

How Four Types of Intragroup Conflicts Shape the Role of Group Diversity on Group Outcomes

by

Lili Bao

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Department of Organizational Behavior
Weatherhead School of Management
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland OH 44106-7235
e-mail: org-behavior@case.edu

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(Advisor: Ron Fry)

The rapid integration of global economics and fierce competition of international markets is pushing for a great demand for diverse work groups consisting of group members from both genders; various cultures; diverse backgrounds; speaking different languages; and owning all kinds of knowledge, expertise and skills to help organizations enhance their performance and productivity by improving their internal operations. From a theoretical perspective, existing literature (e.g., Cox & Blake, 1991, Jackson, 1992; Cox, 1993; Easely, 2001) highlight that workforce diversity should be encouraged to improve work group outcomes. However, from my own practical experiences in both the diverse work groups in business organizations and the diverse student groups during my masters program in a management school in the mid-west, group diversity also would generate thorny difficulties and challenges giving rise to intragroup conflicts, tension (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999), or low member satisfactions in group work.

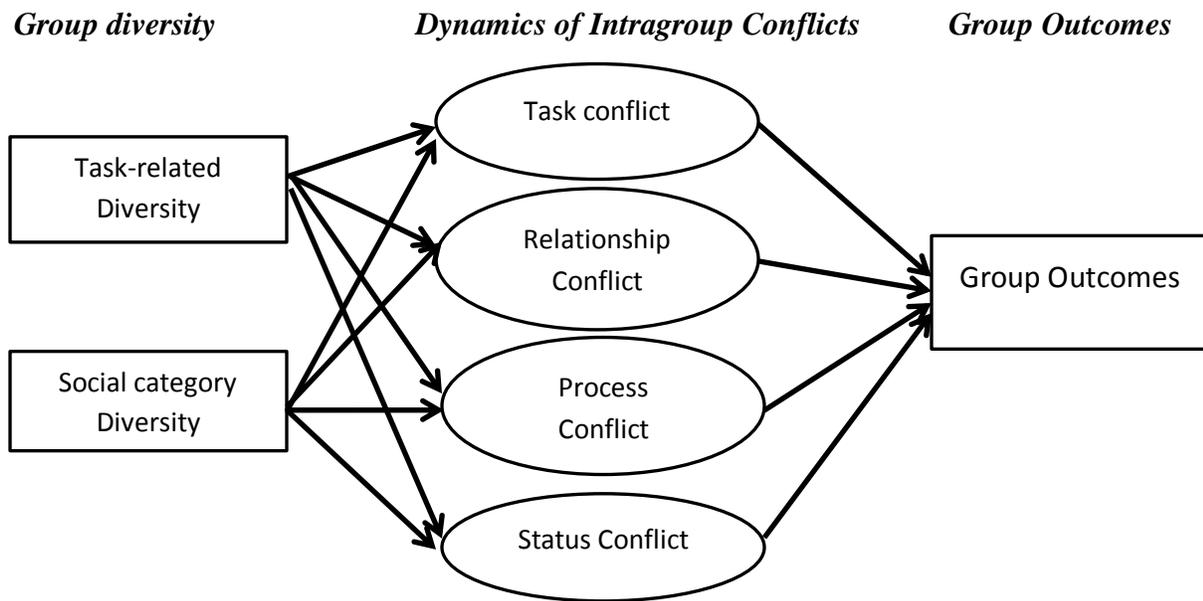
The research on the impact of diversity on work group performance – which has been referred to as "black box" studies by Lawrence (1997) – presents mixed empirical findings and perpetuates a lack of consensus. On the one hand, some researchers of group diversity stress on the positive effect of member heterogeneity on group outcomes in terms of bringing in different perspectives and promoting healthy debates (eg., O'Reilly & Williams, 1998). On the other hand, some counterarguments showed that member heterogeneity will result in unfavorable outcomes and lower level member satisfactions. This “double-edged sword” nature of group diversity suggests that the effects of team diversity on team outcomes are still not fully understood in

existing literature. Also the questions of what processes underlie the mixed effects of diversity on group outcomes and how to manage the processes bring up the challenges to group research theory and practice. In order to meet this challenge and to advance our understanding of the effects of work-group diversity on group outcomes, I attempt to assess the role of dynamics among four types of intragroup conflicts as proposed by Jehn (1995), which are task, relationship, process and status, on the positive and the negative effects of diversity on group outcomes (see Figure 1).

This study serves as conceptual augmentation of previous existing literature on group diversity and group outcomes. First, the focal point of our study is to propose that the dynamics of four types of intragroup conflicts (task, relationship, process and status) play an intervening role on the indirect relationship between group diversity and group outcomes. Existing research has typically studied the roles of task conflicts and relationship conflicts in isolation, whereas my model suggests that the roles of four types of intragroup conflicts interact and therefore I would like to investigate how group diversity indirectly affects group outcomes through the four types of conflict. Moreover, previous studies just studied that two types of intragroup conflicts played an intervening role on the causal relationship between group diversity and group outcomes. My intent is to add to the discussions on two more types of intragroup conflict (i.e., process conflict and status conflict) which is missing from existing literature in team research. In addition to previous research that task and relationships conflicts are each associated with particular dimensions of diversity, my reconsideration about the nature of intervening role of intragroup conflicts suggests that each dimension of diversity (such as task-related diversity and social category diversity) may in principle elicit four types of intragroup conflict. Finally, in order to make my discussion comprehensive, I will not only talk about distal group outcomes, such as

group performance, group effectiveness, productivity (Wit, Greer & Jehn, 2012), but also include the consideration about emergent states of group outcomes, such as group member satisfaction and group member commitment. Accordingly, the primary objective or contribution of this study is to advance and expand the existing theories of group diversity and group outcomes to provide more accuracy in estimates of the causal relationships between group diversity and group outcomes while showing how the four types of conflict mediates this relationship.

Figure 1: Proposed Model: Intervening Role of the Dynamics of four types of intragroup conflicts on the impact of group diversity on group outcomes.



Group diversity

The Dictionary of Merriam Webster defines diversity as the condition of having or being composed of differing elements: variety; especially: the inclusion of different types of people (as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization. Based on this broad definition, existing literature on group diversity provided a definition in this way: "Diversity refers to

differences between individuals on any attribute that may lead to the perception that another person is different from self" (Knippenberg, De Dreu & Homan, 2004 cited Jackson, 1992; Triandis, 1994; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). This definition is so wide that probably it is hard to find the limits of diversity since everything can be considered as a diversity only if other people have different perceptions on that thing from us. Other researchers developed a variety of classifications of group diversity in their studies. For instance, Jackson et al. (1995) distinguished the group diversity between readily detectable and less observable diversity, in which the former represented bio-demographic dimensions, such as gender, race, culture, ethnicity, and age and the latter indicated cognitive resources and personal characteristics. Pelled (1996) also distinguished group diversity into two major themes which are levels of visibility and job-relatedness. Here job-relatedness refers to the attribute which reflects work experience, skills, competency or perspectives related to job. Also, Harrison, Price, and Bell (1998) examined and expanded the conception of group diversity into surface level (demographic) and deep level (attitudinal) diversity. In their model, "surface-level" diversity refers to differences among group members in observable biological characteristics, such as age, gender, and race/ethnicity. In contrast, "deep-level diversity," was conceptualized as less observable differences among members' attitudes, beliefs, and values that were learned through group process over time. Another classification of group diversity is made by Milliken and Martins (1996), they distinguished diversity into two broad types, "observable individual differences" and "underlying attributes." In this study, in light of previous classifications made by other scholars in the literature, I also dichotomized group diversity into two categories: social category diversity (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999) and task-related diversity (Pelled, 1996). Social category diversity represents innate member characteristics that are immediately observable, such as age, gender,

culture and race/ethnicity whereas task-related diversity is acquired individual attributes (e.g., functional expertise, education, perspectives and organizational seniority) that have been considered more related to accomplishing tasks and jobs than social category diversity. These two types of diversity cannot be always distinguished clearly in practice. For example, people from different cultures (social category diversity) may have different education backgrounds and experience and have experienced different expertise training (task-related diversity). Each of these different kinds of diversity implies different divergences and dissimilarities among workgroups, and consequently differentially influencing workgroup outcomes.

Intragroup conflict

Conflict is inevitable relationship in groups and organizations (Amason, 1996) due to the complexity and interdependence of organizational life (Jehn, 1995), especially when the team members engage in complex tasks (Janssen, Vliert & Veenstra, 1999). One particular form of conflict, intragroup conflict, has achieved intense attention among researchers and practitioners given the increased reliance on work groups or teams in organizations. (DeDreu & Weingart, 2003). Based on previous work on conflict (e.g., De Dreu, Harinck, & Van Vianen, 1999; Thomas, 1992; Van de Vliert, 1997; Wall & Callister, 1995) De Dreu & Gelfand (2008) gave an encompassing and comprehensive definition of conflict that "conflict is a process that begins when an individual or group perceives differences and opposition between itself and another individual or group about interests and resources, beliefs, values, or practices that matter to them. This process view dates back to Pondy's (1967) original work about five stages of a conflict episode which are (1) latent conflict, (2) perceived conflict, (3) felt conflict, (4) manifest conflict and (5) conflict aftermath. Here, latent conflict may lead to and include perceived conflict and felt conflict, which refers to intra-person or intra-group states conflicts. Similarly, Jehn (1995)

considered conflict as perceptions by the parties involved that they hold discrepant views or have interpersonal incompatibilities. So according to the definition of conflict, *intragroup conflict* can be defined as a process that emerges from when individuals perceive differences and incompatibilities between him/herself and another individual about interests and resources, beliefs, values, or practices that matter to them within a group. Researchers have typically conceptualized and classified intragroup conflict into two broad categories: task and relationship (Amason, 1996; Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954; Jehn, 1994). Later in recent years, a third type of conflict, process conflict was added (Jehn 1997, Jehn and Mannix 2001). In 2012, the fourth type of conflict, status conflict, was introduced and added by Bendersky and Hays (2012).

Relationship conflict, also called affective conflict (Amason, 1996; Pinkley, 1990), is an awareness of interpersonal incompatibilities and disagreement about interpersonal issues among group members, including affective components such as feeling tension, friction annoyance, frustration, and irritation (Jehn and Mannix 2001). Examples of relationship conflict are conflicts about personally dislike among group members, personality differences, interpersonal style or differences in norms and values (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003).

Task conflict, similar to cognitive conflict (Amason, 1996; Pinkley, 1990), is an awareness of differences in ideas, viewpoints and opinions about the group tasks and disagreement about the content and outcomes of the tasks being performed among group members. Unlike relationship conflict, which commonly coincides with interpersonal negative emotions, task conflict may include lively discussions, information exchange and personal positive emotions (Jehn and Mannix 2001). Examples of task conflict are conflict about the different perspectives to judge or interpret the facts; different insights about the tasks; and disagreement about the distribution of resources, methods, processes and policies pertaining to the tasks being performed.

More recently, researchers identified a third type of conflict, named *process conflict* (Jehn, 1997; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). It is defined as an awareness of disagreement among group members about aspects of how task accomplishment will proceed (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). In contrary to the relationship and task conflicts, process conflict pertains to issues about the administrative logistics, such as resource delegation, tasks distribution, responsibilities of duty. More specifically, who should do what, whose responsibility it is to complete a specific duty, how often the team should meet, where to meet and so on.

Most recently, *status conflicts* has been identified by Bendersky and Hays (2012). They defined status conflicts as "disputes over people's relative status (i.e., respect) positions in their group's social hierarchy"(Bendersky & Hays, 2012) based on the assumption that task groups without a formal hierarchical structure inevitably establish a social hierarchy. In contrast to other three types of intragroup conflicts, status conflicts are structural and pertain to "place" or social position in the group (Bendersky & Hays, 2012), not task issues, personal values, or procedural coordination, inducing more competitive behaviors.

In much of the organizational research literature, conflict is generally considered harmful to performances, outcomes and relationships (Pondy, 1967; Blake and Mouton, 1984). So it is understandable even in today's team or organizations, people still have the stereotype for conflicts and would like to avoid or resolve at the first time (Stone, 1995). In the past 20 years, there has been a shift in the perceptions of conflict in organizational research literature as a detrimental, destructive event toward instead a more positive view of conflict as probably functional and stimulating in terms of information exchange, cognitive diversity, innovativeness, creativity and more critical thinking.

Links between group diversity and intragroup conflicts

Task-related diversity. Task-related diversity refers to acquired individual attributes such as functional expertise, educational background, perspectives, organizational seniority, and work experience. Such diversity has been considered highly related to accomplishing tasks and jobs. Group members with their own knowledge bases, educational background, training and work experience will bring diverse perspectives and opinions about tasks to workgroup, which stimulates group members to engage in information exchange, at the same time, increase the possibility that task-related debates happen among group members (Jehn, Chadwick & Thatcher, 1997). For example, team members with business and marketing background have different preferences and see different opportunities and risks that are different from those in a technical department (such as R&D). People who value sales volume are likely to have disagreements about group's goals and objectives with group members who value net profits. These task-related disagreements and debates accentuate or escalate intragroup task conflict.

Proposition 1a: Task-related diversity will increase intragroup task conflict in workgroups.

Task-related diversity among group members not only influences the task itself, but also has close association with how to get the task done. Group members with different functional expertise and work experience may have different understandings about the task content or different interpretations about the objective of the task. Meanwhile, they also have different preferences and perspectives about resource allocation and duty delegation, such as who is in charge of which part of the project, how often to have group meeting, how to distribute the resource among different parts of the task and so on. People who grew up in engineering may have different mindset, working style and preference to allocate the resources from those who

have primarily management experience, which will bring about process conflict into the work group. Based on the research done by Jehn, Chadwick, and Thatcher (1997), it is much more difficult for groups with members who have different educational experience to decide how to proceed than groups with members who have similar educational backgrounds. Therefore, task-related diversity among group members not only increases task conflicts, but also gives rise to process conflicts.

Proposition 1b: Task-related diversity will increase intragroup process conflict in workgroups.

While task-related diversity is more likely to trigger task-related conflicts, it is also possible for task-related (task itself or process) disagreements and debates to give rise to relationship conflict, since task conflict and relationship conflict are closely related to each other. In the process of task-related debate, group members may use emotionally harsh language (Pelled, Eisenhardt & Xin, 1999) to insist their opinions are correct or to give negative judgment on other people's views. Some group members may get hurt by the harsh debates, "feeling bruised, humiliated, offended, or even brutalized" (Simons & Peterson, 2000) by drastic dispute among group members. Such hurt feeling may easily simulate negative affective components such as feeling tension, friction annoyance, frustration, and irritation (Jehn and Mannix 2001). In other words, task conflicts and process conflicts can easily transform to relationship conflicts based on certain circumstances, such as high level conflicts, lack of trust in workgroup, inappropriate conflict management tactics and so on. This leads to the next proposition:

Proposition 1c: Task-related diversity will increase intragroup relationship conflict in workgroups.

Status conflict could be another product of task-related diversity. Status conflict explicitly refers to “place,” or social position in the group (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). “Put him in his place”, “show them their place” (Bendersky & Hays, 2012) are typical statements of status conflict. Group member with higher organizational seniority, more work experience or higher-level functional expertise may possess higher social status; achieve more respect; have greater influence; and get access to more resource and information for their individual performance, compared with those who with lower seniority and less experience. Group members with higher social status engage to maintain their "places" (Brett et al. 2007) and challenge other group members' status to sort out their relative social standing (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). Group members with lower social status are willing to achieve higher status positions to get more power and resource for themselves. In this fierce status competition (Blau, 1964), conflicts over group members' status positions are a prominent form of intragroup conflicts.

Proposition 1d: Task-related diversity will increase intragroup status conflict in workgroups.

If we say aforementioned task-related diversity are underlying attributes that are not easily determined by others, social category diversity could be considered as readily detectable attributes, such as age, race, gender, and skin color. Most of the demographic researchers have drawn on three conceptual foundations for demographic research: social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978), self-categorization theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986), and the similarity/attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971), to suggest that demographic diversity, social category diversity in particular, generally contributes to intragroup conflicts. Based on social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) and self-categorization theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), individuals have the tendency to sort themselves from others into social categories on the basis of social category diversity. In

order to favor their own social category and keep their own category superior to others', they endeavor to pursue positive opinions of their own category and compare or compete with other categories by developing negative opinions of other categories (Pelled, Eisenhardt & Xin, 1999). This hostile interactions may stimulate stereotyping and distancing group members of other categories (Tajfel, 1982), and developing negative emotional feelings, such as intolerance, anger, frustrations, hostile attitude toward members of other categories. In this manner, it is so easy for such hostile interactions, elevating themselves and disparaging others, to provoke relationship conflicts among group members.

Similar to social identity theory and self-categorization theory, the similarity/attraction paradigm (e.g. Byrne, 1971) signifies that work group members are more positively inclined toward their own group and the people in their own group who are similar to themselves. As a result, perceived similar members will be attracted to each other more closely. On the contrary, when individuals perceive that some people in the group are diverse with them, they will stereotype and distance the people who are difference. So several researchers argue that "the discriminatory treatment of, prejudice against, and unfavorable perceptions of dissimilar others, as well as errors in communication and differing perceptions and attributions among group members" (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998; Ravlin et al., 2000), are more likely to take place in social category diverse groups than in homogeneous groups. The more diverse the group is, the more exchanges with those in different categories group members will experience, causing the relationship conflicts more pronounces.

Proposition 2a: Social category diversity will increase intragroup relationship conflict in workgroups.

Since task conflicts, process conflicts and relationship conflicts may influence each other, it is easy to understand that when individuals hold dislike or hostile attitude toward other members, they may show impatience or intolerance (Pelled, Eisenhardt & Xin, 1999) when others express diverse ideas both about task itself or how to get task done. Also people may hold suspicious rather than agreeable attitude when perceive the viewpoints put forward by the group members they don't like. For example, the research on executive groups done by Eisenhardt and Bourgeois (1988) indicated that when executives have political fighting with each other, they are not willing to listen and respect each other's opinion, and are even inclined to misunderstand and distort each other's views. Negative emotions provoked by relationship conflicts can make task conflicts and process conflicts more pronounced.

Proposition 2b: Social category diversity will increase intragroup task conflict in workgroups.

Proposition 2c: Social category diversity will increase intragroup process conflict in workgroups.

The social identity theory, self-categorization theory and the similarity/attraction paradigm also can help us to understand how status conflict happens in social category diverse groups. Since status conflict is all about "place," social position in the groups, individuals in the group will have their definitions and common sense that who are standing high-status place and who are locating low-status place. Status can be defined as skin colors, age or genders. Individuals tend to classify and differentiate themselves from others on the basis of their status. Once categorization take place, each category with high or low status will strive for self-enhancement and competing

with other categories. The irritated mutual interactions between different status categories lead to status conflicts.

Proposition 2d: Social category diversity will increase intragroup relationship conflicts in workgroups.

Intragroup conflicts as mediators of diversity effects on group outcomes

The task, relationship, process and status conflict triggered by a group's diversity may, in turn, have influence on group outcomes, although the mediating effects of the four types of intragroup conflicts are documented to be different in existing literature. A growing body of previous research has examined the effects of different conflict types (task, relationship, process and status conflict) on a variety of group outcomes, such as innovation (De Dreu, 2006), performance (eg, Bradford, Stringfellow & Weitz, 2007; Bendersky & Hays, 2012), and effectiveness (Barrick et al, 1998; Van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005; Simons & Peterson, 2000), intragroup trust or cohesion (eg, Marks et al., 2001; Curs,ue & Schruijer2010), decision making (eg, Amason, 1996; Schulz-Hardt, Mayer & Frey, 2002) and so on. In light of the considerable amount of existing research, I would like to elaborate in more detail below on the mediating effects of each of the four types of intragroup conflicts on group outcomes.

Task Conflict

In light of past studies and research, the impact of task conflict has shown mixed results, and both positive (e.g. Jehn, 1995; Amason, 1996) and negative (e.g. Lovelace et al., 2001; De Dreu, 2008) associations between group outcomes and task conflicts are found. On the positive side,

some researchers argued that task conflict is likely to potentially enhance group outcomes since it may allow group members to challenge various aspects of task issues, avoid "groupthink"(Janis, 1982), encourage different voices up in the group, promote critical thinking and solution diversity, and develop complete cognitive understanding of tasks in the group (Amason & Schweiger, 1997; Coser, 1956; Deutsch, 1973; Tjosvold, 1991; Behfar, Mannix, Peterson, & Trochim, 2011). Empirical research on the effects of task conflict has largely supported these claims. For example, Jehn (1994) investigated the student-groups performance which was measured by instructor ratings and suggested that task conflict was positively associated with group performance and groups without task conflict may miss new ways to enhance their performance. Amason (1996) gathered data from top management teams in two industries and found that top management teams with higher levels of task conflict will produce higher-quality decisions, develop higher levels of understanding of their decisions, experience higher levels of commitment to their decisions and have higher levels of affective acceptance, and therefore positively affect team performance. Another study (Schulz-Hardt, Brodbeck, Mojzisch, Kerschreiter, & Frey, 2006) conducted an experiment in which 135 three-person groups worked on a personnel selection case with 4 alternatives to indicate that pre-discussion disagreement (task conflict) stimulates the quality of group decision making rather than pre-discussion agreement by overcoming confirmatory biases and mitigating groupthink in group decision making. Also, Olson, Parayitam and Bao (2007) did surveys in top management teams from 85 U.S. hospitals and demonstrated that task conflict, mediating the effects of cognitive diversity on decision outcomes, will not only provide an understanding of the task issues and a commitment to the decision but will also produce a higher quality decision and therefore improve team performance.

On the other hand, the impaired effects of task conflict on group outcomes have been supported by much research. (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Parayitam & Dooley, 2007; Olson, Parayitam & Bao, 2007; De Dreu, 2008). For example, De Dreu and Weingart (2003) revealed in their meta-analysis that task conflict is strongly negatively correlated with group member satisfaction and group performance for all levels of routine and complexity even though task conflict was less negatively related to team performance when task conflict and relationship conflict were weakly, rather than strongly, correlated. Also, Jehn (1995) used multiple methods, collecting quantitative data from surveys and qualitative data through interviews and observations and showed task conflicts were negatively associated with individuals' satisfaction, liking of other group members, and intent to remain in the group. Whereas task conflict had a negative relationship with the outcomes of groups working on routine tasks, but a curvilinear effect on the outcomes of groups working on nonroutine tasks. In addition, De Dreu (2006, 2008) found that the positive relationship between task conflict and group outcomes may not be generalizable and exaggerated because the positive functions of task conflict are found only under an extremely narrow set of circumstances and at most situations negative functions of task conflicts easily outweigh positive functions, hindering the emergence of positive functions of task conflicts. Similarly, there are also some researchers considered task conflict would increase cognitive load, which would distract attention and resources which are supposed to distribute on task performance (eg, Carnevale & Probst, 1998) and lead to narrow thinking, and therefore hinder group outcomes (De Dreu, 2008). Additionally, people may experience stress as a result of task conflict (Dijkstra, Van Dierendonck & Evers, 2005; Yang & Mossholder, 2004) because group members become frustrated or offended when they perceive other group members' disputes or critical feedback a negative judgment of their own competencies or personality as a person.

Proposition 3a: The impact of task conflict on group outcomes both positively and negatively mediates the effect of group diversity on group outcomes.

Relationship Conflict

According to previous research, there is a general agreement among researchers that relationship conflict yielded by diversity leads to negative effects on group outcomes. (eg, De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, 1997; Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981; De Dreu, 2006, Farh, Lee, & Farh, 2010). According to Baumeister (1998), relationship conflicts involving interpersonal incompatibilities and disagreement about interpersonal issues among group members would often represent ego threats, which would cause affective components such as tension, friction, annoyance, frustration, anxiety, and irritation in the group (Jehn and Mannix 2001). These negative affective components also tended to impair group members' satisfaction and group functioning. Empirically, Jehn's (1995) multiple methods study showed that there is a negative relationship between task conflicts and group members' satisfaction, liking of other group members, intent to stay in the group and group outcomes. Similarly, Amason (1996) found that top management teams with higher level relationship conflict will produce lower-quality decisions and experience lower levels of understanding of their decisions, of commitment to the group's decisions, and of affective acceptance of the other group members, and therefore negatively affect team outcomes. Also, De Dreu (2006) indicated that relationship conflicts can harm group outcomes by reducing collaborative problem solving and also because the limited time or resources supposed to be spent on group decision making process would be occupied by non-task-related issues. To summarize, relationship conflicts have often been considered harmful for group functioning in terms of limiting the information processing ability of group (Evan, 1965), increasing group members' stress and anxiety levels (Staw et al., 1981), provoking

antagonistic and hostile interactions (e.g., Janssen et al., 1999), constraining diverse voices and attention distraction (e.g., De Dreu & Weingart, 2003b; Jehn, 1997), including flight behavior and feelings of helplessness (Dijkstra et al., 2005), and harming group creativity (e.g., Farh, Lee, & Farh, 2010), and so on.

Proposition 3b: Relationship conflict is negatively associated with group outcomes and has a negative mediation effect on the impact of group diversity on group outcomes.

Process Conflict

A primarily negative relationship between process conflict and group outcomes by a large amount of research has demonstrated (e.g., Behfar, Mannix, Peterson, & Trochim, 2002; Jehn & Bendersky, 2003; Greer & Jehn, 2007; Jehn et al., 2008) even though there are an extremely small number of studies (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Goncalo et al., 2010) found that process conflicts might slightly positively impact group outcomes depending on the level of process conflicts and stages of project group. Jehn's (1997) multiple methods study also found that work groups with process conflict are more likely to experience low satisfaction, to quit the group, and hinder the group outcomes and productivity. Also, in the process to argue about task delegation or role assignment, it's much easier for group members to experience the negative attitudes or negative emotions towards the group. In this way, process conflicts may transfer to relationship conflicts (Greer & Jehn, 2007), which may stably harm the group outcomes. In addition, process conflicts, similar to relationship conflicts may negatively impact group outcomes in terms of distracting group members' resources or attention from task engagement (Jehn, 1995), decreasing the capabilities or respect within the group (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003) and impairing group commitment to its task (Behfar, Mannix, Peterson, & Trochim, 2011), and so on.

Proposition 3c: Process conflict is primarily negatively associated with group outcomes and has a negative mediation effect on the impact of group diversity on group outcomes.

Status conflict

According to the definition and contested nature of status conflicts documented both theoretically and empirically in literature, status conflicts may induce more competitive behaviors, rather than effective collaboration, which tends to involve restricted information sharing and constrained information exchange more than other types of conflicts do, as a result, hinder group outcomes and performance (Carnevale and Probst 1998, De Dreu et al. 2006). Morrill (1991, 1995) extended the phenomenon status conflicts, which was first identified in "honor societies" (Whyte, 1943) to organizational context.

Using mixed methods research, Bendersky and Hays (2012) introduced status conflict to the group conflict literature and determined its impact on group outcomes to fill the gap in the group conflict research. On one hand, they qualitatively identified the characteristics of status conflicts which are considered distinct type of conflicts. Relying on qualitative data, with status conflicts group members were inclined to engage in more intense and competitive negotiations by stopping others from expressing diverse viewpoints, suppressing valid information that was shared by others and withholding useful information (Bendersky & Hays, 2012), which led to hurt group outcomes by restricting information sharing among group members. On the other hand, they quantitatively validated and employed the four-item survey scale to demonstrate that status conflict negatively affects group outcomes by diminishing the quality of the group's information sharing. In addition, the quantitative data revealed that status conflicts among group

members negatively moderated the positive potential of task conflict on group outcomes by suppressing diverse perspectives and different viewpoints in group (Bendersky & Hays, 2012).

Proposition 3d: Status conflict is negatively associated with group outcomes and has a negative mediation effect on the impact of group diversity on group outcomes.

Taking all these together, a range of studies have been conducted in recent years to better understand the effects of different type of intragroup conflicts on group outcomes. More specifically, task conflicts may either benefit or inhibit group outcomes, and relationship conflicts, process conflicts and status conflicts will predominantly hinder the effective group functioning. I present these effects of intragroup conflict on group outcomes in Table 1.

Table 1: Effects of intragroup conflicts on group outcomes

Conflicts Type	Overall Relationship	Outcomes	Key Moderators/Mediators	Literature
Task Conflicts	Positive	Organizational Performance	Decision Quality, Commitment to decision, Understanding of decisions, affective acceptance.	Amason (1996)
	Positive	Quality and acceptance of problem solutions		Hoffman & Maier (1961)
	Positive	High performance		Eisenhardt, Kahwajy & Bourgeois (1997b)
	Positive	Group performance		Jehn (1994)
	Curvilinear	Group functioning	Groups with nonroutine tasks, conflict level	Jehn (1995)
	Positive	Decision outcomes		Olson et al. (2007)
	Positive	Team Success	Decision-making Interaction Flow	Amason, Thompson, Hochwater, & Harrison (1995)
	Positive	Quality of performance and creativity	Divergent thoughts	Nemeth (1995)
	Positive	Decision Quality	Overcoming confirmatory biases in group decision making	Schulz-Hardt, Brodbeck, Mojzisch, Kerschreiter, & Frey (2006)
	Positive	Group strategic decision making	Overcoming confirmatory biases in group decision making	Schweiger, Sandberg, & Rechner (1989)

	Curvilinear	Team Innovation	Collaborative problem solving, conflict level	De Dreu (2006)
	Negative	Goal attainment		De Dreu (2006)
	Positive	Team Innovation	high degree of participation in team decision making	De Dreu & West (2001)
	Positive	positive outcomes for group decisions	Intragroup trust	Simons & Peterson (2000)
	Positive	group commitment to its task		Behfar, Mannix, Peterson, & Trochim (2011)
	Negative	Performance	Collocated and distributed teams	Hinds & Mortensen (2005)
	Negative	well-being	flight behaviour and feelings of helplessness	Dijkstra, Van Dierendonck, & Evers (2005)
				Yang & Mossholder (2004)
	Negative	Task performance	rigid thinking	Carnevale & Probst (1998)
	Negative	Effectiveness, health and wellbeing	Time and resource distraction, rigidity of thought, psychosomatic complaints, and feelings of burnout	De Dreu (2008)
Relationship Conflicts	Negative	Group Performance		Jehn (1994)
	Negative	Group functioning	Limit the information processing ability of group members	(Evan, 1965)
	Negative	Members' cognitive functioning	Increase members' stress and anxiety levels	(Staw et al., 1981)
	Negative	Group outcomes	antagonistic and hostile interactions	(Janssen et al., 1999)
	Negative	Team Success		Amason, Thompson, Hochwater, & Harrison (1995)
	Negative	Decision quality		Amason (1996)
	Negative	Team process and firm performance		Eisenhardt, Kahwajy & Bourgeois (1997b)
	Negative	Performance		Hinds & Mortensen (2005)
	Negative	well-being	flight behaviour and feelings of helplessness	Dijkstra et al. (2005)
	Negative	Conflict Resolution	Possessive Self	De Dreu & Van Knippenberg (2005)
	Negative	Group outcome (Productivity and Viability)	emergent states on group outcomes (eg. identification, trust, respect, cohesiveness)	Jehn, Greer, Levine, & Szulanski (2008)

	Negative	group-level helping behavior		Rispens, Greer, & Jehn (2007)
	Negative	team members' intent to remain in the team		Bayazit & Mannix (2003)
	Negative	performance effectiveness, and behavioral outcomes		Conlon & Jehn (2007)
	Negative	Team Performance		Raver & Gelfand (2005)
	Negative	Innovation	Collaborative problem solving	De Dreu (2006)
	Negative	Creativity		Farh, Lee, & Farh (2010)
	Negative	Performance		Brief & Weiss (2002)
	Negative	Task performance		Carnevale & Probst (1998)
	Negative	Performance and satisfaction		Jehn (1997)
Process Conflicts	Negative	group commitment to its task		Behfar, Mannix, Peterson, & Trochim (2011)
	Negative	Performance and satisfaction		Jehn (1997)
	Negative	Capabilities or respect within the group		Jehn & Bendersky (2003)
	Negative	Group Functioning		Greer, Jehn, & Mannix (2008)
	Negative	quality of emergent states and group viability		Jehn et al. (1999); Thatcher, Jehn, & Zanutto (2003)
	Negative	Task accomplishment		Jehn, 1995
	Negative	group performance		Behfar et al. (2011)
	Positive	group outcomes	Conflict level and Phases of project group	Jehn & Mannix (2001)
	Positive	Task completion	Start stage of Project group	Goncalo et al. (2010)
Status Conflicts	Negative	Group Performance	Information Sharing	Bendersky & Hays (2012)

Conclusions

In the effort to explore the “black box” between group diversity and group outcomes, this study has theoretically examined the complex link among group diversity (Task-related Diversity and Social category Diversity), four types of intragroup conflict and group outcomes under the enlightenment of existing research.

The findings of this study indicate that different types of diversity will directly associate with different types of intragroup conflicts due to the specific characteristics of different types of

diversity. However, since four types of intragroup conflict could transfer to each other based on levels of conflicts and relative circumstances (such as group interactions, task complexity or different phases of group development and so on) in the group, as a result, each type of diversity may directly or indirectly provoke four different types of intragroup conflict. In addition, this study claims that there is a mixed relationship, both negative and positive relationships between task conflict and group performance consequences and therefore it is not safe to conclude as some previous studies did that task conflict should be encouraged while relationship conflict is restrained in groups. So promoting task conflicts and suppressing relationship, process, or status is not a convincing way to realize "gain the benefits of conflicts without the costs"(Eisenhardt & Zbaracki, 1992). Further, this study includes status conflict as one additional type of intragroup conflicts into the discussion may offer a more comprehensive view of the black box between work group diversity and group outcomes.

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