Mélanie Schaeffner | Hendrik Huettermann | Diether Gebert | Sabine Boerner | Eric Kearney | Lynda Jiwen Song

Swim or Sink Together

The Potential of Collective Team Identification and Team Member Alignment for Separating Task and Relationship Conflicts

Swim or Sink Together: The Potential of Collective Team Identification and Team Member Alignment for Separating Task and Relationship Conflicts

**Mélanie Schaeffner¹, Hendrik Huettermann²,
Diether Gebert³, Sabine Boerner⁴, Eric Kearney⁵,
and Lynda Jiwen Song³**

Abstract

This article investigates collective team identification and team member alignment (i.e., the existence of short- and long-term team goals and team-based reward structures) as moderators of the association between task and relationship conflicts. Being indicators of cooperative goal interdependence in teams, both moderators are hypothesized to mitigate the positive association between the two conflict types. Findings from 88 development teams confirm the moderating effect for collective team identification, but not for team member alignment. Moreover, the moderating role of collective team identification is found to be dependent on the level of task conflict: It

¹Technical University Berlin, Germany
²University of St. Gallen, Switzerland
³Renmin University of China, Beijing
⁴University of Konstanz, Germany
⁵University of Potsdam, Germany

The first two authors have contributed equally to this manuscript.

Corresponding Author:
Hendrik Huettermann, Institute for Leadership and Human Resource Management, University of St. Gallen, Dufourstrasse 40a, 9000 St.Gallen, Switzerland.
Email: hendrik.huettermann@unisg.ch

is more effective in decoupling task and relationship conflicts at medium as compared with high or low levels of task conflict.

Keywords

Research on antecedents and consequences of work team conflicts has sparked a lot of academic interest in the last decades (De Dreu, 2011; De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). To date, conflict scholars have chiefly focused on the distinction between task and relationship conflicts in teams (Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954; Jehn, 1995, 1997; Priem & Price, 1991). Task conflicts describe disagreements among team members concerning the content of the tasks being performed, including differences in ideas, viewpoints, and opinions (Jehn, 1995). By contrast, relationship conflicts exist when there are incompatibilities between team members on a personal rather than a task-related level, including tensions and annoyances (Jehn, 1995, 1997). While extant research has consistently shown relationship conflicts to be detrimental to team performance (Lau & Cobb, 2010), task conflicts can, under some circumstances, benefit team effectiveness (DeChurch & Marks, 2001; De Dreu, 2006; De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012).

However, existing studies investigating task and relationship conflicts reveal a dilemma; that is, both conflict types often occur together in teams (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012). When team members disagree over the content of the task to be accomplished, this dissent may entail tensions on a personal level (Choi & Cho, 2011). As a consequence, the potential of task conflicts to benefit team performance is jeopardized by the negative side effect that they often also cause performance-impeding relationship conflicts (De Wit et al., 2012). To overcome this dilemma, research has examined the question of whether and how task conflicts can be prevented from spilling over into relationship conflicts. In this regard, different boundary conditions of the association between the two conflict types have been identified, among them trust (Peterson & Behfar, 2003; Simons & Peterson, 2000), behavioral integration (Mooney, Holahan, & Amason, 2007), and conflict management (DeChurch, Hamilton, & Haas, 2007).

Despite providing valuable insights in how to attenuate the transition of task into relationship conflicts, existing studies reveal two shortcomings: First, they have neglected the role of individuals' goal-relatedness for decoupling task and relationship conflicts. This omission appears to be remarkable

as organizational conflict theories emphasize the importance of goal interdependence for the consequences of workplace conflict (Deutsch, 1949, 2006; Tjosvold, 1998). Second, none of the existing research has addressed the question of how the dilemmatic association between task and relationship conflicts in teams can be completely resolved. While several factors have been found to attenuate the co-occurrence of the two conflict types, there always remained a risk that task conflicts still turn into relationship conflicts. No boundary conditions have been identified so far that entirely prevent task-related disagreements from spilling over into interpersonal tensions.

With our study, we aim at filling these gaps in research in two ways. First, we examine the link between task and relationship conflicts from the perspective of Deutsch's (1949) theory of cooperation and competition. According to this theoretical framework, individuals can perceive their goals and those of others to be linked either cooperatively ("swim or sink together") or competitively ("one swims, the other sinks"). Under perceived cooperative goal interdependence, members of a team are more likely to communicate effectively and to handle conflicts in a constructive manner (Stanne, Johnson, & Johnson, 1999). In teams with high cooperative goal interdependence, the risk of task conflicts resulting in relationship conflicts may therefore be reduced. We investigate two indicators of cooperative goal interdependence in teams: On the one hand, collective team identification constitutes an affective bond evolving between team members which reinforces a feeling of interdependence and goal-relatedness. It pertains to team members' intrinsic motivation for cooperation resulting from the inherent value attached to team membership (Edwards & Peccei, 2007). On the other hand, team member alignment alludes to team members' extrinsic motivation for cooperation arising from the instrumental value of effective collaboration for achieving individual rewards (Wageman, 1995, 2001). It comprises well-defined team goals and a reward structure that is based on team performance (Bettencourt, Brewer, Croak, & Miller, 1992; van der Vegt, Emans, & van de Vliert, 2000, 2001).

Second, we investigate whether the above dilemma can be completely resolved, meaning that task conflicts can be entirely prevented from inducing relationship conflicts in teams. Several conflict researchers have posited that the level of conflict is crucial for the consequences of task-related debates on team functioning and performance (De Dreu, 2006; Farh, Lee, & Farh, 2010; Jehn, 1995). We address this stream of research by taking the level of task conflict into account when examining the interplay with the boundary conditions in our analysis. More precisely, we scrutinize whether the potential of collective team identification and team member alignment for resolving the dilemmatic association between task and relationship conflicts is contingent on the level of task conflict in teams.

The contribution of this article is threefold. First, we complement organizational conflict research by analyzing boundary conditions for preventing task-related debates from spilling over into personal conflicts (Choi & Cho, 2011). Both collective team identification and the constituents of team member alignment have been proposed to promote constructive conflict handling in teams, but have been neglected in research on task and relationship conflicts (Huettermann & Boerner, 2011; Wageman, 1995). Second, this study contributes to research that has identified the level of conflict to be important for the consequences of task conflicts in teams (De Dreu, 2006; Todorova, Bear, & Weingart, 2014). Indeed, our study reveals that the dilemma of task conflicts being connected to relationship conflicts can be entirely resolved in teams where collective team identification is high and, at the same time, task conflicts are at a medium level. Third, we complement research on the theory of cooperation and competition (Deutsch, 1949, 1973). On the one hand, our analysis demonstrates that cooperative goal interdependence is a powerful theoretical approach for analyzing the association between task and relationship conflicts. On the other hand, we integrate factors pertaining to both team members' intrinsic (i.e., collective team identification) and extrinsic (i.e., team goals and team-based reward structures) motivation for cooperation as indicators of cooperative goal interdependence in teams (Deutsch, 1973; Tjosvold, 1998).

Theory and Hypotheses

In the following paragraphs, the conceptual model and hypotheses are developed in three steps. First, we elaborate on the association between task and relationship conflicts in teams. Second, both collective team identification and team member alignment are introduced as boundary conditions of the relationship between the two conflict types. Third, we consider the level of conflict for the interplay between task conflicts and the boundary conditions.

The Association Between Task and Relationship Conflicts

Task conflicts can be both a cause and a consequence of relationship conflicts in teams (De Dreu, 2011). The emphasis of our analysis, however, is on the influence task conflicts have proved to exert on the emergence of relationship conflicts (Choi & Cho, 2011; Mooney et al., 2007; Peterson & Behfar, 2003). This focus is due to pragmatic reasons: While task conflicts are preponderantly associated with a positive potential concerning team performance, relationship conflicts are considered to be generally detrimental to team effectiveness (De Wit et al., 2012); hence, preventing task conflicts from turning into relationship conflicts appears to be of particular interest for organizational research and

practice alike. Accordingly, existing studies have also largely focused on moderators that buffer the influence of task on relationship conflicts (Greer, Jehn, & Mannix, 2008; Huang, 2010; Mooney et al., 2007).

Two theoretical mechanisms underlying the influence of task on relationship conflicts are discussed in the literature. First, task conflicts can lead to relationship conflicts through a process of misattribution (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012; Simons & Peterson, 2000). That is, objective criticism or divergent ideas explicated in the course of task-related debates may subsequently be subjectively misinterpreted as personal attacks and evoke negative interpersonal emotions and attitudes. Research on attribution theory has found that people tend to construe causal explanations for events that they encounter in everyday life; to this end, they use information from their environment for making sense of factors that give rise to certain outcomes (Harvey & Weary, 1985; Ross & Fletcher, 1985). In the course of task-related conflicts, team members express diverging ideas, knowledge, and viewpoints. When confronted with objective critique, team members are likely to assume their competence to be challenged and attribute the cause of the disagreement not to the task itself, but to the person voicing it (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999; Tjosvold, 1998). Negative affect has proved to develop resulting from objective critique and this, in turn, deteriorates team members' attitudes toward each other (Rispens, 2012). As a consequence, the emergence of relationship conflicts is becoming more likely (Amason, 1996; Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Jehn, 1997).

Second, relationship conflicts can emerge from harsh behaviors in the course of task conflicts (Mooney et al., 2007; Simons & Peterson, 2000). In particular, passionate and heated debates about the best way for accomplishing a task can tempt team members to use aggressive language or even intimidation tactics for advancing their opinion (Pelled, 1996; Simons & Peterson, 2000). Thereby, team members feel offended and humiliated by the way others express their opinion. According to the literature on procedural justice, the fairness of treatment that people perceive exerts a powerful influence on their attitudes and behaviors (Lind & Tyler, 1988). As people are apt to react negatively to disrespectful conduct, inadequate behaviors in the course of task-related discussions are likely to foster personal animosities which give rise to relationship conflicts (Simons & Peterson, 2000).

In support of the assumption of both misattribution processes and inadequate behaviors, research has found task conflicts to foster negative emotionality, which in turn engenders relationship conflicts (Meier, Gross, Spector, & Semmer, 2013; Rispens, 2012).

> **Hypothesis 1:** Task conflicts are positively associated with relationship conflicts.

Disentangling Task and Relationship Conflicts

According to Deutsch's theory of cooperation and competition (Deutsch, 1949, 1973), the way people perceive their goals to be related to other persons' goals has important implications for the dynamics and consequences of their interactions. People can perceive their goals and those of others to be linked either cooperatively or competitively (Deutsch, 2006). Under perceived cooperative goal interdependence, goals are linked in such a way that the probability of a person's goal attainment is dependent on the probability of another person's goal achievement. As a result, people want each other to perform effectively as that helps each person to be successful (i.e., they "swim or sink together"; Deutsch, 1973). By contrast, when people perceive their goals to be competitively linked, goal attainment by one person makes it less likely for other people to reach their goals (i.e., "one swims and the other sinks"). In such situations, people tend to act against each other, given that they are better off when others act ineffectively.

Under perceived cooperative goal interdependence, team members are more likely to handle conflicts in a constructive way, which increases their benefits from the conflicts both as individuals and as a team (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 2000; Deutsch, 1973). In conflict situations, cooperative goals lead to mutual exchange and open-minded discussions of diverse positions that amplify decision quality and productivity (Kane, Argote, & Levine, 2005); this improved team functioning, in turn, has a positive feedback effect on the interpersonal relationships between team members (Tjosvold, 1998). When team members discuss and exchange different viewpoints in the course of task-related discussions, they can be confident that others will reciprocate and work for mutually beneficial solutions. Perceived cooperative goal interdependence can hence be expected to prevent both misattribution processes and the use of harsh behaviors in the course of task-related conflicts as team members are assured that the others are pursuing the same goals. As a result, the emergence of relationship conflicts resulting from task conflicts is likely to be mitigated.

Among others, Deutsch (2006, p. 22) points out that "positive interdependence can result from people [. . .] being rewarded in terms of their joint achievement [and] holding common membership or identification with a group whose fate is important to them". In the following paragraphs, we discuss collective team identification and team member alignment as boundary conditions of the association between task and relationship conflicts. Collective team identification pertains to team members' intrinsic motivation for cooperation resulting from the inherent value attached to team membership (Edwards & Peccei, 2007). By contrast, team member alignment refers

to team members' extrinsic motivation for cooperation arising from the instrumental value of effective team collaboration for gaining individual rewards (Wageman, 1995, 2001).

Collective team identification. Social identification is defined as a deep, psychological, self-defining affective bond between an individual and a social entity (Edwards & Peccei, 2007). When the focus of identification is the work team and members hold a shared feeling of attachment and belonging to the team, this process can be referred to as collective team identification (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Pratt, 1998; van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005).

Individuals can have multiple foci of identification and a range of potential social identities, as they are usually members of various social groups (e.g., based on functional background, gender, or race; Riketta & van Dick, 2005). When collective identification in a team is high (i.e., when collective team identification becomes "salient"; Ashforth & Johnson, 2001), members do not primarily identify with subgroups in a team (e.g., based on functional background), but rather with the team as a whole. As a result, team members will perceive the situation to be cooperative rather than competitive, as they can be confident that other team members' behavior is guided by common team goals rather than by the goals of their relative subgroups (Deutsch, 1973). Due to the feeling of belonging to one team and the commitment to common team goals, team members try to work together as one team and put more effort into gaining common ground (van Knippenberg & Ellemers, 2003).

Strong collective team identification will prevent task conflicts from leading to relationship conflicts. First, misattributions in the course of task-related discussions will be attenuated under high collective team identification. When interpreting diverging views and critique of their counterparts during task conflicts, team members are more likely to make favorable attributions concerning the underlying motives. Knowing that other team members share the same affective bond with the team as well as high commitment to common team goals, these attributions will point to the task itself and not to personal attacks (van Knippenberg & Ellemers, 2003). As a consequence, objective critique is less likely to be taken personally, but will be rather seen as an attempt for improving team performance (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Second, the occurrence of harsh behaviors in the course of task-related discussions will become less likely. Striving for the same team goals and being united by the feeling of emotional attachment to the team, a sense of cooperative team spirit will develop (Hogg & Terry, 2000). This feeling of belonging together, in turn, will improve the quality of social interaction in the team and

sensitize team members to effective modes of dispute resolution. The emergence of interpersonal animosities from task-related discussions is likely to diminish.

> **Hypothesis 2:** Collective team identification moderates the association between task and relationship conflicts such that this association is weaker under high rather than low levels of collective team identification.

Team member alignment. Team member alignment combines two aspects that have been investigated separately in previous research—team goals and outcome interdependence (Bettencourt et al., 1992; van der Vegt et al., 2000, 2001; Wageman, 1995, 2001). Team member alignment is considered to be high when there exist short- and long-term goals at the team level and, at the same time, team members are rewarded on the basis of team instead of individual performance. That is, each individual team member's financial rewards are contingent on the input of all other team members. This approach of establishing team goals and outcome interdependence is proposed to heighten the salience of team rather than individual goals (Schippers, Den Hartog, Koopman, & Wienk, 2003).

Both team goals and team-based reward structures have been shown to foster team members' sense of responsibility for their team and their willingness to work together (Beersma et al., 2003; De Dreu, 2007; Kane et al., 2005; Stanne et al., 1999). They create some kind of "common fate" for team members who realize that their own benefits depend on the cooperative efforts of all team members (Deutsch, 1949). Hence, when team member alignment is high, team members are likely to perceive the situation as cooperative (Alper et al., 2000; Tjosvold, 1998). In contrast to the emotional aspect of perceived cooperative goal interdependence that develops through collective team identification, team member alignment pertains to structural aspects of the organizational context that exert a motivational influence on team members.

Team member alignment is expected to minimize the risk of task conflicts leading to relationship conflicts. On the one hand, as has been argued above, misattributions are likely to result from task-related disputes (Harvey & Weary, 1985; Ross & Fletcher, 1985); these misattributions can be expected to diminish when team members are aware that joint problem solving and job completion are indispensable for obtaining individual rewards. Team members are less likely to suspect hidden agendas in task-related discussions and will interpret objective critique of others in terms of a collective interest for effective performance rather than as personal attacks (Wageman, 2001). Moreover, the explication of unequivocal team goals will contribute to

target-oriented discussions in the course of task conflicts, which will prevent the danger of broad and undirected debates that could easily induce relationship conflicts (Jehn, 1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). On the other hand, harsh behaviors are less likely to occur during task conflicts when team member alignment is high. Both explicitly stated team goals and reward interdependence will decrease the likelihood of inadequate behaviors or insulting rhetoric, because team members want to avoid the risk of jeopardizing individual rewards that can only be achieved through joint efforts. Instead, they will focus more on objective task-related discussions.

> **Hypothesis 3:** Team member alignment moderates the association between task and relationship conflicts such that this association is weaker under high rather than low team member alignment.

The Level of Task Conflict

Extending our previous argumentation, we assume that the potential of the two moderators for resolving the dilemmatic association between task and relationship conflicts depends on the level of task conflict in a team. More precisely, both collective team identification and team member alignment are expected to be more effective when the level of task conflict is medium rather than low or high.

At low levels of task conflict, misattributions and the use of inadequate behaviors in the course of task-related disputes are unlikely to emerge (Jehn, 1997). Thus, both collective team identification and team member alignment are not expected to have a meaningful effect on the co-occurrence of the two conflict types. In a similar vein, when levels of task conflict are high, we assume that spillover effects from task into relationship conflicts are inevitable—even when cooperative goal interdependence is high. The effectiveness of both moderators in cushioning dysfunctional team processes will reach its limits, preventing the emergence of relationship conflicts only to some extent. In the course of heated task-related conflicts, team members are likely to insist on their positions, thereby further fueling long-lasting debates (Brett, Shapiro, & Lytle, 1998; Pruitt, 2008). Being repeatedly confronted with contrary viewpoints and inadequate behaviors of their colleagues, team members will increasingly tend to attribute the cause of the disagreement not to the task itself but to the persons voicing it. In such situations, team members' commitment to the team and to joint goal achievement may not be sufficient for outweighing the negative emotional impact of heated task-related debates (Neuman & Baron, 1997; Pruitt & Kim, 2004). As Tjosvold (1998, p. 305) points out, in the case of such "intractable" conflicts, methods of

cooperative goal interdependence "dealing with these tough, escalated conflicts have limited effectiveness."

Following from this argumentation, we expect both collective team identification and team member alignment to be more effective for preventing the emergence of relationship conflicts at medium levels of task conflict. Under this condition, there is both a necessity for avoiding the emergence of relationship conflicts (as compared with when levels of task conflict are low) and a potential for preventing relationship conflicts as task-related disputes have not yet reached a stage where they can only hardly be influenced (as compared with when levels of task conflict are high).

> **Hypothesis 4:** The potential of both collective team identification and team member alignment for moderating the association between task and relationship conflicts is contingent on the level of task conflict. Both moderators will be more effective at medium as compared with low or high levels of task conflict.

Method

Sample and Data Collection

To test our hypotheses, we gathered data from 88 development teams (373 individuals) in 60 German organizations operating in different industrial and service sectors (e.g., mechanical engineering, pharmaceuticals, consulting, financial services). We focused on development teams as they work by definition on creative and innovation-related tasks and are likely to encounter frequent incidents of task conflicts (S. L. Brown & Eisenhardt, 1995; De Dreu, 2006). Moreover, this type of team has been the subject of much of the extant literature on work team conflicts (Jehn, 1995; Pelled et al., 1999).

Our initial sample consisted of 102 teams working in 63 organizations. However, to assure adequate data quality, our sample was reduced to 88 teams for three reasons: First, teams were retained in our final sample only if we had at least 80% of team members' demographic information (Oh, Chung, & Labianca, 2004). As diversity has been confirmed as an important predictor of relationship conflicts (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999), we decided to control for the influence of age, tenure, and functional diversity in our analysis (see below). Extant research has shown that unbiased diversity measures and effects can only be obtained when demographic information is available from the majority of team members (Allen, Stanley, Williams, & Ross, 2007). Second, we required at least three team members to participate in our survey to distinguish our analysis from studies that investigate dyads (Guzzo &

Shea, 1992; Weick, 1969). Third, we focused on teams in which team members had been working together for at least 6 months. In doing so, we wanted to make sure that the constructs which are the focus of our analysis (in particular collective team identification and conflicts) had already meaningfully developed over time; for example, team members will only be able to develop collective team identification after having worked in their respective team for a certain period of time (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008).

Out of the 88 teams in our analysis, 24 teams (27.3%) worked in business consulting firms, 34 teams (38.6%) developed industrial products, and 30 teams (34.1%) worked in banking and insurance companies. Team size ranged from 3 to 16 individuals ($M = 6.76$; $SD = 3.22$). The majority of participants were male (65.9%) with an average age of 35.8 years ($SD = 7.84$ years) and high average levels of education (87.2% hold a master's or equivalent degree in different academic fields, such as business administration, engineering, pharmacy, etc.). Average team tenure was 25.96 months and the average organizational tenure was approximately 8 years (95.17 months).

We collected data from both team leaders and members. Team leaders were asked to assess team member alignment and team size. Team members provided data with respect to demographic variables (gender, age, team tenure, and functional background) as well as task and relationship conflicts, collective team identification, and task interdependence.

Measures

All variables were measured on 5-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 5 (*completely agree*), except for demographic data. For measuring task and relationship conflicts, collective team identification, and task interdependence, the original scales had to be translated into German. For this purpose, the common translation-back-translation method was applied (Brislin, 1986).

Task and relationship conflicts. Task conflicts were measured with the following three items developed by Jehn (1995): "People in our team disagree very often about how the work should be done"; "Members of our team disagree very often about the best way to achieve the best result"; and "In our team, conflicts about how to achieve a (shared) goal arise very frequently." Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .90 and a principal components factor analysis revealed a single factor with an Eigenvalue greater than 1 that explained 83.62% of the variance.

Relationship conflicts were measured with three items also developed by Jehn (1995): "Personal conflicts are very evident in our team"; "There is a lot

of emotional conflict between members of our team"; and "There is a lot of tension between members of our team." Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .85 and a principal components factor analysis yielded a single factor with an Eigenvalue greater than 1 that explained 77.7% of the variance.

Collective team identification. We measured this variable with four items adapted from Mael and Ashforth's (1992) organizational identification scale: "The members of our team predominantly identify with the team as a whole and not primarily with (informal) subgroups within the team"; "Even if our team is attacked from the outside, we stand together as a strong unit"; "When a team member talks to others (not belonging to the team) about the team, he/she usually says 'we' rather than 'they'"; and "When someone praises our team, every team member feels like getting a personal compliment he/she can be proud of." Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .81 and a principal components factor analysis showed a single factor with an Eigenvalue greater than 1 that explained 65.38% of the variance.

Team member alignment. Team member alignment was measured with two items answered by the team leader: "Short- and long-term objectives are stated for the team as a whole" ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.02$) and "Individual team members are financially rewarded based on the degree to which team goals are achieved" ($M = 2.36$, $SD = 1.52$). Following our theoretical argumentation, team member alignment requires the simultaneous existence of both shared goals and team-based reward structures. First, motivation theories suggest that shared goals and team-based rewards are jointly required for fostering team members' extrinsic motivation (Georgopoulus, Mahoney, & Jones, 1957; Vroom, 1964). Team goals will more persistently be pursued when team members are also rewarded based on common goal achievement (Wageman, 1995). Likewise, joint rewards can be expected to strengthen common goal striving in teams only when the goals to be achieved are clearly defined (van der Vegt et al., 2000). Second and relatedly, both shared goals and team-based rewards can be expected to reinforce each other in promoting team members' motivation for cooperation and joint goal achievement (Vroom, 1964). To represent the requisite simultaneous existence and mutual reinforcement of shared goals and team-based rewards, team member alignment was operationalized as the product of the scores of these two items (for a similar approach, see R. Brown, Vivian, & Hewstone, 1999; Vezzali, Capozza, Mari, & Hichy, 2007).

Control variables. We controlled for team size as it may be more difficult to coordinate activities in large teams, giving rise to relationship conflicts

(Pelled et al., 1999). We included team tenure (in months) as longer tenure may decrease social categorization processes and hence reduce relationship conflicts (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003). Moreover, diversity concerning age, team tenure, and functional background was controlled for. It can be expected that all types of diversity can induce relationship conflicts, for instance, via social categorization processes (van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004). Standard deviations were used to calculate diversity scores for age and tenure; functional diversity was measured by using Teachman's (1980) index (Harrison & Klein, 2007).

Task interdependence (Saavedra, Earley, & van Dyne, 1993) was included as it requires a well-functioning division of labor and allocation of responsibilities, which may give rise to relationship conflicts (items: "Our work requires us to consult with other team members fairly frequently"; "Every member of our team frequently must coordinate his/her efforts with other team members"; and "Every team member's performance depends on receiving accurate information from other members of our team."). Finally, we controlled for industrial sector (Oh et al., 2004). First, we distinguished between business consulting teams and other teams in our sample. Consulting firms are often based on partnership models (Anand, Gardner, & Morris, 2007) and may possess a structural safeguard against high levels of relationship conflict. Second, we differentiate between teams in industrial production firms and those in services organizations. The larger number of functions in industrial services firms may entail more coordination regarding division of labor and allocation of responsibility, thereby fueling relationship conflicts (Pinto, Pinto, & Prescott, 1993).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We conducted team-level confirmatory factor analysis to test the factor structure for task conflicts, relationship conflicts, and collective team identification. We did this to ensure adequate discriminant validity and to control for possible common method bias, as the data concerning all three of these variables were collected from the same team members (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). As expected, the three-factor model yielded a satisfactory fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 30.82$, $df = 32$, $p = .53$, Normed Fit Index (NFI) = .94, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 1.001, Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) = .94, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .00). Due to the high correlation between task and relationship conflicts, we also tested a two-factor model that combines the two types of conflict. Compared with the three-factor model, this two-factor model exhibited an inferior fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 78.40$, $df = 34$, $p = .00$, NFI = .85, CFI = .90, GFI = .83, RMSEA = .12).

A chi-square difference test showed that the three-factor model fitted the data significantly better than did the two-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 47.58$, $df = 2$, $p < .01$). Finally, we tested a one-factor model, which did not fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 184.80$, $df = 35$, $p = .00$, NFI = .64, CFI = .68, GFI = .69, RMSEA = .22). Once again, a chi-square difference test showed that the three-factor model provided a better fit than did the one-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 153.98$, $df = 3$, $p < .01$). Given these results, we do not regard common method bias as a serious problem in our analysis.

Data Aggregation

Data aggregation on the team level was justified on the basis of intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC1 and ICC2; Bliese, 2000) and interrater reliability scores (rwg(j); James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984). The following scores were obtained for the scales in our analysis: task conflicts (ICC1 = .24; ICC2 = .51; rwg(j) = .91), relationship conflicts (ICC1 = .29; ICC2 = .57; rwg(j) = .89), collective team identification (ICC1 = .21; ICC2 = .49; rwg(j) = .92), and task interdependence (ICC1 = .16; ICC2 = .38; rwg(j) = .88). The ICC-scores of our scales largely meet the critical values discussed in the literature. As for ICC1, values between .05 and .30 are considered to be typical (Bliese, 2000; Murphy & Myors, 1998); concerning ICC2, values between .50 and .60 have been proposed to be acceptable (Boyer & Verma, 2000; Glick, 1985; Kunze & Bruch, 2010). However, as ICC2 scores are constrained by group size (Bliese, 2000), the moderate ICC2 values in our analysis are likely to be due to the relatively small average team size (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Thereby, the ICC2 values are within the range of values reported in prior research investigating similar variables and showing a comparable number of respondents per team (Greer, Homan, De Hoogh, & Den Hartog, 2012; Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen, & Lowe, 2009; Wu, Tsui, & Kinicki, 2010). Moreover, all scales exceed the traditional threshold of .70 (George, 1990) for the rwg(j). In summary, both the ICC scores and the rwg(j) values can be considered to support aggregation of the data on the team level.

Results

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among variables. Consistent with previous research, task and relationship conflicts were positively and significantly correlated ($r = .68$, $p \leq .01$). Moreover, collective team identification showed a significant negative relationship with relationship conflicts, while team member alignment was not significantly related to relationship conflicts.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 Team size	6.76	3.22	—										
2 Team tenure (months)	25.96	21.40	.08	—									
3 Age diversity	6.07	3.65	.19	.30**	—								
4 Team tenure diversity	13.74	15.26	.18	.71**	.42**	—							
5 Functional diversity	0.75	0.61	.21	-.18	.12	-.05	—						
6 Task interdependence	3.61	0.45	-.15	-.41**	-.16	-.20	.03	—					
7 Consulting	0.27	0.45	-.10	-.36**	-.43**	-.29**	.11	.30**	—				
8 Industrial development	0.39	0.49	.15	-.01	.33**	.06	.13	.26**	-.49**	—			
9 Task conflicts	2.20	0.59	.02	-.10	-.16	-.01	.00	.15	.10	.03	—		
10 Relationship conflicts	1.95	0.63	.06	.19	-.07	.11	-.12	-.05	-.01	.06	.68**	—	
11 Collective team identification	3.90	0.53	-.12	-.07	.10	.00	.05	.16	.26*	-.06	-.24*	-.37**	—
12 Team member alignment	9.39	7.00	-.02	.13	-.08	-.05	-.08	-.04	.24*	-.22*	.03	.11	.15

Note. $N = 88$ Teams.
*$p \leq .05$. **$p \leq .01$.

To test Hypotheses 1 to 3, we conducted hierarchical regression analysis and simple slope analysis (Aiken & West, 1991; Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003); all predictor variables were mean-centered to facilitate interpretation of results (Dalal & Zickar, 2012; Hayes, Glynn, & Huge, 2012). Relationship conflicts served as our dependent variable. In the first step of the regression analysis, we entered the control variables (i.e., team size, team tenure, age diversity, tenure diversity, functional diversity, task interdependence, and industry sector). In the second step, we added the independent variables task conflicts, collective team identification, and team member alignment. In the third step, interactions between task conflicts and collective team identification as well as between task conflicts and team member alignment were entered.

Table 2 presents the results of the regression analysis. There was a significant main effect of task conflicts, supporting Hypothesis 1. Moreover, team tenure and collective team identification also showed significant main effects. The model associated with Step 2 of the regression analysis (after adding the independent variables) explained a high percentage of the variance in the dependent variable relationship conflicts ($R^2 = .59$). In the third step, we found a significant negative interaction effect between collective team identification and task conflicts ($\beta = -.23$, $p \leq .01$); this result supports Hypothesis 2, which states that collective team identification is a moderator of the association between task and relationship conflicts. By contrast, the interaction between team member alignment and task conflicts was non-significant ($\beta = .03$, $p = .74$). Team member alignment does not constitute a moderator of the connection between task and relationship conflicts, contradicting Hypothesis 3. The additional amount of variance explained by the interactions, over and above the variance explained by the control and independent variables, was 4% ($p \leq .05$).

To further analyze the moderating effect of collective team identification on the relationship between task and relationship conflicts (Hypothesis 2), we conducted simple slope analysis following Aiken and West (1991). This analysis was based on the significant interaction effect in Step 3 of the regression analysis shown in Table 2. In the equation $\hat{Y} = b1X + b2Z + b3XZ + b0$, collective team identification was framed as the moderator variable (Z). Following Aiken and West (1991), we calculated the values of X at both one standard deviation above and below the mean of Z. Figure 1 depicts the results of simple slope analysis. As expected, there was a strong association between task and relationship conflicts when collective team identification was low ($\beta = .82$, $p \leq .01$). Hypothesis 2 posits that this relationship would be weaker under high collective team identification. Results were in line with Hypothesis 2, even though the association between the two conflict types was still significantly positive ($\beta = .43$, $p \leq .01$).

Table 2. Results of Regression Analyses.

	Relationship conflicts		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
1. Control variables			
Team size	.06	.02	.01
Team tenure	.25	.30*	.32*
Age diversity	−.10	.03	.01
Team tenure diversity	.01	−.09	−.09
Functional diversity	−.10	−.09	−.08
Task interdependence	−.03	−.08	−.14
Consulting	.13	.18	.19
Industrial development	.16	.16	.18
2. Independent variables			
TC		.64**	.62**
CTI		−.23**	−.12
TMA		.06	.06
3. Interactions			
TC × CTI			−.23**
TC × TMA			.03
R^2	.08	.59	.63
ΔR^2		.51**	.04*
Adjusted R^2	−.02	.53	.56
F	0.80	9.70**	9.29**

Note. N = 88 teams; standardized regression coefficients are reported. TC = task conflicts; CTI = collective team identification; TMA = team member alignment.
*$p \leq .05$. **$p \leq .01$.

To test the assumption that collective team identification and team member alignment are more effective in moderating the association between task and relationship conflicts under medium levels of task conflict (Hypothesis 4), we analyzed only those 62 teams that reported medium levels of task conflict. The level of task conflict in these teams was in the range between one standard deviation below and one standard deviation above the mean (cf. Aiken & West, 1991). In this subsample, we conducted the same regression and simple slope analyses that we had performed for the overall sample (see Table 2). Once again, only the interaction between collective team identification and task conflicts was significant in predicting relationship conflicts ($\beta = -.34, p \leq .05$), while the interaction between team member alignment and task conflicts was not ($\beta = .04, p = .72$).
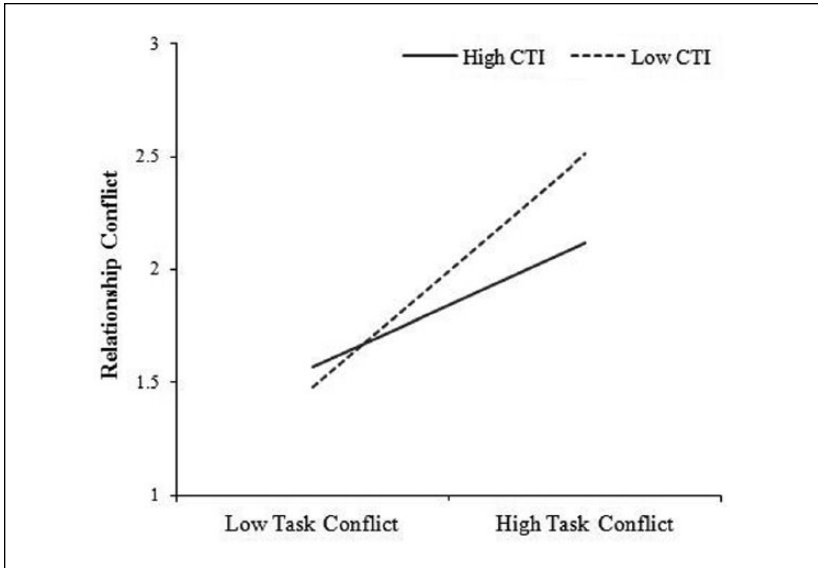
Figure 1. Moderating effect of CTI on the relationship between task and relationship conflicts (*N* = 88 teams).
Note. CTI = collective team identification.

The simple slope analyses in this subsample showed that, given a medium level of task conflict, it is possible that task and relationship conflicts are uncorrelated under high levels of collective team identification. Figure 2 illustrates this finding. When collective team identification was low, there was a significantly positive association between task and relationship conflicts (β = .57, $p \leq$ .01). This association was no longer significant when collective team identification was high (β = −.04, p = .79). This result is in contrast to the interaction effect reported for the overall sample, where the association between task and relationship conflicts remained positive under high levels of collective team identification. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported with respect to the moderating role of collective team identification.[1]

Discussion

Research on task and relationship conflicts in teams has revealed a dilemma, that is, task-related disagreements are likely to spill over into interpersonal tensions (Choi & Cho, 2011; De Dreu, 2011; De Wit et al., 2012). As a consequence, the positive potential of task-related conflicts to benefit
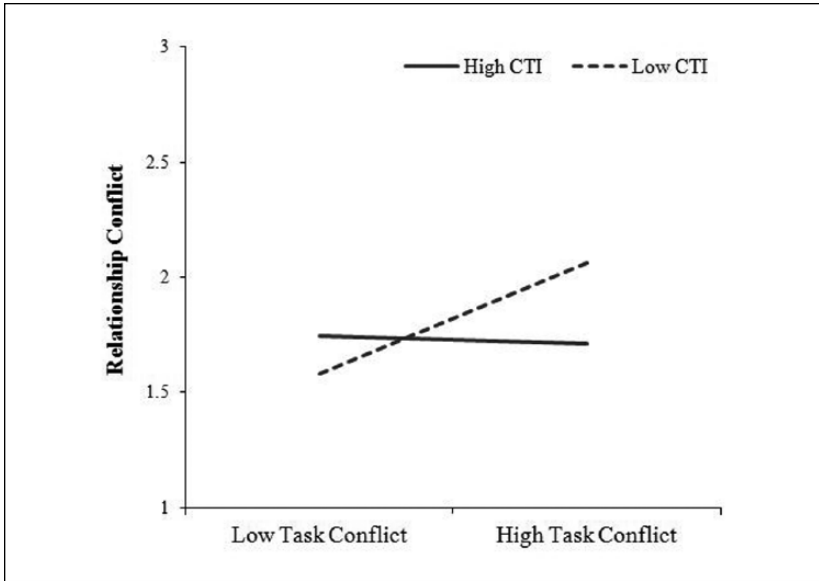
Figure 2. Moderating effect of CTI on the relationship between task and relationship conflict at medium levels of task conflicts (*n* = 62 teams).
Note. CTI = collective team identification.

team performance is at risk of being jeopardized by performance-impeding relationship conflicts. While prior studies have identified boundary conditions which attenuated the association between the two conflict types, they did not succeed in completely resolving the dilemmatic association (Greer et al., 2008; Mooney et al., 2007; Simons & Peterson, 2000). The purpose of this study was to scrutinize the promise of both collective team identification and team member alignment (i.e., the existence of shared team goals and team-based rewards) for separating task and relationship conflicts in teams. Both moderators were argued to be indicators of cooperative goal interdependence in teams (Deutsch, 1949, 1973) and to moderate the connection between the two conflict types. Results from an analysis of 88 development teams showed that complete separation of task and relationship conflicts is possible under certain conditions. The findings from this study contribute to the team literature in several ways.

First, the results showed that strong identification of members with their team can help to mitigate the spillover from task into relationship conflicts. This finding adds to the growing stream in conflict research which investigates boundary conditions of the association between task and relationship

conflicts. Prior investigations have demonstrated the quality of interpersonal relationships in a team to be important for the link between task and relationship conflicts (Mooney et al., 2007; Simons & Peterson, 2000). Collective team identification, however, goes beyond relationship quality in that it includes strong emotional ties and a feeling of common belonging among team members (Ashforth et al., 2008). Realizing that they share a common interest for their team and for promoting its well-being, team members appear to be willing to constructively handle task-related differences, thereby reducing the development of relationship conflicts (Tjosvold, 1998). The findings of this study can be interpreted to support Deutsch's theory of cooperation and competition, which hypothesizes collective team identification to be an indicator of cooperative goal interdependence in teams that fosters constructive conflict handling (Deutsch, 1949, 1973).

Second, our results indicate that completely resolving the dilemmatic association between task and relationship conflicts is possible. The mitigating effect of collective team identification on the association between task and relationship conflicts in teams was found to be dependent on the level of task conflict. The co-occurrence of the two conflict types entirely disappeared in teams that exhibited medium levels of task conflict and at the same time showed high collective team identification. This finding further corroborates the effectiveness of collective team identification for separating task and relationship conflicts (Gebert, Boerner, & Kearney, 2006). Moreover, to the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to find a contingency that allows for complete separation of the two conflict types—provided that task conflicts are at a medium level. Given these results, the study complements the limited prior research that has demonstrated the importance of the level of task conflict for team functioning (De Dreu, 2006; Todorova et al., 2014). In addition, our analysis offers a new and promising avenue for conflict research by demonstrating that the level of conflict is important when considering the interaction of task conflicts with other team factors.

Third, the hypothesized alleviating role of team member alignment on the association between task and relationship conflicts could not be confirmed by the results of this analysis, regardless of the level of task conflict. The existence of short- and long-term goals as well as team-based reward structures did not significantly reduce the probability of task conflicts turning into relationship conflicts. From the perspective of organizational conflict research, it could be construed from this finding that extrinsic factors aiming at team members' rational motivation for cooperation (i.e., team goals and team-based reward structures) are not as effective for separating task and relationship conflicts as intrinsic factors relating to team members' affective attachment to the team (i.e., collective team identification). As conflict scholars have pointed

out, every kind of conflict—irrespective of its source—is emotional to some extent (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Due to this emotionality, which may also be associated with task conflicts, it could be inferred that extrinsic incentives cannot prevent the emergence of interpersonal animosities resulting from task-related disputes (De Dreu, 2011).

Furthermore, the lack of empirical support for the moderating role of team member alignment might be interpreted as disproof of Deutsch's (1973, 2006) notion that team goals and team-based rewards are effective for conflict management in teams. As others have argued, the effects of goal and outcome interdependence may depend on additional factors like the personality of team members (Beersma et al., 2003; De Dreu, 2007). Against this background, a further conceptual refinement of the theory of cooperation and competition might be indicated with regard to the role of joint goals and rewards for promoting cooperative goal interdependence and constructive conflict management in teams.

Fourth, results revealed that teams with higher average team tenure exhibited higher levels of relationship conflict. This finding contrasts with theoretical predictions that argue for a mitigating effect of team tenure on relationship conflicts in teams (Beal et al., 2003; Pelled, 1996). Rather, the results from this study speak to the notion that team members who have worked together for a longer period of time have become more aware of interpersonal differences, in particular with regard to underlying attributes (e.g., values and attitudes). The perception of these differences may contribute to relationship conflicts (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998). Another possible explanation for higher levels of relationship conflict in teams with high average tenure might be that team members that work together for longer periods of time tend to primarily discuss shared and, therefore, redundant information (Levin, Cross, & Abrams, 2002). As a consequence, there may be fewer benefits to be derived from team exchanges and team members may increasingly perceive team discussions as useless. Under these circumstances, they may become frustrated or angry, and this dissatisfaction may fuel relationship conflicts (Rogelberg, Leach, Warr, & Burnfield, 2006).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Our analysis is subject to several methodological limitations. First, the study is cross-sectional, thereby limiting the ability to make causal assertions. For example, we cannot rule out the possibility that relationship conflicts may have also triggered the emergence of task conflicts; that is, personal conflicts between team members may also have detrimental effects on the evaluation of their task-related ideas and opinions (Choi & Cho, 2011). Future research

may benefit from a longitudinal replication of our study to further consolidate the causal direction of the association between task and relationship conflicts and the moderating role of collective team identification. In addition, the negative association of collective team identification with both task and relationship conflicts indicates that other causal relationships than those included in this study appear to be plausible. While the complex interplay between the conflict variables and collective team identification is beyond the scope of this analysis, we believe that it offers several exciting avenues for future research.

A second limitation concerns the risk of common method bias as all variables, except for team member alignment, have been assessed by the same respondents. Yet, as recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003), we used a single-factor model to test for common method bias. Moreover, it has to be noted that interaction effects, which were of primary interest in this study, are unlikely to be artifacts of common method bias (McClelland & Judd, 1993). On the contrary, interaction terms can be considerably deflated by common method variance, making them even more difficult to be detected through statistical means (Siemsen, Roth, & Oliveira, 2010). Nevertheless, future research would benefit from a replication of this study using a multimethod design.

Third, the measurement of team member alignment was based on supervisor ratings. This procedure is comparable with previous research (Mooney et al., 2007) and reduces the risk of common method bias; however, future research might rely on team member ratings of this variable to capture how strong team member alignment is perceived by the team members themselves, as their perceptions may diverge from the team leader's view.

Fourth, the subsamples of teams with high and low levels of task conflict were relatively small in this study ($n = 16$ teams with high levels of task conflict; $n = 10$ teams with low levels of task conflict), not allowing for an adequate test of the interaction between task conflicts and collective team identification in these two subsamples. Even though additional analyses (not reported here due to the small sample sizes) showed that the interaction is not significant in the subsamples of teams with high and low levels of task conflict, we cannot eliminate the possibility that this finding is due to a lack of statistical power (Cohen et al., 2003). Future investigations that incorporate more teams with high and low levels of task conflict may add to further consolidate this finding.

This study also provides several conceptual implications for future research. For example, conflict research may benefit from a thorough analysis of intervening mechanisms between task and relationship conflicts. Similar to our study, existing research has neglected the search for mediators

of the relationship between task and relationship conflicts; however, the identification of intervening processes would allow for a more concise analysis of boundary conditions of the relationship (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007). Therefore, it might on the one hand be worthwhile to analyze the theoretical mechanisms proposed by existing research (i.e., misattribution processes and inadequate behaviors). On the other hand, the finding from this study concerning collective team identification as a boundary condition speaks to the relevance of social categorization processes as mediators; that is, diverging task-related opinions may lead to subgroup formation in teams which subsequently promotes the emergence of relationship conflicts (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

In addition, future research may further explore the promise of Deutsch's (1949, 1973) theory of cooperation and competition for identifying boundary conditions of the association between task and relationship conflicts. This study provided initial evidence for the appropriateness of the theoretical framework by showing that collective team identification as an indicator of cooperative goal interdependence moderates the link between task and relationship conflicts. Future studies may examine the complementarity and interplay of collective team identification with other drivers of cooperative goal interdependence (e.g., influences from the team environment or formal authorities; Deutsch, 2006) for preventing task conflicts from spilling over into relationship conflicts. Furthermore, it could be explored how strong collective team identification is actually related to perceived cooperative goal interdependence in teams—a connection that was theoretically postulated but not empirically tested in this study.

As for the results concerning team member alignment, it might be premature to conclude that team goals and team-based reward structures are generally ineffective in separating task from relationship conflicts. Rather, future research may benefit from the consideration of additional aspects relating to team member alignment. First, it may be promising to examine not only the existence but also the nature of team goals and team-based reward structures. If, for instance, the content of team goals and the basic principles of team-based reward structures are perceived as incompatible with individuals' values and beliefs, this discrepancy may be essential for the effects of team member alignment (Brockner & Siegel, 1996). Second, future research may examine how individual-based rewards interact with team-based reward structures (Wageman, 1995). It is conceivable that individual-based rewards may either complement or be in conflict with team-based rewards in promoting cooperative goal interdependence in teams.

Finally, the higher level of relationship conflict in teams with high average team tenure calls attention to temporal aspects of conflict dynamics. Future

research may examine how the association between task and relationship conflicts develops over time (see Choi & Cho, 2011, for first evidence) and how collective team identification and team member alignment exert their moderating influence on this association at different points of time in a team's existence. For example, it would be interesting to examine whether team member alignment is particularly effective in decoupling task and relationship conflicts at early stages of a team's development, when team spirit has not yet developed. By contrast, collective team identification could be particularly effective when a team has already existed for some time and team members already had the chance to develop a common feeling of belonging.

Managerial Implications

From the viewpoint of organizational practice, the most important finding of this study is that the association between task and relationship conflicts in teams can be overcome under certain conditions (i.e., at high levels of collective team identification and medium levels of task conflict). This finding raises the question of how, on the one hand, collective team identification can be fostered and, on the other hand, high levels of task conflict can be prevented.

As for drivers of collective team identification, one of the most powerful influence factors discussed by extant research is leadership, in particular transformational leadership (Huettermann, Doering, & Boerner, 2014; Kearney & Gebert, 2009). By providing an attractive common vision for the team as a whole, transformational leaders' idealized influence may enhance team members' identification with team goals. Moreover, their team-oriented behaviors will serve as an inspiring role model and foster team members' commitment to team goals and the emergence of team spirit (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Thus, transformational leadership development might be one of the most promising avenues for organizations to enhance effectiveness in teams experiencing high levels of task conflict (Antonakis, Fenley, & Liechti, 2011).

Another factor that has been found to be an important driver of collective team identification is the level of communication and interaction in the team (Postmes, Haslam, & Swaab, 2005). This finding contains two important organizational implications. First, organizations should ensure that team members have enough opportunity to interact and communicate for cultivating a sense of "we" in their team. (Postmes et al., 2005). Second, team building measures might be an important instrument for fostering collective team identification as they have been shown to be most strongly related to affective team outcomes (Klein et al., 2009).

As for avoiding high levels of task conflict, again team leadership might play a crucial role. We posit that team leaders might bear two aspects in mind to avoid high levels of task conflict: First, he or she should ensure that all team members share a common cooperation model (Mathieu, Goodwin, Heffner, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Such a cooperation model includes the assumption that dissent is a necessary precursor to achieving synergies, but that dissent also entails the danger of transforming functional task conflicts into dysfunctional relationship conflicts. A viable cooperation model would also include strategies that specify how to deal with this threat. Second, teams should regularly reflect on team processes to evaluate whether all team members abide by the guidelines specified in the cooperation model. Several studies have found this kind of meta-communication—which is referred to as process reflection (Okhuysen & Eisenhardt, 2002) or team reflexivity (Schippers et al., 2003)—to be highly useful with respect to accomplishing team tasks that involve knowledge processing. One of the reasons for the usefulness of this form of communication might be its ability to make team members aware of the ever-present danger of task conflicts deteriorating into relationship conflicts.

In conclusion, this study extends the understanding of how the positive potential of task-related conflicts that may unfold under certain circumstances can be completely separated from performance-impeding relationship conflicts (De Dreu, 2006; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012). We find that strong collective team identification may prevent the danger of task conflicts turning into relationship conflicts. Given the fact that the alleviating role of collective team identification is dependent on the level of task conflict in a team, the challenge for organizations and team leaders is twofold: On the one hand, the development of collective team identification should be fostered, for instance, by transformational leadership (Huettermann & Boerner, 2011; Kearney & Gebert, 2009). On the other hand, high levels of task conflict should be avoided, as the effectiveness of collective team identification for mitigating the association between task and relationship conflicts decreases with rising levels of task conflict.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

Note

1. To verify that the significant interaction between task conflicts and collective team identification is unaffected by the non-significant control variables in our study, we conducted further regression analyses, thereby including team tenure as the only significant control variable. The results of our additional analyses showed that the significant interaction effect between task conflicts and collective team identification is unaffected by the omission of the non-significant control variables.

References

Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Allen, N. J., Stanley, D. J., Williams, H., & Ross, S. J. (2007). Assessing the impact of non-response on work group diversity effects. *Organizational Research Methods*, *10*, 262-286.

Alper, S., Tjosvold, D., & Law, K. S. (2000). Conflict management, efficacy, and performance in organizational teams. *Personnel Psychology*, *53*, 625-642.

Amason, A. C. (1996). Distinguishing the effects of functional and dysfunctional conflict on strategic decision making: Resolving a paradox for top management teams. *Academy of Management Journal*, *39*, 123-148.

Amason, A. C., & Sapienza, H. (1997). The effects of top management team size and interaction norms on cognitive and affective conflict. *Journal of Management*, *23*, 495-516.

Anand, N., Gardner, H., & Morris, T. (2007). Knowledge-based innovation: Emergence and embedding of new practice areas in management and consulting firms. *Academy of Management Journal*, *50*, 406-428.

Antonakis, J., Fenley, M., & Liechti, S. (2011). Can charisma be taught? Tests of two interventions. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *10*, 374-396.

Ashforth, B. E., Harrison, S. H., & Corley, K. G. (2008). Identification in organizations: An examination of four fundamental questions. *Journal of Management*, *34*, 325-374.

Ashforth, B. E., & Johnson, S. A. (2001). Which hat to wear? The relative salience of multiple identities in organizational contexts. In M. A. Hogg & D. J. Terry (Eds.), *Social identity processes in organizational contexts* (pp. 31-48). Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Beal, D., Cohen, R., Burke, M., & McLendon, C. (2003). Cohesion and performance in groups: A meta-analytic clarification of construct relations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *88*, 989-1004.

Beersma, B., Hollenbeck, J. R., Humphrey, S. E., Moon, H., Conlon, D. E., & Ilgen, D. R. (2003). Cooperation, competition, and team performance: Toward a contingency approach. *Academy of Management Journal*, *46*, 572-590.

Bettencourt, B. A., Brewer, M. B., Croak, M. R., & Miller, N. (1992). Cooperation and the reduction of intergroup bias: The role of reward structure and social orientation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *28*, 301-319.

Bliese, P. D. (2000). Within-group agreement, non-interdependence, and reliability: Implications for data aggregation and analysis. In K. J. Klein & S. W. Kozlowski (Eds.), *Multilevel theory, research, and methods in organizations: Foundations, extensions, and new directions* (pp. 349-382). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Boyer, K. K., & Verma, R. (2000). Multiple raters in survey-based operations management research: A review and tutorial. *Production and Operations Management*, *9*, 128-140.

Brett, J. M., Shapiro, D. L., & Lytle, A. L. (1998). Breaking the bonds of reciprocity in negotiations. *Academy of Management Journal*, *41*, 410-424.

Brislin, R. W. (1986). The wording and translation of research instruments. In W. J. Lonner & J. W. Berry (Eds.), *Field methods in cross-cultural research* (pp. 137-164). Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE.

Brockner, J., & Siegel, P. (1996). Understanding the interaction between procedural and distributive justice: The role of trust. In R. M. Kramer & T. R. Tyler (Eds.), *Trust in organizations* (pp. 390-413). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Brown, R., Vivian, J., & Hewstone, M. (1999). Changing attitudes through intergroup contact: The effects of group membership salience. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *29*, 741-764.

Brown, S. L., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (1995). Product development: Past research, present findings, and future directions. *Academy of Management Review*, *20*, 343-378.

Choi, K., & Cho, B. (2011). Competing hypotheses analyses of the associations between group task conflict and group relationship conflict. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *32*, 1106-1126.

Cohen, J., Cohen, P., West, S. G., & Aiken, L. S. (2003). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dalal, D. K., & Zickar, M. J. (2012). Some common myths about centering predictor variables in moderated multiple regression and polynomial regression. *Organizational Research Methods*, *15*, 339-362.

DeChurch, L. A., Hamilton, K. L., & Haas, C. (2007). Effects of conflict management strategies on perceptions of intragroup conflict. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, *11*, 66-78.

DeChurch, L. A., & Marks, M. A. (2001). Maximizing the benefits of task conflict: The role of conflict management. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, *12*, 4-22.

De Dreu, C. K. W. (2006). When too much and too little hurts: Evidence for a curvilinear relationship between task conflict and innovation in teams. *Journal of Management*, *32*, 83-107.

De Dreu, C. K. W. (2007). Cooperative outcome interdependence, task reflexivity, and team effectiveness: A motivated information processing perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *92*, 628-638.

De Dreu, C. K. W. (2011). Conflict at work: Basic principles and applied issues. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (Vol. 3, pp. 461-493). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

De Dreu, C. K. W., & Gelfand, M. J. (2008). Conflict in the workplace: Sources, functions and dynamics across multiple levels of analysis. In C. K. W. De Dreu & M. J. Gelfand (Eds.), *The psychology of conflict and conflict management in organizations* (pp. 3-54). New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum.

De Dreu, C. K. W., & Weingart, L. R. (2003). Task versus relationship conflict, team performance, and team member satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *88*, 741-749.

Deutsch, M. (1949). A theory of co-operation and competition. *Human Relations*, *2*, 129-152.

Deutsch, M. (1973). *The resolution of conflict*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Deutsch, M. (2006). Cooperation and competition. In M. Deutsch, P. T. Coleman, & E. C. Marcus (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice* (2nd ed., pp. 21-40). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

De Wit, F. R. C., Greer, L. L., & Jehn, K. A. (2012). The paradox of intragroup conflict: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *97*, 360-390.

Dutton, J. E., Dukerich, J. M., & Harquail, C. V. (1994). Organizational images and member identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *39*, 239-263.

Edwards, M. R., & Peccei, R. (2007). Organizational identification: Development and testing of a conceptually grounded measure. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *16*, 25-57.

Farh, J.-L., Lee, C., & Farh, C. I. C. (2010). Task conflict and team creativity: A question of how much and when. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *95*, 1173-1180.

Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (1991). *Social cognition* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Gebert, D., Boerner, S., & Kearney, E. (2006). Cross-functionality and innovation in new product development teams: A dilemmatic structure and its consequences for the management of diversity. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *15*, 431-458.

George, J. M. (1990). Personality, affect, and behavior in groups. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *75*, 107-116.

Georgopoulus, B. S., Mahoney, C. M., & Jones, N. W. (1957). A path goal approach to productivity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *41*, 599-611.

Glick, W. H. (1985). Conceptualizing and measuring organizational and psychological climate: Pitfalls in multilevel research. *Academy of Management Review*, *10*, 601-616.

Greer, L. L., Homan, A. C., De Hoogh, A. H. B., & Den Hartog, D. N. (2012). Tainted visions: The effect of visionary leader behaviors and leader categorization tendencies on the financial performance of ethnically diverse teams. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *97*, 203-213.

Greer, L. L., Jehn, K. A., & Mannix, E. A. (2008). Conflict transformation: A longitudinal investigation of the relationships between different types of intragroup conflict and the moderating role of conflict resolution. *Small Group Research*, *39*, 278-302.

Guetzkow, H., & Gyr, J. (1954). An analysis of conflict in decision-making groups. *Human Relations*, *7*, 367-381.

Guzzo, R. A., & Shea, G. P. (1992). Group performance and intergroup relations in organizations. In M. D. Dunnette & L. M. Hough (Eds.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (2nd ed., Vol. 3, pp. 269-313). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Harrison, D. A., & Klein, K. J. (2007). What's the difference? Diversity constructs as separation, variety, or disparity in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, *32*, 1199-1228.

Harrison, D. A., Price, K. H., & Bell, M. P. (1998). Beyond relational demography: Time and the effects of surface-and deep-level diversity on work group cohesion. *Academy of Management Journal*, *41*, 96-107.

Harvey, J. H., & Weary, G. (1985). *Attribution: Basic issues and applications*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Hayes, A. F., Glynn, C. J., & Huge, M. E. (2012). Cautions regarding the interpretation of regression coefficients and hypothesis tests in linear models with interactions. *Communication Methods and Measures*, *6*, 1-11.

Hogg, M. A., & Terry, D. J. (2000). Social identity and self-categorization processes in organizational contexts. *Academy of Management Review*, *25*, 121-140.

Huang, J.-C. (2010). Unbundling task conflict and relationship conflict: The moderating role of team goal orientation and conflict management. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, *21*, 334-355.

Huettermann, H., & Boerner, S. (2011). Fostering innovation in functionally diverse teams: The two faces of transformational leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *20*, 833-854.

Huettermann, H., Doering, S., & Boerner, S. (2014). Leadership and team identification: Exploring the followers' perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *25*, 413-432.

James, L. R., Demaree, R. G., & Wolf, G. (1984). Estimating within-group interrater reliability with and without response bias. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *69*, 85-98.

Jehn, K. A. (1995). A multimethod examination of the benefits and detriments of intragroup conflict. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *40*, 256-282.

Jehn, K. A. (1997). A qualitative analysis of conflict types and dimensions in organizational groups. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *42*, 530-557.

Jehn, K. A., & Bendersky, C. (2003). Intragroup conflict in organizations: A contingency perspective on the conflict-outcome relationship. In R. M. Kramer & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. *25*, pp. 187-242). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.

Jehn, K. A., & Mannix, E. A. (2001). The dynamic nature of conflict: A longitudinal study of intragroup conflict and group performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, *44*, 238-251.

Jehn, K. A., Northcraft, G. B., & Neale, M. A. (1999). Why differences make a difference: A field study of diversity, conflict, and performance in workgroups. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *44*, 741-763.

Kane, A. A., Argote, L., & Levine, J. M. (2005). Knowledge transfer between groups via personnel rotation: Effects of social identity and knowledge quality. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *96*, 56-71.

Kearney, E., & Gebert, D. (2009). Managing diversity and enhancing team outcomes: The promise of transformational leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *94*, 77-89.

Kirkman, B. L., Chen, G., Farh, J., Chen, Z., & Lowe, K. B. (2009). Individual power distance orientation and follower reactions to transformational leaders: A cross-level, cross-cultural examination. *Academy of Management Journal*, *52*, 744-764.

Klein, C., DiazGranados, D., Salas, E., Le, H., Burke, C. S., Lyons, R., & Goodwin, G. F. (2009). Does team building work? *Small Group Research*, *40*, 181-222.

Kunze, F., & Bruch, H. (2010). Age-based faultlines and perceived productive energy: The moderation of transformational leadership. *Small Group Research*, *41*, 593-620.

Lau, R. S., & Cobb, A. T. (2010). Understanding the connections between relationship conflict and performance: The intervening roles of trust and exchange. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *31*, 898-917.

LeBreton, J. M., & Senter, J. L. (2008). Answers to 20 questions about interrater reliability and interrater agreement. *Organizational Research Methods*, *11*, 815-852.

Levin, D. Z., Cross, R., & Abrams, L. (2002, August). *Why should I trust you: Predictors of interpersonal trust in a knowledge transfer context*. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Denver, CO.

Lind, E. A., & Tyler, T. R. (1988). *The social psychology of procedural justice*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *13*, 103-124.

Mathieu, J. E., Goodwin, G. F., Heffner, T. S., Salas, E., & Cannon-Bowers, A. (2000). The influence of shared mental models on team process and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *85*, 273-283.

McClelland, G. H., & Judd, C. M. (1993). Statistical difficulties of detecting interactions and moderator effects. *Psychological Bulletin*, *114*, 376-390.

Meier, L. L., Gross, S., Spector, P. E., & Semmer, N. K. (2013). Relationship and task conflict at work: Interactive short-term effects on angry mood and somatic complaints. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *18*, 144-156.

Mooney, A. C., Holahan, P. J., & Amason, A. C. (2007). Don't take it personally: Exploring cognitive conflict as a mediator of affective conflict. *Journal of Management Studies*, *44*, 733-758.

Murphy, K. R., & Myors, B. (1998). *Statistical power analysis: A simple and general model for traditional and modern hypothesis tests*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Neuman, J. H., & Baron, R. A. (1997). Aggression in the workplace. In R. A. Giacalone & J. Greenberg (Eds.), *Antisocial behavior in organizations* (pp. 37-67). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Oh, H., Chung, M. H., & Labianca, G. (2004). Group social capital and group effectiveness: The role of informal socializing ties. *Academy of Management Journal*, *47*, 860-875.

Okhuysen, G. A., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (2002). Integrating knowledge in groups: How formal interventions enable flexibility. *Organization Science*, *13*, 370-386.

Pelled, L. H. (1996). Demographic diversity, conflict, and work group outcomes: An intervening process theory. *Organization Science*, *7*, 615-631.

Pelled, L. H., Eisenhardt, K. M., & Xin, K. R. (1999). Exploring the black box: An analysis of work group diversity, conflict, and performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *44*, 1-28.

Peterson, R. S., & Behfar, K. J. (2003). The dynamic relationship between performance feedback, trust, and conflict in groups: A longitudinal study. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *92*, 102-112.

Pinto, M. B., Pinto, J. K., & Prescott, J. E. (1993). Antecedents and consequences of project team cross-functional cooperation. *Management Science*, *39*, 1281-1297.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *88*, 879-903.

Postmes, T., Haslam, S. A., & Swaab, R. I. (2005). Social influence in small groups: An interactive model of social identity formation. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *16*, 1-42.

Pratt, M. G. (1998). To be or not to be? Central questions in organizational identification. In D. A. Whetten & P. C. Godfrey (Eds.), *Identity in organizations: Building theory through conversation* (pp. 171-207). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Preacher, K. J., Rucker, D. D., & Hayes, A. F. (2007). Addressing moderated mediation hypotheses: Theory, methods, and prescriptions. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, *42*, 185-227.

Priem, R. L., & Price, K. H. (1991). Process and outcome expectations for the dialectical inquiry, devil's advocacy, and consensus techniques of strategic decision making. *Group & Organization Studies*, *16*, 206-225.

Pruitt, D. G. (2008). Conflict escalation in organizations. In C. K. W. De Dreu & M. J. Gelfand (Eds.), *The psychology of conflict and conflict management in organizations* (pp. 245-266). New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Pruitt, D. G., & Kim, S. H. (2004). *Social conflict: Escalation, stalemate, and settlement* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Riketta, M., & van Dick, R. (2005). Foci of attachment in organizations: A meta-analytic comparison of the strength and correlates of workgroup versus organizational identification and commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *67*, 490-510.

Rispens, S. (2012). The influence of conflict issue importance on the co-occurrence of task and relationship conflict in teams. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *61*, 349-367.

Rogelberg, S. G., Leach, D. J., Warr, P. B., & Burnfield, J. L. (2006). "Not another meeting!" Are meeting time demands related to employee well-being? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *91*, 86-96.

Ross, M., & Fletcher, G. J. O. (1985). Attribution and social perception. In G. Lindzey & A. Aronson (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (Vol. 3, pp. 73-122). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Saavedra, R., Earley, P. C., & van Dyne, L. (1993). Complex interdependence in task-performing groups. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *78*, 61-72.

Schippers, M. C., Den Hartog, D. N., Koopman, P. L., & Wienk, J. A. (2003). Diversity and team outcomes: The moderating effects of outcome interdependence and group longevity and the mediating effect of reflexivity. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *24*, 779-802.

Siemsen, E., Roth, A., & Oliveira, P. (2010). Common method bias in regression models with linear, quadratic, and interaction effects. *Organizational Research Methods*, *13*, 456-476.

Simons, T. L., & Peterson, R. S. (2000). Task conflict and relationship conflict in top management teams: The pivotal role of intragroup trust. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *85*, 102-111.

Stanne, M. B., Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1999). Does competition enhance or inhibit motor performance: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *125*, 133-154.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). Social identity theory and intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7-24). Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.

Teachman, J. D. (1980). Analysis of population diversity. *Sociological Methods & Research*, *8*, 341-362.

Tjosvold, D. (1998). Cooperative and competitive goal approach to conflict: Accomplishments and challenges. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *47*, 285-342.

Todorova, G., Bear, J. B., & Weingart, L. R. (2014). Can conflict be energizing? A study of task conflict, positive emotions, and job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *99*, 451-467.

van der Vegt, G. S., & Bunderson, J. S. (2005). Learning and performance in multidisciplinary teams: The importance of collective team identification. *Academy of Management Journal*, *48*, 532-547.

van der Vegt, G. S., Emans, B., & van de Vliert, E. (2000). Team members' affective responses to patterns of intragroup interdependence and job complexity. *Journal of Management*, *26*, 633-655.

van der Vegt, G. S., Emans, B., & van de Vliert, E. (2001). Patterns of interdependence in work teams: A two-level investigation of the relations with job and team satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology*, *54*, 51-69.

van Knippenberg, D., De Dreu, C. K. W., & Homan, A. C. (2004). Work group diversity and group performance: An integrative model and research agenda. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*, 1008-1022.

van Knippenberg, D., & Ellemers, N. (2003). Social identity and group performance: Identification as a key to collective effort. In S. A. Haslam, D. van Knippenberg, M. Platow, & N. Ellemers (Eds.), *Social identity at work: Developing theory for organizational practice* (pp. 29-42). New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Vezzali, L., Capozza, D., Mari, S., & Hichy, Z. (2007). Contact models and inter-group relations in an Italian area bordering on Austria. *Testing, Psychometrics, Methodology in Applied Psychology*, *14*, 67-81.

Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Wageman, R. (1995). Interdependence and group effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *40*, 145-180.

Wageman, R. (2001). How leaders foster self-managing team effectiveness: Design choices versus hands-on-coaching. *Organization Science*, *12*, 559-577.

Weick, K. E. (1969). *The social psychology of organizing*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Wu, J. B., Tsui, A. S., & Kinicki, A. J. (2010). Consequences of differentiated leadership in groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, *53*, 90-106.

Author Biographies

Mélanie Schaeffner has worked as a research assistant at the Technical University of Berlin, where she received her doctorate degree in business administration. In her research, she examines how diversity and conflicts in teamwork contribute to innovation. She is currently working as a human resources manager for DB (German National Railways).

Hendrik Huettermann is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Institute of Leadership and Human Resource Management, University of St.Gallen, Switzerland. He received his doctorate degree at the University of Konstanz, Germany. His research focuses on leadership, diversity, and teamwork in organizations.

Diether Gebert is Visiting Professor at the Department of Organization and Human Resource Management, School of Business, Renmin University of China. He retired as Professor for Leadership and Human Resource Management at the Technical University of Berlin in 2005. His research interests include diversity, team innovation, leadership, and change management.

Sabine Boerner holds the chair of Management, especially Strategy and Leadership at the University of Konstanz, Germany. She received her doctorate degree at the Technical University of Berlin. Her research interests are in organizational behavior and management, including leadership, teams, and diversity.

Eric Kearney is Professor of Leadership, Organizational Behavior, and Human Resource Management at the University of Potsdam, Germany. He received his doctorate degree at the Technical University of Berlin. His research focuses on leadership, team composition, and team effectiveness.

Lynda Jiwen Song is Associate Professor in Management and Vice Department Chair at the Department of Organization and Human Resource Management, School of Business, Renmin University of China. Her research interests include organizational culture, leadership, employment relationship, creativity, emotional intelligence, diversity and cross-cultural studies.