usage of the term ‘culture’ has swayed between neutral/observational (man-made part of society) and evaluative (to be cultured is to be sophisticated). Although very similar to the Latin definition, the German 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century philosophers’ concept of culture was used in a neutral/observational rather than an evaluative manner, which is very much how

cross-cultural psychologists view culture today. The word culture in its modern technical or anthropological meaning was established by an anthropologist, Edward Tylor, in 1871. Tylor defined culture as “[t]hat complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871, p. 1). This definition makes way for an open-ended list, which has been extended considerably since Tylor first proposed it (Bodley, 1994).

Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) found 164 definitions after a thorough review of the anthropological literature available at that time. As indicated in Table 1.1 below, the list of types of definitions of culture identified by Kroeber and Kluckhohn indicates the diversity of the concept and underlines the difficulty in treating it as a simple variable. “Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action” (p. 181). More simply put, culture is a dynamic system of meanings that is a product of behaviour and in turn produces behaviour.

TABLE 1.1: Diverse Definitions of Culture based on Kroeber and Kluckhohn’s 1952 survey. (Adapted from Bodley, 1994).

<b>Type:</b>	<b>Definition:</b>
<i>Topical</i>	Culture consists of everything on a list of topics, or categories, such as social organisation, religion, or economy.
<i>Historical</i>	Culture is social heritage, or tradition, that is passed on to future generations.
<i>Behavioral</i>	Culture is shared, learned human behaviour, a way of life.
<i>Normative</i>	Culture is ideals, values, or rules for living.
<i>Functional</i>	Culture is the way humans solve problems of adapting to the environment or living together.
<i>Mental</i>	Culture is a complex of ideas, or learned habits, that inhibit impulses and distinguish people from animals.
<i>Structural</i>	Culture consists of patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols, or behaviours.

Kroeber and Kluckhohn further suggest that: "Culture is an abstraction and the listing of any relatively concrete phenomena confuses this issue" (1952, p. 87). However, even though

broad conceptualisations of culture may be favoured over distinctly listed phenomena since definitions by account can never be exhaustive, what is not explicitly mentioned in specific definitions tends to get left out of consideration. Furthermore, "... broad concepts ... are empirical generalisations, not analytical constructs" (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961, p. 3). A broad definition would render it a useless variable for research since it encompasses everything involved with human behaviour that could explain any observation (Rohner, 1984), effectively making it a tautology (Smith & Bond, 1998).

Schwartz (1994) suggested that, in order to 'unpackage' culture, it is best to view culture as "a complex, multidimensional structure rather than as a simple categorical variable" (Clark, 1987, p. 461 cited in Schwartz, 1994, p. 85). For culture to be used in research, it seemed that on the one hand it needs to be conceptualised narrowly to avoid tautologies but on the other hand involves a more complex treatment than categorical variables such as 'gender' and 'nationality'. This dilemma has fuelled the debate on the definition of culture. The following section will discuss this issue in relation to social systems and societies, and in terms of the in- or exclusion of concepts such as behaviour and artefacts.

### **1.2.3. What is a culture, a social system, or a society?**

Not much unlike a language that can contain several dialects, countries contain within them communities marked by specific characteristics that may differ from another community by their culture, which is based, for example, on religion, language, and the making of a livelihood. These characteristics are shared by people that "are conscious of themselves as a continuing entity and distinguish between members and non-members by some criterion of membership" (Goodenough, 1981, p. 102). Goodenough proposed that it is erroneous for people to be referred to as 'members of a culture' just as people cannot be 'members of a language'. This was later echoed by Rohner (1984): "An individual is a member of society but, ... not of a social system or culture. Individuals participate in social systems ... and share cultures..." (p. 132). In other words, a society, or a nation, is a large multigenerational population, which is organised around a common culture with a common social system (Rohner, 1984). This explains the difference between culture and society: "[o]ne cannot be a member of a set of standards or a body of knowledge and customs" (Goodenough, 1981, p. 103). In other words, one cannot be a

member of shared symbolic meanings, but one can be a member of a *society* that shares symbolic meanings, expressed as a *social system*. However, the terms are often used interchangeably and this may confuse modelling in research: “Most contemporary theorists of culture... agree that one must distinguish the cultural realm ... from the social realm ... if we are to unwrap and refine the concept of culture ... sufficiently to make [it] useful for research” (Rohner 1984, p. 114). Nevertheless, Rohner acknowledged the problematic relationship between culture and social system because his definitions of culture and social system may overlap. Jahoda (1984) and Smith and Bond (1998) consequently argued that a theoretical distinction between these concepts is meaningful, but not useful for research.

#### **1.2.4. Artefacts, behaviour, and symbols.**

Although Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) stipulated that the definition of culture should be kept simple, the discussion on what this definition should describe has not to this day been entirely resolved. The inclusion of artefacts, for one, has proven to be a point of debate because artefacts are strong indicators of culture, yet if the meaning of a particular artefact is unknown, it fails to convey the message. One may thus argue that objects should not be included in the definition of culture: “It is the ideas or meanings associated with artefacts that are candidates for inclusion in a theory of culture, not the objects themselves” (Rohner, 1984, p. 118). However, for those who view culture as a behavioural system the exclusion of artefacts may not apply, “since people obviously make use of their artefacts so that an adequate behavioural description will have to include them” (Jahoda, 1984, p. 141). Smith and Bond (1998) suggest that, although culture contains man made objects (e.g., different types of houses) and social institutions (e.g., marriage), a focus should be shifted to the symbolic meaning associated with the artefacts and social institutions, *and* how this is translated into messages between people which would result in certain types of behaviour.

From the premise that symbolic meanings and subsequent messages associated with artefacts and social institutions result in certain types of behaviour one may conclude that behaviour should be included in the definition of culture. Culture can only exist between people through communication (e.g., Hall, 1976); the individual interprets behaviour (consciously or unconsciously) and meanings are assigned and shared. Perhaps looking at behaviour rather than



attitudes, norms, and values would generate more accurate data since people do not always act according to these factors. However, this criticism can be turned around by highlighting the fact that behaviour, unlike values, is not context-free. “Values are universalistic statements about what we think is desirable or attractive. Values do not ordinarily contain statements about *how* they are to be realised. Behaviours are specific actions, which occur in a particular setting at a particular time” and the difference between the two can be compared to the etic-emic distinction<sup>1</sup> (Smith & Bond, 1998, p. 65). Schwartz (1994) found etic validity for values, but it is uncertain whether he would find the same for behaviours if one would take into consideration that behaviour is contextualised. For example, consider the emotion of “anger” vs. the behaviour of “pointing the index finger”. There is probably more universal consensus about the concept of anger than the pointing one’s index finger<sup>2</sup>. “The expression of specific behaviours can perhaps best be thought of as an emic reflection of the participants’ various values” (Smith & Bond, 1998, p. 66).

Regardless of differences in behaviour, there appears to be a deeper level of functions and generalisations that remain constant across cultures (Kagitçibasi & Berry, 1989; Smith, 1997). In other words, individuals behave differently depending on the context but people share a blueprint of culture. Furthermore, despite inevitable cultural and individual changes that occur

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<sup>1</sup> Berry developed the distinction between Etic and Emic analyses of human behaviour, based on the linguistic distinction between ‘phonetics’ (universal properties of spoken sound) and ‘phonemics’ (ways in which spoken sounds are given meaning within the context of particular words and languages). In Berry’s formulation, “[e]mics apply in only a particular society, while etics are culture-free or universal [functional] aspects of the world (or if not entirely universal, operate in more than one society)” (Berry, 1969, p. 123). Anthropological research qualifies as emic research as it focuses on one particular culture without looking at universals; any findings are unlikely to be true for a culture other than the one studied. Based on the replication of (mainly) North American studies in other countries, Berry coined the term “imposed etic” with regard to methodologies and/or analyses where one assumes similarity in meaning of the measures (items) across nations. Imposed etic analyses are a starting point for comparative research but in order to avoid making assumptions it is important to develop measures in an emic fashion to capture the local interpretations of knowledge (Berry, 1999). Instead, according to Berry (1969), “ideally each behaviour system should be understood in its own terms; each aspect of behaviour must be viewed in relation to its behaviour setting (ecological, cultural and social background). Failing to do so would be “comparing incomparables” (p. 122). Due to the complex nature of measure development in each culture separately, the ‘derived etic’ method was proposed, which involved the extensive use of emic approaches in a number of cultures so that psychological universals may emerge (Berry, 1989, 1999). Because the measures are constructed separately, no metric equivalence is enforced. Any convergence found is an indication of equivalent processes to be used for derived etic generalisations. By moving from emic to derived etic methods it becomes clear that: “indigenous psychologies, while valuable in their own right, serve an equally important function as useful steps on the way to achieving a universal psychology (Berry, 1999, p. 10). The derived etic method is important especially because it defines a core difference between general and (cross-)cultural psychology. Furthermore, it unveiled the need for a framework to measure culture, using items that have been universally validated, refraining from relying on nationality as a distinguishing label when looking at psychological constructs comparing cultures.

<sup>2</sup> The author appreciates that anger as a variable elicits different kinds of behaviour and or thought across cultures, and that it also has contextual determinants. It is assumed, however, that the word ‘anger’ is read less ambiguously than the behaviour ‘pointing a finger’, which can be negative, neutral or positive depending on whether one is accusing, providing directions, or indicating a desire respectively.

within society, the culture-behaviour link is more likely to remain stable than the behaviour itself (Berry, 1989). For example, the process of cooking dinner changes through time with the development of technology, however, it is still likely that the time of eating, type of food, and additional rituals associated with cooking are maintained. Through the identification of universals one can compare cultural groups in their extent of endorsement of these universals and link these to more specific behaviours.

### **1.2.5. A definition of culture for research**

Culture is a relatively organised system of shared meanings that limits the behavioral choices of its members. More precisely, culture can be considered as “a shared system of symbols and meanings that occurs in highly specified forms”, is “historically grounded”, and “constituted communicatively” (Carbaugh, 1985, p. 37). This system contains “... internal constraints of genetic and cultural transmission and ... external constraints of ecological, socio-economical, historical, and situational contexts, with a range of distal to proximal effects within each type of constraint” (Bond & Smith, 1996, p. 209). These internal cultural constraints (or “boundary conditions for behavior” (Poortinga, 1992, p. 13) “limit and shape the behavioral expression of the universal process” (Bond & Smith, 1996, p. 209). The universal process refers to the psychological processes innate to all humans independent of culture, i.e., we all have emotions such as anger and happiness. However, how one culture expresses anger may be different from another – our value system varies across cultures.

In the past, researchers using samples from different countries relied on the mere specification of nationality, without actually measuring one’s cultural disposition. There may not be definitive agreements on how to distinguish between cultural groups but “one cannot describe the cultural profile of a sample of respondents until an agreed set of concepts and measures is available for the purpose” (Smith & Bond, 1998, p. 40). Otherwise, if one would base the distinctions on national culture (i.e., make a comparison between nations without measuring the cultural differences), one would lose track of within nation variation (e.g., subcultures) and lose track of what aspect of the experience of individuals contributes to their cultural make-up. In order to make valid cross-cultural comparisons it is necessary to have a measure of culture that can be used universally and will not result in researchers making

tautological inferences. If cultural dimensions or value-types are used to explain a type of social behaviour, a key element of culture is extracted and is expected to explain behavioural aspects of culture.

It becomes evident from debates like the above that, despite a clear *core* of the concept of culture, the boundaries of culture are not agreed. Efforts to enhance conceptual clarity may thus not be conducive to actual research and may be even bound to fail (cf. Segall, 1984). This does not mean, however, that the myriad of definitions cannot be organised into a workable structure. This is a matter of 'unpackaging' the overall concept to understand the underlying structural foundation and so make it useful for research.

### **1.3. Frameworks for measuring Culture**

#### **1.3.2. Comparing cultures: values**

Early in the last century, Weber (1904/1949) emphasised the importance of values in relation to culture: "The concept of culture is a value-concept. Empirical reality becomes "culture" to us because and insofar as we relate it to value ideas. Only a small portion of existing concrete reality is colored by our value-conditioned interest and it alone is significant to us. It is significant because it reveals relationships that are important to us due to their connection with values" (p. 76). In other words, that part of reality that does not matter to us because our values are not linked to it, will most probably be ignored or at least easily forgotten. "The focus of attention on reality under the guidance of values that lend it significance and the selection and ordering of the phenomena which are thus affected in the light of their cultural significance is entirely different from the analysis of reality in terms of laws and general concepts" (p. 77). Culture represents a significant 'reality' due to the value ideas that underlie it. In order to compare cultures empirically, it does not suffice to use the nationality label in the way that is done, for example, with gender comparisons – because the label provides no indication of the endorsement of values. The extent to which people endorse values becomes an important indicator of their 'reality'.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) were among the first researchers that stressed the need for a universal explanatory construct and they proposed value orientations to explain cultural variation. They defined value orientations as “complex principles which are variable only in patterning” (p. 4). In their pioneering work, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) classified values by deriving ‘value orientations’ from a list of situations and alternative solutions. They introduced five value orientations based on guiding principles to achieve goals in a given culture: 1) Human nature orientation (good vs. evil), 2) Man-Nature (-supernature) orientation (subjugation to, in harmony with, and mastery over nature), 3) Time orientation (past, present, future), 4) Activity orientation (being- being in becoming – doing), 5) Relational orientation (lineal – e.g., kinship; collateral – social order/group; individualistic – autonomy of the individual). Some of these value orientations have come up time and again as shall become evident in the discussion of frameworks. As they studied several tribes in North America their focus was primarily anthropological, but their theoretical work has been highly influential. However, it was not until 1980 that the first values map of cultural groups across the world was developed by Hofstede.

### **1.3.2.1. Culture’s Consequences – A new way of looking at culture**

In 1980 Geert Hofstede published research that has become fundamental to the approach of cross cultural psychologists. Hofstede’s research synthesised data from different countries, which described the (work) values of employees within a large multinational company named Hermes (later identified as IBM) during the 1960’s and 70’s. Approximately 117,000 respondents filled out questionnaires with items about work relations and work values. These individual responses were aggregated into 40 country cases, which enabled Hofstede to make comparisons across countries by factor analyzing the country mean scores. This produced four dimensions: Power Distance, Individualism/Collectivism (I/C), Uncertainty Avoidance, and Masculinity/Femininity (MAS) (See Table 1.2.).

TABLE 1.2: Description and examples of Hofstede's dimensions. (Adapted from Hofstede, 2001).

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Power Distance</b>	<b>Uncertainty Avoidance</b>	<b>Individualism vs. Collectivism</b>	<b>Masculinity vs. Femininity</b>
<i>Description</i>	Difference in human inequality; usually formalised in superior-subordinate relationships, as perceived by the subordinate, within various social institutions.	The extent of avoiding uncertainty in the future; intolerance of ambiguity. Not to be confused with risk avoidance.	The relationship between the individual and the group that prevails in a given society: the way people live and work together.	The difference in endorsement of ego goals (career, money) vs. social goals (relationships, physical environment).
<i>Example of societal norms</i>	Hierarchy means existential inequality.	Feeling of powerlessness toward external forces.	Emphasis on individual initiative and achievement: leadership ideal.	Live in order to work. Sympathy for the strong.

The four dimensions enabled researchers to map cultures and categorise them to facilitate the understanding of differences. For example, North America was found to be highly individualist, just like most of Western Europe and Australia, whereas Guatemala, Ecuador, and Panama were the most collectivist. Furthermore, Greece, Portugal, and Guatemala were the most Uncertainty Avoidant cultures, whereas Denmark, Jamaica, and Singapore were least Uncertainty Avoidant. One conclusion from this brief analysis could be that Guatemala is thus a highly group oriented country with a need to plan ahead. Hofstede's work has been replicated, adapted, and reviewed to the extent that he is one of the most cited non-American researchers in the field of social sciences (Economische Statistische Berichten, 2001). His dimensions have been used to explain phenomena not only in the field of cross-cultural psychology, but also in management and politics. Overall, however, MAS and Uncertainty Avoidance have been less popular for theorising and empirical studies than Power Distance and, in particular, I/C. Furthermore, his work has elicited criticism specifically in relation to his methodology and analysis.

### **1.3.2.1.1. Criticism of Hofstede's (1980) framework.**

Triandis (1982) raised some concern, later echoed by other researchers (see for review Sondergaard, 1994), regarding the predictive validity of the dimensions. In order to be applied as predictors of behaviour, it would be necessary for the dimensions to be based on data from a representative source. As far as representation of country cultures is concerned, IBM is a large organisation with a distinct culture of its own. Not only could a company culture vary from the country culture, but the answers of the respondents could be a mixture of company values and company behaviour. The sample eventually used by Hofstede mainly consisted of employees with a servicing or marketing background. Although some suggest that, due to globalisation, the influence of organisational culture has taken over the influence of national culture in the work place (e.g., Mueller, 1992; Hermans & Kempen, 1998), there is also evidence to the contrary (see Adler & Bartholomew, 1992). However, Hofstede has addressed the issue of the influence of organisational culture and concluded that the effect of organisational culture is at a superficial level, whereas national culture is more deeply rooted (Hofstede, 1984b). Furthermore, the fact that Hofstede still found differences between country scores on the four dimensions indicates that the effect of country culture must be profound. Indeed, Hoppe (1998) found that the country ranks in his sample correlated with Hofstede's, despite a significant difference between sample make-up.

Triandis (1982) and others also raised a concern regarding the number and correlation of the dimensions found by Hofstede. The factor structure is not entirely clear-cut as I/C and Power Distance are strongly negatively correlated. According to Hofstede (2001), despite this correlation, they differ conceptually. There are exceptions to the overall negative correlation, and, if controlled for national wealth, the correlation coefficient is significantly reduced. However, some have argued that I/C is made up of two separate dimensions, rather than bipolar, and that further dissection of dimensions is required (e.g., Aguinis & Henle, in press; Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 1994). Secondly, MAS was found not to be as replicable in subsequent studies (e.g., Hoppe, 1990, 1993), although Hofstede (1998) provided empirical evidence that supported MAS in a variety of studies.

Complete confirmation of the four dimensions was established in only four studies (Sondergaard, 1994). However, similar dimensions to those identified by Hofstede have been proposed by other researchers (e.g., Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Trompenaars, 1985, 1993), refuting the idea that his concepts would lose relevance over time. Furthermore, as discussed before, behaviour within cultures may vary, but culture itself is said to be situated at a deep level within the collective (Kagitçibasi & Berry, 1989; Smith, 1997). Nevertheless, despite the phenomenal impact his dimensions have had on research, management studies, and organisations, Hofstede's research was based on survey material provided by IBM and is thus a typical example of an imposed etic design, potentially missing important concepts not represented by items in his questionnaire. Apart from researchers recognising the need for a direct measurement of cultural dimensions rather than inferring them from country membership (Hui, 1988; Hui & Luk, 1997; Hui & Yee, 1994), some critics also saw that more fine-tuning of the cultural concepts (particularly individualism-collectivism) was required (e.g., Earley & Gibson, 1998).

### **1.3.2.2. Enhancement of the dimensions: non-Western interpretation of values.**

Discussion of the validity of Hofstede's dimensions is not yet conclusive, although research (e.g., CCC, 1987; Helmreich and Merritt, 1998; Hofstede, 1998; Hoppe, 1998; De Mooij, 1998; Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Trompenaars, 1985, 1993) has confirmed that Hofstede's dimensions have been built upon and adjusted, but not refuted. One enhancement of Hofstede's dimensions to more universal values came from the Chinese Culture Connection (CCC) (1987), which consisted of a group of researchers who felt that non-Western values were not adequately represented in the Hofstede measure. Another example of value research is that of Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars (1996), who analysed data obtained by Trompenaars in the 1980's and 1990's. The particulars of these two studies shall be discussed below.

#### **1.3.2.2.1. The CCC**

The CCC constructed a list of what they perceived as fundamentally important Chinese values. Endorsement of these values was tested in 23 nations. Their method was a value survey, to which 50 male and 50 female students from each nation replied and the data resulted in four

country-level factors. Some of these four dimensions correlated significantly with the Hofstede dimensions when the CCC data was compared to the scores for the same countries in Hofstede's data (See Table 1.3). The CCC provided evidence that the Hofstede dimensions Power Distance, I/C and MAS are robust despite a difference in sample, year of research, gender ratio, and cultural origin (i.e., whether the measure was developed in a Western or Non-Western country) (Smith & Bond, 1998). Hofstede (1991) adapted the findings of CCC and added a fifth cultural dimension to his other four: Long Term Perspective. This dimension reflects the opposition of long-term to short-term aspects to concepts such as persistence and thrift to personal stability and respect for tradition (Hofstede, 2001). Although this research did not refute Hofstede's findings, the CCC study indicated that there was a need to move away from a solely western view of social psychology and to appreciate that 'elsewhere they may do things differently'.

TABLE 1.3. Comparison of overlap between CCC and Hofstede's dimensions.

CCC	Hofstede
Integration	Collectivism
Human-heartedness	MAS
Confucian Work Dynamism (Later renamed by Hofstede as "Long Term Perspective" (1991))	n/a
Moral Discipline	High Power Distance
n/a	Uncertainty Avoidance

#### **1.3.2.2.2. Conservatism and Involvement: Evidence of Innovation?**

Trompenaars (1985, 1993) had developed a questionnaire containing items about managers' reactions to situations and some items asking respondents to choose between value statements largely based on Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) conceptions of value dimensions. This measure was used with samples of business employees from 50 countries attending his workshops during the 1980's and 1990's. This provided information about the values of members of organisations from 43 different countries and identified the dimension of time perspective additional to dimensions similar to those of Hofstede (e.g., I/C). Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars (1996) further analysed the available data by using Multidimensional Scaling and derived two major dimensions of culture-level variation in the responses. The first one was



“Conservatism vs. Egalitarian Commitment” and the second dimension was “Loyal Involvement vs. Utilitarian Involvement”. The latter dimension concerned the obligation that people have to groups, and is not unlike I/C. The main enhancement to Hofstede’s study was that the Trompenaars data set included the former East bloc countries, and this additional data provided a clearer separation between the Power Distance and I/C dimensions (Smith & Bond, 1998). The label assigned to the former dimension was borrowed from Schwartz’s research and will be further discussed in section 2.3.2.3.

In sum, these studies introduced a major advance on Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s (1961) careful initiative into the categorisation of values into cultural dimensions. Values, although not the only measure of culture, have become the main medium to capture a person’s cultural profile, which has enabled researchers to conduct better empirical studies than are possible when relying on the nationality label as an explanation for cultural differences. The main criticisms involve the limited number of dimensions, which requires fine tuning for a more accurate mapping of cultures, and the predictive validity of values with regard to behaviour. These criticisms and further development of the cultural values framework are discussed in the next section.

### **1.3.2.3. Schwartz’s subjective value structure.**

Schwartz (1992, 1994; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990) embarked on a large project to clarify value studies as a basis for cultural research. Schwartz looked at how value priorities of individuals are affected by their social experiences, how value priorities affect individuals’ behavioural orientations and choices, and, finally, whether there are any cross-cultural value priority differences, and if so, why? His premise was that if dimensions or concepts are particularly normative for a culture it is likely that they will explain behaviour. For example, if power values are normative but safety values are not, it is likely that power and not safety values would explain why a particular country permits the police to carry guns, or for teachers to use corporal punishment.

Schwartz (1992, 1990) developed a measure of values that can be considered as a ‘derived etic’ measure. This is because his measure encompasses the CCC findings, Western, and

additional nation specific values based on extensive research. Furthermore, he controlled for meaning equivalence, and demonstrated replicability of his dimensions across samples. Finally, he introduced a measure that could be used for research looking at individual, rather than cultural level phenomena, overcoming one of the main criticisms of Hofstede's framework. Before looking at Schwartz's studies in more depth, the issue of levels of analysis will be discussed below.

### **1.3.2.3.1. Levels of Analysis**

According to Hofstede (2001), values are “a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others” (p. 5). Specifically, values can be defined as “desirable, transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives” (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000, p. 467). The endorsement of values can be reflected in a country's educational system, the media, and government, as much as it is reflected in an individual's choice of job, school, or newspaper. Due to the fact that Hofstede aggregated the 117,000 responses into 40 nation cases (now more than 50), he had highlighted one of the most complex methodological problems in cross-cultural psychology. By using countries as cases, his dimensions represented values at the cultural level. This meant that it would not be statistically valid to link any one of his dimensions to a variable, such as negotiation behaviour, for example, at the individual level. Data obtained from individuals cannot be explained by culture level dimensions. For example, the United Kingdom is an Individualist country but the country score is not representative for all the individuals living in the U.K. It is realistic to think that there will be people in the U.K. with Collectivist values. Thus, to measure the negotiation behaviour of a group of British people, and then explain any phenomena by the fact that according to Hofstede, the UK is Individualist, would be to ignore all those in the group who would have Collectivist values. Hofstede called the explaining of individual level phenomena with culture level dimensions, the “ecological fallacy” (1980, p. 29).

An “[e]cological fallacy was committed when authors interpreted the strong ecological correlations ... as if they applied to individuals” (Hofstede, Bond, & Luk, 1993, p. 485). For example, countries that spend the most money on medicine are also the healthiest, but it is not necessarily true that individuals who spend a lot of money on medicines are also the most healthy. Similarly, the list of low Power Distance countries includes many rich countries,

however, rich individuals are not likely to be non hierarchical – they may actually maintain a strong hand in doing business (Smith and Bond, 1998). Data obtained by researchers from individuals within their societies either describe the characteristics of individual behaviour or are aggregated to one of the many levels of the social system (e.g., accident rates, GNP, or health statistics). One cannot draw conclusions about individuals from data obtained from social systems (Hofstede et al., 1993). Some researchers have linked his dimensions to culture level phenomena. For example, Inkeles (2000) considered to what extent psychosocial characteristics of national populations are stable or variable in relation to income quality, press freedom, and economic growth. Strong correlations between culture dimensions and indicators of the quality of governance and economic performance were found. This type of study is exceptional as many researchers to this day still use culture level dimensions to explain individual level phenomena.

Most social psychological research is based on the observation and measurement of individual behaviour. A reverse ecological fallacy can also occur but is less frequent (Hofstede et al, 1993). The reverse ecological fallacy involves “interpreting data from individual level as if they applied to social systems”, in other words, the researcher treats the social system as “king size individuals” (p. 485). The ecological fallacy is not only relevant to cultures and individuals, but also to organisations. By conducting research where the scores of the members of groups are averaged and used as cases, one is conducting research at that level. For example, new individual level scales of Hofstede’s dimensions have been used to explain productivity, cooperation and empowerment at the team level (Kirkman & Shapiro, 2001), treating each team as one case. In essence, if one is comparing only a few groups, the appropriate level of analysis would be at the individual level since any analysis based on a few cases cannot satisfy statistical requirements (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). To overcome these problems, Schwartz (1992) developed a complex framework for individual level cross-cultural research.

### **1.3.2.3.2. Individual level values**

Schwartz (1992; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990) reviewed the literature on Western and non-Western values and proposed that people had three fundamental needs: 1) biological needs, 2) social coordination needs, and 3) survival and welfare needs of groups. Schwartz’s (1992) framework for individual level research was developed by looking at value content, comprehensiveness,

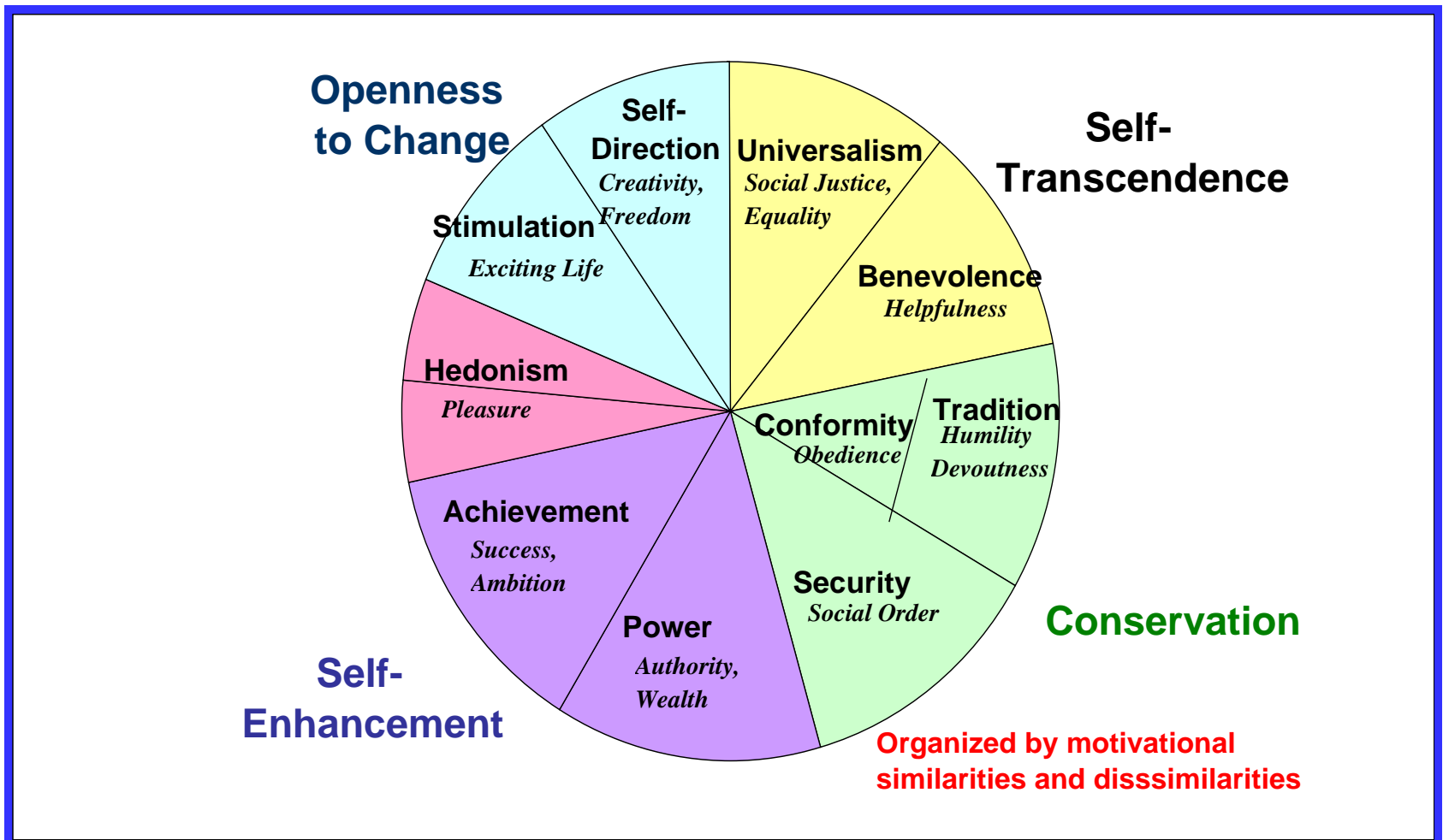
equivalence of meaning and value structure. He concluded that values “are concepts or beliefs”, which “pertain to desirable end states or behaviors”, which in turn “transcend specific situations” and “guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and ... are ordered by relative importance” (Schwartz, 1992, p. 4). Based on research by Rokeach (1973), Schwartz (1992) proposed that “the primary content aspect of a value is the type of goal or motivational concern that it expresses” and that, “[i]n addition to propositions regarding the universal content of values, the theory specific[s] a set of dynamic relations among the motivational types of values. Actions taken in the pursuit of each value type have psychological, practical, and social consequences that may be compatible or may conflict with the pursuit of other value types” (Schwartz, 1992, p. 4).

After modification, the theory identifies ten motivational types of values (see Table 1.4. and Figure 1.1). The value types form a structure that is dynamic (i.e., are correlated to varying degrees) due to their goal oriented content (Schwartz, 1992). Because of this motivational (goal oriented) content, the higher order value types can be structured as two dimensions, which represent conflicts and compatibilities of pursuits by people (Schwartz, 1992). In other words, when a value type is deemed as important and used as a guiding principle in one’s life, it is likely that the opposing value cannot and will not be pursued. The opposing dimensions are: Openness to Change vs. Conservation and Self-Enhancement vs. Self-Transcendence. The value type Hedonism falls in between Achievement and Stimulation due to its duality in meaning: it is focused on the self but not in a competitive or controlling way (Schwartz, 1992), and it also does not represent the same drive and active stance towards self gratification as Stimulation. The value structure should be viewed as a motivational continuum, with the partition lines inserted as convenient boundaries to facilitate understanding, especially in relation to external variables (Schwartz, 1992).

TABLE 1.4. Schwartz's Ten Value Types with Defining Goal and Higher Order Value Membership. (Adapted from Schwartz, 1992).

<b>Value</b>	<b>Defining goal</b>	<b>Higher Order Value</b>
<i>Self-Direction</i>	Independent thought and action – through choosing, creating, and exploring.	
<i>Stimulation</i>	The need for variety and the motivational goal is excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.	Openness to Change
<i>Hedonism</i>	Pleasure or sensuous gratification.	Hedonism may be joined with Openness to Change or Self-Enhancement depending on the sample of one's research.
<i>Achievement</i>	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standard. (Social Esteem at personal level)	Self-Enhancement
<i>Power</i>	The attainment of social status and prestige, and control or dominance over people and resources. (Self Esteem at societal level)	
<i>Security</i>	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.	
<i>Conformity</i>	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.	Conservation
<i>Tradition</i>	Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion impose on the individual.	
<i>Benevolence</i>	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent contact.	Self-Transcendence
<i>Universalism</i>	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of <i>all</i> people and for nature.	

Fig. 1.1. SVS Value Type Structure (Schwartz, 2001).



### **1.3.2.3.3. Structure**

Schwartz (1992) identified 56 values that would represent the value types, and constructed a questionnaire (Schwartz Value Survey (SVS)) in which he asked the respondents to what extent each of the values was a guiding principle in their lives. This format was suggested earlier by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). His sample consisted of teachers and students across countries; Schwartz argues that teachers are a true representation of the values of a country since they pass on values while educating secondary school pupils. The universal applicability of this method was tested by determining whether the values have the same meanings across nations (e.g., does ‘freedom’ mean the same in France as it does in Nigeria?). Schwartz analysed the interrelationship between values by using Smallest Space Analysis (SSA), which is similar to MDS, where the statistical distance between any two values is a measure of their psychological closeness. The results thus show which values cluster together. Schwartz did a separate analysis of the structure of values for each sample from every country and found consistent structure results except for China and Zimbabwe (Schwartz, 1992). Sagiv and Schwartz (1995) carried out tests on 88 samples from 40 countries and found the same circular structure of values in most cultures. These results support the global structural validity of Schwartz’s measure; the data set includes all regions of the world. Recently, Schwartz (2001) reduced the number of values from 56 to 44 values. What remained were those values that consistently fell into the same value-types during all the analyses. For example, ‘friendship’ did not have a universal meaning and it was not used for further analysis.

### **1.3.2.3.4. Variation in endorsement of values: cultural differences**

The structural validity of the measure subsequently allowed Schwartz to map cultural differences by measuring the variation in degree of importance of each value type. Reviewing data from 64 nations, Schwartz & Bardi (2001) found a strong consensus in preferred value types across individuals and societies. Value types such as Benevolence are almost always deemed important, whereas Power is usually scored as less important. It is very likely that this is due to the fact that the former is a socially desirable value type in all cultures. However, “even when value hierarchies are ordered similarly, value ratings may differ meaningfully and reliably” (p. 10). Although average value priorities of samples can be similar, there can be differences in the

degree of importance of each value type. For example, the extent to which Benevolence is endorsed by samples from different countries may vary, despite being ranked as the most important out of the ten value types. Furthermore, this degree of importance of values may change over time. For example, countries currently endorsing collectivist values may become more individualist over time due to globalisation and the domination of certain economies over others. The idea that industrialisation always produces similar modern psychological characteristics was captured in Inkeles' (1983) "Convergence Theory of Modernisation." According to the Convergence Theory of Modernisation, similarity in the structure of modern societies leads to similar value priorities among people in industrialised countries (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). Schwartz and Sagie propose that if one is exposed to industrialised work settings one is more likely to develop Openness to Change type values and reject Conservation type values. This would thus imply that members of industrialised countries would have more consensus about values than people in non-industrialised countries.

#### **1.3.2.3.5. Strength of the measure**

Regardless of the influence of industrialisation of culture, Schwartz's measure of values is robust and reliable and recommended for use in culture studies. The strength of Schwartz's project lies in the thorough sampling, the addition of country samples that were missing in earlier studies (although Arab and African samples are still under represented), and an overall consensus on the meaning of each value.

In sum, Schwartz (1992) presents a tightly argued theoretical basis for his value structure, supported by convincing statistical results based on SSA. Ten motivationally distinct value types were identified, likely to be "recognised within and across cultures and used to form value priorities" (p. 59). Schwartz's framework has incorporated content-based, structural, and dynamic elements, which go beyond describing the specific content of value categories and, instead, "define structural relationships among the categories based on expectations of conflict or compatibility among them" (Lonner & Adamopoulos, 1997, p. 73). According to Schwartz (1994), on the basis of the individual level value types, against the background of common meanings and structure, it is also possible to compare the value priorities of cultures at a cultural level.



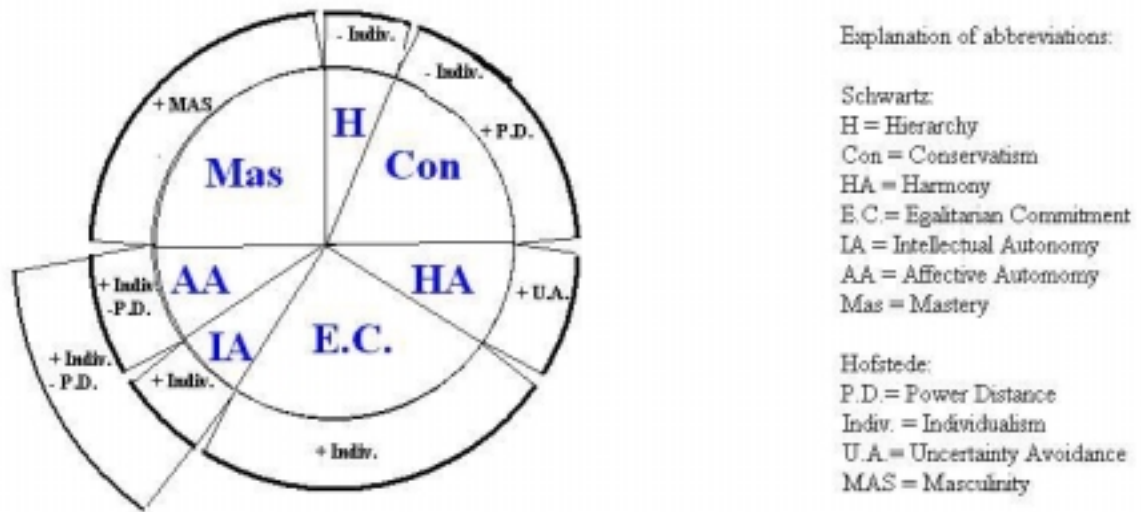
### 1.3.2.3.6. Culture level values

It was mentioned earlier that most social psychological research is conducted at the individual level. However, culture level value models, such as Hofstede's (1980) framework, have had a major influence on the development of individual level value models and are relevant to the present discussion. Step two of Schwartz's research was to identify a culture level value structure by averaging the value scores of individuals and using SSA to compare the structure and distribution of the newly found country scores. Schwartz (1994) found seven culture level value-types: Mastery, Hierarchy, Conservatism, Harmony, Egalitarian Commitment, Intellectual Autonomy, and Affective Autonomy (Fig 1.2.). The model is an enhancement and not a rejection of previous models proposed by Hofstede and CCC, as there is a distinct overlap in dimensions. As Fig 1.2. shows, Power Distance correlated positively with Conservatism, and correlated negatively with Affective Autonomy and Affective and Intellectual Autonomy combined. Individualism correlated positively with Affective Autonomy, Intellectual Autonomy, and Egalitarian Commitment, and correlated negatively with Hierarchy and Conservatism. Uncertainty Avoidance correlated positively with Harmony. Finally, Masculinity correlated positively with Mastery. The fundamental difference between Schwartz's and Hofstede's model is that Schwartz focused first upon individual level analyses within each country separately, thereby constructing a measure which is etically derived rather than imposed.

The seven country-level value types were further summarised into three dimensions: Embeddedness vs. Autonomy (describing the difference between a conservative and restrained approach vs. pursuing intellectual or affective directions), Hierarchy vs. Egalitarianism (legitimacy of unequal distribution of power vs. promotion of the welfare of others), and Mastery vs. Harmony (self assertion vs. harmony with the environment) (Schwartz, 1999). Schwartz found that values that all fall into an individual level value-type may be spread out over two or more culture level value-types (e.g., the values Social Power and Preserving Public Image both fall into Power in the individual level structure, but into Hierarchy and Conservatism respectively in the culture level structure). In other words, even though the underlying content of Individualism relates to Self Direction, Hedonism and Stimulation on the individual level and to Affective and Intellectual Autonomy on a cultural level, the actual values that make up each Schwartz value

type vary on the cultural or individual level. Consider for instance the values Social Power and Social Justice: An individual who values Social Power is unlikely to value Social Justice to the same degree. However, there can be many people who value Social Power and many people who value Social Justice living in one country: the result is a different value structure per level.

Figure 1.2. Circular structure of Schwartz' culture level value-types correlating with Hofstede's dimensions (Correlations at  $P < .05$ , one tailed.) (Schwartz, 1994)



Schwartz's framework is a step forward from the methodology much used by earlier cross-cultural researchers, in which they collect data from several societies, calculate individuals' scores, and then interpret the data, without using a framework identifying whether the cultural differences are actual rather than a mere label of nationality (Lonner & Adamopoulos, 1997). As mentioned before, values measure those aspects of culture deemed important in society, which can subsequently be linked to particular societal phenomena. Schwartz culture level values have been linked to GNP (e.g., Schwartz, 1994), but have also been used to predict role stress (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1999), and to predict sources of guidance used by managers (Smith, Peterson, & Schwartz, 2002). This provides insight to any researcher looking at individual level differences as

well as to the societal level differences that there may be between the samples he/she is exploring.

Through the comparison of Schwartz's culture level structure to Hofstede's dimensions it becomes evident that Schwartz's structure is a "refinement" of Hofstede's work. However, Schwartz' individual level structure may be more useful to social psychologists since most behavioural variables are measured at an individual level. Culture level analyses are only useful if many countries are included since, once summarised, each one counts as only one case; culture level studies usually include an N of 30 or more countries (Hofstede, 1980; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta, in press; Leung, Bond, de Carrasquel, Munoz, Hernandez, Murakami et al., 2002; Schwartz, 1994; Smith, Peterson, & Schwartz, 2002). In order to identify causal links between culture and individual behaviours such as conflict behaviour between just two countries, it is appropriate to use the Schwartz individual level value types. Schwartz (1996) asserts that one value does not necessarily predict one behaviour but a multitude of value types do. For example, 'forgiving', which is part of the value type 'Benevolence' may not predict cooperative behaviour, but the values that make up 'Benevolence' should do (Schwartz, 1996). Recent research has linked individual-level Schwartz value types to environmental behaviours (Corraliza & Berenguer, 2000), cooperation (Schwartz, 1996), and conflict management behaviour (Bilsky & Jehn, 2002; Morris, Williams, Leung, et al., 1998).

#### **2.3.2.3.7. The application of values to conflict behaviour**

Cultures change over time (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Singer, 1987; Smith & Bond, 1998) and it has been suggested that the process of globalisation or 'McDonaldisation' causes cultures to become more uniform (Smith & Bond, 1998). Industrialisation is proposed to produce similar modern psychological characteristics (Inkeles, 1983), which may lead to similar value priorities among people in industrialised countries (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). Not only are industrialised work settings suggested to motivate the endorsement of Openness to Change type values and reject Conformity type values, but members of industrialised countries (such as the Netherlands and Britain) are expected to have more consensus about values than people in non-industrialised countries (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). Furthermore, they argue that value consensus contributes to

social stability as cooperation increases and the probability that violence will be used to resolve a conflict is reduced.

Schwartz (1996) linked the value types to interpersonal cooperation and out-group contact by correlating the 10 individual value types with the type of choice one would make during (a version of) the Prisoner's Dilemma game (bargaining game – see also Chapter 3) and to the type of contact in which people in intergroup conflict would be willing to engage. Results showed that people with Conservation values would engage in non-cooperative behaviour and were not ready for social contact with the other group (out-group). Whereas people with Openness to Change values would opt for cooperative behaviour and readiness for out-group contact. In the present research the Schwartz SVS is proposed as a tool to explain intergroup conflict behaviour differences between cultures.

#### **2.4. A summary**

Culture acts as a basis for forming groups and constructing intergroup relations. With this in mind, it is necessary to define the concept of culture and assess a means of application to research. Culture has been neglected in much psychological research. Unlike society, culture is not an entity to which one becomes a member, but a relatively organised system of shared meanings which involves “the internal constraints of genetic and cultural transmission and the external constraints of ecological, socioeconomical, historical, and situational contexts, with a range of distal to proximal effects within each type of constraint” (Bond & Smith, 1996a, p. 209). These internal cultural constraints (“boundary conditions for behavior” (Poortinga, 1992, p. 13) “limit and shape the behavioral expression of the universal process” (Bond & Smith, 1996, p. 209). Thus, unlike general psychology, (cross) cultural psychology concerns the belief that behaviours vary across cultures due to generations of people living in proximity to each other, sharing and communicating symbolic meanings. Nations are particular groups with shared symbols, which can be represented by values that act as guiding principles in life, which subsequently affect behaviour.

In order to apply culture as a variable in research it was necessary to define a framework that is universal and organised in such a way that it is applicable to most countries but simple

enough for interpretation and ease of use. The work of Hofstede (1980) has been paramount to the process of developing such a framework. Cultural values are a frequently used explanatory framework in cross-cultural research. However, since Hofstede's work, it has been acknowledged that non-western values needed to be included to yield a more universal measure. Furthermore, differentiation between culture level and individual level was required since societal phenomena cannot explain individual level behaviour and vice versa. The individual level Schwartz Value Survey was introduced as a robust and reliable method to measure culture. The next chapter will discuss intergroup conflict and the role of national culture during interactions.

*Chapter 2*

*“... conflict is the primary engine of creativity and innovation. People don’t learn by staring into a mirror; people learn by encountering difference.” – Ronald Heifetz*

**Conflict behaviour between teams: Strategies and Perceived negotiation satisfaction****2.1. Introduction**

Friction in physics is an illuminating analogy to the process of conflict: friction impedes movement and has to be overcome if movement is to take place, but the initiation of movement is impossible without friction, which is therefore essential to movement (Van der Dennen & Falger, 1990). Conflict is an unavoidable aspect of interaction; it takes place within oneself, between friends and family, organisations, and cultures. Social conflict is not necessarily malignant, since it may contribute to the maintenance and cohesion of groups as well as to the cementing of interpersonal relations through reflection and change. The character of conflict is thus neither positive nor negative. Any relationship between individuals or groups necessarily involves competitive as well as cooperative or integrative elements, regardless of the onset or context of the conflict (Deutsch, 1949).

The following chapter outlines the components of intercultural conflict management strategies between managers. Its aim is a detailed analysis of conflict by looking at characteristics (e.g., sources and levels) and a review of various models. The chapter then focuses on conflict management behaviour, which involves particular ‘strategies’ that can lead to a particular outcome. The term strategy is used to differentiate this component of conflict management approach from concerns and communication styles, which have been dealt with as one and the same thing in previous research. The core focus of the chapter is the assessment of the type and number of conflict management strategies that can be used for intercultural negotiation research.

## **2.2. The concept of Conflict**

Over the past decades management research has focused on three alternative views concerning cooperative behaviour within and outside organisations. Some argued that individuals are simply driven by their self-interest (e.g., Smith, 1983) or by self vs. others (e.g., Deutsch, 1949), while others have asserted that individuals' cooperativeness depends on one's cultural value structure (e.g., Hofstede, 1980, 1991), or that cooperation is context dependent (e.g., Griffin, 1987; Rahim, 1992; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). There are many interesting conflict situations that can be studied, and each has its own characteristics that affect the design of the research. In this chapter, the conflict resolution and management literature will be analysed to provide support for a model of the conflict process and its outcome, which is specific to dyadic intercultural team conflict within an organisational setting.

### **2.2.1. Definition of conflict**

Conflict happens “when two or more social entities (i.e., individuals, groups, organisations, and nations) come in contact with one another in attaining their objectives” and the relationship becomes incompatible or inconsistent due to clashing activities (Rahim, 1992, p. 1). People may have attitudes, values, and beliefs that seem incompatible. It could be that the two parties require the same resource, or engage in incompatible behaviours to acquire a goal. As with ‘culture’, ‘conflict’ has many researchers agreeing on the need for the concept but not on the exact definition of the term (Fink, 1968; Tedeschi, Schlenker, and Bonoma, 1973; Thomas, 1976; Rahim, 1992). According to Van de Vliert (1997), conflict is “the cognitive and/or affective experience of discord when at least one of the parties is being obstructed or irritated by the other” (p. 87). However, one can feel frustrated with the other without conflict actually having taken place. Katz and Kahn suggested that “[t]wo systems (persons, groups, organisations, nations) are in conflict when they interact directly in such a way that the actions of one tend to prevent or compel some outcome against the resistance of the other” (1978, p. 613). Rahim (1992, p. 17) dissects conflict by postulating that conflict occurs when two social entities:

1. Are required to engage in an activity that is incongruent with their needs or interests.
2. Hold behavioural preferences, the satisfaction of which is incompatible with another person's implementation of their preferences.

3. Want some mutually desirable resource that is in short supply, such that the wants of everyone may not be satisfied fully.
4. Possess attitudes, values, skills, and goals that are salient in directing their behaviour but are perceived to be exclusive of the attitudes, values, skills and goals held by the other(s).
5. Have partially exclusive behavioural preferences regarding joint actions.
6. Are interdependent in the performance of functions or activities.

In sum, Rahim proposes that “conflict is defined as an *interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities (i.e., individual, group, organisation, etc.)*” (Rahim, 1992, p. 16).

### **2.2.1.1. Conflict and Negotiation – Source of a process?**

The definition of conflict focuses on the confrontational nature of interactions between people. This concept may result in a process of resolution, more often than not through arbitration, bargaining, or mediation; i.e., through negotiation. Gulliver (1979) suggested that “negotiation is one kind of problem-solving process – one in which people attempt to reach a joint decision on matters of common concern in situations where they are in disagreement” (p. xiii). Pruitt (1981) proposed that negotiation on the one hand is a form of social conflict as it involves the defense of opposing positions, and on the other is a form of conflict resolution, “since the roots of the conflict are often examined and rectified during negotiation” (p. 6). He defined negotiation as “a process by which a joint decision is made by two or more parties” (p. 1). Later, Carnevale and Pruitt (1992) described the process of negotiation as involving two or more parties trying to resolve goals that are perceived to be incompatible. Brett (2000) suggested that “[n]egotiation is a form of social interaction [and] ... may be transactional with buyers and sellers, or directed toward the resolution of conflict or disputes” (p. 97/98). In sum, if conflict is the label of a situation, then negotiation is one of the behavioural processes of change.

In terms of subjective experience, “the incompatibilities, disagreements, or differences must be serious enough before the parties experience conflict” (Rahim, 1992, p. 17). There are differences in the threshold of conflict awareness or tolerance among individuals, and sometimes this is a cause of conflict in itself. Furthermore, the intensity or degree of conflict determines the type of management it requires for solving the problem; some issues may be negotiable, others



require a more forceful plan of action or a complete retreat from the (hypothetical) battlefield. Much of the development of a conflict depends on its initial contextual characteristics. Negotiation can be conducted in formal arenas such as international relations, and informal arenas such as interpersonal relations (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993). A negotiation situation involves at least a dyadic interaction and requires the willingness of people to talk, which is a process of conflict management. Bargaining research is associated most typically with negotiation in buyer/seller interactions but it may be argued that most conflicts involve some kind of negotiation, for example in marital arguments, debates on a new project plan, or disputes over government rule, land or natural resources. In the present study, the process of negotiation is assessed as the conflict situation concerns interactions between organisational teams.

### **2.2.1.2. Classifying conflict further**

The impact of constructive conflict management, and its subsequent gains or losses, causes conflict management to be a major topic not only in social and organisational psychology, but also in business management and international relations. Psychological research on negotiation focuses much on the win-lose paradigm, in which two parties usually are required to negotiate to come to a solution by engaging in cooperative or competitive behaviour, or some variation or combination of these.

Most conflict between individuals is solved through simple dialogue and administrative processes. However, a more complex process is at hand when conflicts involve interaction between teams (Blake & Mouton, 1964). "...[O]rganisational decisions ... involve different groups and ... these groups often have sharply diverging agendas, values, perspectives and goals" (Haslam, 2001, p. 179). Usually problems arise if groups negotiate conflicting interests, for example concerning financial rewards (e.g., wages), the territorial ownership of lands or consumer markets, or the responsibility for meeting delivery deadlines (e.g., production vs. marketing). The organisational context provides a wealth of information regarding the conflict process because a scarcity of resources, a set way of 'doing things', and values particular to a department, team or organisation as a whole may cause friction. Recently, research has shown that the outcome of a conflict is not solely dependent on the strategies of the players within the bargaining game; it may be a function of other contextual variables (e.g., Bradford, Stringfellow,

& Weitz, 2001; De Dreu et al., 1997; Gelfand & Dyer, 2000; Leung, 1988; Morris et al., 1998), such as the source (relational vs. task) and level (e.g., interpersonal vs. intergroup) of the conflict. These aspects will be further discussed below.

### **2.2.1.2.1. Sources**

A number of models have been developed to illustrate the dynamics of different types of conflict. Conflict can be seen as a process, with either a beginning, middle, and end (Goldman, 1966), or in stages, from a latent stage to a conflict aftermath (Pondy, 1967). Either approach is further categorised into different forms of conflict, dependent on its origin, between which social entities it is taking place and at what level, and how these entities intend to manage the conflict. Conflict may originate from a number of sources, whose identification may help to understand its nature and implications. Research has identified two main types of sources, i.e., social-emotional or task related, also known as affective and cognitive conflict respectively (Bales, 1954; Cosier & Rose, 1977; De Dreu, 1997; Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954). Affective, psychological, or relational conflict involves conflict between parties due to differences in emotions and feelings (De Dreu, 1997, Rahim, 1992, Thomas, 1976). Cognitive conflict entails a conflict between parties who try to solve a problem and “become aware that their thought processes, perceptions, or judgment policies are incongruent” (Rahim, 1992, p. 20). This should not be confused with De Dreu’s (1997) conception of cognitive conflict issues, which involves a difference of opinion on task related issues such as scarce resources, policies and procedures. Rahim (1992) classifies De Dreu’s description of cognitive conflict within additional sources that he listed: Conflict of Interest, which involves conflict between parties due to an inconsistency in their preferences for the allocation of a scarce resource, and Substantive Conflict, which involves a disagreement on task or content issues. Although these sources are not mutually exclusive, i.e., a conflict can start by being about task related issues and then develop into a personality clash, if subjects are specifically required to deal with an affective or cognitive conflict (e.g., in vignette studies) they do tend to behave differently dependent on the source manipulated (e.g., De Dreu, 1997).

Several researchers have assessed the conflict management process of task vs. relational issues. Jehn, Chadwick and Thatcher (1997) investigated the influence of value congruence and demographic dissimilarity among group members on team productivity and conflict.

Experiments using organisational teams showed that informational demographic differences (education) increased task conflict, while demographic differences (age, sex, nationality) increased relationship conflict. Although some contextual variables may thus have an effect on the level of either task or relationship conflict, whether the conflict itself is concerned with task or relationship may affect behaviour, too. De Dreu (1997) reviewed various positive effects of stimulating and promoting conflict, and several negative consequences of avoiding and suppressing conflict in group and organisational settings. He found that what he calls ‘cognitive conflict’ reduces contending behaviours and enhances Problem Solving, whereas affective conflict involving one’s personal or group identity, norms and values do the reverse. De Dreu concluded that constructive conflict management is a positive function of cognitive conflict, and a negative function of affective conflict. Bradford, Stringfellow, & Weitz (2001) found that “the presence of power differences among team members increases affective conflict but does not significantly increase task conflict” (p. 20). Additionally, as shown in De Dreu’s (1997) study, if the goal of the conflict is the resolution of a relational issue but the course of action taken is confrontation, successful management may be less probable than when the issue was not confronted but avoided. However, it may be that these findings are dependent on other contextual variables. For example, it may be easier to use avoidance if the conflict is between colleagues than between subordinate and a superior. Van de Vliert (1997) summarised the research and concluded that all conflict incorporates task and relationship goals, the latter of which may concern personality issues or status differences.

#### **2.2.1.2.2. Interpersonal conflict due to personality and status differences**

Even if the source of a conflict is strictly task related, personality and hierarchy differences may cause affective friction. Each conflict is played out by different groups of people that are, for example, power related (subordinates vs. superiors), or concern a dispute between different personality types. With regard to personality, empirical evidence provides some insight but results are inconclusive (see also Rahim, 1992). Results from a study by Kilmann and Thomas (1975) show that the four dimensions of Jungian personality are linked to different strategies of conflict handling. For example, extroverts are more likely to opt for compromising or problem solving than introverts. Schneer and Chanin (1987) found that individuals are more dominating if they had a high need for dominance and low need for affiliation, and those with a low need for

dominance and high need for affiliation would opt for obliging instead. If individuals solely have a need for affiliation, Jones and White (1985) found that this correlated positively with a preference for compromising and negatively with a preference for problem solving. Furthermore, they found that deference is negatively correlated with a preference for dominating, whereas aggression is negatively correlated with compromising. However, Bell and Blakeney (1977) and Jones and Melcher (1982) found low correlations between personality and strategies of handling conflict. Jones and White (1985) suggest that the inconclusiveness of personality and conflict research may be due to the complexity of the interaction between personality and behaviour, and that the reasons for using the different strategies vary per personality.

Another typical example of interpersonal conflict would be that of an organisational member with a superior or subordinate (Rahim, 1992). Superiors and subordinates negotiate continuously – their relationship is not a matter of merely giving and taking orders. According to Rahim (1992), an organisation plants “the seed of conflict by allowing different statuses to different people” (p. 90). The measuring of true conflict strategy preferences may be complicated due to a hierarchical filter, which may promote the individual to do what is acceptable rather than according to their true choice of strategy. Confirming what one might expect, Phillips and Cheston (1979) and Van Oudenhoven, Mechelse, & De Dreu (1998) found that superiors tend to use dominating strategies with their subordinates more than with peers or superiors. Furthermore, people who dealt with peers were found to use compromising strategies most. Rahim (1985) found that executives primarily use an obliging strategy with superiors, integrated ideas with subordinates, and compromised with peers. However, significant status differences may be a result of these studies being exclusively dyadic - once several people enter the conflict situation, the effect of status becomes more blurred (Raven and Kruglanski, 1970). Furthermore, research into Japanese and American compliance-gaining strategies found no significant status differences but significant country differences (Ratchford, Baldwin, Imahori, & Kapoor, 2001), indicating again that the variance caused by status may disappear once a group identity such as nationality is entered into the equation.

### **2.2.1.2.3. Intergroup conflict**

Conflicts can take place at four main levels of conflict: Intrapersonal (tasks are mismatched with the individual, which affects performance, usually within the context of work but could also refer to school, society/organisation or even life in general), Interpersonal (conflict between two social units of similar or different hierarchy (e.g., subordinate vs. superior conflict), Intragroup (conflict among members of a group), and Intergroup (conflict between two or more groups, e.g., football supporters, management and labour, national groups). This classification of levels is based on the level of the conflict when it commenced, since several levels may coincide at some point (e.g., intergroup conflicts may cause an intragroup disagreement) (Rahim, 1992). According to Van de Vliert (1997), intergroup conflict qualifies as interpersonal conflict because “a group cannot experience discord and cannot display conflict behaviour” (p. 7). Van de Vliert argues that individuals can act on behalf of a group to represent that group’s view, but there is no group conflict behaviour as such. However, social identity research has shown that there is more to a group than the sum of its parts.

A group of individuals may converge their thoughts into a group goal or approach to a conflict, which has proven often to be more rigid than individuals’ ideas (e.g., Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1982). In a seminal paper, Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood and Sherif (1961) presented conflict behaviour between two seemingly very similar groups of young boys. The 22 boys were split into two groups, given a group name, and therefore, a group identity, and were required to perform tasks and competitions. The results were very interesting: competition between the two teams was fierce, at times aggressive, and the boys were completely devoted to the group to which they were randomly allocated. In Sherif et al.’s (1961) study, only a superordinate goal (the two groups had to cooperate to get food), would diminish the aggressive competition between the groups. Other researchers have replicated Sherif’s research design, and some studies showed that competition would not occur at all (Tyerman & Spencer, 1983), or that even a superordinate goal would not enhance group relations to the extent that aggressions were so severe that the experiment had to be terminated (Diab, 1970).

Sherif’s findings have been very influential on bargaining and negotiation research in general, providing a baseline for game theory and the underlying process of bargaining. For

example, research has shown that during competitive games, such as the Prisoner's Dilemma game, two pairs of individuals are more competitive with each other than two single individuals (McCallum, Haring, Gilmore, Drenan, Chase, Insko, & Thibaut, 1985). Furthermore, the decisions made with group consensus are more competitive than decisions made by individuals even when these individuals represent the group (Insko, Pinkley, Hoyle, Dalton, Hong, Slim, Landry, Holton, Ruffin, & Thibaut, 1987). These findings suggest that group membership enhances competitive behaviour (Insko, Schopler, Hoyle, Dardis, & Graetz, 1990). Based on Tajfel et al.'s (1971) research on minimal group paradigms, organisations are advised to *downplay* the psychological salience of group membership for teams involved in conflict (Haslam, 2001). Alternatively, Haslam (2001) argues that successful conflict management stands or falls with the acknowledgment of group dynamics "within the framework of a shared superordinate social identity" (p. 181), suggesting that teams in conflict can resolve differences if they would view each other as part of a larger group trying to solve the problem. However, "relationships between groups are not exclusively competitive" (Caddick, 1982, p. 150) and may also be affected by mutual interdependencies or concerns. The famous 'Summer camp' studies by Sherif and his colleagues (1961) also inspired later competition theories by Blake and Mouton (1962), whose work is covered in section 2.3.3..

#### **2.2.1.2.4. Group processes in conflict**

Overall, in-group/out-group behaviour is at the core of conflict research as it describes the underlying process of the conflict. "When intergroup conflict of win-lose orientation occurs, competition among members within each group is reduced and the groups become more cohesive. The group members tend to conform to the group norm more and they become loyal to the group. [A]n increase in the intergroup conflict may reduce intragroup conflict ... This encourages groupthink [concurrency seeking tendencies of a group], which may lead to ineffective problem solving. ... The two groups fail to see the similarities in their solutions and see only the differences between their solutions. ... [T]he ingroup members [may believe] that their solutions are superior to the outgroup's" (Rahim, 1992, p. 121). The more intense the conflict, the more likely parties are to be caught in a win-lose battle, and the less likely the conflicting parties will resort to problem solving strategies to make decisions about their disagreements, nor is there room for compromise (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Rahim, 1992).

The crux of the complexity of intergroup behaviour is that individuals would like to be seen to some extent as individual cases<sup>3</sup> (liked for their personality, appreciated for their skills) but at the same time their behaviour is moderated by the group. This behaviour, in turn, is perceived by another group during interaction, and it is unlikely that this group will view all the individuals independently. As mentioned before, people in large groups lose some sense of their personal identity and take on a stronger sense of their social identity. Another specific dimension of intergroup behaviour is that people become more interdependent. The importance of interdependence of fate was introduced by Lewin (1948), and although minimal group paradigm research showed that even randomly created groups display favoritism for their own group, a common goal will invariably strengthen a group's cohesion. The following sections will discuss research on cooperation and competition and their link to goal interdependency. As will become evident, goal interdependency is core to conflict management strategy theory.

### **2.3. Cooperation vs. Competition: Goal interdependency.**

Deutsch (1949) developed Lewin's ideas further and introduced the cooperation and competition theory. According to Deutsch's (1949, 1973) goal interdependency theory, conflict either benefits or is detrimental to decision making depending on whether people in conflicting groups perceive positive or negative goal interdependence. Positive interdependence refers to conflict issues that involve a perceived positive relation between the attainment of one's own and the others' goals, i.e., a mutual gain orientation. For example, a conflict between teams may be about a price. The seller can maintain the price (e.g., for a product), but add in some benefits (e.g., provide the technical machinery required for the product). This way the buyer does not receive a monetary discount but one that may be calculated into free technical machinery for example. In the case of negative interdependence, conflict issues involve a perceived negative relation between the attainment of one's own and the others' goals, i.e., a win/lose orientation. For example, two parties may have a dispute over land, so that if one obtains it the other

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<sup>3</sup> It is appreciated that some people are more collectivist or interdependent in their orientation, by which the group consensus is important to them. However, it is suggested that despite this, the group is sometimes perceived as more cohesive than its individual members would believe it is. Written correspondence with the individualist respondents of the present study has indicated exactly that: the managers expressed concern about having to assess their team's behaviour due to individual differences within the group.

automatically loses. Most conflicts can be placed somewhere in between the two extremes; they are “non-zero-sum games” or “mixed-motive” conflicts (Rahim, 1992, p. 19), which are part of a larger process, described in terms of the Gaming Theory (Von Neumann & Morgenstern, 1944), exemplified specifically by the Prisoner’s Dilemma game (Luce & Raiffa, 1975).

Deutsch (1973) and Tjosvold (1998) approached individual differences in conflict behaviour by distinguishing two major and one minor motivational orientation towards conflict: competitive vs. cooperative orientation, and an individualistic orientation. Most conflicts are a mix of the three types of interdependence. Depending on a person’s concern for oneself or other people, he or she either engages in competitive (concern for oneself), cooperative (concern for other and self), or individualistic (no concern for either) behaviour. ‘Individualism’ or ‘independence’ occurs when one group “has an interest in doing as well as it can for itself and is unconcerned about the welfare of the other” (Deutsch, 1994, p. 14). This description, however, could also apply to ‘competitive’. Deutsch actually concluded that the ‘independence’ or ‘individualistic’ dyad “will move toward mutual cooperation or mutual competition depending upon which is favored by external circumstances and situational facilities”, eventually rejecting ‘individualism’ as a goal orientation, since it could be grouped with either cooperation or competition. (Deutsch, 1994, p. 15). Analyses provided by Johnson, Johnson, & Smith (1991) reflect this dichotomy: ‘individualism’ shares some common ground with cooperation in that rewards (e.g., profit) are potentially unlimited, in contrast to competition where rewards are limited. Kuhlman and Wimberley (1976) and McClintock and Liebrand (1988), however, have shown that cooperation and competition are in fact not the only available strategies for interacting, and confirmed the third value that Deutsch (1949) had proposed but then rejected, which represents a lack of concern for either, later formulated as avoidance by Thomas (1976). The cultural subjectivity of the underlying motivations of strategies, specifically Avoiding, will be discussed in more depth in section 2.4.2. First, the process of cooperation vs. competition will be analysed further, before introducing models describing multiple conflict management strategies.

### **2.3.1. The process of cooperation vs. competition.**

The process of cooperation and competition can be summarised as follows: In situations of positive interdependence, the actions of others towards their goals directly benefits the in-



group's goal attainment and under such conditions the out-group will be motivated to cooperate with and help these others, will also tend to like them and the group as a whole will be propelled towards its goal. In situations of negative interdependence the in-group will be more motivated to compete with others, will like them less and the overall group force in the direction of the goal will be lessened. Deutsch (1949, 1994) tested these hypotheses and found that groups that worked under conditions of positive interdependence were more cooperative, integrated their ideas, communicated more, and liked each other more than groups working under negative interdependence. Despite methodological flaws, these findings have been largely confirmed by later research (cf. Brown, 1988; Tjosvold, 1998). Much research has focused on this single dimension: competition vs. cooperation. Empirical evidence has indicated that people who perceive others to be positively interdependent engage in constructive conflict management leading to effective decision-making outcomes, whereas negative interdependence evokes destructive handling of conflict (Tjosvold, 1998). Advocates of this approach have created a dichotomy between cooperation ("good") and competition ("bad") by implying that cooperation has an antithesis, competition, and that only open discussion in a cooperative environment generates desirable outcomes (e.g., Deutsch, 1949; Tjosvold, 1998). Research testing Deutsch's theories has usually been set in laboratory contexts, whereby participants are required to bargain for a scarce source, often money, while the influence of, for example, communication, values, or conflict management strategies is observed (e.g., Beersma, 2002; Drake, 2001; Kern, Brett, & Weingart, 2001; Kim & Kim, 1997; Orbell, van de Kragt, & Dawes, 1988; Sally, 1995; Schei, 2001; Valley, Thompson, Gibbons & Bazerman, 2002).

The interchangeable occurrence of competitive vs. cooperative behaviour during one conflict may result in conflict management strategies that are a combination of both extremes. For example, Thompson and Hastie (1990) found that student subjects usually expect that the other party's interest is opposed to their own during bargaining experiments. Subjects learned that an accurate perception of the other may result in higher pay offs, especially if the learning took place early on during the negotiation. A concern for both oneself and the other may thus lead to better negotiation performance. Schei (2001) found that negotiators reach higher personal results when they have a cooperative rather than individualistic goal orientation, and when they negotiate with a cooperative opponent rather than with an individualistic opponent. The majority of research has found that positive interdependence is necessary for an effective outcome

(Barker, Tjosvold, & Andrews, 1988; Deutsch, 1949, 1973, 1994), which has had a profound impact on manuals for successful business negotiations (e.g., Fisher et al., 1991).

### **2.3.2. Methodology of cooperation vs. competition studies**

Bargaining studies have been criticised particularly for methodological reasons. Many bargaining studies use business students as subjects, which may not be representative of the conflicts that take place between teams in organisations. Although the experimental context enables the researcher to control for any confounding influences, the game setting does not provide an insight into one's own or the opponents' behaviour during 'real life' conflicts. For example, Nauta, De Dreu, and Van Der Vaart (2001) found that one's social value orientation and organisational goal concerns affect interdepartmental problem solving behaviour. Once confounding variables, such as culture and context, come into the equation, bargaining research has generated mixed results (e.g., De Dreu, Weingart, & Kwon, 2000; Schei, 2001; Tinsley and Pillutla, 1998). Further development of the field required a closer look at the influence of contextual variables, and therefore, at the completeness of the theory as originally proposed by Deutsch.

Research has expanded from the simple competitive-cooperative behaviour dichotomy by looking at a multitude of conflict behaviours and incorporating social concerns, as well as to assessing the mediating influence of contextual factors (e.g., Blake and Mouton, 1964; Thomas, 1976; Rahim, 1983abc; Van de Vliert, 1997; Van Lange & De Dreu, 2001; Beersma, 2002). Going back to the drawing board, researchers not only looked at the underlying processes that motivate individuals or groups to choose to behave competitively or cooperatively but also worked towards a model of a multitude of conflict management strategies expanding from the cooperative/competitive dichotomy. The development of models of conflict management strategies will be discussed in subsequent sections.

### **2.3.3. Blake and Mouton's (1964) Managerial Grid**

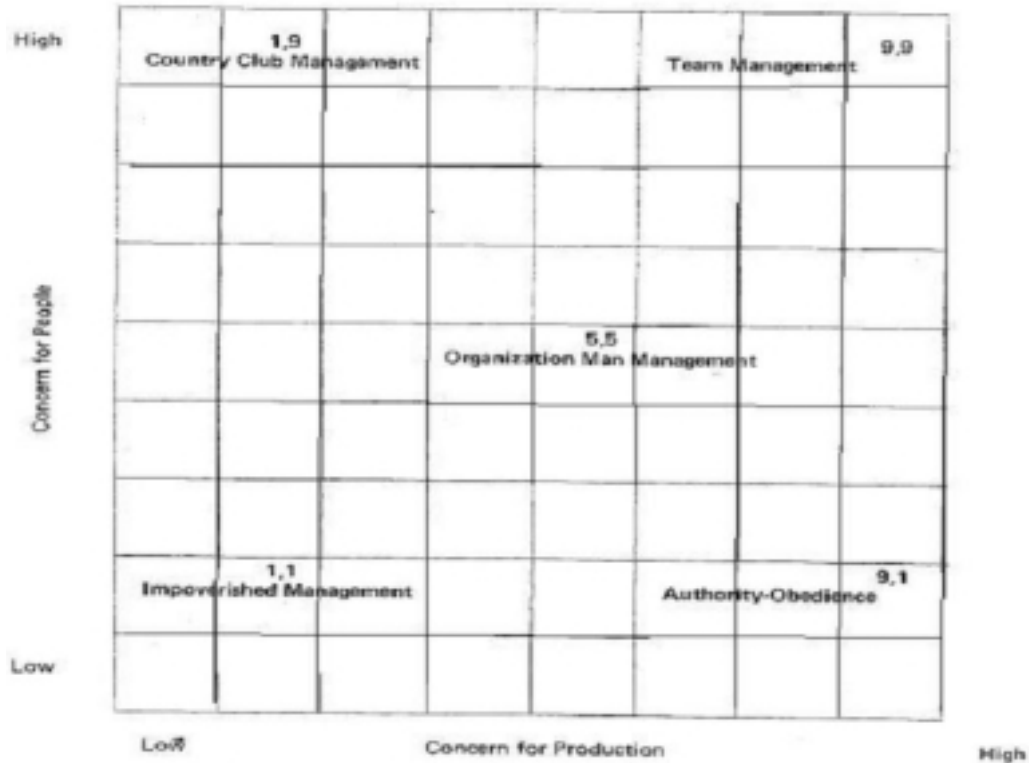
The goal orientation of self vs. others became the focal point of conflict management research. Blake and Mouton (1964) approached the dichotomy from a leadership perspective, looking at

how managers would balance a concern for people with a concern for production. Blake and Mouton (1964) introduced the 'managerial grid' as a way to measure and assess leadership styles (see Fig. 2.1). Their work has been the core to many studies looking at either leadership or conflict. The particulars of the managerial grid will be discussed below, as the grid approach has been applied to many other conflict management models. Subsequent focus will be on Thomas' (1976) process and structural conflict models. Blake and Mouton's and Thomas' models laid the ground work for conflict management typologies, which are the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

### **2.3.3.1. Independence vs. Interdependence: A matrix of conflict management.**

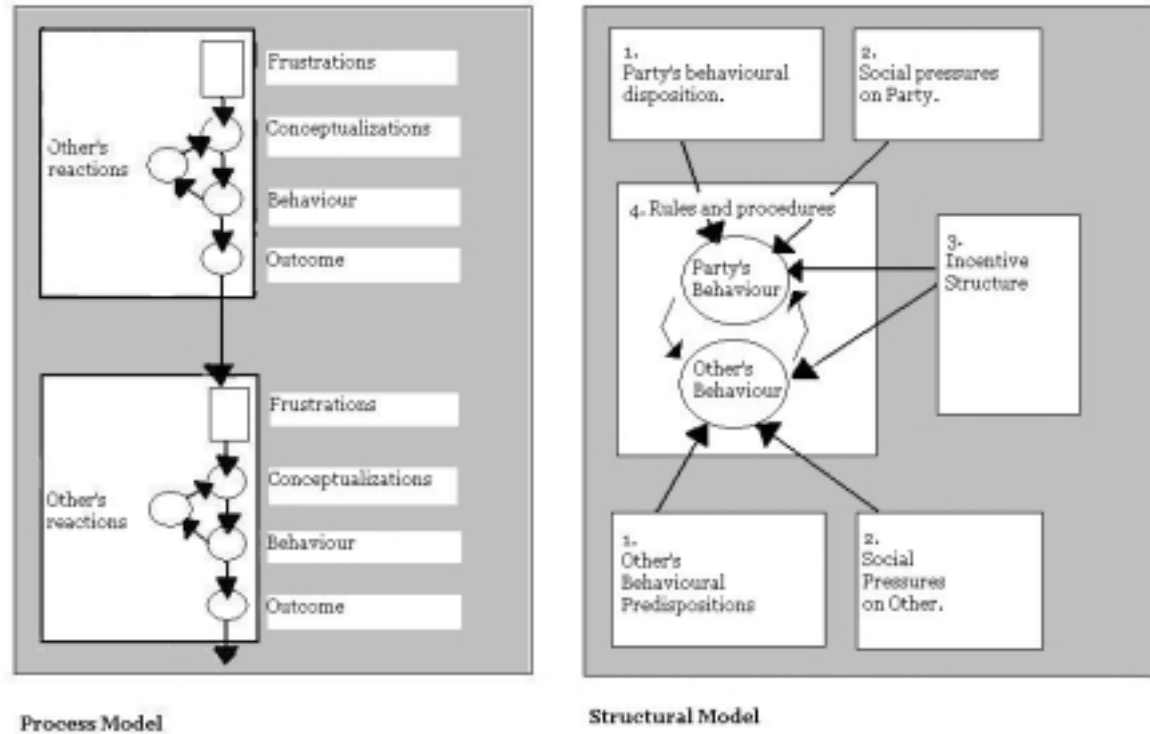
The grid plots different leadership styles along two axes, each on a nine-point scale, with one being the lowest and nine being the highest score. The vertical axis relates to the individual's concern for people and relationship, or "P" score. The horizontal axis plots scores for an individual's concern for production, or "T" score. After completing the eighteen-questions on the Leadership Questionnaire, each individual is rated with a two digit score: (P-Score, T-Score). According to Blake and Mouton's model, the most effective leaders show high concern for both task and people orientations. Such leaders believe that people need to be committed to their work, and interdependence created through a common goal and a stake in organisation purpose leads to relationships of trust and respect, which would score a (9,9) on the scale. The most ineffective leaders would receive a score of (1,1), which refers to leaders who believe that exertion of minimal effort to get required work done is appropriate to sustain organisation management. A leader whose score is (1, 9) feels that thoughtful attention to the needs of people for satisfying relationships leads to a comfortable, friendly, organised atmosphere and work tempo. The opposite of this style has a score of (9,1). These leaders believe that efficiency in operations results from arranging the conditions of work in such a way that human elements interfere to a minimal degree. The mid-point score of (5,5) represents leaders who feel that adequate organisation performance is possible through balancing the necessity of productivity while maintaining morale of people at a satisfactory level (Blake and Mouton, 1964).

Fig 2.1 Adapted version of Blake and Mouton's (1964) Managerial Grid.



The managerial grid has been tremendously influential on conflict research. Thomas (1976), Rahim (1983a, 1983b) and Van de Vliert (1997), among others, used it as a basis for their work on conflict management theory and empirical research. Thomas (1976) introduced a measure of conflict based on the grid theory for the first time. In his extensive review on conflict research, it was highlighted that the research had been divided by the way researchers review conflict: some focussed on the behavioural process during a conflict, whereas others emphasised the context and mediators surrounding conflict. Accordingly, he proposed two main models of dyadic conflict: the process model and the structural model, which are complementary to each other. The two models will be described below to illustrate the applicability of the five-way typology of conflict management strategies (See Fig. 2.2).

Fig. 2.2 Thomas's (1976) Process and Structural Models (Adapted from Thomas, 1976).

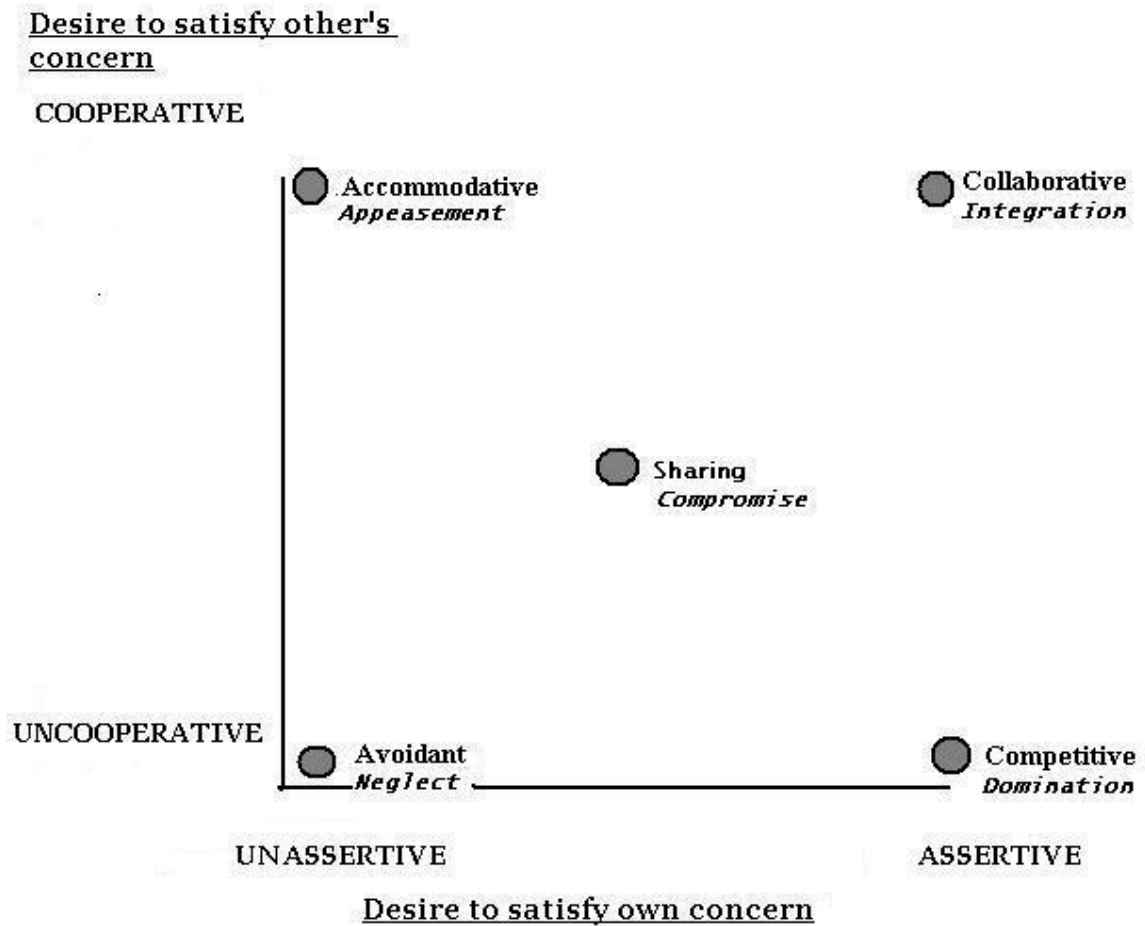


### 2.3.3.1.1. Process Model

The process model focuses upon “the *sequence of events* which transpire within a conflict episode” (p. 926), and consists of five stages: frustration, conceptualisation, behaviour, the other’s reaction, and outcome. By identifying events, frustration may occur when an individual perceives their goals, beliefs, and/or attitudes as incongruent with those of another individual or group. These identified events may influence following events, which require conceptualisation of behaviours. Conceptualisation is the cognitive appraisal of what is perceived as causing this level of frustration. The behaviour selected for handling the conflict is influenced by three factors: the degree of concern for oneself and/or the other party, the insight into all underlying concerns, and the severity of the issues. The knowledge of behaviour and its effects could help direct interaction toward a desirable outcome. The final stage of the process model involves the outcome of the conflict, which comprises either a satisfactory resolution or continued emotional distress. Research that assesses conflict according to the process model would focus on singular

events and subsequent behaviour and would be applicable to the assessment of particular conflict situations. Thomas applied Blake and Mouton's (1964) managerial grid to the process model and suggested that the degree to which one would like to satisfy one's own concern and the degree to which one would like to satisfy the other's concern is a basis for the categorisation of one's orientation. There are five orientations, i.e., avoidant, accommodative, competitive, sharing and collaborative, and each of these is associated with a different preferred outcome, i.e., neglect, appeasement, domination, compromise, and integration respectively (see Fig. 2.3). The avoidant orientation reflects an instance of withdrawal and indifference as there is no concern for either oneself or the other. The accommodative orientation also reflects a lack of concern for oneself, but a high concern for the other, resulting in appeasement. The competitive orientation represents the desire to win at the other's expense and is referred to by Blake and Mouton (1964) as "win-lose power struggles". The sharing orientation is intermediate between appeasement and domination, which would result in incomplete satisfaction for both parties. Finally, the collaborative orientation represents a desire to integrate both parties' concerns through Problem Solving. The organisation of the concerns and the orientations in a matrix such as described above, has been adapted by many researchers as will become evident in the remainder of this chapter. The process model is applicable to a short-term, crisis management situation. Systematic changes and a long-term approach are discussed in the section on the structural model below.

Fig. 2.3 Five conflict handling orientations plotted according to desire to satisfy own and other's concerns. (Adapted from Thomas, 1976).



### 2.3.3.1.2. Structural Model

Thomas' structural model focuses on the underlying conditions of a conflict. First, the parameters (or conditions) influencing conflict behaviour need to be identified. These parameters are suggested to be fixed or slow changing. In order to assess the context of the conflict, the form of the influence needs to be identified. The contextual mediators of the structural model involve four types of social pressures. Constituent pressure involves the evaluation of whether a conflict is a group or personal matter, and whether the group has a communal goal that is

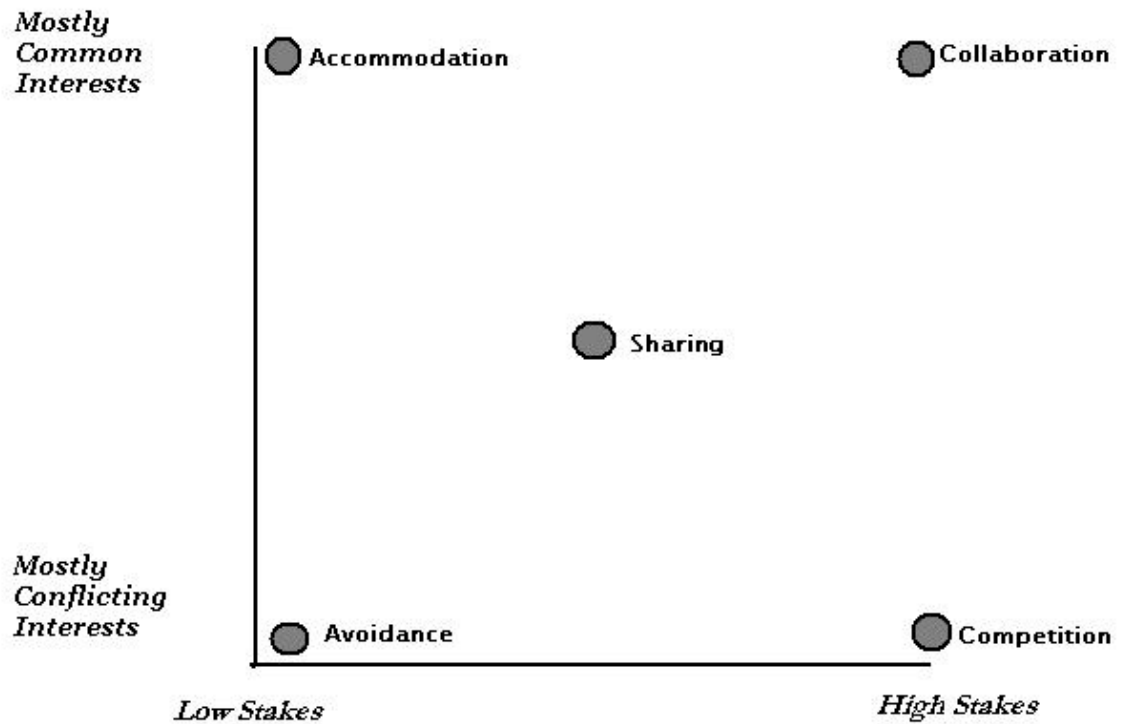
opposed to the other group's goal. Secondly, ambient social pressure refers to organisational or cultural values that affect the structure of the conflict. Incentive structure is the third social pressure, which reflects a concern for self or a concern for the other, but this is dependent on whether the parties have high or low stakes, and whether or not there is a conflict of interest. Rules and procedures also create social pressures that generate different types of conflict behaviour. Formal rules may obstruct creative thinking and fuel black and white thinking, which in turn handicaps problem solving behaviour. Negotiation procedures require trust and fact finding to serve a problem solving strategy, whereas a formal stance during the negotiation may generate competitive behaviour. Finally, arbitration and mediation may result in problem solving behaviour during a conflict when this is done in a consultative and integrative manner but it could result in competitive behaviour if the arbitration or mediation is seen as unfair.

Similar to Blake and Mouton's grid and Fig 2.3., score combinations reflecting how much is at stake and whether there is a conflict or communality of interest generate a five-way typology of conflict strategies (see Fig. 2.4.). For instance, a conflict of interest combined with high stakes would generate competitive behaviour; whereas communality of interest and high stakes generates collaborative behaviour. Figures 2.3. and 2.4. thus only differ in the underlying measurement (i.e., concerns vs. stakes and common interests).



Fig. 2.4 Predominant conflict-handling behaviour as a function of stakes and aggregate conflict of interest in a relationship (Adapted from Thomas, 1976).

**Conflicting vs. Common Interests  
in Relationship**



**Party's Stakes in Relationship**

The structural model thus has a long-term focus that involves systematic changes in conflict-handling behaviour. The process model describes a conflict crisis and is relevant to managing an ongoing system. The two models are complementary and reflect the different perspectives of conflict research, since “structural variables constrain and shape the process dynamics, while knowledge of the process dynamics helps one predict the effects of structural variables” (Thomas, 1976, p. 894). While the process model of conflict is concerned with the subjective realities that determine conflict behaviour, the structural model describes the objective

realities of the situation. The latter recognizes the pressures and constraints upon the parties, which results in a mixed use of behaviours during the negotiations. The main focus of subsequent studies has been on a typology of conflict management strategies, which was based on the Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid and has been adapted into, among others, the Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument (MODE) (1974), the Rahim Organisational Conflict Inventory (ROCI-I and II, 1983b,c), and Janssen and Van de Vliert's Test of Conflict Handling DUTCH (1996), each of which has been applied in survey format to people just after bargaining experiments or as part of a larger survey on conflict behaviour.

The present research is an example of a process analysis of conflict, combined with an assessment of the contextual mediators as described under the structural model, that may affect conflict management approaches and subsequent outcomes. Specifically, the study is mainly concerned with self reports of *behaviour* and *perceived behaviour* during conflict. The conflict management styles that categorise this behaviour are those that come into play in the behaviour stage of the process model. Nevertheless, the contextual mediators of the structural model are also assumed to play an important role in the assessment of conflict episodes. As described under the process model, Thomas (1976) proposed that different strategies can be used in different circumstances, in that different strategies are used during one conflict in a sequential fashion ('if A fails, then B'), and that this is also dependent on ability. For instance, if one is creative one is more likely to use an innovative strategy such as problem solving. However, strategies are also believed to be a function of one's underlying contextual mediators, which are, according to Thomas' theory, part of an ongoing structure and long-term focus. This suggests that varying processes of intercultural conflict may be assessed on the basis of this one common component, i.e., culture, which can be considered as one of the broadest social contexts in which conflict can occur (Carnevale, 1995).

The following sections will review the five-way typology as proposed by Blake and Mouton (1964) and further developed by Thomas (1976), Rahim (1992), and Janssen & Van de Vliert, (1996). These studies shall be discussed in more detail, explaining the properties of each strategy and assessing alternative approaches to the five-way typology based on further empirical research. Furthermore, the specific role of culture will be assessed in relation to general conflict research and its influence to the use of conflict management strategies.

## 2.4. Conflict management strategies

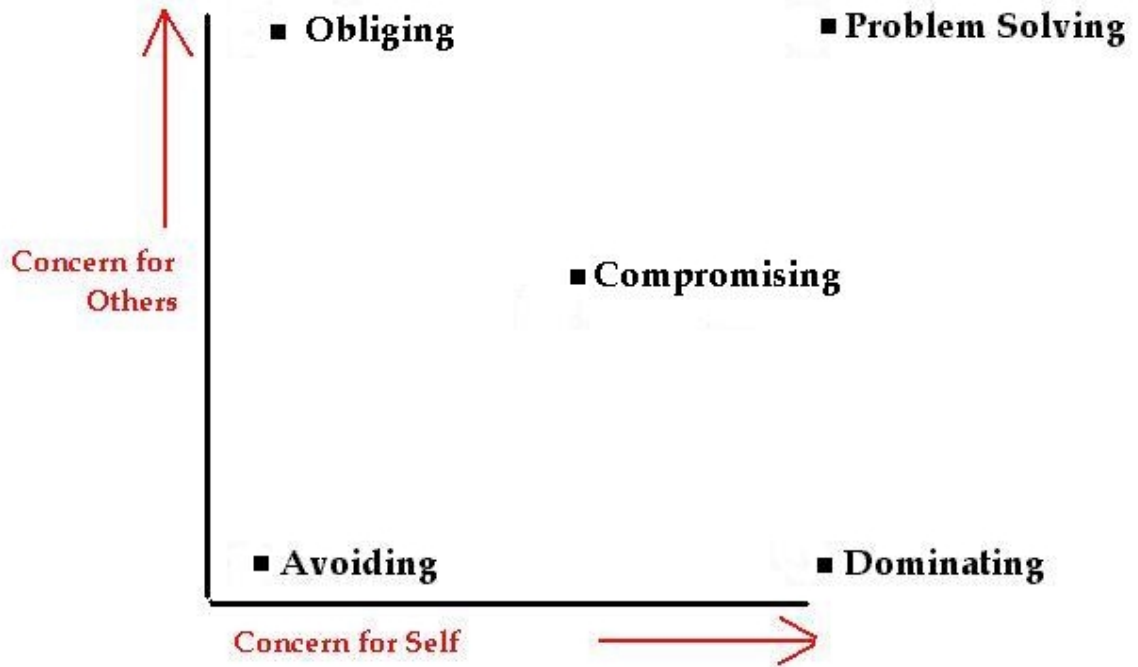
Since one can handle a conflict situation in several ways, usually by engaging in some kind of cooperative or competitive behaviour, or a combination of the two, many researchers have addressed the issue of the ultimate number of conflict management strategies. Many different labels have been introduced for intrinsically similar strategies, essentially describing the same concept. In the present research they are referred to as conflict management *strategies* in order to distinguish them from the communication styles that will be described in the next chapter.

The confusing mixture of labels requires specific explanation, using the labels of Blake and Mouton as a guide (see table 2.1). Like Blake and Mouton's (1964) and Thomas' (1976) matrix, the strategies for handling conflict are a combination of a person's concern for self and concern for others, which portray the motivational goal orientations of a given individual during conflict (Rahim, 1992). Taken from Rahim (1983ab) the five strategies of conflict management used in the present study are: Problem Solving strategy (high concern for self and others), Obliging strategy (low concern for self and high concern for others), Dominating (high concern for self and low concern for others), Avoiding strategy (low concern for self and others), and Compromising strategy (intermediate in concern for self and others) (See Fig 2.5).

TABLE 2.1 Conflict Management Strategies labels.

<b>Researcher(s)</b>	<b>Conflict Management Strategies</b>				
<b>Deutsch (1949)</b>	Competitive	Cooperative		Individualist	
<b>Blake &amp; Mouton (1964)</b>	Country Club Management	Team Management	Organisation Man Management	Impoverished Management	Authority Obedience
<b>Thomas (1976)</b>	Competitive	Collaborative	Sharing	Avoidant	Accommodative
<b>Rahim (1983b, 1992)</b>	Dominating	Integrating	Compromising	Avoiding	Obliging
<b>Janssen &amp; Van de Vliert (1996)</b>	Fighting	Problem Solving	Compromising	Avoiding	Accommodating

Fig. 2.5. Rahim's (1983bc) Conflict Management Matrix based on the Dual Concern Model.



Problem Solving involves open exchange of information and an assessment of the issues at stake to reach a solution acceptable to both parties. Dominating is also known as competing and concerns a win-lose situation, whereby the Dominating individual opts for the use of his/her power to impose his/her will. Ohbuchi and Takahashi (1994) define Avoiding as “refusing both overt recognition of a conflict and engagement in any active action toward its resolution” (p. 1347). Avoiding is also known as suppression. It involves withdrawing from or ignoring the conflict. The Avoiding person is unconcerned with the issues and parties involved in conflict. Obliging is also known as accommodating, which entails one party trying to satisfy and obey the other party. Finally, Compromising involves a give-and-take approach. This strategy is often confused with Problem Solving, but whereas Problem Solving involves cooperating to find a mutually acceptable (new) solution, a compromising person does not explore the issues in the depth necessary for the development of new solutions. As Thomas (1976) suggested, the five strategies can be organised according to an integrative and a distributive dimension. Dominating vs. Obliging strategy would be the poles of the latter dimension, whereas Avoiding vs. Problem

Solving would make up the former dimension. Sharing represents the cross point of the two dimensions. The amount of satisfaction of the concerns perceived by both parties is thus represented by the integrative dimension. The distributive dimension represents the amount of satisfaction of the concerns perceived by one of the parties (concern for self *or* concern for others).

The theoretical basis of the five-way typology rests strongly upon the premise that conflict behaviour is the result of a combination of a concern for oneself and a concern for the other. Although five strategies fit well into the model, many researchers have found different numbers of strategies, particularly if other contextual variables are taken into consideration. The remainder of this chapter will focus on culture as a contextual variable in particular.

### **2.4.1. Alternative Approaches**

Despite the strong convergence of conflict management models, other researchers have proposed an alternative number of strategies. Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim (1994) defined four strategies of handling conflict (problem solving, yielding, contending, and inaction) that are very similar to the five strategy typology except that they exclude compromising. Rahim (1992) and Van de Vliert and Kabanoff (1990) argue that to ignore compromising is to omit an independent conflict management strategy: compromising (give and take) is something different from collaborating (finding the next best alternative). Furthermore, there is little empirical evidence to back the four-strategy typology (see also Rahim, 1992).

Horney (1945) described three conflict management strategies on the basis of her clinical research on neuroticism. They involve a differentiation between passively moving away, actively moving towards, and moving against people. Putnam and Wilson (1982) presented a similar approach by looking at nonconfrontation, solution orientation, and control. Rahim's ROCI is viewed as mainly a conflict measure which has incorporated communication, whereas the OCCI (Organisational Conflict and Communication Inventory) by Putnam and Wilson (1982) is a communication measure focused on conflict situations. The fact that this measure is more communication focused becomes evident through the description of the communication styles: Solution-oriented: to resolve conflict by solving the problem; Non-confrontational: to avoid

conflict or elude the issue; Control: to deal with conflict by arguing or using non-verbal messages to emphasise demands. The role of communication in conflict research will be further discussed in chapter Four. A main criticism of Putnam and Wilson's work is that the findings are data driven. Rahim (1992) calls the three-strategy design "an artifact of Factor Analysis" with no theoretical basis. In his thorough review of the literature and research Van de Vliert (1997) emphasizes the dual concern model, but distinguishes between conflict models that favour a dichotomy such as cooperation-competition, trichotomies such as non-confrontation vs. negotiation vs. competition, a four-part typology, or a five-part typology, and concludes that there is no 'right' number of behavioural components since this depends on the empirical project of the researcher.

#### **2.4.2. Criticism of the dual concern model**

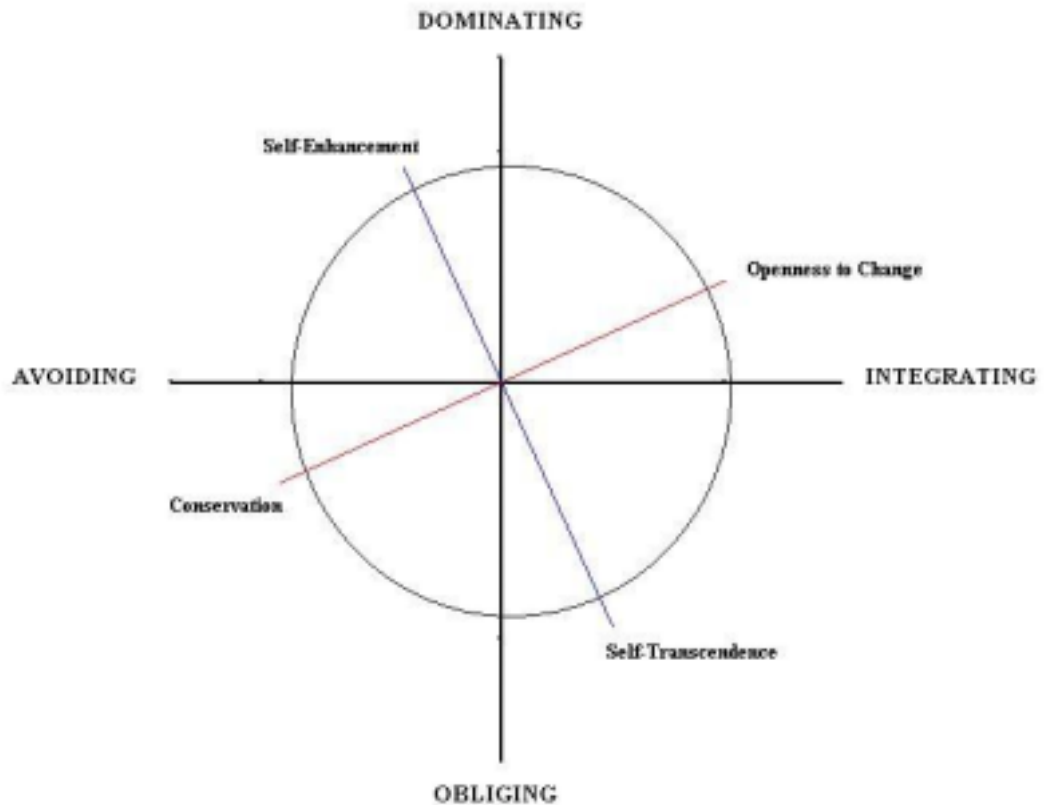
The dual-concern models have received some substantial criticism. Lytle and Rivers (2001) argued that "the traditional two-by-two of concern for self and concern for other may not be adequate to model and describe the reality of conflict handling behaviour and styles across cultures" (p. 10). They further suggest that dimensions such as negative/positive, active/passive, indirect/direct, conceding/taking, avoid/confront may have an important place in broadening the theory underpinning conflict behaviour. Moreover, despite the strong theoretical model underlying the five-typology matrix, empirical research has showed that only the strategies within the trichotomy are often found to be clearly distinguishable from each other (Bell & Blakeney, 1977; Fitzpatrick, 1988; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Putnam & Wilson, 1982; Ross & DeWine, 1988; Schaap, Buunk, & Kerkstra, 1988; Walton, Cutcher-Gershenfeld, & McKersie, 1994; Weider-Hatfield, 1988; Wilson & Waltman, 1988). Obliging and compromising are often seen as part of Problem Solving strategies and would be particularly difficult to distinguish from each other if participants are asked to rate the out-group's behaviour. In fact, Rahim (1992) has indicated that inexperienced employees may have difficulties distinguishing between Compromising and Problem Solving. Moreover, he points out that, in case of measuring perceptions of other people's strategies, "it has been found that when a person (observer) is asked to predict [conflict] styles, the factor structure of the conflict styles is substantially altered. Factor Analyses of these data from observers on styles loads on three instead of five factors. The integrating, obliging, and compromising styles are lumped into one factor", particularly in the

case of a subordinate rating his/her superior (Rahim, 1992, p. 33). It can furthermore be argued that obliging, i.e., yielding to the other's concerns, in general is not a conflict management style as such, since if one obliges, conflict would not occur in the first place.

In a study linking organisational culture and individual values, Bilsky and Jehn (2002) found that the Rahim conflict styles overlap considerably with Schwartz's (1992) higher order value types. However, as is shown in Fig. 2.6., the Schwartz higher order value types cannot be superimposed exactly onto the Rahim conflict styles matrix. In their discussion of the findings, Bilsky and Jehn (2002) proposed that "the opposing poles of the respective dimension, Self-Transcendence and obliging (i.e., low concern for self and high concern for others) do not perfectly match with respect to common features. This is so because an Obliging conflict style is not only characterised by an orientation towards Self-Transcendence in terms of Schwartz's theory, i.e., Benevolence and Universalism, but towards Conformity and Security as well. These later values are typical representatives of the conservation pole of the second basic value dimensions" (Bilsky & Jehn, p. 221/222). Similar considerations were suggested with respect to the interrelation between openness to change vs. conservation, in that integration may be a combination of a benevolent and innovative disposition. The association of Avoiding with Schwartz value types was found to be more complicated. Avoiding represents withdrawal from a threatening situation, which is opposed to Self-Direction and Stimulation, but the link with Conservation is less pronounced, according to Rahim's theory.

If the collectivist motivation for avoiding is considered, avoiding can be explained by Conservation, as this higher order value type correlates negatively with individualism (see Chapter 1). Avoiding has been found to be preferred by more collectivist cultures due to the harmony seeking and face saving values that are profound within these societies. According to the goal or concern model, Avoiding involves a low concern for self and for the other. However, such passive involvement is not descriptive of collectivist values. The interpretation of Avoiding may vary between countries (i.e., for one culture it may represent concern for neither the self or others, whereas for other cultures it may reflect harmony maintenance); this makes the theory not universally valid. The underlying motivations of the conflict management strategies, such as Avoiding, may vary per culture. A further discussion of the universal validity of the dual concern model is presented below.

Fig. 2.6. Hypothesised relation of higher order value types (Schwartz, 1992) and conflict styles (Rahim, 1983abc). (Adapted from Bilsky and Jehn, 2002).



It could be the case that people in general have a goal to resolve a conflict effectively, and in harmony with the other person or team, regardless of their cultural value preferences. Some may find that the best way to achieve this goal is via problem solving strategies, while others may prefer alternative procedures. Early on, Leung (1987) proposed that different cultures can desire a certain goal to the same extent but that the road towards this goal may differ. Rather than a lack of concern for self or other, conflict avoidance may actually be particularly motivated by a concern for the relationship with the people involved regardless of nationality (e.g., De Dreu, 1997; Gire & Carment, 1992; Leung & Bond et al., 1992; Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Morris et al, 1998; Ohbuchi & Takahashi, 1994), but with the motivation showing cultural variation. In other words, to what purpose is the relationship saved – harmony with others or saving one’s own face? One may avoid a confrontation because one does not like arguing and



likes to keep things pleasant, just like one may avoid to maintain harmony in order to avoid loss of face of the other person. Either reason may be explained by cultural values. Research has established why collectivists may avoid by linking Avoiding to values describing a Conservation orientation. The reason for the (lack of) Avoiding in individualist cultures has, however, not been assessed in such depth. This issue will be further discussed in the next chapter on communication as in the present study it is proposed that a lack of Avoiding is linked to a concern for Clarity and a need for direct communication due to higher levels of Uncertainty Avoidance and a need for consensus.

### **2.4.3. Conflict and culture**

Before cultural frameworks were available for research, cross-cultural studies were criticised for the lack of explanatory models for variance. As discussed in the previous chapter, the introduction of value measures enables researchers to qualify conflict phenomena that are observed. Additionally, cross cultural conflict research has highlighted the weakness of the dual concern model, due to the high ratings of collectivists for Avoiding, a conflict style previously associated with a low concern for self and others, which is not representative of collectivist values.

Any group identification becomes more profound when opposed against another group of individuals that are not categorised to be part of one's in-group (Singer, 1987). In order to understand the other group and manage conflict during interaction effectively, it is important to learn of their perceptions, attitudes, and values, as well as their cultural language (Singer, 1987). In a study looking at in-group bias between children from different cultures, Wetherell (1982) found that, when different cultural groups of children were asked to allocate rewards to the other group, "both groups showed ingroup bias but Polynesian children moderated their discrimination, displaying greater generosity to the outgroup and a preference for maximum joint profit rather than the establishment of maximum difference in favour of the ingroup. New Zealand/European subjects behaved in much the same way as English children suggesting that the Polynesian vs. New Zealand/European response differences found in this experiment are the product of a non-Western value system" (p. 220-221). Thus all groups showed in-group bias but results indicated a difference in the way this was expressed. The results Wetherell obtained

were suggested to be due to normative cultural differences. However, as Brown (1988) indicates, such a conclusion has two main shortcomings, in that “normative accounts need to be able to predict in advance which of a number of norms will predominate in any particular situation [and secondly,] normative accounts are by their nature too general and over-inclusive” (p. 226). At the time of Wetherell’s study and Brown’s criticism, cultural frameworks to explain behaviour were not well applied. The introduction of culture as an explanatory variable and the subsequent required methodologies have come a long way since and much of the more recent conflict literature concerns intercultural comparisons.

#### **2.4.3.1. A cultural perspective on negotiation: A model by Gelfand and Dyer (2000).**

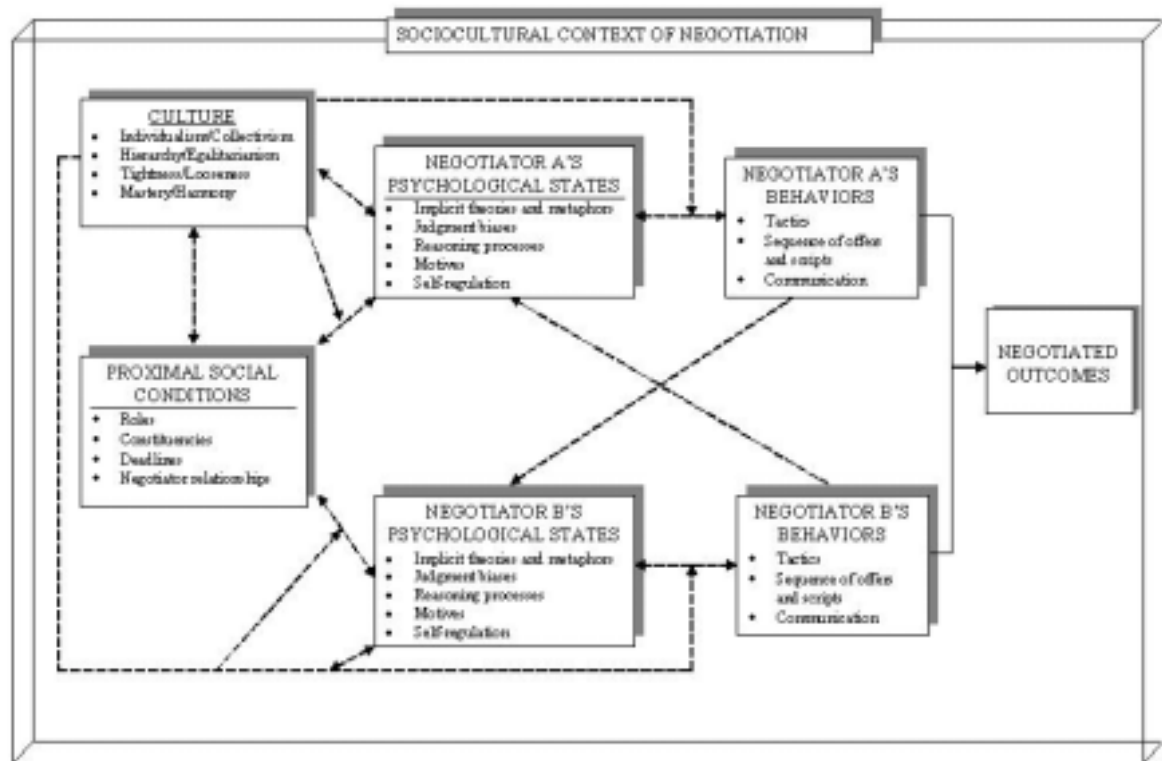
Values are a guiding principle in one’s life and function as goals, which have a motivational content (Schwartz, 1992, 1994). These affect the concerns people have in a conflict situation: the underlying concerns that affect the strategies adopted to bring the conflict to a satisfactory solution. The outcome of the negotiation is further determined by the behaviour of each team, which is expressed through conflict management strategies and communication. The model developed by Gelfand and Dyer (2000) represents the influence of culture on a negotiation situation between two parties (see Fig 2.7.). This model incorporates contextual variables, cognitive and social factors, additionally to the view of the other, which makes testing all of it in one study virtually impossible. However, the model was not intended for this purpose as such, since Gelfand and Dyer (2000) reviewed the literature to try and come to a more complete model for intercultural negotiation situations in general.

Gelfand and Dyer propose that the key aspects of the model are the negotiator’s ‘psychological states’ and that “culture is operationalised on a variety of specific value dimensions” (p. 76). These two aspects are proposed to have a direct effect on each other, which is consistent with Lewin’s (1935) theory and the culture theory; stipulating that the behaviour is a function of psychological events and that culture affects the psyche (Gelfand and Dyer, 2000). Empirical researchers, however, have used the geographical location of their sample as a surrogate for culture and have ignored the psychological processes (e.g., motives and cognitions) that are involved in intercultural negotiations. Gelfand and Dyer (2000) further suggest that research has examined only a limited number of proximal situational conditions in

negotiations across cultures. Therefore, understanding of the moderating effect of culture on negotiation is limited.

Gelfand and Dyer (2000) highlighted four specific culture-level dimensions to explain intercultural negotiation behaviour. Individualism/Collectivism was proposed to represent differences in aspects such as in-group vs. out-group orientation and the degree of self vs. other orientation. Hierarchy/Egalitarianism was proposed to represent differences in power distance related issues such as status and the effect of roles (buyer/seller). The dimension of Tightness/Looseness was proposed to represent differences in efficiency such as a dependence on formal rules and coordination. Finally, the Mastery/Harmony dimension was proposed to represent a difference in competitive goal orientation such as achievement vs. adaptability. Each dimension is thus related to particular conflict management issues and will result in different conflict management strategies. For example, high Mastery cultures are likely to be focused on winning and therefore will revert to tactics such as threats and warnings. Gelfand and Dyer (2000) concluded that interculturally, people construe identical situations differently and pursue different goals, which makes it difficult to coordinate and achieve a high quality agreement. The explanatory merit of cultural values will be further discussed in the next sections.

Fig. 2.7. Towards a more dynamic and psychological framework (Gelfand and Dyer, 2000).



#### 2.4.3.2. Intercultural conflict : Value differences

Since conflict is sometimes new and almost always ambiguous or anxiety-provoking, it is expected that group, or cultural, values concerned with these emotions will affect behaviour during intergroup conflict interaction between cultures. “Managers from cultures with different value profiles are likely to espouse different constellations of strategies for negotiating conflict” (Tinsley, 2001, p. 585). Leung (1997; Leung and Chan, 1999) reviewed the cross-cultural negotiation literature and proposed that the differences in intercultural negotiation behaviour are particularly profound with regard to reward allocation and distributive behaviour. He suggested that this may be due to value differences but values are affected by cognitive factors such as differences in probability judgements, time perception, attribution, and styles of persuasion, and normative factors such as differences in initial positions, nonverbal concessions, communication style (e.g., directness), among others. Leung (1997) concluded that “cultural dimensions have an impact on a set of mediating variables and that it is these variables that are direct determinants of the behavior in question” (p. 668). Similarly, Gelfand and Dyer (2000) proposed that culture

affects the expectations and interpretations of the environment, which is thus expected to have an effect on the dynamic interplay between negotiators' behaviour and subsequent perception of these behaviours by each party involved. Cultural values thus create a social environment that encourages people to use some behaviours over others. Similarly, those conflict management strategies for which assumptions fit with one's cultural values will be used more than others.

#### **2.4.3.3. Defining strategies by values: A criticism of the research**

The model presented by Gelfand and Dyer (2000) was designed to highlight pitfalls in the literature, i.e., the use of geographical location as a surrogate for culture, the fact that psychological processes are ignored, and the focus on a limited number of proximal situational conditions. One pitfall of their model, however, is its focus on culture-level dimensions, which complicates analysis at an individual level (see chapter two section 1.3.2.3.1.). The way their model is presented, it cannot be applied to the present research. It may be that Gelfand and Dyer (2000) used cultural level labels for individual level phenomena (for example 'I/C' is confusingly used at both levels), but this is mere speculation.

Furthermore, for a model to be universal, it requires firm agreements on the categorisation of strategies as competitive or cooperative. Leung, Bond, Carment, Krishnan and Liebrand (1990) investigated the effect of cultural femininity on conflict management by comparing The Netherlands (feminine) and Canada (masculine). They predicted that Dutch subjects would prefer harmony-enhancing procedures (e.g., arbitrating, mediating, negotiating, and complying) more and confrontational procedures (e.g., threatening, accusing, ignoring, and falsely promising) less than Canadians. These findings were confirmed, but they also found that Canadians were more likely to give in but less likely to ignore a conflict than were the Dutch. Ignoring was hypothesised to be a confrontational procedure, and the authors thus concluded that ignoring was a "feminine way of resisting and confronting" (p. 385). However, in the dual concern model 'ignoring' or 'Avoiding' is described as a passive strategy. Furthermore, the I/C literature has classified it as typically collectivist. In addition to their confusing use of terms, Leung et al. (1990) did not use a cultural measure to check for the levels of femininity within the Netherlands and Canada, but assumed these based on scores published by Hofstede (1980).

Gire and Carment (1992) obtained their I/C scores from a measure which has not been widely tested when looking at the influence of a cultural value dimension (I/C) on conflict management with regard to harmony-enhancing procedures (e.g., mediation and negotiation) vs. competitive procedures (e.g., arbitration). In this study, arbitration was thus categorised as a competitive rather than harmony-enhancing strategy. They deliberately chose to work with samples other than from Asia vs. U.S.A., and instead opted for Nigeria (collectivist) and Canada (individualist) to test the universality of previous studies. They found that Canadian subjects had a clear preference for negotiation (proposed to be a 'collectivist' strategy) and that Nigerians subjects scored equally high on negotiation and arbitration. The issue that comes to the fore here is, if there is no agreement on classifications, then how can one make intercultural comparisons?

These examples are an indication not only of the subjectivity of the terminology used in the studies but also the variation in allocation of conflict strategies as 'typically' Individualist or Collectivist. The confusion of conflict strategies is further complicated by their correlations with different value dimensions. The difference between cultural femininity and collectivism has been misunderstood frequently throughout the literature (see for review Hofstede, 1998). Collectivist individuals have been found to be focused on face-saving and harmony seeking behaviour in general (e.g. Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1988), but this characterisation should be applied to in-groups in particular (see for review Leung & Chan, 1999). For example, the Japanese are found to use more controlling (i.e., competitive) strategies with out-group members and conflict avoidance with in-group members (Ting-Toomey, 1992). Femininity, too, is focused on harmony or pleasant atmosphere (e.g., in the work environment), and on interpersonal cooperation. But whereas femininity is concerned with a quality of relationship (work in order to live, nurturing environment) and describes a quality of life style, collectivism is a group affiliation issue. Furthermore, the Schwartz (1992; 1994) individual level values that describe femininity are represented by Universalism and Benevolence – value types usually endorsed globally (Schwartz, 2001), not by feminine countries only.

#### **2.4.3.4. A summary: The incorporation of culture in conflict research**

In sum, the problem may thus be the universal validity of the measures that are applied in conflict research. The goal interdependency model is based on a western way of thinking, but if used within different national cultures, the items will be interpreted in a way that may differ from that originally intended by its Western creators. This underlines the importance of the emic/etic distinction discussed in the previous chapter: items used for global research are required to be universally applicable and interpretable. Furthermore, if contextual factors such as relational vs. task source are considered, avoiding may be universally preferred as the most effective strategy. Finally, interregional differences are not picked up if questionnaire items describing Avoiding are written in ways that focus on a particular concern for the other (e.g., Kim, 1994) or lack of concern for all (e.g., Rahim, 1992), as these may be representative of collectivism or individualism respectively. The importance of underlying motivations for the use of conflict management strategies, particularly in cross cultural studies, is also due to the possible insight they provide in explaining conflict outcomes.

#### **2.5. Intergroup conflict: Is effectiveness the goal?**

As mentioned in chapter one, conflict may be both functional and dysfunctional. “It is functional to the extent to which it results in better solutions to problems or effective attainment of individual, subsystem, or ... objectives that would otherwise not be possible. ... The relationship between conflict and ... effectiveness approximates an inverted-U function. Whereas too little conflict may lead to stagnation, too much conflict may lead to confusion and ... disintegration” (Rahim, 1992, p. 137). Too little conflict may result in lack of creativity, and too much conflict may cause rigid thinking, and both can cause further conflict situations in themselves. The complexity of conflict, due to, for example, its source, level, or context, warrants a more detailed look at conflict outcomes as well. If the source is relational, the conflict outcome may be more concerned with harmony than effectiveness, and when the context is intercultural, self and other perception become important aspects. The differentiation between effectiveness (success) and comfort, and perception of the other team will be discussed in the section below.

Although there is a plethora of research into conflict management and outcome effectiveness, no winning formula has been identified and outcome effectiveness may be a function of several factors. The dual concern model only describes a general difference in self and other interest. Likewise, Face theory suggests that preserving one's own face or the other's face is the main goal during conflict (see also section 3.4.4.). However, Kim's Conversational Constraints theory suggests that these face goals are opposed to an interest in Clarity and effectiveness (see section 3.4.5.). The following sections outline the argument that it is important to consider both effectiveness and relational aspects when assessing the outcome of a conflict.

### **2.5.1. Is an integrative approach the solution to conflict?**

The predominant idea in the conflict management literature has been that positive interdependence is necessary for an effective outcome (Barker, Tjosvold, & Andrews, 1988; Deutsch, 1949, 1973, 1994). However, such conclusions are not culture sensitive (Leung, 1987; Tinsley & Pillutla, 1998) nor do they take into account the possibility of confounding variables such as context (Schei, 2001). Looking specifically at goal interdependency, Schei (2001) found that negotiators reach higher individual results when they have a cooperative rather than individualistic goal orientation, and when they negotiate with a cooperative opponent rather than with an individualistic opponent. However, results depended on the conditions of the conflict situation, in that group context and knowledge of the other party's orientation improved outcomes for those with an individualist goal orientation. Furthermore, it was found that goal orientation had no effect on satisfaction. Jehn, Chadwick and Thatcher (1997) found that value content dimensions (i.e., innovativeness, stability, orientation (toward detail, outcome, reward, or team), aggressiveness, supportiveness, and decisiveness) affected conflict outcome and satisfaction. Detail and outcome value orientations increased objective performance; outcome, decisiveness, and stability orientations increased perceptions of high performance; and both decisiveness and supportiveness orientations increased satisfaction of group members while a team orientation decreased individual member satisfaction. Therefore, before even taking into account other contextual or mediating variables, the reality of goal interdependency is a little more complex than the dual concern model suggests.



The functionality of different strategies has been researched to find out which strategy contributes to organisational effectiveness. The Problem Solving approach is often cited as the most beneficial, since it benefits all parties involved and reduces stress (Rahim & Buntzman, 1990; Fisher, et al., 1991; Friedman, Tidd, Currall & Tsai, 2000). Burke (1970) found that Problem Solving related to effective management, whereas Avoiding and Dominating related to ineffective management, which was supported by Likert and Likert's (1976) research. Kuhn and Poole (2000) also found that groups that developed problem solving type conflict management styles made more effective decisions than groups that used dominating or avoiding type styles. However, other results showed that Problem Solving strategies are linked positively to satisfaction, but not to organisational performance (Aram, Morgan, and Esbeck, 1971). Furthermore, a Problem Solving strategy alone is not necessarily the best strategy to cope with a conflict if it concerns de-escalation (Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994), or if the conflict is about a relational or emotional issue (de Dreu, 1997). Avoiding is generally viewed as the second most favorable strategy, especially in intercultural conflicts (Leung, 1988). Furthermore, Bradford, Stringfellow, & Weitz (2001) concluded that "the use of conflict management behaviours can either offset or exaggerate the negative impact of conflict on team outcomes"(p. 20), since they found that competitive strategies had a positive main effect on task performance, whereas compromising had a positive main effect on the creativity of the team solution and satisfaction of the team members. Tinsley and Pillutla (1998) found that North American subjects preferred Problem Solving but Chinese subjects preferred equality procedures, and concluded that the preferred conflict management strategy for one country may not work for the other. Hence Problem Solving behaviour, like any other strategy, may generate Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction for one party but dissatisfaction for the other in cross-cultural negotiations. Furthermore, the findings by Burke and Likert and Likert may be due to the Western background of their samples.

Rahim (1992) proposed that the effectiveness of any strategy depends on the circumstances of the conflict. Problem Solving requires time, a mutual interest and a complex issue, whereas Dominating and Avoiding are better strategies in case a simple matter needs resolving and a quick decision is required. The dilemma with effectiveness research concerns multiple criteria of evaluation. The conclusions drawn by researchers and self reports from respondents are, after all, subjective judgements. It needs to be established what qualifies as a

true measure of effectiveness. An evaluation of post conflict events depends on issues such as mutual gain vs. investment and long-term benefits. Actual effectiveness expressed in, for instance, monetary value, would require long-term research.

### **2.5.2. Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction: A duet of comfort and success**

One way of assessing outcome effectiveness is to make a differentiation between success and well-being, conceptualised in the present study as Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction. Rated success of a meeting can be considered as an indication of immediate effectiveness. Well-being is a description of a person's comfort during and after the conflict which may be a good indicator of cooperation in the future, depending on whether the parties felt the mood was good, whether they were comfortable in each other's presence, and whether they approached the conflict in a 'them vs. us' approach. A conflict can have a successful outcome, but may have been uncomfortable for both parties. Conversely, a team may not have been successful in achieving a solution at the end of the negotiation, but felt comfortable during the interaction, which may lead to further cooperation. Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction can serve as an overarching term for outcome success and comfort. Well-being in particular concerns the interaction with others, as the perception of others' behaviour affects our own. By asking respondents about their perceptions of the other group's well being and success, a comparison can be made of the extent of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction when one group's ratings of in-group and out-group is compared with another group's ratings.

## **2.6. Intercultural conflict**

As previously discussed, in- and out-group differentiation can be considered fundamental to conflict. During a negotiation one is likely to feel partial to one's in-group regardless of one's cultural background. Turner (1980) suggested that intergroup discrimination as a function of social categorisation is mediated by a blend of in-group favoritism and 'fairness'. Brewer (1979) found that the achievements of the in-group are seen as superior to those of the out-group, and in-group behaviour is deemed socially desirable. Furthermore, it is well-known that in-group members or products receive more favourable ratings than equivalent out-group stimuli (Brewer, 1997; Brown, Tajfel, & Turner, 1980). If one's own team's behaviour is perceived as more

favorable than the other team's behaviour, it is likely that this affects interaction. Furthermore, the subjective nature of 'favourable' and 'socially desirable' outcomes may be problematic, since what is desirable according to one group may not be qualified as such by another. These issues will be discussed below.

### **2.6.1. Intercultural perception**

Expectations of other's behaviour are strongly linked to one's own behaviour in social dilemmas (e.g., Dawes, McTavish, & Shaklee, 1977; Schroeder, Jensen, Reed, Sullivan, & Schwab, 1983; Van Lange and Liebrand, 1989), in that individuals who expect others to cooperate, cooperate more themselves, and those who expect others not to cooperate, cooperate less themselves. These findings amplify the importance of intergroup perception in conflict research. Brett and Okumura (1998) had found that intercultural negotiators were less happy and satisfied after negotiations than intracultural negotiators. Intercultural negotiators may be less motivated to integrate and learn the needs and goals of the other group and this may be due to in-group and out-group differentiation (Adair, Okumura, and Brett, 2001). This will be further enhanced by cultural differences in collectivism and individualism, since people within collective cultures have been found to cooperate with the in-group, but compete with the out-group (Triandis, 1989).

Self-reported behaviour is subject to cultural bias that may be left undetected if only assessed from the in-group's point of view. Socially desirable behaviour is allocated to the in-group (e.g., Turner, 1981). Due to findings indicating that benevolent and universal values are globally endorsed, it is not surprising that positive interdependence, cooperative goal, and Problem Solving strategies are viewed as the best solution to conflicts (e.g., Fisher et al., 1991). Even if one could pose that effective self reported conflict management behaviour is a function of in-group vs. out-group differentiation, differences in behaviour could still occur due to cultural value differences. If the interaction involves different national cultures, some socially undesirable behaviour in culture A may be desirable in culture B. For example, culture A may endorse values which motivate a person to use Problem Solving strategies to resolve a conflict, whereas culture B's values motivate more Avoiding behaviour to achieve the same goal. Culture A would most likely claim that their in-group is more Problem Solving than the out-group, whereas culture B would claim that their in-group is more Avoiding than the out-group. Both

cultures thus discriminate the in-group from the out-group. However, since the socially desirable behaviour is not the same in both countries, a cultural difference exists. Intercultural conflict appears thus to be more complex than the identification of a truly universal formula for successful conflict resolution.

## **2.7. A summary**

Conflict has been reviewed as both a positive and negative process in that it can generate creative solutions, but also cause break-down of communication. Conflict can be categorised according to type (e.g., personal vs. group) or source (e.g., task vs. relational). Thomas' (1976) structural and process model of conflict introduced the dual concern model specific to conflict situations. Conflict research has been mainly derived from Game Theory and has focused on the process of underlying conflict management strategies. Based on empirical findings it was proposed that all conflict management involves a mixture of independent and interdependent orientations. Linked with these orientations, yet contradicting the original dual concern model theory, cross-cultural conflict research has been primarily oriented towards individualism vs. collectivism. Results have shown that Western strategies focus on problem solving and Eastern strategies involve more face-saving, avoiding strategies with the in-group, yet Eastern cultures may be more competitive with the out-group. The theoretical premise that Avoiding is an expression of a low concern for self and the other does not represent the collectivist values with which it is associated in the intercultural conflict literature.

Furthermore, regional variation warrants a careful approach to generalisations. Conflict theory is based on the premise that independent or interdependent concerns or goals result in competitive or cooperative behaviour, linking these to (un)successful outcomes. However, intercultural conflict studies provide support for the criticism presented here that this theory may not be universally applicable. Intercultural conflict research has focused on the premise that cultural differences in preferences for particular strategies explain the complexity of successful outcomes. This would imply that if two groups endorse the same strategy, a successful outcome is likely. However, empirical research has shown that within cultural clusters (e.g., Europe) conflict still occurs and requires further assessment. Such fine-tuning of conflict phenomena can be achieved by separating the components that make up strategies by looking also at underlying

concerns and communication styles. Differences in the extent to which individuals endorse cultural values and therefore vary in their conflict management behaviour is furthermore expected to lead to a difference in success rate and comfort, i.e., Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction. It is expected that the previously all incorporating conflict management strategies are influenced by conversational constraints (concerns), and expressed through communication styles and that it is thus beneficial to analyse these components separately. The latter two components are discussed in the following chapter.

*Every country has its own way of saying things. The important point is what lies behind people's words. F. Starke*

## **Intercultural Communication: Conversational concerns and communication styles**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The number of interactions between people from different cultures has greatly increased due to the increase in world population and the advances in technology (Frederick, 1993; Mowlana, 1986; Samovar & Porter, 1994). The fact that technological developments and the world population have grown at an exponential rate implies that related aspects, such as the number of personal interactions, have also increased in frequency (Stevenson, 1994). Many people communicate with others from different cultures for a short while, for example, tourists, businesspeople, governmental and university visitors, or for a longer period, e.g., expatriates, overseas students, voluntary workers, refugees, immigrants, locals interacting with visitors (Argyle, 1982). Communication between people varies on a number of contextual dimensions: the length, the nature of the relationships between people, the topic, and the way people speak, among others. “Difficulties of social interaction and communication arise in several main areas: (1) language use, including forms of polite usage; (2) non-verbal communication: uses of facial expressions, gesture proximity, touch, etc.; (3) rules of social situations, e.g., for bribing, gifts and eating; (4) social relationships, within the family, at work, between members of different groups; (5) motivation, e.g., achievement motivation and for face-saving; (6) concepts and ideology, e.g., ideas derived from religion and politics” (Argyle, 1982, p. 76). Therefore, developing competence in everyday use of verbal and nonverbal codes can be a major challenge to intercultural communicators.

Several researchers have claimed that the culture of a person influences communication style (e.g., Gudykunst, 1998; Hofstede, 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1999a; Matsumoto, 1990). However, to an equal degree, “communication behavior is the primary vehicle for the active creation and maintenance of cultures” (Davenport Sypher, Applegate, & Sypher, 1985, p. 17). “The relationship between culture and communication ... is reciprocal. ... Understanding

communication on any culture ... requires culture general information (i.e., where the culture falls on the various dimensions of cultural variability) and culture specific information (i.e., the specific cultural constructs associated with the dimension of cultural variability)” (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 44/45). For example, two cultures can both be qualified as ‘collectivist’, but one may emphasize the family, whereas the other may focus on groups that are not family related (e.g., professional, hobbies, political groups) (Gudykunst, 1998). Through the cultural context of symbolic meanings communicative acts can be more accurately interpreted.

Communication between people can be seen as the user interface or front-end of culture, which, according to Hofstede (1991), is “the software of the mind” (p. 4). Cultures can be viewed as dynamic meaning systems, and people help construct their culture through the communication and negotiation of meanings of their experiences (Lau, Chiu, & Lee, 2001). Through increased interaction between people from different cultures, cultural universals and differences as a focus of psychological research developed quickly in the last century. By the 1970’s the "intercultural reality of the world societies ... elevated intercultural communication to a topic of significant academic merit" (Kim & Gudykunst, 1990, p. 146).

Intercultural communication has been particularly studied in relation to conflict, as a failure of the former almost unavoidably causes the latter. Communicative competence involves knowing not only the language code, but also what to say to whom, and how to say it appropriately in a given situation (Saville-Troike, 1996). The ability to use and interpret linguistic forms appropriately calls for social and cultural knowledge and experience beyond the grammar of the language (Bialystok & Hakuta, 1994). Analysing feedback from returning overseas visitors, Hammer, Gudykunst, and Wiseman (1978) found that intercultural competence concerns the ability to communicate effectively, to deal with psychological stress, and to establish interpersonal relations. Effective communication is part and parcel of successful intercultural interaction. In this chapter, the particulars of communication will be discussed, focusing on the main intercultural communication theories and their link with conflict management strategies and cultural dimensions. Specifically, the concept of communication will be defined in relation to communication theory and the socio-cultural approach. The process of communication in general will then be discussed focusing on its role within bargaining and negotiation, particularly in an intercultural context. Linking bargaining and communication research with concerns, Kim’s

conversational constraints theory shall be discussed, focusing on perception and communication effectiveness. The remainder of the chapter will look at three main theories of intercultural communication exploring the link of Uncertainty Avoidance with differences in Indirect/Direct communication to arrive at a model that encompasses concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles.

## **3.2. The concept of communication**

### **3.2.1. The theory of talk**

Communication is the process of “assigning significance to messages” (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 9). We may speak in tongues (languages) but this would not constitute the communication process. “Communication is an intersubjectively generated and regulated symbolic activity that is largely verbal, ... constituting a degree of shared meanings and a sense of community” (Carbaugh, 1985, p. 37). Social psychological research concerning communication has involved the assessment of professionals (e.g., Brekelmans, Holvast, & Van Tartwijk, 1992) and the role of communication in bargaining situations (e.g., Kern, Brett, & Weingart, 2001; Orbell, van de Kragt, & Dawes, 1988; Sally, 1995; Valley, Thompson, Gibbons & Bazerman, 2002). Furthermore, communication research has looked at differences between groups, for example gender (e.g., Aruguete & Roberts, 2000; Bradley, Sparks, & Nesdale, 2001; Giannantonio, Olian, & Carroll, 1995) and communication between cultures (e.g., Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, & Nishida, 1996; Kim, Aune, Hunter, Kim, & Kim, 2001; Lee & Gudykunst, 2001; Martin & Nakayama, 1999; Takeuchi, Imahori, & Matsumoto, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 1985, 1986, 1988). Nevertheless, no dominating theory of (intercultural) communication has been established (see also Wiseman, 1995).

#### **3.2.1.1. Socio-cultural approach**

A social psychological perspective on communication involves the reasons for communication behaviour to occur, and how. Communication concerns the “exchange of messages and creation of meaning (e.g., assigning significance to messages)” (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 9). Sources of communication behaviour are habits (enacting routines), intentions (instructions how to



communicate), and emotions (actions and reactions based on our feelings) (Gudykunst, 1998). People use sociological, psychological, and cultural information to make predictions of their communication behaviours; i.e., they “choose among various communicative strategies on the basis of the predictions about how the person receiving the message will respond” (Miller & Steinberg, 1975, p. 7). Sociological information helps predict behaviour in an intracultural context, as it involves group membership such as gender or social class, and roles such as student or manager. Similarly, intercultural information provides the person with some clues to their likely responses based on common knowledge about the person’s culture or knowledge acquired during the interaction. “Knowledge about another person’s culture – its language, beliefs, and prevailing ideology – often permits predictions of the person’s probable response to messages ... Upon first encountering ... [another person], cultural information provides the only grounds for communicative predictions” (Miller & Sunnafrank, 1982, p. 226). Psychological information involves personal knowledge of the person with whom one is communicating. However, it is impossible to get to know each person we communicate with well; therefore people rely mostly on cultural and sociological information during interactions (Miller & Steinberg, 1975). The differentiation between psychological, sociological, and cultural information can be further categorised into interpersonal (psychological) vs. intergroup (sociological and cultural) behaviour (Gudykunst, in press). The focus of the present literature review is on intergroup communication.

### **3.2.1.2. Social Identity and the communication process**

Cultural and social attributes are part of the social categorisation process. “Once we place strangers in social categories, our stereotypes of people in these categories are activated. ... [O]ur stereotypes create expectations about how people from our own and strangers’ groups will behave” (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 16). Tajfel (1978) and Turner et al. (1987) proposed that human identity involves our self concept in relation to other humans, social identity concerns one’s self concept in relation to members of specific in-groups, and personal identity involves one’s self concept which differentiates a person from other in-group members. All three identities are expected to be activated during most interactions, however one identity tends to predominate at any given time (Turner, 1987). When interacting as part of a team, with another team, however, it is likely that the social identity becomes more salient (e.g., Tajfel et al., 1971).

National identities are thus social identities whose influence on communication may go largely undetected, until confronted with other national cultures. The strength of the identification with one's culture is determined by the importance it has to the person, and the positive or negative view they may have. The degree to which one's national background becomes an important influence varies from situation to situation. When a person from the U.K. deals with fellow Britons, he/she may not think about being a member of British society. However, when meeting people from other cultures or visiting abroad, the cultural identity becomes more salient. If fellow Britons were to meet in a room with Union Jack flags, a picture of the queen, and use language interspersed with references to 'the British way of doing things' their cultural awareness is constantly triggered.

Such an environment is typical of an organisation, where logos, company ethics, and lingo are vivid symbols activating awareness of being a member of this organisation. Organisational identification is the process whereby organisational members define the self in relation to the organisation (Turner, 1987), in that organisational identification represents the social and psychological tie binding employees and the organisation, even when dispersed across borders. An organisation's identity guides members' feelings, beliefs and behaviours (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). Perhaps as Hofstede (1991) argued, organisational identity sits at a more practical and superficial level, whereas national identity sits at a deeper level. Organisational identity is more transient (in general, one changes jobs with companies more than nationalities), even though in everyday life people are more influenced by their organisational identity. "When we define ourselves mostly in terms of our social identities ... intergroup communication occurs. It is important to recognize, however, that our personal and social identities influence all of our communication behaviors, even though one predominates in a particular situation" (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 14).

National cultural information provides a blueprint of certain aspects of a person, which when evoked may overrule other social identities, for example organisational membership (Hofstede, 1991). We may understand the same language and 'communicate' but we may not pick up on the subtleties of the other's message. For example, a fundamental difference between East and West is that in the East one is more likely to use 'code' or messages with implicit

meanings for each communicator (Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1989), which may generate misunderstandings concerning a difference in evasiveness vs. directness (Gallois & Callan, 1997). Through the assessment of endorsed values within a culture and the codes used by the people of that culture, a more complete picture of a specific communication context can be obtained. Furthermore, if the context of assessment is maintained constant, i.e., teams from different cultures within the same (multinational) organisation, but the observed (communicative) behaviour between the teams varies, the profound effect of one's social identity, e.g., national culture, on communication behaviour may be established. This chapter will thus analyse the relationship between cultural values and communication so as to create a theoretical framework for the empirical assessment of the role of communication in conflict management situations between teams of differing national cultures.

### **3.3. Communication and Bargaining**

Communication, like conflict, occurs at different levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal, organisational and mass communication level (Roloff, 1987). The conflict and communication research is replete with subordinate-superior comparisons (e.g., Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Bergmann & Volkema, 1989; Thomas & Schmidt, 1976). Yet, one facet of organisational communication is the negotiation between teams, or groups, which can be seen as organised collectives, and organisational communication involves the “production, transmission, and interpretation of symbols by organisational members” (Roloff, 1987, p. 496). “The primary goal of organisational communication is to coordinate the actions of the membership so that organisational goals are met” (p. 496). If these goals are incompatible, conflict may occur.

#### **3.3.1. Communication in Bargaining Research**

Research has shown that (to allow) communication during prisoner's dilemma games significantly improves the outcome (e.g., Orbell, van de Kragt, & Dawes, 1988). Sally (1995) performed a meta-analysis of 57 different studies of prisoners' dilemma and social dilemma games and found that face-to-face communication increased the likelihood of mutual cooperation by 43%, even after controlling for the loss of anonymity and expectations of future interaction. According to Kagel and Roth (1995), heightened social utility and supplementary

channels providing additional information may increase efficiency of bargaining. Valley, Thompson, Gibbons and Bazerman's (2002) empirical findings confirm these hypotheses. They found that efficiency increased to 94% when face-to-face communication is allowed prior to determining price through a double auction, which suggests that social aspects of communication may be more important than bidding mechanisms. Kern, Brett, and Weingart (2001) found that cooperative negotiators who were engaged in a mixed-motive, multi-party task and who talked more had better individual outcomes than those who talked less. Furthermore, they found that the successful cooperatives were using problem-solving strategies. Examining the impact of communication constraints and trade-off structures on negotiations, Palmer and Thompson (1995) found that three person groups restricted to dyadic-only communication perceived other group members and themselves to be more competitive than groups that engaged in full-group communication. However, as argued by Kanazawa (1999), while the highly controlled setting of such studies is good for theory development, practical value is greater for more realistic designs.

Although conflict and communication researchers have looked at the effect of culture and have categorised differences in codes, the interactional aspect of communication has mainly been studied within these experimental, and thus highly controlled, settings. Researchers often used conflict inventories such as Rahim's (1983abc) ROCI, Putman and Wilson's (1982) OCCI, or Janssen and Van de Vliert's (1996) DUTCH, which have incorporated communication into the self-reported preferences for conflict management strategies (see Chapter Two). True comparisons of cross-cultural communication, i.e., analysing the communication styles of people from different cultures and their mutual perceptions, are problematic for methodological and logistic reasons as it would require a sample of people from two or more different nationalities who are in frequent contact with one another without the sample background varying too much (e.g., they are all students or managers). To gain access to multinational organisations and generate a large enough sample for statistical purposes involves complicated logistics and bureaucracy and may therefore occur less frequently.

The majority of communication research has looked at communication styles within one culture and compared this to another (e.g., Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, & Nishida, 1996; Kim, Aune, Hunter, Kim, & Kim, 2001; Lee & Gudykunst, 2001; Takeuchi, Imahori, &

Matsumoto, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 1985, 1986, 1988). Some researchers have also looked at peoples' perceptions of each other (e.g., De Dreu, Evers, Beersma, Kluwer, & Nauta, 2001; Leung and Bond, 2001; Tedeschi & Felson, 1994; Worchel, Prevat, Miner, Allen, et-al., 1995; Yrle, Hartman, & Galle, 2002) but apart from a few studies that investigated perception in a cross-cultural context (e.g., Dace, 1994; Coleman, Beale, & Mills, 1993) there is little research that assessed the perception of conflict and communication styles in a cross-cultural context. The next sections will look at communication and conflict management strategies in intercultural settings, focusing on the dyadic nature of communication through the assessment of perception.

### **3.3.2. Communication and conflict management strategies in an intercultural setting**

A large number of intercultural conflicts that people encounter can be traced to cultural miscommunication, whereby one's culture-based beliefs affect perceptions and interpretations through communication through different conflict assumptions, conflict rhythms, conflict norms and styles, and ethnocentric bias (Ting-Toomey, 1999b). "In intercultural negotiations, ineffective and frustrated communication may be the primary consequence of clashing normative behaviors that hinders the generation of joint gains" (Adair et al., 2001, p. 381). Intercultural misunderstanding and potential conflict arise when social entities have different ways of expressing and interpreting the same symbolic action, which is governed by a specific set of normative rules and movements of a culture (Ting-Toomey, 1985). "Because of language barriers, non-verbal encoding and decoding differences, and value divergences, intercultural misunderstandings, can easily lead to conflict. A conflict episode can be caused by external or internal pressures. It can also be overtly expressed or intrapersonally repressed" (Ting-Toomey, 1985, p. 71). Within multinationals specifically in everyday work, people are required to communicate effectively to make organisational decisions; it involves the cooperation of culturally different people to come to a solution that is of joint satisfaction (Carbaugh, 1985). The following section will focus on people's perception and interpretation of each other during intercultural conflict.

### **3.3.2.1. Perception of own and other's communication behaviour**

When one is examining intercultural interaction, in-group vs. out-group perception, additionally to cultural values become relevant to the behaviour of the people involved in the interaction. It is generally accepted that groups tend to favour the in-group (Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1982), even if part of an inferior group (e.g., Brown and Ross, 1982). Burchfield and Sappington (1999) assessed students' self-perception of participation in class discussion as compared to peer perception and instructor perception. They found that students ranked themselves higher, on average, than did their peers and instructor, indicating that people perceive themselves differently, and often better, than others do. Similarly, Powers, Flint and Breindel (1988) found that student subjects perceived themselves to be very effective communicators and perceived their peers and other people in general to be less effective. Furthermore, a study by Bond (1979) showed that Asian female students expecting to be in competition with another, would rate the adversary allocated to them in particular more positively than somebody else's adversary. According to Bond this is due to the enhancement of self-esteem by having a strong contender. In sum, people are thus likely to rate themselves as more competent than others would rate them and enhance their self-esteem further by viewing the opponent as particularly challenging.

Further research compared ratings of individuals about themselves with those of others about the individual to assess the level of convergence. Leung and Bond (2001) examined the links between the personality of group members and their styles of communication during group meetings over a 3-month period, using Asian college students as subjects. Focusing on the interrelation between the actor (the self) and their fellow group members (the others), they found that even after extensive group interaction, ratings of self and others converged only when observable characteristics were being measured (e.g., extraversion in personality or precision in communication). Furthermore, results provided evidence that ratings derived from the self and those derived from others appear to develop from different sources of information and relate to different outcomes. Sypher and Sypher (1984) examined the extent to which employees' self-reports corresponded with superior, subordinate, and peer reports of the employees' communicative behaviour. They found that employees' descriptions of their own communication behaviour correlated poorly with descriptions contributed by peers, subordinates, and superiors,

in that participants' responses reflected an egocentric bias in their tendency to rate themselves higher than others rated them.

The egocentric bias is likely to be more profound if the social identities are more pronounced (such as ethnic background or nationality). Looking at ethnicity and perception in relation to communication, Dace (1994) researched differences in European-American and African-American communication. The findings suggest that at least where ethnic issues are concerned, European Americans expect non-white individuals to communicate in ways that are friendly, comfortable, and absolving, and subsequently communicate these expectations to African Americans. It was further found that African Americans learn what sort of communication is expected and alter their behaviours to respond in accordance with European Americans' expectations. This study not only highlighted the skewed ethnic communicative relationship within one nation (U.S.A.) but also, like the previously reviewed studies, indicates the importance of perceived communication styles during interaction.

Perception of the other has been argued to be intrinsically linked to cultural (mis)understandings and effective communication (Gudykunst, 1998; Singer, 1987). "Expectations involve our anticipation and predictions about how strangers will communicate with us. Our expectations are derived from social norms, communication rules, and strangers' characteristics of which we are aware. Expectations also emerge from our out-group attitudes and the stereotypes we hold" (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 101). Lee and Gudykunst (2001) examined how interpersonal and intergroup factors influence attraction in initial interethnic interactions when they are taken into consideration at the same time. The researchers predicted that interethnic attraction would increase as the perceived similarity in communication style, perceived self-concept support, positive intergroup expectations, and shared intergroup networks increased, whereas uncertainty would decrease. Furthermore, they proposed that interethnic attraction would increase when the strength of ethnic identities decreased and strength of cultural identities increased. They found that perceived similarity in communication styles, perceived self-concept support, lack of uncertainty, strength of ethnic identities, and positive intergroup expectations did predict interethnic attraction.

Cultural values and beliefs provide guidelines for appropriate behaviours and expectations used in judging competent communication, which, in the West can be generally defined as maintaining a polite distance, refraining from emotional outbursts, and speaking coherently and fluently (Gudykunst, 1998). “The perceptions that each of us experience are unique, they are based on our cultures, our ethnicities, our sex, and background experiences, and our needs. Our communication problems arise because we mistakenly assume that we perceive and observe strangers in an unbiased fashion” (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 142). A nation is essentially a particular group, and an individual is likely to allocate favourable behaviour to in-group and unfavourable behaviour to the out-group (Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1982). However, each group’s culture is a system of a shared symbolic meanings, partly represented by values that act as a guiding principle in one’s life (Schwartz, 1992). Since “reality” derives from perceptions, that which is culturally true for one group may differ from that which is culturally true for another group. Upon this premise, intercultural group interaction (i.e., perceived behaviour) is coloured by the cultural make up (i.e., values) of the groups involved.

### **3.3.2.2. Cultural values explaining differences in communication perception**

The perception of another is particularly important during intercultural interactions (e.g., Tedeschi & Felson, 1994; Singer, 1987). Especially within a professional context, knowledge of the cultural background of the other is important for effective communication (Niemeyer & Van der Meulen, 1990). Misinterpretations occur when others’ behaviour is interpreted using one’s own frame of reference. “When we are communicating with strangers and base our own interpretations on our symbolic systems, ineffective communication often occurs” (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 27). This may be due to differences in pronunciation, communication rules, or violation of stereotypical assumptions. Furthermore, “... our cultures and ethnicities influence our explanations of the causes we make about strangers’ behavior” (p. 30). For example, Koomen and Baehler (1996) found, when researching British, German, French, Belgian, and Dutch individuals’ stereotypical perceptions of each other, that different European nationalities had a common representation of each other but that they judged their own groups in a more positive way than they judged other groups. However, specific perceiver-target country combinations influenced the stereotyping. Linssen and Hagendoorn (1994) found that determinants of the content of Western European stereotypes, defined as attributed efficiency, emotionality,



empathy, or dominance, were a function of social (e.g., politics, perceived economic development, and social security) and geographical factors. Messages are subjectively interpreted; the meanings attached to the message are a function of the actual message transmitted, the individuals who receive it, the relationship between the people, and the way the message is transmitted (Singer, 1987; Gudykunst, 1998). Individuals do not transmit and perceive messages independently of one another. Both processes are engaged in simultaneously, either supporting or rejecting stereotypical preconceptions.

Research specifically looking at how people perceive others who are culturally diverse from themselves is not widespread. In a study looking at how Chinese professionals perceive interpersonal communication in organisations in the US and China, Wang and Chang (1999) found some evidence that behaviour typically attributed to individualists or collectivists may be not so clear cut. Results showed that the dimensions 'Blunt Assertiveness', 'Smooth Amiability', and 'Surface Humility' underlie Chinese perceptions of interpersonal communication in Chinese organisations; whereas those underlying American organisations were: 'Sophisticated Kindness', 'Manipulative Stroking', and 'Casual Spontaneity'. One would expect to find bluntness to be associated with directness or individualism, whereas kindness and manipulative stroking would be considered a more collectivistic or Indirect approach. As with conflict strategy research, the field of intercultural communication may benefit from a more consistent use of terms for different communication phenomena. Other research focused on people's perception of others' communication behaviours found more distinct cultural differences. Levy, Wubbels, Brekelmans, and Morganfield (1997) studied cultural factors in students' perceptions of teacher communication style. Teacher communication style was analysed from both the students' and teachers' perspectives, and related to students' cultural background and class composition. They found that the greater the number of different cultures and percentage of students from non-American cultures in class, the greater was the class's perception of teacher dominance. Their hypotheses that Latino and Asian students would perceive greater teacher dominance than Anglo students and that teachers' perceptions of their own communication styles would be closer to American students' perceptions than to those of Latino and Asian students were partially confirmed. This implies that perception is a function of the similarity of the parties or the ability to understand the other party by overcoming cultural dispositions.

Communication has also been researched as a function of preference for listening style, by which one is either partial to people, the content, action, or time. Sargent, Weaver, and Kiewitz (1997) compared the link between communication apprehension (anxiety or fear to speak) and listening styles and concluded that listening to others and speaking to others are two relatively independent aspects of the communication process. Kiewitz, Weaver, Brosius, and Weimann (1997) studied the listening styles of German, Israeli, and American subjects. They found that German individuals preferred the action style (prefer to receive concise and error free information), Israeli individuals preferred the content style (prefer to evaluate complex information carefully), and American subjects endorsed both the people (concern for others' feelings and emotions) and time (brief and hurried interactions) style. Support for the idea that the needs of the listener are better understood when the interaction involves part of one's ingroup is illustrated by Coleman, Beale, & Mills (1993), who sampled 40 U.S. American and 40 foreign college student judges who were asked to view 60 audiovisual clips of women who were instructing one of four listeners: a child, a foreign adult speaker, a 'mentally retarded' adult, or a native adult speaker of 'normal' intelligence. The foreign college students came from various continents and were recruited from the local English Language Institute. The subjects were asked to identify the listener in each clip. Overall, native judges were more accurate than foreign judges at identifying the listeners. The authors suggest that the accuracy of native judges may have been influenced by similar and overlapping linguistic and paralinguistic features contained in the communication styles and previous expectations – which are culturally determined - about the listener groups. As will become evident below, the interaction of listener and speaker is crucial to communication being effective. The conclusion that can be drawn from the studies described above is that culture affects the way one perceives how the other communicates.

### **3.3.2.3. Communication effectiveness**

Researchers have suggested that individual success in organisations can be attributed at least in part to interpersonal and communicative effectiveness (Sypher and Sypher, 1983). Orpen (1997) looked at the interactive effects of communication quality and job involvement on managerial job satisfaction and work motivation. Results showed that the interaction between involvement and communication added significantly to the explained variance in both satisfaction and motivation. Managers who were more involved were more affected by the quality of

communication. Looking at the relationship between several measures of interpersonal effectiveness and job level within an organisation, Davenport-Sypher and Sypher (1983) found that perceived communication effectiveness was related to job level in the organisation, self-monitoring, and to perceived persuasive ability. In an intercultural context, Redmond (2000) operationalised intercultural communication competence as six competencies: language competence, adaptation, social decentering, communication effectiveness, social integration and knowledge of the host culture, each of which was proposed (but only 'adaptation' was found) to be linked to stress. Furthermore, these results are similar to findings by Hammer, Gudykunst, and Wiseman (1978), which showed that communication effectiveness to be a function of the ability to communicate effectively, of the ability to deal with psychological stress, and of the ability to establish interpersonal relations. In another study assessing intercultural communication effectiveness, American managers in Saudi Arabia and French managers in the U.S.A. were questioned about their agreement on their subjective evaluation of the importance of 16 personal abilities for intercultural communication effectiveness (ICE) (Dean and Popp, 1990). Both groups rated the ability to work with other people and to deal with unfamiliar situations, handle communication misunderstandings, and changes in life styles as most facilitating of functioning in a foreign culture. Finally, Tominaga, Gudykunst, and Ota (2002) found that individualists and collectivists have different conceptualisations of what constitutes 'effective communication' in that collectivists are concerned with good relations and individualists are concerned with Clarity (see also section 4.4.5.).

Whether or not with an intercultural focus, the studies described above suggest that communication effectiveness is related to a multitude of variables ranging from functioning in a foreign culture to stress and motivation within the workplace. The conceptualisation of effective communication further seems to vary depending on one's cultural background. If organisational success is as strongly linked to effective communication as is suggested (e.g., Davenport-Sypher & Sypher, 1983; Orbell, Van de Kragt, & Dawes, 1988), and since Game Theory studies showed that communication increases bargaining outcomes (e.g., Kern, Brett, & Weingart, 2001; Orbell, van de Kragt, & Dawes, 1988; Sally, 1995; Valley, Thompson, Gibbons & Bazerman, 2002), it is surprising that so little research has looked at intercultural conflict and communication styles.

Communication seems to be a medium through which successful, effective, or secure outcomes can be obtained and is therefore an important concept to be incorporated into intercultural conflict research. Cultural differences increase the complexity of interactions between group members thus increasing barriers of communication and understanding, which in turn, increases confusion and can develop into confrontation between culturally different parties (Hogg, Turner, & Davidson, 1990; Murnighan, 1978). When channels of communication and information exchange are inhibited or broken, teams may not perform at the expected productivity level; therefore resulting in lower levels of perceived performance and decreased member satisfaction (Jehn & Weldon, 1997). Furthermore, group members may experience higher levels of stress, lower levels of satisfaction, and lower levels of productivity due to cultural conflict.

In the next sections four main approaches to intercultural communication are reviewed and the theory and measures applied to the present study are presented. As will become evident, the core of intercultural communication research pertains to I/C, which has been linked to a main communication style dichotomy of directness vs. indirectness. Both styles, however, are not exclusive to individualist or collectivist cultures and can be organised as part of a trichotomy, much like conflict management strategies. The present study proposes that the communication style typology is made up of indirectness and directness, additionally to a neutral style of asking questions and listening carefully.

### **3.4. Styles of intercultural communication during conflict.**

Communication has been treated “either as a source of disagreement or as a means of handling disputes rather than a fundamental dimension that pervades conflict development and management (Putnam & Poole, 1987, p. 562). This, among things, has resulted in the ignoring of the role communication plays in fostering the conflict strategies one may adopt when handling conflicts (Weider-Hatfield, 1990).

Unlike the many typologies of conflict management strategies, intercultural communication styles have been identified as a series of dichotomies: one communicates in a way that is either direct or indirect, elaborate or succinct, personal or contextual, and

instrumental or affective (Gudykunst, & Ting-Toomey, 1988). Other theories conceptualise communication as incorporated into conflict management approaches (e.g., Rahim, 1983abc; Janssen & Van de Vliert, 1996). It is worthwhile to distinguish communication styles from conflict management strategies because what is communicated is what is initially perceived by the other party. Actual concerns and conflict management strategies are more subtle. For example, initially a person can be seen as direct, and their strategy may thus be perceived as dominant, whereas to their own accord, they may have been problem solving. The following section looks at the different concerns and communication styles that characterise people in a variety of contexts, based on four main models of intercultural communication.

### **3.4.1. Individualism vs. Collectivism – The cross-cultural epistemology?**

The focus within intercultural communication research has been on the role of individualism-collectivism, concentrating either on styles (e.g., Hall, 1976; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988) or concerns (Kim, 1994). According to Triandis (1988), one of the major factors that differentiate individualism and collectivism is the relative importance of the in-group. Individualists have many specific in-groups that may influence behaviour in any particular social situation. Since there are many, they exert little influence on behaviour. According to Ting-Toomey (1992), the communication process in individualistic cultures focuses on inter-individual levels, while collective cultures focus on the group base (whether you are in-group, one of us; or out-group, one of them). This results in, Ting-Toomey argues, individualistic people tending to be verbally direct: they value communication openness, learn to self disclose, like to be clear, straightforward, and contribute to a positive management climate, whereas in collectivistic group-oriented cultures, indirect communication is preferred because group harmony is essential. It is rare in Asian cultures to have open conflict, because it appears to disrupt group harmony. However, Collectivists are more stringent in treating the in-group differently from the out-group (Triandis, 1988). Current thinking emphasises that the fundamental difference in interaction behaviour between collectivists and individualists is a concern for harmony, whereby collectivists are more concerned to maintain harmony, particularly with in-group members, than individualists (e.g., Brown and Levinson, 1987; Kim, 1994; Ting-Toomey, 1988; 1994; 1999a). Individualism and collectivism feature strongly in three of the main approaches of intercultural

communication; High vs. Low Context Communication, Face Theory, and Kim's (1994a) Conversational Constraints, which will be discussed below.

### **3.4.2. High Context vs. Low Context Communication**

In 1976, Hall published his work on low and high context cultures (LCC vs. HCC). "E.T. Hall's (1976) conceptualisation of high and low context cultures has surfaced in the literature as a driving force in determining buyers' and sellers' negotiation styles" (Mintu-Wimsatt & Gassenheimer, 2000, p. 1). Hall (1976) contends that "two things get in the way of understanding [of cross-cultural communication]: the linearity of language and the deep biases and built-in blinders that every culture provides" (p. 59) and points out that a translation device may translate the words but the sentences remain incoherent since "in real life the code, the context, and the meaning can only be seen as different aspects of a single event" (p. 79). Hall proposes that cultures can be differentiated on the basis of whether the meaning of a message should be inferred from its context or is explicitly put forward by the speaker. Further developed by Gudykunst (1983) and Ting-Toomey (1988), HCC/LCC theory has been tremendously influential in intercultural communication research.

#### **3.4.2.1. HCC/LCC and culture**

High and low context cultures are said to show contrasting communication styles. In HCC, "most of the information is either in the physical context or internalised in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message (Hall, 1976, p. 79). Communication in LCC involves "the mass of information [that] is vested in the explicit code" (Hall, 1976, p. 70). Otherwise formulated, "High-context communication can be characterised as being indirect, ambiguous, and understated with speakers being reserved and sensitive to listeners. Low-context communication, in contrast, can be characterised as being direct, explicit, open, precise, and being consistent with one's feelings" (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 180). Hall (1976) proposed that the U.S.A., Scandinavia and the UK are typical examples of LCC, whereas China, Japan, and Taiwan would be typical examples of HCC. The patterns of collectivism and individualism are compatible with HCC and LCC communication, respectively (Gudykunst, 1998).

Gudykunst (1998) linked Hall's approach to I/C, but argued that high context communication and low context communication are not mutually exclusive in any given culture. For example, Adair, Okumura, and Brett (2001) suggested that individualists perceive direct communication as the most effective strategy to accomplish goals, whereas collectivists perceive the effectiveness of directness dependent on whether they deal with in-group or out-group members. Furthermore, as found by De Dreu (1997), individuals may engage in indirect communication if the context is of a relational nature.

### **3.4.2.2. HCC/LCC and conflict**

As mentioned previously, conflict is strongly linked to communication, since “[c]onflict, as a form of intense, antagonistic communicative experience, is bounded by the cultural demands and constraints of the particular situation. This set of demands and constraints, in turn, implicitly dictates what are the appropriate and inappropriate ways of behaving and communicating in a given system” (Ting-Toomey, 1985, p. 75). Ting-Toomey (1985) proposed that analyses of the relationship between conflict and culture requires specific theories which allow for an interpretation of communication behaviour, for example, Hall's (1976) low- and high-context framework, thereby highlighting the role of communication in intercultural conflict research. “...In the HCC what is not said is sometimes more important than what is said. In contrast, in the LCC words represent truth and power” (Ting-Toomey, 1985, p. 77). Based on Hall's conceptual definitions, Ting-Toomey proposed that “individuals in LCCs are more likely to perceive the causes of conflict as instrumental [practical] rather than expressive [emotional] in nature (p. 78). In other words, according to the individualist, the cause for a problem may be due to clashing agendas, mix up of facts, or a demand for scarce goods. In contrast, “[i]ndividuals in HCCs are more likely to perceive the causes (or, more important tend to focus on the process) of conflict as expressive rather than instrumental in nature” (p. 78). Thus, for example during a business meeting the build up of the relationship (trust) is more important than the exact amount of discount percentage bargained for in the end. One may be better off sending the executive with whom the collectivist business party has a long-standing relationship and offering a small discount, than sending the assistant and offering a large discount. According to Ting-Toomey (1985), LCC individuals are more likely to assume a confrontational, direct attitude towards conflicts, which is expressed in either a factual-inductive or axiomatic-deductive (general to

particular reasoning) style. HCC individuals are more likely to assume a non-confrontational, Indirect attitude towards conflict, which is expressed in an affective-intuitive (emotional) style of conflict management; HCC and LCC are defined by direct and indirect communication style respectively.

Low and high context communication are thus proposed to be the predominant styles of communication in individualistic and collectivistic cultures. However, both styles can be used within any culture. Individualistic people tend to use direct low-context communication most of the time, but use high-context communication when expressing emotions in intimate or close relationships. Collectivists use indirect high context communication most of the time, but use low-context communication when dealing with a member of the out-group (Gudykunst, 1998). Close and intimate relationships or the in-group provide a safe context whereby the sender assumes that the receiver will understand their messages. Due to a focus on the individual in most Western cultures, this understanding is limited to those very close, whereas in more group oriented Eastern cultures the wider in-group is assumed to understand implicit messages. Furthermore, individualists prefer to use explicit messaging with those who they do not know well for the sake of clarity, whereas collectivists use it with people they consider part of the out-group but for them it has a certain antagonistic connotation.

It seems that the modelling of HCC/LCC is particularly complex as the approach is context dependent but is based on a broad cultural dimension (I/C), and therefore, HCC/LCC seems to be an overarching differentiation. Furthermore, HCC/LCC may be used to try to explain (in)directness in situations where context is not a factor (e.g., between individualistic cultures) but may fail to capture subtle differences. Furthermore, HCC/LCC is a concept that is not represented by a measure. Empirical research has usually applied a measure of I/C or self-construals to explain HCC/LCC. The intercultural communication theory so far is mainly focused on two communication styles: Direct and Indirect. The next sections will explore the development of the theory and then move toward two alternative perspectives; One that introduces underlying concerns as a form of communication and another that introduces a third communication style, which will compliment the three-way typology of conflict management strategies discussed in the previous chapter.



### **3.4.3. Politeness theory**

Moving on from the HCC/LCC approach, research on the preservation of face has incorporated politeness theory, focusing on one particular contextual factor: embarrassment. Politeness theory has been used to explain cultural differences between Eastern and Western countries with regard to conflict avoidance and harmony maintenance. Politeness theory focuses on the interaction of communicators and how they present themselves (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967). The presentation of communicators is also known as face management, which refers to the idea that people try to preserve their own and other people's 'face' when communicating. Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1988) describe 'face' as a "claimed sense of favorable social self-worth that a person wants others to have for her or him" (p. 187) or "a projected image of one's self in a relational situation" (Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 215). The image one wants to portray can be lost, maintained, or increased, and people cooperate and assume each other's cooperation in maintaining face. Based on work by Goffman (1967) and Brown and Levinson (1987), Ting-Toomey (1988; 1994; 1999a) developed a theory of face and intercultural communication, specifically aimed at the interpretation of individualist and collectivist interaction. The theory holds that people have two types of face: positive (desire to be liked and respected by others) and negative (the desire for freedom of action and imposition by others).

#### **3.4.3.1. Face Theory and Culture**

Giving face involves agreeing with someone to give them face, to avoid embarrassment. Face is the public self image and is based on needs for inclusion vs. needs for autonomy, or a concern for the other's face or a concern for one's own face (Ting-Toomey, 1988). "Problems in communication may occur when there is a difference in interpretation of the face-concern being used. In collectivistic cultures, the concern for face is predominantly other oriented. In individualistic cultures, the concern is self-oriented" (p. 156).

People from all cultures try to maintain face in communication situations, balancing both negative and positive face needs (Ting-Toomey, 1994). Negative face concerns a need for

autonomy or dissociation, whereas positive face concerns the need for inclusion or association (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Self Positive-Face (SPF) involves the use of communication styles to defend and protect the need for inclusion and association; whereas Self Negative-Face (SNF) involves styles that provide oneself freedom and space. Other Positive-Face (OPF) concerns the use of communication styles to defend and support the other person's need for inclusion and association, whereas Other Negative-Face (ONF) involves communication styles to signal respect for the other person's need for freedom, space and dissociation (Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 219).

As mentioned before, if one perceives oneself as a unique person one tends to be from an individualistic culture and tends to communicate in a direct style to assert one's standpoint. When harmony of the in-group is important, it is likely one is from a collectivist culture and one would speak in an indirect fashion to maintain harmony. Research by Cocroft & Ting-Toomey (1994) supported the link of I/C to directness and indirectness. Individualists were more concerned with their own and maintaining the other's negative face, whereas people from collectivist cultures were more concerned with positive face of the other, rather than maintaining their own (negative) face. Cultural values thus indicate the variation in the extent of a common use of (in)directness and Giving Face. "One might think that Oriental [sic] cultures, such as the Chinese are more reluctant to express feelings openly, because of a possible risk of losing face. The Dutch, on the other hand, might even be more direct than British and Americans, because of their presumed open-mindedness" (Ulijn, Rutkowski, & Kumar, 2001, p. 2). These are, however, speculations and require thorough empirical research in order to be supported. The following section will analyse the importance of face in relation to conflict and cultural values, looking specifically at interregional differences.

### **3.4.3.2. Face Theory and Conflict**

The (un)importance of face causes people to use particular communication styles, particularly in the context of conflict (e.g., Ting-Toomey, 1985). Ting-Toomey (1999b) suggests that individualists would try to avoid direct apologies and embarrassment in order to preserve self-face, perhaps by making jokes to shift responsibilities, whereas collectivists may be more concerned with in-group embarrassment and try to amend any damage. Takeuchi, Imahori, and

Matsumoto (2001) examined the readjustment of Japanese students in criticism styles upon returning to Japan. Results showed that Japanese subjects preferred to use indirect criticism, whereas American subjects preferred to use direct criticism styles, supporting Ting-Toomey's propositions. However, the difference in importance of face is not merely a Western vs. Asian phenomenon. Lindsley & Braithwaite (1996) found that "understanding communicative behaviors reflecting concern for other's face are described as essential in addressing conflict at every organisational level". Americans were "often described as violating these norms, which are deeply felt and widely held among Mexicans" (p. 199). Additionally, it is important to recognise that indirectness occurs in individualistic cultures as well. The reasons for indirectness in individualistic cultures like the U.S.A., however, appear to be different than those in collectivistic cultures. According to Condon (1984), Americans are indirect when something sensitive is discussed and one is nervous about others' reactions – in essence, something is awry. Indirectness may be used if one is cautious, protecting one's self esteem, or monitoring oneself to avoid unpleasant clashes and losing one's own face (as opposed to indirectness to safeguard the other's face). Furthermore, indirectness may also occur when individualists are interacting with someone close to them, someone who could imply the meaning of the message from the context (Gudykunst, 1998). There are few empirical studies, however, that have looked at indirectness of individualistic cultures.

Some interregional differences in facework have been found. In a recent study describing facework behaviours, Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Masumoto, and Yokochi (1999) found 13 different types of facework behaviour during conflicts: (a) aggression, (b) apologize, (c) avoid, (d) compromise, (e) consider the other, (f) defend self, (g) express feelings, (h) give in, (i) involve a third party, (j) pretend, (k) private discussion, (l) remain calm, and (m) talk about the problem. Oetzel et al. asked participants to rate the appropriateness and effectiveness of three messages within each of the categories and a Factor Analysis of these ratings revealed three underlying categories: Integrating, Avoiding, and Dominating. Apologize, compromise, consider the other, private discussion, remain calm, and talk about the problem were examples of integrating facework. Avoid, give in, involve a third party, and pretend were examples of Avoiding facework. Aggression and defend self were examples of Dominating facework. Express feelings was associated with both Dominating and integrating facework. In a subsequent study, Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Masumoto, Yokochi, Pan, Takai, and Wilcox (2001) found that integrating

facework obtained mixed results between cultures: when choosing between the different integrating behaviours, individualists used more Problem Solving, respect, and private discussion and less apologising and remaining calm. Oetzel et al. (2001) propose that individualists use an integrative approach when the conflict is task related and collectivists use an integrating approach when the conflict is relationship related. The study concerned face and facework during interpersonal conflicts across four national cultures: China, Germany, Japan, and the US. Results showed that German subjects had more self- and mutual-Face Concerns and used defending more and remaining calm less than Americans, and Chinese subjects had more self-face concern and involved a third party more than did Japanese. Earlier research by Clackworthy (1996) supports these findings; the German style of conflict management was found to be direct and confrontative, as in Germany it is important to discuss facts thoroughly and completely, upholding self-face concerns. European Americans tended to remain calm, focusing on talking about ideas in a calm manner in order to come to a mutually acceptable resolution. Therefore, European Americans often view Germans as being too blunt, while Germans often view European Americans as unwilling to engage in conflict seriously (Clackworthy, 1996). The results of the studies described above support the focus on three conflict management strategies: Problem Solving, Avoiding and Dominating as suggested in chapter two. Furthermore, the findings indicate that some of Ting-Toomey's own work shows some variance within the individualistic and collectivistic clusters, which suggests that interregional differences can provide some insight into the process of conflict management in relation to communication.

#### **3.4.3.3. Face Theory: limitations**

First of all, empirical studies linking conflict to face work do not apply a separate measure for communication, but communication styles are assumed through the conflict management strategies that are preferred by respondents (e.g., Trubinsky, Ting-Toomey, & Lin, 1991). This makes a more specific analysis of communication difficult since Face theory relies heavily on the differentiation of concern for one's own face and a concern for the other's face, a distinct I/C phenomena. Many theorists argue that it is not appropriate to use one broad cultural value dimension such as I/C or high vs. low context, to explain cultural differences as it fails to pick up on subtle differences between cultures (e.g., Aguinis & Henle, in press; Hofstede, 2001; Kagitçibasi, 1987; Schwartz, 1990, Singelis, 1994).

Several studies counteract the association of Directness vs. Indirectness with Individualism and Collectivism respectively, and thus the automatic clustering of Western and Eastern cultures. Neulip and Hazleton (1985) found that Japanese people preferred direct strategies in compliance-gaining situations more than Americans did. Steil and Hillman (1993) compared American, Japanese, and Korean compliance-gaining behaviour and found that all respondents rated direct strategies as their most, and indirect strategies as their least, preferred strategy. Equally, individualistic persons can behave in what are deemed to be 'collective' ways, such as Avoiding, but they may do this to serve their own interest and the other's by Avoiding a clash of some sort, which could cause embarrassment. They may not, however, go out of their way to put themselves down to ease the potential conflict. In fact, value types such as "hedonism, achievement, self direction, social power, stimulation ... all serve self interests of the individual, but not necessarily at the expense of any collectivity" (Schwartz, 1990, p. 143). There is however, little research that explored this. Overall, it appears that the behaviours formerly said to be typically individualistic or collectivistic require a more detailed look at the context and motivation of those behaviours.

Finally, Face theory implies that the goal of individuals during interaction is ultimately concerned with saving one's or the other's face. However, the main focus of conflict management outcomes has been on effectiveness. An alternative approach has been an incorporation of both other vs. self concern and effectiveness, pioneered by Kim (1994a; Kim & Kim, 1997), which will be discussed below.

#### **3.4.4. Kim's conversational constraints.**

As discussed in the previous chapter, an individual's approach to a conflict may be through the use of conflict management strategies (e.g., Problem-Solving, Avoiding, or Dominating), which stem from the dual concern model. For example, if one has a concern for oneself and not for the other, one is likely to dominate, whereas if one has a concern for both oneself and the other, one is likely to use a Problem Solving strategy. The conflict management theory incorporates a series of communication styles, thus assuming that conflict management strategy and communication style are one and the same (Kim, 1994a; Roloff, 1987; Rahim, 1992; Van de Vliert, 1997).

Empirical research supporting this approach to conflict and points of criticism have been covered in chapter two. However, Kim's (1994a) theory of Conversational Constraints draws together two issues in particular: the emic validity of the dual concern model and the separation of communication from conflict management strategies.

It can be debated whether a person is ever truly only altruistic (obliging) or selfish (dominating/competing). It may be argued that people involved in a conflict will almost always display a combination of altruistic and selfish behaviour as not only one's personal gain but also the relationship is typically at stake. Conflict research has shown that the underlying concerns of conflict management strategies are a mixture of a concern for self or a concern for the other, usually described in a three-, four-, or five-way typology. An alternative approach was Kim's (1994a; Kim & Kim, 1997) research, which looked at the concerns that may occupy people when in a conflict situation with another person in relation to communication. This research led Kim (1994a, Kim & Kim, 1997) to conclude that there are a series of typical concerns that people have when making requests, which she labelled 'conversational constraints'. After empirical testing, the number of constraints was set to three: a concern for clarity (to make a point directly and clearly), a concern for the other's feelings (avoid hurting the other), and a concern for minimising imposition (to avoid inconveniencing the other). Further tested with samples from the U.S.A. and Korea, it was found that the conversational constraints reflected a difference in Individualist and Collectivist values; whereby Individualists were more concerned with clarity and effectiveness (need for dominance), and Collectivists were more concerned with a need for social approval (Kim & Kim, 1997).

Kim & Kim (1997) suggested that constraints have the property of being global rather than domain specific (such as interaction goals, i.e., making a request). Furthermore, they propose that "[t]he importance of different interactive constraints as perceived by the individual is apt to affect what strategies are chosen, and what inferences are made about others' behaviour. Interactive constraints provide non-specific guidelines for the selection of communicative strategies. The culturally favored interactive constraints may shape the individual's preferred forms of interaction. Knowledge about the culture-specific salience of interactive constraints might be particularly important for coordination and successful communication as societies increasingly become multicultural" (p. 510). It may be, however, that both collectivists and

individualists would be concerned with effectiveness and clarity, especially in an organisational context. Furthermore, the specific motivation of the typically collectivist constraints can also be found within individualist cultures if these constraints are described in a more universally applicable way. In other words, perhaps individualist countries could also score higher on indirect communication if this behaviour was not solely linked to a concern with the other's opinion or an entirely passive approach to conflict.

In a study attempting to explain the perceived effectiveness of the use of request tactics among 296 Korean and 299 American undergraduates, Kim and Bresnahan (1994b) found that among Korean subjects, the concern for avoiding hurting the other's feelings and concern for avoiding negative evaluation by the hearer contributed to the prediction of effectiveness. Among the American subjects, clarity was a strong predictor of the perceived effectiveness of tactics. These findings support Kim's theory. However, within "collectivist" cultures, Miyahara, Kim, Shin, and Yoon, (1998) found that Japanese focus more on clarity constraint, while Koreans focus more on social relation constraints (avoiding imposition to the hearer or loss of face.). Tominaga, Gudykunst, and Ota (2002) found differences between the conceptualisation of effective communication between Japanese and American subjects. The Japanese focused on maintaining good emotional relations between communicators, whereas the Americans focused on clarity and understanding. This is consistent with the emphasis on maintaining harmony in collectivistic cultures (e.g., Triandis, 1995) and is also compatible with Kim's (1994a) research. Overall, however, the Japanese and American samples share the idea that 'effective communication' concerns a positive approach, understanding, and clarity (Tominaga, et al., 2002). Kim's (1994a) theory may require a more universal adaptation for an individualist to be able to be concerned with the context and the collectivist to be concerned with clarity. Furthermore, individualists too may be concerned with relationship aspects of a conflict, albeit more out of their own (dis)comfort. Whether out of collectivist or individualist motivations, a person feels embarrassed or inconvenienced and may opt to avoid a confrontation.

It is proposed in the present study that a concern for the other's feelings, concern for avoiding negative evaluation, and a concern for minimising imposition can be summarised into a more universal concern for Inconvenience, whereby the individual would be concerned with preventing uncomfortable questions being raised, concerned with preventing problems to occur,

concerned with preventing awkward situations from happening, concerned with preventing difficult discussions from developing, and concerned with minimising tension. By eliminating the stipulation “for the other”, the self vs. other distinction is not made<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, Kim and Kim (1997) summarised a concern for clarity and a concern of effectiveness into a need for dominance. In the present study it is proposed that dominance is reflected in a need to manage the situation due to a concern for control. Furthermore, concern for Clarity is presented in more neutral universal terms reflecting a need to eliminate ambiguity and a desire to maintain transparency of the issues at hand. At this point in the literature review, a three-way typology of conflict management strategies (Problem Solving, Avoiding, and Dominating) and three concerns are arrived at, and only two communication styles were introduced. The next section will discuss the need for a third communication style.

### **3.4.5. Interlude: The introduction of a third communication style.**

It has become evident that Indirect-Direct communication styles are central to most of the intercultural communication theories reviewed. They reflect a specific dichotomy, leaving room for a more neutral style, which is neither indirect nor direct. As will become evident in the next section, the fourth approach to intercultural communication, Gudykunst’s AUM theory, links Hall’s HCC/LCC to uncertainty avoidance and anxiety (e.g., Chua & Gudykunst, 1987). Like I/C, UA is a broad dimension, thus not particularly useful to explain the particulars of conflict management behaviour within regions such as Europe. However, the underlying motivations of UA may provide an interesting addition to I/C when intercultural communication is assessed in empirical research. AUM furthermore proposes that effective communication is a function of mindfulness, which involves listening to the other and asking questions. Mindfulness, or consultative communication style, is proposed to be the third communication style. Like conflict management strategies, it is proposed that different communication styles can be used

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<sup>4</sup> It is not suggested, however, that this distinction is erroneous. It is proposed that a concern for self vs. other is a function of cultural value preferences and variances in-group/out-group discrimination. For example, for the individualist, a concern for self vs. a concern for the other may be more straightforward than for the collectivist, since the latter makes a more stringent distinction between the identity of ‘the other’, i.e., is he/she part of one’s in-group or out-group? A concern for self or the other is expected to be reflected in one’s cultural profile. For example, an individualist’s concern for other may be explained by a benevolent disposition, whereas a collectivist’s concern for other may be explained by value types such as conformity, tradition, and security.



simultaneously during the conflict to facilitate effective communication, as that is defined by the cultural values of the group in question.

### **3.4.6. AUM: Intercultural communication with strangers**

The following section is a review of Gudykunst's (1995; 1998; in press) work on intercultural communication, which focuses on anxiety and uncertainty avoidance between strangers within a group context, formulated as 37 individual level axioms and 8 cross-cultural axioms. Gudykunst proposes that culture provides theories that allow predictions of other people's behaviour and since predicting behaviour effectively may reduce uncertainty, this is important to intercultural communication. Gudykunst further proposes that when people meet strangers, a feeling of anxiety and uncertainty may arise, which can affect communication behaviour. The theory in its entirety is far too extensive to be applied within one study. Furthermore, the cultural aspect of Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) Theory of Effective Communication cannot be applied to the present design as it is applicable to intercultural communication with strangers at a culture level (Gudykunst, 1998; in press). Nonetheless, particular ideas for individual level analysis are more than relevant and will be discussed below.

#### **3.4.6.1. AUM at the individual level**

AUM theory draws on Social Categorisation Theory (e.g., Tajfel et al., 1971; Turner et al., 1987). In-group interaction is said to cause less anxiety than in-group/out-group interaction (Stephan and Stephan, 1985), mainly because in-group behaviour is more accurately predicted than out-group behaviour (Gudykunst, 1995). This is the main premise of AUM theory. Overall, the theory suggests that if both anxiety and uncertainty are above maximum thresholds, anxiety must be managed before uncertainty is managed. Furthermore, when one is mindful, new categories for strangers are created, as one is open to new information and is aware of how strangers are interpreting messages (Gudykunst, in press). The salience of one's social or personal identity and one's self concept in relation to others may affect levels of anxiety and uncertainty when communicating with strangers. AUM theory proposes that if people are secure in their social identities, and if strangers are perceived to be typical members of an out-group, "an increase in the degree to which our social identities guide our interactions with strangers will produce a

decrease in our anxiety and an increase in our confidence in predicting their behavior” (Gudykunst, in press, p. 18). This proposition sets the context for intercultural communication, in that there is a certain level of uncertainty present, which is a function of the in/out-group differentiation.

If one’s social identity guides one’s behaviour, anxiety goes down and ability to predict behaviour goes up, but these effects will only be generated if one is secure in this identity and if the other’s social identity leaves little room for surprises, i.e., he/she is a typical member of the out-group. It is further proposed that (collective) self-esteem will produce a decrease in anxiety and an increase in the ability to accurately predict behaviour; whereas an increase in threat to one’s social identity produces the reverse effect. Thus, if the cultural context is made salient and the social identity is activated, people should feel less anxious about predicting behaviour. Furthermore, the accuracy of perception of the other is also paramount to effective communication in that “an increase in our ability to categorize strangers in the same categories they categorize themselves will produce an increase in our ability to accurately predict their behavior” (Gudykunst, in press, p. 26). Thus, once the in/out-group differentiation is established, the next step is to see if the category one has associated the out-group member with is correct.

AUM theory also suggests that an increase in the quantity and quality of contact with out-group members may produce a decrease in anxiety and an increase in ability to predict their behaviour accurately. Gudykunst and Nishida (1986) reported that members of individualistic cultures focus on person-based information (e.g., values, attitudes, beliefs) to manage uncertainty, and members of collectivistic cultures focus on group-based information (e.g., group memberships, age, status) to manage uncertainty. Gudykunst and Nishida (2001) examined whether anxiety and uncertainty could predict perceived communication effectiveness in in-group and out-group relationships in Japan and the United States. Results suggest that anxiety negatively predicted perceived effectiveness but attributional confidence positively predicted perceived effectiveness across relationships and cultures. The measure of perceived effectiveness of communication used in this study was based on ‘understanding’. However, it is possible that effective communication means different things for different groups, depending on, for example,

whether they have a person or group focus. More research is needed to come towards a universal conceptualisation of effective communication.

In sum, AUM highlights the importance of in/out-group processes and the role of anxiety and uncertainty, especially in an intercultural context. When people from different cultures, with different foci, come together to discuss a problem, understanding may be one aspect that is important but, as Hammer, Gudykunst, and Wiseman (1978) showed, effective communication also concerns the ability to deal with psychological stress and to establish interpersonal relations.

### **3.4.6.2. AUM and Conflict**

AUM theory further proposes that the extent of feelings of uncertainty or of uncertainty avoidant behaviour varies across cultures, which causes communication style differences. Effective communication requires uncertainty to be between one's minimum and maximum thresholds in order to have sufficient confidence in one's abilities to predict a stranger's behaviour. If uncertainty is too low or too high intercultural miscommunication is likely to occur. Similarly, too little anxiety weakens motivation to converse with a stranger, whereas too much anxiety may halt communication altogether. Avoiding the other person can result from high levels of uncertainty and anxiety, whereas if anxiety and uncertainty are kept between the minimum and maximum levels of threshold one is 'mindful', in the sense that one is consciously aware of communication behaviour, open to new information, able to create new categories, and aware of more than one perspective (Gudykunst, in press; Langer, 1989). However, individualists and collectivists have different concepts of 'effective communication' (e.g., Tominaga, Gudykunst, and Ota, 2002) and conceptualisation of effective communication has not resulted in an empirical measure of effective communication.

Several axioms of the theory have been tested over the years. However, there has been no research regarding anxiety and uncertainty thresholds, nor do studies concerning 'mindfulness' exist. By looking closely at the axioms it appears that in essence what AUM theory suggests is that if people feel comfortable with their own social identity, are willing/needing to talk and open-minded, make a cognitive effort not to fall back on stereotypes, and try to connect

in a respectful way, and if the context is supportive (i.e., more in-group than out-group members, institutional support and a cooperative goal), anxiety and uncertainty may be reduced and effective communication may be achieved. This parallels the premise of other intercultural communication theories, albeit phrased differently. AUM's strength and weakness are centered on the same point: it covers many major theories if all 47 axioms are tested, but, it would be difficult to study all axioms simultaneously. Empirical evidence for AUM would thus involve studies which are not too different from those looking at Hall's LCC/LCC (where the ambiguity of the context may cause uncertainty) or Ting-Toomey's Face Theory (where the need for harmony may cause a certain degree of anxiety). It would require further empirical research to assess AUM's additive value to the process of understanding intercultural communication. Nevertheless, the core idea that, in particular, UA plays a significant role in intercultural communication and conflict is an attractive alternative to I/C. Furthermore, the idea of 'mindfulness' as a communication style that promotes effective communication supports the differentiation between concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles, as it complements the three-way typologies introduced earlier.

### **3.4.7. Communication styles**

In sum, the present study proposes to assess concerns separately from communication styles and conflict management strategies. First, it allows for the assessment of what people are concerned about vis-à-vis how they communicate this. Furthermore, it permits the underlying needs to be more directly accessed rather than being assumed as in the dual concern model. Finally, by linking both concerns and strategies to individual level value types the cultural motivation for concerns and conflict management strategies may be better established. The next section is an evaluation of the intercultural communication theories in relation to communication effectiveness. As will become evident, one's concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles all influence the extent of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction.

### **3.4.8. Communication styles and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction**

In the previous chapter (section 3.5.), the outcome of the conflict was discussed and a case for the incorporation of both effectiveness and comfort was presented. In the following sections,

several empirical findings will be put forward, which suggest that the road towards such goal attainment may be a function of not only one's conflict management strategy but also of how this is communicated. The identification of underlying motivation can facilitate the understanding of why people use certain communication styles, influenced by their endorsement of certain cultural values. Many cultural roads can lead to Rome, which highlights the need to analyse conflict management components such as motivation, strategies, and communication styles separately.

Different cultures may endorse the same conflict management strategy (e.g., problem solving or integrating), yet the way that strategy is communicated may vary per culture. Pruitt (1983) found that both direct and indirect information exchange correlated with socially desirable, integrative agreements. Similarly, Adair, Okumura, and Brett (2001) showed a significant difference in behaviour between American and Japanese intercultural negotiators. People in the U.S.A. integrate ideas through direct information. However, indirect information allows people to infer preferences through offer making, which is also considered integrative behaviour in Japan. The Japanese negotiators were thus found to adapt more and clarify more. Adair et al. concluded that "facility in direct or indirect communications may not lead to joint gains if parties do not also have a norm for information sharing", and that integrative behaviour is based on different motivations, dependent on the culture (Adair et al., 2001, p. 380). Tinsley (2001) found that negative remarks correlated significantly with explicit contracting. However, procedural remarks also correlated with explicit contracting. She too concluded that "the same dimension may cause different conflict behaviors, depending on culture" (p. 591). Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction may be a function of the context which at times may require tact, whereas otherwise one would use frank discussion, depending on whether one is looking to maintain the relationship or avoid ambiguity. Alternatively, Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction as a whole may be viewed as requiring tact, whereas others may think it equals directness, dependent on the cultural values of the individual. Such speculations indicate the gap left in the intercultural communication theory literature up until now. It is proposed that, additionally to the source of the conflict, cultural values which represent group relations (I/C) and cultural values which represent anxiety and uncertainty avoidance (UA) may explain variance in communication styles and thus variance in Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction. The latter cultural dimension in relation to communication shall be discussed below.

### **3.5. The present study**

As was previously discussed, indirectness in the East is found to be used with the in-group and directness for the out-group, whereas in the West Indirectness is reserved for close relations and directness is used for everybody else. Western cultures have a less distinct tendency to distinguish between in-groups and out-groups, but there may be a distinct difference between in-group and intimate partner. It is thus possible that whereas directness is viewed as the appropriate communication style to use in the West because it is clear and concise and does not rely on contextual cues, it is used as a formal, professional and differentiating communication style in the East. As has become evident, Collectivists tend to be more Indirect than Individualists when they were asked about communication styles with someone from the same culture (in-group) (e.g., Gudykunst et al., 1996), but they were found to be direct with people from other cultures (e.g., Adair et al, 2001). There are however, few studies that have studied the indirectness and directness of people within individualistic cultures. Here we arrive at the crux of the thesis: indirectness-directness has been an issue related to I/C in the East. However, because Western cultures do not distinguish between in-groups and out-groups to the extent that Eastern cultures do, indirectness-directness may be more of an issue of clarity and uncertainty avoidance in areas such as Europe and the U.S.A., because directness is viewed as the preferred form of communication to maintain clarity but indirectness is employed if the relationship is at stake.

The premise of the current chapter was that concerns, communication styles and conflict strategies are strongly linked but that a more insightful model can be derived if these concepts are studied separately. In order to assess concerns and communication styles separately from conflict management strategies one of the goals of the present study was to develop and test a concerns measure and a communication measure that could stand on their own but that reflect the three styles as proposed by Putnam and Wilson (1982). As described in this chapter, the concern measure will incorporate Kim's (Kim, 1994; Kim & Kim, 1997) ideas of need for Dominance and Social Harmony by testing whether respondents have a concern for Clarity and a concern for Control, or a Concern for Inconvenience respectively. Furthermore, it will incorporate the Indirect-Direct communication style dichotomy, which is proposed to be linked to Uncertainty Avoidance, additionally to Consultative communication style, or

‘mindfulness’ as proposed by Gudykunst (in press), which compliments Problem Solving and concern for Clarity and is likely to be endorsed by both individualistic samples.

### **3.6. In sum**

Communication is the process of “assigning significance to messages” (Gudykunst, 1998, p. 9). Research shows that communication styles are important to the course of interaction, especially to people with different cultural backgrounds. The socio-cultural approach incorporates SIT, recognising that the influence of culture on communication is particularly profound when cultural membership is made salient (e.g., in an intercultural context). Intercultural communication has increased dramatically and the focus of intercultural research has been on East vs. West communication style differences and effective communication behaviour between strangers. The main intercultural communication theories involve High Context vs. Low Context Theory, Face Theory, and AUM, which propose that communication style differences are predominantly an issue of Directness vs. Indirectness. Mixed results in Indirect/Direct communication style research between cultures indicate that more detailed research into communication styles is required. The theories focus on I/C (HCC/LCC and Face Theory) and Uncertainty Avoidance (AUM), which are broad cultural dimensions but the application of the latter to individual level comparisons within Europe may prove to be useful to explain interregional variance. Cultures that use a(n) (in)direct styles of speech may assume others use or at least appreciate the same style of communication. Overcoming misunderstandings due to Direct-Indirect style differences is difficult because “in seeking to clarify, each speaker continues to use the very strategy which confused the other in the first place” (Tannen, 1979, p. 5). As a result, it is useful to view conflict management strategies as separate from concerns and communication styles, additionally to assessing the underlying cultural values which motivate a particular approach to conflict.

*Truth, like competence, beauty, and contact lenses, is in the eye of the beholder. Laurence J. Peter*

## **Synthesis of the literature: The Hypotheses**

### **4.1. Introduction**

The review of the literature indicated that teams within organisations are likely to interact cooperatively, competitively, or a combination of the two. Furthermore, according to in-group/out-group differentiation, team members are likely to view their own team engaging in socially desirable behaviour and as implied by the term, socially desirable behaviour is likely to be determined as such by the cultural norms and values of the group. The review of the literature has shown that conflict behaviour can be classified as several components such as underlying motivations or concerns, which are expressed in terms of a choice of strategy to work towards a certain outcome, and these strategies are communicated by using a certain communication style. Should a conflict take place between different national groups, participants' cultural values are likely to explain some of their behavioural tactics. Research has shown that cultural values predict concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles, but it has not combined these components into one study. The present study aims to look at concerns, conflict management strategies, communication styles and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction to provide a more complete picture of the conflict management process.

This chapter is divided into two sections: a general section and a sample specific section. In the first section, the conflict management and culture literature will be summarised and the hypotheses presented. In the sample specific section, the samples will be introduced with specific reference to cultural (value) differences.



## **4.2. Limitations of previous research and outline of an improved design.**

The gaps in the conflict management literature are summarised in this section and concerns regarding sampling, emic validity, and use of cultural value dimensions will be covered. The latter two will be discussed in section 4.4.

With regard to sampling and validity, Bradford, Stringfellow, & Weitz (2001) concluded, after studying conflict management behaviour in simulations typically using undergraduate students in role-playing scenarios, that “the results from using a simulation may be biased because it does not capture the same level of task involvement that might occur in ad-hoc, cross-functional teams solving problems” (p. 23). Secondly, Game Theory researchers have assessed conflict in experimental settings, thereby sterilising the context of the conflict situation, which is useful for theory testing (Kanazawa, 1999) but may be missing valuable information provided by the inclusion of contextual variables.

The present study looks at managers who provided self-reports of actual negotiation situations with teams within their organisation. Game Theory research has been marked by the competition vs. cooperation bipolarisation; a team could either cooperate or compete with the other team, or use a combination of both. However, real life conflicts are highly contextualised and the need for cooperative or competitive tactics may only become apparent during the course of the interaction. To maintain a design that provides insight into team interaction, the present study assesses the perception of one’s own and other team’s behaviour while controlling for contextual variables such as number of participants present, hierarchical relationship, age, tenure, years of acquaintance, gender, language spoken during conflict, and departmental membership.

Furthermore, previous conflict research focused mostly on individual behaviour, not an individual’s perspective of *team* behaviour. A focus on one’s group vs. other group provides an insight into the perception of the other team, which can be viewed as a more realistic representation of a team based organisational negotiation. Furthermore, an analysis can be made as to what constitutes a socially desirable behaviour in each sample, as respondents are expected to agree strongly that their own team engages in such behaviour especially in comparison with the other team. For example, as Problem Solving is socially desirable, it is likely that many

respondents will agree that their team engaged in Problem Solving behaviour and that the opponent was less Problem Solving oriented.

Fourthly, previous research tested conflict management strategies and communication styles within the same measure. The present research provides a more specific picture through the inclusion of underlying concerns and by looking separately at conflict management strategies and communication styles. Moreover, previous research has focused on meeting effectiveness, looking specifically at the short-term benefits of ‘winning the game’ only, not highlighting the benefits of feeling comfortable with one another. In the present study, Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction measures both comfort and success. Overall, the present research is thus teasing out the components of conflict management approaches and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction as a whole.

### **4.3. Conflict Management Approach: The hypotheses**

#### **4.3.1. Concerns**

An approach to conflict and underlying concerns has emerged from Kim’s (1994a) work on conversational constraints, which focused on the underlying concerns individuals may have when communicating. Research has shown that ‘Clarity’ is of high concern to individuals as it is a socially desirable behaviour (e.g., Kim, 1994a; Tominaga, et al., 2002). However, individualistically oriented people may be more concerned with Clarity as this was theorised to be linked to a need for dominance, which also relates to a concern for effectiveness and control. Collectivists, on the other hand, have more need for harmony than individualists (Kim, 1994a). Concern for Harmony reflects the degree of tension and embarrassment present during the conflict; in the present study it is defined as concern for ‘Inconvenience’. Furthermore, behaviour that is socially desirable is likely to be attributed to one’s own team (in-group), while socially undesirable behaviour is likely to be attributed to the out-group (Hewstone & Ward, 1985; Semin & Fiedler, 1992; Taylor & Jaggi, 1974). Given that the Dutch and British samples are highly individualistic, this reasoning leads to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Managers are more concerned about Clarity than about Control, about which they are more concerned than Inconvenience.

Hypothesis 1b: Managers perceive the other team to be less concerned about Clarity and more concerned about Control than their own team.

### **4.3.2. Conflict management strategies**

To recap, the dual concern model is frequently applied to explain differences in conflict management approach. The degree of concern for self and concern for the other leads to different conflict management styles. According to Rahim (1992) the 'best' conflict management strategy is a function of contextual variables. Gelfand, Nishii, et al. (1998) found that American students viewed conflicts to be concerned with competition, individual rights, and autonomy, whereas Japanese students viewed conflicts to be concerned with cooperation, violations of duties, and obligations. Dominating strategies were found to be preferred by individualistic respondents over Avoiding (Morris et al., 1998). As discussed in chapter three, the theory proposes that Avoiding is the result of a combination of concern for self and others. However, theoretically, a low concern for self and others cannot result in Avoiding behaviour if studies have shown that collectivists with high concerns for the other Avoid more than individualists (e.g., Morris et al., 1998) or even that individualists themselves prefer to use Avoiding if the conflict is over a relational matter (e.g., De Dreu, 1997). Again, as with concerns, such preferences for conflict management strategies are expected to be subject to in-group/out-group differentiation.

Hypothesis 2a: Managers use a Problem Solving strategy more than a Dominating strategy, which they use more than an Avoiding strategy.

Hypothesis 2b: Managers perceive the other team as less Problem Solving and more Dominating than their own team.

### **4.3.3. Communication Styles**

Interest integration (Problem Solving) is easier when preferences are explicitly communicated (Fisher et al., 1991; Tinsley, 1998). Effective communication for individualists involves understanding others' messages, compatibility, positive dispositions, nonverbal communication and outcomes, amount of communication, and adapting messages (Tominaga et al., 2002). As AUM theory suggests (Gudykunst, 1995; 1998; in press), being mindful of the other will benefit the effectiveness of communication, translated in the present study by 'being Consultative' (i.e., listening, asking questions). Studies assessing face work have focused mainly on the dichotomy of Indirect vs. Direct communication as most frequently used by collectivists and individualists respectively (e.g., Clackworthy, 1996; Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994). Communication styles, finally, are also expected to be thought about in terms of socially desirable or undesirable behaviour, and in-group/out-group differentiation is expected to occur accordingly.

Hypothesis 3a: Managers use a Consultative communication style more than a Direct style, which they use more than an Indirect style.

Hypothesis 3b: Managers perceive the other team as less Consultative than their own team.

## **4.4. The cultural focus**

Conflicts between individuals from different national cultures are believed to be more difficult to resolve than conflicts within a national culture since "people involved in within-culture conflicts can assume similarities in behavioural dispositions, values" whereas "people involved in between-culture conflicts cannot make such assumptions" (Ohbuchi, Fukushima, Tedeschi, 1999, p. 1346). The present study focused on the particulars of a negotiation situation within a multinational business organisation that has headquarters in two different countries (Netherlands and UK) whose employees work together frequently, which sometimes leads to conflict due to cultural differences. The present study focuses on explanations for differences in conflict management approach based on cultural value types, which include, but are not limited to, I/C.

In general, the field of cross-cultural management research "lacks adequately developed theories that could help us to understand the variations found between management practices in

the relatively collectivist cultures of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, or the variations in management practices within the relatively individualist nations of Europe” (Smith, 2001, p. 21). The criticism referring to variations within individualistic nations is the focus of the present research: to gain more knowledge on the variations in managers’ conflict management within Europe.

Within individualistic regions research has shown that nations are not identical in their individualism; for example, Swedes stress equality, whereas North Americans emphasise hierarchy (Triandis, 1995). Furthermore, several researchers have found variance between samples when comparing individualistic nations on issues such as conflict (e.g., Leung & Bond, 1990; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998) and deception (Triandis, Carnevale, Gelfand et al., 2001). Specifically, within Europe, cultural diversity is almost as great as within the world (Hofstede, 1996; Schwartz & Ros, 1995; Schwartz & Bardi, 1997). Van Oudenhoven et al. (1998) compared conflict behaviour of five European countries and found preference differences in constructive ways of conflict management. For example, managers from Spain and Germany employed more Avoiding behaviour than managers from Denmark, Great Britain, and the Netherlands. Lichtenberger and Naulleau’s (1993) findings based on 216 French and German Joint Ventures showed that many respondents reported tension between the two nationalities due to differences in their approach to work.

Despite this empirical evidence for intra-regional differences in conflict management behaviour, intercultural research using samples that are mainly individualistic occurs less frequently than research comparing individualistic vs. collectivistic cultures or research looking at intra-collectivist differences. This gap may stem from the fact that one of the main criticisms of cross-cultural psychology was that most of the theories and empirical data came from the West, specifically North America. However, it appears that the balance has tilted the other way; the East vs. West comparison has become the most frequent comparison in cross-cultural research. Although this has generated very interesting findings, it focused efforts onto the I/C dimension, whereby I/C became a cure all for cultural phenomena in the field. In general, cultural value differences between individualistic countries may be more subtle than comparisons between

collectivists and individualists, but nonetheless they are real and expected to affect conflict management behaviour.

In order to arrive at a set of hypotheses describing national differences and the role of cultural values it is important to review the cultural background of the two samples by looking at some relevant cultural characteristics and empirical research that established areas of specific cultural differences.

#### **4.4.1. Introducing the samples**

Brief descriptions of the samples in the present research can be found in Chapter six, page 131. However, since the cultural value orientation of the samples are incorporated into some of the hypotheses, it is important at this point to give an overview of each culture. Each section consists of some general background information and general empirical findings regarding value preferences, conflict management behaviour, and communication styles.

##### **4.4.1.1. The Netherlands**

The Dutch are paradoxical in that they are known to be sober, regulated, and conformist, but also progressive, tolerant, and challenging of convention (Van Dijk and Punch, 1993). According to Hofstede's (1980) research Dutch culture is both individualistic and high on femininity. Usually perceived as an oxymoron, this means that the freedom of the individual is valued as much as a need for consensus and living in harmony with one's environment. Schwartz (1994) reported the Dutch to score high on Harmony and Intellectual Autonomy, value types describing concepts such as 'protecting the environment' and 'broadmindedness'. Individual level research has also shown that the Dutch prefer constructive conflict management behaviour with peers (Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998), they may avoid a confrontation if the relationship is at risk (De Dreu, 1997), and link integrative behaviour with joint outcomes and group climate in bargaining studies (Beersma, 2001). In daily business life the Dutch have been accused of being direct and even rude, certainly not diplomatic and ambiguous (Van Rijswijk, 2002).

### **4.4.1.2. Great Britain**

The British are individualistic, self-controlled, and have a strong sense of fair play, but are also xenophobic, reserved, and conservative (Tayeb, 1993). The values prevalent in British society according to Hofstede's (1980) research are Individualism and Masculinity; effectively describing it as society focused on the individual gain and ambition in relation to ego and work. The findings according to Schwartz' (1994) research show a more detailed picture, whereby the UK scores high on Mastery and Affective Autonomy, which represent values such as 'ambitious' and 'independent', and 'enjoying life' and 'varied life' respectively. Individual level conflict management research showed the British to be slightly less constructive than fellow European managers (Van Oudenhoven et al., 1996), but with a preference for interactive negotiation (Clear & Rungay, 1992) and adversarial procedural models of conflict resolution (Lind, Erickson, Friedland, & Dickenberger, 1978).

### **4.4.1.3. World Value Survey**

The following sections will review different sources of empirical research that have incorporated British and Dutch samples in their studies. The first one to be discussed, the World Values Survey, is a worldwide investigation of sociocultural and political change being carried out by an international network of social scientists. The surveys consist of basic values and beliefs of publics in more than 65 societies on six inhabited continents. It built on the European Values Surveys, which commenced in 1981, and the last survey took place in 1999-2001. The investigators claim that the investigation has produced evidence of gradual but pervasive changes in what people want out of life, and that the basic direction of these changes is, to some extent, predictable (Inglehart, 1999).

Comparing nations' scores on authority (i.e., traditional vs. secular-rational authority) and correlating these with their scores on survival (represented by values such as 'not happy', 'trust science') or well-being (life satisfaction, trust people), the Netherlands and Britain are both highly secular-rational regarding authority and both score high on well-being. This is represented by items such as finding divorce, abortion and homosexuality acceptable, trusting people, and

having postmaterialist values. According to the findings, the Netherlands is somewhat higher on well-being and secular-rational authority than Britain (Inglehart, 1997). Furthermore, comparing level of trust and economic development, people in the Netherlands and Britain both trust people highly in general (approx. 55% and 45% of the population respectively) compared to countries with a lower GNP per Capita. Measuring cross-national differences in satisfaction with one's life as a whole from 1973 to 1998, Inglehart and Klingemann (2000) report that people in the Netherlands are more satisfied than people in Britain. On the whole, compared to other countries both The Netherlands and Britain score high on life satisfaction and happiness, and reportedly 92.5% and 87.5% of the population are satisfied with life respectively. The Netherlands and Britain overall seem to be similar, particularly considering their religious (protestant), political (democratic), and sociocultural (wellbeing) background (Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000). It is thus no surprise that the countries would be clustered together for analysis in cross-cultural or pan European research at a cultural level.

#### **4.4.1.4. Cluster research: Apples and Oranges?**

Due to their geographical proximity, the similarity in governmental structure, and their mutual Protestant background, there seem to be few differences between The Netherlands and Britain. In fact, throughout history, the two nations rarely clashed (except for three trade wars fought at sea from 1652-1654, 1665-1667 and 1672-1674<sup>5</sup>) and organisational marriages are deemed quite successful and have occurred regularly (Royal Dutch/Shell, Reed-Elsevier, and Unilever). Although researchers would cluster Britain and The Netherlands together as West European or individualistic, some more specific research categorises Britain into an Anglo cluster, and The Netherlands in either a Nordic (Hofstede, 1987) or Germanic cluster (Gupta, Hanges, and Dorfman, 2002). The Anglo cluster, as defined by Ashkanasy, Trevor-Roberts, and Earnshaw (2002), comprises Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa (white sample). According to this study it is mainly characterised by an orientation of low Power Distance and low Institutional Collectivism (“encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action” p. 5). The Germanic Europe cluster includes Austria, Germany

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<sup>5</sup> The last Anglo-Dutch war was between the British and William III of Orange, who was assigned Stadhouder in the Netherlands (ruler of an area in the name of the land owner) in 1672. Ironically he later became King William III of England, after James II of England was dethroned in 1689.



(former West), Germany (former East), The Netherlands, and Switzerland. The cluster was found to be highly Uncertainty Avoidant and low Power Distance oriented. Both clusters would like to see their leaders as participative and charismatic. Cluster members are said to be more successful at cooperating than non-cluster members due to their cultural similarities. However, it seems that clustering depends on the purpose of the study and there is therefore no 'perfect' or widely accepted way of clustering (see also Gupta et al., 2002). Furthermore, interregional differences requires clustering to be done with caution, and results to be interpreted in the context of the study – i.e., clusters applied to, for example, leadership preferences, may break down when those countries clustered are assessed on other variables.

#### **4.4.1.5. Cultural differences – a brief review**

Hofstede's research showed that British and Dutch cultures are high on Individualism and low on Power Distance, yet differ on Masculinity/Femininity and Uncertainty Avoidance. In other words, both cultures place an emphasis on individual initiative and achievement and de-emphasise hierarchy or inequality. They differ with regard to feelings of powerlessness toward external forces, whereby the Dutch are more concerned about this than the British (highly Uncertainty Avoidant), and with regard to the importance of achievement and leadership (Masculinity), which is more important within British culture than Dutch culture. The latter differences was also supported by Schwartz's findings with regard to Harmony and Mastery; Dutch culture endorsed the former, whereas British culture the latter. The World Value Survey and cluster analyses provide some indication that British and Dutch cultures are relatively similar in that they are secular-rational with respect to authority, trusting towards other people, score high on life satisfaction, and low on Power Distance. Main differences are established in a higher score for the Netherlands on general well-being and satisfaction. Furthermore, British culture can also be described as Institutionally Collectivist, whereas Dutch culture can be described as Uncertainty Avoidant. Uncertainty Avoidance was found to correlate with Harmony, and Masculinity, the opposite of Femininity correlated with Mastery (Schwartz, 1994). Mastery is positioned opposite Harmony and Egalitarian Commitment in Schwartz' culture level circumplex model (see also Chapter two, Fig. 2.2).

#### 4.4.1.6. Individual-level value differences

Schwartz and Sagie (2000) proposed that if one is exposed to industrialised work settings one is more likely to develop Openness to Change type values. This would thus imply that members of industrialised countries (such as the Netherlands and Britain) would have consensus about values and that these values are likely to reflect Hedonism, Stimulation, and Self Direction, which are opposed to Tradition, Conformity, and Security. Researchers proposed that cultures high on autonomy may be more likely to pursue instrumental goals (e.g., removing an obstacle blocking a task) and employ tactics such as formal argumentation and information exchange (Gelfand & Dyer, 2000) and that the conflict management strategy Problem Solving (integrating), which can be associated with instrumental goals, can be explained by Openness to Change (Kozan and Ergin, 1999). Indeed, in a study looking at the possibility of correlating conflict styles with cultural values using German subjects, Bilsky and Jehn (2002) found that integrating correlated with Self Direction. Based on these findings, individuals from an industrialised culture are likely to be similar in their endorsement of cultural values and conflict management strategies, i.e., cooperative or Problem Solving strategies.

Schwartz's individual level scores for British and Dutch samples are not published but were made available (Schwartz, personal communication) and are displayed in Table 4.1. The table shows that the pattern of preferred value types for both samples are relatively similar. Schwartz & Bardi (2001) indicated that the rank order of value types within each cultural sample is similar across many samples. Based on the Schwartz data both samples value Benevolence and Self Direction most, and Power and Tradition least. The main differences that are displayed are a higher score for the Dutch sample on Universalism, Hedonism, and Self Direction, whereas the UK endorses Benevolence, Conservation, Security, Tradition, Power, Achievement, and Stimulation more. The scores for Britain and The Netherlands are centered<sup>6</sup> and based on teacher samples obtained in 1993. Hypothesis 4a concerns the question of whether managers in general differentiate between the higher order values – i.e., whether the profiles for both Dutch

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<sup>6</sup> Schwartz centered the means around the international mean of four to avoid problems of multicollinearity, which poses computational problems as the IVs are highly correlated (>.90) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Centering of scores become important when one wants to include interactions of IVs or power of IVs in a prediction equation (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2001).

and British managers are flat<sup>7</sup> – the hypothesis is a reflection of the circumplex model and the conflict relationship sequence between the higher order values. Hypothesis 4b concerns the question of whether the Dutch means differ from the British means for each value type – i.e., whether the profiles are parallel – the hypotheses are a reflection of the national differences in the degree of endorsement of cultural values.

TABLE 4.1. Individual level means of the Value Types for the UK and The Netherlands (Schwartz, personal communication).

<b>Schwartz value types</b>	<b>Higher Order Value Types</b>	<b><i>The Netherlands</i></b>	<b><i>Britain</i></b>
<b>Universalism</b>	Self	4.46	4.16
<b>Benevolence</b>	Transcendence	4.81	4.96
<b>Tradition</b>		2.62	2.75
<b>Conformity</b>	Conservation	3.40	4.07
<b>Security</b>		3.51	3.96
<b>Achievement</b>	Self	1.86	2.13
<b>Power</b>	Enhancement	3.73	4.03
<b>Hedonism</b>	Openness	4.58	3.85
<b>Stimulation</b>	to	3.16	3.21
<b>Self Direction</b>	Change	4.84	4.34

Hypothesis 4a: Managers endorse Self Transcendence more than Openness to Change, which they endorse more than Conservation, which they endorse more than Self Enhancement.

Hypothesis 4b: Dutch managers endorse Self Transcendence more and Self Enhancement less than British Managers

The remainder of this chapter presents hypotheses that focus on those cultural values that may represent uncertainty avoidance and related cultural values and attempts to link these to conflict management and communication behaviour. These hypotheses are somewhat exploratory, however, as Schwartz (1994) has only shown a relation between UA and his value types at a cultural level (i.e., UA correlates positively with Harmony). Figure 4.1 depicts the potential overlap of Hofstede's cultural values with individual level Schwartz value types according to the results of Ohbuchi et al., (1999). The figure shows that, according to Ohbuchi

<sup>7</sup> If a profile is flat, no differences exist between, for example, the subscales that make up a phenomena., in this case the value types. If profiles are parallel, no differences exist between one sample's profile and another. See chapter seven, section 7.2 for more details on Profile Analyses.

et al.'s findings, UA is not linked to Schwartz's individual level value types. The interpretation of these results and/or the use of them for current hypotheses is problematic as culture level and individual level value types are not equivalent. Furthermore, some confusion exists with regard to the exact meaning of Hofstede's definition of the term. Hofstede (2001) re-evaluated UA as an aversion against anxiety rather than uncertainty, which highlights the discrepancy found between Hofstede's and GLOBE studies results. Based on the GLOBE studies, uncertainty avoidance is more a matter of "the extent to which members of an organisation or society strive to avoid uncertainty by reliance on social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices to alleviate the unpredictability of future events" (House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002, p. 5). The GLOBE studies indicated that, although both the Anglo and Germanic cluster have a low PD focus in common, one difference lay in a high score on UA for the Germanic cluster (See Table 4.2). Table 4.2. provides culture level scores of several 'individualist' countries. Particularly of interest is the increase of Uncertainty Avoidance from West to East and the general desire to be less ('should be') uncertainty avoidant than the status quo ('as is'). Anglo-Saxon countries are less uncertainty avoidant than Germanic countries, and UA appears to be a socially undesirable trait. Yet, UA can be seen as a reflection of both mindfulness and a need for effectiveness or order (e.g., Gudykunst, in press). For example, the World Survey results indicated the emphasis among the Dutch for social welfare and Kim (1994a) found that individualists have a need for effectiveness, clarity and dominance. The present study uses individual-level cultural value types as indicators of an uncertainty avoidant *disposition*, to predict concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles that are proposed to reflect uncertainty avoidant *behaviour*. The focus of the present study is to attempt to explain conflict management differences by applying a broader spectrum of cultural dimensions rather than just UA<sup>8</sup>, by using Schwartz's SVS.

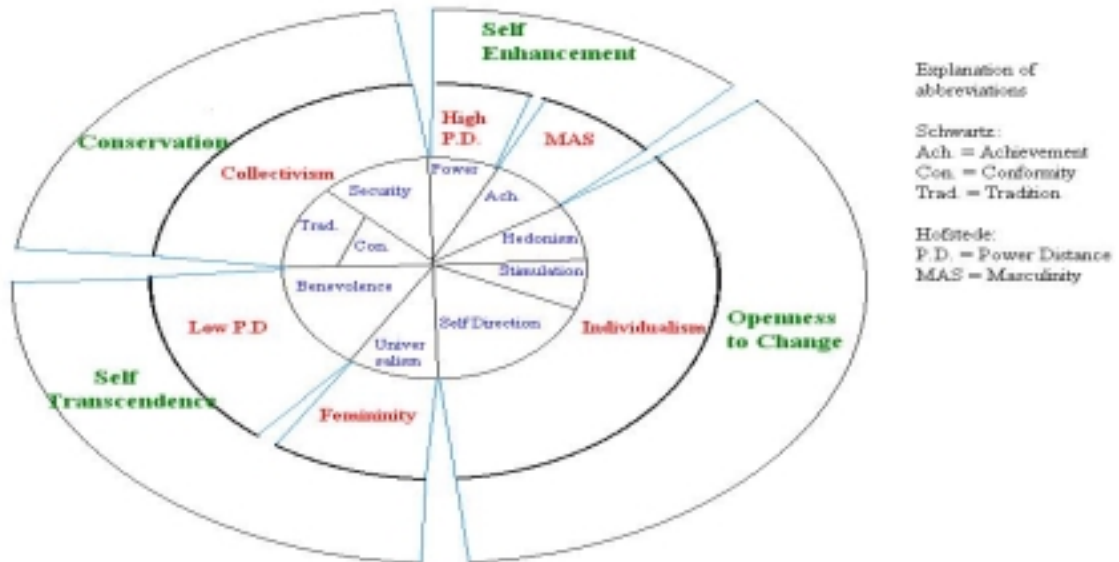
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<sup>8</sup> Or IC for that matter, as discussed in chapter three and four.

TABLE 4.2. Country mean scores for Hofstede’s and GLOBE’s Uncertainty Avoidance according the Anglo (Ashkanasy, Trevor-Roberts, and Earnshaw, 2002) vs. Germanic cluster (Szabo, Brodbeck, Den Hartog, Reber, Weibler, and Wunderer, 2002).

<b>Uncertainty Avoidance</b>	<b>Hofstede (1980) (ranking 1-53; 1=uncertainty avoidant)</b>	<b>GLOBE (as is) (7 point scale)</b>	<b>GLOBE (should be) (7 point scale)</b>
<i>The U.S.A.</i>	43	4.15	4.00
<i>Ireland</i>	47	4.30	4.02
<i>UK</i>	47	4.65	4.11
<i>The Netherlands</i>	35	4.70	3.24
<i>Germany (West)</i>	29	5.22	3.32
<i>Germany (East)</i>	N/A	5.16	3.94

Fig. 4.1. Schwartz individual level value types and higher order value types as compared to Hofstede’s culture level dimensions.



First of all, if Dutch managers are particularly concerned with UA, they may have a need for consensus and be inclined to maintain clarity and keep communication lines open. Thus, they are more likely to score low on concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding, and Indirect communication style as this may cause ambiguity than British managers. It is expected that cultural values will mediate the effect nationality has on differences in conflict management approach. If one cares for the other but this care is accompanied by a need for uncertainty avoidance and need for consensus, a Self Transcendence orientation is expected to mediate effects for nationality. Alternatively, if one is Self Enhancement oriented, i.e., one is ambitious and looking for achievement, one may opt to avoid conflicts, because one wants to preserve relationships to advance one's position without disturbances, particularly if the conflict is an internal matter and one is likely to come across the same people in the future.

More generally, based on the development of industrialised nations and findings in conflict research, those people with an open mind and a care for the welfare of others are likely to engage in Problem Solving behaviour, maintaining transparency through mindful, or consultative communication. If however, one is more concerned with maintaining the status quo (Conservation) and ambition (Self Enhancement) one may be more concerned with managing the meeting, using a Dominating strategy and communicating this in a Direct fashion. Below are listed the hypotheses with regard to differences in approach to conflict management.

Hypothesis 5a: National differences are expressed through lower Dutch concern for Inconvenience, a lower use of Avoiding strategy and lower use of Indirect communication style.

Hypothesis 5b: Self Transcendence and Self Enhancement mediate national differences in concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style.

Hypothesis 5c: Openness to Change and Self Transcendence predict concern for Clarity, Problem Solving, and Consultative communication style.

Hypothesis 5d: Self Enhancement and Conservation predict concern for Control, Dominating strategy, and Direct communication style.

#### **4.5. Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction**

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the hypotheses regarding the concerns and communication styles as separate concepts within one's conflict management approach, additional to conflict management strategies. Conflict does not take place in a vacuum – it is characterised by a plethora of contextual variables (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993). “Research has examined only a limited number of proximal situational conditions in negotiations across cultures, and thus our understanding of the moderating effects of culture on negotiation is limited” (Gelfand & Dyer, 2000, p. 63).

Values are motivational goals and thus in the present study, they are hypothesised to be linked to Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction, which includes both the degree of success of a negotiation and the degree of comfort of the participants during the negotiation. Globalisation and the reinforcement of Western values within an organisational sample may tend to produce similar modern psychological characteristics (Inkeles, 1983), which may lead to similar value priorities among people, most likely those represented by Openness to Change (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). On a more universal level, values which represent Self Transcendence have been found to be a global favorite (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). Together, the values which represent Openness to Change and Self Transcendence describe an individual who looks for excitement, pleasure, and independent thought but with a concern for the welfare of people regardless of their (in/out) group membership. In the context of a conflict or negotiation, managers that endorse Self Transcendence are likely to be willing to work together and are likely to find it important to feel comfortable during the conflict. However, the actual success rate of the conflict may be a function of managers who endorse Self Enhancement values such as Power and Achievement. Furthermore, the behaviour of the opponent is crucial as well; people who perceive the other to cooperate are more inclined to cooperate themselves. Cultural values and the other team's conflict management approach will act as mediators in the relationship between one's conflict management approach and the degree of success and level of comfort. Nevertheless, contextual variables may influence the conflict additionally to cultural values (Capellin & Sherer, 1991; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1997) and should be controlled for. Aspects such as tenure, age, length of acquaintance, number of participants, gender, and organisational

background (commercial or technical) can affect the negotiation process. They thus should be incorporated as moderators.

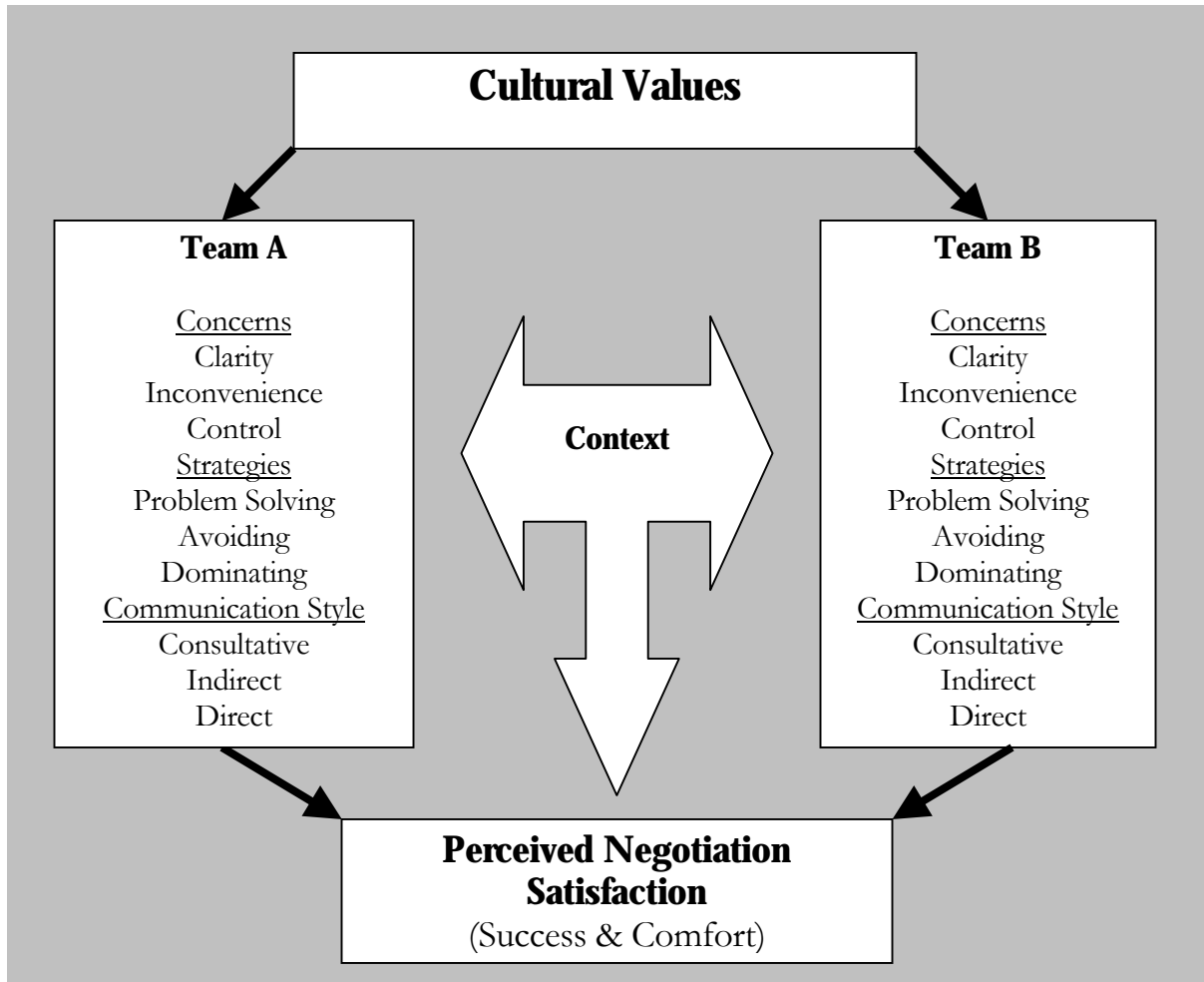
The following model (Fig. 4.2) was also presented in chapter four and describes the relationships as discussed above. Culture is expected to influence the underlying concerns (concern for Clarity, Inconvenience, and Control), conflict management strategies (i.e., Problem Solving, Avoiding, and Dominating), and communication styles (i.e., Consultative, Indirect, and Direct). The purpose of the present study is to focus on predictive validity of concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication, while controlling for contextual aspects like age, hierarchical relationship, and gender, on Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6a: Openness to Change and Self Transcendence, own and other team's concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative communication style will predict Comfort.

Hypothesis 6b: Self Enhancement, own and other team's concern for Control, Dominating Strategy, and Direct communication style will predict Success.



Fig. 4.2. A Model of Approaches to Conflict Management by International Teams



#### 4.6. A summary

In the present study, the particular focus is on managers' preferential conflict management approach, and more specifically, which values in British and Dutch culture lead to (lack of) concern for Clarity, Inconvenience or Control, conflict Problem Solving, Avoiding or Dominating and Consultative or (In)Direct communication style. It is expected that both Dutch and British managers are concerned with Clarity, and use a Problem Solving strategy and Consultative communication style. Furthermore, due to in/out-group differentiation, it is expected that both samples will rate their own team higher on the above mentioned conflict management approaches than the other team.

Values have a universal meaning (Schwartz, 1992, 1994), but the associations between a value and behaviour may not necessarily be the same universally due to cultural relativism. For this reason it is possible that I/C is a good indicator of Avoiding or Dominating in individualist vs. collectivist cultures comparison, whereas UA may be more appropriate for comparisons between individualist cultures on differences in conflict management. Dutch managers are expected to be more uncertainty avoidant than British managers because they have a need for consensus and effectiveness and therefore national differences are expected to be expressed through a lower score for Dutch managers on concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style compared to British managers.

Nevertheless, despite cultural differences, both British and Dutch managers are expected to endorse Openness to Change and Self Transcendence, which are expected to explain the comfort aspect of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction. Success is expected to be linked to Self Enhancement. However, Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction is likely to be a function of CMA and contextual variables, additional to cultural values. The next chapter will present the development of the conflict management approaches measures (Chapter six). The differences and relationship between the main variables are then discussed in Chapter seven, followed by a discussion and conclusion with suggestions for further research (Chapter eight).

**The making of a measure.**

The current chapter is a description of the methodologies that were developed to investigate respondents' views of conflict management processes within their organisation and their cultural value preferences. The reasons for preferring a questionnaire design over experiments or qualitative methods will be outlined, followed by an assessment of the measures to be used in the present research as scale development is an iterative process of construction, assessment, revision, and re-evaluation. Finally, this chapter will describe the development of research methods used to study conflict management approach of teams in a multinational organisation, focusing on criteria for scale consistency including SSA for the SVS, and Cronbach's Alpha and Factor Analysis for the conflict management approach measures.

**5.1. Approaches to a comparison of cultures**

In conflict management and organisational research several methods are available; for example, interviews, discourse analysis, artificial laboratory experiments, and surveys. Studies investigating conflict management behaviour in artificial laboratory experiments may not be relevant to everyday social life (e.g., Argyle & Coleman, 1995) or in reference to in-group out-group (conflict) research (Vivian & Brown, 1995). Furthermore, Kanazawa (1999) argues that laboratory experiments have little external validity as their main purpose is to test a theory, not to test a model that incorporates confounding and contextual variables.

The current study applied conflict management and communication theories to an organisational setting, testing an adapted version of Gelfand and Dyer's (2000) model. Most of the data were obtained via questionnaires, a method whose methodological qualities have been evaluated (Crampton & Wagner, 1994), and is relatively easy to develop, administer, and analyse, and is cost effective (e.g., Aycan, 2000). This is particularly relevant if the survey is conducted within an organisation where research is subject to restrictions such as time pressures, content constraints, and access to a limited data pool, as was the case in the present study. Furthermore, since the design of the study investigated attitudes rather than cognitive processes (e.g., priming

experiments), a questionnaire seemed most appropriate. However, as the study also looks at the perception of behaviour and observations of actual conflict situations were not possible, exploratory research through interviews, informal surveys, and observation were conducted before embarking on the construction of the questionnaire.

To gain insight into the particulars of intercultural conflict management behaviour and perception, it was deemed important that the samples interacted frequently. After all, there is little point in asking individuals about the conflict management approach of a person from another culture if they have not interacted, unless one was studying, for instance, stereotyping. By gaining access to and being employed by a British/Dutch multinational that has two head offices, one in The Netherlands and one in Britain, it was possible to experience the practices of the company and observe interactions on a day-to-day basis. The samples represent individualistic Europe. However, the Dutch are known for their pragmatic Directness and the British for their polite reticence (e.g., Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993). Several informal interviews about the nature of cooperation and everyday functioning with members of the other culture were conducted with Dutch and British managers in their native language, to qualify these characteristics. The present research involves analyses of samples of respondents from the two countries matched on the basis of organisation membership, level of management, and department type. Differences in cultural values will provide an insight into the normative value preferences of each individual based on their cultural heritage, but, cultural differences should not be measured by surveys alone. In order to establish what phenomena exist and then study these on a larger scale, it is important for the researcher to use both qualitative and quantitative data (Jackson & Aycan, 2001).

### **5.1.1. Qualitative findings.**

In a review of Dutch employees in the UK by Elsevier (Anglo/Dutch monthly news magazine) it was put forward that the directness of the Dutch does not lead to too many problems, other than that the Dutch are more comfortable putting the facts on the table and want to work towards a solution more swiftly than the British (Van Rijswijk, 2002). As long as this is not done in a blunt but rather in a subdued way, this forthright attitude is usually appreciated by British colleagues. Nevertheless, sometimes toning down their directness is said to need some effort

from the Dutch, and the British are reported to complain that some Dutch ask ‘why’ too often. Trompenaars (2000), in a review of Dutch/British mergers and joint ventures indicated that the Dutch were usually not top of the list when diplomacy skills were required, whereas British indirectness left many Dutch employees confused as to the status quo after a meeting. The main issues that came up during the qualitative interviews for the present study were an echo of the above, in that the Dutch and British get on very well as a whole, but seem to have some conflicting opinions of the benefits of Directness vs. diplomacy.

Below are extracts of qualitative feedback from British and Dutch employees during the initial piloting stage. All feedback particular to the cooperation of British and Dutch employees is included. According to a British Expatriate located in The Netherlands: *“The Dutch definitely seem to go for more consensus but paradoxically they all think they are right. The British all think they are right too, may agree with someone but then act on what they originally believed anyway. The Dutch definitely say what they think without much filter between brain and mouth, but you can generally take what they say at face value it is also much shorter, to the point and terser. The British are much more restrained and diplomatic, which can lead to a build up of frustration and misunderstanding on their part. The British seem to take themselves a lot less seriously than any other race [sic] I have ever encountered and don't mind a joke/sarcasm, laughing at themselves etc. this in itself can lead to a lot of misunderstanding when the other party doesn't understand humour or sarcasm or the vein in which it is meant to be taken. I have seen some fantastic arguments between Dutch people and within two minutes they have forgotten about it and are cooperating colleagues again - the Brits don't seem to get over it quite so quick”* (1998).

Some other comments that were made reflected in particular that a) British vs. Dutch differences are certainly present within the company and b) that these are usually manifested in differences in communication styles, at times leading to conflict. *“I find negotiating and working with Dutch nationals refreshing. They speak their mind. I believe the English approach is less direct”* (British employee, 2000). *“When a second Dutchman joins in [the conversation] he and his Countryman [sic] tend to lapse into Dutch leaving the Brit out of the conversation. ... A further point is that some colleagues tend to believe that our Dutch colleagues are somewhat arrogant, whether this is something grown out of their need to feel confident in a foreign land I am unsure”* (British employee, 2001). *“With 25 years [the company] of which 15 years abroad I think you can maintain the following description for the difference between the English and the Dutch: - the Dutch often say exactly what we [sic] think about something without always thinking about*

*what we are saying... - an Englishman [sic] on the other hand always thinks about what he is saying but rarely says what he thinks*" (Dutch employee, translated from Dutch<sup>9</sup>, 2001). "The British [I dealt with during a negotiation] were predominantly service providers with a strong conviction that the matter being discussed was best for [the company] if outcome was in their favour. Knowing that logic would prevail, the approach was slanted to tactfully winning over the other party without making them lose face" (British employee, 2001). Last not but least, a response from a Dutch employee (2001), which, although not directly commenting on Dutch/British differences but on the present research, is an example of Dutch 'directness': "I was wondering whether this extreme poorly set up inquiry has been evaluated at "some level" within [the company], e.g., is HR involved? I hope that this inquiry [questionnaire] is not representative for the new fashion of "diversity". If so, everybody within [the company] will probably be very pleased to see it die away in silence in a couple of years?".

In general, the conclusion was drawn that day to day working relations function effectively, however, in meetings, communication can cause problems due to, among other things, Dutch directness and British indirectness. This is amplified by a Dutch desire for clarity and open communication, whereas the British prefer to maintain a certain polite distance. According to one employee "The Dutch and British meet and agree on a plan, but then how this is put into action is interpreted entirely different" (British employee, 2000). Furthermore, the effects for a need for clarity and open communication are not limited to conflict situations : "Another ... conclusion seems to be Dutch nationals' higher degree of concern for "consensus" rather than "winning" an argument ..., which is not only evident in negotiation style, but in my opinion, also in the management style of the Anglo-Dutch [company] group which is very much consensus-based (sometimes too much!) rather than directive, when compared with U.S. or even British counterparts" (British employee, 2000). Therefore perception of the other team's intentions is important in enabling more fluent cooperation. These themes can be explored further by surveying managers using a conflict management strategy measure and additionally testing for communication differences by asking specific questions about respondents' and other team's consultativeness, indirectness, directness, and hierarchical (formal vs. informal) dispositions.

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<sup>9</sup> "Met 25 jaar [the company] waarvan 15 jaar in het buitenland kan je wat mij betreft de volgende beschrijving aanhouden voor het verschil tussen Engelsen en Nederlanders: - Nederlanders zeggen vaak precies wat we ervan denken zonder altijd na te denken bij wat we zeggen... - een Engelsman daarentegen denkt na bij wat hij zegt maar zegt zelden wat hij denkt."

The structure of the remainder of this chapter is as follows: First, Schwartz's SVS is evaluated using data from several studies conducted between 2000 and 2001 (Studies 1 -3) to obtain insight into the SVS structure and reliability, additionally to establishing cultural value preferences for each sample. Secondly, approaches to conflict management were explored through the administration of different measures, which were evaluated through several studies also completed between 2000 and 2001. The sections will describe the methodology, samples, dimensionality, and validity of each measure to yield a series of robust measures to be used to test the hypotheses, as described in chapter seven.

## **5.2. The Schwartz Value Survey**

In order to establish whether two national groups differ in preference and perception of conflict management strategies, it was important to measure the culture of the individual respondents using a measure that has been designed for this purpose. Schwartz's (1992, 1994) value measure is a tool that can be used to establish the cultural profiles of individuals from different national cultures. A comprehensive list of the individual values can be found in Table 1.4. in section 1.3.2.3.2. Schwartz (1992) found that 44 values cluster together consistently in at least 75% of cultures surveyed. Out of the 44 values, 10 dimensions can be identified: Universalism, Benevolence, Self-Direction and Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement, Power, Tradition, Conformity, and Security. A Dutch version of this survey was made available by Huisman (2000, personal communication), the English version was available from Schwartz (1992). Items in the survey are introduced as values and norms which should be rated to the extent that each value is a 'guiding principle in one's life', subjects were asked to use a rating scale of -1 (opposed to my values), 0 (not important), +3 (important), to +7 (of supreme importance). The values were organised in a list with a small description for each one. Subjects were required to read the entire list first and then rate the most important and least important value, before rating the remainder of the 44 values (See Appendix A, p. 251; B, p. 258; and C, p.277).

As part of a series of studies exploring approaches to conflict management in the UK and the Netherlands, the SVS was administered during 2000 and 2001<sup>10</sup>. SVS was incorporated

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<sup>10</sup> For Study 1 please refer to sections 6.3.1. and 6.3.2. for methods and sample details. For study 2 and 3 please refer to sections 6.4.1.3 & 6.4.1.6. and 6.4.2.1 & 6.4.2.2. respectively.

in three different versions of questionnaires asking employees from a large multinational about a negotiation situation in which they participated. The total number of respondents, after deletion of incomplete questionnaires, was 433, of which 220 were Dutch and 213 were British. The response rate was almost 21%. The questionnaire version of Study 1 (Appendix A, p.251) was posed in English for both samples, which was further divided into subversions whereby respondents either answered questions about a conflict with a fellow national or with a foreign opponent<sup>11</sup>. The versions used in study 2 (Appendix B, p.258) and 3 (Appendix C, 277) were posed in the language of the respondent and concerned a negotiation situation with a foreign opponent only.

### 5.2.1. Dimensionality

Schwartz (1992, Schwartz and Sagiv, 1995) previously reported the dimensionality and validity of the SVS measure. Schwartz tested for the interrelation and distances between values across cultures and found a similar structure in most of his samples. However, one particular value may be of equal distance between two value types. Furthermore, each value type is made up of an unequal number of values (e.g., Universalism contains eight, whereas Hedonism contains two

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<sup>11</sup> The 83 Dutch respondents who filled out the English version in 2000 were compared to the 137 Dutch respondents who filled out the Dutch version in 2001. The results showed slight differences in reliability of the value types (see also section 6.2.1). A MANCOVA with the Schwartz higher order value types and ten value type as the DVs and the language version as the IV with the total mean as covariate (Schwartz, 1992) showed that there was a significant difference on the value type 'Universalism' ( $F(1) = 6.03, p = .015, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$ ) and 'Security' ( $F(1) = 16.35, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .08$ ) whereby the Dutch respondents who had filled out the English version scored higher on Universalism than those who filled out a Dutch version, whereas the reverse was true for Security. These results could be due a) a language difference, b) a group difference (i.e., sample filling out a Dutch version was somehow different from the sample that filled out the English version, or c) a time difference (the English version was sampled in Summer of 2000, the Dutch version was sampled in 2001). The former is doubtful due to the rigorous testing SVS has undergone by Schwartz and colleagues to ensure universal validity, and the latter has been controlled for by selecting samples from the same organisation.

This questionnaire version of Study 1 also varied with regard to the conflict management measures; in one version subjects were asked to focus on an event that involved a fellow national, whereas the other version involved questions regarding subjects' dealings with a foreign national. Sample descriptives are 84 Dutch and 34 British respondents, of whom 46 filled out a Dutch(self)/Dutch(opponent) version, 38 a Dutch/British version, 16 a British/British version, and 18 a British/Dutch version. 46.3% of the respondents came from a technical department and 61% from a commercial department. Respondents had worked for this organisation on average between 16-20 years. Average age was between 46 and 50 years and 81.5% were male and 17.6% were female. A MANCOVA with value types as DVs, version type as the IV, and the total mean for all cultural variables as a covariate showed no significant differences.

In sum, the nationality of the opponent does not influence the value preferences of respondents, however the language version generated different results within the Dutch sample. Since the difference between 'nationality of opponent versions' was not significant, and the difference between 'language version' was limited to only two value types, the entire data set was used for the testing of the structure of the four higher order value types and ten value types.



values), which affects Cronbach Alphas reliabilities as Universalism would be less prone to response fluctuations than Hedonism.

### **5.2.1.1. SSA for Schwartz Value Types**

In order to test the dimensionality of the SVS for the British and Dutch sample a Smallest Space Analysis was conducted, as was used by Schwartz (1992). The SSA used in the present study is a type of Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) applying a non-metric algorithm proposed by Guttman (1968), using Psychometric Analysis Package for Facet Analysis. SSA uses distances to generate plots that are tested for the extent to which they fit the correlation matrix by looking at the correlations between derived distances and original data.

Before the SSA results are reported, the benefits of SSA vs. Cronbach Alphas and Factor Analysis are briefly reviewed. Reliability, or the consistency of individual scale items and the instrument in its entirety, is key to creating measurement instruments prior to between group investigations of the main research variables. In the social sciences Cronbach's Alpha is particularly useful for the analysis of the reliability of the scale but that interpretation has been subject to criticism (e.g., Cortina, 1993). First of all, the validity of Cronbach Alphas is a function of the number of items included in the correlational analyses: the more items are included, the more likely Alpha will reach the commonly accepted desirable value of .70 or above. This is due to the fact that "when many items are pooled, internal consistency estimates are relatively invariant (i.e., large) and therefore somewhat useless" (Cortina, 1993, p. 101). Alternatively, a low correlation of a scale with few items may be erroneously judged to be unsuitable for analyses.

A way to solve these issues is first of all to report mean inter-item correlations, whereby the influence of number of items and the number of common factors is diminished. Mean inter-item reliabilities provide useful and unbiased information beyond Cronbach Alphas and should be above 0.2 (Fischer, personal communication, 2003). See Table 6.1. for Cronbach Alpha's and Inter Item Correlations for the cultural values per nationality. However, Schwartz (1992, 1994) recommends using SSA for SVS data; Cronbach Alphas and Factor Analysis results should be therefore be interpreted with caution. Furthermore, whereas SSA produces distances between values (MDS), Cronbach Alphas analysis checks for inter-item correlations by performing all the

split test combinations possible. Similarly, Factor Analyses look at the inter-item correlations finding common denominators separating the factors, whereas it is not the purpose of the SVS to treat each subscale as separate as they are organised in a circumplex structure. Several studies by Schwartz (1992; Schwartz and Sagiv, 1995) have confirmed the value structure using data from samples that included the Netherlands and Britain. Nevertheless, Cronbach Alphas reliabilities (Fig. 5.1) for the Higher Order Values specifically show a reliable structure.

Table 5.1 Reliabilities and Mean Inter-Item Correlations for Schwartz Higher Order Value Types and Value Types.

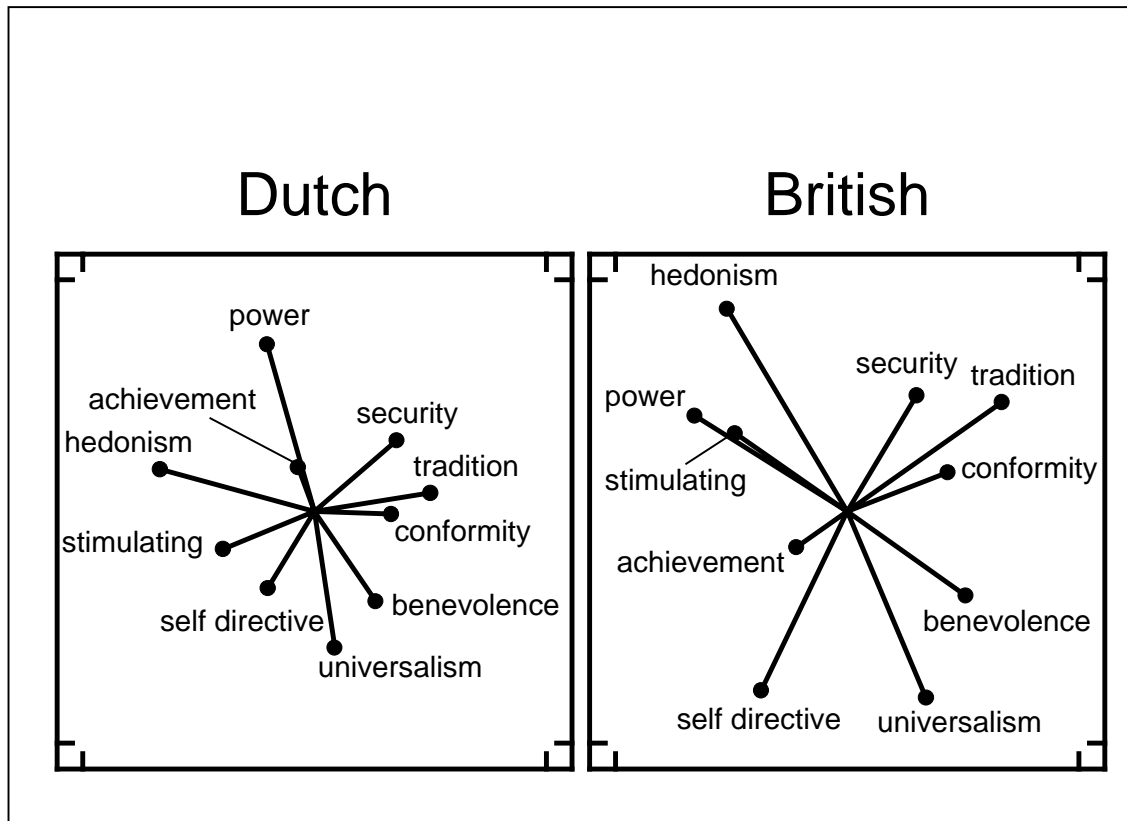
<b>Higher Order Value Type</b>	<b>British</b>		<b>Dutch</b>		<b>Value types</b>	<b>British</b>		<b>Dutch</b>	
	<b>Alpha</b>	<b>Mean Rij</b>	<b>Alpha</b>	<b>Mean Rij</b>		<b>Alpha</b>	<b>Mean Rij</b>	<b>Alpha</b>	<b>Mean Rij</b>
<b>Self Transcendence</b>	<b>.78</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.70</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>Universalism</b>	.72	.27	.72	.27
					<b>Benevolence</b>	.69	.32	.67	.29
<b>Conservation</b>	<b>.78</b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>.80</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>Conformity</b>	.66	.33	.68	.35
					<b>Tradition</b>	.55	.20	.63	.26
					<b>Security</b>	.55	.19	.52	.18
<b>Self Enhancement</b>	<b>.71</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>.68</b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>Power</b>	.59	.33	.56	.29
					<b>Achievement</b>	.72	.40	.67	.34
<b>Openness to Change</b>	<b>.80</b>	<b>.26</b>	<b>.77</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>Hedonism</b>	.75	.51	.66	.41
					<b>Stimulation</b>	.81	.59	.68	.44
					<b>Self Direction</b>	.70	.32	.64	.27

First, the SSA generated a table of means and Standard Deviation for each sample, which are reported in Table 5.2. Correlation coefficients for derived distances and original data was  $r = -.99$  for Dutch and  $r = -.99$  for British sample. Results for the SSA showed that the plots for each sample fitted well with the original data SSA structures are displayed in Fig. 5.1. As is clear from the graphs, SVS data from both samples generate structures similar to those found by Schwartz (1992, Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). The structure of the SVS data was judged adequate for the hypotheses testing discussed in Chapter seven. In the following sections, the development and testing of the different versions of the conflict management approach measures are described. First, the exploration of concern for self vs. other will be discussed.

TABLE 5.2. Means and Standard Deviation for Schwartz Value Types per nationality.

Value Type	Dutch Mean	SD	British mean	SD
Conformity	3.95	1.11	4.14	1.04
Tradition	2.52	1.25	2.48	1.25
Benevolence	4.84	.79	4.73	.90
Universalism	4.52	.95	4.39	1.10
Self Direction	4.84	.91	4.77	.86
Stimulation	3.98	1.37	4.28	1.24
Achievement	4.27	1.08	4.60	.96
Power	2.18	1.18	2.48	1.23
Security	3.84	.99	4.06	1.00
Hedonism	4.84	1.31	4.88	1.20

Fig. 5.2 SSA structures for Dutch and British samples.



### **5.3. Study 1: Self vs. Other focus during communication**

Chapter three presented the dual concern model (self vs. other) and Chapter four described the focus on Indirectness vs. Directness in the intercultural communication literature as related to the self vs. other dichotomy. Although this has generally been viewed as an East vs. West phenomenon, both concerns exist within a region. For example, in the West, Indirectness is seen as a style used when one deals with people particularly close to oneself or where a relationship is at stake and diplomacy is needed, whereas Directness is used in situations where ambiguity needs to be avoided. Similarly, Avoiding (low concern for self and others) is actively employed by more collectivistic individuals but also by individualistic people who try to protect the relationship from a potentially damaging clash. Furthermore, Problem Solving (high concern for self and others) is a universally endorsed way of dealing with conflict. The (informal) interviews and qualitative data described in section 6.1.2. show that one of the observed differences between British and Dutch managers was a differing approach towards interaction, whereby the former employees were viewed as more indirect and diplomatic, and the latter more direct and pragmatic. The first analysis involved the correlations of items based on intercultural conflict and communication theory and qualitative research to see if a specific dimension describing this phenomenon could be established.

#### **5.3.1. Methods**

As described in section 5.2., Studies 1 - 3 explored the cultural profiles and approaches to conflict management of British and Dutch employees. Study 1 had an emphasis on indirect vs. directness, based on intercultural conflict and communication theory and qualitative findings. First, an email announcing the survey was sent before the questionnaire was mailed to the respondents. A cover letter explaining the purpose of the study (conflict management within the organisation), an incentive (prize draw), and questionnaire (See Appendix A, p. 251), followed two weeks later. Respondents were asked to recall a situation with the goal of obtaining information, goods, or making decisions that had involved a discussion, conflict, or meeting. Respondents were provided with space to indicate the nature of the conflict at the beginning of the questionnaire. Although each subject was asked to think of a negotiation situation with a *colleague*, subjects were also required to denote their role in relation to the 'opponent' (e.g., peer,

superior, subordinate, other). Furthermore, subjects were asked to rate Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction in terms of the extent of the successfulness of the meeting, whether the mood was good, what was the level of competitiveness, and whether it was a task or relational issue. Subjects were also invited to share their opinion about the topic and content at the end of the questionnaire.

Items were newly developed and based on either an assessment of one's own behaviour (e.g., I was...) or of the other party (My colleague was...) and represented a vertical (e.g., The best approach was to be respectful of my colleague's status) vs. horizontal (I felt comfortable arguing my point regardless of my surroundings) or a Direct (I was frank in stating my opinion) vs. Indirect (I was polite and tactful at all times) approach to communication.

### **5.3.2. Sample**

The questionnaire was sent to 200 British and 200 Dutch managers of a multinational in the summer of 2000 by internal mail. Selection was random and performed by an independent administrator who obtained a list of names with nationality from the company's database. Respondents received one of four versions of the questionnaire, dependent on their nationality and the nationality of the 'opponent'; resulting in the following questionnaire combination: Dutch-Dutch, Dutch-British, British-British, British-Dutch (see also footnote 12). The questionnaire consisted of 3 sections: assessing negotiation behaviour (including questions about strategies, communication style, and formality), Schwartz values, and biographical data. Out of 400 employees sampled, 118 employees responded of whom 84 were Dutch and 34 were British (see Table 5.3 for demographic details). Due to company restrictions, only one reminder could be sent out to encourage respondents to fill out the questionnaire.

TABLE 5.3. Descriptives for Study 1.

		<u>Dutch</u>	<u>British</u>
<b>Department</b>	Technical	47	8
	Commercial	35	26
	Missing	2	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	73	24
	Female	11	10
<b>Time</b>	FT	55	20
	PT	1	2
	Contract		1
	Missing	28	11
<b>Abroad experience</b>			
	Home country only	10	20
	UK & Netherlands	13	1
	Home country and other	21	6
	UK & Netherlands and other	29	7
<b>Tenure</b>	0-10 years	26	5
	11-20 years	30	17
	21-40 years	28	12
<b>Age</b>	21-30	11	5
	31-40	21	8
	41-50	41	15
	51-60	11	6
<b>Questionnaire version</b>	Dutch – Dutch	46	British – British 16
	Dutch – British	38	British – Dutch 18

### 5.3.3. Dimensionality

A total of 36 items were entered into a correlation matrix to assess any relationship patterns. This showed that enough items correlated together to explore the relationships further. A Factor Analysis was performed on all items using Principal Component Analyses (PCA) with Varimax rotation. This exploratory FA showed one clear factor with 12 items followed by several smaller factors each containing two or three items. A second FA restricted to two factors showed a clearer picture<sup>12</sup>. The two factors were identified respectively as indicating cooperative and competitive (passive and active) negotiation. Items describing the first factor represented concepts such as amicable, diplomatic, courteous, correct, and tactful, with negative loadings for confrontation, hindrance, and inappropriate or outspoken jokes or comments. The second factor

<sup>12</sup> Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test of sphericity for the British sample, however, was below the 0.6 cut off point, which indicates a diffusion of the pattern of correlations. Since this scale was not used any further the FA is not presented in full. However, tests were analysed for preliminary indicators of effects and should be interpreted with caution.

loaded on concepts such as feeling hindered, being closed, distanced, uncertainty, vague, authoritarian, overbearing, detached, with negative loadings for straightforward and sincere. In other words, both the respondent and the colleague may either have engaged in a cooperative or competitive type of negotiation. A further scale reliability test per nationality showed high reliabilities for Factor 1 “Cooperative”, with Cronbach Alpha’s at .79 for the Dutch and .85 for the British, and for Factor 2 “Competitive”, with Cronbach Alpha’s at .79 for the Dutch and .67 for the British (after 1 item was deleted<sup>13</sup>). However, the factor structure, particularly for ‘Competitive’ was inequivalent, i.e., items with strong factor loadings for Dutch managers were different to those for British managers.

### **5.3.4. Some preliminary analyses: Cooperation vs. Competition**

Assumptions were first checked by looking at Skewness, Kurtosis and Normality. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that the data did not deviate significantly from normality. Levene’s Test for Homogeneity was not significant, indicating equal variance across the data for cooperation and competition. Further analyses involved an assessment of whether a negotiation was deemed more competitive (or cooperative) with a fellow national or with a foreign colleague as opponent. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) of nationality and ‘questionnaire version’ (i.e., dealing with the same nationality or not) on Competition and Cooperation revealed that there was no main effect for nationality on Competition ( $F(1) = 2.58, p = .111, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$ ), nor on Cooperation ( $F(1) = 1.06, p = .714, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .001$ ). There was no significant main effect for questionnaire on Competition ( $F(1) = 0.70, p = .405, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .006$ ), nor on cooperation ( $F(1) = 1.06, p = .306, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .009$ ). There was a significant interaction for Nationality x Questionnaire version on Cooperation ( $F(1) = 1.20, p = .002, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .08$ ), but not on Competition ( $F(1) = 1.20, p = .275, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$ ). The Dutch and British managers felt the negotiation was more cooperative with a British opponent than with a Dutch opponent.

Two regressions were performed to establish whether Schwartz value types would predict cooperation and competition. The overall model was significant only for British managers ( $F(10) = 2.42, p = .045$ ); in particular for Achievement (Standardised Beta  $-0.61, p = .007$ ) and Hedonism (Standardised Beta  $0.52, p = .041$ ) for the British (Total  $R^2 = .39$ ). If a British

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<sup>13</sup> “My colleague made straightforward demands”.

employee did not value Achievement but did value Hedonism, he/she evaluated the negotiation as competitive.

The conclusion was drawn that the concepts cooperative and competitive are interesting and relevant as overarching terms. However, the factor structure was inequivalent. Furthermore, the way the items were phrased, i.e., 'My colleague is ...' and 'I am ...' generated factors related to 'other vs. self', without actually providing adequate insight into more interesting psychological phenomena such as degree of Indirectness or Directness. A measure assessing the communication styles and/or concerns during a conflict requires more focus and more consistency in order to come to useful results. The concepts of cooperation and competition provide too broad a basis.

#### **5.4. The Conflict Management measure**

The data used for the first assessment of the conflict management strategies measure was collected at the same time as for the cooperation vs. competition analyses described above. The method and sample are described in sections 5.3.1. and 5.3.2. The aim of the questionnaire was to test the conflict management strategies and communication styles measures, of which some were derived from previous studies and some were newly developed.

The conflict management strategies measure was based on Rahim's (1983a,b) conflict management inventory and items were compared to those of the DUTCH (Janssen & Van de Vliert, 1996) conflict measure. Rahim (1983a,b) developed two types of Organisational Conflict Inventories; one (ROCI-I) was designed to measure intrapersonal, intragroup, and intergroup conflict, and the second (ROCI-II) was designed to measure interpersonal conflict with superior, subordinates, and peers. Whereas ROCI-I measures the intensity of the conflict, ROCI-II measures the types of styles people use during a conflict: Avoiding, Dominating, Integrating, Obliging, and Compromising. The latter measure was used for the present study (See Appendix A, p. 251). ROCI-II consists of a total of 28 items (statements) with a five-point Likert type scale, and Rahim (1983b) and Weider-Hatfield (1988) found that Rahim's instrument was internally consistent, stable and insensitive to social desirability response sets. However, it can be argued that the Integrative style (trying to find a solution, bringing all concerns into the open) is



socially desirable and would generate high scores regardless of one's status or, in the case of the present research, one's nationality. Typical examples of items are: "I tried to investigate an issue with my colleague to find a solution acceptable to me" (Integrative) and "I used my authority to make a decision in my favour" (Dominating). The ROCI-II has been used to investigate the relationships between conflict styles and social factors such as culture (Kozan, 1990), face maintenance (Ting-Toomey, Gao, Trubinsky, et al., 1991), bargaining (Levy, 1989), superior vs. subordinate relationships (Rahim, 1983a), and values (Bilsky & Jehn, 2002). The ideal number of strategies depends on the research design (Van de Vliert, 1997), and may be reduced from five to three (Avoiding, Dominating, and Problem Solving) when the design involves perception of the opponent (Rahim, 1992) (See also section 2.4). The internal structure and validity was analysed based on three versions of the measure. Data was obtained between 2000 and 2001 and the specific methodologies, sample characteristics, dimensionality and validity are described before commencing with the testing of the hypotheses.

#### **5.4.1. Does ROCI-II measure up?**

##### **5.4.1.1. Reliability and Factor Analyses**

First, reliability analysis for the ROCI-II scale showed that reliabilities for the Dutch ranged from Cronbach Alphas .60 for Integrating to .82 for Avoiding, and for the British from .55 for Dominating to .76 for Obliging but with valid mean inter-item correlation scores (See Table 5.4). A further PCA<sup>14</sup> with Varimax<sup>15</sup> rotation per nationality restricted to 5 factors showed a clear factor structure, including for 'Dominating'. However, there was no clear separation of the scales for Integrating and Compromising general (See Table 5.5). The reliabilities and factor structure indicate a need for item improvement. Furthermore, they support Rahim's (1992) notion that the dimensions may merge when some of the respondents are junior managers or when respondents are required to rate other's conflict behaviour. The next sections describe the exploration of alternative approaches such as put forward by Putnam and Wilson (1982), who proposed three instead of five conflict management styles (see also section 2.6 for a discussion).

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<sup>14</sup> If the sample size per FA is below 200 results are less robust (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and should be interpreted with caution, i.e., results point towards a solution and are not a solution in itself.

TABLE 5.4. Alpha reliabilities and Mean Rij for ROCI-II subscales per nationality.

	<b>Avoiding</b>	<b>Integrating</b>	<b>Obliging</b>	<b>Compromising</b>	<b>Dominating</b>
<b>Dutch</b>	.84	.61	.62	.65	.66
<b>Mean Rij</b>	.46	.22	.21	.26	.39
	<i>Avoiding</i>	<i>Integrating</i>	<i>Obliging</i>	<i>Compromising</i>	<i>Dominating</i>
<b>British</b>	.72	.72	.76	.73	.55
<b>Mean Rij</b>	.30	.31	.36	.36	.30

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<sup>15</sup> Varimax is an orthogonal rotation that attempts to maximise dispersion of loadings within factors and is suitable when factors are expected to be independent (Field, 2000).

TABLE 5.5. PCA structure Rotated Component Matrices with Varimax Rotation for Negotiation strategies per nationality<sup>16</sup>.

<i>Item</i>	<b>British</b>					<b>Dutch</b>				
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
IN1					.67		.41	.61		
IN4	.64						.57			
IN12	.56		-.51						.73	
IN22		-.67							.61	
IN23	.56						.41		.56	
IN28	.76		-.47						.71	
ON2	.70						.75			
ON10			.83							.53
ON11		.48	.65							.52
ON13					.45			-.42		
ON19			.72		.41					.60
ON24	.59		.45	.48			.42			.49
AN3		.58				.53				
AN6				-.70		.70				
AN16		.56				.82				
AN17		.82				.80				
AN26		.82				.74				
AN27		.56				.63				
CN5	.76									
CN7					.61		.59			
CN14	.51						.42	-.47		
CN15	.80						.57			
CN20	.69						.65			
DN8				.42				.61		
DN9	-.50				.53					.47
DN18				-.84				.68		
DN21			-.68					.49		
DN25								.55		.51
Eigenvalues	3.84	3.24	2.82	2.54	2.50	5.45	3.86	3.51	2.59	2.29
Variance Explained (%)	13.71	11.56	10.06	9.06	8.91	19.48	13.78	12.53	9.25	8.17

<sup>16</sup> (Code: AN=Avoiding, IN=integrating, ON=obliging, CN=compromising, DN=Dominating). Values less than .40 omitted.

### 5.4.1.2. Further preliminary analysis: The effect of opponent's nationality

To test if the version of the questionnaire, i.e., of managers were referring to a negotiation with a fellow national or a foreign opponent, affected the mean scores on Obliging, Avoiding, Compromising, Dominating, or Integrating, a profile analysis<sup>17</sup> was performed. Not only would this analysis provide insight into the behaviour of managers in relation to the nationality of their opponent, but it also checks for stereotypical behaviour that may have occurred due to the design of the study. If there is a significant difference between the versions then this may indicate that respondents were primed to answer according to the stereotypical beliefs that exist (as was shown by the qualitative feedback by respondents, for example) between British and Dutch managers within this multinational organisation.

The five strategies were entered as the within subject factor, and a dummy variable for questionnaire version (0 = same nationality, 1 = not the same nationality) was entered as the between-subjects factor. Mauchly's test of sphericity proved to be significant, but the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion was at acceptable level (.71). Using the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion, results showed that the main effect was statistically reliable so the profiles were not flat, i.e., managers differentiate between the different strategies ( $F(2.85, 107) = 117.29, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .53$ ). Secondly, samples did not deviate significantly from parallelism,  $F(2.85, 107) = 1.73, p = .164$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .02$ ; i.e., no reliable differences were found between groups (See Table 5.6. for Means and Standard Deviations). The above results indicate that, although respondents differentiate between the five conflict management strategies, they do not vary their answers according to the nationality of their opponent overall (See Fig. 5.3 and 5.4).

To check for individual results a MANOVA with the five strategies as the Dependent Variables, and a dummy variable Questionnaire version (0 = Same nationality, 1 = not the same nationality) was run per nationality. Results confirmed that both samples do not significantly differ in their use of conflict management strategies dependent on whether they deal with a

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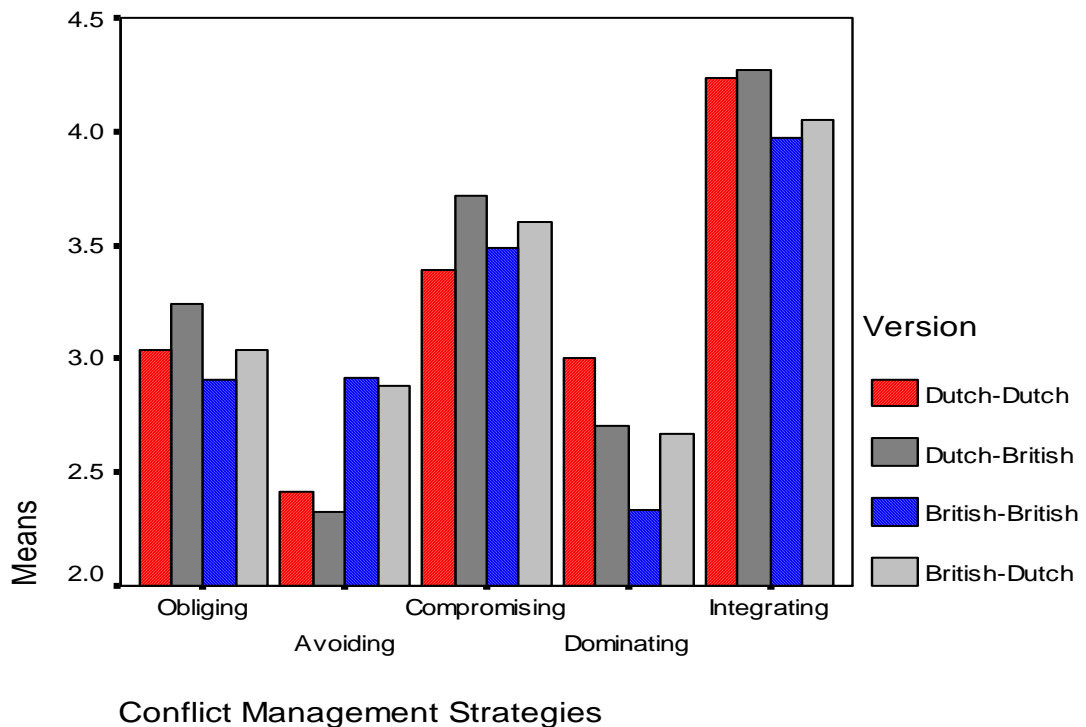
<sup>17</sup> See for a more detailed description of Profile Analysis chapter Seven, section 7.1).

fellow national or with a foreign opponent, except for Dutch managers with respect to Compromising. Dutch managers were less Compromising with fellow nationals than with foreign opponents ( $F(1, 76) = 6.01, p = .017, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .08$ ).

TABLE 5.6. Means and Standard Deviations for Conflict Management Strategies per Questionnaire Version.

	Obliging	SD	Avoiding	SD	Compromising	SD	Dominating	SD	Integrating	SD
NL-NL	3.04	.50	2.41	.88	3.39	.59	3.00	.91	4.24	.36
NL-UK	3.24	.54	2.33	.70	3.72	.57	2.70	.73	4.27	.45
UK-UK	2.90	.57	2.92	.67	3.49	.75	2.33	.82	3.98	.48
UK-NL	3.09	.53	2.88	.89	3.60	.48	2.67	.71	4.05	.73

Figure 5.3. Estimated Marginal Means of Conflict Management Strategies per Questionnaire version.



### **5.4.1.3. Moving forward: From a five fold to a three-way typology.**

Further development of the conflict management and communication behaviour measures focused on the interrelation between three concerns, three conflict management strategies, and three communication styles based on theories and research by Kim (1994a; Kim & Kim, 1997), Putnam and Wilson (1982), and Gudykunst (1998; Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988) respectively. Furthermore, intercultural conflict research by Ohbuchi and Tedeschi (1994) and Ohbuchi et al. (1999) and a face work study by Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Masumoto, and Yokochi (1999) also identified tactics similar to Avoiding, Dominating, and Problem Solving strategies through Factor Analyses. Additionally, Compromising and Obliging are particularly difficult to distinguish as a ‘perceived strategy’ (e.g., Rahim, 1992). Therefore, ‘Avoiding’, Problem Solving’ and ‘Dominating’ were used as conflict strategy behaviours.

The Problem Solving strategy involves “collaboration between the parties”, “openness, exchange of information, and examination of differences to reach a solution acceptable to all parties” (Rahim, 1992, p. 23). The Avoiding strategy concerns literally avoiding any discussion, confrontation or debate through sidestepping and withdrawing from the issues. Finally, Dominating has also been defined as competing (Rahim, 1992) or fighting (van der Vliert, 1997), and assertion (Ohbuchi et al., 1999) and has been linked to a win-lose orientation. These results reflect the presence of concerns and communication styles incorporated within the conflict management strategies, which are separated in the present study.

The next study assesses an adapted version of the scale for the three conflict management strategies, as well as a newly developed communication scale incorporating both the Indirectness and Directness dichotomy and Gudykunst’s (1995; 1998; in press) ‘mindfulness’, which resulted in three styles labeled Indirect, Direct, and Consultative respectively. Furthermore, Kim’s (1994a; Kim & Kim, 1997) research on conversational constraints was incorporated into a new scale testing underlying concerns: Concern for Inconvenience, Concern for Clarity, and Concern for Control. The following sections describe the procedures involved in testing these new scales.

#### 5.4.1.4. Study 2: Procedure

The data pool of Study 2 consisted of managers in Britain and the Netherlands from departments within the multinational that had agreed to cooperate. Due to the Data Protection Act<sup>18</sup>, it had become considerably more problematic to generate entirely random samples and it also decreased the number of people that could be targeted. Within participating departments names were obtained randomly from their database and sent a questionnaire with an incentive to win a prize if they would respond. An additional reminder was sent out one week later to urge people to complete the questionnaire. In a cover letter, respondents were asked to participate in a study commissioned by the Psychology department within the company on a voluntary basis, which was accompanied by the questionnaire (See Appendix B, p. 258). Participants were told that the questionnaire was designed to find out more about discussions, meetings and negotiations within the company. These could concern reorganisations, budgetary problems, product innovation, important investments, marketing policy, human resource management, and management. Specifically, participants were asked to think of a typical discussion, of which they would vividly remember the issue and the circumstances. They were reminded that it should concern a meeting between Dutch and British employees of this multinational only.

This time, the focus of the questionnaire was on *team* behaviour as feedback from the previous study indicated that most negotiations took place between more than two people per team. Furthermore, through this design, social, rather than personal identity was emphasised. Results from Study 1 (section 5.4.1.2.) showed significant cultural differences between the versions based on ‘nationality of opponent’. Therefore, only the versions asking about a negotiation with a foreign opponent were now employed; i.e., managers were asked to report on a negotiation situation that involved them as part of a team with fellow nationals vs. a British/Dutch foreign team. Respondents were required to think of a negotiation and answer questions regarding their conflict management strategies, any underlying concerns they may have had, the context of the negotiation, the communication styles used, the extent of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction, their cultural values, and demographic information. In order to obtain

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<sup>18</sup> The Data Protection Act protects the privacy of employees so that managers or administrators are not at liberty to disclose personal information such as name, nationality, and company address details. The organisation only allowed further research if H.R. department heads were first contacted and asked for permission to conduct research.

insight into the sample make-up items asking after respondents' nationality (Dutch or British), department type (commercial or technical), international experience (lived abroad or not) and gender (male or female) were included. The questionnaire furthermore assessed the context of the conflict setting through variables such as source (task vs. relational), number of participants, hierarchical relationship (superior/subordinate, peers), and length of acquaintance. These data were compared between the two samples using analyses for categorical data. Initial analyses of the data showed that all the respondents used a task related conflict as a source, therefore this variable was excluded from further analyses.

Respondents were asked to rate their own team first and the other team thereafter, using the same items for each set of ratings, enabling an equal analysis between the two with regard to content and meaning. The measure was formatted in such a way that a column on the left side of the scale represented the respondents own national group, which was to be completed first. Then, respondents were asked to rate the same items for the other group, in other words, how the other group was perceived to behave during the meeting. In each row on either side of each item a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree) was displayed. The conflict management strategy items were adapted from an individual ("I" phrasing) to a group focus, since meetings within this organisation often consist of 2 or more people within one group. A neutral format without a subject enables the respondents to rate both their own group and the other group. Words such as 'try' and 'usually' were omitted to limit any ambiguity. It was expected that the measures would generate reliable data as the self reports were based on generally clearly observable behaviour<sup>19</sup>, as stipulated by Crampton and Wagner (1994).

#### **5.4.1.5. Issues of language translation and equivalence**

When research is conducted using samples from different cultures and thus, in some cases, using respondents who speak different languages, there are several recommendations that should be taken into account, for example translation and response bias (see also Breakwell, Hammond, and Fife-Shaw, 2001; Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). A researcher can either apply the instrument, whereby the literal translation is deemed appropriate; or adapt the instrument,

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<sup>19</sup> Although conflict management strategies and communication styles are considered observable, it is acknowledged that underlying concerns may be less clear.



whereby it is first literally translated and then adjusted for the new cultural context; or, thirdly, one may opt for assembly, whereby the original document is deemed inappropriate and a new instrument is developed (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Each option can be done through a) translation followed by back translation (most commonly used), b) letting a committee review the overlap in versions, and/or c) developing the instruments simultaneously.

In the present study, the English version had been reviewed by several academic and business experts for its content with regard to style and relevance. The English version of the questionnaire was the original and had to be translated into Dutch. The Dutch version of the Schwartz value survey was made available by Huisman. A Dutch version of the DUTCH conflict management scale was made available by Van de Vliert, who also reviewed the adapted conflict management scale used in the present study. The conflict management approach scales were translated simultaneously by both a Psychology colleague at the Free University of Amsterdam and a professional translator. These two versions were compared with each other and then the Dutch and British versions were adjusted to omit any colloquialism or culture specific items and also to avoid any stilted language that disturbs the natural flow of the text (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997).

#### **5.4.1.6. Response bias**

Researchers have looked at issues of response style due to the potential cultural differences in responding on a questionnaire (e.g., Leung, 1989; Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Two forms of response bias that are frequently researched are Acquiescence Response Style (ARS) and Extreme Response Style (ERS). ARS concerns the tendency to give systematically higher responses compared with another group. This can be explained through social desirability, in that higher scores are seen as more honest or 'better' (see Hui & Triandis, 1989). ERS is similar to ARS in that high ERS respondents would use the extreme options of a rating scale (e.g., on a 5 point Likert type scale consistently answer with 1 or 5), whereas low ERS respondents' answers remain around the midpoint. Both ARS and ERS affect analyses with regard to correlations, internal consistency measures, and correlation related techniques (Fischer, personal communication, 2003).

A way to deal with such response biases is to standardise scores, which involves subtracting a mean from a score divided by a standard deviation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) or merely subtracting a specific mean from a score then adding a general mean (e.g., Schwartz, 1992) (See also section 5.2.4.1.). Nevertheless, recent developments in cross-cultural methods and analyses have led researchers to voice concern regarding the effects that standardisation may have on the data, in that it may eliminate variance that is actually valid (Smith, in press; Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). One could resolve this issue by testing the hypotheses both with and without standardisation. If hypotheses are more strongly supported using standardised scores, it is likely that bias was artefactual (Schwartz, Verkasalo, Antonovsky & Sagiv, 1997). Analyses based on raw scores are reported in this thesis and any differences between raw and standardised scores will be mentioned specifically.

#### 5.4.1.7. Participants and contextual variables: a comparison

Out of the 100 employees sampled, 40 employees responded, among whom 18 were Dutch and 22 were British (See Table 5.7. for descriptives). There were neither significant age differences:  $t(278) = 1.18, p > .05$ ; nor differences in tenure  $t(278) = 2.97, p > .05$ .

TABLE 5.7. Descriptives for Study 2.

		Dutch	British
<b>Department</b>	Technical	9	20
	Commercial	9	2
<b>Gender</b>	Male	18	17
	Female		5
<b>Abroad experience</b>	Home country only	9	13
	UK & Netherlands	3	2
	Home country and other	2	3
	UK & Netherlands and other	4	4
<b>Tenure</b>	0-5		6
	6-10	1	3
	11-20	11	11
	21-30	4	2
	31+	1	
	Missing	1	

### **5.4.1.8. Reliability and Factor Analyses**

The new scales for concerns and communication styles all consisted of five items, whereas the 18 items for the conflict management strategies were adapted from the previously tested ROCI-II items. Alphas and Mean Inter-Item correlation (Mean Rij) per nationality for the three dimensions of concerns, conflict management strategies ranged from .64 to .90 for concerns and .68 to .82. However, for the communication styles the Alphas were not acceptable (ranging from .09 to .84) but the Mean Rij were acceptable (range from .27 to .70). A PCA with Varimax rotation showed very clear three factorial structures for concerns for both samples, whereas the factor structure for communication styles showed a two factor structure: Indirectness vs. Directness and Consultative<sup>20</sup>. Interestingly, for ratings of the other team, Cronbach Alpha's for their concerns, conflict management strategies and communication styles showed stronger internal consistency (Alpha range .78 to .95 for concerns, .60 to .89 for conflict management strategies, and .52 to .86 for communication styles). This result was also reflected by a clearer factor structure for other team's conflict management approach than for one's own team's conflict management approach. This result may be an indication that ratings of one's own behaviour are subject to more scrutiny, whereas ratings of other's behaviour are less discriminating. Nevertheless, further revision of the items for communication styles in particular was necessary before commencing the testing of hypotheses. Data derived from Study 3 were used for further testing of structure and reliabilities of the scales and also for the testing of the hypothesis (See Chapter Six).

## **5.4.2. Reviewed and Revised: Study 3**

### **5.4.2.1. Method and Description of Sample**

Using the same list of departments that were willing to cooperate, an email introducing the study two weeks beforehand was sent to 1400 managers working for a multinational in the Netherlands and Britain who had not been previously approached. Two weeks later, the cover letter explaining the purpose of the study, the questionnaire, and the incentive (prize card) were

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<sup>20</sup> Samples are very small for Factor Analysis, results should thus be interpreted with caution.

mailed out (See Appendix C, p. 277). Respondents were asked to think of a typical discussion, of which they vividly remember the issue and the circumstances. Any event that involved a discussion, negotiation or debate applied. They were reminded to think of an internal conflict situation only (and not one that involved external service providers, for example). First, respondents were asked to rate conflict management strategies (based on ROCI-II and DUTCH as discussed before). Then, respondents were asked to consider how their strategies were communicated. Typical examples of the communication style measure were: [The Dutch or British participants] ‘Came Directly to the point while conveying their message’ (Direct), ‘Discussed any problems tactfully and Indirectly’ (Indirect), and ‘Asked questions to identify any difficulties’ (Consultative). Next, respondents were asked to identify any underlying concerns of their and the other team, e.g., ‘Control the meeting’ (Control), ‘Prevent tension between participants’ (Inconvenience) or ‘Eliminate any ambiguity’ (Clarity). Finally, respondents were asked to indicate the success rate of the meeting and indicate the degree of comfort during the meeting, as well as to fill out the SVS and answer questions about their demographic details.

The total response was 288 returned questionnaires, which was an 18% response rate (see Table 5.8 for details). After omission of incomplete questionnaires, the total N = 282, of which 124 were Dutch and 158 were British. The average age of the sample was 41 years, and tenure was 14.45 years. Further information relates to the context of the negotiation situation. On a scale from one to five, more respondents agreed that the conflict was task (Dutch 3.58, British 3.72) or business (Dutch 4.01, British 4.08) related than to do with personal issues (Dutch 1.79, British 1.92) or personality differences (Dutch 2.61, British 1.84), however the means for the British and Dutch managers differed significantly on the latter item. “During the meeting some personality differences were discussed” ( $F(1) = 29.81, p < .001$ ).

Chi-Square analyses were used to test if the two samples differ from each other. There were no statistically significant difference in length of acquaintance:  $\chi^2(4) = 5.30, p > .05$  or language spoken during conflict  $\chi^2(1) = 1.63, p > .05$ . The samples differed with respect to hierarchical relationships  $\chi^2(3) = 21.50, p < .01$ , organisation type  $\chi^2(1) = 4.95, p < .05$ , abroad experience  $\chi^2(1) = 3.93, p < .05$ , and gender  $\chi^2(1) = 3.92, p < .05$ . Since hierarchical relationship consisted of four categories (peers, mixed, British superiors with Dutch subordinates, or Dutch superiors with British subordinates) Chi-Square analyses were performed once these categories were recoded into dummy variables. Results showed that the sample differed significantly in the

latter two categories, i.e., the Dutch sample reported more 'British were superior/Dutch subordinate' situations  $\chi^2 (1) = 7.71, p < .01$ , whereas the British reported more 'Dutch superior/British subordinate' situations ( $\chi^2 (1) = 12.79, p < .001$ ). An ANOVA was used to compare means for age (years), tenure (years), and number of participants present in the meeting. Results showed that Dutch respondents were on average older than British respondents ( $F(1,251) = 27.71, p < 0.001$ ) and that they also had on average worked longer for the company than British respondents ( $F(1,250) = 38.77, p < 0.001$ ). Finally, the samples also differed significantly with regard to the number of participants that were present in the meeting, albeit with a smaller margin ( $F(1,245) = 4.64, p < .05$ ). The samples differed significantly with respect to age, number of participants, hierarchical relationship (nationality \* superior/subordinate), type of department, abroad experience, and gender<sup>21</sup>, therefore these variables were controlled for in all further analyses<sup>22</sup>. Following assumptions, structure and reliability testing the data was employed to conduct the main analyses (See Chapter six). The above described demographics were used as covariates in the analyses, except for nationality, which was the only Independent Variable.

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<sup>21</sup> Gender differences in conflict and communication have been frequently studied (e.g., Arugete & Roberts, 2000; Bradley, Sparks, and Nesdale, 2001; Giannantonio, Olian, & Carroll, 1995). One of the main findings has been a difference between directness and indirectness between men and women respectively. Results for a Mixed Model Anova with gender as the between subjects variable showed significant results (p. 04 Greenhouse-Geisser criterion), however these disappeared when Nationality was entered as a covariate. It was decided not to further explore but control for gender by entering it as a covariate.

<sup>22</sup> The samples also differed significantly with respect to tenure. However, covariates are recommended not to correlate with each other (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Tenure correlates highly with age ( $R = .70$ ), and was therefore omitted from the analyses as a covariate.

TABLE 5.8. Frequencies and descriptives for total sample.

		Dutch	British
<i>Organisation</i>	Commercial	36	28
	Technical	87	129
	Missing	1	1
<i>Country (lived in)</i>	Home only	60	94
	Abroad	64	62
	Missing		2
<i>Nationality</i>		124	158
<i>Average Tenure (years)</i>		17.9	11.7
<i>Average Age (years)</i>		44	38.6
<i>Gender</i>	Male	111	125
	Female	13	32
	Missing		1
<i>Hierarchical relationship in conflict:</i>	Dutch subordinate/UK superior	17	4
	Dutch superior/UK subordinate	2	16
	Peers	29	50
	Mixed	65	79
	Missing	11	9
<i>Language spoken during conflict</i>	English	110	141
	Both English and Dutch	9	17
	Missing	5	
<i>Length (known each other)</i>	Never before	15	10
	Less than a year	35	55
	1-5 years	66	85
	More than five years	1	7
	Mixed	3	1
	Missing	4	
<i>Average Participants (# of)</i>		8.8	7.8

#### 5.4.2.2. Reliability

Assessment of reliabilities and mean inter-item correlations showed a better structure for the revised measures, especially for perceived conflict management approach (other team) (see Table 5.9.). This highlights the fact that Alpha values need to be interpreted with caution, since the same items elicit different reliability values dependent on whether the respondent is assessing their own or the other team's behaviour. The reliability of the coefficients for nations can be tested for equality by applying a formula specified by Van de Vijver and Leung (1997). For example, the largest difference in Cronbach Alphas values are those for concern for Inconvenience: .68 for the Dutch sample and .80 for the British sample. According to the

formula<sup>23</sup>, the value obtained indicates that the reliability coefficients are not considered different.

TABLE 5.9. Alpha reliabilities and mean inter-item correlations for own and other team's conflict management approach.

Team	Dutch own		Dutch other		British own		British other	
	Alpha	<i>M R<sub>ij</sub></i>	Alpha	<i>M R<sub>ij</sub></i>	Alpha	<i>M R<sub>ij</sub></i>	Alpha	<i>M R<sub>ij</sub></i>
<b>CLARITY</b>	.76	.41	.81	.47	.82	.48	.86	.56
<b>INCONVENIENCE</b>	.68	.30	.75	.38	.80	.44	.79	.44
<b>CONTROL</b>	.85	.53	.89	.61	.87	.57	.90	.65
<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	.67	.25	.84	.51	.74	.32	.82	.48
<b>AVOIDING</b>	.79	.35	.83	.45	.78	.34	.81	.38
<b>DOMINATING</b>	.65	.27	.71	.32	.59	.21	.71	.32
<b>CONSULTATIVE</b>	.62	.25	.78	.42	.66	.28	.80	.45
<b>INDIRECT</b>	.78	.41	.82	.49	.83	.49	.86	.55
<b>DIRECT</b>	.67	.36	.79	.48	.77	.46	.76	.45

### 5.4.2.3. Dimensionality

First, the scales for concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles were checked for retention of the intended structure. Exploratory Factor Analyses resulted in 13 (British sample) to 14 (Dutch sample) factors with eigenvalues greater than one for conflict management approach components relating to one's own team, and 11 factors for conflict management approach components relating to the other team. The more stringent scree test

<sup>23</sup> First a value that represents the difference between the Cronbach Alphas's one wants to compare is calculated:  $(1-\alpha_1)/(1-\alpha_2) = (1-.67)/(1-.80) = .32/.20 = 1.60$  This value is then compared and should be lower than that which is displayed in a table of F ratios: F distribution with N1 - 1 and N2-1 degrees of freedom (124-1 = 123 and 158 - 1 = 157). In the table 123 or 157 is not indicated, closest are: F ratio df 200 numerator (items) 5 = 2.26, F ratio df 120 numerator (items) 5 = 2.29. The value obtained through the formula (1.60) is below both values, indicating an equivalence of reliability coefficients.

(Zwick & Velicer, 1986; Field, 2000) suggested extraction of eleven to thirteen factors for ratings concerning own team and nine factors for ratings concerning the other team. A factor analysis whereby the number of factors were set at nine showed a relatively clear discrimination between the concepts. However, within scale collapse occurred for the Dutch sample with regard to communication styles: Consultative and Direct items came up as one factor. Although this interesting finding supports the reasoning in chapter four in that asking questions and listening carefully is linked to Directness for the, as hypothesised, more uncertainty avoidant Dutch, further comparisons between Dutch and British samples concerning those variables should be done with caution. Furthermore, the knowledge that for the Dutch Directness and being Consultative is one and the same thing can provide some interesting information when linked with the cultural values as they are likely to diverge from the cultural values the British would link to Consultative and Direct communication.

First, correlations between individual components of conflict management approach (i.e., concerns, strategies, and communication styles) were computed to check whether they could be treated as independent from one another as hypothesised. Table 5.10 shows that the components correlated up to a maximum of  $r = .55$  for Problem Solving and Consultative for the British sample, indicating that although the concepts may be somewhat related (e.g., concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative communication style), they are not one and the same. Results also indicated that Indirect vs. Direct communication style cannot be treated as a bipolar scale, as these components are positively correlated for the British sample. In comparison, the correlation matrix computed for other team's approach to conflict management show a large increase in the number of significant correlations despite the items being the same (Table 5.11). The components correlated up to a maximum of  $r = .73$ , which suggests multicollinearity issues. Although the main interest here is the self reported behaviour of respondents vis-à-vis their own team's approach to conflict management, the less discriminating reports on the other teams' approach to conflict management will be discussed in Chapter eight.

Three separate PCAs for each nation's data using Varimax rotation were performed to analyse each set of concepts (See Tables 5.12 – 5.14). Results for KMO and Bartlett's Test were adequate. Again, it was found that in the Dutch sample the Consultative and Direct communication styles factor together. Other components, however, were relatively independent.



A similar pattern was found when ratings concerned the other team's behaviour were factor analysed.

TABLE 5.10: Correlation matrix of conflict management approach components per nationality.

NL	Clarity	Inconvenience	Control	Prob. Solving	Avoiding	Dominating	Consultative	Indirect	Direct
<b>UK</b>									
<b>Clarity</b>		-.08	.08	.24*	-.11	-.04	.42**	-.08	.40**
<b>Inconvenience</b>	-.28**		.08	.16	.31**	-.05	.13	.19*	-.00
<b>Control</b>	-.02	.27**		.20*	-.12	.12	.17	.05	.07
<b>Prob. Solving</b>	.43**	-.14	-.10		.01	-.11	.50**	.40	.27**
<b>Avoiding</b>	-.13	.41**	.02	-.10		.04	-.03	.13	-.13
<b>Dominating</b>	-.15	.24**	.39**	-.26**	.18*		-.10	.10	-.13
<b>Consultative</b>	.41**	-.05	-.09	.55**	-.24**	-.30**		.29**	.39**
<b>Indirect</b>	-.26**	.42**	.22*	-.04	.35**	.27**	-.02		-.01
<b>Direct</b>	.33**	-.25**	-.11	.28**	-.24**	-.13	.27**	.51**	

\*\* p < .01

\* p < .05

TABLE 5.11: Correlation matrix of other team's conflict management approach components per nationality.

NL	Other Clarity	Other Inconvenience	Other Control	Other Prob. Solving	Other Avoiding	Other Dominating	Other Consultative	Other Indirect	Other Direct
<b>UK</b>									
<b>Other Clarity</b>		-.33**	-.13	.52**	-.36**	-.31**	.47**	-.14	.56**
<b>Other Inconvenience</b>	.10		.26**	-.32**	.65**	.32**	-.28**	.30**	-.51**
<b>Other Control</b>	-.13	-.15		-.33**	.33**	.47**	-.13	.21*	-.32**
<b>Other Prob. Solving</b>	.57**	.17*	-.33**		-.52**	-.57**	.73**	-.06	.59**
<b>Other Avoiding</b>	.03	.38**	-.36**	.28**		.51**	-.42**	.36**	-.63**
<b>Other Dominating</b>	-.20*	-.20*	-.47**	-.32**	-.22**		-.45**	.35**	-.46**
<b>Other Consultative</b>	.63**	.22*	-.23**	.73**	.12	-.23**		.04	.54**
<b>Other Indirect</b>	-.00	.37**	-.19*	.29**	.49**	-.07	.20*		-.33**
<b>Other Direct</b>	.34**	-.22**	.22**	.18*	-.28**	.12	.25**	-.36	

\*\* p < .01

\* p < .05

TABLE 5.12. Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation for own and other team's concerns per nationality.

<i>Own Team</i>						<b>Concerns</b>	<i>Other Team</i>					
<i>NL</i>			<i>UK</i>				<i>NL</i>			<i>UK</i>		
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	Items	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
.75				.65		Obtain complete clarity of the issues.		.78			.75	
.66				.77		Remove misunderstandings out of the way.		.77			.78	
.74				.81		Be as clear as possible.		.58			.85	
.54				.79		Eliminate any ambiguity.		.78			.84	
.82				.73		Maintain clarity of thought and ideas.		.80			.79	
		.73			.77	Prevent uncomfortable problems from occurring.			.70			.78
		.66			.79	Prevent an awkward situation from happening.			.67			.75
-.48		.61			.75	Prevent a difficult discussion from developing.			.68			.78
		.69			.68	Prevent tension between participants.			.68			.65
-.55		.45			.60	Prevent uncomfortable questions from being raised.			.67			.71
	.74		.81			Control the meeting.	.82			.83		
	.78		.75			Have control of the discussion.	.85			.80		
	.79		.79			Manage the meeting.	.80			.86		
	.79		.88			Be in charge of the situation.	.78			.87		
	.83		.82			Lead the meeting	.87			.88		
3.38	3.27	1.98	4.24	3.19	1.86	Eigenvalues	4.25	3.17	1.84	4.17	3.08	2.6
22.51	21.78	13.2	28.28	21.26	12.39	Total Variance Explained (%)	28.35	21.12	12.26	27.81	20.53	17.33

Note: Values below .40 suppressed.

TABLE 5.13. Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation for own and other team's conflict management strategies per nationality.

<i>Own Team</i>						<i>Conflict Management Strategies</i>							<i>Other Team</i>					
<i>NL</i>			<i>UK</i>										<i>NL</i>			<i>UK</i>		
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	Items	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>			
	.54			.56		Investigated the issue with the other participants to find a solution acceptable to both parties.	.56			.71								
	.63			.64		Integrated all the ideas to come up with a decision jointly.	.74			.80								
	.57			.53		Exchanged accurate information to solve a problem together.	.78			.73								
	.60			.61		Brought everyone's concerns out in the open so that issues could be resolved in the best possible way.	.70			.73								
	.65			.69		Collaborated to come up with a decision acceptable to all of us.	.84			.74								
	.63			.77		Worked together for a proper understanding of a problem.	.76			.80								
.62			.61			Avoided an open confrontation.		.70			.71							
.64			.60			Kept their disagreement to themselves.		.61			.65							
.61			.66			Avoided an open discussion of differences in opinion.		.71			.66							
.67			.75			Avoided an open argument with the others.	-.53	.50			.70							
.71			.73			Stayed away from a disagreement.		.73			.79							
.70			.59			Kept their disagreement quiet in order to avoid hard feelings.		.71			.68							
.71			.59			Avoided unpleasant verbal exchanges.		.73		.45	.55							
		.56				Were persistent in pursuing their own side of the issue.									.56			
		.66			.59	Used their influence to get their own ideas accepted.			.75						.78			
		.61			.65	Used their expertise to make a decision that was to their favour.			.74						.58			
		.63			.63	Used their authority to make a decision in their own favour.	-.50		.66	-.47					.66			
		.72			.71	Used their power to win a competitive situation.			.56	-.44					.69			
3.31	2.51	2.21	3.58	2.95	1.68	Eigenvalues	6.45	2.11	1.55	4.82	2.90	2.1						
18.3	12.93	12.3	19.90	16.38	9.33	Total variance explained (%)	35.86	11.72	8.6	26.77	16.14	11.67						

Note: Values below .40 suppressed.

TABLE 5.14. Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation for own and other team's communication styles per nationality.

<i>Own Team</i>						<b>Communication Styles</b>	<i>Other Team</i>					
<i>NL</i>			<i>UK</i>				<i>NL</i>			<i>UK</i>		
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
		.54		.56		Asked questions to identify any difficulties.			.67		.72	
.46				.73		Listened carefully to identify any issues at stake.		.44	.49		.73	
.63				.60		Identified and explained their own reservations.			.75		.59	
.54				.69		Considered the opinions of others in order to identify the core issues.		.51	.4		.80	
		.63		.55		Conferred with the other group to identify any misunderstandings.			.691		.75	
	.78		.78			Discussed any problems tactfully and indirectly.	.86			.79		
	.77		.75			Talked about the issues in an indirect and subtle way.	.70			.75		
	.78		.76			Voiced opinions indirectly and diplomatically.	.82			.86		
	.64		.66		-.45	Expressed criticism discreetly and indirectly.	.78			.81		
	.57		.75			Addressed difficulties in an indirect and subtle way.	.52		.44	.70		
.45			-.44			Came directly to the point while conveying the message.		.42	.43			.76
.71					.62	Were direct and frank when voicing ideas.		.78				.83
.72				.51	.52	Openly and directly confronted any problems		.79			.43	.58
.77					.67	Were honest and direct in their opinion		.75				.70
		-.74			.75	Expressed their criticism in a direct, blunt way.			-.42	-.56		
3.15	2.99	1.26	4.61	2.41	1.16	Eigenvalues	4.09	3.54	1.14	4.13	3.66	1.33
21	19.96	8.41	30.73	16.07	7.73	Total Variance Explained (%)	27.24	23.57	7.61	27.5	24.43	8.84

Note: Values below .40 suppressed.

Based on the collapse of the Direct and Consultative communication styles for the Dutch sample, a test rotation was performed to see if Dutch and British respondents differed in their interpretation of these scales (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). As shown in Table 5.15, the results confirmed that the proportionality coefficients (Tucker's Phi) for own and for other's communication styles are substantially below the acceptable level of .90 and interpretations and British-Dutch comparisons are therefore to be done with caution. All other values of Phi were more than acceptable.

TABLE 5.15 Proportionality coefficients for Conflict Management Approach(CMA) and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction.

	<b>Proportionality coefficient per Factor</b>		
Concerns	.96	.96	.96
Other's Concerns.	.96	.93	.93
Strategies.	.96	.96	.96
Other's Strategies	.88	.90	.91
Communication Style	<b>.87</b>	<b>.66</b>	<b>.54</b>
Other's Communication Style	.98	.87	<b>.84</b>
Success and Comfort	.96	.90	
Other's Success and Comfort.	.97	.97	

### **5.5. Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction: Reliability and factor structure**

The Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction measure was newly developed for the present study and therefore reliability analysis and factor structure were of particular importance. The Success scale was made up of three items (after one was deleted); a typical example being: "In general, the negotiation went successfully". The Comfort scale was made up of six items, two related to group relations and were reversed (typical item: "During discussion they saw the other group as their opponent."), two related to mood (typical item: "Their mood was generally good during the discussion."), and two related to comfort (typical item: "The participants felt at ease with the other group. "). Cronbach Alpha's and mean inter-item correlations for both success and comfort showed that the items correlated well (Table 5.16). The factor structure showed two distinct factors: success and comfort (Table 5.17).

TABLE 5.16. Alphas and mean inter-item correlations for Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction (success and comfort) per team and per nationality.

	<b>Dutch own team</b>		<b>Dutch other team</b>		<b>British own team</b>		<b>British other team</b>	
	Alpha	<i>Mean Rij</i>	Alpha	<i>Mean Rij</i>	Alpha	<i>Mean Rij</i>	Alpha	<i>Mean Rij</i>
<b>Success</b>	.82	.61	.80	.58	.81	.64	.82	.62
<b>Comfort</b>	.79	.38	.84	.49	.84	.49	.88	.57

TABLE 5.17. Principal Component Analyses with Varimax Rotation for Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction per team and per nationality.

<i>Own Team</i>		<i>Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction</i>				<i>Other Team</i>			
<i>NL</i>		<i>UK</i>			<i>NL</i>		<i>UK</i>		
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	Items	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	
	.84		.83	The discussion outcome was in their favour.		.82		.83	
	.89		.90	Overall, the results were favourable for them.		.83		.87	
	.85		.85	In general, the negotiation went successfully for them.		.84		.85	
.43				If they had to do the meeting again, they would change almost nothing.					
.45		.67		They dealt with the discussion in a “them vs. us” approach. (R)	.67		.79		
.71		.80		The participants felt at ease with the other group.	.80		.80		
.74		.77		Their mood was generally good during the discussion.	.78		.82		
.80		.86		They were comfortable in the other group’s presence.	.79		.85		
.76		.65		The participants were mostly in a pleasant mood.	.75		.72		
.61		.69		During discussion they saw the other group as their opponent. (R)	.71		.78		
3.20	2.40	3.93	2.01	Eigenvalues	3.61	2.34	4.20	2.11	
31.98	24.03	39.3	20.09	Variance explained	36.05	23.44	41.97	21.09	

## 5.6. Screening Data

Before any multivariate analyses were conducted, the data set was explored by looking at the descriptives of each sample and each variable (i.e., ten Schwartz value types, eleven conflict management approach scales (e.g., concerns, strategies, communication style, and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction), and eleven other team conflict management approach scales). Glass, Peckham, and Sanders (1972) found that many parametric tests are not seriously affected by violations of assumptions. However, data was checked for normality, outliers, collinearity, unequal sample size, and sphericity (homogeneity of variance).

### 5.6.1. Normal distribution and the identification of outliers.

Although Profile Analyses can tolerate violations of normality, they are extremely sensitive to outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001; Weinfurt, 2000). Furthermore, skewness can be a problem for analyses that use the mean to make comparisons (Yu, 2002). Through a preliminary analysis of normal distribution it was found that the data were not normally distributed, with several variables being skewed<sup>24</sup>. Analyses of box-plots and Q-Q plots indicated that there were several variables with univariate outliers, and some cases scored particularly high or low for more than one variable<sup>25</sup>. Thus transformation of data or deletion of outlying cases may be necessary (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). Subsequent deletion of those cases which were univariate outliers for several variables improved skewness substantially. Regardless, for skewness to be problematic it would have to be twice the standard error, and in the present study only four out of 32 variables are three times the standard error. Since the skewness before transformation was not across the board and the degree of skewness was not severe, it may be preferable to use the data without

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<sup>24</sup> The analysis for normality presumes that the sample is representative of the general population. The variables that were identified as skewed were all negatively skewed, i.e., with a pile up on the top end of the scale. The variables in question were: concern for Clarity, Consultative communication, Direct communication, success, comfort, perceived comfort, perceived Dominating strategy, perceived Consultative communication, and perceived Direct communication, which are considered to be reflective of effective conflict management behaviour, therefore highly desirable for the managers that make up the present sample and may be an indication of ceiling effect.

<sup>25</sup> An exploration of the characteristics of the variables with outliers showed that socially desirable variables such as 'concern for Clarity', 'Consultative', and 'success' had cases that scored above and below the sample mean. An exploration of the characteristics of the type of respondents which were repeated outliers showed no particular demographics with regard to gender, age, tenure, and nationality.



transformations as ‘real’ scale differences (e.g., a score of 1 vs. 2 or 4 vs. 5) are then maintained<sup>26</sup> (Wright, personal communication). However, particularly in the present study, where the number of cases is 282, it is important to first consider the benefits and drawbacks of deletion vs. transformation.

The decision of deletion or transformation of data was based on detection of multivariate outliers and their overlap with univariate outliers (e.g., case 145 was both a univariate and a multivariate outlier)<sup>27</sup>. The criterion for multivariate outliers is Mahalanobis distance at  $p < 0.001$ , and nine cases were identified, of which four were also recognised as univariate outliers. In order to establish why these were detected as multivariate outliers Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) recommend to run a regression, whereby variables that significantly predict the case number are variables which separate the outlier from the other cases. The scores on these particular variables are then compared to the remaining sample mean.

This analysis checked for several assumptions and found that a) there were no ceiling or floor effects, b) there were no outstanding correlations between cases (e.g., outliers were not all British males aged 45 scoring high on Problem Solving). Nevertheless, as expected with multivariate outliers, the results showed internal inconsistencies per case, i.e., although most respondents who score high on concern for Clarity would also score high on Problem Solving, the cases identified as outliers do not follow this trend and instead score high on concern for Clarity but low on Problem Solving, which qualifies as an unusual combination of scores.

The nine identified outliers were removed and a subsequent check using Mahalanobis distance identified an additional three outliers, which were also removed. A final exploration of the data regarding normal distribution showed no improvement for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results, i.e., the removal of multivariate outliers did not improve the data for normality. The data set without multivariate outliers was transformed using log transformation (See Field, in press; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). The data showed no improvement after transformation.

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<sup>26</sup> There are debates whether ordinal data can be treated as interval data; i.e., can the distance between 1 and 2 vs. 3 and 4 on a Likert-type scale be considered equal? Several researchers argue that parametric tests can be applied to ordinal data without problem (e.g., Baker, Hardyck, & Petrinovich, 1966; Borgatta & Bohrnstedt, 1980; Tukey, 1986).

<sup>27</sup> Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) provide a syntax file for the calculation of Mahalanobis distance. In the present study, any case whereby  $\chi^2$  was more than 59.703 at df30 (actual 32)  $P < 0.001$  was considered a multivariate outlier.

Profile Analysis is robust to violations of normality, provided there are more cases than Dependent Variables in the smallest group – which is the case in the present study. However, unequal sample size may affect this and needs to be looked at (see section 7.1.2.2.).

### **5.6.2. Unequal sample size.**

Unequal sample sizes in repeated measures can be problematic for some designs. Keselman, Algina, and Kowalchuk (2001) argue that an unbalanced design affects ANOVAs, and thus repeated measures ANOVAs. However, Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) argue that unequal sample sizes provide no special difficulty in profile analyses because each hypothesis is tested as if in a one-way design and unequal sample sizes create difficulties in interpretation only in designs with more than one between-subjects Independent Variable. In the present study nationality is the only between-subjects Independent Variable.

### **5.6.3. Multicollinearity and singularity**

Multicollinearity and singularity are problems that arise when variables are too highly correlated, whereby the former involves a high correlation (e.g., .90 and above) and the latter involves a redundant variable because it is a combination of two or more other variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In the case of the present study, for example, it has already become evident through the Factor Analyses discussed in the previous chapter that for the Dutch sample Direct communication and Consultative communication are considered the same, which can indicate multicollinearity. Singularity is not a problem in the case of Profile Analysis as due to the nature of ‘repeated measures’ this overlap of variables is accounted for (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) provide a syntax file which generates collinearity diagnostics. The analyses were run for the entire sample and for each nationality separately. Results showed a high conditioning index ( $> .30$ ). A conditioning index is “a measure of tightness or dependency of one variable on the others” (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2001, p. 85). In the present study, multicollinearity may potentially be a problem as many factors had a high conditioning index. The next step is to check the variance proportions to see if they account for a sizable proportion

of variance in two or more variables. However, no dimension (row) was found to have more than one variance proportion of  $>.50$ , which indicates that there should not be a problem of multicollinearity.

#### 5.6.4. Sphericity

The estimation of error variance in repeated measures ANOVA is more complicated than regular ANOVAs. The assumption of homogeneity of variance is known as sphericity in repeated measures and “describes a form of the relationship between scores at all levels of the within-subject variable” (Weinfurt, 2000, p. 329). The degree of variability (covariance) among the levels of the repeated measures variable needs to conform to a spherical pattern (Keselman et al., 2001). It is required that the variances of the measures at each level of the repeated factor are equal and that the covariances (hence correlations) between the measures at each level of the repeated factor are also equal (Weinfurt, 2000). The literature suggests to check Box’s M, provided the dependent variable is normally distributed (See Weinfurt, 2000, for discussion). Weinfurt suggests to assess the degree of sphericity using the ‘epsilon’ ( $\epsilon$ ) value, others (Field, 2000; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) suggest to check Mauchly’s test of sphericity. However, Weinfurt argues that this test is highly influenced by violations of multivariate normality. A quick review of the  $\epsilon$  values indicated that the sphericity assumption varied from excellent (i.e.,  $\epsilon > .90$ ) to just under ‘safe’ ( $< .70$ ) (Weinfurt, 2000)<sup>28</sup>. Therefore the Greenhouse-Geisser adjustment for ANOVA values of F, df, significance, and partial  $\eta^2$  will be reported<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> Epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) values ranged from  $> .90$  (concerns, conflict management strategies) to  $< .70$  (own/other conflict management strategies). For values  $< .70$  Mauchly’s test of sphericity is indeed significant indicating a difference in variance. Weinfurt (2000) and Field (2000) recommend to use an average of the Greenhouse-Geisser and Huynh-Feldt adjustments in this case. However, since Huynh-Feldt is more liberal and Greenhouse-Geisser more conservative it was decided to use the latter adjustment. Besides, comparison of statistics based on sphericity assumed vs. Greenhouse-Geisser adjustment showed no major conflict (i.e., whereby results were significant for sphericity assumed and not for Greenhouse-Geisser), thereby avoiding the issue whether the null hypothesis was erroneously accepted or rejected depending on the choice of criteria.

<sup>29</sup> Additionally to F value, df, and significance, the literature encourages the reporting of  $\eta^2$  (eta squared) to indicate the effect size, i.e., “degree to which the IV(s) and DV are related” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p. 52). Eta squared “indexes the proportion of variance explained by a variable (...similar to  $R^2$ )” (Weinfurt, 2000, p. 324). Eta squared thus can be used to evaluate the strength of association between groups and averaged ratings on, in the present study, the subscales of the conflict management behaviour components (see also Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p. 398). However, Field (2000) argues that eta squared is biased and alternative measures can be used. SPSS reports *partial* eta squared, which takes into account the error variance. The criteria of the proportion of variance is as follows:  $.01 =$  small,  $.09 =$  medium,  $.25 =$  greater or large, which corresponds to a 10%, 30%, and 50% difference respectively, also known as the binomial effect size display (BESD) (Weinfurt, 2000). In sum, whereas

## 5.7. Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the development of the scales used to assess conflict management approach and cultural values in an organisation. SSA indicated that the predicted structure for the Schwartz (1992) value types was clearly present in both samples. The scales to measure conflict management approach underwent several changes before a final Factor Analysis of the items indicated the presence of three distinct concepts: concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles, each consisting of three scales: Control, Clarity, and Inconvenience; Problem Solving, Avoiding, and Dominating; and Direct, Indirect, and Consultative respectively. A similar finding was obtained for data concerning ratings of the other team. However, Direct and Consultative communication styles collapsed for the Dutch sample, an effect which will be taken into consideration when testing the hypotheses. The measure for Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction was also tested for scale reliabilities and factor structure. Both these tests showed strong internal reliabilities and clear factor structures per team and for both samples. Data were subsequently checked for violation of assumptions and univariate and multivariate outliers were removed where appropriate. This means that the culture, conflict management approach, and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction measures can be used for testing the hypotheses.

*The most exciting phrase to hear in science ... is not 'Eureka!' (I found it!) but 'That's funny ...' Isaac Asimov*

## **Testing of the hypotheses**

The following chapter applies the instruments described in chapter six to explain the conflict management approach of organisational teams from the Netherlands and UK. Survey data can be analysed in several ways, depending on, for example, the design of the study, violations of assumptions, and the hypotheses. The focus of this chapter is twofold. First it looks at the interrelation between conflict management approach (concerns, strategies and communication styles), and employs a between groups design, comparing the Dutch and British responses using Profile Analyses. Then, regression analyses are performed to predict conflict management approach and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction using the Schwartz Value Types.

As mentioned in Chapter five, the method and sample are the same as described for Study 3 (See section 5.4.2.1.). The total response was 288 returned questionnaires, which was an 18% response rate (see Table 5.8 for details). After omission of incomplete questionnaires, the total N = 282, of which 124 were Dutch and 158 were British. The average age of the sample was 41 years, and tenure was 14.45 years. Results of main data analysis are presented in current chapter and interpretation of results can be found in Chapter Seven.

### **6.1. Testing of the hypotheses: Conflict management approach**

The first hypotheses to be tested are those relating to differences in conflict management approach<sup>30</sup>. To recap, it was predicted that managers in general have a high concern for Clarity, are highly Problem Solving oriented, and use mostly a Consultative communication style during

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<sup>30</sup> Since analyses of factor structures conducted before tests for normality were good (see sections 6.5.2.1 to 6.5.2.3) and any outliers due to erroneous data entry or misinterpretation of scales were accounted for, any further deletion of cases would have improved the structures even more and thus variables were deemed to be solid enough for multivariate analyses (Wright, personal communication).

conflict. Furthermore, it is expected that managers score themselves as higher on the above behaviours than their opponents, who are scored higher on socially undesirable behaviours such as concern for Control and Dominating conflict management strategy. Any cultural differences with regard to socially (un)desirable behaviour will be represented by a difference in concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and (In)direct communication. Specific hypotheses will be assessed in sections 6.2.1. to 6.2.4. Analyses for the conflict management approach components (i.e., concerns, strategies, and communication styles) were similar, which benefited the consistency of the output.

There are several ways to analyse the type of data obtained in the present study. Profile analyses were used to compare profiles of the two samples. It is valuable for the purpose of this study as it allows within and between comparison of the two samples. Profile analysis is a particular application of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to a situation where there are several Dependent Variables, which are all measured on the same scale – typical of survey research (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001; see also Weinfurt, 2000). It compares groups in terms of their profiles across multiple scores, applying mixed designs when the same within subject variable is repeatedly measured, or, in the present case, several Dependent Variables are measured all on the same scale. Profile analyses are a way of decomposing the data to ascertain where differences lie but are less commonly used for survey data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p. 391) but this type of analysis enables a comparison between the different scores on subscales, something which (M)ANOVAs do not, as they provide only a value of general significance.

In the present scenario, Profile Analysis enabled a comparison of the mean scores on the three conflict management components (concern, strategies, and communication styles) and values overall and per nationality. It thus assesses group differences across multiple dependent variables simultaneously and protects against inflated Type I error due to multiple tests of correlated DVs, provided issues such as sample size differences, missing data, power, multivariate outliers, reliability of covariates, and multicollinearity are accounted for (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The main research questions for profile analyses are: a) Are the profiles parallel? (Are there group differences in the overall levels of performance?), and b) Are the profiles flat? (Do the DVs elicit the same average response?). A Levels test (Between Subject statistic), which

takes the average of the scores on the subscales (e.g., the average of concern for Clarity, Inconvenience, and Control) and compares this score between groups. This statistic in itself is not informative as it does not provide insight into where the national difference lies exactly (Weinfurt, 2000). For this reason, MANCOVAs were performed to identify national differences, if any. Following Profile Analyses, Linear Multiple Regressions are used to assess the relationships between the conflict management approach variables, cultural value types, and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction.

### 6.1.1. Concerns

In this section the mean differences between concerns within each sample group, between sample groups and between own concerns and other team's concerns within and between sample groups are looked at. Table 6.1 displays the raw means, Standard Deviation, and N for concerns and other concerns per nationality.

TABLE 6.1 Means, Standard Deviation, and N for own and other concern per nationality.

	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Clarity</b>	Dutch	4.08	.53	98
	British	4.05	.54	129
<b>Other Clarity</b>	Dutch	3.30	.70	98
	British	3.80	.69	129
<b>Inconvenience</b>	Dutch	2.59	.63	98
	British	3.12	.69	129
<b>Other Inconvenience</b>	Dutch	3.37	.65	98
	British	2.49	.65	129
<b>Control</b>	Dutch	3.16	.68	98
	British	3.10	.68	129
<b>Other Control</b>	Dutch	3.53	.74	98
	British	3.45	.74	129

First to be tested is Hypothesis 1a: 'Managers are more concerned about Clarity than about Control, about which they are more concerned than Inconvenience'. A profile analysis was performed on the three subsets of the Concern measure: concern for Clarity, concern for Inconvenience, and concern for Control. The grouping variable was nationality of the managers.

The first test is thus to check for the flatness of the profiles (i.e., did the DVs elicit the same average response?), which is tested by the main effect, followed by an assessment of whether the samples are parallel. (i.e., to look at group differences in the levels of performance) which is indicated by the nationality x measure interaction. Using the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion, the profiles were tested for flatness and the main effect for concerns was statistically reliable  $F(1.97, 231) = 17.8, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .07$ , i.e., the profiles are not flat. Furthermore, samples deviated significantly from parallelism,  $F(1.97, 231) = 13.65, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .06$ ; i.e., reliable differences were found between national groups. None of the covariates were statistically significant.

The above results provide an indication of the overall results for differences between concerns. To assert the precise differences per sample group a split file analysis mixed model ANOVA was performed. Results showed that Hypothesis 1a was supported:  $F(1.98, 231) = 6.11, p = .003, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .06$  for the Dutch sample and  $F(1.89, 231) = 10.38, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .07$  for the British sample; i.e., reliable differences were found between concerns for both groups. Pairwise comparisons using Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons per nationality showed that means for concerns differed significantly from each other, except for concern for Inconvenience and concern for Control for the British sample (See Table 6.2). Thus, managers have more concern for Control than for Inconvenience in the Dutch sample but not in the British sample, suggesting that further exploration of cultural differences is required.

TABLE 6.2. Pairwise comparisons for concerns: Estimated marginal means.

CONCERNS (Mean)			Mean difference
<b>Dutch</b>	Clarity (4.08)	Inconvenience (2.57)	1.51**
	Clarity (4.08)	Control (3.15)	0.94**
	Inconvenience (2.57)	Control (3.15)	-0.58**
<b>British</b>	Clarity (4.05)	Inconvenience (3.11)	0.94**
	Clarity (4.05)	Control (3.10)	0.95**
	Inconvenience (3.11)	Control (3.10)	0.01

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

The next comparison involved managers' ratings of their own team vs. the out-group – the other nationality. A mixed model ANOVA was performed and although Mauchly's test of



sphericity proved to be significant, the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion was .83, well above acceptable levels. Results for the flatness test indicated that concerns for own team were significantly different from concerns for other team  $F(4.15, 227) = 11.63, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$ . and results for the parallelism test showed that there was a significant interaction for nationality with own and other concerns  $F(4.15, 227) = 32.48, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$ . No significant results for the covariates were found. A subsequent split file mixed model ANOVA generated a Bonferroni adjusted pairwise comparison that indicated a significant difference for both samples with regard to concern for Clarity vs. other's concern for Clarity, supporting Hypothesis 1b: 'Managers perceive the other team to be less concerned about Clarity and more concerned about Control than their own team'. Differences for concern for Inconvenience and Control were also found with regard to differences in in- and out-group assessment. A cultural difference was established for concern for Inconvenience: the Dutch sample rated the out-group higher, whereas the British sample rated the in-group higher on this component. Both samples rated the out-group higher on concern for Control than the in-group (See Table 6.3). A summary of all the means for concerns and other concerns is graphed in Fig. 6.1.

TABLE 6.3. Pairwise comparisons for own vs. other concerns: Estimated marginal means<sup>31</sup>.

	<b>CONCERNS (Mean)</b>	<b>OTHER CONCERN (Mean)</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>
<b>Dutch</b>	Clarity (4.08)	Other Clarity (3.30)	0.78**
<b>British</b>	Clarity (4.05)	Other Clarity (3.80)	0.25**
<b>Dutch</b>	Inconvenience (2.57)	Other Inconvenience (3.38)	-0.78**
<b>British</b>	Inconvenience (3.11)	Other Inconvenience (2.49)	0.63**
<b>Dutch</b>	Control (3.17)	Other Control (3.53)	-0.37**
<b>British</b>	Control (3.10)	Other Control (3.45)	-0.35**

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

<sup>31</sup> The means that are adjusted for the influence of the variables are displayed and vary slightly from the raw means and means derived from other mixed model ANOVAs due to the Bonferroni adjustment and influence of the covariates (e.g., Table 7.1).

Fig.6.1. Means for Managers' own and other team's concerns.

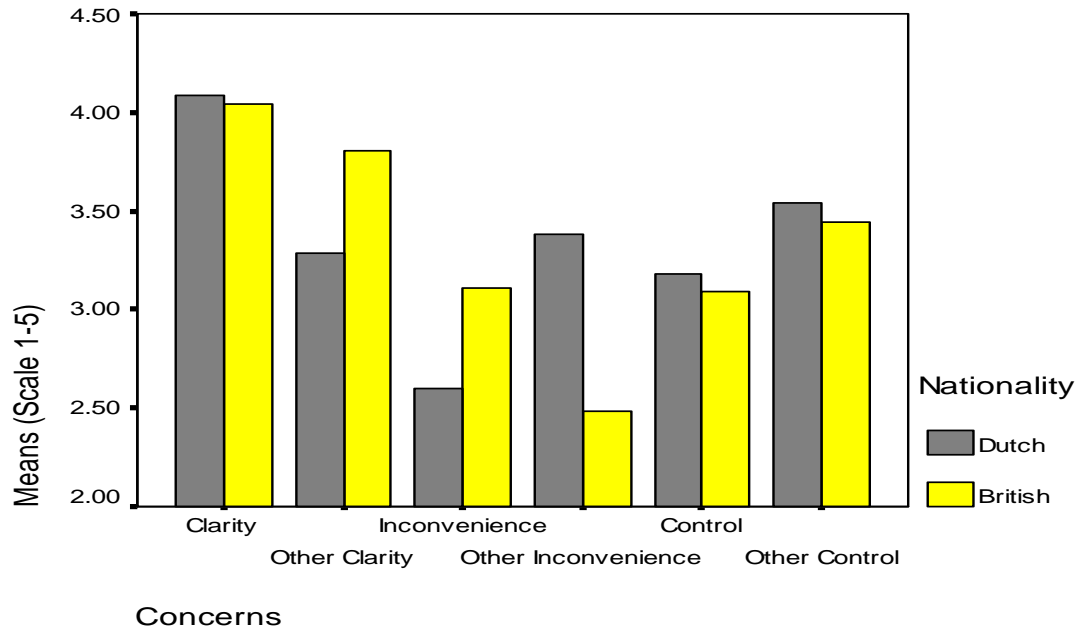


Fig. 6.1. clearly indicates the cross-interaction for concern for Inconvenience and Other team's concern for Inconvenience. The British and Dutch respondents not only differed in the extent to which they are concerned with inconvenience, but confirmed these ratings in their evaluation of the other team. This cultural differences will be further explored in section 7.3.

### 7.1.2. Conflict management strategies

In this section the mean differences between conflict management strategies within each sample group, between sample groups and between own conflict management strategies and other team's conflict management strategies within and between sample groups are looked at. Table 6.4. displays the raw means, Standard Deviation, and N for own and other conflict management strategies per nationality.

TABLE 6.4. Means, Standard Deviation, and N for own and other conflict management strategies per nationality.

	Nationality	Mean	S. D.	N
<b>Problem Solving</b>	Dutch	3.84	.46	100
	British	3.84	.70	131
<b>Other Prob. Solving</b>	Dutch	3.24	.48	100
	British	3.49	.70	131
<b>Avoiding</b>	Dutch	2.15	.57	100
	British	3.23	.67	131
<b>Other Avoiding</b>	Dutch	3.35	.49	100
	British	2.45	.68	131
<b>Dominating</b>	Dutch	2.97	.66	100
	British	3.15	.71	131
<b>Other Dominating</b>	Dutch	3.49	.53	100
	British	3.43	.64	131

The following hypothesis was tested: Hypothesis 2a: Managers use a Problem Solving strategy more than a Dominating strategy, which they use more than an Avoiding strategy. Again, a profile analysis was performed on the three subsets of the Conflict management strategies measure: Problem Solving, Avoiding, and Dominating. The grouping variable was nationality of the managers. As mentioned in section 7.1. the first test is to check the flatness of the profiles (i.e., did the Dependent Variables elicit the same average response?), which is tested by the main effect, followed by an assessment of whether the samples are parallel. (i.e., to look at group differences in the overall levels of performance) which is indicated by the nationality x measure interaction.

Using the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion, the profiles were shown not to be flat; i.e., the main effect was statistically reliable  $F(1.99, 236) = 27.75, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .11$ . Furthermore, samples deviated significantly from parallelism,  $F(1.99, 236) = 56.97, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .20$ ; i.e., reliable differences were found between groups. None of the covariates were statistically significant. The above results provide an indication of the overall results for differences between conflict management strategies.

To determine the precise differences per sample group a split file Profile Analysis was performed. Results showed that Hypothesis 2a was supported:  $F(1.96, 236) = 20.57, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .18$  for the Dutch sample and  $F(1.97, 236) = 9.23, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .07$  for the British sample; i.e., reliable differences were found between conflict management strategies for both groups (See Table 6.5). The covariate for residency abroad and at home ('Home')  $F(1.96, 236) = 3.44, p = .035, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$  was significant for the Dutch sample. Pairwise comparisons using Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons per nationality showed that the means for conflict management strategies differed significantly from each other, except for Avoiding and Dominating for the British sample. The proposition that 'Managers use Dominating more than Avoiding' was supported for the Dutch sample but not for the British sample, sustaining the earlier suggestion that further exploration of cultural differences is required.

TABLE 6.5. Pairwise comparisons for conflict management strategies: Estimated marginal means.

<b>Conflict Management Strategies (mean)</b>				<b>Mean difference</b>	
<b>Dutch</b>	Problem Solving	(3.84)	Avoiding	(2.15)	1.69**
	Problem Solving	(3.84)	Dominating	(2.96)	0.87**
	Avoiding	(2.15)	Dominating	(2.96)	-0.81**
<b>British</b>	Problem Solving	(3.84)	Avoiding	(3.24)	0.60**
	Problem Solving	(3.84)	Dominating	(3.16)	0.69**
	Avoiding	(3.24)	Dominating	(3.16)	0.09

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

The next comparison involved managers' ratings of their own team vs. the out-group – the other nationality. Hypothesis 2b: Managers perceive the other team as less Problem Solving and more Dominating than their own team. A mixed model ANOVA was performed and although Mauchly's test of sphericity proved to be significant, the Greenhouse-Geisser  $\epsilon^2$  was above the acceptable level of .75. The results indicated that conflict management strategies for own team were significantly different from conflict management strategies for other team  $F(3.86, 231) = 11.15, p .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05.$  and that there was a significant interaction for nationality with own and other concerns  $F(3.86, 231) = 49.39, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .18.$  Covariates were not significant.

A subsequent pairwise comparison using Bonferroni adjustment indicated a significant difference for both samples with regard to Problem Solving for own vs. other comparison, supporting Hypothesis 2b. Similarly to the results for concerns, a cultural difference was found for Avoiding: Dutch managers rated British managers higher, whereas British managers rated Dutch managers lower than their own team on this strategy. Both samples rated also their team as lower on Dominating than the other team (See Table 6.6.). A summary of all the conflict management means is graphed in Fig. 6.2.

TABLE 6.6. Pairwise comparisons for own vs. other conflict management strategies: Estimated marginal means.

	Conflict Management Strategies (mean)		Mean difference
<b>Dutch</b>	Problem Solving (3.84)	Other Problem Solving (3.24)	0.60**
<b>British</b>	Problem Solving (3.84)	Other Problem Solving (3.49)	0.35**
<b>Dutch</b>	Avoiding (2.15)	Other Avoiding (3.35)	-1.20**
<b>British</b>	Avoiding (3.23)	Other Avoiding (2.45)	0.78**
<b>Dutch</b>	Dominating (2.97)	Other Dominating (3.49)	-0.52**
<b>British</b>	Dominating (3.15)	Other Dominating (3.43)	0.28*

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

Fig. 6.2. Means for own and other team's conflict management strategies per nationality.

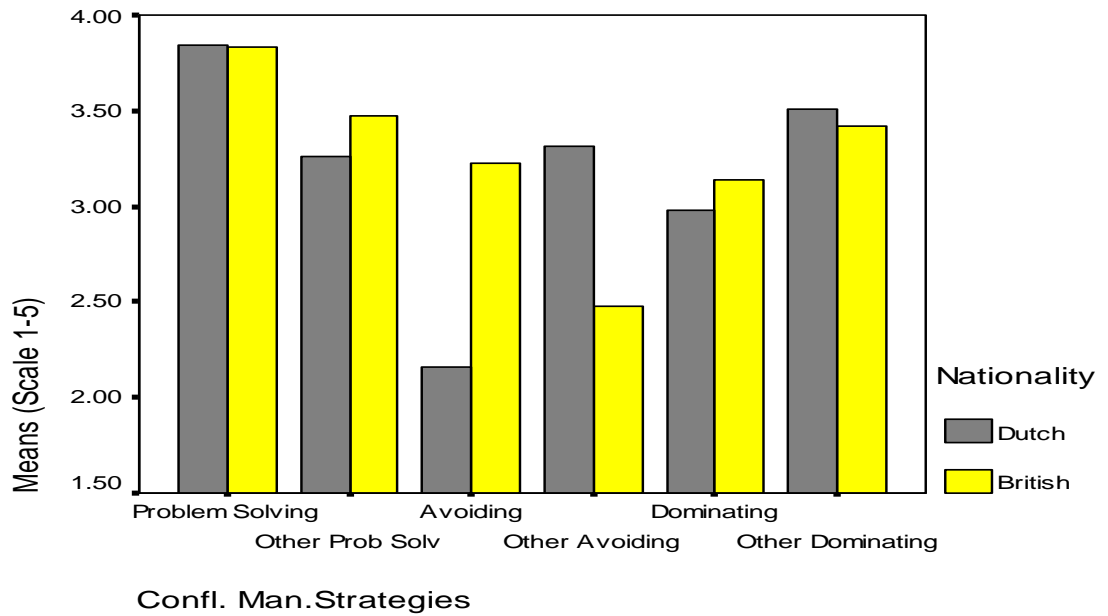


Fig. 6.2. clearly indicates the cross-interaction for Avoiding strategy and Other team's Avoiding strategy. The British and Dutch respondents not only differed in the extent to which they use Avoiding as a strategy, but confirmed these ratings in their evaluation of the other team. Similarly as for concern for Inconvenience, this cultural differences will be further explored in section 7.3.

### **6.1.3. Communication styles**

Finally, in this section the mean differences between communication styles within each sample group, between sample groups and between communication styles and other team's communication styles within and between sample groups are looked at. Table 6.7. displays the raw means, Standard Deviation, and N for concerns and other communication styles per nationality.

TABLE 6.7. Means, Standard Deviation, and N for own and other communication styles per nationality.

	<b>NATIONAL</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Consultative</b>	Dutch	3.73	.44	104
	British	3.83	.42	128
<b>Other Consultative</b>	Dutch	3.35	.61	104
	British	3.36	.65	128
<b>Indirect</b>	Dutch	2.49	.51	104
	British	3.28	.65	128
<b>Other Indirect</b>	Dutch	3.78	.51	104
	British	2.28	.61	128
<b>Direct</b>	Dutch	4.09	.45	104
	British	3.41	.61	128
<b>Other Direct</b>	Dutch	2.59	.69	104
	British	4.19	.52	128

A profile analysis was performed on the three subsets of the Communication styles measure: Consultative, Indirect, and Direct to test Hypothesis 3a: Managers use a Consultative communication style more than a Direct style, which they use more than an Indirect style. The grouping variable was nationality of the managers. As mentioned in section 6.1., the first test is to check whether the flatness of the profiles (i.e., did the Dependent Variables elicit the same average response?), which is tested by the main effect followed by an assessment of the samples are parallel (i.e., to look at group differences in the overall levels of performance), which is indicated by the nationality x measure interaction.

Mauchly's test proved to be significant and Greenhouse-Geisser  $\epsilon^2$  is .72, which suggests a slightly greater probability of a Type I error<sup>32</sup>. Using Greenhouse-Geisser criterion, the profiles were tested for flatness and the main effect was significant  $F(1.45, 234) = 18.6, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .08$ . Furthermore, samples deviated significantly from parallelism,  $F(1.45, 234) = 97.37, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .30$ ; i.e., reliable differences were found between groups (See Table 6.8.). None of the covariates were statistically significant.

<sup>32</sup> If increasing the chances of making a Type 1 error is large then the critical p value for any comparison should be lowered to, for example, .01 (Wright, personal communication). As becomes evident from the results, lowering the critical p value in this case poses no problem.

TABLE 6.8 Pairwise comparisons for communication styles: Estimated marginal means.

	<b>Communication Styles (adjusted mean)</b>		<b>Mean difference</b>
<b>Dutch</b>	Consultative (3.73)	Indirect (2.49)	<b>1.24**</b>
	Consultative (3.73)	Direct (4.09)	<b>-0.36**</b>
	Indirect (2.49)	Direct (4.09)	<b>-1.60**</b>
<b>British</b>	Consultative (3.83)	Indirect (3.28)	<b>0.56**</b>
	Consultative (3.83)	Direct (3.42)	<b>0.42**</b>
	Indirect (3.28)	Direct (3.42)	-0.14

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

The above results provide an indication of differences between communication styles. To determine the precise differences per sample group a split file analyses mixed model ANOVA was performed. Again, Mauchly's test was significant, and for the British sample Greenhouse-Geisser criterion was below acceptable at .69. Results showed that Hypothesis 3a was supported for the Dutch sample ( $F(1.65, 234) = 34.94, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .27$ ), but not for the British sample ( $F(1.38, 234) = 2.05, p = .147, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$ ); i.e., reliable differences were found between communication styles for the Dutch sample only. Pairwise comparisons using Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons per nationality showed that means for communication styles differed significantly from each other, except for Indirect and Direct for the British sample. Hypothesis 3a stated that managers use a Consultative style more than a Direct communication styles, which they use more than an Indirect communication style. The larger mean for Direct was supported for Dutch managers only. British managers used Consultative more than Direct but the difference between Direct and Indirect was not significant. The latter will be further explored in relation to the similar cultural differences already observed for concerns and conflict management styles.

Finally, managers' ratings of their own team vs. the out-group – the other nationality were assessed to test Hypothesis 3b: Managers perceive the other team as less Consultative than their own team. A mixed model ANOVA was performed and although Mauchly's test of sphericity proved to be significant the Greenhouse-Geisser  $\epsilon$  was above the acceptable level of .75. The results indicated that communication styles for own team were significantly different



from conflict management strategies for other team  $F(3.81, 132) = 11.63, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .05$ . and that there was a significant interaction for nationality with own and other concerns  $F(3.81, 132) = 75.03, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .46$ . Covariates were not significant. A subsequent Bonferroni adjusted pairwise comparison was executed and indicated a significant difference for both samples with regard to Consultative communication for own vs. other comparison, supporting Hypothesis 3b: Managers will perceive their team as more Consultative than the other team. Furthermore, a cultural difference was found for both Indirect and Direct communication style: Dutch managers rated their team as more Direct and less Indirect than the British team, whereas British managers rated their team as more Indirect and less Direct than the Dutch team (See Table 6.9). A summary of the means for all communication styles is graphed in Fig. 6.3.

TABLE 6.9. Pairwise comparisons for own vs. other communication styles: Estimated marginal means.

	<b>Communication Styles (mean)</b>	<b>Other Communication Styles (mean)</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>
<b>Dutch</b>	Consultative (3.73)	Other Consultative (3.35)	0.37**
<b>British</b>	Consultative (3.83)	Other Consultative (3.36)	0.47**
<b>Dutch</b>	Indirect (2.49)	Other Indirect (3.78)	-1.29**
<b>British</b>	Indirect (3.28)	Other Indirect (2.28)	1.00**
<b>Dutch</b>	Direct (4.09)	Other Direct (2.59)	1.50**
<b>British</b>	Direct (3.41)	Other Direct (4.19)	-0.77**

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

Fig. 6.3. Means for own and other team's communication styles per nationality.

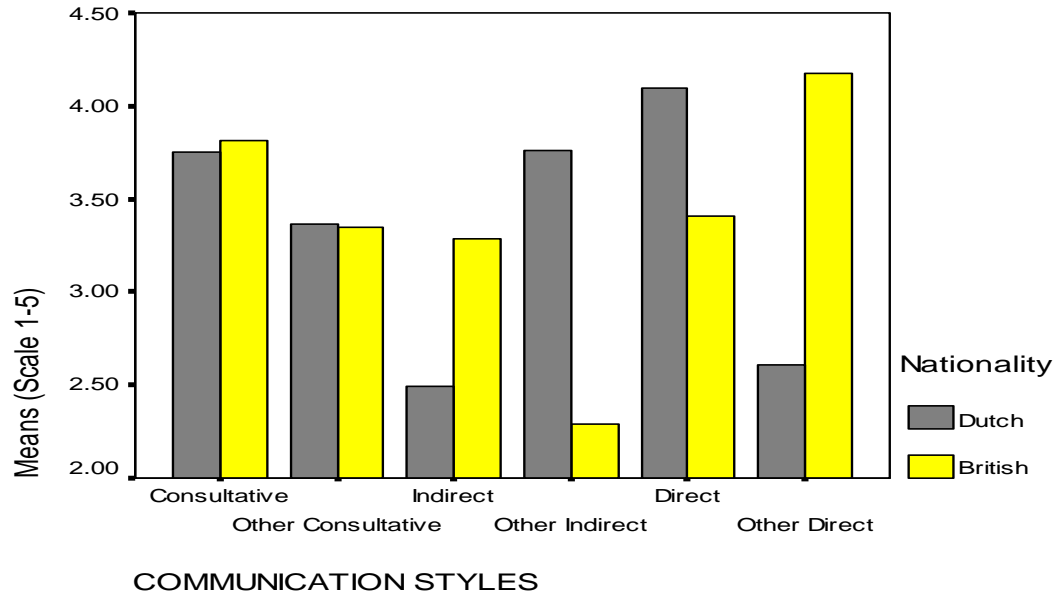


Fig. 6.3. clearly indicates the cross-interaction for both Indirect and Direct communication and Other team's Indirect and Direct communication style. The British and Dutch respondents not only differed in the extent to which they use these communication styles, but confirmed these ratings in their evaluation of the other team. The cultural differences obtained for concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles will be further discussed below.

## **6.2. Cultural differences: values and conflict management approach**

The following sections report the results for the SVS measure by looking at cultural profiles for each sample and the mean differences for the value types. First, the results for the higher order value types are described, followed by results for the ten value types<sup>33</sup>.

### **6.2.1. Higher Order Values**

The value preferences and cultural differences in value endorsement were investigated. First, it was tested whether the value profile for managers was flat: Hypothesis 4a: Managers endorse Self Transcendence more than Openness to Change, which they endorse more than Conservation, which they endorse more than Self Enhancement. Furthermore, value profiles were not expected to be parallel: Hypothesis 4b: Dutch managers endorse Self Transcendence more and Self Enhancement less than British Managers

First, a profile analysis applying the higher order values as levels, nationality as the grouping variable, and the value total mean as covariate was executed. Mauchly's test proved to be significant but the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion was acceptable at .87. Results showed a significant main effect for the higher order value types  $F(2.60, 214) = 10.74, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$ ; indicating an absence of flatness. The means indicate that both Dutch and British managers endorse Self Transcendence values most, then Openness to Change values, followed by Conservation and finally Self Enhancement. Pairwise contrasts indicated support for Hypothesis 4a with significance levels at  $p < .05$  for Dutch managers. They scored higher on Self Transcendence than on Openness to Change, higher on Openness to Change than on Conservation, and higher on Conservation than Self Enhancement. For British managers, there was no significant difference between Self Transcendence and Openness to Change, nor between Conservation and Self Enhancement. The interaction of nationality by higher order

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<sup>33</sup> For the analysis presented here, the Schwartz data was derived from the sample as described in section 7.1. SVS data was obtained at several sessions, however, and the analysis of this amalgamated data is presented in Appendix D, p. 298. Those results cannot be used for further relationship comparisons, however, as the CMA measures were not the same across the sessions.

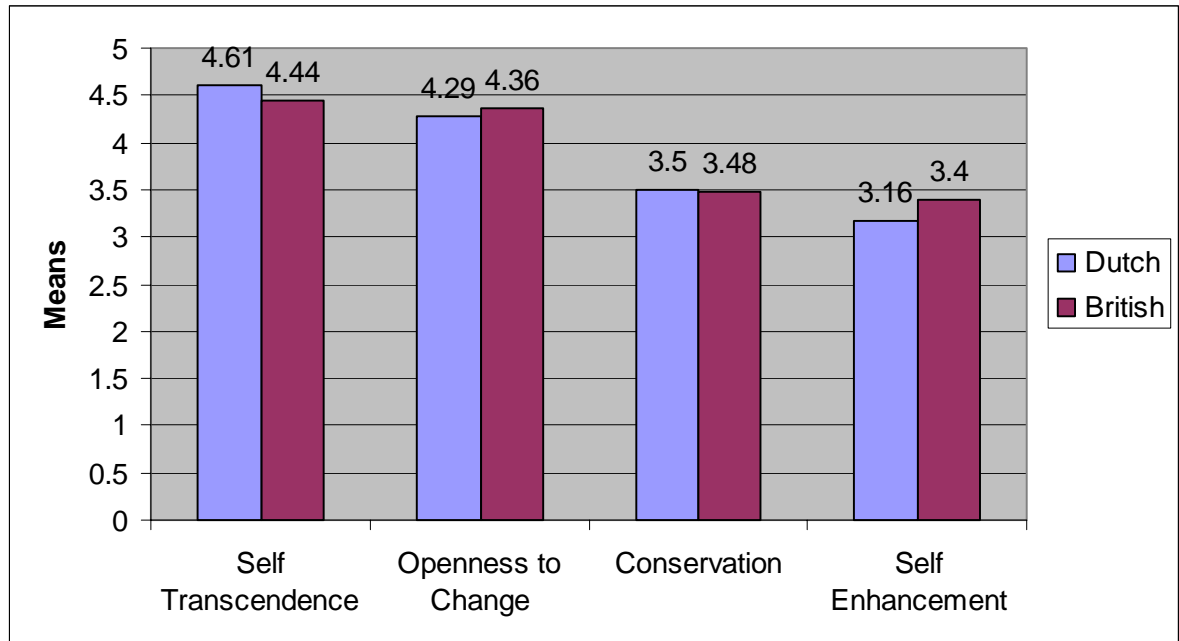
values was also significant  $F(2.60, 214) = 2.96, p = .039, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$ ; indicating the profiles are not parallel, although the F value and partial  $\eta^2$  are small.

Analyses using MANCOVA with the total value mean as covariate (Schwartz, 1992) of the Higher Order Values showed that significant differences between samples was found for Self Transcendence ( $F(1, 211) = 5.09, p = .025, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$ ) and Self Enhancement ( $F(1, 211) = 5.88, p = .016, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$ ), in that the adjusted means indicate that British managers are higher on Self Enhancement, and Dutch managers are higher on Self Transcendence<sup>34</sup>, supporting Hypothesis 4b (see Fig. 6.4). Levene's Test was significant for Openness to Change ( $F(1, 212) = 6.05, p = .015$ ). These preliminary analyses provide some insight that the cultural profiles of the Dutch and British samples are different at both the within subject and between subject levels, however, a more specific analyses using the ten value types may provide a more precise picture.

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<sup>34</sup> The fact that Openness to Change and Conservation mean differences do not come out as statistically significant is due to the total value mean entered as covariate in order to standardise the means, as recommended by Schwartz (1992), in order to remedy possible presentation bias in the form of social desirability. Secondly, the added covariate would eliminate some of the shared variance between the Dependent Variables thus restricting potential problems of multicollinearity. If the covariate is not entered, a MANOVA with the Higher Order Values as Dependent Variables and Nationality as Independent Variable produces the following results: Openness to Change  $F(1, 212) = 5.05, p = .026, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$ ; Self Enhancement  $F(1, 212) = 13.25, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .06$ ; Conservation  $F(1, 212) = 4.08, p = .045, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$ ; Self Transcendence  $F(1, 212) = 0.11, p = .745, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .001$ . These results show that the covariate entered affects the significance results. Please note that Levene's test for Homogeneity of Variance was significant for Openness to Change at  $p < .05$  for both the analyses with and without covariate.

Fig. 6.4. Estimated Marginal Means for Schwartz Higher Order Values per nationality.



## 6.2.2. Ten Value Types

The findings as obtained through the profile analyses for the Higher Order Values can be further dissected by looking at the Ten Value Types. Though no specific hypotheses were generated, the Ten Value Types should follow the pattern as found for the Higher Order Values. A profile analysis for the ten value types was performed. Mauchly's test of Sphericity was significant and the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion was below 'safe' at .64 indicating a risk of Type I error<sup>35</sup>. Main effect for Value Types was significant  $F(5.8, 214) = 10.2, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$ ; indicating that the profiles are not flat. As Fig. 6.5. indicates, the ten value type profile follows the trend set by the Higher Order Values and as theorised by Schwartz (1992, 1994) in that Individualistic people tend to endorse Benevolence and Universalism as opposed to Achievement and Power, and Self Direction, Stimulation, and Hedonism as opposed to Security, Tradition, and Conformity. However, it was also found that the sample means for Self Direction (Openness to

<sup>35</sup> If increasing the chances of making a Type 1 error is large then the critical p value for any comparison should be lowered to, for example, .01 (Wright, personal communication). As is evident of the results, lowering the critical p value in this case poses no problem.

Change) are higher than those for Universalism (Self Transcendence), and the means for Achievement (Self Enhancement) are almost as high as those for Benevolence (Self Transcendence). The interaction of nationality by Value Types checked for parallelism and showed that, according to the Greenhouse-Geisser criterion, the differences were not significant  $F(5.8, 214) = 1.91, p = .080, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$ , i.e., the profiles are parallel. This means that, overall, the means for the Value Types are very similar for both samples. Individual values can still be assessed through a pairwise comparison (Karpinsky, 2003)<sup>36</sup>.

To assess the differences between the samples per Value Type, a MANCOVA was performed with nationality as the IV and the total mean as covariate to centre scores. Levene's Test was significant for Hedonism ( $F(1, 212) = 5.23, p = .023$ ). Following the pattern set by the Higher Order Values, British managers proved to be more Achievement oriented than Dutch managers ( $F(1, 212) = 7.00, p = .009, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$ ) and Dutch managers proved to be more Benevolence oriented than British managers ( $F(1, 212) = 5.03, p = .026, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .20$ ). Achievement and Benevolence are opposed in the Schwartz circumplex model of value types. Thus the results support each other considering that opposing value types conflict with one another (see also Chapter two). Fig. 6.5 depicts the estimated marginal means for the ten Value Types per nationality, while Fig. 6.6. depicts those means organised along the circumplex model as theorised by Schwartz (1992, 1994) (See Fig 1.1., Chapter One). In the next step the specific cultural differences in conflict management approach are assessed in more depth.

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<sup>36</sup> It is recommended to include the total mean as a covariate in order to centre the data. Additional analysis omitting the total mean as a covariate did show significant results (see Appendix E, p. 302). As the covariate variables is not independent of the IVs, this highlights the issue of weighing the benefits of centering data in order to control for response bias, or omitting the covariate in order to ascertain the exact power of the value differences.

Fig. 6.5. Means for value types per nationality

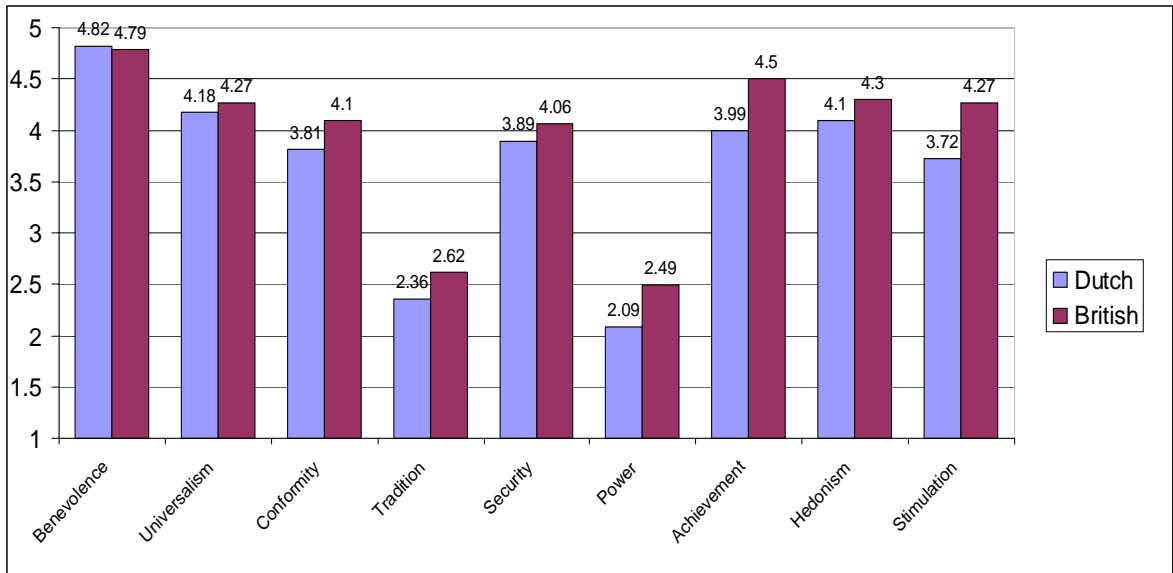
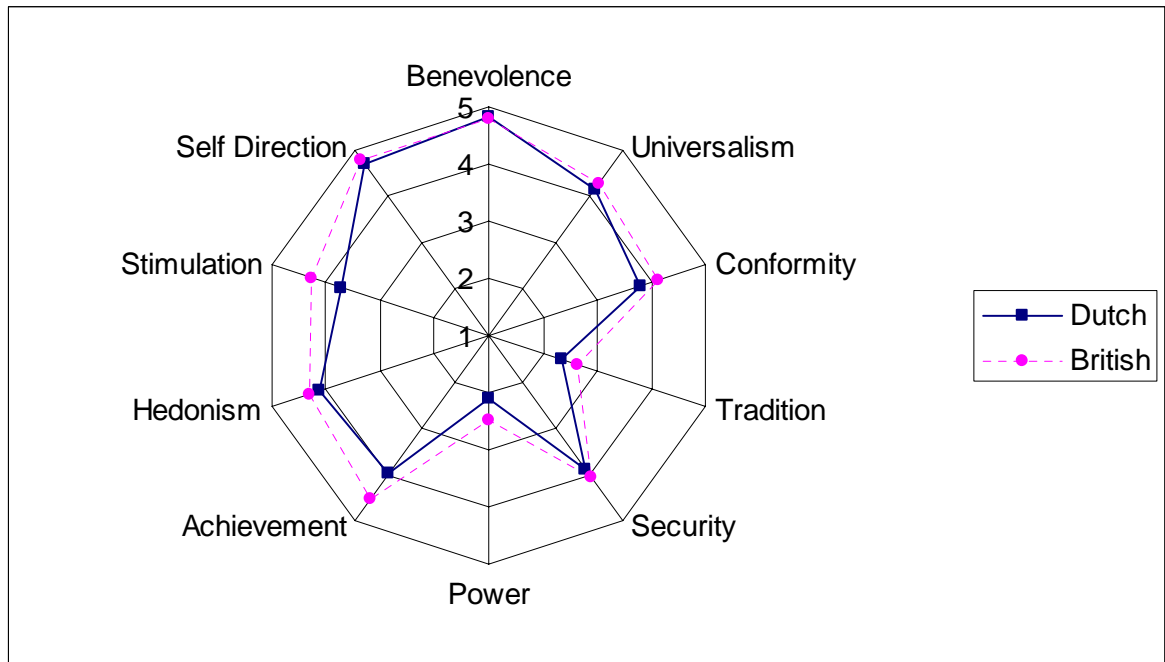


Fig. 6.6. Circumplex model of Schwartz Value Types for Dutch and British managers.



### 6.3. Dutch and British differences in conflict management approach

In this section the differences in conflict management approach between the samples will be assessed followed by an assessment of the relationships among the conflict management approach components and with values. The theory suggests that cultural differences vis-à-vis conflict management approach between Dutch and British managers may exist, which was supported by results described above. A more detailed analysis of these findings is reported below.

Hypothesis 5a read: National differences are expressed through greater British concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style. A MANCOVA was employed to analyse mean differences between the nationalities on each conflict management approach component using Conflict Management Approach as the Dependent Variables and nationality as the Independent Variable with demographics as covariates. Tests for Homogeneity of Variance showed that Box's test was significant at  $F(45, 140545) = 73.94, p = .009$  and Levene's test was significant for Avoiding ( $F(1, 223) = 8.92, p = .003$ ), Indirect ( $F(1, 223) = 5.13, p = .025$ ), and Direct ( $F(1, 223) = 8.50, p = .004$ ). Hypothesis 5a was supported, for concern for Inconvenience  $F(1, 223) = 33.59, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .14$ , Avoiding strategy  $F(1, 223) = 144.12, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .40$ , and Indirect communication  $F(1, 223) = 26.49, p = .000$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .25$ . For all components the means for British managers were significantly higher than those means for Dutch managers. An additional finding was a significant difference in Directness; Dutch managers were more Direct than British managers ( $F(1, 223) = 78, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .27$ ). A significant covariate of influence was Home ( $F(9, 208) = 2.46, p = .011$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .10$ ), which is a Dummy variable reflecting whether managers have only lived in their home country (0) or abroad as well (1). Pairwise comparisons of means with Bonferroni adjustment are displayed in Table 6.10. The next step is to test for the mediating relationship of cultural value types predicting national differences in conflict management approach.

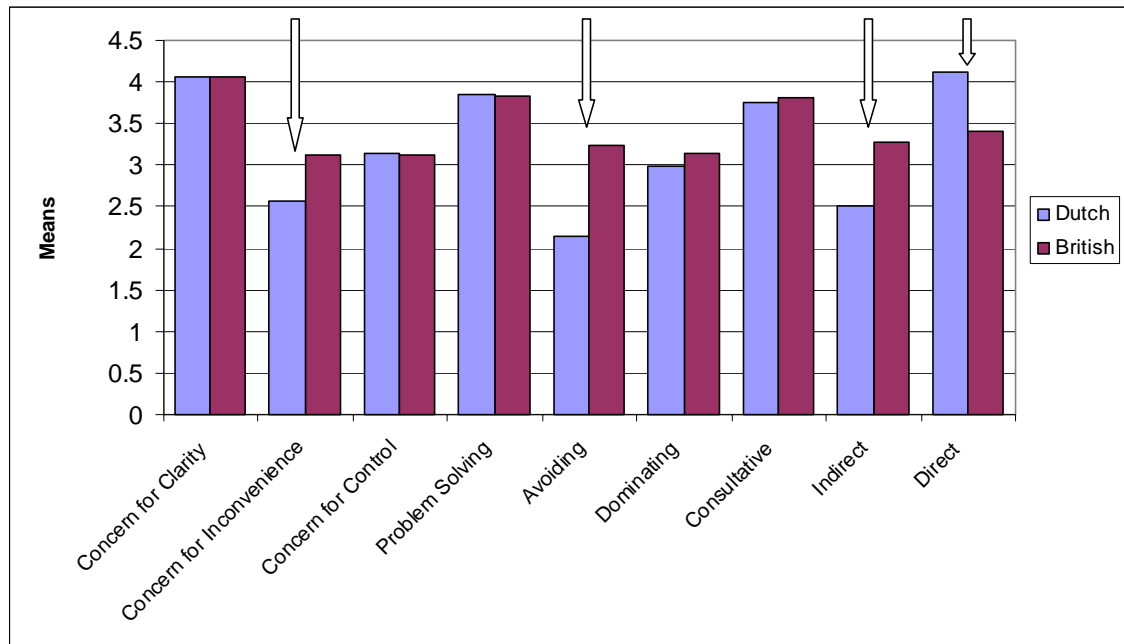


TABLE 6.10. Pairwise comparisons for conflict management approach: Estimated marginal means.

CMA	Dutch	British	Mean difference
<b>Concern for Clarity</b>	4.06	4.06	.00
<b>Concern for Inconvenience</b>	2.56	3.12	-.56**
<b>Concern for Control</b>	3.15	3.12	.03
<b>Problem Solving</b>	3.84	3.83	-.01
<b>Avoiding</b>	2.15	3.24	-1.08**
<b>Dominating</b>	2.99	3.14	-.15
<b>Consultative</b>	3.75	3.82	-.07
<b>Indirect</b>	2.51	3.27	-.76**
<b>Direct</b>	4.12	3.40	.72**

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

Fig. 6.8. Means for conflict management approach per nationality.



#### 6.4. Relationships: Values and Conflict management approach

The following section discusses the testing of Hypothesis 5b: Self Transcendence and Self Enhancement mediate national differences in concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style, Hypothesis 5c: Openness to Change and Self Transcendence predict concern for Clarity, Problem Solving, and Consultative communication style and Hypothesis 5d: Self Enhancement and Conservation predict concern for Control, Dominating strategy, and Direct communication style. The specific

regression procedure is a variation of mediation testing as discussed by Morris et al. (1998), Baron and Kenny (1986), and Judd and Kenny (1981).

In order to explore whether there are correlations between Higher Order Value Types and conflict management approaches in general and whether relationships vary according to nationality, a post-hoc correlation matrix of all Higher Order Values and all conflict management approach components was generated based on a split file per nationality (See Table 6.11.). Results show that there is a distinct difference between the two nation samples with regard to the relationships of Higher Order Value Types with conflict management components, in that for British managers, more Higher Order Value Types correlate with more conflict management components than for Dutch managers. The correlation coefficients are relatively low. However, regression analysis provides a more powerful test of relationships between variables as demographic and contextual factors can be controlled for.

TABLE 6.11. Correlations between Conflict Management Approach components and Higher Order Values per nationality.

	Self Transcendence		Conservation		Self Enhancement		Openness To Change	
	NL	UK	NL	UK	NL	UK	NL	UK
<b>Clarity</b>	<b>.22*</b>	<b>.23**</b>	-.18	.07	-.08	-.02	.02	.14
<b>Inconvenience</b>	-.13	.00	.00	.10	-.07	.00	-.19	-.03
<b>Control</b>	.01	-.01	.15	.10	.13	.16	-.01	<b>.24*</b>
<b>Prob Solv</b>	.08	<b>.24**</b>	.16	<b>.23*</b>	-.01	-.17	-.04	-.09
<b>Avoiding</b>	-.13	-.04	-.10	.04	-.13	.06	<b>-.24*</b>	.07
<b>Dominating</b>	.00	.05	-.17	.09	.17	<b>.18*</b>	.09	.13
<b>Consultative</b>	.22*	<b>.20*</b>	.01	.15	-.09	-.11	.04	-.10
<b>Indirect</b>	.08	-.01	.14	-.05	.01	-.05	-.02	-.05
<b>Direct</b>	.06	.14	.06	<b>.27**</b>	.15	.09	.16	.08

\* p < .05 \*\* p < .01

To test the specific hypotheses, the role of the context variables was explored to assess which ones were to be controlled for in the regression model. Results showed that Nationality (Dutch = 0, British = 1), dummy variable Hierarchical Relationship 'Equals' (other = 0, equals = 1), Language spoken (English only = 0, Both English and Dutch = 1), and number of participants in the meeting had a significant effect for concern for Inconvenience, Nationality and Hierarchical relationship 'Equals' had an effect for Avoiding,

and Nationality and Language had an effect for Indirect Communication style. Three regressions (a) with concern for concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style as the outcomes were performed with details about the significant demographics and conflict context as the first step (forward method).

Secondly, a similar set of stepwise regressions (b) was performed with the same outcomes entered but with the demographics except for Nationality in the first step (Forward method), the Schwartz Cultural Values in the second step (Enter method), and Nationality as the third step (Forward method) to see if the Cultural Values mediate the predictive validity of Nationality (See Table 6.12). Results showed that Nationality significantly predicted concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style. Concern for Inconvenience was additionally predicted by not 'being equals', speaking both English and Dutch during the conflict, and when fewer participants are present. Speaking both English and Dutch also predicted Indirect communication style. Cultural Values did not mediate the predictive validity of Nationality but their inclusion slightly decreased the adjusted  $R^2$  of the other contextual variables<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> Post-hoc explorative regression analyses whereby 'Nationality' was omitted as a third step and, instead, the data file was split based on Nationality also did not generate significant effects for the cultural values as significant predictors of concern for Inconvenience ( $F(2, 124) = .18, p = .84$ ), Avoiding strategy ( $F(2, 124) = .26, p = .77$ ), and Indirect communication style ( $F(2, 127) = .18, p = .83$ ).

Table 6.12: National differences explained: concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style regressed on Contextual Variables, Nationality and Higher Order Values.

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Inconvenience			Inconvenience		
Step 1: Nationality	.40**	41.16**	Step 1: Language		
Step 2: Language	-.14*	4.94*	Equal relationship		
Equal relationship	-.14*	4.14*	Participants	-.13*	6.00*
Participants	-.13*	4.75*	<b>Step 2: Self Transcendence</b>		
			<b>Self Enhancement</b>		
			Step 3: Nationality	.39**	33.65**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.19		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.15	
d.f.	4, 228		d.f.	4, 212	
F	14.3**		F	10.49**	

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Avoiding			Avoiding		
Step 1: Nationality	.67**	193.31**	Step 1: Equal relationship		
Equal relationship			<b>Step 2: Self Transcendence</b>		
			<b>Self Enhancement</b>		
			Step 3: Nationality	.68**	173.81**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.45		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.45	
d.f.	1, 233		d.f.	3, 217	
F	193.31**		F	61.64**	

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Indirect			Indirect		
Step 1: Nationality	.58**	110.07**	Step 1: Language		
Language	-.12*	5.13*	<b>Step 2: Self Transcendence</b>		
			<b>Self Enhancement</b>		
			Step 3: Nationality	.60**	99.5**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.33		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.31	
d.f.	2, 232		d.f.	3, 224	
F	58.57**		F	34.61**	

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

Hypothesis 5b: was tested through a similar procedure as described above for Hypothesis 5a. First, it was established which contextual variables affected concern for Clarity and Control, Problem Solving and Dominating strategy, and Consultative and Direct communication. The significant contextual variables, i.e., Age for concern for Clarity, Hierarchical relationship 'Mixed' (other = 0, mixed subordinates, superiors and peers = 1), and Length of Acquaintance (other = 0, never met before = 1) for concern for Control, Hierarchical relationship 'Mixed' for Problem Solving, Home (mother country residency only = 0, abroad residency = 1), Nationality, and Hierarchical Relationship 'Equals' (other = 0, equals/peers = 1) for Dominating, Hierarchical relationship Dutch subordinate/British superior (other = 0, NL subordinate/UK superior = 1) for Consultative communication, and finally, Nationality and Hierarchical relationship Dutch subordinate/British superior (other = 0, NL superior/UK subordinate = 1) for Direct communication.

Secondly, a similar set of stepwise regressions (b) was performed with the same outcomes entered but with the demographics except Nationality in the first step (Forward method) and the Schwartz Cultural Values in the second step (Enter method). If Nationality was significant predictor, i.e., in the case of Dominating strategy and Direct communication, then it was entered as the third step (Forward method) to see if the Cultural Values mediate the predictive validity of Nationality (See Table 6.13 and Table 6.14).

Results for concern for Clarity show that the significant effect for Age is mediated by Self Transcendence. However, the adjusted  $R^2$  is small, as is the F value, indicating that other variables, such as other conflict management approach components could increase the model fit. Secondly, the results showed that values explain significant variance additional to that explained by demographics. If managers are Self Transcendence oriented, they are more likely to use a Problem Solving strategy and a Consultative communication style. Results for concern for Control showed that the model was not enhanced by the introduction of cultural values. The contextual variables indicated that if managers were in a mixed relationship of subordinates, superiors, and peers, and if they had never met before, they were likely to be concerned with Control. A mediating effect for the cultural values occurred for Dominating strategy. The predictive validity of Nationality and a relationship other than a relationships among Equals disappeared after the introduction of the cultural values. If managers had lived abroad and were Self Enhancement oriented they would use a Dominating strategy. Finally, if managers were Dutch and if they valued Conservation, they were more likely to use a Direct

communication style. Considering that the factor structure of communication styles for Dutch managers showed an overlap between Consultative and Direct communication, this effect is particularly interesting. The introduction of cultural values thus did not mediate the predictive validity of Nationality but it did explain significant variance in concerns, strategies, and styles.

TABLE 6.13: Concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative communication regressed on contextual variables and Higher Order Values.

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised</b>	<b>F</b>
Clarity	$\beta$	<b>Change</b>	Clarity	$\beta$	<b>Change</b>
Step 1: Age	.14*	4.62*	Step 1: Age		
			<b>Step 2: Self Transcendence</b>	.18*	3.74*
			<b>Openness to Change</b>		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.02		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.02	
d.f.	1, 240		d.f.	2, 218	
F	4.62*		F	3.74*	

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised</b>	<b>F</b>
Problem Solving	$\beta$	<b>Change</b>	Problem Solving	$\beta$	<b>Change</b>
Step 1: Mixed relationship	.17**	6.84**	Step 1: Mixed relationship	.17*	5.32*
			<b>Step 2: Self Transcendence</b>	.19**	4.69*
			<b>Openness to Change</b>		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.02		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.05	
d.f.	1, 233		d.f.	3, 210	
F	6.84**		F	4.96**	

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standard.</b>	<b>F</b>
Consultative	$\beta$	<b>Change</b>	Consultative	$\beta$	<b>Change</b>
Step 1: NL subordinate/UK superior relationship	-.20**	9.40**	Step 1: NL subordinate/UK superior relationship	-.22**	11.71**
Mixed length of acquaintance.	-.14*	4.79*	Mixed length of acquaintance.	-.13*	4.11*
			<b>Step 2: Self Transcendence</b>	.16*	3.22*
			<b>Openness to Change</b>		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.05		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.08	
d.f.	2, 239		d.f.	4, 215	
F	7.17**		F	5.69**	

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

TABLE 6.14: Concern for Control, Dominating strategy, and Direct communication regressed on contextual variables and Higher Order Values.

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Control			Control		
Step 1: Mixed relationship	.20**	9.00**	Step 1: Mixed relationship	.20**	7.81**
Length of acquaintance: never met before	.13*	3.90*	<b>Step 2: Self Enhancement</b>		
			<b>Conservation</b>		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.05		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.04	
d.f.	2, 230		d.f.	3, 205	
F	6.51**		F	4.00**	

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standard <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standard. <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Dominating			Dominating		
Step 1: Home	.18**	7.28**	Step 1: Home	.14*	4.73*
Nationality	.18**	7.59**	<b>Step 2: Self Enhancement</b>	.20**	3.90*
Equal relationship	-.13*	4.27*	<b>Conservation</b>		
			Step 3 Nationality		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.07		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.04	
d.f.	3, 233		d.f.	3, 209	
F	6.52**		F	4.22**	

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Direct			Direct		
Step 1: Nationality	-.53**	86.74**	Step 1: NL superior/UK subordinate relationship		
NL superior/UK subordinate relationship	.11*	3.97*	<b>Step 2: Self Enhancement</b>		
			<b>Conservation</b>	.13*	1.00
			Step 3: Nationality	-.54**	80.82**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.27		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.27	
d.f.	2, 241		d.f.	3, 216	
F	45.89**		F	27.81**	

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$



The results show some support for Hypothesis 5c: Openness to Change and Self Transcendence predict concern for Clarity, Problem Solving, and Consultative communication style, in that Self Transcendence significantly predicted concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative communication style but no effects for Openness to Change were found. Hypothesis 5d: Self Enhancement and Conservation predict concern for Control, Dominating strategy, and Direct communication style was partially supported: Self Enhancement predicted Dominating strategy, and Conservation predicted Direct communication style. The adjusted  $R^2$  and F values indicate that the model could be a better fit if other variables are taken into consideration.

A model combining the effects of both cultural values and conflict management approach was presented in Chapter five, and the next section will test the predictive validity of the cultural values, additional to contextual variables, and one's own and other conflict management approaches in predicting levels of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction. The model is given again as Figure 6.9 (section 6.4.1.).

#### **7.4.1. Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction**

This section will address the hypotheses regarding Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction. The model as presented (Fig. 6.9.) below hypothesises that the level of success and level of comfort of a negotiation is a function of not only a team's values and behaviour but also their perception of the other team's behaviour, additional to the conflict context (hierarchical relationship, number of participants, language spoken, and length of acquaintance) and demographics of the participants (age, tenure, gender, nationality, type of organisation (commercial vs. technical), and abroad experience (residency in home country only or also abroad)). Specifically, this section will test Hypothesis 6a: Openness to Change and Self Transcendence and own and other team's concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative communication style will predict Comfort and Hypothesis 6b: Self Enhancement, own and other team's concern for Control, Dominating Strategy, and Direct communication style will predict Success. Table 6.15 displays the means for Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction.

Fig. 6.9. Conflict and Communication Between Cultures: International Team Negotiations.

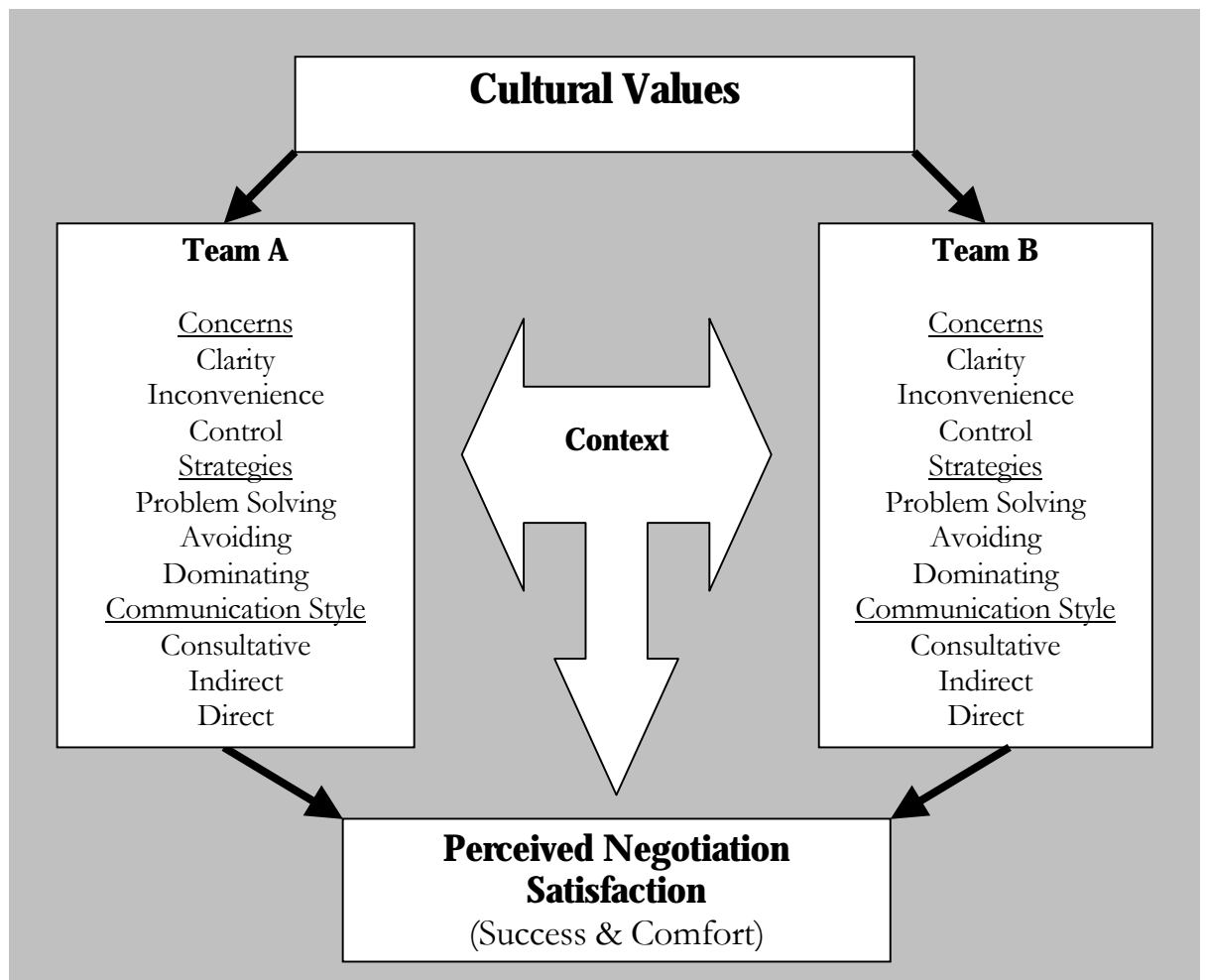


Table 6.15. Means, Standard Deviation, and N for own and other Success and Comfort per nationality.

	Nationality	Mean	S.D.	N
Success	Dutch	3.10	.66	97
	British	3.32	.59	127
Other Success	Dutch	3.16	.63	97
	British	3.32	.61	127
Comfort	Dutch	3.83	.61	97
	British	3.94	.66	127
Other Comfort	Dutch	3.69	.70	97
	British	3.79	.76	127

First, regressions with the samples pooled were performed with Comfort and Success as outcomes, and conflict context, demographics and all components of conflict management approach (CMA) as predictors to see if any of the variables could be dropped. For Comfort, Tenure, dummy variable for Hierarchical Relationship (Other = 0, Dutch subordinate/British superior = 1), concern for Inconvenience, Consultative communication style, Other Problem Solving, and Other Consultative communication style had a significant effect. For Success, Nationality and Other Indirect communication style remained. Comfort was then regressed on the variables Tenure, dummy variable for Hierarchical Relationship (Other = 0, Dutch subordinate/British superior = 1), concern for Inconvenience, Consultative communication style, Other Consultative communication and Other Problem Solving strategy to obtain the model without cultural values (a). In a second regression, Comfort was regressed on the same contextual variables as a first step (Forward), the Higher Order Values Openness to Change and Self Transcendence were entered as step two (Enter) (b). Since Nationality was not an indicator of Comfort, a mediation effect was not tested. Results are displayed in Table 6.16. and show that cultural values did not have an effect on Comfort. However, the results indicate that the longer one has worked for the company, if one is not in a hierarchical relationship consisting of Dutch subordinates and British superiors, if one does not have a concern for Inconvenience and communicates in a Consultative manner, and if the other team uses a Problem Solving strategy and communicates in a Direct and Consultative style, one feels more comfortable. This supports Hypothesis 6a with regard to Consultative communication style but not vis-à-vis the role of concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, or values.

Similarly, Success was regressed on Other Indirect style and Nationality to establish the model without the inclusion of cultural values (a). Then, in a second regression, Other Indirect communication was entered as the first step (Forward), the Higher Order Value Self Enhancement was entered as a second step (Enter), and Nationality as a third step (Forward) to see if the cultural value Self Enhancement mediates Nationality (b). Results are displayed in Table 6.16. and show that the influence of Nationality and Other Indirect communication style is mediated by the inclusion of Self Enhancement. This supports Hypothesis 6b for the cultural value, but not for concern for Control, Dominating strategy, and Direct communication style.

Table 6.16: Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction regressed on Contextual Variables, Nationality, Higher Order Values, and Conflict Management Approaches.

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Comfort			Comfort		
Step 1: Other Problem Solving	.19*	56.09*	Step 1: Other Problem Solving	.15*	51.03**
Consultative	.19**	14.42**	Consultative	.23**	17.46**
Inconvenience	-.20**	5.90*	Other Consultative	.23**	6.61*
Other Consultative	.21**	6.28*	NL subordinate/UK superior Relationship	-.14*	5.82*
NL subordinate/UK superior Relationship	-.14**	5.15*	Inconvenience	-.21**	4.88*
Other Direct	.20**	5.91*	Other Direct	.22**	8.07*
Tenure	.14*	6.25*	Tenure	.12*	4.49*
			<b>Step 2: Self Transcendence</b>		
			<b>Openness to Change</b>		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.34		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.33	
d.f.	7, 222		d.f.	9, 202	
F	16.14**		F	12, 74**	

<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Standardised <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>F Change</b>
Success			Success		
Step 1: Nationality	.38**	5.49*	Step 1: Other Indirect		
Other Indirect	.30**	8.40**	<b>Step 2: Self Enhancement</b>	.20**	9.65**
			Step 3: Nationality		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.05		Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.04	
d.f.	2,240		d.f.	1, 232	
F	7.03**		F	9.65**	

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

Finally, in order to assess the differences between Dutch and British managers with regard to Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction, regression analyses using a split file command based on nationality were performed with Comfort and Success as outcomes. Following the Morris et al. (1998) procedure, first the demographic and contextual variables were controlled for by entering these as predictors using the forward method. None came out as significant

predictors for either nationality. Secondly, this procedure was repeated for own and other team's conflict management concerns, strategies, and communication styles (see Table 6.17 for results). Those variables that came out significant, were then entered in a third regression (enter method). The results indicate that the model for Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction changes if the analyses are conducted per nationality. Success is predicted by other team's concern for Inconvenience for Dutch managers, and by Openness to Change for British managers. Furthermore, Comfort is predicted by own and other team's Problem Solving for Dutch managers but by Dominating (negatively), own and other team's Consultative communication style, and dummy hierarchical relationship (0= other, 1 = equals) for British managers. These results will be discussed further in the discussion in the following chapter.

TABLE 6.17. Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction Regressed on Conflict Context, Cultural Values, Conflict Management Approach (CMA), other team's CMA, and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction per nationality.

<b>Comfort NL</b>	Standard. $\beta$	<b>Comfort UK</b>	Standard. $\beta$
Problem Solving	.24**	Dominating	-.17*
Other Problem Solving	.47**	Consultative	.17*
		Other Consultative	.33**
		Hierarchical Relationship 'Equals'	.18*
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.39	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.23
d.f.	5, 84	d.f.	4, 127
F	12.26**	F	10.96**

<b>Success NL</b>	Standard. $\beta$	<b>Success UK</b>	Standard. $\beta$
Other Inconvenience	.28**	Openness to Change	.23**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.07	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.04
d.f.	2, 100	d.f.	1, 130
F	4.83**	F	6.57**

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

## 6.5. In sum

In this chapter the hypotheses as set out in chapter five were tested using the instruments as reviewed in chapter six. Several mixed model ANOVAs were conducted to establish profiles for both conflict management approaches in general and per national group. Pairwise comparisons provided further insight into the specific differences between the two samples. Managers were found to have a high concern for Clarity, use Problem Solving conflict

management strategy most, and communicate in mostly in a Consultative style. Furthermore, managers deemed that the other team had less concern for Clarity, but more concern for Control, were more Dominating but less Problem Solving, and were less Consultative than their own team. Additionally, it was found that the main cultural difference centered around concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding, and Indirect and Direct communication: British managers scored significantly higher on all but Direct communication. The next step was to check for cultural value differences. It was found that Dutch and British managers differed in their endorsement of Self Transcendence and Self Enhancement, or more specifically, Dutch managers endorsed Benevolence more and British managers endorsed Achievement more.

Regression analyses were performed to check whether these Higher Order Cultural Values also explained the national differences in concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication. It was expected that if such a link was found, those Schwartz Cultural Values describing Uncertainty Avoidance would have been identified. Although such clear links were not found, cultural values Self Transcendence predicted concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative communication style. Furthermore, the percentage of variance that Nationality (i.e., being British) explained for Dominating strategy was mediated by Self Enhancement. Conservation explained Direct communication but this was not a mediation effect as Nationality was still significant.

Finally, Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction was shown to be a function of the context, cultural values, and both one's own and other's conflict management approach. Specifically, the meeting is more successful when the other party communicates in an Indirect way and if one is British but this result is mediated by Self Enhancement. Comfort is a function of tenure, a relationship other than Dutch superiors and British subordinates, concern for Inconvenience (negatively), Consultative communication style, and other team's Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative and Direct communication style. Split file analyses showed that the models predicting Comfort and Success for British and Dutch managers differ, especially for Success. The adjusted  $R^2$ 's for Success are low, however, suggesting that other variables not measured may have an effect. The results for Comfort show that the predictors are variables that correlate (e.g., Problem Solving and Consultative), additional to Dominating (negatively) and being in an Equal relationship for British managers. Overall, there does not seem to be a profound conflict in what predicts Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction for British and Dutch managers (e.g., it is not the case that Comfort is predicted by Self Transcendence

and Problem Solving for one and Self Enhancement and Dominating for the other sample). The next chapter will discuss the results in more depth and will provide a critical evaluation of the present study, additional to suggestions for future research.

*Say not, 'I have found the truth,' but rather, 'I have found a truth.' Kahlil Gibran*

## **Discussion**

### **7.1. Research findings and implications: Introduction**

Particular to the last decades, increasingly frequent contact between individuals of different cultural backgrounds is a fact. These interactions often have little incubation time and require swift processing, resulting in people being pressed to adapt effectively, especially in organisational contexts. Due to the increase in intercultural contact, some degree of conflict is inevitable, and requires management. This, however, may be complicated if the approaches to 'best practice' vary between the cultural groups.

The various differences that are observed in research need to be evaluated for their size, relevance and practical meaning (Matsumoto, Grissel, & Dinnel, 1980). A review of the findings of the present research, followed by a discussion of the implications is presented below. Size is established through mean differences, significance and partial  $\eta^2$ . The relevance of cultural differences was tested by checking if cultural values could explain variance. Practical meaning is considered by looking at 'the bigger picture', assessing the results in light of organisational culture and applied conflict management. Finally, ways of improvement and suggestions for future research are discussed.

#### **7.1.1. Instrument validation**

First, the validation of the different instruments that were applied in the present study will be discussed in the following sections. The development of the conflict management approach components will be addressed. The present research's conflict management approach scales were based on theoretical and empirical information, which was collated to come towards a synthesis of the intercultural conflict and communication research. Both the conflict and communication literature focused on self vs. other, so that some of the main conflict instruments were based on the dual concern model and a large part of the intercultural communication literature focused on indirect vs. direct communication styles.



To associate particular conflict management approaches with either a concern for self or the other may limit the accuracy of the interpretations of the data, as previous research has shown that a type of behaviour theoretically associated with people who mainly have a concern for oneself *or* the other actually may depend on the circumstances of the conflict. Furthermore, one's disposition towards either a concern for oneself and concern for the other may be more accurately measured through cultural values, such as I/C.

To assert that one's Problem Solving strategy, for example, is a direct result of concern for self and other, may be too random. Furthermore, a Problem Solving strategy also does not automatically indicate a particular communication style, as one can be both indirect and direct in solving problems. One of the main issues that came to the fore in the present research is that the conflict and communication literature have developed separate theories. However, empirically conflict researchers have incorporated communication into the measures applied. Additionally, concern theory had only been thoroughly researched by Kim (1994a, Kim & Kim, 1997) as part of intercultural communication theory. The fact that these components are interwoven is clear, the empirical assessment of the theories however, has been ambiguous.

The final scales for conflict management behaviour differentiated three components, made up of three subscales each. They incorporated the concepts of 'concern', 'conflict management strategy', and 'communication style', additionally to a measure for 'Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction' in order to test the degree of success and comfort during and after the conflict. The new instruments were tested on several occasions in two cultural samples, and yielded adequate reliability and robust factor structures; any specific limitations are discussed below (see section 7.1.1.2., 7.1.1.3, and 7.1.1.4. for more details). The scales were used in combination with the SVS and contextual information such as gender, organisation type, and hierarchical relationships to test the hypotheses. These results will be discussed in section 8.2.

## **7.1.2. Conflict management strategies**

Although previous empirical research has indicated that a research design that integrates the perception of another individual or team's conflict management approach benefits from a conflict management typology limited to three strategies and some researchers have argued

that the number of strategies depends on the research design, the present study assessed the scale as presented by Rahim (1983abc) in its original form. Results from Factor Analyses showed that the scales for Integrating (Problem Solving) and Compromising collapse for the British sample. Based on the research design and Factor Analysis results, a three-way typology was employed. The scale was revised by omitting words such as 'I' and 'normally' to eliminate ambiguity and the focus of the context changed from an interpersonal to an intergroup conflict. The final form generated good reliabilities and robust factor structure for both samples, particularly if the questions were answered for the other team. Since the items were the same, the divergence in reliabilities highlight the problems associated with this type of reliability analysis as suggested by Cortina (1993).

### **7.1.3. Concerns and Communication Styles**

First, the dichotomy of self vs. other was explored in relation to communication, since there was no suitable empirically validated measure available such as there was for conflict management strategies. Initially, a core dimension of cooperation vs. competition could be established, which echoed conflict management research pioneered by Deutsch (1949). However, the factor structure showed inequivalence between the samples. Furthermore, as highlighted in the literature review, a focus on others vs. self may dominate more subtle differentiations such as indirectness vs. directness or horizontal vs. hierarchical orientation towards the interaction. If the choice of indirectness vs. directness is assumed to be associated with other vs. self only, this may be an oversimplification and generalisation of the social phenomena observed.

The concept of concerns proposed by Kim (1994a; Kim & Kim, 1997) was applied to the three-way typology of the conflict management strategies. Adhering to the notion of cooperation vs. competition and Kim's findings that individualists tend to have a need for dominance which is expressed through a concern for clarity and effectiveness, whereas collectivists tend to have a need for social harmony, the present study explored the reliability and patterns of three concerns (i.e., Inconvenience (social harmony), Clarity, and Control (social dominance)). The results generated good Cronbach Alpha's and robust factor structure.

Although Kim's (1994a; Kim & Kim 1997) research on concerns is categorised as intercultural communication research, the present study separated concerns from communication styles as the former can be seen as an underlying motivation for conflict management strategies, whereas the other is an outcome or 'front end' of conflict behaviour. The scale for communication styles was mainly based on previous intercultural theory by Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988), who developed Face Theory from Hall's (1976) original High context vs. Low context communication. High context vs. Low context communication is linked conceptually with indirect vs. direct communication style, implying that the two concepts are not orthogonal. Results from Factor Analyses, however, showed that the two can be treated as separate concepts. Unexpectedly, the third communication style, Consultativeness, which was based on Gudykunst's AUM theory and his idea of 'mindfulness' and Rahim's Problem Solving, collapsed with Directness in the Dutch sample. This effectively means that, to Dutch managers, being direct is conceptually similar to being mindful or consultative, i.e., one who is direct and open about his or her opinions equates this with listening carefully and asking for other people's opinions. As is discussed in section 8.2. below, this also affects the interpretation of the results for comparisons between Dutch managers' own and the other team's consultative and direct behaviour. For example, if the mix of consultativeness and directness is seen as socially desirable, are the low ratings that Dutch managers give their British counterparts for 'directness' truly a confirmation that the British are less direct, or is it a result of in-group vs. out-group differentiation, or perhaps a combination of the two? Some of these issues can be explored by linking these phenomena with cultural values. Yet, future research can explore the issue of to what extent results are an issue of mere in-group/out-group differentiation or an example of cultural differences?

#### **7.1.4 Values**

The SVS provides researchers with a means to test cultural profiles, rather than relying on the nationality label only. Schwartz's value survey is conceptually defined and has been shown empirically robust by previous research. In the present study, the SSA for the Dutch sample replicates the Schwartz findings, however results for the British sample showed that they placed Hedonism and Achievement differently than as specified by the circumplex model. Hedonism came between Power and Security, whereas Achievement came between Self Direction and Stimulation. The issue that arises with inequivalent structures is that one is comparing different scales. The difference generated in the present study is small, however,

and previous findings by Schwartz have supported the universal validity of the SVS, including for samples from the UK. Schwartz and Sagiv (1995) carried out tests on 88 samples from 40 countries and found the same circular structure in most but not all cultures; the SSA findings of the present study are robust enough to warrant the use of the results to establish cultural differences and relationships. Although some researchers have devised formula to check for equality between reliabilities, and Factor Analysis structures can be tested through proportionality coefficients (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997), no such statistical maneuvers exist for SSA.

## **7.2. Conflict management approach: Differences**

One of the main purposes of the present research was to separate conflict management components in order to obtain a more specific picture of conflict management in an intercultural organisational setting. Furthermore, the assessment of one's own and the opponent's behaviour allows a comparison of the interactional nature of a conflict situation. The following sections will discuss the results obtained for concerns, conflict management strategies and communication styles in more detail.

The profile analyses provided clear patterns, which were repeated for each conflict management component. Profiles were found to be neither flat (in general respondents differentiated between the subscales of each component), nor parallel (Dutch and British managers differed in their approach to conflict management). Furthermore, the correlation matrix indicated that there were distinct relationships between concerns, strategies, and communication styles, however, correlation coefficients did not signify possible multicollinearity issues, i.e., correlation coefficients remained below .56. With respect to the relationships, it was found, for example, that concern for Clarity related to Problem Solving and Consultative and Direct communication for both samples. This may indicate that one's concern for Clarity fuels a Problem Solving oriented strategy, which can be communicated in a Consultative and Direct manner. Similarly, concern for Inconvenience related to Avoiding and Indirect communication for both samples. Less clear were the results for concern for Control, which correlated with concern for Inconvenience, Dominating and Indirect communication for the British sample but with Problem Solving for the Dutch sample. A similar correlation matrix generated for other team's conflict management approach resulted in a multitude of significant correlations, of which it would be difficult to ascertain a

particular pattern. It is likely that the results are due to a less discriminatory approach to the evaluation of the behaviour of the other, due perhaps to the fact that one is an observer and also because the out-group is often viewed as more homogeneous than the in-group (e.g., Sherif, 1966). The predictive validity of the other team's conflict management approaches will be further discussed in section 8.4. when reviewing the results for the Regression analyses. First, the results for approaches to conflict management with respect to intra and inter sample differences will be discussed.

### **7.2.1. Concerns**

The results for underlying concerns showed that managers have a high concern for Clarity, and less concern for Control and Inconvenience. According to previous empirical research, individualistic people tend to have a concern for social dominance (e.g., Clarity and Control) more so than social harmony (e.g., Inconvenience) (Kim, 1994a; Kim & Kim, 1997). This result was replicated for the Dutch sample, but not for the British sample, indicating a cultural difference. Unlike Dutch managers, British managers did not have more concern for Control than for Inconvenience. It is questionable whether such a result is an indication of a more collectivist orientation of the British managers. More likely, the expression of relationship orientation may differ between the samples, in that Dutch managers' concern for harmony may be expressed differently (e.g., through need for consensus and clarity) than through being concerned about embarrassing situations and tension. In light of the value differences observed, indeed Dutch managers were not less, but were found to be even more benevolent than British managers, who were more achievement oriented. This cultural difference was amplified by the fact that Dutch managers rated the British managers as more concerned with Inconvenience, whereas British managers rated Dutch managers as less concerned for Inconvenience, indicating a relationship between in-group/out-group differentiation and cultural differences. If concern for Inconvenience is universally (or at least in both samples) seen as socially undesirable, both samples would likely rate their own team as lower on this concern than the opponent.

Clear in-group/out-group differentiation was observed for own concern for Clarity and Control vs. other team's concern for Clarity and Control. Both manager samples viewed their opponent as less concerned with Clarity and more concerned with Control. Based on the literature concerning in-group/out-group differentiation, such patterns are not a surprise.

People are likely to view their in-group engaging in socially desirable behaviour more than the out-group, whereas the out-group is seen to be engaging in socially undesirable behaviour. However, since research (e.g., Kim, 1994a) showed that individualists tend to have a need for Control, the present results could be indication that managers in the present samples are not individualists. This seems unlikely considering past research concerning cultural values that showed a strong overall individualistic nature of British and Dutch subjects and the results for the SVS in the present research also showed high scores on individualistic value types and low scores on collectivistic value types. Alternatively, the results perhaps indicate that concern for Control is not a socially desirable behaviour, even to individualistic respondents. British and Dutch managers may have a concern for Control despite it being considered socially undesirable, much like the results obtained by the GLOBE studies with regard to 'actual' and 'should be' levels of Uncertainty Avoidance, whereby the subjects indicated that they aspired to be lower on UA than they reported to be (Ashkanasy, et al., 2002; Szabo et al., 2002). Future research could focus on testing one's actual and aspirational levels of concerns.

### **7.2.2. Conflict Management Strategies**

Similar patterns were obtained for conflict management strategies. Both samples rated their own team as highly Problem Solving, significantly more so than Dominating and Avoiding. Dutch managers were also more Dominating than Avoiding, whereas British managers did not make such a distinction. The particular meaning of the items that make up Dominating clearly indicate that this strategy is a reflection of power and influence, rather than effectiveness and control. The present manager samples endorsed values such as Self Direction and Achievement, but not Power. It may be that Dominating is an 'easy way out' as one makes use of little skill when employing one's influence to get one's way. Interestingly, however, the covariate Hierarchical Relationship bore no significant effect, as a manager may employ a Dominating strategy when decisions have to be made quickly and one is dealing with subordinates (See also Rahim, 1992). Some conflict research has showed that individualistic people tend to use Dominating more than collectivists (e.g., Morris et al., 1998) and Kim (1994a) referred to need for social dominance as typically individualistic, expressed through a concern for clarity and effectiveness, and using direct communication. The fact that Dutch managers prefer Dominating over Avoiding is likely to be more a reflection of the particular dislike for Avoiding, since no cultural differences between Dutch and British managers were found for Dominating. Furthermore, both samples viewed the other team as

more Dominating than themselves, likely indicating that this is not viewed as a socially desirable behaviour.

The Dutch managers' low score for Avoiding may be due to the fact that they live in a culture which has been found to be more Uncertainty Avoidant and Feminine than the British culture. Avoiding may enhance the chances of an ambiguous situation in the eyes of those who appreciate planned and ruled interaction in an environment where people at each level are consulted. This idea is supported by the low score for concern for Inconvenience for the Dutch sample; they tend to be less concerned about embarrassment or a confrontation than British managers, and care more for matters to be clear and under control.

Alternatively, British managers are perhaps more concerned with the relationship aspect of the conflict, since studies have indicated that Avoiding is a good strategy to apply when tension requires reduction. An issue that comes to the fore is that, theoretically, it is possible that British managers were reflecting upon a relational conflict, whereas Dutch managers were reflecting upon a task related conflict. Relational, or affective, conflict promotes the use of Avoiding type of strategies during conflict. Although more respondents reported that the conflict was task related than personal related, there were issues with scale reliability and the variable was dropped for further analysis. This reliability issue may also indicate that this matter is more complicated than merely asking respondents whether they felt they were dealing with an affective/relational or a cognitive/task issue. Furthermore, Dutch managers perceived their opponent as more Avoiding than themselves, whereas British managers perceived Dutch managers as less Avoiding than themselves, which also indicates that the findings are due to a cultural rather than a relational vs. task difference. Finally, another reason why it is unlikely that British managers care more about others or social harmony can be found in the differences in cultural values: Dutch managers scored higher on Self Transcendence (Benevolence) than British managers, who scored higher on Self Enhancement (Achievement). Self Transcendence reflects the care for the wellbeing of others, whereas Self Enhancement is the opposite, and emphasises ambition and power.

### **7.2.3. Communication Styles**

Finally, British and Dutch managers showed a similar pattern such as described above for communication styles. Both samples rated themselves as highly Consultative, indicating that they listen to the other and ask questions. As described by Gudykunst, mindfulness is associated with effective communication and desirable particularly during intercultural interactions. With regard to Direct and Indirect communication the results imply a dichotomous relationship, despite Factor Analyses showing that the respondents saw them as separate factors. Dutch managers viewed themselves as highly Direct (more so than Consultative) and low on Indirect, whereas British managers saw themselves as equally Direct as Indirect. A note of caution towards the separation of Direct and Consultative for Dutch managers is necessary, as Factor Analyses showed that these items formed one factor for this sample. This was also true for the factor structure for 'opponent' items. The Dutch sample viewed the other team as less Consultative and Direct than themselves, whereas the British viewed the Dutch as less Consultative but more Direct than themselves. For British managers the factor structure did come out as proposed. Unfortunately, whether results with regard to indirect/direct preferences are due to in-group/out-group differentiation or due to cultural differences is difficult to establish due to the factor structure issue. If the Dutch sample see Consultative and Direct as one and the same and therefore as socially desirable, it may be that the results either confirm the fact that British managers are less Direct or are merely the result of associating the in-group with socially desirable behaviour more so than the out-group. However, if Indirect and Direct are opposed as the results suggest, then the former explanation is more plausible, as Dutch managers viewed the British as more Indirect than themselves, whereas the reverse was true for British managers. The following sections will discuss the cultural value profiles of both samples and then explore the results of the relationships between the value types and conflict management approach.

### **7.3. Values**

Values may serve as indicators of cultures, but are values a good basis for cross-cultural comparisons? "To obviate the possibility that differences in findings are merely artifacts of differences in method, one tries to design studies to be comparable with one another in their methods, to establish both linguistic and conceptual equivalence in the wording of questions and in the coding of answers, and to establish truly equivalent indices of the underlying



concepts” (Kohn, 1987, p. 720). As has become evident, in order to compare cultures it is important to use a measure by which the items’ content mean the same for respondents of different nationalities. Furthermore, “to build the micromediation chain from national culture to [other variables such as] conflict resolution models requires finding cultural dimensions that are conceptually related to the assumptions [proposed]” (Tinsley, 1998, p. 317). In other words, cultural dimensions are required to relate to what they are intended to predict, unless they are solely used to differentiate between cultural profiles.

The theoretical dichotomies presented by Schwartz (1992, 1994) allow for the speculation that if one endorses, for example, Self Transcendence, one would score low on Self Enhancement. Furthermore, if Self Transcendence was endorsed the most out of all four Higher Order Value types, and Openness to Change came second, then it follows that Self Transcendence’s opposite, Self Enhancement would be endorsed least of all, and Conservation would come in third. This pattern was found for Dutch managers but not for British managers as they did not endorse Self Transcendence significantly more than Openness to Change, nor Conservation more than Self Enhancement.

Overall, however, the profiles of the value preferences for the samples were not flat for either the Higher Order Values or the ten Value Types, in that within subject differences were significant. Both samples thus differentiated between the value types. The profiles were, however, parallel for the ten Value Types, in that there was little difference in the degree of endorsement of the value types between the samples. The observed differences were a higher score of Benevolence for Dutch managers and of Achievement for British managers. This was also reflected by the significant difference in Self Transcendence and Self Enhancement. The issue of standardisation becomes important here, as raw mean scores for other value types differed more than those for either Benevolence or Achievement. This highlights the issue of the application of centering or standardisation, as some actual differences based on raw scores may be suppressed through this manipulation (See Appendix E).

In light of Hofstede’s findings that Dutch culture is more feminine than British culture, which was echoed by Schwartz’s finding that Dutch culture is higher on Harmony, whereas British culture is higher on Mastery, the observed differences may be an indication of individual level femininity vs. masculinity. Harmony correlates with UA at a cultural level. Dutch culture is known for its tolerance towards others and its emphasis on humility, but

also for its need for consensus. Within the workforce, Dutch managers are expected to work as hard as their subordinates without many (obvious) privileges and consultation at all levels is appreciated if not expected. It is perhaps for this reason that there are only rare cases of outstanding internationally renowned individual achievement, and the country is better known for its team effort, be it in football, engineering, or commerce. Within the British workforce at managerial level, the focus on achievement is motivated throughout education and training. From an early age, (middle class) individuals are encouraged to become 'head boy/girl' or team captain, get graded, and do interschool competitions. Managers within the present sample are thus likely to be particularly achievement oriented, even though 'Achievement' was a highly endorsed value for both samples. As the profile analyses indicated, on the whole both samples endorsed the value types in a similar fashion, indicating that the level of goal orientation for Dutch and British managers is unlikely to cause major discrepancies during cooperation.

#### **7.4. Values and Conflict Management Approach**

Conflicts do not take place in a vacuum – they are characterised by a plethora of contextual variables (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993) and our understanding of the moderating effects of culture on conflict is limited (Gelfand & Dyer, 2000). In chapter four, a model of cultural values, conflict management approach, and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction was presented. In the present section, whether the model was supported by the present study will be discussed. Based on theory and research by Kim (1994a; Kim & Kim, 1997) culture likely influences the underlying concerns, also referred to as the cognitive schemas that people may have of the negotiation (Gelfand, Nishii, Dyer, Holcombe, Ohbuchi, & Fakuno, 1998). Culture is also likely to affect the negotiator's conflict management strategies, and communication styles as previously shown by Morris et al. (1998) and Bilsky and Jehn (2002). The purpose of the present study was to focus particularly on the predictive validity of cultural values in relation to those concepts that indicated a national difference, and the predictive validity of cultural values and approaches to conflict management in relation to Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction, yet control for contextual aspects like age, hierarchical relationship, and gender.

The mediating role of cultural values was explored for those components which were hypothesised to generate cultural differences, i.e., concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding

strategy, and Indirect communication style. Theoretically, Self Transcendence-Self Enhancement is the cultural value dimension that represents care for others either within or beyond one's ingroup vs. care for oneself only. Therefore, this dimension was theorised to explain variations in concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication style as these components represent the relational aspect of conflict management. First of all, it was found that both groups of managers endorsed Self Transcendence more than Self Enhancement. Secondly, for Dutch managers, it was found that they scored low on concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect communication than British managers. Thirdly, the national differences were expressed through a British greater endorsement of Self Enhancement and a Dutch greater endorsement of Self Transcendence.

However, regression results indicated that Self Transcendence and Self Enhancement did not have a mediating effect. There are three post hoc explanations for these findings. First, it is possible that the cultural values are too abstract to correlate highly with a subjective and highly contextual phenomenon such as a negotiation. It is perhaps not surprising that immediately relevant aspects such as other team's conflict behaviour, as was indicated by the correlation matrices, are a better predictor of one's own strategies etc. than the extent to which one values Benevolence and Universalism. Nevertheless, the cultural value Self Transcendence proved to predict other variables such as Clarity, Problem Solving, and Consultative communication, and Self Enhancement mediated variables such as Dominating and Success. It is not logical that the cultural values would be too abstract to predict one set of conflict management approach but not another.

A second explanation seems more plausible, in that, theoretically, none of the individual level Value Types directly represents Uncertainty Avoidance as a concept (e.g., Ohbuchi et al., 1999). It is likely that particularly organised and structured cultures would score high on UA. "Uncertainty Avoiding cultures shun ambiguous situations. People in such cultures look for a structure in their organizations, institutions, and relationships, which makes events clearly interpretable and predictable. Paradoxically, they are often prepared to engage in risky behavior to reduce ambiguities, like starting a fight with a potential opponent rather than sitting back and waiting" (Hofstede, 1991a, p. 116). Using ranks for Hofstede's scores from 1 to 53, Sweden and Denmark rank number 50 and 51, which implies that many of their citizens feel little threatened by uncertain situations. Great Britain is ranked at 47 and

the USA at 43, whereas The Netherlands is ranked 35 and is thus the most uncertainty avoidant of these countries. Nevertheless, Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands are often clustered as 'Feminine' countries, and Great Britain, the USA, and the Netherlands are often clustered as typical 'Individualist' countries. UA has often been overlooked in research that has given precedence to other dimensions to explain variance in behaviour between cultures. This is an issue that future research could explore with the introduction of additional values to the SVS. Uncertainty Avoidance has been an established dimension with cultural variations but since it is not represented within the SVS, this can be viewed as a limitation in the predictive validity of SVS. Harb (2003), for example, introduced additional values describing Arabic culture in order to predict levels of Life Satisfaction.

Finally, the individual values may not predict team behaviour as well as an individual's own behaviour, despite the fact that the instructions clearly indicated that respondents should take themselves into consideration when answering the questions (See Appendix C, p. 277). This is a trade-off issue; Either one studies a situation that is as realistic as possible and accepts that the predictive validity of values may be lessened, or one studies a dyadic situation, which occurs less frequently and brings along issues of personality rather than group culture, but increases the likelihood that individual values have predictive validity. Future research would benefit from the exploration of values that can better predict UA universally by adding other values describing this dimension, something which Schwartz recommends. These values could describe opposites to the concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding, and Indirectness as explored in the present study, for example formulated as 'directness – lack of ambiguity, keeping openness of issues', and 'organisation – a planned life, a predicted life'. The question is, however, whether UA is a universal phenomenon at the individual level.

Cultural values did significantly predict other conflict management components. Conservation predicted Direct communication style, mediating the effect for Dutch superior/British subordinate dummy variable. It is likely that superiors are more senior, and thus perhaps more Conservation oriented. Since Dutch managers were found to be more Direct than British managers, it is not unusual to find that Conservation predicts Direct communication style. It was furthermore found that Self Enhancement predicts Dominating strategy. As will be discussed in the next section, Self Enhancement also predicted Success but Dominating predicted Comfort negatively, indicating a possible trade-off between

Comfort and Success if one is particularly Self Enhancement oriented. Finally, Self Transcendence predicted concern for Clarity, Problem Solving strategy, and Consultative communication style. This finding is particularly relevant to conflict management practices as Problem Solving and being Consultative or 'mindful' have been associated with effective conflict management and communication in past research (e.g., Aram et al., 1971; Burke, 1970; Gudykunst, 1998, in press; Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1991; Friedman, Tidd, Currall & Tsai, 2000; Kuhn & Poole, 2000; Likert & Likert, 1976; Rahim & Buntzman, 1990). The results of the present study thus show that people with a Self Transcendent orientation are likely to engage in behaviour that lead to the Comfort aspect of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction, which may benefit future cooperation.

#### **7.4.1. The model**

The results generated to check the model showed that more immediate aspects of the conflict had the largest predictive validity. Regressions with CMA components and the other party's behaviour as predictors and Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction as outcomes generated adjusted R<sup>2</sup>s of .04 for Success and .34 for Comfort.

One is more likely to rate the negotiation as successful if one is British and if the other team communicates in an Indirect style. The predictive validity of Nationality is mediated by Self Enhancement. This means that a value difference on this Higher Order Value Type accounts for the difference in level of Success. Yet, the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> and model F were low when Nationality, Other Indirect, and Self Enhancement were entered as predictors. This indicates that there are potentially other factors additional to cultural values and conflict context that may predict Success. It thus seems that there is no particular formula for a successful meeting. The low variance explained, despite high beta values and significance levels, indicate that the concept of success may be less straightforward than initially thought. The evaluation of what is 'success' is a subjective issue, potentially prone to cultural divergence. Alternatively, respondents may have chosen to report on conflicts that were not likely to have clearly measurable success rates, as they concerned issues internal to the company whereby long term cooperation could be a bigger priority than instantaneous success.

The mediating role of cultural values in relation to Nationality was not an issue for Comfort as no national differences were observed. Nonetheless, cultural values were also not predictors of Comfort. The model showed that a longer tenure, if the hierarchical relationship was not one of Dutch subordinates and British superiors, if one has no concern for Inconvenience but communicates in a Consultative manner, and if the other team is perceived as Problem Solving, and communicating in a Consultative and Direct manner, one feels more comfortable. If one works for a company for a long time, one is likely to be familiar with the protocol and less anxious about a negotiation situation. Equally, if the relationship is non hierarchical, the participants may feel more comfortable. The fact that specifically the Dutch subordinate vs. British superior situation is significant could be due to the directness of the Dutch – in their role of subordinates this may create uncomfortable situations, something which the British are keen to avoid!

To test if there is indeed a national difference when it comes to what predicts Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction, the regressions were run for the national samples separately. The results indicated that the model for Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction changes if the analyses are conducted per nationality. When the data were pooled, Self Enhancement came out as the single predictor for Success, whereas the split file analyses showed that Success is predicted by other team's concern for Inconvenience for Dutch managers, and by Openness to Change for British managers. Furthermore, Comfort is predicted by concern for Inconvenience (negatively), own and other Consultative communication style, tenure, other team's Direct communication style, and dummy Hierarchical relationship (0 = other, 1 = Dutch subordinates, British superiors), whereas results based on the split file showed that Comfort is predicted by own and other team's Problem Solving for Dutch managers but by Dominating (negatively), own and other team's Consultative communication style, and dummy hierarchical relationship (0= other, 1 = equals) for British managers. Such a discrepancy between pooled samples and split samples results is likely to be due to the difference in sample sizes but an overall interesting result is that most of the significant effects are based on perceptions of what the other party does or does not do.

Contextual variables such as nationality, tenure, and hierarchical relationship came out as significant predictors of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction. This result may support Gelfand and Dyer's (2000) claims that contextual variables are important aspects to a

conflict. In the present scenario, the parties in conflict came from the same multinational, and therefore were familiar with the lingo, the types of organisation, and the practices of how to deal with hierarchical relationships. The organisation in the present study is also viewed as somewhat of an institution in both cultures – the company has existed for over a century and has a royal connection (e.g., pictures of the Dutch Royal family are displayed in the offices), this may enhance one's national as much as one's organisational identity. If one's organisational identity is more superficial, as Hofstede argues, to enhance the combination of national and organisational identity may tie employees to the organisation on both an emotional and practical level. Examples of such an approach exist, but are more common to those cultures where the national identity is very important, such as the U.S.A.

Social psychology, by its very nature being concerned with the observation of groups, would benefit from incorporating culture into empirical research as each group has a culture. As the purpose of any science is to verify theories, those which involve individuals are immediately presented with the particularities of their sample, and the generalisability of findings derived from data obtained from that sample to the greater population. Particularly with reference to national cultures, human beings have adapted to the challenges of different contexts, and area specific cultural dynamics have been established through time. The present research, like many others, provides evidence that the psychological dynamics of a group in one location differ from those of another and that this substantially affects outcomes when groups interact. The suggestion for future research is the continuous development of measures of culture to improve the empirical understanding of national groups.

## **7.5. Limitations**

Every research has its limitations, and the present thesis is no exception. By the nature of psychological research, for example, the decision to control for or limit the number of variables to eliminate noise at the same time inhibits the span of conclusions one can draw from the results. It implies further research is required to come towards an all encompassing model. Furthermore, weaknesses such as in research validity and replicability and scale reliability can prove to be a problematic.

### **7.5.1. SVS**

Fiske et al. (1998) stressed that, despite the fact that the subjective-value literature is “impressive in both the breadth of cultures covered and the general convergence of the findings by different research groups, ... some methodological and conceptual problems [must be covered]” (p. 950). They pointed out, among other issues, that researchers may use mean scores to compare cultures but different meanings may be associated with the value items. A difference in the pattern of relationships between values may thus be an indication of cultural difference, i.e., to some ‘love’ may fall into the same dimension as ‘friendship’ and ‘freedom’, whereas to others it may be associated with ‘duty’ and ‘nurture’. For instance, in the Netherlands ‘honour’ was associated with self-achievement and autonomy, whereas in Spain ‘honour’ was found to be associated with family and social interdependence (Rodriguez Mosquera, Manstead & Fischer, 2002). Such idiosyncrasies would warrant a reassessment of the value ‘honour’, in order to maintain the universal applicability of the value survey. The issue that arose in the present study was not with individual values, but that value types were structured differently by the two samples, despite the fact that Schwartz and Sagiv (1995) carried out tests on 88 samples from 40 countries and found the same circular structure in most cultures.

The main issues associated with the SVS are threefold and concerned with social desirability and universal validity, abstraction, and circularity. Since the SVS is based on the premise that the values are guiding principles in one’s life, this implies that they are a goal towards which one aspires or is at least an aspect in life that is desirable. As Schwartz (1992; Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995) indicated, values such as Universalism and Benevolence are highly endorsed universally, and it is unlikely that many participants in a study would not care for the welfare of, if not the population in general, than at least those near to them. This, however, is a general criticism of any research based on self reports, and the conflict management approach is likely to be subject to this same problem. It also complicates validity and reliability issues as skewness is likely to cause ceiling or floor effects. However, in the case of Conflict Management Approach (CMA), respondents’ views on opponents’ behaviour provides some further insight into how others view them. This is more problematic for the SVS as it would be difficult to ask respondents to rate values for another person.

Post Hoc correlation matrices of the cultural values with CMA components showed that there were substantial differences in the type of values that linked to CMA depending on



one's nationality. An issue that comes to the fore is whether such a trend fits with Schwartz's idea that the value types are universal, and should therefore have the same meaning in each culture. It is certainly possible for individuals from different cultures to see Benevolence as a value that relates to the welfare of the people one is close to. However, how this value is expressed in behaviour, may differ in those two cultures. For example, some may find it is in the interest of the welfare of people to be free to commit euthanasia, whereas others vehemently oppose to such a notion, also out of concern for the welfare of people. This raises the issue of practical application of the SVS as abstract concepts measuring culture. An alternative explanation is the split between individual values and team behaviour. As was shown by the present research, to study a conflict situation that is as realistic as possible by assessing team (group) dynamics, this complicates the predictive validity of individual values vis-à-vis a team's approach to conflict management, regardless of whether the respondents were urged to take themselves into consideration.

A second issue is the level of abstraction of the values. Since they are goal oriented, the context in which they are presented to the participant may change responses. For example, if the questionnaire concerned a subject different than conflict management, would the SVS be completed differently? Schwartz developed the SVS to improve upon the work done by Hofstede and others, in order to come towards an instrument that allows the mapping of cultures at the individual level, and not to explore the relationships between values and behaviour as such. Fiske et al. (1998) highlighted that evidence from the attitude literature shows that a strong correlation between values and actions is doubtful at least. Moreover, "in the social field practically all predictions are only probabilistic ... [and] ... in general, norms and roles are relatively good predictors of behavior" (Jahoda, 1984, p. 143). However, Schwartz (1996) asserts that values do not necessarily predict one behaviour but a multitude of value types do. For example, 'forgiving', which is part of the value type 'Benevolence' may not predict cooperative behaviour, but the values that make up the 'Benevolence' do (Schwartz, 1996). As SVS is applied to measure cultural profiles more widely, it may become possible to compare different samples within one culture to see if the sample make up and context of the questionnaire proves to be moderating factors.

Finally, the Circularity of SVS affects its statistical usefulness. The SVS consists of value types that correlate with each other, either positively or negatively working in a circular fashion. In other words, the theory implies that if one endorses Universalism, one is likely to

endorse Benevolence as these value types are theorised to correlate more than, for instance, Universalism and Power, which are placed opposite each other in the model. Thus, in general, the Value Types Universalism and Benevolence may be so highly correlated that they should be treated as one variable, i.e., Self Transcendence, because in multivariate statistics, multicollinearity is a problem. It increases the probability that a valid predictor of the outcome will be found non-significant, it limits the size of R, it makes the assessment of the individual importance of a predictor, and finally, it can result in unstable estimated values of the regression coefficients (Field, 2000; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Solutions on how to deal with multicollinearity are discussed in the results chapter and, in the present study, core analyses are done using the four Higher Order Value Types, rather than the ten Value Types.

### **7.5.2. Further methodological issues: FA, Response Patterns, and Sampling**

The above described issues concerning the SVS are particular to this measure since it employs an alternative way of testing for reliability and factor structure. This does not mean, however, that a Factor Analysis (FA) would resolve all problems related to the exploration or confirmation of variables based on multiple items in a questionnaire. FA, after all, calculates the main factors that exist within the data, potentially suppressing other items that could form a valid variable within the model. The measures used in the present study may have been void of some variables that are important to the exploration of conflict management approach, not only within the scale (e.g., there may be more types of concerns one could have during a conflict), but also in general. Although the present study has included an extensive range of variables, other aspects may be of interest such as the cognitive processes presented in Gelfand and Dyer's (2000) model. The respondents may have given biased answers if they were not given all the options that relate to conflict management approach.

A second limitation is related to biased answers. The means that were compared were derived from two culturally different samples. A point of concern is the equivalence of meaning and any response bias that may have occurred. The cross-cultural researcher is in a predicament in that he/she has to make all necessary allowances for language variations, or use one language version only thereby forcing the respondent to answer items about psychological phenomena in a language that is not his/her own. As was shown in chapter six, using different language versions within one cultural sample can generate significant differences, and it is difficult to tell whether this is due to the language version or to an actual

sample difference. Nevertheless, checks were made, through the application of formulae for reliability equivalence, proportionality coefficients, and transformed data.

Furthermore, the questionnaire contained three sections with at least 45 items in two of them, making the questionnaire long. Any risk of loss of interest was attempted to be remedied by breaking up the sections that required a rating with factual, easy to fill in questions such as 'number of participants' and 'language spoken during the negotiation'. The SVS was placed at the end of the questionnaire, which, on the one hand may lead to time pressure and cognitive overload due to the abstract nature of the exercise (i.e., filling out scales with some negative numbers) but on the other hand left the longest measure at the end, as respondents may be put off if it were placed at the beginning. Future research could take into account aspects such as time pressure and response context of the sample by comparing for example response rates from students who are participating for credits with those from busy managers in an organisation.

One issue that should be mentioned is the sampling method in the present study. This took place under direct supervision of the HR departments within the organisation due to regulations related to the Data Protection Act. The sampling could only occur within those departments that agreed to cooperate and within which random sampling occurred based on last names and managerial job level. The results obtained may thus have varied if other departments had participated. Furthermore, the response rate was low (18%), which increases the risk for self selection, whereby those who chose to complete the questionnaire may be significantly different from those who did not.

### **7.5.3. Conflict Management Approach: limitations**

Limitations related to conflict management approach components are linked to sample, inclusiveness, and relevance to reality. Issues related to translation, control of sample, within scale control variables and potential order effects and contamination should be considered. The scales used to test conflict management approach are based on an extensive review of the literature and on empirically tested scales, yet, matching procedures intended to control for the issues described above may themselves cause limitations. For example, by selecting respondents from a managerial population to ensure the homogeneity of the sample, generalisations towards the general population are limited. Therefore, the extent to which the

present findings can be applied to other individuals from the same culture, or across different settings (e.g., other (non) organisational contexts) and times are limited.

Secondly, the conflict management approach instruments were developed on the basis of several empirically tested conflict scales (e.g., Janssen & Van de Vliert, 1996; Gudykunst, 1985, 1998, in press; Kim, 1994a; Rahim, 1983abc), but it would be useful to sample the definitions of the strategies and the specific items more widely. In line with the emic vs. etic distinction made earlier, it is possible that, although thorough effort has been made to make the instrument as universally applicable as possible, individuals from other cultures would define 'Clarity' or 'Direct communication' differently than those in the present samples. This was particularly brought to the surface by the factor structure for communication styles in the Dutch sample as they considered 'Consultative' and 'Direct' communication to be the same concept. This is an interesting result in itself, but it highlights the complications and compromises researchers must sometimes make with regard to the validity of intercultural comparisons.

A third point is that it is likely that one engages in several different types of strategy at the same time during one conflict. In fact, it has been found that a combination of 'forcing' and 'problem solving' is more effective than using 'problem solving' alone (Van de Vliert, Nauta, Euwema, & Janssen, 1997). Results of the present study indicated that all three strategies were used to a certain extent. It is possible, however, that respondents felt it to be cognitively taxing to recall precisely how they and others behaved during the conflict, perhaps relying more on a general memory of events.

Finally, the predictive value of national differences can be questioned in light of minimal group paradigm studies, whereby in-group/out-group differentiation occurs without groups having a shared history and strong group culture. It is possible that managers' evaluations of groups and the behaviour observed in the present study are a function of group identity – them vs. us – and that the cultural label was influenced by the research design. However, minimal group paradigm research has been criticised by researchers in that the experimental condition primes group differentiation (e.g., Schiffmann & Wicklund, 1992), whereas "social identity undoubtedly plays a key role in the 'intense group affiliations' with nation, religion, ethnic group etc." (Rabbie & Horwitz, 1990, p. 120). If it were true that the results are solely due to in-group/out-group differentiation, then profiles should have been

parallel. In the present study, interactions of the between-subjects variable (nationality) and within-subjects variable (CMA) were found for concerns, conflict management strategies, and communication styles. Thus, even if the social identity of nationality was primed by the research design, the results indicated distinct cultural differences that, although perhaps stereotypical, were confirmed in the patterns observed by comparing respondents' ratings of own behaviour with those ratings for the other team. Although this limits the possibility of generalising findings towards a greater population, the value of the results in providing insight into intercultural conflict management approach within a multinational organisation is secure.

## **7.6. Practical implications**

An organisation is a social system that is different from a nation since its members select their membership in it and are answerable to it only during working hours. Although there is ample visual evidence that organisations have cultures, the culture is shared on a superficial level through practices such as rituals (meetings) and language (lingo), as opposed to through values (Hofstede, 1991). Organisational culture “is a characteristic of the organisation, not of *individuals*, but it is manifested in and measured from the verbal and/or non verbal behaviour of individuals – aggregated to the level of their organisational unit” (Hofstede, 1991, p. 481). Hofstede proposed that there is an important difference between national culture and organisational culture when it comes to items measuring values or practices: “Cultural differences between matched samples of respondents from different countries are primarily a matter of values, while cultural differences between matched samples of respondents from different organisations within the same country are primarily a matter of *practices*, as perceived by the respondents” (Hofstede, 1991, p. 482). Nevertheless, the organisational context of the present research needs to be taken into consideration, not only when interpreting the data, but perhaps more so when assessing the practical value of the findings. The present study was conducted in a field setting not common to conflict management research, and can therefore have some valuable implications for practitioners in the field, particularly for managers from Britain and the Netherlands.

First, managers in general approach conflict in a similar way, using a Problem Solving strategy and a Consultative communication style and being mainly concerned with maintaining Clarity. These specific behaviours have been shown to reduce conflict in past

research and the present research indicated that if one is particularly Self Transcendence oriented, one is more likely to engage in these behaviours. It is probably in the best interest of managers working in organisations to realise that the long term benefits of cooperating, which is part and parcel of using a Problem Solving strategy and using a Consultative communication style, overrides the short term benefits of success. One is likely to encounter the 'opponent' again, especially since managers shift positions more quickly, as they are increasingly considering flexible forms of employment, including short term contracts in different departments (see also The European Union Online, 1998) .

The cultural value types, which are guiding principles in one's life, that were related to the above described conflict management behaviour varied however, for each sample. The post hoc correlation matrices indicated that, for example, Openness to Change is negatively linked to Avoiding for Dutch managers, and to concern for Control for British managers. What a significant correlation coefficient shows, is that the way people apply a cultural value orientation that people may have, may not be universally the same. This highlights the importance of the underlying concerns for behaviour, since these are perhaps more pressing than one's cultural values when dealing with a conflict. Differing concerns pose a challenge to managers who are required to cooperate with a diverse workforce. Practically, it should thus be taken into consideration that a) although managers may share a particular value orientation, how this is expressed may vary, and b) the motivations for certain behaviour are likely to be benign but subject to cultural variability.

The main points of the present research that are of interest to managers is that conflict management training programmes should emphasise the cultural difference that exists within this multinational, which is expressed as a concern for Inconvenience, Avoiding strategy, and Indirect and Direct communication style. First, it may be in managers' best interest to establish people's underlying goals through briefing sessions. This is not only because this research has established that concerns are separate from strategies and communication styles, but also because the key to Problem Solving is the exploration of alternatives to a win/lose situation. For example, since British managers are more concerned with tension reduction and embarrassing situations, Dutch managers risk achieving the opposite to their goal of maintaining clarity, by pushing the British manager to avoidance leaving the conflict unresolved and both parties frustrated. Secondly, Dutch managers should take into account that his/her actions can be interpreted as antagonistic by someone who is more indirect. On

the other hand, a British manager should realise that if a manager is direct and perhaps blunt, it may be that he/she is looking to cooperate and clarify matters so that everyone is on the same page. These issues are best related to the cultural values one holds, not due to deliberate acts of antagonism or general unpleasant dispositions. Training interventions can be build around the need to highlight these perspectives.

## **7.7. Conclusion**

Focused experimental investigations can provide information about the psychological dynamics of individual participants that are particularly beneficial to the formulation of a theory. A more complete model can then be developed by including contextual variables in the research design, which is likely to increase predictive power. Such steps are an improvement on “experiments in a vacuum”, as one is testing phenomena outside a controlled environment. Yet, such studies can still fall short of claims for universality. Although experimental investigations control for noise and the inclusion of contextual variables may improve probability estimates, failure to predict behaviour across cultures can still occur if culture is not included as a variable.

The present study set out to test if conflict management research could benefit from the separation of the three main aspects: concerns, strategies and communication styles. It was found that concerns, strategies, and communication styles individually add to the process of negotiation. By testing the newly developed scales in two national groups, interregional differences were explored, additional to the validity of the claim that individualistic cultural groups are dissuaded from using indirect and avoidant type conflict management behaviour. It was found that Dutch and British managers differed with regard to their Self Transcendence and Self Enhancement orientation, and their level of concern for Inconvenience, their use of Avoiding strategy and Indirect and Direct communication style. By introducing Schwartz Value Survey it was expected that managers’ approach to conflict management could be explained by cultural values. Results showed that cultural values did predict managers’ conflict management approach. Yet, as not all components could be clearly explained by cultural values, future research may benefit from the exploration of Uncertainty Avoidance at the individual level. Furthermore, it introduced a model of conflict management approach that includes culture, one’s own but also the opponent’s concerns, strategies, and communication styles, and context as predictors of Perceived Negotiation

Satisfaction. Indeed, one's own conflict management approach works interdependently with the other's conflict management approach, as they and cultural and contextual variables all affect levels of Perceived Negotiation Satisfaction.



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