Bottom-up influences in representative negotiations: How representatives affect intra-inter group relations
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Summary
SUMMARY

Having done my dissertation during the era of the Arab springs, Turkey uprisings, and the Syrian civil war, I got to witness the social change inducing function of intergroup conflicts and once more realized how inevitable conflicts are. While conflicts between groups can potentially lead to innovation and societal progresses through constructive problem solving, in all of the cases above it led to combat and preventable casualties. One common aspect of the conflicts mentioned above is that they either failed to start a dialogue between each other, or did not handle the negotiation process well enough to prevent conflict escalation. To better understand when negotiation processes result in conflict escalation or resolution, the role of representatives in intergroup negotiation needs to be systematically studied. To do this, researchers can either take a bottom-up approach or a top-down approach.

Research following a top-down approach tested how broader societal context influences representative negotiation processes and outcomes (e.g., Benton & Druckman, 1974; Ben-Yoav & Pruitt, 1984). However, we see many times that a satisfying negotiated agreement alone does not automatically transfer into better intergroup relations and as such the deteriorated intergroup relations may lead to poor implementation of agreements and renewed conflict. To have a fuller picture of the role of representatives, we complemented earlier work on top-down influences by taking a bottom-up approach, which has taken very limited attention so far. A bottom-up approach examines how the negotiation process influences the broader intra-inter group relations regardless of the negotiated outcome (De Dreu, Aaldering, Saygi, 2014). First, we examined how threatening situations influence constituents’ justification of ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics as well as their likelihood to re-elect the representative. Second, we examined how the representative negotiation process influences broader intergroup relations regardless of the negotiated outcome. Figure 1.1 shows the overall conceptual framework of this dissertation.
Empirical findings

In representative negotiations, constituents’ judgment about the ethicality of ambiguous negotiation tactics can highly depend on the degree to which the behavior can be justified by the context. As these judgments can potentially influence constituents’ tendency to re-elect the representative, understanding the contexts under which ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics become justifiable is essential (e.g., Olekalns, 2013). In Chapter 2, I report two studies that examined the possibility that constituents become more tolerant towards their representative’s ethically ambiguous
negotiation tactics under threat as it can occur in value conflicts. Previous research shows that a situation can become threatening if the situation at hand is relevant to our goals and our ability to cope with the consequences is low (e.g., Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996). As such, I proposed that under negative threat, constituents may become more tolerant towards advantageous unethical negotiation tactics as opposed to costly ethical tactics.

Results showed that under low threat, constituents justified information sharing more than information withholding despite the associated costs with information sharing. Furthermore, constituents were more likely to re-elect the representative who shared the private information rather than the representative who withheld information. However, under high threat, this relationship disappeared. Constituents justified information sharing and information withholding equally and, as such, their likelihood to re-elect the representative who used ethical versus ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics did not differ. In Study 2, because value conflicts are perceived to be more threatening than resource conflicts (Kouzakova et al., 2013), I proposed and found that constituents justified information sharing more than withholding information but only under resource conflicts. Under value conflicts, information sharing and information withholding were equally justified, and constituents’ likelihood to change the representative did not differ.

The findings in Chapter 2 thus show that representatives should not automatically assume that their constituents expect them to do whatever it takes (e.g., using unethical negotiation tactics) to win at negotiations, unless the behavior can be justified by the context. In our case, we examined threat as a context, which can also occur in value conflicts and showed that constituents can stretch their moral standards to justify their representative’s ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics under negative threat. Although value conflicts are mostly associated with people fighting for what they think is right, I found that they justify ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics just as much as clearly ethical negotiation tactics under value conflicts. As such, we witness an interesting phenomenon that when people are trying to protect their values, they may ignore the wrongdoings of their representative in order not to compromise their values in the negotiations. Hence, the elasticity of moral justification needs to be better understood in order to prevent conflicts from escalating.
SUMMARY

In Chapter 3, I examined the bottom up influences of representative cooperativeness/competitiveness on intergroup relations regardless of the negotiated outcome. First it was shown that outgroup derogation increased when the outgroup representative communicated competitively as opposed cooperatively or in a neutral way. Furthermore, under cooperative communication, constituents were more satisfied with the negotiated outcome, as opposed to competitive and neutral communication even though the negotiated outcome was exactly the same across all conditions. In a follow up study, I examined whether the negative effect of competition can be lessened if it is preceded by cooperation. To test this, I manipulated the timing of competition. Results showed that in late competition condition, constituents were less satisfied with the outcome but felt more trust towards the outgroup, as opposed to early competition. The reason for decreased outcome satisfaction in late competition was that participants increased their outcome expectations after observing an early concession by the outgroup representative.

In Chapter 4 I complemented these findings by examining the bounded benefits of cooperative outgroup representative on intergroup relations. So far we have seen in Chapter 3 that cooperative outgroup representative can improve intergroup relations as well as outcome satisfaction when compared to a competitive and neutral outgroup representative. However, in Chapter 4 I argued that some representative characteristics may block the positive effects of cooperative outgroup representatives on intergroup relations. First, I showed that constituents generalized the cooperativeness of the outgroup representative to the entire outgroup, but only when the outgroup representative was a prototypical member of the outgroup. When the outgroup representative was a peripheral member, cooperative behavior of the outgroup representative in fact led to decreased perceived outgroup cooperativeness, and hence decreased constructive behavioral tendencies. This contrast effect should be taken into account when groups appoint an external representative since a peripheral member’s cooperation may backfire. The second representative characteristic that I examined was representative competence. Here I argued that because negotiation context is rather competitive (e.g., Fein & Hilton, 1994; Kramer, 1994; 2004; Messick & Mackie, 1989), cooperative behavior is less expected (e.g., Benton & Druckman, 1973) and if a skilled or competent representative acts cooperatively it may lead to suspicion and distrust (Boon & Holmes, 1991). As predicted, I found that cooperativeness of the outgroup
representative increased outgroup trust and constructive behavioral tendencies only when the outgroup representative had low competence. When the outgroup representative was highly competent, the relationship between cooperative outgroup representative and constructive behavioral tendencies disappeared. Together, findings in Chapter 3 and 4 showed that a dignified negotiation process can improve intergroup relations regardless of the negotiated outcome. However, certain representative characteristics such as peripherality and high competence may block and even harm the positive effects of cooperative behavior on intergroup relations. Finally, I did not find any correlation between intergroup relations and outcome satisfaction, suggesting that one cannot simply assume better intergroup relations when representatives achieve a satisfying agreement.

Conclusion
In this dissertation, I systematically studied bottom up influences of representative negotiation processes on intra-intergroup relations and made three main conclusions. The first is that contrary to what representatives expect (Benton & Druckman, 1973), constituents do not justify ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics (even if it brings benefits) more than information sharing (even if it is costly) unless it is a threatening context such as in value conflicts. The second conclusion is that representatives cannot simply assume that they can sustain good intergroup relations by settling a satisfying agreement. In fact, what matters more for the intergroup relations is the negotiation process. A dignified negotiation process (cooperative communication) can improve intergroup relations regardless of the negotiation outcome. The third and last conclusion is that the positive effects of the outgroup representative’s cooperation is bounded as his or her cooperativeness may backfire if the outgroup representative is a peripheral or highly competent member of his or her group.
Samenvatting
SAMENVATTING

Tijdens het schrijven van mijn proefschrift in het tijdperk van de Arabische lentes, de Turkse opstanden en de Syrische burgeroorlog, was ik getuige van de sociale verandering die intergroep-conflicten teweegbrengen en realiseerde ik me wederom hoe onvermijdelijk conflicten zijn. Hoewel conflicten tussen groepen kunnen leiden tot innovatie en maatschappelijke vooruitgang door constructieve probleemoplossing, leidde het in alle bovenstaande gevallen tot strijd en voorkombare slachtoffers. Een gemeenschappelijk aspect van bovenstaande conflicten is dat er ofwel gefaald is een dialoog met elkaar te starten, ofwel het onderhandelingsproces niet goed genoeg is gehanteerd om conflictescalatie te voorkomen. Om beter te kunnen begrijpen wanneer onderhandelingsprocessen leiden tot conflictescalatie of conflictoplossing, is het van belang de rol van groepsvertegenwoordigers in intergroep-onderhandelingen systematisch te onderzoeken. Hierbij kan ofwel een bottom-up ofwel een top-down benadering worden gehanteerd.

In studies met een top-down benadering is onderzocht hoe een brede maatschappelijke context onderhandelingsprocessen en -uitkomsten van vertegenwoordigers beïnvloeden (bv. Benton & Druckman, 1974; Ben-Yoav & Pruitt, 1984). We zien echter vaak dat een bevredigende onderhandelde overeenkomst alleen, zich niet automatisch vertaalt in betere intergroepsrelaties. Verslechterde intergroepsrelaties kunnen vervolgens leiden tot verkeerde implementatie van overeenkomsten en hernieuwd conflict. Om een vollediger beeld te krijgen van de rol van vertegenwoordigers hebben we eerder werk over top-down invloeden aangevuld door een bottom-up benadering te hanteren. Deze benadering heeft tot nu toe weinig aandacht gekregen. Een bottom-up benadering richt zich op de invloed van onderhandelingsprocessen op de bredere intra-intergroepsrelaties, ongeacht het onderhandelde resultaat (De Dreu, Aaldering, Saygi, 2014).

Allereerst hebben we onderzocht hoe bedreigende situaties zowel de rechtvaardiging van ethisch ambigue onderhandelingstactieken van groepsleden, als de waarschijnlijkheid dat de groepsvertegenwoordiger worden herkozen, beïnvloeden. Vervolgens hebben we onderzocht hoe het onderhandelingsproces van de groepsvertegenwoordiger de bredere intergroepsrelaties beïnvloedt, ongeacht de onderhandelde uitkomst. Afbeelding 1.1 toont het algemene conceptuele kader van dit proefschrift.

Empirische bevindingen

In vertegenwoordigingsonderhandelingen kan het oordeel van de groepsleden over de ethiek van ambigue onderhandelingstactieken sterk afhangen van de mate waarin het gedrag kan worden gerechtvaardigd door de context. Daar deze oordelen mogelijk invloed hebben op de neiging van de groepsleden om de vertegenwoordiger te herkiezen, is het essentieel om de contexten waarin ethisch ambigue onderhandelingstactieken gerechtvaardigd worden te begrijpen. (bv., Olekalns, 2013).

In Hoofdstuk 2 bespreek ik twee studies waarin de mogelijkheid dat groepsleden toleranter worden tegenover de ethisch ambigue onderhandelingstactieken van hun

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vertegenwoordiger in een bedreigende context, zoals ook in waardeconflicten, wordt onderzocht. Eerder onderzoek wees uit dat een situatie bedreigend kan worden wanneer deze relevant is voor de eigen doelen en wanneer het vermogen om te gaan met consequenties laag is (bv., Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996).

Daarom heb ik geponeerd dat in een bedreigende context groepsleden mogelijk toleranter worden tegenover gunstige onethische onderhandelingstactieken in plaats van kostbare ethische tactieken.

Resultaten lieten zien dat in een laag bedreigende context groepsleden het delen van informatie meer rechtvaardigden dan het achterhouden van informatie, ondanks de kosten die gepaard gaan met het delen van informatie. Bovendien waren groepsleden meer geneigd om de vertegenwoordiger die privé-informatie deelde te kiezen dan de vertegenwoordiger die informatie achterhield. Echter, wanneer de mate van bedreiging hoog was, verdween dit verband. Groepsleden rechtvaardigden het delen van informatie en het achterhouden van informatie evenzeer en daarom was er geen verschil in de waarschijnlijkheid om de vertegenwoordiger met de ethisch ambigue onderhandelingstactieken te kiezen niet. In Studie 2, omdat waardeconflicten als meer bedreigend worden gezien dan middelenconflicten (Kouzakova et al., 2013), heb ik geponeerd en gevonden dat groepsleden het delen van informatie meer rechtvaardigden dan het achterhouden van informatie, maar alleen bij middelenconflicten. In het geval van waardeconflicten werden informatie delen en achterhouden evenveel gerechtvaardigd en verschilde de waarschijnlijkheid dat de groepsleden een andere vertegenwoordiger kozen niet.

De bevindingen in Hoofdstuk 2 laten daarom zien dat vertegenwoordigers er niet automatisch van uit kunnen gaan dat hun leden verwachten dat zij alles doen wat nodig is (offeel, onethische onderhandelingstactieken gebruiken) om onderhandelingen te winnen, tenzij het gedrag gerechtvaardigd kan worden door de context. In ons geval hebben we bedreiging als context onderzocht, wat voor kan komen in waardeconflicten, en laten zien dat groepsleden bereid zijn hun morele standaarden bij te stellen om de ethisch ambigue onderhandelingstactieken van hun vertegenwoordiger te rechtvaardigen onder bedreigende omstandigheden.
SAMENVATTING

Hoewel waardeconflicten voornamelijk geassocieerd worden met vechten voor wat men denkt dat juist is, heb ik gevonden dat ethisch ambigue onderhandelingstactieken net zozeer gerechtvaardigd worden als puur ethische onderhandelingstactieken in waardeconflicten. Zodoende zijn we getuige van een interessant fenomeen waarin men, om eigen waarden te beschermen, de wandaden van de vertegenwoordiger mogelijk negeert om zo geen compromissen te hoeven sluiten op het gebied van eigen waarden tijdens onderhandelingen. Daarom is het noodzakelijk dat de elasticiteit van morele rechtvaardiging beter in kaart wordt gebracht om te voorkomen dat conflicten escaleren.

In Hoofdstuk 3 heb ik de bottom-up invloeden onderzocht van coöperatie/competitie van de vertegenwoordigers op intergroepsrelaties, ongeacht de onderhandelde uitkomst. Allereerst heb ik aangetoond dat outgroup-degradatie toenam wanneer de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger competitief in plaats van coöperatief of op een neutrale manier communiceerde. Bovendien waren groepsleden meer tevreden met de onderhandelde uitkomst in het geval van coöperatieve communicatie, in tegenstelling tot competitieve en neutrale communicatie, ondanks het feit dat de onderhandelde uitkomst in alle gevallen hetzelfde was.

In een vervolgonderzoek heb ik onderzocht of het negatieve effect van competitie af kan nemen wanneer het vooraf is gegaan door coöperatie. Om dit te testen, heb ik de timing van competitie gemanipuleerd. De resultaten laten zien dat in de late competitie conditie de groepsleden minder tevreden waren met de uitkomst maar meer vertrouwen voelden tegenover de outgroup, in vergelijking met de vroege competitie. De reden voor de afgenomen uitkomsttevredenheid in de late competitie was dat deelnemers hun uitkomstverwachtingen verhoogden nadat ze een vroege concessie van de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger hadden geobserveerd.

In Hoofdstuk 4 heb ik deze bevindingen gecomplementeerd door de beperkte voordelen van een coöperatieve outgroup-vertegenwoordiger op intergroepsrelaties te onderzoeken. Tot dusver zagen we in Hoofdstuk 3 dat een coöperatieve outgroup-vertegenwoordiger zowel de intergroepsrelaties als de uitkomsttevredenheid kan verbeteren in vergelijking met een competitieve en neutrale outgroup-vertegenwoordiger. Echter, in Hoofdstuk 4 beargumenteer ik dat sommige karakteristieken van de vertegenwoordigers de positieve effecten van coöperatieve
outgroup-vertegenwoordigers op intergroepsrelaties zouden kunnen blokkeren. In de eerste plaats heb ik laten zien dat groepsleden coöperatie van de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger generaliseerden over de gehele outgroup, maar alleen wanneer de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger een prototypisch lid was van deze outgroup. Wanneer de vertegenwoordiger van de outgroup een perifeer lid was, leidde het coöperatieve gedrag van de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger juist tot verminderde waargenomen outgroup-coöperatie en derhalve verminderd constructieve gedragstendensen. Dit contrasteffect moet in acht worden genomen wanneer groepen een externe vertegenwoordiger aanwijzen, aangezien coöperatie van een perifeer lid zich tegen hen kan keren. De tweede vertegenwoordigerskarakteristiek die ik heb onderzocht is vertegenwoordigerscompetentie. Hier heb ik beargumenteerd dat, omdat onderhandelingscontext nogal competitief is (bv., Fein & Hilton, 1994; Kramer, 1994; 2004; Messick & Mackie, 1989), coöperatief gedrag minder wordt verwacht (bv., Benton & Druckman, 1973) en wanneer een kundige of competente vertegenwoordiger zich coöperatief opstelt, kan dit leiden tot achterdocht en wantrouwen (Boon & Holmes, 1991). Zoals verwacht, vond ik dat coöperatie van de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger het outgroup-vertrouwen en de constructieve gedragstendensen vergrootte wanneer de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger weinig competent was. Wanneer de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger zeer competent was, verdween het verband tussen de coöperatieve outgroup-vertegenwoordiger en de constructieve gedragstendensen. Tezamen toonden de bevindingen in Hoofdstuk 3 en 4 dat een waardig onderhandelingsproces intergroepsrelaties kan verbeteren, ongeacht de onderhandelde uitkomst. Echter, sommige vertegenwoordigerskarakteristieken, zoals perifere ligging en hoge competentie, kunnen de positieve effecten van coöperatief gedrag op intergroepsrelaties blokkeren en zelfs schaden. Ten slotte heb ik geen enkele correlatie gevonden tussen intergroepsrelaties en uitkomsttevredenheid, wat suggereert dat men niet simpelweg kan aannemen dat intergroepsrelaties beter zijn wanneer vertegenwoordigers een bevredigende overeenkomst bereiken.

Conclusie

In dit proefschrift heb ik systematisch bottom-up invloeden van vertegenwoordigersonderhandelingsprocessen op intra-intergroep relaties onderzocht en ik heb hieruit drie hoofdconclusies getrokken. De eerste is dat, in tegenstelling tot
wat vertegenwoordigers verwachten (Benton & Druckman, 1973), groepsleden ethisch
ambigue onderhandelingstactieken niet meer rechtvaardigen (zelfs als dit voordelen
met zich meebrengt) dan het delen van informatie (zelfs als dit kostbaar is) tenzij er
sprake is van een bedreigende context zoals in waardeconflicten. De tweede conclusie
is dat vertegenwoordigers niet simpelweg kunnen aannemen dat ze goede
intergroepsrelaties kunnen onderhouden door een bevredigende overeenkomst te
sluiten. Wat belangrijker is voor de intergroepsrelaties is het onderhandelingsproces.
Een waardig onderhandelingsproces (coöperatieve communicatie) kan
intergroepsrelaties verbeteren ongeacht de onderhandelingsuitkomst. De derde en
laatste conclusie is dat de positieve effecten van coöperatie van outgroup-
vertegenwoordigers beperkt zijn, aangezien zijn of haar coöperatie zich tegen hem of
haar kan keren als de outgroup-vertegenwoordiger een perifeer of hoog competent lid
isvan zijn of haar groep.
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THANK YOU

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