National Diversity and Conflict

The Role of Social Attitudes and Beliefs

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Diversity in workgroups is being promoted by laws and regulations, immigration and globalization, and at times by economic pressures. In essence of the definition of diversity, the workforce has always been diverse with reference to some characteristics when individuals with unique qualities and wisdom work towards a common task. The recent trends have brought women into formal professions, facilitated the disabled, and laws of equal opportunities have introduced a culturally diverse workforce. Diversity trainings and practices are being observed while norms and regulations are being reviewed and revised for improvements. The ambitious organizations have included diversity management to improve the organizational achievements and the well being of their workers. As diversity increases in the workforce, organizations strive to search for means and possibilities to capitalize on this diversity. It has become important to understand how diversity affects group and organizational outcomes since organizations are increasingly operating in multinational contexts (Milliken & Martins, 1996).

Diversity, generally defined as perceived differences, has been advocated by many diversity researchers for effective and productive workgroups and organizations (e.g., Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1996; Watson, Kumar, & Michaelson, 1993). On the other hand are those that have negative findings to share regarding diversity for reasons such as lack of social integration and high turnover (Jackson et al., 1991; O’Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989), conflict (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Mannix & Neale, 2005), and demographic differences.
Diversity research reveals a collection of contradictory results concerning the effects of diversity on group outcomes (Barsade & Gibson, 1998; Guzzo & Dickson, 1996; Jackson, Joshi, & Erhardt, 2003; Mannix & Neale, 2005; McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1996; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998) leaving us with an inconclusive stance about effects of diversity or when and what type of diversity is helpful.

Diversity is not often realized in actuality as desirable for its potential or as required through law. As Lunardi (1996) and Wirth (2002) noted, women still continue to fight for equal rights in the workplace, such as for pay and opportunity to grow and advance. Minorities and immigrants still face discrimination in selection, evaluation, and promotion (Akrami, Ekehammar, & Araya, 2000; Metz, 2009; Syed, 2008a). While all these issues of the workplace remain in countries around the world, certain problems are more disturbing depending on their context-specific situation. This asserts the need to consider context, especially the social and cultural context, when dealing with diversity in workplace.

In this chapter, I will provide a synopsis of diversity research as a foundation to the research model of my dissertation. I will describe the existing information on national diversity and its consequences on workgroups’ processes and outcomes. I speculate that diversity is a complex characteristic of workgroups that requires a more focused look at the specific types and the surrounding context. The individuals constituting a certain diversity type cannot of course be ignored. These individuals become part of the groups along with their attitudes and opinions that direct their interpersonal interaction and behavior within the group. To understand the group dynamics, we thus need to understand the characteristics of these individuals. To understand groups with national diversity, I argue that the individual attitudes based on nationality as well as social and cultural learning are important.

**National Diversity in Workgroups**

In examining how diversity may help or hinder organizations, researchers have proposed that the type of diversity can determine whether or not diversity will be useful or harmful to an organization (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Pelled et al., 1999a). To figure out how to minimize the costs and maximize the benefits, we need to understand all
dimensions and types of diversity. Research shows that some diversity characteristics have a larger impact than others (Miles, 1964; Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992). One type of diversity that could have a significant impact on workgroup interaction is national diversity. A group is considered nationally diverse when the workgroup is comprised of members with different national origins (Dahlin, Weingart, & Hinds, 2005). National categorizations become more salient in nationally diverse groups where a multinational group is more likely to behave in view of similar nationals-versus-other nationals (Kozmitski, 1996). I, therefore, look at national diversity as one such important diversity type in multinational workgroups as the focus of study in this dissertation.

I assert that national diversity is a characteristic distinct from cultural and ethnic diversity. Cultural diversity includes demographic elements that are related to cultural characteristics, values and perceptions (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000) and is often defined in terms of individualism-collectivism dimensions of cultural differences (Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991; Vodosek, 2005). Although national diversity may include cultural aspects within it, there is more to national diversity with respect to history, geography, politics, and economic activities. All these elements make up one’s national learning and perception. Considering that a nation may include more than one culture and practices, I distinguish cultural diversity from national diversity such that national diversity may incorporate cultural as well as ethnic differences within itself. The cultural differences, thereby, may be set aside by the members in favor of finding at least somewhat similar other members in a more diverse group situation. Ethnic and cultural differences are then presumably diminished and national similarity becomes more salient and attractive in a multinational scenario, especially when a worker is placed outside his/her own national geography or when there is a nationally diverse group. To fulfill the need of affiliation and for psychological security, the chances of finding similar nationals are more in multinational or international groups. Schmitt, Spears, and Branscombe (2003) noted that members identify with some social group according to the social context of intergroup relations. With lesser chances of finding ethnically similar members, national diversity not only becomes more salient, it also becomes more relevant. In a multinational workgroup, different ethnicities from a particular nation would
diverge into a set of similar characteristics. Such a group would come together for the sake of security and integrity and pick up attributes that are similar to the members of the same nationality. This means that whereas a person may be recognized as Mexican-American when in the United States, the same person may identify, and be identified, as American when situated outside the United States. Similarly, Punjabis, Sindhis, and Pathans will all be identified as Pakistanis outside Pakistan.

Two different nations could have similar cultures as well as geographic characteristics but national differences can often overwhelm the cultural similarities and make national characteristic more significant (Kozmitski, 1996). For example, Indians and Pakistanis have similar culture, customs, and traditions but when asked about their preferences, they have strong emotional attachment with their nation. Also, Yemen and Saudi Arabia (or the Netherlands and Belgium) have similar cultures and similar religious customs, but they have strong national identities and a history of clashes due to national differences. In this way, national diversity can be more significant than cultural diversity whereby national diversity includes characteristics of ethno-cultural diversity combined under a national umbrella with a national conscience. The need for distinctiveness then shifts in view of the nation-other nation distinction in place of the culture-other culture or region-other region distinction. Cultural differences will be diminished and individuals from a particular nation become one inclusive group when placed outside their nation or in a multinational context, described as the reconfirmation effect by Kozmitski (1996). The tendency is to seek similarity (similarity attraction theory, Byrne, 1961) that often starts from immediately available similar characteristics. The national land is one such characteristic available in multinational situations. Generally, workers would be relieved to find anyone from their national land despite several other differences. The interaction pattern changes in view of national distinction and workers from one nation are more likely to come together. Accordingly, I look at national diversity as critically more relevant within multinational workgroups but with little attention in diversity research.

**National Diversity and Conflict**

Conflict has been broadly defined as perceived incompatibilities, discrepant views or interpersonal incompatibilities (Deutsch, 1973). Different
types of conflict have been classified as socio-emotional conflict (Priem & Price, 1991), cognitive and affective conflict (Amason, 1996), relationship-focused people conflicts and conflicts about the substantive content of the task (Wall and Nolan, 1986), or goal-oriented and emotional conflict (Coser, 1956). Jehn (1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001) identified three main types of conflict. The first type is relationship conflict, which is, by definition, conflict about interpersonal incompatibilities among group members. Secondly, task conflict is disagreements among group members about the content of the tasks being performed, including differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions. The third type, process conflict, is defined as disagreements about logistical issues, such as the assignments of responsibilities or resources or the setting of an agenda. Early theories focused on negative conflict and suggested that conflict is detrimental to organizational functioning (c.f. Jehn, 1997). Although empirical findings show that all conflicts have negative effects (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), some research recognizes that conflict, such as task conflict, can be beneficial under certain circumstances (Amason, 1996; cf., Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Effort has been directed towards understanding which types of diversity lead to advantageous or deleterious conflict as well as to investigate how to maximize some type(s) of beneficial conflict.

The focus of intragroup conflict research has mostly been on the outcomes of conflict and lesser so on the antecedents of conflict (cf., Vodosek, 2007). Mannix and Neale (2005) noticed that the details of mechanisms underlying the effects of diversity have not been adequately studied. Research has shown that group integration and member communication suffer when diversity increases (O’Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989; Smith et al., 1994; Triandis, 1994). The categorization processes associated with diversity may lead to heightened levels of intragroup conflict (Thatcher & Jehn, 1998). Jehn, et al. (1999) found that social category diversity resulted in increased relationship conflict (also O’Reilly et al., 1998; Pelled, 1996; Pelled, Ledford, & Mohrman, 1999b). Similarly, different nationalities in a workgroup could trigger intergroup discrimination just by the awareness that other nationalities are present (Rivenburgh, 1997). Hinds and Bailey (2003) noted that international teams engage in group dynamics that use an ‘us-versus-them’ attitude. This is according to self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985) which states that dissimilarity can impede work-unit friendships. The group members
are then involved in specific behaviors towards each other. With such segregation of members, conflict is evident. Thus, this dissertation examines specific attitudes as exacerbators of conflict in nationally diverse workgroups.

To resolve the issue of contrasting results, Jackson and Joshi (2004) have suggested that diversity research examine individual attitudinal differences. Organizational research recognizes that the interpersonal and social attitudes significantly influence workgroup processes (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Organizational norms may not encourage social attitudes to influence their workgroups, especially those that are least concerned or helpful with their job accomplishments. Every member, however, enters the workgroup with a set of personal and social attitudes and beliefs. These pre-programmed attitudes and beliefs may largely affect one’s perceptions and thus behaviors. Whether diversity will have positive or negative consequences may be explained by investigating attitudes of the group members. For this reason, I investigate nationalistic attitudes as moderators of conflict in nationally diverse workgroups such that these attitudes are likely exacerbate conflict in nationally diverse workgroups.

**Nationalistic Attitudes in Nationally Diverse Workgroups**

With only a few studies examining the relationship between national diversity and conflict specifically (e.g., Bayazit & Mannix, 2003), there is a dearth of studies that examine the attitudinal moderators of this relationship. While Brief et al., (2005) have emphasized the importance and influence of attitudes that members bring to the workgroups from the outside communities; this has been a neglected aspect of diversity and conflict research. I believe that one of the main moderating aspects between national diversity and conflict is nationalism, in two forms: ingroup preference and outgroup derogation. Nationalism is especially relevant when workers from different backgrounds come to work together, such as in a multinational workgroup (Adler, 1991; Garcia-Prieto et al., 2003). Nationalism, learned through years of direct and indirect learning and experience (Larsen et al., 1993), is apt to affect workgroups as much as any interpersonal context. Since workgroups are composed to obtain task-specific goals, they are expected to work closely and share information and responsibility. However, if attitudes like nationalism are
present, the communication may be a stressful exchange and the group members may experience conflict.

I define nationalism as an attitude of national superiority towards an identified national group with national favoritism and/or derogation of other nations with prejudice and discrimination. That is, a highly nationalistic person is one who strongly favors his/her country and country-fellows while s/he may or may not also derogate people of other countries. Nationalism is an attitude that may persist over time, resist change and counter-persuasion, and have an impact on judgments and behavior (Krosnick & Petty, 1995). In that, nationalism guides interpersonal communication and also determines one’s behavior. The nationalism literature observes that the nationalist attitudes and feelings are deeply-ingrained in people’s minds and lives which affect their interpersonal interaction (Calhoun, 1997; Griffiths, 1993). A national attitude may differ in affect (positive or negative) and the amount of strength of this affect as moderate, very, or extremely positive/negative (See Dekker, Malova, & Hagendoorn, 2003). These national attitudes are often reinforced by political activities and political leaders. Despite its psychological nature, there is relatively little work on the topic of nationalism within psychology compared to political science research (cf., Searle-White, 2001).

Psychologists, especially within the organizational context, have yet to explore and explain nationalism and its impacts on individual and group processes. I wish to draw attention to nationalism as an important contributor in any group interaction where multinational groups are involved. This appears more relevant within the present world situation with nationalities and national identities becoming salient because of cross-national mobility of workforce, global, political and economic activities, and globalized media. Although such issues are quite sensitive to talk about, due to their negative connotations, an investigation of these topics is necessary in order to comprehend all aspects of the processes surrounding the dynamics of nationally diverse groups and to learn how to better manage such groups. In this dissertation, based on literature reviewed, I propose nationalism will mainly have a negative role in workgroups as it tends to intensify a positive relationship between national diversity and conflict.
Nationalistic Attitudes: Social Distances and National Stereotypes

Nationalism can be distinguished into two attitudinal aspects: ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation. In my first empirical study in this dissertation, I explore the moderating role of nationalistic attitudes on the relationship between national diversity and conflict. I intend to study if nationalism is one of the factors through which task conflict is reduced and relationship and process conflicts are enhanced in nationally diverse workgroups. How are the groups affected by members’ nationalistic attitudes? I consider the attitudes of contact avoidance and negative stereotypes of the outgroups as two means by which nationalism is more likely translated into behavior.

Social distance is the degree of contact acceptability based on the perceived social differences between oneself and others. It is a negative attitude that determines social relations (Bogardus, 1967) or the willingness to interact (Chan & Goto, 2003). It evokes negative feelings that motivates the avoidance of outgroups (Hagendoorn & Kleinpenning, 1991). It indicates the acceptability of a number of social groups based on the perception of social differences among the groups. In this sense, there is a hierarchy of preferences that starts with the most similar social group to the least similar (Hagendoorn, 1995; Parillo & Donoghue, 2005; Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). For example, Dutch in the Netherlands are closer in social distance to English people than Turks (Hraba, Hagendoorn, & Hagendoorn, 1989); that is, a Dutch person will more readily interact with an English person in his/her workgroup than s/he will with a Turk.

Stereotypes are the beliefs about certain traits considered as characteristic of members of a social category. A generalization concerning a trait attribution about a national group constitutes a national stereotype (cf., Brigham, 1971). These characteristics are generally believed to be possessed by all members of a group, discrediting the individual differences. A stereotype is concerned with the cognitions of ‘others’ (how ‘they’ are expected to behave) and is generally about characteristic qualities for evaluations, such as liking/disliking.

I aim at investigating stereotypes and social distances to see how they influence conflict and performance of the group. Whereas I propose that nationalism can have a negative effect when group members come from
different national backgrounds (chapter 2 & 3), I also realize that diversity itself may be an opportunistic context where exposure to dissimilar others arouses cross-national learning and thus ameliorates nationalistic attitudes (chapter 4). Also, more choices of interaction help find similarities with some of the members and thus reducing interaction with the distant members to the unavoidable minimum. Group composition affects several aspects of a group’s activities and processes (Levine & Moreland, 1990). For instance, the perception of distance is affected by the heterogeneity context of a group (Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). If differences in beliefs and attitudes such as stereotypes and social distances are present, they will likely lead to conflict and decreased performance in nationally diverse workgroups (chapter 4). However, I also expect that social distances will be small and stereotypes will be less negative in nationally diverse workgroups compared to nationally homogenous workgroups. This is in view of in view of the group numerical composition affects (cf., Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000) that more choices of contact ameliorate the negative effects of the differences between the diverse people. I expect that high diversity will moderate the negative effects of social distance and stereotypes and increase performance and task conflict while decreasing relationship and process conflicts. I focus on nationality within nationally diverse group because it is: a) a diversity characteristic that can function both positively as well as negatively, and b) nationality is described as one of the more salient and influential characteristics of a nationally diverse workgroup (Ayub & Jehn, 2007; Earley & Mosakowski, 2000; Hofstede, 1980).

**Interpersonal Attitudes: Similarity Preferences and Respect**

Social distances and national stereotypes are the negative aspects of nationalism and reflect outgroup derogation. However, ingroup favoritism may not necessarily have negative intentions or outgroup rejection or derogation (Brewer, 1999). I propose that ingroup favoritism will not have a negative effect as strong as outgroup derogation because ingroup favoritism is not directly negatively affecting anyone. What happens when group members perceive ingroup biases within the group? To find an answer, I explore similarity preferences and how it affects the group processes and outcomes of
racioethnically diverse workgroups. Until now, the social aspect of similarity preference has not directly been related to workgroup conflicts or efficiency.

Whereas acceptance and recognition are important, similarity preference implies disregarding certain group members as unacceptable for contact. Respect can have a significant influence where group members feel recognition of equal standing, especially when relationships within the group are tense because of some inequality (Simon & Sturmer, 2005). Similarity preference can be considered a state of inequality where certain members are preferred for contact and others are excluded. As similarity preferences represent a negative aspect, respect offers a positive attitudinal constituent of group interaction. I contribute to an understanding of respect within group research as there remains a lack of knowledge to describe the important consequences of respect on group processes and outcomes (Prestwich & Lee, 2009). I investigate the role of respect as well as similarity preference in racioethnically diverse workgroups (chapter 5). Similarity preferences and perceived respect together describe the relationship of diversity to conflicts and performance. The relationship between racioethnicity and conflict has not been explored on these grounds before, taking into account the individuals’ similarity preference and respect.

The main focus of this dissertation is thus to explain the relationship between diversity and performance through the moderating effects of social attitudes and the mediating role of conflict. To elaborate on the moderating effects, I include conflict as a mediator. I explore the hypothesized models with the help of multiple methodologies such as field surveys in organizations and scenario studies. In the following pages, I provide outline of the different studies that I conducted to study the role of social attitudes in specific types of diversity and contribute to the understanding of diversity and conflict research.

Chapters Overview

Chapter 2: Role of Nationalism in National Diversity to Conflict Relationship

In this chapter, I develop a theory to explain how national diversity within a workgroup can lead to intra-group conflict, and how this effect may be exacerbated in the presence of nationalistic attitudes. I define and discuss
what national diversity is and why it is relevant to multinational organizations. I then construct a multi-level, theoretical framework to propose the conditions under which national diversity may lead to high levels of conflict. I describe and explain the role of nationalism (i.e., individuals’ attitude towards their and others’ nationalities) in diverse workgroups and explore the moderating effect of nationalism on the relationship between national diversity and intra-group conflict. I propose that in nationally diverse workgroups the presence of workgroup members with strong nationalistic attitudes (e.g., ingroup favoritism and outgroup rejection) will exacerbate the likelihood that national diversity may lead to relationship conflict and process conflict, and that it will weaken the likelihood that national diversity leads to task conflict. The model demonstrates the necessity of examining national diversity and the factors and conditions, such as the presence of nationalistic attitudes that may hinder the potential of a nationally diverse workgroup.

Chapter 3: Nationalism as a Moderator of National Diversity to Conflict Relationship

To empirically investigate the relationship between national diversity and conflict types in multinational workgroups as proposed in the second chapter, I examine group members’ nationalistic attitudes regarding outgroup derogation and ingroup preference in a field study. Based on existing research and the proposed relationship between national diversity and conflict, I develop and test hypotheses in a sample of employees in multinational workgroups. I distinguish between two aspects of nationalism as ingroup preference and outgroup derogation and propose that nationalistic outgroup derogation will have a stronger effect on the national diversity to conflict relationship compared to nationalistic preference. The results show a moderating effect of nationalistic derogation on the relationship between national diversity and both task and relationship conflicts. The relationship between national diversity and both task conflict and relationship conflict is intensified when members have negative attitudes based on nationality towards the outgroup members. I discuss the results for future research and practical implications.
Chapter 4: Social Attitudes in Workgroups: Social Distance and National Stereotypes

In chapter 4, I describe a study where I examine how differences in attitudes and beliefs (i.e., social distance and stereotypes) and national diversity (differences in kind; e.g., number of nationalities) affect the conflict experience and performance of workgroup members. I also examine the mediating role of conflict in the relationship of social distance and national stereotypes with performance. I designed a scenario study with reference to three outgroup countries and collected data from Pakistan and the Netherlands. The study participants were provided with a workgroup situation where they were to perform a group task along with 3 other group members whose nationalities were identified. The group situation either included one outgroup category (low national diversity) or 3 different outgroup categories (high national diversity). Results show that both social distance and national stereotypes were negatively related to performance and positively related to conflict. While conflict mediates the social distance and national stereotypes to performance relationship, national diversity moderates the social distance and stereotype to conflict relationship. This study contributes to workgroup research on diversity and conflict management by exploring social attitudes and opinions and offers interesting results for future investigation.

Chapter 5: Social Attitudes: Similarity Preference and Respect

If ingroup bias is not malicious in itself, how does it affect group members’ experiences and perceptions? To understand the role of ingroup bias, I choose to study similarity preferences that group members may have towards similar other members in their group. In the previous chapter, I proposed and found that ingroup preferences are not as detrimental to the group as the nationalistic attitude of outgroup derogation. Realizing that selective contact preferences may not have malignant intentions, I also note that exclusion is not a pleasant experience. This likely leaves the members who are excluded from contact preferences with grievances and increased conflict among the group members. Restricted contact of those high on similarity preferences also implies misunderstanding and lack of adequate communication. Perceived respect among the group members could help the members to work as a group regardless of contact choices. In this chapter, I
describe a study where I examine the moderating roles of similarity preference and respect in the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency. Cross-cultural data from 3 samples is used to examine the set of hypotheses. Results show that the racioethnic diversity to efficiency relationship is more negative in the presence of similarity preference and more positive in the presence of perceived respect among the workgroup members. This moderated relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency is mediated by task, relationship, and process conflicts. Also, similarity preference moderates the relationship between racioethnic diversity and task and process conflicts, while respect moderates the relationship between racioethnic diversity and the three types of conflict. I discuss the results in view of the hypotheses and provide suggestions for future research.

Chapter 6: General Discussion

In this chapter, I present a summary of the research described in this dissertation. I then proceed with a general discussion in view of the findings from the empirical studies. The main purpose of this dissertation was to explore the attitudinal factors that may explain the diversity to outcome relationship. Starting with a basic theoretical model, I extended my investigation by examining types of individual attitudes in the empirical studies. Each chapter provides theoretical background of the study model. After summarizing the results, I discuss some managerial implications for diversity and conflict management. Through this dissertation, I hope to bring attention to the importance of social attitudes within workgroups and how to manage a group in view of the group members’ characteristics and attitudes. In the end, I would like to mention that the empirical chapters in this dissertation have been prepared as journal articles and thus may be read independent of each other. For the same reason, the empirical chapters are written in the first-person plural.
When organizations strive to create the most effective workgroups, they bring together individuals with relevant skills and capacities. The search for skilled employees may often result in the construction of nationally diverse workgroups. In addition, since workgroups are increasingly operating in multinational contexts (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000; Milliken & Martins, 1996), it is important to understand how national diversity may affect groups and group outcomes.

Research on diversity, in general, has found that diverse groups often prove ineffective at capitalizing on the potential benefits of their diversity for a variety of reasons such as lack of social integration and high turnover (Jackson et al., 1991; O’Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989), conflict (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999), competition (Reagans, 2005), and demographic differences (Alexander, Nuchols, Bloom, & Lee, 1995). Despite the growing importance of national diversity in workgroups, little research has specifically theorized about the relationship between national diversity and conflict. Additionally, little research has focused on the attitudes or biases towards specific forms of diversity and how these may influence the effect of diversity on group processes. In this article, we thus extend the theory on diversity and conflict by specifically examining the relationship between national diversity and intragroup conflict. Additionally, we introduce the concept of nationalism into the small group literature and discuss the possible ways in which members’
nationalism may accentuate or diminish the relationship between national diversity and intragroup conflict.

In examining how diversity may help or hinder organizations, researchers have proposed that the type of diversity can determine whether or not diversity will be useful or harmful (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn et al., 1999; Pelled et al., 1999a). To figure out how to minimize the costs and maximize the benefits, we need to understand all dimensions and types of diversity. One type of diversity often understudied in the organizational literature, but identified as salient and important in organizational workgroups, is national diversity (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000; Hofstede, 1980; Laurent, 1983). We define national diversity as represented by the number and distribution of different national backgrounds of the workgroup members (Dahlin, Weingart, & Hinds, 2005).

We propose that national diversity is likely to be an especially salient and influential form of diversity, particularly in modern workgroups, for several reasons. First of all, past research has shown that some diversity characteristics have a larger impact than others (Miles, 1964; Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992). For example, when placed in a multinational organization, Laurent (1983) noted that Germans become more German; Americans become more American, and so on. This reaffirmation effect (Bakker, 2005; Kozmitski, 1996) explains why some identity characteristics become more salient in certain contexts (e.g., nationality in a multinational workgroup). Rivenburgh (1997) also noted that national identities are context dependent, situational, and dynamic. Therefore, when members are placed in multinational workgroups, they are likely to perceive the national differences and differentiate workgroup members into national categories (Jenkins, 1997).

A second reason why national diversity may be particularly salient in workgroups is its relevance to global political events. As workgroups become more nationally diverse (Paletz, Peng, Erez, & Maslach, 2004), national differences become even more pronounced due to the international history and current events of the nations involved. Li and Brewer (2004) sampled the American public after the September 11 incident and studied national attitudes and the tolerance of diversity. They observed that priming conditions of events like September 11 influenced identification, loyalty, and cohesion towards one’s national ingroup and reduced tolerance of cultural diversity which
reinforced negative attitudes towards other national groups. Li and Brewer (2004) noted that there are restricted identification criteria (e.g., belonging to the same nation) that reinforce the negative attitudes towards other nationalities. Devos and Banaji (2005) also observed how stereotypes, based on nationalistic identification, guide responses such as exclusion of dissimilar others and inclusion of similar others. Brief et al. (2005) noted that bringing whites closer to blacks increased the perception of interethnic conflict in whites as they developed negative responses to diversity. This means that when diverse members are brought together in a workgroup, they may experience conflict due to individual attitudes that already exist and that may be reinforced by the interdependent workgroup conditions.

A third reason that national diversity is likely to be particularly salient in multinational workgroups is the associated histories and tradition that nationality carries with it, making it often used in categorization processes. For example, workgroup members often refer to the social and political histories, and the cultural traditions of others for categorizing and making comparative judgments (Lalonde, 2002; Weiss, 2003). Stereotypes and attitudes based on the past are then also reinforced with events such as the September 11 incident (Li & Brewer, 2004), recent political transitions and differing media interpretations (Blank & Schmidt, 2003; Rivenburgh, 1997; Weiss, 2003). For example, imagine a multinational workgroup composed of Arabs, or Iranians working alongside Americans. The national, economic, and political events influence workgroup members’ attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Lalonde, 2002; Li & Brewer, 2004; Weiss, 2003), especially when they are working in such a diverse multinational group. These past research findings and examples of current events highlight the significance of national diversity as a critical diversity variable to consider when predicting conflict in multinational workgroups. We, therefore, intend to propose how national diversity in a workgroup may be linked to different types of conflict and how this relationship is influenced by the individual members’ feelings of nationalism (see Figure 1).

In this paper, we theorize about the impact of national diversity on intragroup conflict moderated by nationalism. Nationalism can be defined as a form of ethnocentrism based on national identity, which includes national favoritism towards one’s own nation, and rejection and derogation of other
nations (Mummedey, Klink, & Brown, 2001). A person’s national identity is basically a subjective emotional bond with a nation (Tajfel & Turner, 1986)

**Figure 1.** A model of the relationship between national diversity and conflict types moderated by nationalism

and is a fundamental element of nationalism since it creates the desire to preserve that identity (Dekker, 2001). Our major focus will be on nationalism as a moderator of national diversity to conflict as we introduce nationalism to the workgroup context. Nationalism is an attitudinal factor that, we believe, is critical to the study of workgroup conflict in today’s global economy, but has not yet been considered in diversity research to date. We argue that the degree of nationalism present among workgroup members is a crucial factor in determining whether conflict remains at a steady state or is exacerbated in nationally diverse workgroups.

We propose a model which examines the interplay of national diversity at the workgroup level and nationalistic attitudes at the individual level. Although national diversity is generally considered to be a group phenomenon where a group is comprised of members from diverse national backgrounds, it is important to consider that members of a group have unique subjective perceptions of and reactions to this diversity (Garcia-Prieto, Bellard, & Schneider, 2003; Lau & Murnighan, 1998). Therefore, we will describe how individual members of a workgroup will perceive national diversity and how this may lead them to engage in national categorization and the processes of inclusion and exclusion (Spencer & Wollman, 2002). The
perception of national diversity is thus expected to lead to conflict among the group members. This relationship between national diversity and conflict will be further exacerbated when members hold strong nationalistic attitudes (national favoritism and nationalistic derogation). To continue with our earlier example of a nationally diverse group, if the multinational workgroup of Americans and Arabs has members with strong feelings of national favoritism and outgroup derogation (that is, nationalism) the likelihood and escalation of conflict will be greater than in a workgroup with the same composition, but where the members do not hold strong nationalistic feelings and attitudes. We elaborate on the theoretical rationale behind this example below.

NATIONAL DIVERSITY AND CONFLICT

While diversity has generally been found to have mixed effects on group outcomes (cf. Williams & O’Reilly, 1998), diversity specific to certain attributes like gender, age, race, and nationality (Cummings, Zhou, & Oldham, 1993) has been found to lead to negative workplace processes such as conflict and communication (Jehn et al., 1999; Pelled et al., 1999b) and performance outcomes (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Pelled, 1996). Williams and O’Reilly (1998) suggest that researchers examine a more complex framework of the nature of diversity in order to understand the findings in the diversity literature. They stressed the importance of moderating factors and intervening variables to explain the effects of diversity. Additionally, conflict has been found to be a key intervening variable between diversity and group outcomes, yet the effects of diversity on conflict are not clear-cut (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003; Jehn et al., 1999; Pelled, 1996). Therefore, to reconcile these discrepancies in past research, add to the understanding of diversity in workgroups, we propose that national diversity in particular is an important factor that will have a major impact as a predictor of conflict specifically in multinational workgroups since nationality has been found to have a distinct and often a more significant influence than other demographic characteristics (Miles, 1964; Tsui et al., 1992). Additionally, we discuss nationalism as a new attitudinal moderating factor to explain the specific relationship of national diversity and conflict in multinational workgroups.

Conflict has been broadly defined as perceived interpersonal incompatibilities or discrepant views (Deutsch, 1973). Jehn (1997) identified
three main types of conflict. The first type is relationship conflict, which is, by definition, conflict about interpersonal incompatibilities among group members. The second type of conflict is task conflict which may develop in workgroups due to disagreements among group members about the content of the tasks being performed, including differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions. The third type of conflict, process conflict, is defined as disagreements about logistical issues, such as the assignments of responsibilities or resources, or the setting of an agenda. Many early theories focused on the negative aspects of conflict and suggested that conflict is detrimental to organizational functioning (e.g., Blake & Mouton, 1984; Wall & Nolan, 1986). In fact, recent studies such as De Dreu and Weingart’s (2003) meta-analysis continue to stress the negative effects of conflict on group performance and satisfaction. However, some research has found that conflicts, such as task conflicts, can be beneficial under certain circumstances (Amason, 1996; cf. Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). These contradictory findings suggest that the debate of whether conflict is beneficial or detrimental in diverse workgroups is still ongoing and that conflict may have negative or positive consequences for different task types and group compositions. Therefore, we propose a model of national diversity and individual member attitudes suggesting that some types of conflict are detrimental in multinational teams (e.g., relationship conflict) while other types may be beneficial in a multinational group setting (e.g., task conflict).

Research continues to attempt to identify types of diversity that may lead to either advantageous or deleterious conflict as well as investigating how to maximize the benefits of conflict (e.g., Hinds & Mortensen, 2005; Jehn et al., 1999; Yang & Mossholder, 2004). We provide a detailed view of national diversity in workgroups and the individual attitudes that influence intragroup conflict. National diversity has been identified as an important diversity type and has also been found to influence relationship conflict (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003). Bayazit and Mannix (2003) were mainly interested in relationship conflict as a mediator of the relationship between nationality diversity and intent to remain in the team. For a more complete theoretical understanding of how national diversity may affect the group members’ overall experience of conflict and whether national diversity can lead to positive conflict or negative conflict, we propose a model of national diversity and relationship conflict,
task conflict, and process conflict moderated by member attitudes (i.e., nationalism).

National Diversity and Relationship Conflict

First, based on past demographic diversity research, we propose that national diversity will lead to relationship conflict for three reasons: decreased relationship quality, decreased group integration, and increased categorization processes. The quality of interpersonal relationships is lowered as diversity increases in groups (Riordan & Shore, 1997). Brief et al. (2005) found lower quality work relationships in racially diverse organizations as compared to less racially diverse organizations. Similarly, different nationalities in a workgroup can trigger intergroup discrimination just by the awareness that other nationalities are present since nationalities are often made stereotypically salient, for example, through media portrayals (Rivenburgh, 1997). Consider a group composed of Americans working together with Arabs or Chinese. We suggest that in such a group, the national diversity may be associated with relationship conflict due to national category differences and stereotypes stimulated by members’ perception of national diversity.

Research has also shown that group integration (the degree of connectedness or cohesion among group members; Shaw, 1981) and member communication also suffer when diversity increases (O’Reilly et al., 1989; Smith et al., 1994; Triandis, 1994). The categorization processes associated with diversity may also lead to heightened levels of intragroup conflict (Thatcher & Jehn, 1998). Hinds and Bailey (2003) noted that international teams engage in group dynamics that use an ‘us-versus-them’ attitude. This is consistent with the self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985) which states that dissimilarity impedes work-unit friendships as a function of perceived differences among the members. The differences are likely to trigger categorization and stereotyping (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Thatcher, & Jehn, 1998; Tsui et al., 1992). Jehn et al. (1999) found that social category diversity resulted in increased relationship conflict (also O’Reilly et al., 1989; Pelled, 1996; Pelled et al., 1999b), and based their reasoning for this finding on social categorization processes. When segregation of members exists along national lines, relationship conflict is likely (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003) because national categorization create an us-versus-them tension and intergroup discrimination.
National Diversity and Conflict based on nationality. We, therefore, propose that national diversity will lead to relationship conflict based on the processes of social categorization, decreased member integration, and diminished relationships.

**Proposition 1:** The more nationally diverse a workgroup is, the more likely the members are to experience relationship conflict than the members of a workgroup with low national diversity.

National Diversity and Task Conflict

We believe that national diversity is a form of structural diversity (Cummings, 2004) that can potentially be advantageous in task accomplishment. For instance, Hoffman (1978) observed that members with different perspectives in a group discussion enhance debates about task content. Although social category diversity is often not considered to be task-related, Jehn (1997) suggested that social category diversity may represent informational diversity when members of a group have different experiential backgrounds. This social category diversity is then task-relevant. We suggest that national diversity can also contain task-relevant aspects. Cummings (2004) described geographic locations as one type of structural diversity where individuals from different nationalities bring a variety of information and ideas as they come from different social networks and social and educational backgrounds. Members with different national backgrounds are likely to have different perspectives, skills, information and knowledge bases, and talents (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Bantel & Jackson, 1989; Cramton & Hinds, 2005; Maznevski, 1994). Being different in this sense can have a positive effect on group processes. Given that Jehn, et al. (1999) found that differences in past work experiences were positively related to task conflict in workgroups, we propose that nationality differences may also lead to task conflict.

We consider national diversity as a social category difference that can bring diversity of ideas to the group since different national backgrounds bring in diverse sets of knowledge, expertise, and wisdom. Adler (1997) had suggested that cross-national diversity will increase creativity and synergy. For example, a workgroup comprised of Arabs, Indians, and Germans will bring together a variety of task-relevant viewpoints that are derived from their national traditions and different educational experiences. We therefore, propose that national diversity will lead to increased task conflict.
Proposition 2: The more nationally diverse a workgroup is, the more likely the members are to experience task conflict than the members of a workgroup with low national diversity.

National Diversity and Process Conflict

We also propose that nationally diverse workgroups will experience process conflict as a result of having to deal with and delineate task processes among dissimilar group members. Williams and O’Reilly (1998) indicated that diverse groups are more hindered by process difficulties than homogenous groups. Process conflict may arise for the following three reasons: (self) exclusion from procedural decision making, misunderstandings due to stereotypical biases, and misunderstandings due to language and communication issues. Mor-Barak and Cherin (1998) noted that dissimilar people are often excluded from information and opportunity networks and, thereby, dissimilarity is likely to be negatively related to workgroup involvement. Dissimilar members will be more inclined to withdraw from the group psychologically (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), perceive the group as less attractive (Tsui et al., 1992), have less frequent communication among group members (Zenger & Lawrence, 1989), and thus contribute less to the task performance (Kirchmeyer, 1993; Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992). Greer, Jehn, and Thatcher (2005) proposed that members different from the majority of the group report higher levels of process conflict than their majority counterparts. Greer and coauthors proposed that when minority members lack voice in groups, they may use process issues, such as the setting of meeting times or the delegation of tasks, to express their frustrations with their position within the group.

Punnett and Clemens (1999) found that nationally diverse teams take longer to reach decisions. The problem arises when the dissimilar others are categorized with stereotyped images. This relates to the second reason we stated for why national diversity may lead to process conflict: misunderstandings due to stereotypical biases. Stereotypical impressions and the associated misunderstandings and misinterpretations influence the interactions among group members (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Weiss, 2003). For instance, in our hypothetical multinational workgroup, Arabs and Americans are expected to perceive large cultural and ideological differences and
therefore are likely to have disagreements about how to perform or proceed with the task (i.e., process conflict).

In nationally diverse workgroups, it may be difficult to bridge the differences in communication which will give rise to process conflict in nationally diverse groups. Adler (1997) suggests that cross-national diversity is likely to increase miscommunication and potential conflict. She observed that diversity based on national differences appears to interfere with group processes to a much greater extent than heterogeneity on other attributes. This is because interaction with dissimilar others is often impregnated with misunderstandings and errors (cf. Greer et al., 2005). It is possible that the members who perceive distinct group behavior and communication in light of their national character believe that their voice is not heard or their ideas are not accepted because they are different. Take, for instance, a workgroup that is composed of British, Afghans, and Germans. Such groups will be laden with misperceptions and miscommunications based on national stereotypes that lead to increased arguing and the delaying of progress. This will lead to higher levels of process conflict in nationally diverse groups. We therefore propose:

**Proposition 3:** The more nationally diverse a workgroup is, the more likely the members are to experience process conflict than the members of a workgroup with low national diversity.

**THE ROLE OF NATIONALISM IN NATIONALLY DIVERSE GROUPS**

We have proposed that national diversity has the potential to produce harmful conflict (e.g., relationship conflict) as well as potentially useful conflict (e.g., task conflict), but we also propose that some characteristics of the group members significantly influence how likely it is that national diversity within a group will lead to helpful or harmful conflict. We consider members’ nationalism as one factor that can significantly affect group processes. We define nationalism as an attitude of national favoritism and superiority an individual holds for his/her national group, and derogation of other nations (Dekker, Malova, & Hoogendoorn, 2003; Mummendey, et al., 2001). Nationalistic attitudes of employees are especially relevant in nationally diverse groups since national diversity implies differences in beliefs and attitudes rooted in the group members’ national backgrounds.
Nationalism is commonly discussed in political science and sociology as a political doctrine or ideology (e.g., Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990; Kohn, 1955; Smith, 1983). However, Calhoun (1997) noted that nationalism can also be a basic way of talking, thinking, and acting that plays an extensive role in shaping people’s lives outside of its explicit political concerns. Nationalism is a way of thinking, feeling, and behaving regarding one’s connection to a particular national group by members of that nation (Kamenka, 1973). Therefore, nationalism markedly influences individuals’ everyday activities and actions. Take our earlier example. If the workgroup of Arabs and Americans have members with strong nationalistic feelings, we propose that it is more likely that members of this group will have conflicts and that the conflicts will be exacerbated than if the diverse group members do not hold such strong nationalistic attitudes.

Nationalism has been conceptualized more specifically as an attitude. Attitudes are the amount of affection or general feeling of favorableness or unfavorableness towards ideas, objects, or persons (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). An attitude is a relatively enduring mental state of readiness which is acquired through experience and exerts a directive influence upon an individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related (Allport, 1935; See also Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Dekker et al. (2003), in the political science tradition, define nationalism as a cumulative hierarchy of attitudes such that the hierarchy moves from the positive patriotic attitudes to the extreme nationalistic attitude in which individuals have the tendency to consider their national group as the superior nation above all other nations. This implies that nationalism becomes more and more negative and destructive towards outsiders, or other-nationals, as it moves up in the hierarchy. Although nationalism is frequently defined with reference to an ingroup where the feeling of one’s own national superiority does not necessarily imply outgroup derogation (Allport, 1954; Brewer, 1999), the theory of ethnocentrism notes that ingroup feelings are also connected with outgroup rejection (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Billiet, Maddens, & Beerten, 1996; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Sumner, 1906). In such situations, the outgroup rejection is mainly an effort to maintain the ingroup esteem and superiority. Brewer (2001) also observes that ingroup favoritism is a source of inter-group bias. Accordingly, we consider nationalism to include both
Ingroup as well as outgroup feelings. As stated earlier, we define nationalism as an attitude of national superiority an individual holds for his/her national group that specifically includes national favoritism and derogation of other nations (Mummendey, et al., 2001). This definition, in essence, follows Dekker et al.’s (2003) hierarchy where a person ranking lower in the hierarchy of nationalism will be less inclined to show an ingroup-versus-outgroup attitude while a person ranking higher on the hierarchy will be more nationalistic and show an increased ingroup-versus-outgroup attitude.

Cramton and Hinds (2005) introduced ethnocentrism into small group research in their recent article on internationally distributed teams. They discussed ethnocentrism as an aspect of racioethnic diversity that significantly influences group dynamics. Ethnocentrism is when an individual views his or hers own specific group (formed on the basis of any group identifying criteria, e.g., national group) as the pivotal focus, which is used as the reference point to rate all other groups and is considered to be the right and the superior group (Sumner, 1906). Past research has defined nationalism as a form of ethnocentrism that combines positive feelings towards one’s own national group and bias towards other national groups (Federico, Golec, & Dial, 2005; Schatz & Staub, 1997). Although nationalism has yet to be explored within an organizational context, we can anticipate its presence among the workers and make predictions about its influence on group processes such as conflict on the basis of cultural and racioethnic research findings (Cramton & Hinds, 2005; Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black, & Ferzendi, 2006). Nationalism is context-specific as are other attitudes and thus has the potential to become more manifest in a multinational environment where the workgroups are diverse and likely comparisons with members from other nations are made. This can lead to biased attitudes and perceived discrimination that influences the relationship of diversity to conflict within the group. Correspondingly, we propose that, if members of a nationally diverse workgroup hold strong nationalistic attitudes, then the relationship between national diversity and conflict will be moderated by the level of members’ nationalism. A presence of one or more nationalistic members in a nationally diverse workgroup will influence the group processes, such as the group members’ experience of conflict.
We presume that nationalism will exacerbate negative group interactions in a nationally diverse group. Nationalistic members will find the means to defend their own nationality and they will seek different ways to derogate other nations (Aberson, Healy, & Romero, 2000). We propose that when group members are highly nationalistic, national diversity is more likely to lead to destructive conflict forms such as relationship and process conflict, but less likely to lead to task conflict.

**Nationalism and Relationship Conflict**

We propose that nationalism can aggravate potential relationship conflict situations in nationally diverse workgroups. It can incite emotions such as discomfort, irritation, and hatred (Peterson, 2002; Scheff, 1994). Nationalism can also be highly influential in how group members communicate with members of other nations in their group. Nationalistic attitudes have been found to be associated with negative attitudes such as hostility towards outgroups (Adorno, et al., 1950; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Perreault & Bourhis, 1999). In our earlier example of the diverse workgroup with Arab and American members, we would suggest that if the members have strong nationalistic attitudes, that is, if they believe that their own country is far superior to the other nation represented in the group, any relationship conflict will be exacerbated by the feelings of superiority and outgroup hostility. The same conflict in a similarly diverse group where members do not have such strong nationalistic attitudes will not be loaded with such potential underlying biases that could further escalate conflicts. The presence of nationalistic group members will increase the likelihood that relationship conflict will occur in multinational groups.

Strongly nationalistic people are inclined to maintain distance and to avoid contact (Ibarra, 1995) with people from other nations. However, in an interdependent multinational workgroup, this is not entirely possible. Therefore, any contact which may be necessary can bring anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). The tension will increase as nationalistic individuals work in a group with members from other nations and their attitudes motivate negative national comparisons, outgroup hostility, and derogation. Earley and Mosakowski (2000) observed that international teams differentiate across differences and thus experience interpersonal conflict. They suggested that
relationship conflict can be exaggerated due to different beliefs and attitudes that can be held by international team members. We specify these attitudinal differences as those of nationalism and propose that when a nationally diverse workgroup has members with strong nationalistic attitudes, there will be amplified relationship conflict. Specifically, we propose that nationalism will intensify the relationship conflict experienced in a nationally diverse group as shown in Figure 1.

**Proposition 4:** In nationally diverse workgroups, the positive relationship between national diversity and relationship conflict will be strengthened in the presence of strongly nationalistic group members; that is, the members of a nationally diverse group will have more relationship conflict when there are nationalistic members in the group.

**Nationalism and Task Conflict**

Team members often fail to profit from diverse and potentially important viewpoints since they do not feel comfortable disclosing them to other members who are different from them (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003). One significant reason for why national diversity may fail to benefit from its positive potential is the moderating effect of nationalism in the relationship between national diversity and task conflict. Cramton and Hinds (2005) suggested that whether diverse groups produce creative results or generate more conflict depends on the nature of their differences and how well they are managed. These differences in beliefs and attitudes, in turn, can stimulate certain feelings and reactions guided by previously learned stereotypes and biased attitudes. Dissimilarity may cause some group members to ignore the contributions of those dissimilar to them (Elsass & Graves, 1997), and it may also give rise to perceptions of unfairness and exclusion within the group (Mor-Barak, Cherin & Berkman, 1998). This implies that the opinions of those perceived to be different will be valued less and possibly given less cognitive attention. We thus propose that any task conflict that might be present as a positive aspect of national diversity will be diminished due to nationalism.

Members with strong nationalistic attitude may not be motivated to make an effort to participate in group discussions or they may even cause disturbances. Deep-level attitudinal characteristics such as nationalism are
difficult to give up or deny, and they can often cause extreme hindrances in interaction and coordination (Milliken & Martins, 1996). Research has shown that simple contact is not sufficient to improve attitudes towards an outgroup (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). Members may hold back useful information from each other (Armstrong & Cole, 1995; Milliken & Martins, 1996), specifically in nationally diverse groups. Their attention will be restricted to focusing on and relating to members from their own national ingroup, if any exist, and avoiding outgroup members. This can cause negative and competitive subgroup formation along national lines (Lau & Murnighan, 1998). Therefore, contrary to our proposition about relationship conflict (where nationalism will increase the likelihood of non-task, person-based antagonism), we propose that task debates will be less likely as members either avoid active participation due to exclusionary and derogatory feelings based on nationalistic attitudes or direct their efforts at suppressing the views of outgroup members. For a nationalistic member, an outgroup member’s potentially good ideas are a threat to his/her nationalistic identification of being superior. As such, this will decrease the value that the group members find in communicating with diverse others about the task at hand.

Individuals make an effort to keep their belief system intact and find means and methods to reinforce them, with the help of self-serving biases (Zuckerman, 1979). Instead of facilitating each other in a group, nationalistic members will remain aloof from dissimilar others in order to preserve their pride and superiority, or the distinctiveness, of their ingroup. Contact will be avoided as much as possible and this will, in turn, reinforce distances and boundaries (Hewstone & Greenland, 2000; Mullick & Hraba, 2001). Knowledge or expertise cannot lead to performance improvements when it is not applied or shared. Nationalism, thus, negatively influences interaction and cooperation by denying any positive debate or information-exchange among members in diverse groups. We, therefore, propose that nationalism will moderate the positive relationship between national diversity and task conflict such that any task conflict possible due to national diversity will be lowered in the presence of nationalism (see Figure 1).

**Proposition 5:** In nationally diverse workgroups, the positive relationship between national diversity and task conflict will be weakened in the presence of strongly nationalistic workgroup
members; that is, the members of a nationally diverse group will have less task conflict when there are nationalistic members in the group.

**Nationalism and Process Conflict**

In contrast to the proposed attenuating moderation effect of nationalistic attitudes on the relationship between national diversity and task conflict, we posit that nationalism has the potential to aggravate process conflict among nationally diverse members. Recall that process conflicts are about the delegation of duties, distribution of resources, and the responsibilities of members (who should get what and do what) – conflicts about *how* the work should be completed. Once members within a diverse group are categorized as different based on nationality, prejudices and biases are likely that can influence planning and communication regarding process issues (Adler, 1997; Cramton & Hinds, 2005). Nationalism leads to negative evaluations of group members of different nationalities which can create scapegoating and blame when the task does not proceed smoothly (Brewer, 2000). In addition, members of a ‘superior’ nation may ignore the opinions and suggestions of ‘lesser’ nations regarding work processes. Nationalistic members may try to cover up for the weaknesses of their ingroup members (national favoritism) and cause hindrances in the outgroups members’ performance (nationalistic discrimination). Roles and resources may not be distributed fairly or may be perceived to have been distributed unfairly even if they were not.

Dennen (1987) refers to several studies that suggest nationalism as an exacerbator of cheating and fighting in multinational contexts. In an attempt of nationalistic group members to favor fellow-nationals and to discriminate against other-nationals, conflict regarding the work processes can occur and the actual work will be delayed. For instance, in our hypothetical workgroup of Americans and Arabs, if members attempt to favor similar others due to their attitudes of ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation, conflicts over resources and favored duties will flourish. The process conflict due to national diversity, as proposed earlier, will be worsened in groups with high levels of nationalism. We, thus, propose that the positive relationship between national diversity and process conflict will be strengthened in the presence of nationalistic group members as shown in Figure 1.
**Proposition 6:** In nationally diverse workgroups, the positive relationship between national diversity and process conflict will be *strengthened* in the presence of strongly nationalistic workgroup members; that is, the members of a nationally diverse group will have more process conflict when there are nationalistic members in the group.

**DISCUSSION**

In this paper, we have identified national diversity and nationalism as important factors in multinational workgroups due to the strong attributes and attitudes that are associated with them. We propose that national diversity may lead to increased relationship, task, and process conflicts. Nationalism was introduced as a specific type of attitude which was proposed to exacerbate the effect of national diversity on relationship and process conflict. Any beneficial task conflict was proposed to be diminished in the presence of nationalism.

Our model opposes the commonly argued optimistic “value-in-diversity” hypothesis (cf. Mannix & Neale, 2005) because we speculate that national diversity leads to destructive conflict. While we agree that national diversity brings a richness of various qualities that can lead to constructive task debates, it may also create differences and doubts which can lead to more negative processes, such as relationship or process conflicts. In addition, we introduced nationalism in our model as an attitude that may not only hinder the effectiveness of a nationally diverse group, but may also cause members to distance themselves from one another, thus limiting any opportunity for positive contact or learning (work-related or interpersonal learning) from other group members.

In sum, we proposed a model about the relationship between national diversity and relationship, task, and process conflict. We described nationalism as a main moderating factor of this relationship and proposed that when a nationally diverse workgroup is composed of strongly nationalistic members, the relationship between national diversity and both relationship conflict and process conflict will be strengthened. Task conflict, however, was proposed to decrease in nationally diverse groups that contain strongly nationalistic members. In order to manage conflict in nationally diverse groups, the role of nationalism is important in understanding how group
member attitudes and biases are reinforced in contexts such as multinational groups where they are likely to lead to problematic behaviors.

We hope this model provides interesting pathways for future research on diversity and conflict. For example, empirical research should consider different forms and views of diversity composition (Harrison & Klein, In press) regarding nationality to examine how national diversity is related to conflict types. Research has generally tended to study national diversity or nationality as social category diversity (e.g., Bayazit & Mannix, 2003; Hinds & Bailey, 2003), leading to negative group processes or outcomes. However, positive group processes might be expected if national diversity is considered as knowledge diversity. We have, for that reason, proposed that national diversity can lead to task conflict; that is, if the knowledge aspect of national diversity is emphasized and attended to then national diversity is likely to lead to positive outcomes. Workgroups can benefit from such diversity if the workgroups or teams are encouraged to focus on these positive aspects of diversity. For example, in our hypothetical workgroup comprising of Americans and Arabs, the members may have tension and conflict due to national diversity and negative nationalistic feelings. However, if they are redirected to shift their focus from national differences to that of combining their skills and unique knowledge, this group can come forth as an efficient and a creative workgroup with a large variety of potential. Punnett and Clemens (1999) have shown that even though nationally diverse groups take longer to make a decision, they consider a wider range and number of options before reaching a decision. This shows the positive capacity of a nationally diverse group which can produce more beneficial results depending on how these groups are managed and employed.

Research should also explore perceived differences across nations when examining national diversity. For example, some nations have similar histories and geographies and they have had good political and economic relationships. Group members from similar nations may not have negative nationalistic feelings against each other even though they come from two different nations. On the other hand, if the members are from two nations that hold nationalistic feelings against each other then they will have problems in communicating and working in one group. Similar to social distances, the differences across nations may be studied as national distances. Social
distances are the degree of acceptance or rejection of others who are perceived to possess certain desirable or undesirable characteristics (Bogardus, 1967). It must be noted that social distances are established at an interpersonal level. National distances are, however, developed at an ideological level mainly through indirect learning and are often laden with stereotypes and biases towards groups and people. These national distances guide communication processes when any two members from different nations come to work together in a group. Employers and managers must be aware of handling these national distances while forming workgroups.

In addition to national distances, future research should consider faultlines in nationally diverse groups. Faultlines are determined by the alignment of multiple demographics that can potentially subdivide a group into subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 1998). National faultlines are likely to be activated when national diversity is high with relatively higher likelihoods of subgroup formation when national distances are large. For example, a nationally diverse group of 3 members with a Chinese, an American, and a British member is more likely to have members’ segregation based on national faultlines due to presumably higher national distances between American and British on one hand and Chinese on the other, as compared to a group with an American, a British, and a Canadian member. The latter group ranks closer on national distances as shown by Parillo and Donoghue’s (2005) national survey. National diversity may become a problem when there are more chances of national subgroup formation. Members of national subgroups may be more likely to act upon their nationalistic attitudes when they share their feelings with other members. Status distances across the different nationalities (Phillips & Thomas-Hunt, Forthcoming), as well as power distances (Hofstede, 1983), are also important. The effects of these distances may multiply if they interact or they may act as moderators of the other depending upon the group composition and strength of nationalistic attitudes.

One area open to research is to empirically examine what specific aspects of nationalism are harmful to workgroup processes and outcomes. Nationalism can be seen as having two sides (both of which we proposed to exacerbate negative effects in nationally diverse workgroups): national favoritism towards one’s own nation and nationalistic derogation of other nations. Nationalism certainly can have positive effects in political arenas or in
homogenous organizations as attitudes of ingroup favoritism are linked to pride and strong feelings of efficacy (Alter, 1985; Dekker, 2001). While the favoritism aspect in Dekker et al.’s (2003) nationalism hierarchy is also seen as positive from a political science point of view, nationalistic derogation of the outgroup continues to be seen mainly as a negative component. Therefore, we believe that future research should disentangle these aspects of nationalism as they operate in different group contexts and task environments.

The levels of nationalism as well as its specific aspects (national favoritism and derogation) and their interactions can help provide an explanation of the relationship between national diversity and conflict. However, there is a challenge for future empirical work. Whereas national diversity can be measured by questions about group members’ nationality and can be aggregated to a group level construct of national diversity for a workgroup, nationalism is a rather complicated construct. It is an individual-level construct and could be simply aggregated to a group-level construct by summation of the different individuals’ nationalism scores. However, a group of three members with nationalism scores of 2, 2, and 5 and another group of members with nationalism scores of 3, 3, and 3 will give the same mean scores for group nationalism. The two groups, nonetheless, have two very different nationalism profiles with potentially very different group experiences. The first group has one member with a high nationalism score which could possibly lead to disturbances in group processes if that member acts upon his/her nationalistic beliefs. The chances of problematic interaction increase when these members belong to different nations that are perceived to be stereotypically distant by the member with strong nationalistic attitudes. The second group has members with the same level of nationalism but moderate nationalism scores which is less likely to be a big obstacle in their cooperation and efficiency. One option for researchers is to examine only the experience and outcomes of individuals, but we hope to forward group research and suggest that future researchers look to the recent developments in the study of asymmetry of attitudes and perceptions of group members (Jehn, Greer, Rispens, Barreto, & Rink, 2006; Jehn, Rupert, & Nauta, In press; Rispens, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2005). This research examines and captures the differences in group members and how this can influence group processes and outcomes (Jehn & Chatman, 2000).
Another interesting aspect to add to the model is time. The effects of diversity and nationalistic attitudes may not be constant over time and therefore future models should extend our hypotheses regarding diverse workgroups with reference to the time-frame in which the group is operating and empirical work should be conducted longitudinally. Although the effect of surface-level diversity (i.e., demographic diversity such as national diversity) on workgroup interaction and performance has been found to weaken over time (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998; Watson et al., 1993), Harrison et al. (1998) also noticed that deep-level (attitudinal) diversity strengthened over time. Our model incorporates both aspects, demographic diversity (national diversity) and deep-level attitudes (nationalism) and therefore, will be an interesting model to examine overtime with possibly simultaneous weakening of one effect (national diversity) and strengthening of another (nationalistic attitudes). Similar to Harrison et al. (1998), we believe individuals working in diverse groups will be motivated by their nationalistic attitudes as deep level constructs which may act as reinforcers for their destructive nationalistic attitudes, therefore exacerbating conflict within a workgroup over time. Also, research has noted that surface-level diversity (such as national diversity) affects social integration in newly formed diverse groups (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003; Watson et al., 1993) due to the discomfort associated with being or working with members of social groups categorized as different from their own. We believe that this discomfort may continue or even increase in the long-term if members maintain strong nationalistic attitudes.

Contrary to the above idea, a more positive picture would emerge if beneficial effects of national diversity are strengthened over time and the negative impact of nationalism weakens. We know that attitudes are learned and inculcated throughout one’s life, starting early in childhood (Sears, 1981, 1983, 1988), and that they are difficult to change or give up (Green & Seher, 2003; Sears & Funk, 1999). Nevertheless, we know that a learnt attitude can be altered as well. If nationalism has been reinforced through media and education, then there should be channels to change or modify it. When asked for the reasons for staying in his job despite the perceived national differences with other members, a member of a diverse workgroup replied that, “despite all the discrimination I feel as a foreign national, it is the ‘competition’ factor for good evaluations and promotions with the employees of other nationalities
that is the reason for my motivation.” Although there is no competition with other nationalities as far as monetary benefits are concerned, there is still competition among us for the good name of one’s own nation and country.” This illustrates that nationalistic attitudes can be diverted into positive competition when they drive members to compete in order to maintain their national image as strong performers. Strong national attachments and attitudes may actually have the potential to benefit group performance if discrimination and derogation based on nationality are avoided. For cross-national learning and effective workgroup interaction, we propose that members of diverse workgroups examine their personal beliefs for misperceptions and false stereotypes.

If organizations can increase their knowledge of the challenges faced by diverse groups, we hope they can improve their workgroup productivity and performance by encouraging positive interactions among nationally diverse group members. An organization can provide workgroups with an environment that facilitates open and accepting communication. Future research based on this model, therefore, can explore and observe how work environments can facilitate positive interaction and cross-national learning. Individuals are likely to continue to work in multinational organizations and diverse groups for reasons such as monetary rewards, job opportunities, and better benefits, despite negative group experiences. Such workgroups may have an adequate level of performance, but may never be exceptional, as the negative consequences of diversity may interfere with the real value-in-diversity, that is, commitment beyond the job contract and true creative application of the nationally diverse members’ capacities. By understanding and being able to harness the advantages of group diversity and conflict, we believe the potential for exceptional workgroup performance can ultimately be increased.
Chapter 3

The Moderating influence of Nationalism on the Relationship between National Diversity and Conflict

Based on Ayub & Jehn, 2010b

While diversity at work can create assets such as innovation, expertise, and wisdom (e.g., McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1996), it can also introduce problems such as lack of commitment, low involvement, and increased conflict (e.g., Mannix & Neale, 2005; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Research shows that different types of diversity can have contrasting effects, with positive effects often determined by access to information while negative effects are often caused by social processes such as social categorization (c.f. Dahlin, Weingart, & Hinds, 2005; van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004). In this study of nationally diverse workgroups, we focus on perceived national diversity, defined as the perception of employees that differences in national backgrounds exist in their workgroup (Dahlin et al., 2005; Zellmer-Bruhn, Maloney, Bhappu, & Salvador, 2008). A recent theoretical piece (Ayub & Jehn, 2006) discussed the need to study national diversity as a variable that can promote potentially helpful as well as harmful conflict. To understand the effects of national diversity in multinational groups more thoroughly, we empirically study the effects of perceived national diversity on relationship and task conflicts moderated by two forms of nationalism: national ingroup preference for one’s own nationality and derogation of other nationalities.
We examine if the nationalistic attitudes of group members moderate the relationship between national diversity and conflict. We distinguish between two aspects of nationalism: national preference and nationalistic derogation. Nationalism can be considered as positive and negative attitudes of superiority that one holds towards one’s own nationality (ingroup preference) and rejection of other nations (outgroup derogation; Dekker, Malova, & Hoogendoorn, 2003; Mummendey, Klink, & Brown, 2001). According to Ayub and Jehn (2006), nationalism influences individuals’ everyday activities and actions. Since nationalistic attitudes are context-specific, nationalism is likely to be activated in a national diversity setting because nationally diverse members categorize other nationalities (social category theory, Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and this affects their intragroup behavior and relationships. Given recent national, political, and economic events, these differences in nationalities have become more pronounced and have reinforced nationalistic feelings in many countries (see Ahmad, 2004; Li & Brewer, 2004; Weiss, 2003) including multinational workgroup settings. We propose an interaction of national diversity with nationalism such that when the derogation aspect of nationalism is present, we expect the experience of conflict, specifically relationship and task conflict, in members of nationally diverse groups to be exacerbated (see Fig 1). We also propose that the moderating effect of nationalistic derogation will be stronger than the moderating effect of national preference.

Task conflicts are defined as perceived disagreements about the job content and relationship conflicts are perceived interpersonal clashes about non-task issues (Jehn, 1995). The contrasting consequences of diversity can be described in terms of task and relationship conflicts. By definition, task conflicts are debates and arguments about the task contents and for such arguments functional expertise and information is required (e.g., Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). Thereby, if diversity implies wider access to information, then it also assumes increased task conflict. Additionally, if diversity leads to social categorizations that distinguish the group members into different categorized subgroups, relationship conflict is expected to arise among these subgroups (e.g., O’Reilly, Williams, & Barsade, 1998; Pelled, 1996). We, therefore, examine a model of the effects of national
diversity and nationalism on task and relationship conflict. We study task and relationship conflicts as these two types are the most common in diverse workgroups (Simons & Peterson, 2000).

We contribute to the literature on diversity, conflict, and multinational teams by examining the importance of social attitudes and feelings (such as nationalistic preferences and derogation) that influence the relationships and behavior at workplaces. This study will also extend past theorizing (Ayub & Jehn, 2006) by empirically examining the role of social attitudes within organizational groups. In addition, we contribute to the diversity and conflict literature by showing that it is not just the categories or aspects of diversity that matter, but rather the attitudes of individuals (e.g., nationalistic attitudes in national diversity setting) also matter significantly.
With a collection of mixed findings on diversity, scholars now attempt to specify the research focus in terms of types and moderators of diversity (cf. Jackson, Joshi, & Erhardt, 2003; Mannix & Neale, 2005; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Certain diversity types, such as national diversity, can serve as a double-edged sword with positive as well as negative effects. Ayub and Jehn (2006) proposed that national diversity can be considered to have both a social category aspect and also a structural or informational aspect of diversity at the same time. A nationally diverse group consisting of members from different nationalities has the tendency for members to socially categorize the other members into ingroup and outgroups and thus create an us-versus-them tension and intergroup discrimination (based on nationality) that negatively affects the group. On the other hand, Jehn (1997) suggested that when members of a group have different experiential backgrounds, they may benefit from informational diversity of the group (see also Cramton & Hinds, 2005; Maznevski, 1994). This informational characteristic can positively affect the group. On the basis of these observations, we presume that national diversity is positively related to both relationship as well as task conflict. The likelihood of national diversity leading to helpful or harmful conflict outcomes, however, depends upon certain factors. Nationalism is an important factor relevant to national diversity since nationalism is an attitude towards nationalities that is likely to be activated in a multinational context and influences perceptions and interactions in nationally diverse workgroups. Therefore, we will examine the different effects of nationalistic attitudes (i.e., ingroup preference, outgroup derogation) and how this influences conflict in multinational workgroups.

In addition, there have been very few studies regarding attitudes such as nationalism despite the recognition that attitudes are important in influencing and directing one’s behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Attitudes are formed over time through a number of direct and indirect experiences that are often ingrained within cultural and national contexts (cf. Lavine, Huff, Wagner, & Sweeney, 1998). It is important to understand members’ attitudes when they work together as a group since the groups’ performance depends on how the group members interact and respond to one another. Therefore, if diversity and conflict, as well as social attitudes
(such as nationalistic preferences, outgroup rejection and derogation), are considered in workgroups, this will contribute to a better understanding of multinational workgroup dynamics.

This study focuses on the perceptions of diversity and intragroup conflict of individual members of multinational workgroups where the members hold attitudes towards their own nationality and other nationalities. Attitudes are held by individuals and influence conflict perceptions at the individual level. For example, members of a nationally diverse group including Pakistani and Chinese members are likely to experience different levels of conflict due to the differing nationalistic attitudes of each member about the other nationality. It is thus important to study perceptions and attitudes of employees to determine the resulting conflict effects. Therefore, we focus on employees in multinational workgroups to examine their nationalistic attitudes and the influence of these attitudes on group processes. We examine Pakistanis in this study, a sample that has been relatively ignored even though Pakistanis make up a significant part of the diverse workforce around the world (see Ogbonna & Harris, 2006). In addition, significant events such as the September 11 attack on the New York twin towers have influenced attitudes towards certain nationalities working in multinational settings. Research has explored the changes in attitudes of Americans towards certain nationalities and religions (e.g., Li & Brewer, 2004; Skitka, 2005), but has not examined the attitudes in workgroup setting and specifically the attitudes of employees from predominantly Muslim countries (e.g., Pakistan) and how they now react in multinational workgroups. With this study, we will be able to examine the relationship between diversity and conflict in yet another culture, as well as explain this relationship through the moderating effect of nationalism.

Theoretical Background: National Diversity and Conflict

Diversity research reveals contradictory results regarding the effects of diversity on group outcomes (Barsade & Gibson, 1998; Jackson, Joshi, & Erhardt, 2003; Mannix & Neale, 2005; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Research has shown that specific diversity types such as social category diversity (e.g., age and gender) have negative effects on
workgroup processes and outcomes (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Pelled, 1996; Pelled et al., 1999b), while others have argued that such diversity types can also have positive effects (Jehn, 1997; Ayub & Jehn, 2006). In this study, we specifically look at national diversity and its effects on members’ conflict experiences. National diversity is an especially relevant category as more multinational workgroups exist within organizations and the organizations expand across nations. Social category theory suggests that self-definition occurs in intergroup contexts (Hogg & Turner, 1987), such as nationally diverse workgroups in this case, where certain characteristics are contextually more salient than others. When members are placed in multinational workgroups, they are likely to perceive the national differences and differentiate workgroup members into national categories (Jenkins, 1997). Research has shown that social identities are context-dependent and one identity is more salient and relevant than another within a specific context. For example, when members of a single nationality are studied, cultural or ethnic identities are more salient, but the national identity takes precedence over cultural and ethnic identities when more than one nationality is present (Kozmitski, 1996). Therefore, in this study we specifically consider national diversity given that our focus is on multinational workgroups where multiple nationalities are present.

Social theories suggest that categorization into subgroups follows almost automatically after individuals perceive differences (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Thatcher & Jehn, 1998). For example, when an Indian and a Dutch employee are working together, the two are likely to perceive national differences. Thereafter, despite the fact that the Indian has lived in The Netherlands for over twenty years, the two will still categorize each other as two different social categories. The categorization is often based on visible characteristics such as skin color and physical features (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992). Other bases of categorization include language, lifestyle, the social group one is identified with, and eating, dressing, and living habits. These same issues may actually lead some individuals to reaffirm their social identity when in a situation where an identity becomes challenged. This reaffirmation effect of seeking a relevant social identity depending on the context (Kozmitski, 1996) implies that members identify with their nationality as the salient identity when in a
nationally diverse context. Members of a nationally diverse workgroup are, therefore, more likely to categorize other group members on the basis of nationality as an important characteristic when in a multinational context, such as a nationally diverse workgroup (Kozmitski, 1996; Laurent, 1983).

In this study, we also contribute to the existing literature by taking a more perceptual perspective on national diversity. Dahlin et al. (2005) reasoned that the differences in results of diversity studies could be explained with reference to the salience of the demographic factors; that is, whether they are actively perceived or not (see also Garcia-Prieto, Bellards, & Schneider, 2003; Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Randel, 2002). According to this research, perceptions are more influential than actual or objectively constructed variables (Jehn & Bezrukova, 2010; Zellmer-Bruhn et al., 2008). For example, researchers of conflict asymmetries show that it is the perceived attributes that affects group’s dynamics and outcomes (Jehn & Chatman, 1999; Jehn, Rupert, & Nauta, 2006).

In order to perceive conflict, Bayazit and Mannix (2003) also point out the importance of the subjective perception of members that their group is comprised of members with different characteristics. We propose that diversity will lead to conflict only when the members are cognitively aware of that diversity (Ellemers, Kortekaas, Ouwerkerk, 1999). While the human nature of ‘homophily’ (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954; Ruef, Aldrich, & Carter, 2003) and similarity-attraction (Byrne, 1961, 1971) leads to interaction with others who are similar and familiar, those perceived to be dissimilar will be categorized as outgroups (Turner, 1985). Based on this, we study the subjective perception of national diversity among workers and how it is related to conflict in a multinational workgroup context.

Relationship conflict is disagreement or contention about interpersonal issues and incompatibilities among group members (c.f. De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, 1995; Jehn & Rispens, 2008). The quality of the interpersonal relationships in a group is lowered as diversity increases in the groups (Riordan & Shore, 1997). According to self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985), dissimilarity impedes work-unit friendships. The categorization processes associated with diversity can lead to heightened levels of intragroup conflict (Jehn et al., 1999; O’Reilly et al., 1998; Pelled, 1996; Pelled et al., 1999a; Thatcher & Jehn, 1998). Similarly, research
shows that members of nationally diverse groups are likely to experience relationship conflict (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000). For example, if a Pakistani is placed in a group with an Italian, or an Iraqi is placed with an American, these group members will perceive the national differences and will be less comfortable working with each other due to the national differences than if they were in a nationally homogenous group. Prejudices and biases guide the interaction with the outgroup members so that the ingroup-vs-outgroup differentiation becomes salient and influences subsequent behavior and perceptions. The perceived differences not only serve to differentiate people into social categories, they also indicate that the individual is in a group with a dissimilar other and thus this increases likelihood of relationship conflict among ingroup and outgroup members.

Research on national diversity reveals that it negatively affects members’ social integration into the group (Watson, Kumar, & Michaelson, 1993), thus also increasing relationship conflicts (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003). This can be due to the discomfort associated with being or working with members of national groups categorized as different from their own. Once identified as different, the group members will be categorized as ingroup or outgroup members. We, therefore, propose that national diversity will be related to relationship conflict.

Hypothesis 1: Perceptions of national diversity by workgroup members will be positively related to relationship conflict.

When members of a group have different experiential backgrounds, the group may represent informational diversity (Jehn, 1997). This diversity of information and experience can facilitate task accomplishment as it is positively related to task conflict (Jehn et al., 1999). When members with different perspectives participate in a group, they help enhance debates about task content (Hoffman, 1978). A nationally diverse group is also likely to consist of members with a diverse experiential background. Research has suggested that workers from different backgrounds and geographic contexts (e.g., nations) are likely to have diverse sets of knowledge (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Bantel & Jackson, 1989) and assumptions (Cramton & Hinds, 2005). Adler (1997) specifically theorizes that cross-national diversity will increase creativity and different task opinions. Therefore, diverse bases of information that national diversity can
bring to a group can lead to task conflict (Amason, 1996; de Dreu & Vliert, 1997; Jehn, 1995; Jehn et al., 1999; Schulz-Hardt, Jochims, & Frey, 2002). Task conflict develops in workgroups due to disagreements about the content of the tasks being performed, such as differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions. Consider again the example of an Italian working alongside a Pakistani. Both of them will be motivated to prove their national esteem by participating in the task arguments (van Knippenberg, 2000) and they will have different opinions to offer based on the diversity of learning and thought processing that they have acquired (Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997). The differentiation of nationally diverse group members into national categories may rise to an intergroup competitive situation (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) where the members will be motivated to make an effort to put forth the best image and self-representation (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) of their own national category. Being different in this sense may facilitate the discussion and debate of different perspectives in the group that result from unique cultural learning, educational background, and experiential learning. This can lead the group members to productive debates and arguments over the tasks.

In addition, outgroup minorities can be active and influential in diverse workgroups (cf. Moscovici, 1980; Wood, Lundgren, Ouellette, Busceme, & Blackstone, 1994). This may be especially true for an objective task-relevant discussion or debate. Objective tasks often allow the minority voice to provide differing views relevant for objective and useful information (see Wood et al., 1994). Moscovici (1980) suggested that minority influences can be quite strong because of the diversity and uniqueness of the individuals in that group (see also Moscovici, Mugny, & Papastamou, 1981). Studies suggest that outgroup disagreements are often expected in diverse groups and opinion differences with the outgroup members are accepted because they are congruent with the expectations of being different (e.g., Phillips, 2003; Phillips, Mannix, Neale, & Gruenfeld, 2004; Rink & Ellemers, 2007). We can, therefore, see how national diversity may cause relationship conflict (Hypothesis 1) but also shows a potential for increased task conflict as task differences and opinions are debated (i.e., task conflict; see van Knippenberg, De Dreu & Homan,
Thus, we propose that national diversity will lead to increased task conflict.

*Hypothesis 2*: Perceptions of national diversity by workgroup members will be positively related to task conflict.

**The Moderating Role of Nationalism: Ingroup Preference and Outgroup Derogation**

To resolve the issue of contrasting results, Jackson and Joshi (2004) have suggested that diversity research examine individual attitudinal differences. Although a few studies have examined the relationship between national diversity and conflict specifically (e.g., Bayazit & Mannix, 2003), studies that examine the attitudinal moderators of this relationship are rare. While Brief et al. (2005) have emphasized the importance and influence of attitudes that members bring to the workgroups from outside communities, this has been a neglected aspect of diversity and conflict research. We believe that one of the main moderating aspects between national diversity and conflict is nationalism, in two forms: ingroup preference and outgroup derogation. Nationalism is especially relevant when workers from different backgrounds come to work together such as in multinational workgroups (Adler, 1991; Garcia-Prieto et al., 2003). Social identity and social comparison research shows that it is important to determine not only one’s own identity but also the identities of the interaction partner (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Barsade, 2002). Once these identities are known, social category theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) assumes that individuals are placed in different social categories. The interaction is consequently influenced by the attitudes held towards these social categories and we describe nationalism as the social attitude towards other nationalities within nationally diverse workgroups.

Past research has defined nationalism as a form of ethnocentrism (Sumner, 1906) that combines positive feelings of individuals toward workgroup members’ of their own national group and a bias against other national groups different from their own (Druckman, 2006; Federico, Golec, & Dial, 2005; Schatz & Staub, 1997). While ingroup as well as outgroup attitudes can both be considered as nationalist attitudes, we distinguish the two from each other and believe that they are different
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functional concepts that may not necessarily work together or covary (Duckitt, Callaghan, & Wagner, 2005; Duckitt & Para, 2004; Shah, Brazy, & Higgins, 2004). That is, there can be a preference for ingroup members but not hate for outgroup members or even a liking of outgroup members but realizing they are different. We define nationalism as an attitude of national superiority an individual holds for his/her national group. This concept has two aspects: certain degrees of national preference for one’s own nation and nationalistic derogation for the members belonging to other nations (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Mummendey et al., 2001; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). Similarly, Dekker et al.’s (2003) framework of nationalism includes both positive patriotic feelings and attitudes of extreme negative nationalism. In distinguishing the two aspects of nationalism as national preference and nationalistic derogation, we propose a moderating effect of nationalistic derogation such that when nationalistic derogation is present in a nationally diverse workgroup, it is expected to exacerbate the experience of conflict (i.e., relationship and task conflict). We also delineate specific arguments for national preference as a moderating factor that will influence the relationship between perceived diversity and task and relationship conflict, but to a lesser extent than attitudes of national derogation.

Nationalistic Outgroup Derogation and Ingroup Preference

Since nationalism is a context-specific attitude (Haslam, McGarty, & Turner, 1996), it is likely to be active and especially relevant in nationally diverse groups. For example, Hinds and Bailey (2003) noted that members of international teams use an ‘us-versus-them’ attitude. The differences among social categories in diverse groups (Pelled, 1996) influence perceptions and behaviors such as prejudice (Allport, 1954). Different nationalities in a workgroup can trigger intergroup discrimination just by the awareness that other nationalities are present (Rivenburgh, 1997). Individuals have the tendency to communicate more with similar workers who are given ingroup preference (Byrne, 1961), and categorize the dissimilar as outgroup members (Tajfel, 1982), leading to communication biases and problems (Higgins, 1999). Thus, the categorization process triggered by national diversity will be strengthened
and sustained in the presence of nationalism in the forms of outgroup derogation and ingroup preference, but to different degrees. My tendency to want to work with members similar to me (ingroup preference) may increase the likelihood that I will experience relationship and task conflict in a multinational group. However, my attitudes toward outgroup members (outgroup derogation) will exacerbate the positive relationship between national diversity and conflict much more so given the negative components associated with outgroup derogation. We discuss nationalism and its two components in the following paragraphs.

Adler (1991) has suggested that national differences play an important role in group dynamics and processes. We propose that the relationship conflict that was predicted in a nationally diverse group will be intensified due to different nationalistic attitudes (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000). We propose that when members of a nationally diverse group possess attitudes of nationalism, they will experience more relationship conflict than when nationalist attitudes are inactive. Nationalistic derogation is particularly about negative intentions directed towards the outgroup. It can bring about feelings of discomfort, irritation, and hatred towards different others (Peterson, 2002; Scheff, 1994), which will increase relationship conflict as compared to the members of a nationally diverse group with members who exhibit low nationalistic derogation. Nationalistic derogation includes the belief that the outgroup is inferior in qualities (Allport, 1954) and deserves inferior treatment. These beliefs restrict a person from initiating and encouraging communication since the outgroup is considered to be less honest (Brewer, 1999) and may be less worthy of being involved. The outgroup derogatory attitude of nationalism is, therefore, expected to intensify the perceived conflict among group members.

When there are derogatory feelings towards some group members, the members are less likely to learn and benefit from contact because the effort is often directed at self-verification of the presumed derogatory attitudes (Swann, 1983) or confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998) rather than on the workgroup task. Consider a group in which group members have derogatory feelings towards other group members. The nationalistic derogation may lead members to be engaged in impolite, hostile, and/or
defeating behaviors that signify relationship conflict. This could be in terms of rejecting or demeaning an outgroup member’s viewpoints or it could be in the form of denying information to those outgroup members. Derogation can also be displayed by passing remarks at the outgroup member or about the outgroup member(s) to other group members. For example, a group including a Pakistani and an Indian may not perform to its best of potential if one of these members holds derogatory attitudes towards the other due to negative nationalistic feelings. We therefore hypothesize that outgroup derogatory attitudes toward group members who are from nations different from an individual’s own will intensify the relationship conflict of members in a nationally diverse group.

Hypothesis 3: The attitude of nationalistic derogation will moderate the relationship between perceived national diversity and relationship conflict, such that the presence of nationalistic derogation intensifies the positive relationship between national diversity and relationship conflict.

Nationalistic Derogation and Task Conflict

We proposed earlier that national diversity will lead to task conflict. Some research has, however, found results that may indicate other relationships (e.g., Bayazit & Mannix, 2003). Studies show that members dissimilar in demographic and functional characteristics are more inclined to have less frequent communication among group members (Adler, 1997; Zenger & Lawrence, 1989). If this occurs they may not be very involved in the tasks (Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992) and therefore experience less conflict regarding the task. This appears to contradict our assumption that national diversity will lead to task conflict. However, some of the previous studies have shown that it is not the national diversity itself but the attitudes about task interaction (e.g., Homan, van Knippenberg, van Kleef, & De Dreu, 2007) that causes a decrease in productive discussion and task-opinion sharing. Research has shown that group members may not feel comfortable disclosing their opinions and ideas to other members who are different from them in terms of demography and attitudes (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003; van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004). Although national diversity may potentially allow the diverse group members to be
involved in task conflict given their background differences and experiences (Thatcher & Jehn, 1998), there are other factors like restricted communication (Lau & Murnighan, 2005) related to attitudes of nationalism that may cause a group to fail to benefit from its diversity potential. We propose to explain these findings in the framework of our model by examining the nationalistic attitudes held by the group members of a nationally diverse group.

While national diversity has the potential for groups to have task debates and constructive conflicts (Watson, Johnson, Kumar, & Critelli, 1998), the group may not be able to take advantage of the possible beneficial aspects due to nationalistic attitudes, specifically outgroup derogation. When the information-sharing is based on subjective perceptions and evaluations of other’s knowledge and expertness (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Borgatti & Cross, 2003), it is likely that the members will favor the national ingroup and discriminate against the outgroups (i.e., outgroup derogation). The contributions and capacities of the outgroups will be ignored or disregarded (Elsass & Graves, 1997) and detract from members’ efforts to participate as they withhold useful information from each other (Armstrong & Cole, 1995; Milliken & Martins, 1996). Blake and Mouton (1962) observed that, in a problem solving situation, the group members were more inflexible when they approached conflict resolution with a competitive ‘win-lose’ orientation rather than a problem-solving orientation. When members tend to favor their ingroup and disregard the opinions of the outgroups (Yaniv & Kleinberger, 2000), the likely task conflict in nationally diverse groups will be diminished as the problem-solving orientation is less of a focus. Also, the ingroup-versus-outgroup nationalistic behavior has the tendency to give rise to knowledge-sharing hostility (Husted & Michaiilova, 2002) where members may refuse to share information and thus restrict the flow of information in the group (Huang & Ocker, 2006). Accordingly, we propose that nationalism moderates the positive effect of national diversity on task conflict. Nationalistic attitudes of outgroup derogation will reduce the effect of national diversity on task conflict as members focus less on the task dimension of the group interaction.
We assume that nationalistic derogation will diminish the task conflict in nationally diverse workgroups because members will be less likely to communicate or cooperate within the workgroup (Lau & Murnighan, 2005). For example, an Indian would consider herself to be more competent than a Dutch member due to her nationalistic derogatory attitude against the Dutch and may suspect that the Dutch would not share information or the resources equally and honestly with her as the Dutch would with a nationally similar member. In fact, she would be rather more willing to share with a member who is from her own country or preferably a similar country. Both of them lose the chance of beneficial task-specific sharing due to being a nationalistic member or even a target of nationalism. Therefore, we propose that nationalistic derogation will moderate the positive relationship between national diversity and task conflict such that any task conflict possible due to national diversity will be lowered in the presence of nationalistic outgroup derogation. We, therefore, hypothesize that nationalistic derogation will weaken the positive relationship between national diversity to task conflict.

_Hypothesis 4:_ The attitude of nationalistic derogation will moderate the relationship between perceived national diversity and task conflict, such that the presence of nationalistic derogation weakens the relationship between national diversity and task conflict.

Finally, we hypothesize about the moderating role of nationalistic derogation compared to national preference. We propose that national derogation has strong moderation effects compared to national preference. National preference in terms of ingroup favoritism may restrict workgroup involvement and communication with diverse others but may not cause workgroup members to shun outgroup members, as is the case with members who have the attitude of outgroup derogation (Allport, 1954). National preference is also not likely to provoke negative feelings such as exclusion and discomfort compared to outgroup derogation. While the tendency to prefer similar members (ingroup preference) may increase the likelihood of conflict in a multinational group, the attitudes toward outgroup members (outgroup derogation) will exacerbate conflict in nationally diverse groups given the negative components associated with outgroup derogation. We propose that ingroup preference will not be as
deleterious as outgroup derogation. Therefore, we believe that derogation may be considerably more significant in aggravating the conflicts in nationally diverse workgroups than attitudes of national preference.

_Hypothesis 5_: Nationalistic derogation will be a stronger moderator of the relationship of national diversity and conflict than national preference.

**METHOD**

**Data and Sample**

We computed results on the basis of survey data from 131 IT professionals working in 29 multinational workgroups in 4 organizations located in Islamabad, Pakistan. Out of the 160 total surveys, 29 had to be removed due to incomplete or erroneous responses. By assuring the organizations and groups that they surveys would be anonymous and important for the company, we were able to secure an 82% response rate. Considering our target sample, national diversity is rare in workgroups, as well as in the general society in Pakistan. Thus, national diversity is prominently noticeable whenever present in a workgroup and it is likely that any difference is highly visible and salient to Pakistanis who are generally unaccustomed to national diversity (i.e., contrast effect or exaggerated differences; Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965). In this sample, the average amount of diversity in a group was around 30% diverse members. Therefore, this was a typical sample to study national diversity within the Pakistani multinational setting. The groups generally included one or two non-Pakistani members. The participants were involved in groups with an average group size of 7.73 (SD= 3.45) members. An all-Pakistani sample was used to control for the effect of members working in a workgroup within their homeland as compared to that of members of workgroups who are working away from their homelands (Doucet & Jehn, 1997). The multinational workgroups of the participants included members from Pakistan, the United States, China, Korea, and United Arab Emirates. The mean age of the participants was 28.94 (SD= 6.62) with the age range of 28 to 63 years, and 23 (17.6%) were women. The participation was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential.
Measures

**Perceived National Diversity.** Similar to Zellmer-Bruhn et al. (2008), we were interested in the members’ subjective experience of national diversity in their workgroups. Accordingly, members’ perceptions of national diversity were determined by items asking whether group members perceived that the group had members with different nationalities. We adapted two Zellmer-Bruhn et al. (2008) items such that the perception of national diversity was measured by asking respondents how much they thought their workgroup was diverse with reference to nationality with a 7-point Likert scale (“How diverse is your workgroup in nationality?”). We also added a second item asking for the approximate percentage of dissimilar nationalities present in the workgroup (“What percentage of your workgroup are not Pakistanis?”). We computed the average of the two items after converting the percentage to a 7-point scale. The items gave a mean value of 1.51 (SD= 1.01) and an alpha coefficient of .76. The Cronbach alpha coefficient showed sufficient internal consistency for using the two items as a measure of perceived diversity. Although this was an individual level study, we also checked the variances across members who belonged to the same group. The two items gave adequate range (from 0 to 6) showing the existence of national diversity and that members within the same group perceived diversity differently, similar to the study of Zellmer-Bruhn et al. (2008).

**Task and Relationship Conflict.** We used Jehn’s (1995) scales for measuring task and relationship conflict. The items were included in the survey in question format with 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (Never) to 7 (A Lot). Nine items were selected for measuring the conflict types. We used principal component analysis with oblique rotation to confirm and establish our scales and subscales. The analysis for the conflict items distinguished task conflict and relationship conflict (See Table 1). Four items measured task conflict (e.g., “How much conflict of ideas is there among the members of this workgroup?”) and 5 items measured relationship conflict (e.g., “How much do members differ about personal issues?”). The Cronbach alpha coefficients for task and relationship conflict were .86 and .90, respectively.
Nationalism. We conceptualize nationalism as an attitude comprised of two components, namely, national preference and nationalistic derogation. To measure individuals’ level of national preference, we used the nationalism items from Dekker et al.’s (2003)

Table 1: Principal Components Analysis of the Conflict Items (N=131)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Relationship Conflict</th>
<th>Task Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Conflict of ideas</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Differences of viewpoints on decisions</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Disagreement about varying opinions</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Differences of opinions</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance explained= 59.74%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1. Fighting about personal issues | .838 | .043 |
| 2. Differences about personal issues | .959 | -.182 |
| 3. Personality clashes | .794 | .118 |
| 4. Interpersonal fighting about people | .816 | .120 |
| 5. Do not get along interpersonally | .694 | .109 |
| Variance explained= 13.32% |
| Total variance explained= 73.07 |

nationalism scale (e.g., “I feel I am a member of one Pakistani family”; “Pakistan is the best country to live in”; “In general, I like Pakistanis better.”) and the Pettigrew and Meertens’ (1995) blatant rejection subscale (e.g., “Other nationalities have jobs that Pakistanis should have only because of their nationalities”; “Pakistanis can never be comfortable with other nationalities even if they are close friends”) with 7-point Likert scales (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). The principal component analysis of the items with oblique rotation extracted 2 components shown in Table 2. Cronbach alpha coefficients for ingroup preference and nationalistic derogation are .91 and .78 respectively.

Controls. We included age and gender as control variables since they are known to have significant effects on the perception of conflict (Jehn, 1995; Jehn et al., 1999; Pelled, 1996; Randel, 2002). The results,
however, did not differ significantly in the presence of these variables in this study.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations. Means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations were computed for all the measures as

Table 2: Principal Components Analysis of the Nationalism Items (N=131)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>National Preference</th>
<th>Nationalistic Derogation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I prefer being a Pakistani citizen</td>
<td>.724</td>
<td>-.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I prefer to live in Pakistan</td>
<td>.827</td>
<td>-.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In general, I like Pakistanis better</td>
<td>.870</td>
<td>-.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pakistanis are the best people for contacts</td>
<td>.752</td>
<td>.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Pakistan is the best country to live in.</td>
<td>.906</td>
<td>-.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Pakistani nationality is the best nationality</td>
<td>.862</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I feel I share a common origin</td>
<td>.817</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I feel I am a member of one Pakistani family</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I feel I have Pakistani blood</td>
<td>.659</td>
<td>-.017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variance explained = 39.02%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>National Preference</th>
<th>Nationalistic Derogation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. The Pakistanis should not mix with other</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>.562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. All the Pakistanis should live in Pakistan</td>
<td>.124</td>
<td>.422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The non-Pakistanis living in Pakistan should leave</td>
<td>-.133</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. International cooperation overburdens</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Other nationalities have jobs that Pakistanis should</td>
<td>-.091</td>
<td>.515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Other nationalities and Pakistanis can never be</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfortable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Other nationalities are less competent</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variance explained = 15.06%

Total Variance explained = 54.08

presented in Table 3. Age was negatively related to perceptions of relationship and task conflicts as well as nationalistic derogation. This shows that older members experience less task and relationship conflict and they are less nationally derogatory as compared to younger members.
Gender did not have significant correlations with any of the study variables.

**Hypotheses Testing.** Hypotheses were tested with regression analyses after centralizing our variables for interactions (Aiken & West, 1991). We entered national diversity and the nationalism components in the first step and then the interactions of national diversity with the national preference and nationalistic derogation variables in the second step (see Tables 4 and 5).

Our first hypothesis, that national diversity will lead to relationship conflict, could not be confirmed as national diversity failed to have a significant main effect on relationship conflict. However, national diversity had a direct main effect on perceptions of task conflict (shown in Table 4), thus verifying our second hypothesis that national diversity is positively associated with task conflict. Hypothesis 3 predicted a moderating effect of nationalistic derogation on relationship conflict. The interaction between national diversity and nationalistic derogation showed significant moderating effects on relationship conflict, such that the presence of a derogatory attitude among workers with perceived national diversity in their group led to increased relationship conflict among the workers (see graph 1). This result, in combination with the results for hypothesis 1, showed that national diversity itself may not be directly related to relationship conflict but through strong moderation effects of factors such as nationalistic derogation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>28.97</td>
<td>6.64</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. National Diversity</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. National Preference</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Nationalistic Derogation</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Relationship Conflict</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>-.24**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Task Conflict</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We expected that perceived task conflict would be decreased when group members have derogatory attitudes (Hypothesis 4). Noticeably, the results showed an increase in task conflict when the workers reported national diversity and the presence of nationalistic derogation as shown in Table 4 (see also graph 2). When workers perceived national diversity in their group and were high on nationalistic derogation, relationship as well as task conflict was higher among these workers as compared to workers who had lower levels of nationalistic derogation. Our results also support our hypothesis 5, that nationalistic derogation is a stronger moderator of the national diversity to conflict relationship than national preference.

**Table 4:** Regression Analysis: Dependent Variable is Task Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔF</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1: Main effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Diversity (ND)</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingroup Preference (IP)</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgroup Derogation (OD)</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>3.68**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2: Two-way interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND X IP</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND X OD</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>2.52**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 131; *p<.10, **p<.05

**Table 5:** Regression Analysis: Dependent Variable is Relationship Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔF</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1: Main effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Diversity (ND)</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingroup Preference (IP)</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgroup Derogation (OD)</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td>6.04***</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>6.04***</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2: Two-way interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND X IP</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND X OD</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>5.33***</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>3.79**</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 131; **p<.05, ***p<.005
DISCUSSION

Recently, nationality has been recognized as a distinct and important demographic characteristic but it has not been studied in depth. In this study, we examined how national diversity can influence group processes such as task and relationship conflict. We identified nationalism as an important factor in nationally diverse workgroups due to the strong attributes associated with national diversity in many multinational groups. We defined nationalism as attitudes incorporating national preference and nationalistic derogation. We hypothesized that nationalism exacerbates the relationship of national diversity to relationship conflict due to contact distances and tensions between ingroups-vs-outgroups. At the same time, we believed that task conflict will be undervalued in the presence of nationalism when nationalistic members hold back information and ignore the information and opinions of the outgroup members. The results supported our hypotheses that national diversity increased task conflict and nationalistic derogation intensified this effect. National diversity had a significant direct effect on task conflict but not on relationship conflict. We predicted that national diversity leads to task conflict given that national diversity implies functional diversity and a wider range of skills and expertise which could assist creativity. The results showed that national diversity, for this sample, was perhaps more important as a functional diversity characteristic and did not form a basis for interpersonal issues by itself. The finding substantiates previous studies speculating national diversity as a potential contributor to positive group processes (e.g., Adler, 1997; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992, Jehn et al., 1999). This work is also consistent with research on minority influence (Moscovici, 1980) and expectancy congruence (Rink & Ellemers, 2007; Phillips et al., 2004). National diversity is somewhat rare in Pakistani organizations and thus any nationally diverse workgroups were perhaps more enthusiastically welcomed as unique by Pakistanis who were able to be a part of it. Thus, members from nationalities other than Pakistani were taken as valued minority who were expected to be different. When asked about their workgroups, the participants reported their workgroup as generally more competent indicating that they were possibly capable of perceiving and appreciating the informational diversity present in their groups.
When we take into account the influence of nationalism, the relationship of national diversity to both task as well as relationship conflict was affected by nationalistic derogation. Both relationship and task conflicts were increased in the presence of members with nationalistic derogatory attitudes. Apparently, national diversity by itself does not always possess the potential for relationship conflict unless we incorporate moderating variables, such as attitudes, into the model. This observation not only confirmed our hypothesis that derogatory attitudes increase relationship conflict in nationally diverse workgroups, it also pointed out the importance of the moderating effects of nationalistic attitudes in nationally diverse workgroups.

Nationalistic derogation moderated the relationship between national diversity and task conflict such that it increased task conflict in nationally diverse workgroups. This provides hope that nationalistic derogation can be converted into positive competition, or task conflict, in multinational workgroups. We can explain the above results in view of intergroup competition (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). When members perceive national diversity and they have a nationalistic attitude, they will be motivated to enhance their national esteem and thus make an effort to bring forth the best representation of their national image (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Group members may be tempted to derogate and disregard the outgroup members when they are perceived to be different and competing for the same resources and rewards as the ingroup members. This threat is also likely to compel them to compete even more forcefully, not only to win the resources but also to defeat the outgroup members. For example, we mentioned that an Indian was likely to be suspicious of a Dutch colleague’s information and resource sharing, but it is also possible that this challenges her (the Indian’s) competence and makes her invest more in proving her (derogatory) superiority. The group members will be motivated to self-verify and uphold their presumed national esteem and expectancies (Swann, 1983; Swann, Kwan, Polzer, & Milton, 2003a; Swann, Polzer, Seyle, & Ko, 2004). They may exert more effort at proving their national superiority by competing with the outgroup members and challenging their own skills and ideas as they strive to evoke self-congruent reactions.
(Swann, et al., 2003b). This could take the shape of healthy competition, task debates, and better performance. Future research should look at this mediation chain to explain performance in multinational groups. Keeping in view the potential curvilinear relationship between task conflict and performance (Jehn, 1995), further research on the influence of nationalism should also explore the levels of nationalism and task conflict and how they influence performance.

While nationalistic derogation was apparently capable of increasing task conflict in nationally diverse workgroups, it also increased perceptions of relationship conflict. Relationship conflict has been consistently shown to have negative effects on group outcomes and thus found to be an undesirable type of conflict. In view of the results, we know that nationalistic derogation is harmful in terms of enhancing relationship conflicts among workgroup members and we also know from the social and political research that nationalism is a strong attitude that can not be easily eliminated. To our surprise, however, nationalism seems to work somewhat positively in some group situations by reinforcing task conflict. Whereas we cannot easily change the national identities and the nationalism of members, managers can perhaps redirect the competition between nationalities by setting clear task goals such that members become more involved in task conflict and the relationship conflict is diminished. One of the strengths of this study is that we conducted a field survey with actual workgroups that have real interactions and experiences with diversity and conflict.

It is interesting to note that our results did not show national diversity to be related to relationship conflict. While we argue that attitudes are the crucial moderators of the relationship between national diversity and conflict, perhaps one of the reasons for no significant effects of national diversity on relationship conflict (as opposed to studies conducted in the lab, e.g., Bayazit & Mannix, 2003) is the real workgroup context where people actually experience diversity. It is likely that the workgroup members (in this case in Pakistan) value the national diversity in their workgroups and are more inclined to be occupied with task conflict than relationship conflict. We can base our assumption on our findings for national preference. We entered national preference into our analyses to
explore its effects on the relationship between national diversity and conflict. We suggest that national preference will cause members to be more reserved in communicating with others and they will remain distant since national favoritism or preferences leads to the restricted criteria of the ingroup inclusion of the group members (Pelled et al, 1999a). The members have prejudices and, therefore, are less open to other members (Pelled et al., 1999a) and thus restrict interpersonal interaction.

**Limitations of this Study and Future Research**

We studied the moderating role of personal attitudes, that is, nationalism, on the relationship between national diversity and conflict. Based on its relevance in a nationally diverse context, nationalism was selected as a significant moderator of the relationship between national diversity and conflict in workgroups. We offer some observations which call for further research to continue to verify observations with various samples.

This was mainly a correlational study and the data was collected through self-report surveys where common-method bias is often a concern. However, we believe the results to be interpretable for two reasons. One, the participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity to encourage them to respond genuinely and honestly (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Also, the survey was carefully designed with unambiguous and focused scales with sets of items separated by definitions and instructions (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Secondly, our constructs of interest were the subjective perceptions and therefore, required self-report (Spector, 1994; Spector, Zapf, Chen, & Frese, 2000).

Another limitation of this study is that the sample was involved in workgroups that were not diverse to a large extent in national background providing a conservative test of our model. This sample is, however, representative of workgroups in Pakistan which is not a highly multinational society. We are, however, curious to know how Pakistanis (and members of other nationalities) carry their attitudes outside their homeland and how they perceive other’s attitudes and behaviors towards them, and whether that in turn affects their performance. Also, of interest is how different nationalities deal with their nationalistic attitudes in
international interactions in workgroups and the differences of attitudes among various nationalities. Similarly, national distances and nationalist attitudes of nations may be studied in majority and minority situations (inside or outside their country). Future research may consider cross-national observations for further understanding and verification of the findings of this study.

The data was collected from actual workers in multinational organizations and the study included a Pakistani sample which represents a set of characteristics that are different from the often studied Western samples due to its geographic and cultural differences, as well as from the Eastern or Asian countries like China and Japan. Although an addition to research, it is also a challenge to study such a novel sample not frequently examined but this also allowed us to validate the conflict scale with two distinct dimensions with a Pakistani sample and examine this unique setting.

Although nationalism, as a concept as well as an ideology, gained pronounced popularity around the world from the countries of the West to the East after the nineteenth century and was attended to by philosophical and qualitative debates (e.g., Gellner, 1983; Kohn, 1955; Smith, 1983), it failed to win considerable attention in the foreground of empirical research (for an exception, see Dekker et al., 2003). There have been very few research studies that include Pakistanis as a nationality, and even rarer is a study that focuses on Pakistanis in multinational workgroups. We believe, in line with culture-specific arguments, that Pakistanis have their unique cultural, as well as cross-cultural, experiences which makes it desirable to understand the views, attitudes, and perceptions of Pakistanis. Pakistanis contribute to the economy within Pakistan but they are also a part of the world community and organizations as immigrants. The results of this study are thus of interest to organizational research in general that attempts to understand the social aspects of the organizational world.

There were some unexpected results and although the results distinguished between the two types of conflict, we could have benefited more if we had information on some of the underlying mechanisms for task and relationship conflict that could help us understand how the two are different. In the future, research should include measures of underlying
mechanisms such as whether diversity facilitates discussion and how national identity is related to motivations of self-verification and ultimately, how these mechanisms distinctly relate to different types of conflict. In addition, since this study included only perceptual measures, the future research in this area might include objective measures for comparison and verification of the differences between the objective versus the perceived. Diversity and conflict asymmetries (see Jehn & Rispens, 2008; Jehn, Rispens, & Thatcher, in press) could also result in interesting contributions to our understanding of diversity and conflicts in nationally diverse workgroups.

Social distances are also an important area to explore. Similar to social distances as a psychological factor (acceptance or rejection based on perception of certain desirable or undesirable characteristics; Bogardus, 1967), we assume that members from different nationalities will be perceived as similar or dissimilar based on national distances. This suggests the possibility for future research to study national distances between individuals of various countries. Research should also explore other moderators and mediators that can improve our understanding of the diversity to conflict and outcome relationships. For example, cross-national learning and organizational or group cultures may facilitate constructive group processes.

**Practical Implications**

In view of our results, we suggest that national diversity has different effects depending on the attitudinal variables that moderate the effects of national diversity. Organizations must realize that the package of national diversity comes with other characteristics within itself that they must be aware of in order to benefit from that diversity. To be able to profit from the positive aspects of national diversity, we need to understand and take into account the negative aspects as well. One of the presumably harmful attributes present in diverse groups and organizations is nationalism and, more specifically, nationalistic derogation of outgroup members. Such attributes cannot be easily eliminated but require cautious handling especially in current day organizations where workers may be surrounded by pronounced historic, economic, and political nationalism.
Our results showed that nationalistic derogation positively moderated the relationship between national diversity and conflict types. As expected, nationalistic derogation enhanced relationship conflict in nationally diverse groups and thus appeared to be a non-desirable attitude among workgroup members negatively affecting the group processes. It also enhanced task conflict when members perceived national diversity in the group. A conducive group environment for open communication and clearly defined tasks and routines may, thus, help lessen chances of misunderstandings. Consequently, there should be no ground for provoking attitudes such as national preference or derogation which could create disturbance or conflict among the members.

It is also important to note that although relationship conflict is not directly related to the workgroup task, it can interfere with job-related processes and performance. In order to have efficient and productive personnel, we must consider individual attitudes that shape group members’ interpersonal relationships. Conflicts can become disruptive when actively perceived by the group members. Therefore, managers must be closely involved with their personnel and know how the group members perceive and behave, instead of acting on their own presumptions and perceptions, and manage diversity and conflict accordingly.

Conclusion

In this study, we examined the relationship between national diversity and task and relationship conflict with nationalism as a moderator of this relationship. We distinguished between group members’ national preference for their own nation and nationalistic derogation towards other nations and observed that nationalistic derogation is a stronger moderator of the relationship between national diversity to task and relationship conflict than national preference. The results draw attention to the need of a broader vision for research examining attitudinal moderators and mediators in diversity and conflict research. This will help researchers discover, and managers implement, improved conflict management.
Chapter 4
When Diversity Helps
Performance: Effects of Social Distance, National Stereotypes, and National Diversity on Conflict and Performance

Based on Ayub & Jehn, 2010c

Diversity is not simply differences, but a compositional construct (Harrison & Klein, 2007) where the nature and composition of differences should be considered when exploring diversity. Few studies on diversity have considered the specific group composition (cf. Moreland, Levine, & Wingert, 1996) and most of the studies have conceptualized diversity as ‘variety’ (e.g., nationality heterogeneity; cf., Harrison & Klein, 2007). Moreland et al. (1996) noticed that the number and types of people included in a group can significantly influence group dynamics and performance. The number, as well as, the type of people determines whether diversity will benefit the group. The different types of people represent information and expertise; the “value-in-diversity” (Cox & Blake, 1991), and types of people can be described in terms of different social categories such as nationalities. These social categories suggest social differences that may negatively affect the group dynamics. In reflection of the importance of the nature and composition of differences, we are interested in studying the effects of both forms of group composition (i.e., differences in attitudes and opinion and differences in type) and how they influence conflict and performance simultaneously. We aim to find if diversity acts positively despite negative social attitudes and beliefs. We expect that high diversity will moderate the negative effects of social
distance and stereotypes and increase performance and task conflict while decreasing relationship and process conflicts. We will focus on nationality within nationally diverse group because it is: a) a diversity characteristic that can function both positively as well as negatively, and b) nationality is described as one of the more salient and influential characteristics of a nationally diverse workgroup (Ayub & Jehn, 2007; Earley & Mosakowski, 2000; Hofstede, 1980).

Diversity, in general, is referred to as differences or variations that may be perceived and used by people to distinguish among them and others (Mannix & Neale, 2005). A nationally diverse workgroup can be more creative due to national diversity, but that same group can have the negative effects of social category diversity when members from different nationalities segregate as ingroups versus outgroups (cf., Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Pelled, 1996; Pelled et al., 1999a). Van Knippenberg and Schippers (2007) noted that studies often presume social categorization to be the reason for biased attitudes towards ingroup rather than outgroup members without direct observations of social categorization process. They also observed that individual dissimilarity may not necessarily reflect group diversity and thus call for research to validate this basic presumption regarding social categorization processes within diverse groups. In addition, Van Knippenberg, De Dreu, and Homan (2004) put emphasis on ingroup bias, rather than categorization per se, to have disruptive effects on group processes. Van Knippenberg & Schippers (2007) maintain the importance of studying the psychological dimensions, such as differences in attitudes and perspectives that are often presumed to be associated with demographic differences, which we do in this study. Correspondingly, Brewer (1979) suggests that social categorization translates into ingroup favoritism that may or may not lead to outgroup derogation. We propose that social distance and national stereotypes are two such relevant psychological dimensions within nationally diverse workgroups that may not only describe social categorization process in terms of ingroup favoritism and outgroup rejection but also explain the effect of dissimilarity within diverse workgroups.

When a worker is placed in a group with workers from nationalities other than his/her own, the worker is likely to maintain social distances.
Social distance is defined as the degree of (un)willingness to interact with other group members (Chan & Goto, 2003). In addition to social distance, members often experience negative group processes, such as conflict, when negative stereotypes are attributed to the perceived outgroup members (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Larkey, 1996; Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992). This suggests that national stereotypes and social distance are crucial factors to consider when constituting or placing members in a nationally diverse workgroup.

When is diversity a positive element of a group? If value-in-diversity can be derived from informational characteristics of a group which are implied in the numerical composition of the group, then perhaps the numerical composition (national diversity) should be considered as well as the social attitudes and beliefs (in terms of social distance and national stereotypes). Social attitudes and beliefs are proposed to negatively affect group processes and outcomes while national diversity is expected to have a positive influence. Therefore, in this study we consider two aspects of national diversity simultaneously; social attitudes and beliefs in the form of social distance and stereotypes and diversity in the form of nationality numerical composition.

**National Stereotypes and Social Distance**

Stereotypes are the beliefs and expectations associated with social groups (Hamilton & Sherman, 1994). A stereotype is a set of beliefs about certain traits considered as characteristic of members of a social category. Judgment and actions are affected by stereotypes such that a person acts toward another as if the other possesses traits specified in the stereotype (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). A stereotype is concerned with the cognitions of ‘others’ (how ‘they’, belonging to an outgroup, are expected to behave) and is generally about characteristic qualities for evaluations, such as liking/disliking. For example, if I stereotype you as honest, I expect you to act honestly and thus will behave towards you accordingly. A generalization concerning a trait attribution about a national group constitutes a national stereotype (cf., Brigham, 1971) which we include in this study of nationally diverse workgroups.
Social distance is a negative attitude towards members of other social groups (Brown, 1995; Devine, 1989; Krueger, 1996). It refers to the ‘degrees and grades of understanding and feeling that persons experience regarding each other. It charts the character of social relations’ (Bogardus, 1967) or the willingness to interact as described by Chan and Goto (2003). Distance evokes negative feelings that motivates the avoidance of outgroups (Hagendoorn & Kleinpenning, 1991). Social distance, thereby, indicates the acceptability of a number of social groups based on the perception of social differences among the groups. For example, Dutch in the Netherlands are closer in social distance to English people than Turks (Hraba, Hagendoorn, & Hagendoorn, 1989), which implies that a Dutch person will accept an English person more in his/her workgroup compared to a Turk. Parillo and Donoghue (2005) have shown that social distances clearly exist among different nationalities and that these social distances tend to remain stable over time giving a hierarchy of outgroups (Hagendoorn, 1995; Parillo & Donoghue, 2005; Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000).

Stereotypes and social distance differ in whether the attitude and consequential behavior is that of the perceiver or of the perceived. Social distance is an attitude concerned with how a perceiver will behave in view of the degree of acceptability to interact with the outgroup members, based on perceived social differences. Thus, I see you as different and object to having you as my coworker; therefore, I will avoid contact with you (keep a distance). A stereotype is an opinion that may include varied evaluations (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Social distance and national stereotypes do not necessarily covary; one can be positive while the other is negative, and thus may have distinctive effects. For example, I may avoid interacting with you (social distance) due to social differences among us, but I may regard you as reliable (positive stereotype). Due to their distinct characteristics, national stereotypes and social distance may differ in amount and intensity for different nationalities within a workgroup. We will, therefore, study both social distance and national stereotypes and investigate how they are related to conflict and performance in nationally diverse workgroups and if they are influenced by national diversity.
Individuals adjust social distances and stereotypes according to the context (Haslam, Turner, Oakes, McGarty, & Hayes, 1992; Hopkins, Regan, & Abell, 1997). An individual may be kept at a larger distance in one group situation (e.g., a group with one other nationality) while the same member may be perceived relatively closer in another group context (e.g., a group with several nationalities), perhaps depending on the number and type of group members. Although stereotypes have been studied regarding how they change within different social contexts, social distances or even stereotypes have not been adequately considered in small groups. Zaidman (2000) noted that stereotypes in the workplace are often concerned with women and minorities, but suggested that stereotypes can exist also within international managers and workgroups. We investigate stereotypes and social distance to see how they are influenced by national diversity and how they may influence performance of the group. Specifically, we consider national diversity of workgroups and examine its impact on social distance, national stereotyping, and conflict given the number of nationalities present.

Group composition affects several aspects of a group’s activities and processes (Levine & Moreland, 1990). For instance, the perception of distance is affected by the heterogeneity context of a group (Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). The number of nationalities present in a workgroup may be described as the variety form of diversity (differences in kind or category; Harrison & Klein, 2007). Following Harrison and Klein’s logic, as well as that of the group composition and context effects, more nationalities should mean more task debate and increased performance since each nationality is expected to add to the group’s knowledge and experience (cf., Harrison & Klein, 2007). If, however, differences in beliefs and attitudes such as stereotypes and social distances are present, they will likely lead to conflict, social disintegration (Harrison & Klein, 2007), and decrease performance in nationally diverse workgroups.

We also propose, in view of the group numerical composition effects, that social distances will be small and stereotypes will be less negative when there is high or maximum national diversity as compared to when there is low or moderate diversity in the workgroup (cf., Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). Apparently, more choices of interaction help in reducing
the likelihood of rejection since one can find similarities with some of the members and be less concerned with having to interact with the distant members. The interaction with distant members is also likely to be less stressful when the support of less distant members is present. Therefore, we propose that there will be more task conflict and better performance and less relationship and process conflict when there is high national diversity as compared to low national diversity in a workgroup (see Figure 1). We elaborate on this theoretical rationale below.

Figure 1. Effects of National Diversity on Social Distance and Stereotypes and the Mediating Role of Conflict Types

National Stereotypes and Social Distance in Nationally Diverse Workgroups

For any interpersonal process, the theories of social identity and categorization (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1985) as well as the similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1961), suggest that diversity can negatively affect group processes and outcomes due to the tendency of ingroup-outgroup differentiations. People prefer to work with similar others and the dissimilar members are often excluded from information sharing and opportunity networks (Morbarak & Cherin, 1998). Social categorization can lead to the perception of outgroup members as less cooperative (Brewer, 1979). The social category perspective, as well as the
similarity-attraction paradigm, suggests a negative association between
dissimilarity and group outcomes.

Studies have also found that dissimilarity is associated with fewer
organizational contacts (Ibarra, 1995) and lower number of conversation
exchanges (Oetzel, 1998). In addition, understanding each other can lead to
higher performance (Maznevski, 1994). These studies point at the
importance of the interaction processes and the integration of diverse
viewpoints (Watson, Johnson, Merritt, 1998). We present a study of social
distance and national stereotypes to explain reduced contact and exchanges
within diverse groups, and explore their effects on group performance.

While research on social dimensions of diversity is rare, we refer to
individual dissimilarity research to propose that social attitudes and beliefs
such as social distance and national stereotypes can help explain group
processes and performance in diverse workgroups. Hobman, Bordia, and
Gallois (2003) defined dissimilarity as an individual’s distance from other
group members and found a negative association between value
dissimilarity and workgroup involvement. Value differences are also found
to be associated with lower group cohesiveness (Harrison et al., 1998). The
demographically dissimilar members have lower group commitment
(Riordan & Shore, 1997; Tsui et al., 1992), lower task contributions
(Kirchmeyer, 1993), less frequent communication (Zenger & Lawrence,
1989), and lower group performance and intent to remain (Jehn, 1994;
Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997; Jehn et al., 1999). Social distance
specifically measures the preference or acceptability of interacting with
other group members. Since interaction processes are found to be crucial
for group’s performance, we hypothesize that when social distance is large,
performance will be low.

**Hypothesis 1a:** Social distance will be negatively related to
performance.

Visible demographic characteristics may be used for categorization
processes which can cause stereotyping (Tsui et al., 1992). The initial
perceptions or stereotyping about the group members often determine the
quality and type of future relationships among the team members and that
these beliefs persist over time (Tsui, Xin, & Egan, 1995). Research has
shown that stereotypes negatively affect performance. Women performed
worse when stereotyped negatively despite high praise (Vescio, Gervais, Snyder, & Hoover, 2005) and stereotyping also debilitates women’s upward mobility (Heilman, 2001). The stereotyping tendencies have adverse consequences for those who are stereotyping as well as those who are negatively stereotyped. Those who negatively stereotype other group members are not only likely to resent working with those members but are also observed to perform worse themselves (Wheeler, Jarvis, & Petty, 2001). In view of these studies, we propose that national stereotypes will also hinder group’s performance. Specifically we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 1b**: Negative national stereotypes will be negatively related to performance.

The perceived differences can become a source of conflict in nationally diverse workgroups. Since social distances are based on perceived differences from certain social groups and national stereotypes are cognitions about those social groups, both social distances and stereotypes can give rise to conflict among those social groups. Conflict has been recognized as an important group process affecting group performance and outcomes (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Milliken & Martins, 1996; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Conflict is a subjective experience of perceived incompatibilities or differences between group members (De Dreu, Harinck, & Van Vianen, 1999; Deutsch, 1973; Wall & Callister, 1995). Jehn (1995, 1997) has defined three types of conflict, namely, task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict. By definition, task conflict denotes discussions or arguments focused on the content of the tasks being performed including differences in ideas and opinions that are directly task-related. Relationship conflict is concerned with interpersonal incompatibilities (e.g., differences in personal traits, language, cultural practices), and process conflict refers to disagreements about logistical issues such as the distribution of resources and task responsibilities. Research still seeks to understand if and what conflict type may possibly be good for performance (e.g., De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn & Bendersky, 2003).

National diversity increases relationship conflict (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003) as well as task conflict depending on what aspect of national diversity is more salient; that is, whether national diversity predominantly acts as social category diversity or as a source of information. We consider
social distances and stereotypes, which are often present in nationally diverse workgroups (Devine, 1989) as two causes of conflicts in such groups. In turn, we propose that conflict will act as a mediator between social distance, stereotypes, and performance (see Figure 1).

Staple and Zhao’s (2006) study showed how strong an impact nationality differences could have in giving rise to conflict. They observed that national differences lead to increased conflict even in virtual teams (see also Vodosek, 2007). When core values and beliefs differ, interpersonal friction can occur since members are less able to predict each others’ behavior (Kluckhohn, 1951). The ingroup members relate to the outgroup members with reference to the distance between them (Brewer, 1999). This explains why group members will have discrete interpersonal processes with other group members when those members are placed at particular distances. Contact with group members is likely to be guided by ingroup-versus-outgroup differentiation and prejudices. The differentiation into social categories and the feeling of being with dissimilar others who are not one of ‘us’ may increase the likelihood of relationship conflict in the group (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000). This categorization negatively affects the social integration of the group (Watson, Kumar, & Michaelson, 1993), again increasing the likelihood of relationship conflicts (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003). Research on individual dissimilarity has shown that relationship conflict in a team is triggered by visible dissimilarity (Jehn et al., 1997; Pelled 1996; Pelled, Xin, Weiss, 2001). The conflict may be a result of the tendency to develop contact preferences based on social distances and negative stereotypes that hinder constructive communication and social integration, as well as promoting interpersonal grievances. These attitudes and attributes are then likely to lead to relationship conflict.

**Hypothesis 2a:** Social distance will be positively related to relationship conflict.

**Hypothesis 2b:** Negative national stereotypes will be positively related to relationship conflict

We also propose that there will be more process conflict when social distance is high or when national stereotypes are negative. When group members see each other as socially distant and/or stereotype each other more negatively, they are likely to have more process difficulties than
group members with low social distance and/or less negative stereotypes. Ayub and Jehn (2007) explain some of the antecedents of process conflict in nationally diverse groups as (self) exclusion from decision making, misunderstandings due to stereotypical biases, and misunderstandings due to language and communication issues. All these reasons appear to arise due to social distance or national stereotypes. When group members perceive social distances and negative stereotypes, they are less likely to communicate with each other and thus chances of misunderstanding increase. These social attitudes and beliefs also mean unwillingness to interact with those who are perceived as different; that is, withholding information and also disregarding opinion of others (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998), giving rise to process conflict where the group is likely involved in arguments and debates other than task-focused processes. Social distance as well as national stereotypes may not only hinder communication, they also increase grievances and possible perceptions of discrimination among group members that they are being ignored or excluded and that resources or responsibilities are distributed unfairly (cf. Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Morbarak & Cherin, & Berkman, 1998). Consequently, we propose that process conflict will be high when social attitudes or beliefs are high in a workgroup.

**Hypothesis 3a**: Social distance will be positively related to process conflict.

**Hypothesis 3b**: Negative national stereotypes will be positively related to process conflict.

A nationally diverse group is also likely to consist of members with a diverse experiential background and set of knowledge (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Bantel & Jackson, 1989) increasing the chances of creativity and synergy (Adler, 1997). Therefore, diverse bases of information that national diversity can bring to a group can lead to task conflict (De Dreu & Vliert, 1997; Jehn et al., 1999; Schulz-Hardt, Jochims, & Frey, 2002).

In view of national diversity, we find studies showing that demographic dissimilarities such as nationality makes the group members less inclined to communicate with other group members (Adler, 1997; Zenger & Lawrence, 1989), or contribute to the tasks (Kirchmeyer &
Negative perceptions of the dissimilar other may lead to ignoring their contributions to the team (Elsass & Graves, 1997). If the group members have large social distances and negative stereotypes, they are likely to withhold opinions and ideas (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003; Van Knippenberg et al., 2004) and restrict communication and the flow of information (Huang & Ocker, 2006) among those who are perceived as less nationally separated, thus losing the positive potential of task conflict. Accordingly, we hypothesize that social distance and national stereotypes will have a negative relationship with task conflict.

**Hypothesis 4a**: Social distance will be negatively related to task conflict.

**Hypothesis 4b**: Negative national stereotypes will be negatively related to task conflict.

### National Diversity as a Moderating Mechanism

When stereotypes are frequently used, they make up a well-learned set of associations (Dovidio, Evans, & Tyler, 1986) that are automatically activated in the presence of a member of the target group (Devine, 1989; Smith & Branscombe, 1988). For example, if a German member in the nationally diverse group thinks that the French are not hard-working (Reigrotski & Anderson, 1959), s/he will not consider a French person who is included in her workgroup to be hard-working. The presence of a hard-working French person will be a source of expectancy violation (Rink & Ellemers, 2007) as well as cognitive dissonance and the self-affirmation of stereotypes will occur by searching several possible sources (cf., Steele & Liu, 1983). Studies have, however, also shown that stereotypes can be altered by interactions and the context of the interaction or contact (Allport, 1954). We expect that the national diversity moderates the affect of stereotypes such that the stereotypes will be perceived less negatively when there is high national diversity in the workgroup. In this way, workgroup processes and outcomes may be affected by social distance and stereotypes but may also be influenced positively in the form of national diversity.

Social judgments, such as stereotyping, depend on the context or the frame of reference of the individual (e.g., nationality context). Within a nationally diverse context, the number of nationalities or the choices of
interaction will affect how any nationality is stereotyped. For example, research has shown that the social context can change the form and content of social categories (e.g., Cinnirella, 1998; Haslam et al., 1992; Hopkins et al., 1997; Kinket & Verkuyten, 1999; Rijswijk & Ellemers, 2002; Rutland & Cinnirella, 2000). Thus, stereotypes are not fixed cognitive structures, but they are constructed variably as a function of the nature of the social context (Haslam et al., 1992; Hopkins et al., 1997). Consequently, the same national groups can be categorized as different in one compositional context and similar in another depending on the number of national groups (i.e., national diversity) present (Hopkins et al., 1997; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). For example, if nationality A is negatively stereotyped when a group includes nationality A as the only outgroup nationality, that nationality A is likely to be less negatively stereotyped when there are more nationalities present along with nationality A. That is, the presence of nationalities B and C along with A means possible presence of a nationality that is less negatively stereotyped than A and thus less concern with the nationality A. Stereotype attributions of nationalities are influenced by group heterogeneity of nationality composition (Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). Correspondingly, we assume that how a nationality is stereotyped will depend on how many nationalities (national diversity) are present for comparison where diversity reduces negativity of stereotypes. Specifically, we hypothesize that national diversity will influence the effect of negative stereotypes such that there will be less disruptive conflict (relationship and process conflicts) and more task conflict when there is high national diversity compared to when there is low national diversity.

**Hypothesis 5a**: National diversity will moderate the relationship between social distance and conflict; that is, national diversity will enhance task conflict and reduce relationship and process conflict.

Since contact is inevitable in workgroups, the group members are likely to delineate social distances towards all other group members (Chan & Goto, 2003) and use these distances as a guide to their interaction pattern. Research has shown that the tendency to hold a distance hierarchy decreases when the number of outgroup members increases (LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). This suggests that despite
having a stable character, social distance may also be altered, similar to stereotypes, if not altogether removed from a group.

Social distance is defined as a negative attitude shared among the members of a social group towards members of other social groups (Brown, 1995; Devine, 1989; Krueger, 1996). Distance hierarchies have been observed in several parts of the world (e.g., Hagendoorn, 1995; Mullick & Hraba, 2001; Parillo & Donoghue, 2005) and are known to be shared by members of the nationalities (Kleinpennen, 1993). Some countries are thereby, more socially distant from one another than others. For example, White Americans in the United States are closer to British and Canadians than Chinese and Vietnamese (Parillo & Donoghue, 2005). Parillo and Donoghue (2005) also noted that people are more comfortable interacting with those who are perceived to be similar or at a smaller social distance.

High national diversity is expected to modify the negative effects of social distance with the possibility of less conflict when there is national diversity compared to when there is low national diversity. The increased number of nationalities diffuses the negative effects of social distance. To demonstrate, consider an example of two workgroups; one group has one outgroup nationality A, whereas the second group has three outgroup nationalities, A, B, and C. According to our assumptions, if A is held at a distance with a measured score of 3, the national diversity in the second group will influence the social distance from A such that the reported distance for A in the second group is expected to be lower than 3. Specifically, we hypothesize that social distances, as well as national stereotypes, are expected to be moderated by high national diversity in the workgroups. The relationship between the social distance and conflict will be weakened in the presence of national diversity with less relationship and process conflicts and more task conflict in the presence of national diversity.

**Hypothesis 5b**: National diversity will moderate the relationship between national stereotypes and conflict; that is, national diversity will enhance task conflict and reduce relationship and process conflict.
Conflict in Nationally Diverse Workgroups

Conflict has been recognized as an important group process affecting group performance and outcomes (Williams & O’Reilly, 1998; Milliken & Martins, 1996). It has been studied as a main mediator that explains the relationship between diversity and outcomes (Jehn et al., 1999; Pelled et al., 1999a; Vodosek, 2007). There are, however, others studies that have not found support for a mediating role for conflict or found results contradicting the expected direction of the mediation (Knight et al., 1999; O’Reilly, Williams, & Barsade, 1997). These conflicting findings are the object of continued further research on the significance and role of conflict in diverse workgroups. Past research had shown that conflict in any form is detrimental to group performance (e.g., meta-analysis by De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). On the positive side, Jehn (1995, 1997) has argued that conflict need not always be negative. By definition, task conflict facilitates group performance, while process and relationship conflicts are apparently less beneficial to team performance (e.g., Jehn, 1997; Jehn et al., 1999; Pelled et al., 1999a). Supporting the positive view of conflict, studies have found that conflict can be beneficial to performance under certain conditions (e.g., DeChurch & Marks, 2001; Matsuo, 2006; Van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005).

In line with the positive aspects of conflict and the diverse views that diversity brings, we propose that task conflict will be positively related to performance in nationally diverse workgroups, whereas relationship and process conflicts will be negatively related to performance (cf., Simons & Peterson, 2000). Conflict will, in fact, act as a mediator in the social distance and stereotypes to performance relationship (see Fig 1). Specifically, we hypothesize for a mediated moderation relationship:

**Hypothesis 6a:** Relationship and process conflicts will mediate the moderated relationship of social distance and negative national stereotypes with performance, such that these social attitudes and beliefs will be positively related to conflict (relationship and process conflicts) and conflict will be negatively related to performance.

**Hypothesis 6b:** Task conflict will mediate the moderated relationship of social distance and negative stereotypes with performance, such
that these social attitudes and beliefs will be negatively related to task conflict and task conflict will be positively related to performance.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Sample. To test our hypotheses, we used data collected through a scenario study in two samples. There were 267 participants with the mean age of 25.34 years and included 94 females. The samples included 147 participants from Pakistan and 117 from the Netherlands. The Pakistani participants gave a mean age of 28.65 years with 26 females and the mean age of the Dutch sample was 21.78 years.

The participants were randomly assigned to one of two scenario conditions. According to their scenario assignment, the participants were asked to imagine themselves working in a group with members from either one or all of the four selected nationalities. These countries were selected on the basis of historical, as well as, socio-politico-economic relationships with these countries. The first condition placed the participants with members of one of the three nationalities. The group composition with one other nationality represented low or moderate national diversity. The second condition placed the participants in a completely heterogeneous scenario with group members from each of the three countries (i.e., high or maximum national diversity). The description included instruction on a marketing task (making an advertisement) with a group that included members of nationalities different from that of the participant. A version of the description is as follows:

You are assigned the task of advertisement making for the company along with 3 other members. While you are a Pakistani, you will be working with another Pakistani and two British members. You are asked to work as a group with these 3 people for the next one week and design an advertisement...Remember, you have no information about your group members other than their nationality.

Based on the nature of the socio-political issues, we expected a distance hierarchy where the Chinese would be least distant and the Indians

1 Pakistani sample was presented with British, Indian, and/or Chinese nationalities and the Dutch sample was assigned British, German, and/or Moroccan nationalities
most distant with the British in the middle. Regarding the national stereotypes, we expected a similar pattern where the Chinese would be stereotyped most positively and the Indians most negatively while the British would be in the middle. A pretest with a group of university students (N= 32) confirmed our manipulation assumption for both social distance and national stereotypes. Similarly, a pretest for the Dutch sample with a group of university students (N= 21) confirmed our manipulation assumption for both social distance and national stereotypes. We expected that the British would be least distant and stereotyped most positively and the Moroccans most distant with most negative stereotype with the Germans in the middle.

The participants were required to complete a survey questionnaire about group processes and performance for the groups after the instructions on the task with the assigned groups. The participants were not required to do any real task once they had completed the survey.

**Measures**

**Social Distance.** We used the Bogardus Distance scale (1933) to measure social distance towards the given three nationalities. The items were ranked on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (highly objectionable) to 7 (highly acceptable). The average of the scale items was used as the social distance measure, where higher scores reflected higher distances. The scale items used include how objectionable or acceptable is it to have a given nationality as a co-worker, as a neighbor, friend, business partner, invited over dinner, come to country as a worker? The principal component analysis of the 6 items with oblique rotation gave one social distance component that explained 57.99% of the variance in distance measure. The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the distance items was .85. For social distance in the Dutch sample, we found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .91 and the component analyses showed that 66.08% of variance was explained by the component.

**Stereotypes.** Participants were asked to rate the given nationalities on ten work-related adjectives that would represent the national stereotypes of a worker from a particular nationality. The list included adjectives adapted from scales by Johnson, Terry, and Louis (2005) and Verkuyten and Hagendoorn (2002) such as ‘reliable’, ‘hard-working’, and ‘honest’. The
items were formatted on a 7-point scale with 1 (not at all) and 7 (very much). A component analysis gave a single stereotype component (total explained variance 54.05% in the Pakistani sample and 52.87% in the Dutch sample). The items were reverse coded for negative stereotypes where the higher scores reflected negative stereotypes of a country. The Cronbach analysis gave a reliability coefficient of .90 in the Pakistani sample as well as the Dutch sample.

**Conflict.** We measured the task, relationship, and process conflict using an adaptation of Jehn (1995) and Jehn and Mannix (2001) conflict scales. The scale included 4 items for task conflict (e.g., Do you expect conflict of ideas in this workgroup?), 5 items for relationship conflict (e.g., Do you expect this group would have fights about personal issues?), and 4 items for process conflict (e.g., Do you expect the members would disagree about the process of how to get the work done?). All the items were formatted on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (A lot). The principal component analysis gave three distinct components namely process conflict, task conflict, and relationship conflict (cumulative variance explained 45.04%, 59.24%, and 70.40% in that order). The Cronbach alpha coefficients for task, relationship, and process conflict were .82, .86, and .89 respectively for the Pakistani sample and .89, .76, and .89 for the Dutch sample.

**Performance.** We used four items with a 7-point (Never to Always) Likert scale to measure general performance of the group (e.g., the group will adequately complete assigned duties, perform the expected tasks, fulfill responsibilities as specified, and meet formal performance requirements). The items were adapted from Gibson, Zellmer-Bruhn, and Schwab’s (2003) measure of team effectiveness. Items constituted a single component according to principal component analysis (variance 79.36% and 93.25%) that we used as a measure of performance. The Cronbach coefficient showed that the items were a reliable measure of performance (α = .91 and .98 for the two samples).

We also used a money distribution task where the participants were asked to distribute money among the members such that the amount totaled to a 100 as this task considered being indicative of members’ actual behavior toward each of the other members. Additional outcome measure
was included for intent to work with such a group in the future including 2 items about the willingness to remain and continue to work with the given workgroup.

Results

We obtained similar results including interaction effects when results were computed for the two samples separately. We thus collapsed the two samples for combined results. The means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations were computed as shown in Table 1. Social distance negatively related to national diversity and outcomes while it positively related to relationship and process conflicts showing that larger social distances were likely to hinder performance and add to relationship and process conflicts. Negative national stereotypes were negatively associated with all the outcome measures, that is, more the negative stereotype less the performance and intent to work and less money given to the other nationality.

Social Distance and National Stereotypes in Nationally Diverse Workgroups

We conducted a MANOVA using Roy’s largest root multivariate test statistic to test the overall significance of the model with social distance, negative national stereotypes, and national diversity as the independent variables and performance, money distribution, and intent to work as the dependent variables. Social distance (F (52, 94) = 2.69, p= .00) as well as negative national stereotypes (F (56, 94) = 2.72, p = .00) had a significant effect on outcomes. Also, national diversity significantly interacted with social distance (F (34, 94) = 1.35, p= .00) and national stereotypes (F (29, 94) = 2.38, p= .00) in the social attitudes and beliefs to outcomes relationship. In general, this analysis supported our assumptions that social distance and national stereotypes directly affect outcomes and that national diversity moderates the relationship of the social attitudes and beliefs with the outcomes.

We conducted t-tests to compare the effects of participants’ nationality on each of our study variables. The Dutch sample perceived more national diversity in their given workgroups and also stereotyped the other nationalities more negatively than the Pakistani participants. In
Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Inter-correlations for the Study Samples (N= 375)

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*p < .05; **p < .01
addition, the Dutch sample reported more task, relationship, and process conflicts and lower performance compared to the Pakistani sample. Due to the observed significant effects of nationality, we controlled for nationality in further analyses.

To test our main effect hypotheses 1 to 4, we conducted t-tests and compared the effects of low versus high social distance and national stereotypes on conflict and also each of our outcomes. The tests were carried out with median cut-off points to divide the variables into low and high scores; 3.33 for social distance and 3.20 for negative national stereotypes. Social distance was positively related to process conflict \((t=2.56, p=.01)\); that is, more process conflict when high social distance \((M=4.00, SD=1.09\) and \(M=3.71, SD=1.10)\). We also found a negative relation between social distance and performance \((t=-2.22, p=.03; M=4.60, SD=1.45\) and \(M=4.98, SD=1.58)\), intent to work together again \((t=-2.71, p=.01; M=4.63, SD=1.45\) and \(M=5.07, SD=1.60)\), and money distribution \((t=-2.38, p=.02; M=30.37, SD=9.75\) and \(M=35.68, SD=8.67)\). Negative stereotypes were negatively related to performance \((t=-3.34, p=.00; M=4.51, SD=1.55\) and \(M=5.08, SD=1.42)\), intent to work together again \((t=-3.87, p=.00; M=4.56, SD=1.50\) and \(M=5.71, SD=1.53)\), and money distribution \((t=-3.69, p=.00; M=29.81, SD=8.28\) and \(M=33.35, SD=9.92)\). We also explored some comparisons for national diversity (low versus high) and found that it was significantly related to relationship conflict such that less relationship conflict was reported when high national diversity. Higher performance and intent to work was reported with more money given to an outgroup member when high national diversity. These results gave support to our hypotheses 1-4 that social distance and negative national stereotypes are positively related to conflict and to an extent also supported our hypothesis 5 that national diversity has a positive moderating effect. We also observed that social distance and national stereotypes are negatively related to all three outcomes.

Following the overall multivariate model testing, we conducted univariate analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs) to test the interaction effects of national diversity and the social attitudes and beliefs on conflict types (hypothesis 5). The results showed that national diversity interacted
Table 2. Univariate Analysis for Moderation Effects of National Diversity and Social Distance on Types of Conflict and Outcome Variables

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Table 3. Univariate Analysis for Moderation Effects of National Diversity and Negative National Stereotypes on Types of Conflict and Outcome Variables

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with both social distance and stereotypes to affect the outcomes as shown in Table 2 and 3 for social distance and negative national stereotypes. National diversity interacted with social distance to give more task conflict and reduced relationship conflicts as shown in Figures 2 and 3. The horizontal axis in all interaction plots shows 1 = low social distance and 2 = high social distance. Task conflict was reported to be highest when high national diversity and low social distance. National diversity also interacted with negative national stereotypes to give higher task conflict (see Figure 4) and decreased process conflict (see Figure 5). The results sufficiently supported our hypothesis 5 that national diversity will moderate the relationship of social distance and national stereotypes with conflict.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance for Task, Relationship, and Process Conflicts: Dependent Variables are Performance, Money Distribution, and Intent to Work

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We ran additional ANCOVAs to test the mediated moderation controlling for the conflict types and whether the interaction effects of national diversity and the social attitudes and beliefs were reduced when the conflict types were controlled as covariates. First, one-way ANOVAs for conflict types showed that all conflict types were significantly related to
performance and intent to work (see Table 4). Performance and intent were low when process and relationship conflicts were high supporting our

**Figure 2.** Interaction effect of Social Distance and National Diversity on Task Conflict

**Figure 3.** Interaction effect of Social Distance and National Diversity on Relationship Conflict

**Figure 4.** Interaction effect of National Stereotypes and National Diversity on Task Conflict
hypothesis 6a. Performance and intent were also low when there was high task conflict.

We then proceeded with MANCOVA to look for an overall effect of the mediated moderation. The analysis gave significant results for the main effects of social distance ($F(52, 90) = 1.97, p = .00$) and negative stereotypes ($F(56, 90) = 2.23, p = .00$) as well as their interactions with national diversity; interaction with social distance ($F(34, 90) = 3.27, p = .00$) and with negative stereotypes ($F(29, 90) = 1.57, p = .06$). Finally, we ran ANCOVAs to examine the mediating effect of conflict types as a test of our third hypothesis. The ANCOVAs then showed that the conflict types fully or partially mediated the relationship of social distance and stereotypes to outcomes as shown in Table 5 for social distance and Table 6 for stereotypes (similar results were obtained when conflict types were entered separately). These ANCOVA results gave sufficient support to our hypothesis 6 that conflict types mediate the relationship of the social attitudes and beliefs with outcomes where national diversity serves as the moderator.
Table 5. Analysis of Covariance for Mediated effects of Conflict Types on Interaction of National Diversity and Social Distance: Dependent Variables are Performance, Money Distribution, and Intent to Work

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Table 6. Analysis of Covariance for Mediated effects of Conflict Types on Interaction of National Diversity and Negative National Stereotypes:
Dependent Variables are Performance, Money Distribution, and Intent to Work

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<th>Source</th>
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<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
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Discussion

We explored the interrelationship between social distance, stereotypes, and conflict types within nationally diverse workgroup context. We examined the moderating effects of national diversity on social distance and national stereotypes in nationally diverse settings. To our knowledge, this is one of the first studies to consider work-related stereotypes and social distances in Pakistan or the South-Asian countries (see for an exception on social distance; Chan & Goto, 2003). Also, even though stereotypes and social distances are being studied in social sciences, small group research is yet to adequately describe the role of attitudes (social distance) and attributes (stereotypes) in organizational or workgroup processes and outcomes such as conflict and performance. We were interested to study when diversity helps performance and our main hypothesis that diversity moderates the negative effects of social distance and national stereotypes on conflict and performance was supported. The findings promote the value-in-diversity (cf Jehn et al., 1999) proposition by showing that diversity can help performance by ameliorating the negative effects of social attitudes and beliefs in workgroups.

Research concerning stereotypes has generally studied stereotype threats in group members but not stereotypes or, specifically, work-related stereotypes. We believe it is important to study relevant types of stereotypes since a social category-related (nationality) stereotypes may act differently than that of work-related stereotypes. Differences in stereotypes could serve as distinct sources of conflicts and misunderstandings in nationally diverse workgroups (Everett & Stening, 1987). In workgroup context, work-related stereotypes of nationalities should be considered. Accordingly, in this study, we observed that work-related nationality stereotypes are specifically relevant to the workgroup processes and behaviors.

Results from different analyses and samples (Netherlands and Pakistan) supported our hypotheses regarding the effect of social distance and stereotypes on conflict types and the interaction effect of national diversity on social distance and stereotypes. We observed that social distance and negative stereotypes were positively related to relationship and process conflicts and negatively related to performance, as expected;
that is, conflict increased and performance decreased in the presence of social distances among group members and negative stereotyping of the group members. We found support for our hypotheses through t-test comparisons and analyses of variance that social distance and stereotypes are related to one or the other type of conflict and that national diversity moderated the relationship between these social attitudes and beliefs and conflict. Task conflict was increased while relationship and process conflicts were reduced when social distance was large and national stereotypes were more negative.

To contribute to the understanding of process-related variables such as members’ interactions (Chan & Goto, 2003) in nationally diverse workgroups and how that affects conflict and outcomes, we studied social distance and stereotypes in the context of national diversity. We found that the social attitudes and beliefs in the form of either social distance or nationality stereotypes were related to conflict such that they increased relationship and process conflict while decreasing task conflict. Chan and Goto (2003) have also observed that perceived social distance influenced the perception of conflict. In view of social distance as an indicator of communication with a given group member and a potential factor in segregating members into subgroups based on social differences, we hypothesized that it will hold back task conflict and thus performance. We speculated that social distance would increase conflict and decrease performance, perhaps by restricting communication and information sharing. Our results verified our assumptions as well as previous findings that subgroup formation led to communication issues and also conflict (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000), and less information sharing (Cramton, 2001). Our results also corroborated with findings on relational differences being negatively correlated with intention to stay (Tsui et al., 1992).

National diversity served as the positive moderator of the relationship between social distance and stereotypes and conflict, proving to be a positive aspect of national diversity that could help performance outcomes. Alongside social category (Turner, 1985) and similarity attraction theories (Byrne, 1961), Akerlof (1997) explained social distance in terms of conformist social distance model where people are expected to be attracted to similar others because of the mutual advantages of anticipated social
exchanges. The possible social exchange motivates the members of a social group to become close to each other and form a subgroup. Although social mobility from one group to another may be difficult, it is not impossible and there may be motives for social movements (Akerlof, 1997). Warner and Defleur (1969) had further elaborated on the definition of social distance in view of status-position considerations and role expectations in social relationships. They suggested that these relationships may remain positive and even intimate as long as the social distance is maintained and acknowledged. Brewer (1999) also agrees that a workable relationship could be established without negatively affecting the group processes as long as group distinctiveness is maintained; such as through specified social distances. This suggests that there may be other variables that could facilitate positive contact and group processes despite social distance and national stereotypes. Past research has already shown that national stereotypes and social distance are altered by group composition (e.g., Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000). Jehn et al. (1999) noted that while social category diversity was related to conflict in workgroups, diversity in functional background was positively related to task conflict. Whereas Jehn et al. (1999) related functional or educational diversity to task conflict, Cummings (2004) also found that there was improved information-exchange and thus performance when there was structural diversity. Our results also showed that national diversity in terms of numerical composition of nationalities in a workgroup improved task conflict while it reduced relationship and process conflicts in the workgroups. Even though national diversity served as a positive moderator of conflict in the presence of social distance and negative national stereotypes, the situation was even better when social distance and negative stereotypes were low and national diversity was high.

In corroboration with past findings, relationship and process conflicts showed negative effects on performance outcomes. Again, we found that there was more relationship conflict and process conflict when social distance was large and national stereotypes were negative, while national diversity moderated the relationship so that these conflicts were reduced when social distance was small and stereotypes were less negative. The study pointed at the importance of social attitudes and beliefs in this study.
Process conflict appeared as a distinct type of conflict with significant results underlining the need to study it as an important type of conflict alongside other types of conflict. The social attitudes and beliefs within national diversity setting and national diversity emphasized the significance of studying the characteristics of diversity with its specificities in view.

The results of this study affirmed that diversity should be studied by giving attention to several of its aspects. Group composition in the form of diversity, specifically national diversity in national diversity context is often ignored. In this sense, an inclusion of a single different member (at least one member with a different nationality; moderate diversity as termed by Harrison & Klein, 2007) increases the chances of task conflict and high group performance. It is also important to be aware that national diversity includes social aspects such as social distance and national stereotypes. When these social attitudes and beliefs are high, the group is likely to be negatively affected by the attitudinal and opinion differences. If, for example, a Dutch member of the group maintains large social distance from a Moroccan member or holds negative national stereotypes against the Moroccan member, the group will likely experience high relationship and process conflict while task conflict may be low. This in turn, will negatively affect the group performance and the commitment or intention of the group members to work in that group. Although social distances and negative stereotypes may not be completely eliminated, these social attitudes and beliefs as well as group processes may be improved by introducing national diversity. The results showed that even conflict was modified when there was national diversity despite social distances and negative stereotypes. The presence of British, German, and Moroccan members (high national diversity) in a group had a positive effect on the social distances and stereotypes that a Dutch member would hold against these nationalities compared to when the group comprised of only Moroccan, German, or British members (low national diversity). The results imply that managers may seek diversity and encourage positive and constructive debates. Through task conflict, members could have a sense of inclusion and thus, are likely to improve on their relationships through positive contact.
Even though there was no direct contact between the different nationalities, the findings showed that social distances and negative stereotypes were determinants of behavior that would affect group processes and outcomes. This means that social attitudes and beliefs cannot be ignored. Managers must be aware of the social distances and stereotypes that different nationalities hold about each other when constituting a nationally diverse group. Whereas these social aspects of diversity should not dispirit the choices of national diversity, management should have plans for avoiding the negative effects of social distances and stereotypes. Diversity should be valued and celebrated within the workgroup to avoid faultline formations and segregations or exclusions on the basis of social attitudes and beliefs such as social distances and stereotypes. This asserts the importance of celebrating national diversity as a positive element of diversity in workgroups.

**Limitations and Future Research**

In this study, we found support for our hypotheses that social attitudes and beliefs in the form of social distance and stereotypes and national diversity affect conflict and performance and that the social attitudes and beliefs were moderated by national diversity. There was more task conflict and less process conflict when national diversity interacted with social distance and national stereotypes, that is, in groups where Pakistanis were working with Chinese, British, and Indian members (high national diversity), they reported more task conflict and less process conflict compared to when Pakistanis were working with only one of the given nationalities (low national diversity). The conflict types mediated the relationship between social distance and national stereotypes and performance where task and process conflicts had a positive effect on performance while process conflict negatively affected performance.

The main limitation of the study was that it was a scenario study and thus did not include real group interactions. However, respondents reported it as a familiar and realistic group situation. Although possible common method effects on the results can not be ignored, the money distribution gave results as well adding weight to the analyses. The findings were encouraging to direct further research on these factors. In consequence,
future research should attempt to validate the results in workgroups setting in organizations.

Research has shown that stereotyping is a mutual phenomenon where countries are perceived to have similar negative traits as that of ones own (Bronfenbrenner, 1961). Studies also show that self-perceptions are influenced by misperceptions and vice versa (Kenny, 1994). We will be interested to know how each of the selected nationalities, and/or other nationalities, stereotyped Pakistanis and the distance they perceived towards Pakistanis. Also, whether social distance and stereotypes are mutually perceived and how do meta-perceptions influence one’s own perceptions. We would expect similar group characteristics in workgroups in and outside Pakistan as found in this study. We also expect a distance hierarchy with similar associations to stereotypes and conflict perceptions in view of nationality composition. However, we need more studies to validate our results and verify these findings.

In this study, we considered two aspects of national diversity; national numerical composition, and the social aspects in the form of social distance and stereotypes. With the help of samples from two cultural settings, we found that national diversity had a positive effect within a nationally diverse workgroup in that it reduced the negative effect of social distance and negative national stereotypes. Furthermore, social distances and negative stereotypes were related to performance and the relationship of these social attitudes and beliefs with performance was fully or partially mediated by conflict types, that is, task, relationship, and process conflicts. The results not only showed how national diversity could become disadvantageous for a workgroup because of the negative social attitudes and beliefs, we also found that diversity can positively facilitate group outcomes through the national diversity aspect of national diversity.
Chapter 5

The Influence of Racioethnic Diversity and Similarity Preference on Intragroup Conflict and Efficient Performance

Based on Ayub & Jehn, 2010d

To better understand all facets of diversity, research has explored a number of diversity characteristics and beliefs that may have a significant role in how diversity affects group activities. According to existing research, diversity may lead to negative or positive consequences depending on other factors and features that may be influencing the relationship of diversity to outcomes as moderators or mediators. For example, ethnic diversity could impact satisfaction positively in the presence of common ingroup identity and negatively in the absence of common ingroup identity (Cunningham, 2005). Little research has examined how racioethnic diversity, in particular, influences group processes (Bowers, Pharmer, & Salas, 2000; Lawrence, 1997; Pelled, 1996; Pitts, 2005). Cox (2004) noted that the tendency to study whites and blacks in terms of race and Hispanics and Asians in terms of ethnicity is not entirely accurate. According to Cox (2004), race and ethnicity of a group are not separable and thus, should be studied together. He defines racioethnicity as the combination of biological and cultural differences (also Roberson & Block, 2001).

Research often examines one diversity characteristics, such as race and ethnicity (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998), although such demographic
characteristics are rather inseparable. Roberson and Block (2001) noted that racioethnicity can lead to social categorizations and that racioethnicity in fact is a common basis for ingroup-outgroup categorization in the United States. While the United States has common racioethnic categorizations (Frable, 1997), other countries also have specific racioethnic subgroups. For example, Asians can be identified as Asians but also distinctly as Chinese, Indians, or Japanese. Even the whites distinguish among themselves as British White or Caucasian White and the ‘coloured’ as Afro-American, Surinamese, Indian Americans, or Hispanics, among others (cf. Smith & Stratton, 2003). Whereas two whites will see each other as more similar than a black, the two whites will be even more similar if both are of Irish ethnicity compared to if one is Irish and the other is British. Although the dark-skinned Caribbean immigrants acknowledge racial and color similarities with African-Americans, they culturally distinguish themselves from native-born blacks (Waters, 1996). We thus, recognize racioethnicity as a distinct characteristic of group members (cf. Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Webber & Donahue, 2001).

Even though diversity research has sometimes included observations on race and ethnic diversity, it has failed to show consistent findings on individual and group experiences and functioning (Baugh & Graen, 1997; Martins, Milliken, Wiesenfeld, & Salgado, 2003; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). We contribute to the understanding of diversity, specifically racioethnic diversity, by looking at members’ similarity preferences and perceived respect within workgroups, and how racioethnic diversity is related to conflict and in turn affects the group performance, especially the aspect of efficiency. Efficiency marks the progress of a group by conservation and effective utility of time in completing a task. Efficiency has been considered to be an important indicator of effective performance of a workgroup (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Eisenhardt, 1989) but it has not been commonly included as a performance measure. It is especially critical to examine in diverse workgroups because diverse members may be more productive but they may be less efficient. Thereby, we consider timeliness and valuable utility of time (i.e., efficient performance) as an important outcome to consider in diverse workgroups.
Whenever an individual faces an interpersonal situation, s/he has preferences to guide his/her interactions and communication. Members of a racioethnically diverse group are likely to be drawn to members who are similar to themselves in racioethnic background and will be less drawn to those who are not (e.g., Jackson et al., 1991; Wagner, Pfeffer, & O’Reilly, 1984). We explore preferences in a racioethnically diverse group as similarity preferences. Similarity preferences can be defined as values that guide member’s attraction to other members in the group (Reade, 2001) based on certain similarity characteristics such as racioethnicity. It represents the attitude of reservations or choices for contact where a stronger similarity preference denotes highly reserved choices for contact, that is, a person with a strong similarity preference preferably interacts with similar members only. That is, an Indian Surinamese will interact with other Indian Surinamese compared to Chinese Surinamese and a Chinese Asian will interact more with Chinese Asian than Japanese Asians. In other words, the stronger the preference the less likely the person is to attempt contacts with dissimilar others. Although similarity preference is not directly related to a job, it is likely to intensify the relationship and process conflicts due to selective choices of interaction and behavior within the group. We will study similarity preference as pertinent to racioethnic diversity since racioethnic diversity and similarity preference both share the characteristic of racioethnic differences. The relationship between racioethnicity and conflict has not been thoroughly explored before by taking into account the individuals’ similarity preference. Thus, this research adds to the literature on diversity and conflict as well as the social attitudes that affect group processes and performance.

Another contribution of this research is that we examine both negative and positive aspects of group interaction. While similarity preferences represent a negative aspect, respect offers a positive attitudinal constituent of group interaction. While similarity preferences are natural to human beings (cf. similarity-attraction paradigm; Byrne, 1971), respect can be seen as a group norm for desirable group processes and performance. Researchers have found that the potential positive features of groups such as empathy and positive emotions among group members are important to determine functioning in diverse groups (Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy et al.,
Lalljee and colleagues suggest respect as one such positive and important feature of groups that should be considered more in group research (Lalljee, Tam, Hewstone, Laham, & Lee, 2009). We, therefore, examine the role of respect in racioethnically diverse workgroups specifically alongside similarity preferences to take into account both positive and negative moderators and also study the individual attitudes as well as focus on respect at the group level. Simon and Sturmer (2005) believe that respect can have a significant influence where group members feel recognition of equal standing, especially when relationships within the group are tense because of some inequality. Similarity preference can be such a state of inequality where certain members are preferred for contact and others are excluded. We, therefore, investigate the role of respect as well as similarity preference in racioethnically diverse workgroups. We will contribute to an understanding of respect within group research as there remains a lack of knowledge to describe the consequences of respect on group processes and outcomes (Prestwich & Lalljee, 2009).

One significant intervening variable in the relationship between diversity and performance is conflict (Jehn, Greer, & Rupert, 2009; Jehn et al., 1999, Pelled, 1996; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Diversity may be beneficial but it also has the potential for greater tension and conflicts (Cox, 1993; Jackson & Ruderman, 1995). Studies have found that heterogeneous teams experience more conflict, higher turnover, and dissatisfaction compared to homogenous teams (Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992; Zenger & Lawrence, 1989). More specifically in empirical studies, racially diverse teams experienced more conflict (Sessa, 1993) and reported lower inclination to work with such a team (Hinds, Carley, Krackhardt, & Wholey, 2000). Research is needed to establish the role of conflict in this relationship specifically with reference to diversity types. In the next section, we will develop hypotheses about the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency with conflict as the mediator. This will, in turn, explain how diversity affects performance positively as well as negatively through the effects of different types of conflict. For a complete model, we introduce similarity preference and respect as the relevant moderators of the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency (see Figure 1).
This study will examine the relationship between perceived racioethnic diversity and efficiency in workgroups. We will examine the moderating roles of similarity preference and perceived respect as two social attitudes within groups, and the mediating role of conflicts in the racioethnic diversity to efficiency relationship. Until now, there is a dearth of studies examining how the social aspect of similarity preference is related to workgroup conflicts or efficiency. We believe that it is important to examine these social attitudes of group members which may explain the behavior patterns of the group members and thus the group processes and outcomes. Together, similarity preferences and perceived respect are expected to describe the relationship of diversity to conflicts and performance more comprehensively. The full model depicts a mediated moderating relationship as shown in Figure 1.
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Racioethnic diversity incorporates and is defined as the combination of biological and cultural differences (Cox, 2004; McKay & Avery, 2006). For example, a group is racioethnically diverse when it includes an Indonesian, a Moroccan, and a Dutch. All four members of the given group come from four different ethnicities and races. This diversity may lead to constructive group activities or task conflict due to its potential positive diversity characteristics such as variety of information and knowledge (McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1996). At the same time, it may also lead to negative conflict, that is, relationship and process conflicts due to social categorization issues (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). There are numerous attributes that can be a basis for diversity but the attributes that significantly affect the groups are those that are salient and subjectively experienced (Randel, 2000, 2002; Lau & Murnighan, 1998), that is, perceived diversity. Perception of diversity is now recognized to be an important factor in determining group processes (Jehn & Bezrukova, 2009; Zellmer-Bruhn et al., 2008). Race or ethnicity is seen as one of the most salient characteristic of group members for social interaction (Ibarra, 1992). In this study, we include subjective perceptions of racioethnic diversity and how this perception affects group processes and outcomes.

Racioethninc composition of workgroups may significantly impact team performance (Townsend & Scott, 2001). Studies have shown that performance increases as diversity decreases (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998; Wiersema & Bantel, 1992). Conversely, diversity is seen as a source of rich inputs providing groups with a wider range of perspectives and a broader skills base for higher quality decisions, greater creativity, and innovative ideas in workgroups (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Bantel & Jackson, 1989, De Dreu & West, 2001; McLeod & Lobel, 1992). Some research studies, however, found no relationship between diversity and performance (Earley, 1993; Kilduff, Angelmar, & Mehra, 2000; Watson, Johnson, & Merritt, 1998) suggesting that there is no direct relationship between diversity and performance (Kochan et al., 2003). We will study how racioethnic diversity is related to efficient performance of the group, through the moderating effects of attitudes and norms, since diversity
appears to be particularly disruptive to efficient performance of workgroups (Jackson & Joshi, 2004).

Diversity may affect performance through group processes such that diversity is beneficial to performance under facilitating conditions like perceived respect (Kochan et al., 2003). Alternatively, the dysfunctional group processes, such as conflict and miscommunication, may impede performance (Wagner, Pfeffer, & O’Reilly, 1984; Watson et al., 1993). Similarity preference may be one source of miscommunication and thus conflict. We, therefore, propose that racioethnic diversity will be negatively related to efficiency through the moderating effects of similarity preference, but also expect that racioethnic diversity will be positively related to efficiency when the group members perceive respect (i.e., respect positively moderates the diversity to performance relationship), regardless of racioethnic differences.

**Similarity Preference, Racioethnic Diversity, and Efficiency**

Even though open and direct racial animosity is not normally exhibited in the workplace, stereotypes and beliefs continue to stimulate an implicit tension among workers who come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds (Barreto & Ellemers, 2009; Townsend & Scott, 2001). When group members perceive differences, they will engage in categorization process and will be positively biased towards the members who are categorized as similar compared to those members who are categorized as others or outgroups (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Konrad & Gutek, 1987; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999; Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992). These biases hinder the individual, as well as the group efficiency (Jackson, Joshi, & Erhardt, 2003; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998) since subgroup differentiation may lead to distrust and reduced willingness to contribute to the group processes (Brewer, 1996), that is, increased process loss and coordination cost.

Intergroup bias evolving from social categorization processes can disrupt the group’s communication effectiveness, and in turn can reduce efficiency and performance (Ensari & Miller, 2006). Shared characteristics not only maintain mutual attraction (Ibarra, 1995; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), they also imply categorization of members...
who are different as outgroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The categorization process and the reduced attraction towards the differently categorized subgroups are likely to restrain contact among these subgroups. Such categorizations instigate social stereotyping and discriminatory behavior towards outgroups (e.g., Brewer, 1988; Brown, 2000; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Sherif, 1967; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Regardless of whether similarity preference stimulates outgroup discrimination, it appears that similarity preference by itself may be perceived as discriminatory (Reskin, 2000) and harm the efficiency of the group through reduced integrity and coordination. We also acknowledge that a highly diverse group may have members open to interact, without any similarity preferences. However, we hypothesize that when a racioethnically diverse workgroup includes members with preferential attitudes, efficiency will decrease.

Hypothesis 1: Similarity preference will moderate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency; that is, efficiency will be lower in racioethnically diverse workgroups when there is similarity preference in the group members.

Respect, Racioethnic Diversity, and Efficiency

Perceived respect can facilitate within group interaction and processes. Respect comprises unbiased and dignified treatment and has been shown to increase commitment (Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler & Boeckmann, Smith, & Huo, 1997) as well as explain different aspects of organizational groups such as collective identification (Simon & Sturmer, 2003) and group-serving behavior (Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002; De Cremer, 2002; Ellemers, Doosje, & Spears, 2004; Simon & Sturmer, 2003; Sturmer, Simon, & Lowey, 2008). Moreover, Simon, Lucken, and Sturmer (2006) suggest that respect within the group improves relationships among group members (Tyler & Lind, 1992).

Respect is a stable general attitude (Lalljee et al., 2007) that signals equal worth (in the sense of all humans being equal) and recognition (also see Dillon, 2007). Lalljee et al. (2009) emphasized studying respect as a significant psychological process within groups that may contribute to positive processes. They found that respect strongly predicted positive action tendencies towards the outgroup even when attitudes towards the
outgroup were taken into account. Research has also shown that group members can cooperate, even if they dislike each other, when they perceive respect and recognition. This implies that people can have similarity preferences as well as respect for outgroup members at the same time. To understand how the two social attitudes influence the group simultaneously, we explore the two as distinct moderators of the relationship between racioethnic diversity and performance. Correspondingly, we hypothesize that respect will moderate the racioethnic diversity to efficiency relationship.

Respectful treatment serves as a message of acceptance and inclusion where the respected feel they are treated equally and that their ideas are listened to (Lalljee et al., 2007). While members of racioethnic diversity may find themselves excluded from networks of information sharing (Cox, 1994; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995), inclusion, in the form of respect within the group, can influence the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficient performance (Cho & Mor-Barak, 2008). Respect encourages members’ involvement in their workgroup (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998) and this involvement improves performance of these groups (Lawler, 1993; Rumbler & Brache, 1990). Procedural justice literature also shows that respect among group members increases commitment to the group (Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith, & Huo, 1997; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Deliberative democracy theory also finds mutual respect to be desirable among those who have reservations and disagreements but maintain rational debate (e.g., Gutman & Thompson, 1996). Since respect promotes inclusion, participation, involvement, and commitment as noted above, we can propose that efficiency of a racioethnically diverse group will be enhanced when respect is high. Accordingly, when group members perceive respect within their group, we propose that the group is likely to perform efficiently as a group.

Hypothesis 2: Respect will moderate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency; that is, efficiency will be higher in racioethnically diverse workgroups when there is respect in the group.
Racioethnic Diversity, Conflict, and the Social Moderators

We have noted above that research has found mixed effects of diversity on performance and that conflict can better explain these results as a mediator of this relationship (Jackson et al., 2003; Jehn et al., 1999). Accordingly, we propose that racioethnic diversity may have positive or negative effects on efficiency depending on the moderators and the types of conflict mediating this relationship. Task conflict is defined as disagreements about the content of the tasks being performed, including differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions that are directly task-related (Jehn, 1997). The three types of conflicts that Jehn identified also include relationship and process conflicts along with task conflict. Relationship conflict incorporates interpersonal incompatibilities (e.g., differences in personal traits, language, cultural practices), and process conflict includes disagreements about logistical issues such as the distribution of resources, agenda settings, and task responsibilities (Jehn, 1997). Below, we discuss the existing findings on the relationship between diversity and conflict to rationalize whether racioethnic diversity will be positively or negatively related to conflict.

Similar to the diversity to performance relationship, studies on the diversity to conflict relationship also give mixed findings. When could diversity lead to task conflict and potentially enhanced performance, and not negatively affect the group with relationship or process conflicts? To find an answer, we aimed at exploring two social moderators: similarity preference and respect. We speculate that similarity preference will enhance relationship and process conflicts and reduce task conflict while respect will decrease relationship and process conflicts and increase task conflict in racioethnically diverse workgroups. In addition, conflict types that negatively affect performance will be increased and positive potentials of racioethnic diversity may be lost due to similarity preference.

Similarity Preference, Racioethnic Diversity, and Conflict

Similarity preference is an attitude that describes the members’ choice of contact. That is, those perceived as similar will be chosen for more frequent interaction compared to those who are dissimilar (Byrne, 1971; Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989). For example, in a racioethnically diverse
group, a Canadian is more likely to prefer a Canadian compared to a British or a white American. In Pakistan, a Jutt will interact preferably with a Jutt than an Araain even though they both identify themselves as Punjabis too. Brief et al. (2005) found that members working in a racioethnically diverse group may be quite familiar with the racioethnically different members around them but still experience stress and conflict. Brief et al. (2005) showed that closer proximity in fact increased conflict (see also Ramarajan, Bezrukova, Jehn, Euwema, Kop, 2004). Other studies have also shown that team diversity has no significant effect on social integration (Horwitz & Horwitz, 2007; Milliken & Martins, 1996; O’Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989). These studies suggest that racioethnicity by itself may not influence the group and its members’ experiences. However, preference for contact towards racioethnic diversity is a more significant attribute than racioethnicity itself that can affect how racioethnic diversity leads to either positive or negative consequences. Whether members seek self-reinforcement of their held beliefs or discard their stereotypes as being false may also depend on their contact preference.

Outgroup members (defined as dissimilar others) may evoke disliking, distrust, and competition in members of diverse workgroups (Hogg & Hardie, 1991; Brewer, 1996). People like and trust ingroup members more than outgroup members and thus generally tend to favor ingroups over outgroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Reservations in communication or similarity preference restrict contact opportunities in racioethnically diverse groups. Similarity preference may socially exclude some group members and thus have negative consequences even if similarity preference in itself does not have malignant intents (cf. Zadro, Williams, & Richardson, 2004). Similarity increases the frequency of communication, which leads to a more cohesive and effective work group climate (Chatman et al., 1998; Jehn et al., 1999). The similarity preferences can give rise to outgroup stereotypes and negative images (Levine & Moreland, 1990) and polarization between the subgroups (Hogg, Turner, & Davidson, 1990).

The social identity/self categorization perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) explains the negative effects of diversity. The interpersonal differences between the group members are likely to be associated with
relationship conflict (Triandis et al., 1994). Ethnicity affects interpersonal attraction (Chattopadhyay, 1999; Riordan & Shore, 1997) and the intergroup categorization intensifies negative conflict due to decreased communication. Consequently, group performance is decreased (Tsui, Egan & O’Reilly, 1992; Smith et al., 1994; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999) as members are preoccupied with interpersonal issues instead of focusing on the group tasks. Accordingly, we propose that similarity preference will exacerbate the relationship conflict in racioethnically diverse workgroups.

Mannix (1993) showed that the outgroup members may be deprived of important resources. We have seen that when a group includes racioethnically different group members, competition threat is heightened (Campbell, 1965; LeVine & Campbell, 1972). This competition can have positive effects in terms of task conflict but then this can also lead to the defeating and outstripping tendency. This tendency of covertly hurting the outgroup members can turn into process conflict and negatively affect the group’s efficient performance. Adler (1997) also suggested that a group can benefit from diversity but only if the group is able to get beyond process-oriented difficulties. Also, lack of communication among the group members (Hoffman, 1985) may lead to misunderstandings and delays. Thereby, diverse teams take longer to reach decisions (Punnet & Clemens, 1999). Thus, similarity preference may exacerbate process conflicts in racioethnically diverse workgroups.

Sargent and Sue-Chan (2001) showed that racioethnically diverse groups reported higher levels of task-specific and generalized group efficacy. When members come from various racioethnic backgrounds, they come with a variety of learning experiences and strategies to handle work processes. This variety of knowledge, capacity, and skills of racioethnically diverse group members is expected to contribute to increased task conflict. However, restricted communication in terms of similarity preference can inhibit information sharing within the group, which is crucial for a diverse group to benefit from its diverse potential. When group members perceive favored interactions within the group, they may be discouraged from participating and contributing to the group task. Similarity preferences affect the task-specific processes due to withdrawal of the group members...
and thus increase task conflict in racioethnically diverse groups. We expect that the members’ similarity preferences will moderate the racioethnic diversity to conflict relationship.

Hypothesis 3a: Similarity preference will moderate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and relationship and process conflict; that is, there will be more relationship and process conflict in racioethnically diverse groups when there is similarity preference in the group members.

Hypothesis 3b: Similarity preference will moderate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and task conflict; that is, there will be less task conflict in racioethnically diverse groups when there is similarity preference in group members.

Respect, Racioethnic Diversity, and Conflict

Similarity preference, by definition, is more ingroup oriented than outgroup. A member could have reservations about interpersonal relations due to similarity preferences, but that same member could also respect the other group members (cf. Ayub & Jehn, 2010a). Ayub and Jehn (2006) found that nationally diverse group members experienced task conflict despite high outgroup derogation. They speculated that perhaps group norms such as respect among the group members encouraged positive competition among the group members. Respect can be defined as recognition that one has a considerable voice and that his/her views are valued (Lalljee et al., 2009). It is also defined as a sense of inclusion, perceived liking, and fair treatment (see Huo, Binning, Molina, 2009).

Contact theory suggests that greater contact can reduce the outgroup derogation and stereotyped expectations, as contact exposes them to information that contradicts stereotypes (Brewer & Brown, 1998). Whereas Allport’s conditions for contact to translate into positive consequences may not give the complete list of conditions (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), we believe respect can essentially facilitate group interaction. The conflict experience will be ameliorated if the group members respect each other, regardless of categorization. Janssens and Brett (1997) found that the team members’ perception of respect or meaningful participation is relevant to the teams’ performance through successful interaction. Participation can
facilitate their commitment and intent to progress by raising the morale of the group members. Some studies, on the contrary, show little role of respect in diverse groups. Respect is found to be low with reported unwillingness to work with different others (Pelled et al. 1999; Timmerman, 2000). This does not, however, necessitate that diverse groups will be low in respect, but it does show that if respect in diverse groups is low, then cooperation will be low and thus, affect efficiency negatively. We, therefore, hypothesize that respect has a moderating role, which will influence the relationship between racioethnic diversity and conflict types within the group. This factor helps complete our model for explaining the relationship between racioethnic diversity and conflict as shown in Figure 1.

Lalljee et al. (2009) advocate unconditional respect as a means to understand the underlying processes for conflict. Lalljee et al. (2009) observed that members high in respect are less likely to exclude other members. Rather, they approach the interaction respectfully and are willing to spend time with the other members. The respectful treatment includes courteous behavior and listening to the arguments of other group members. If members of a racioethnically diverse workgroup perceive respect, that is, they find a considerable voice and that their views are valued, they will be encouraged to share and participate. Perceived respect facilitates group members’ willingness to cooperate, group-oriented behavior, and efforts to goal achievements (De Cremer, 2002; Simon & Sturmer, 2003; Simon & Sturmer, 2005; Smith, Tyler, Huo, Ortiz, & Lind, 1998; Tyler & Blader, 2000). Thus, respect appears to facilitate group processes and performance in a positive way. This also suggests that respect is likely to strengthen the relationship between racioethnic diversity and task conflict.

When respect is absent, members may have lower self-esteem, which can accentuate relationship conflict in diverse groups as they are denied recognition (Honneth, 1995). According to the procedural fairness research, respect signals recognition and a valued status (Tyler & Lind, 1992). A high group justice climate with respectful treatment of group members positively influences the group interaction and thus, helps lessens relationship conflict in diverse groups (Li & Cropanzano, 2008). Similarly, the respect and intragroup status model (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005) states
that respect develops a sense of recognition and belonging and a positive reputation within the group. In addition, respect reduces derogatory attitudes towards the outgroup members (Smith & Tyler, 1997; Tyler & Smith, 1999). Perceived respect may satisfy the need to belong and drive the members to have more positive relationships in response to the respect perceived from other group members (Tyler & Smith, 1999). These studies show that respect can significantly influence how members behave within a group and suggest that respect can bring out the positive aspects of racioethnic diversity. Specifically, relationship conflict may be reduced when racioethnically diverse group members perceive respect.

When in a group, members expect equal rights and entitlements (Wenzel, 2004). Respect is described as recognition and equal treatment. Thus, perceptions of equal entitlement imply that conflict over roles and resources will be reduced when the group members respect each other, that is, there will be less process conflict in diverse groups when respect is high. Also, Simon et al. (2006) noted that respect played a valuable role when interaction was laden with unfavorable rights and participation opportunities. If members perceive respect within their workgroups, we propose that they will be content with the entitlements and thus there will be less process conflict.

**Hypothesis 4a:** Respect will moderate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and relationship and process conflict; that is, there will be less relationship and process conflict in racioethnically diverse groups when there is respect in the group.

**Hypothesis 4b:** Respect will moderate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and task conflict; that is, there will be more task conflict in racioethnically diverse groups when there is respect in the group.

Above, we have hypothesized that racioethnic diversity is related to efficiency with similarity preference and respect as the two social attitudes that moderate this relationship. We have also proposed conflict to serve as the mediator and hypothesize a mediated moderated relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency. For a complete mediated moderating hypothesis of our model, we specifically state:
Hypothesis 5: Conflict will mediate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and performance where the effect of racioethnic diversity is moderated by both similarity preference and respect; that is, similarity preference and respect will interact with racioethnic diversity to intensify or diminish conflicts and these conflicts in turn, will decrease (relationship and process conflicts) or increase (task conflict) performance.

METHOD

Sample
To test our hypotheses, we collected data from 3 samples located in 2 countries. The data were collected in Pakistan and the Netherlands. These are two notably multiethnic countries, with several racial categories within the given ethnicities, and their organizations employ racioethnically diverse workgroups (Ayub & Jehn, 2010b; Siebers, 2009). Within Pakistan, there are several ethnicities including Punjabis, Pathans, Sindhis, and Balochs. These ethnicities are further subdivided along several racial groups. For example, Punjabis distinguish themselves, among many, as Araain, Rajput, or Gujjer while Pathans can be Achakzai, Aurakzai, or one of their several racial categories. Within the Netherlands, ethnicities are distinguished according to one’s inherited origin such as Chinese, British, Surinamese, or Dutch. Among these ethnicities, races are identified as Caucasians, Afro-Dutch, and Fries (from Friesland) among many others, as also reported by the participants of this study.

The survey data came from individuals in workgroups from 3 industries: information technology, finance corporation, and HR services. There were 541 professionals in workgroups of size ranging from 2 to 13 members with a mean group size of 6.64. The participants mostly belonged to the age group of 25-34 years and included 243 (43.2%) women. The sample included 137 participants from Pakistan and 105 from one industry and 299 from the other industry in the Netherlands. Participants from Pakistan represented Punjabi, Pathan, and Kashmiri ethnicities in majority with few Sindhis, Potoharis, and Balochs. Participants in the Netherlands samples included British, Indian, Chinese, Moroccan, and Germans with few Australians, Brazilians, Italians, Pakistani, and Turkish. These
participants identified themselves as White, European, White British, White Latin, Caucasian, Antillian, Asian, Surinamese, Black, and Afro-Dutch. These samples were collected to verify our hypotheses testing across cultures and across different types of workgroups.

The participants were required to complete a survey questionnaire about group processes and performance for their workgroups. The surveys from workgroup members were accompanied by supervisor ratings of the workgroups. The surveys consisted of the same measures and followed similar data collection procedures in all samples. The participation was voluntary and confidential.

**Measures**

This study used a survey questionnaire including items for measuring subjective similarity preference, perceived racioethnic diversity, respect, conflict, and efficiency. The same measures were used for all samples, except where noted in the measures description.

**Racioethnic Diversity.** The perception of racioethnic diversity was measured by asking about how much the respondents thought their workgroup was diverse with reference to race, ethnicity, and culture (e.g., How diverse is your workgroup in ethnicity? How diverse is your workgroup in national background?). We computed the average of the items and the items gave an alpha coefficient of .79.

**Similarity Preference and Respect.** We defined similarity preference as values that are likely to guide member’s attraction to other members in the group based on similarity of culture and nationality. We measured similarity preference using Reade (2001) and Dekker, Malova, and Haagendoorn (2003) preference subscales (7-point Likert scale; 1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). The survey included items such as “prefer colleagues with shared national background” and “In general, I prefer to have people of my own national background as my work colleagues”. Cronbach alpha coefficient for the preference items was .82.

In addition, we included two items on members’ perception of respect to observe the influence of group members’ social attitudes. Our items asked directly whether members perceived respect within their workgroups (e.g., Do the group members have a high opinion of one
another? Do members in your workgroup respect each other?). The items were formatted with 7-point Likert-type scales from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Very much). The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the respect items was .77.

**Conflict.** We used Jehn’s (1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001) scales for measuring task, relationship, and process conflict. The items were included in question format with 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (Never) to 7 (A Lot). Twelve items were selected for measuring the conflict types including 4 for task conflict (e.g., How much conflict of ideas is there among the members of this workgroup?), 4 for relationship conflict (e.g., How much do members differ about personal issues?), and 4 for process conflict (e.g., How much disagreement is there about delegating responsibilities in your workgroup?). The conflict items loaded onto 3 separate factors in principal component analysis and the Cronbach alpha coefficients for task, relationship, and process conflicts were .85, .81, and .86 respectively.

**Efficiency.** We collected supervisor ratings of efficient performance and self-report items to measure perceived efficiency of the workgroup members. Gibson, Zellmer-Bruhn, and Schwab’s (2003) items were used to measure group efficiency from supervisors and group members (e.g., This group is effective at getting things done quickly; This group is effective at getting things done in time). The items were formatted with 7-point Likert type scales. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the three efficiency items was .86.

**Control Variables.** We included age and gender as control variables since they are known to have significant effects on the perception of conflict (Pelled, 1996; Randel, 2002). In general, attitudes and behaviors are influenced, even within the same culture, by age and gender (Hall, 1984; Segall, Dasen, Berry, & Poortinga, 1990). We also controlled for nationality, industry, group identity, and group size. The effects of our modeled variables remained significant despite controlling for these variables.
RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations. Means, standard deviations, and correlations were computed for all the measures as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Racioethnic Diversity</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Similarity Preference</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>-0.17**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Respect</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>-0.17**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Task Conflict</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.21**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Relationship Conflict</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.37**</td>
<td>0.52**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Process Conflict</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.30**</td>
<td>0.61**</td>
<td>0.57**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Perceived Group Efficiency</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.19**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>-0.30**</td>
<td>-0.29**</td>
<td>-0.41**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Supervisor Rating</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.19**</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>-0.055</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01; *p<.05

Hypotheses Testing. Hypotheses were tested with hierarchical linear regression analyses after centering our variables (Aiken & West, 1991). In the first two hypotheses, we stated that similarity preference and respect moderate the relationship between perceived racioethnic diversity and performance. To test the moderating effects of similarity preference and respect on the relationship between racioethnic diversity and performance, we entered the variables into the regression analysis as suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). We plotted the relationship for all significant interactions (Aiken & West, 1991). Similarity preference significantly interacted with racioethnic diversity such that group efficiency decreased in the presence of their preferential attitude (see Table 2, Figure 2).

Regardless of similarity preference among members, supervisors rated the groups with higher efficiency compared to groups that reported lower similarity preferences (Figure 3). Respect moderated the racioethnic diversity to perceived group efficiency relationship such that this relationship was positively enhanced in the presence of perceived respect (see Table 2). Perceived efficiency was, however, higher when racioethnic diversity was low and respect was high (figure 4). These results supported our hypotheses in that similarity preference and respect moderated the
relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency in their respective directions. Similarity preference decreased the efficiency of racioethnically diverse groups whereas respect enhanced the efficiency of that group in terms of members’ perceived efficiency and supervisors rating.

In hypotheses 3 and 4, we stated that similarity preference and respect will moderate the relationship between racioethnic diversity and the conflict types. Task and process conflicts were high when racioethnic diversity as well as similarity preference was high (see Table 2). While our hypothesis 3b regarding task conflict could not be supported since task conflict was high despite high similarity preference (Figure 5), hypothesis 3a was partly supported as process conflict was increased in the presence of similarity preference (Figure 6). Respect significantly moderated the

**Table 2. Regression Analysis for the Moderation Effect of Similarity Preference and Respect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>β Efficiency</th>
<th>β Supervisor Rating</th>
<th>β TC</th>
<th>β RC</th>
<th>β PC</th>
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<td>Racioethnic Diversity (RD)</td>
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<td>-.00</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Preference (CP)</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect (R)</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.232</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.103</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>.019</td>
<td>6.63**</td>
<td>23.77**</td>
<td>13.52**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDXCP</td>
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<td>.18**</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDXR</td>
<td>-.13**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.259</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ R²</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>35.71**</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>7.75**</td>
<td>16.61**</td>
<td>11.79**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ F</td>
<td>6.70**</td>
<td>4.61*</td>
<td>8.98**</td>
<td>5.05**</td>
<td>8.35**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01; *p<.05; †p<.10**
relationship between racioethnic diversity and the three conflict types. The interaction plots show that respect increased task conflict (Figure 7) while it helped reduce relationship and process conflicts in racioethnically diverse groups (see Figures 8 & 9).

In the fifth hypothesis, we expected a mediating role of conflict in the moderated relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency, where similarity preference and respect would moderate the racioethnic diversity to performance relationship. For this mediation effect of conflict types, we followed a series of regression steps for a mediated moderation model (Langfred, 2004). After establishing the interaction effects, we ran
more regression analyses to verify the mediation effects of conflict types. According to the results for hypotheses 1 to 4, the racioethnic diversity to similarity preference and racioethnic diversity to respect interactions significantly related to efficiency as well as the three types of conflict. For the second part of mediation analyses, we found that the conflict types were significantly related to efficiency (task conflict, $\beta = -.30, p < .001$; relationship conflict, $\beta = -.29, p < .001$; process conflict, $\beta = -.41, p < .001$) showing that our mediators were related the dependent variables. The conflict types positively related to supervisors’ rating. Results for the
mediation effect of conflicts showed that conflict indeed mediated the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency. The interaction effects on efficiency as well as the objective ratings were reduced when conflict types were included in the regression analyses as controls. The moderation effects of similarity preference were partially mediated by the three types of conflict as shown in Table 3, while the conflict types fully mediated the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency moderated by respect (see Table 3). We also noted that the three types of conflict negatively related to group members’ own perceived efficiency.
whereas these three conflict types positively related to the supervisors’ ratings of their group’s performance.

**Figure 8.** Moderation Effect of Respect on the Relationship between Racioethnic Diversity and Relationship Conflict

![Diagram showing the relationship between Racioethnic Diversity and Relationship Conflict with Low Respect and High Respect conditions.](image1)

**Figure 9.** Moderation Effect of Respect on the Relationship between Racioethnic Diversity and Process Conflict

![Diagram showing the relationship between Racioethnic Diversity and Process Conflict with Low Respect and High Respect conditions.](image2)
Table 3. Regression Analysis for the Mediated Moderation Effect of Cultural Preference and Respect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediators</th>
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<th>Supervisor Rating</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Conflict</td>
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<td>.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Conflict</td>
<td>-.28**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Conflict</td>
<td>-.38**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
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<td>36.14**</td>
<td>31.03**</td>
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<td>ΔR²</td>
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<tr>
<td>ΔF</td>
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<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01; *p<.05; †p<.10

DISCUSSION

Diverse workgroups hold potential advantages for organizations (Cox & Blake, 1991), but they have their negative facets as well that may inhibit the positive aspects if diversity in workgroups is not managed properly. Organization and group research strives to understand the consequences of diversity with respect to all diversity characteristics and components. We add to this knowledge by studying perceived racioethnic diversity in view of relevant social attitudes of similarity preferences for interpersonal contact and perceived respect. We conducted a field study and collected data from organizational workgroups, which allows for generalizability of our results to workgroups. We included samples from different countries and industries to study the model in a variety of workgroup settings.
We hypothesized and found that similarity preferences and respect moderated the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency as well as the different types of conflict. In the end, our hypothesis for the mediating role of conflicts in the racioethnic diversity to efficiency relationship was also supported. In support of hypothesis 1, we found that similarity preference significantly moderated the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency such that efficiency was decreased when group members had similarity preferences. In support of hypothesis 2, we found that respect positively moderated the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency such that respect enhanced efficiency of racioethnically diverse workgroups. We also found support for hypotheses 3 and 4 as similarity preference and respect moderated the relationship between racioethnic diversity and conflict types as well. In the presence of similarity preference, members of racioethnically diverse workgroups experienced more process conflict. Members of racioethnically diverse workgroups experienced less relationship and process conflicts and more task conflict in the presence of respect within the group. Finally, our last hypothesis that conflict types mediated the moderated relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency was also supported by statistical analyses.

Workgroup members may shift their attention to deeper-level attitudes when surface-level diversity becomes a familiar part of their group context (Brief et al., 2005). We proposed that similarity preferences and respect would influence group processes in racioethnically diverse workgroups. We considered these social attitudes to affect workgroup in opposite directions; similarity preference negatively and respect positively affecting workgroups. Studying the two attitudes, we could also observe that the two uniquely affected the groups and thus explain how racioethnic diversity could relate to positive task conflict and efficiency as well as negative relationship and process conflicts. Such social attitudes are more enduring and may affect the group despite the interdependence and contact within the group. Whereas research has shown that time spent together modifies conflict and group processes, research also shows that attitudes like ingroup and outgroup bias are hard to defy and these attitudes and beliefs may even restrict the positive potentials of the group. Positive
psychology, however, offers hope in terms of promoting positive attitudes if the negative attitudes cannot be completely eliminated. That is, if group members are naturally attracted to similar others for preferred contact choices, we could establish the respect norm within the group to avoid the negative notion of such ingroup favoritism.

Our results showed that racioethnic diversity significantly interacted with similarity preference. That is, in racioethnically diverse workgroups, there was more process conflict and reduced task conflict and efficiency when similarity preference was high. Also, respect significantly interacted with racioethnic diversity such that there was high task conflict and efficiency while relationship and process conflicts were low when there was respect among the members of racioethnically diverse workgroups. These results confirm the significance of moderating variables and specifically similarity preference and respect in racioethnically diverse groups. This also shows that attitudes remain stable across context and situations since the effects of racioethnic differences within a group remained negative even in a racioethnically heterogeneous group as opposed to the diversity context research (Riordan, 2000) and the contact hypothesis (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Brewer & Kramer, 1985). On the contrary, this observation implies that the members seek to maintain the distinctiveness of ethnic categories (Cunningham, 2005) and have preferences for interpersonal contacts which could continue to be a source of conflict in such workgroups. Whereas these similarity preferences may not accompany outgroup rejection or derogation (Brewer, 1999), the outgroup members may not like to be excluded. That is, although members with similarity preference may not directly intend to derogate the outgroups, the contact preferences leaves some group members with the feeling of being excluded. Thus, similarity preferences may intensify conflict, regardless of its focus or intent.

Horwitz and Horwitz (2007) found a positive relationship between task-specific diversity and team performance but also observed that performance of diverse groups was more likely reduced due to demographic differences. These observations may be explained in terms of the social attitudes of group members. The demographic differences (such as racioethnic differences) reduce performance due to the similarity
preferences among similar racioethnic members while respect, as we found, enhances performance through task conflict. This shows that group members can perform as a group, regardless of racioethnic-based identifications and similarity preferences, for the sake of their work progress. This is possible if members perceive that they are respected and accepted as members of the group because perception of being respected encourages meaningful participation (Janssens & Brett, 1997) and willingness to contribute to the group (Smith et al., 1998). Contrary to our hypothesis, we observed that task conflict was high when similarity preferences were high. This may be due to the respect norm that kept the group members together and free from grievances regarding contact preferences. Perhaps, perceived respect, and the implied recognition through respectful treatment, helps the group members feel valued and to acknowledge the natural tendencies for contact preferences. Perceived respect possibly tones down the negative connotations of similarity preferences and facilitates the group members to focus on tasks, especially when they perceive recognition and equal opportunity. Another explanation could be that exclusion experienced due to similarity preference may serve as a motive to seek respect (Sleebos, Ellemers, De Gilder, 2006). For that reason, similarity preference could not weaken members’ participation in task conflict. The results suggest that similarity preference may be a concern for interpersonal contact and communication but they may not be a hindrance to workgroup progress, at least when respect is a group norm (cf. Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

To encourage and benefit from contact opportunities, workgroup members need to be encouraged to be open and flexible in interacting with other members of the group. Managers must be sensitive to the members’ need for ethnic identity distinctions, but at the same time promote respect among the group members. This could in turn facilitate group processes positively and improve individual as well as group experiences.

**Limitations of this Study and Future Research**

In this study, we empirically explored the moderating roles of similarity preference and respect in the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency which was also predicted to be mediated by the
three types of conflict, namely, task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict. The data was collected from racioethnically diverse workgroups in Pakistan and the Netherlands. Although the study has its strengths in that it studied and reported significant findings about a specific diversity characteristic and several relevant variables, it had some limitations that are discussed which should be considered in future research.

We collected cross-sectional data and, therefore, could not explore a causal model or the effect of time. A longitudinal study of these attitudes within work context could investigate how they persist and effect workgroups. In addition, we have explored individual perceptions and attitudes which are appropriate for the study as similarity preferences specifically affect the group members at the individual level. Group-level examinations could elaborate the model to a larger context. Also, in view of the complex characteristic of respect, perhaps the details of what respect means to diverse group members may add to the understanding of social aspects of workgroups, such as what do people of various social groups desire when they demand respect.

Conflict types did not fully mediate the interaction effects of racioethnic diversity and similarity preference. We also found that task conflict was high in racioethnically diverse workgroups despite high similarity preference. These results demand further examination of such social attitudes so that the roles of such attitudes may be clearly explained in workgroup settings. Cooperation and communication patterns could show whether similarity preference actually kept the group members from interacting with the racioethnically different members. Research should seek information on whether the groups are divided into subgroups on the basis of similarity preference and if this leads to conflict when the group members perceive the subgroup tendencies in their groups. Another important aspect of diverse groups is to explore the diversity composition of the group. How many racioethnic groups are present and what are these racial or ethnic groups may give information on the likelihood of similarity preference and its impacts in future research. Task interdependence is also important for cooperation. A highly interdependent group must resolve their differences in order to progress and that interdependence could
compel the group members to respect other members’ contribution so that their own performance, as dependent upon the group performance, does not suffer.

We focused on efficiency as we expected that all types of conflict would influence group efficiency. Consequently, we found that while efficiency was negatively affected by relationship and process conflict, it was also negatively affected by task conflict. Although task conflict can sometimes be beneficial for the group performance (e.g., Jehn, 1995; Simons & Peterson, ), we also know that it can specifically lead to task-specific outcomes particularly such as creativity, innovation, and decision making (e.g., McLedo, Lobel, & Cox, 1996). In order to be able to realize the true contribution of task conflict, research should consider looking at more task-specific outcomes such as creativity, outcome quality, and decision quality.

**Conclusion**

Past research notes that types of diversity such as racioethnicity and attitudes of the members of diverse groups need more thorough theorizing and empirical study. This study intended to explain how racioethnic diversity was related to group outcomes, specifically efficiency. We found that respect and similarity preference moderated the relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency. Conflict types mediated the moderated relationship between racioethnic diversity and efficiency. The findings imply that managers should know their group’s atmosphere and understand the importance of members’ social attitudes and group norms (level of similarity preference and respect). These group attitudes and practices can facilitate work outcomes without a need to change the fast held attitudes and preferences.
Chapter 6

General Discussion

Parts of this chapter are excerpts from Ayub & Jehn, 2010

Organizations are hiring diverse groups of individuals in the hope of bringing into the organization a variety of skills and knowledge while conforming to the requirement of equal rights and opportunity. The movement between nations has become frequent as individuals search for better economic conditions across borders. These individuals may bring with them diversely rich qualifications and characteristics but this diversity is also seasoned with several issues that hinder performance. As diversity in the workforce increases and global competition rises, organizations strive to constitute the most effective workforce from diverse members. Diversity can be helpful or detrimental under given circumstances and in certain organizational contexts (Carroll & Harrison, 1998; Jehn & Bezrukova, 2004; Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998). Research has been directed towards understanding how diversity is advantageous and what additional problems are brought into workgroups along with diversity (Carroll & Harrison, 1998; O’Reilly, Williams, & Barsade, 1997; Jehn & Bezrukova, 2004). Organizational research strives to find out the advantages of diversity and how to achieve its potentially positive outcomes (Ho, 2000; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; O’Reilly, Williams, & Barsade, 1998; Tsui, Porter, & Egan, 2002). In this study, I examine how national diversity can be preserved in an organization and how to make use of such a heterogeneous workforce while keeping its deleterious effects at bay.

Diversity can be useful or harmful to the organization depending on the type of diversity (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale,
Williams and O’Reilly (1998) observed that some types of diversity within organizations, although important, have been less studied. In addition, the social processes through which diversity could positively affect are yet to be specified (Guzzo & Dickson, 1996). While workgroups are becoming more nationally diverse, research still needs to more thoroughly study this diversity type distinctively from other diversity types. The set of studies in this dissertation were designed to find out how a nationally diverse workforce functions in view of the attitudes of its constituent members and what are the effects of such diversity on group processes and performance. To examine national diversity, the data for the multiple studies were collected from multinational organizations and university students. The studies included either diverse groups or participants presented with diversity scenarios. I collected data from South Asian and European samples for observations across diverse samples. I noted that diversity compositions are quite varied across countries and that findings across diverse samples would strengthen the generalizability of findings across cultures and countries. The main contributions and goals of this research were: 1) to determine how national diversity influences workgroup processes (e.g., conflicts) and performance (e.g., effectiveness), 2) to determine if nationalistic attitudes of ingroup preference and outgroup derogation negatively influences these relationships, 3) to find out how to help an organization improve the effectiveness of diverse (and homogenous) groups, and 4) to extend and verify the generalization of theories and propositions across samples.

Nationalism in Nationally Diverse Workgroups

The multinational diversity context provides fertile grounds to explore group members’ attitudes specifically directed to particular diversity types. As diversity research expands, psychological factors such as social attitudes are yet to be adequately explored within workgroup settings. In chapter 2, I theorized that national diversity would be exacerbated by nationalistic attitudes among the group members. While nationalism is a deeply ingrained attitude that develops over years of an individual’s life span, certain contexts and situations are more sensitive for these attitudes to be activated. Nationally diverse workgroups are a context
where group members come from different national backgrounds and are obliged to interact and cooperate within the group. Different nationalities in a workgroup can trigger intergroup discrimination just by the awareness that other nationalities are present (Rivenburgh, 1997). National identity carries some level of emotional value for group members (Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Tajfel, 1981). Interactions with other nationalities, therefore, hold the potential for conflict that can affect the task performance of a group.

When national differences are perceived, the interactions are presumably guided by attitudes such as nationalism. Nationalism is an extreme attitude an individual may carry about his/her national origin. It is defined as having a sense of belonging to a particular “nation” with a common origin (Dekker, Malova, & Hoogendoorn, 2003). In the developed theoretical model, I proposed that members with diverse national backgrounds, especially if they have strong nationalistic attitudes, are likely to experience more conflict among workgroup members than nationally homogenous groups (or if members do not hold strong nationalistic views). I discussed three types of conflict (Jehn, 1995) and explained when national diversity leads to relationship and process conflicts and reduced task conflict through the moderating effects of nationalism.

Overview of the Results

Nationalistic Outgroup Derogation Moderates National Diversity to Conflict Relationship

Following the basic theoretical model, I designed an empirical study to test our theoretical model as proposed in chapter 2. In addition, I further disentangled the concept of nationalism and distinguished between two elements of national preference and nationalistic outgroup derogation. I hypothesized and observed a main effect of national diversity on task conflict, that is, more task conflict was reported by members of nationally diverse groups. I hypothesized that outgroup derogation was a stronger moderator of the national diversity to conflict relationship compared to national preference due to its negative intent. Through a field study, I
discovered that nationalistic derogation was indeed a stronger moderator of the relationship between national diversity and conflict. In support of our hypothesis, I found that outgroup derogation increased relationship conflict in nationally diverse groups. I also observed that outgroup derogation exacerbated the diversity to task conflict relationship. This was an interesting finding, contrary to what I hypothesized. I interpreted and discussed our findings in view of existing theory and research as well as the characteristics of the sample studied.

Social Distance and National Stereotypes Moderated by National Diversity

Is there a characteristic of national diversity that supports positive consequences despite group members’ negative attitudes? In chapter 2 and 3, I noted that nationalistic attitudes may be present within workgroups where individuals of different nations come into contact with each other. Research has shown that diversity may cause group members to employ social categorizations (Smith et al., 1994; Pelled 1997; Riordan & Shore, 1997). These categorizations may increase conflict and decrease group performance (Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992; Pelled et al., 1999a). Once members identify themselves with some category, they perceive their own category as superior and thereby engage in distancing, stereotyping, and censuring members of the other categories (Tajfel, 1982). Accordingly, national identity is activated when different nations come into contact and are evaluated in terms of the home nation’s perspective (Rivenburgh, 1997). Individuals would identify with their national heritage strongly when they are placed in a diverse group competing for distinctions since they wish to uphold the positive opinion they have established about their own national origin. I identified social distances and national stereotypes as two types of nationalistic attitudes warranting further research. I continued our research with these variables and conducted a study as described in chapter 4.

Members coming from different nations may view each other through their nationalistic biases and stereotypes such that these biases may decrease the efficiency and performance of the group. Based on social comparisons, people develop some conception of a social structure that
places social groups into a hierarchy in which they are often put into competition with others for resources, power, and prestige (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). The categorization process produces perceptions by assigning all members of a social category some characteristic which distinguishes them from other groups. This process leads to the recognition of in-groups versus out-groups that have been described as social distance: a hierarchy of social groups from the most acceptable to the least acceptable in terms of interaction (Bogardus, 1933). When members of an organization interpret the behavior of others through a set of beliefs and values, the least preferred are often excluded from interpersonal contact. This exclusion and perceived exclusion can become a source of conflict. I thus hypothesized that social distance will negatively affect the group processes and outcomes. To explore the nationalistic attitudes, I also considered national stereotypes distinct from social distances. Although national stereotypes were hypothesized to have negative effects similar to social distance, I reasoned that national stereotypes were unique and intended to explore how the two were related to conflict and performance outcomes.

Nationalistic attitudes appeared to influence workgroups quite negatively. Is national diversity that unpromising and unwelcomed in workgroups? Diversity research has found that heterogeneous groups can perform better than homogenous groups (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993). That is, research has observed that group composition is a significant determinant of group processes and performance. I discussed group composition research and hypothesized that high national diversity may not only lead to categorization along with the activation of negative attitudes, it could perhaps weaken those negative attitudes and beliefs because of the group composition.

Chapter 4 described the scenario studies that were conducted in Pakistan and the Netherlands. As hypothesized, social distance and national stereotypes were negatively related to outcomes and positively related to conflicts. As expected, national diversity served as a positive moderator and reduced relationship and process conflicts while it increased task conflict despite social distance and negative national stereotypes. Performance outcomes were also improved when national diversity was high, despite social distance and negative national stereotypes. The main
The contribution of this study was to show the value in diversity. National diversity could reduce the negative influences ensuing from social categorization that are doomed to occur when groups include members with social differences (cf. social categorization theory; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Similarity Preference and Respect: The Negative and the Positive Moderators

While heterogeneous group composition may be a common condition for work groups, research shows that group integration decreases (Eisenhardt & Tabrizi, 1995; O’Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989; Smith et al., 1994) and member communication suffers (Triandis, 1994; c.f., Williams & O’Reilly, 1998) as diversity increases. Studies of racial diversity have also shown that it decreases workgroup commitment (Riordan & Shore, 1997), and that it is associated with higher emotional conflict (Pelled et al., 1997). At the same time ethnic diversity has been found to have a positive relationship with creativity and implementation in groups (O’Reilly, Williams, & Barsade, 1997). Furthermore, Pelled (1997) found no relationship between racial diversity and conflict and argued that for a highly heterogeneous group, being different could be a normal condition for work group members. These inconsistent findings suggest that any attribute may have different effects depending upon other surrounding factors or conditions.

In chapter 4, I explored the positive influence of diversity composition of workgroups and found that national diversity benefited the groups by moderating the negative effects of social distance and negative national stereotypes. The diversity research, however, generally focuses on the negative effects of diversity. What then, led to the increase in task conflict despite nationalistic outgroup derogation (chapter 3) and reduced the negative effects of social distance and national stereotypes (chapter 4)? If it is not diversity itself, what helps diversity? To seek further explanation, I considered exploring the context of diversity. Having explored outgroup oriented attitudes as described in chapter 4, I continued with an ingroup-oriented attitude of cultural similarity preference for contact. In addition, I considered positive group norms that could facilitate
diversity. After studying national diversity, I focused on racioethnic diversity in chapter 4 to study the more fine tuned discrepancies or distinctions within a country, such as in Pakistan and Netherlands.

Similarity-Attraction theory suggests that people prefer similarity in their interactions (Byrnes, 1971). Jehn et al. (1999) noted that similarity in values and demographics are needed to maintain an effective work environment. Relational demography research has shown that dissimilarities among group members negatively affect the group (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Pelled, 1996; Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992). Similarity obviously attracts and members preferably seek similar others for contact within their workgroups which implies that interaction with dissimilar other members is kept to minimum within a workgroup setting. I studied these similarity contact preferences as cultural preferences in chapter 5. I proposed that these similarity preferences will negatively affect the relationship between diversity and conflict and performance. Accordingly, I found that racioethnically diverse groups reported decreased efficiency in the presence of cultural preferences.

What can help the diverse group to perform as a group despite similarity preferences? Gillett and Stenfert-Kroese (2003) found that work units with quality outcomes demonstrated a positive organization culture. Organizational culture is defined as the shared values and beliefs that direct the norms of organizational behavior (Delobbe, Haccoun, & Vandenberghe, 2002). According to the definition, organization culture often consists of one of the basic dimensions, such as people-orientated culture that demonstrates perceived support, cooperation, mutual respect, and consideration between organizational members. The general level of support that a team feels it receives from its organizational context contributes to a climate of psychological safety and enhanced efficacy. While behavior may be predicted by identity-based attitudes (e.g., similarity preferences based on national categorization), it is also important to consider what type of group culture or group norms are perceived by the group members. I propose that the intensity and content of organization culture moderate the relationship between group diversity and intragroup conflict. The role of organization culture depends on the degree of the value content shared among group members (Chang, Church, & Zikic,
In chapter 5, therefore, I examined the positive group norm of respect, among group members as a moderator of the diversity to conflict and performance relationships, as well as similarity preferences. I found that similarity preference moderates the diversity to conflict and efficiency relationships such that task conflict and efficiency is decreased and process conflict is increased in the presence of similarity preferences. Respect on the other hand moderated in the positive direction such that task conflict and efficiency were increased and relationship and process conflicts were reduced in the presence of perceived respect among the group members.

**Practical Implications**

The purpose of this dissertation was to study the role of social attitudes of group members to explain the relationship between diversity and group performance. The findings of each study are described in the empirical chapters in this dissertation. I have included managerial implications as I discussed the results of each study in the earlier chapters. In sum, I found that social attitudes have significant effects on group processes and outcomes in diverse workgroups.

Although I found that national diversity potentially has positive main effects on group processes and performance (see Chapter 4 Tables), I also learnt that diversity comes with other characteristics within itself that the managers must be aware of in order to benefit from that diversity. Nationalistic attitudes are not only active in political or civic interactions, they also effect the interpersonal as well as task-oriented interaction in workgroup settings. Since these nationalistic attitudes are strongly indoctrinated within individuals system, it is almost impossible to remove these attitudes through managerial practices. However, I have found that there are elements of diversity itself and positive group norms, such as respect, that can modify the effects of these attitudes. These findings point out that it is important for the managers to fully understand diversity and to avoid the negative effects of social attitudes that are likely activated within certain diversity constitution. While introducing diversity to workgroups for better human resources, several factors must be kept in view when introducing any diversity, specifically national diversity. Despite negative group experiences, individuals may be forced to work in multinational
workgroups for reasons such as monetary rewards and job opportunities. The negative consequences of diversity may interfere with the members’ commitment beyond the job contract, and thus hinder the true potentials of the diversity. If the managers seek workgroups that not only function and perform well but that they continue to perform well together under their effective management, to the satisfaction of the managers and the group members, then it is important for the managers to be aware of the social attitudes associated with diversity. For example, I studied national diversity and showed the effects of nationalistic attitudes and how the groups could continue to perform well due to the heterogeneity of the groups as well as positive group norms such as respect (Chapter 4). I also observed that the group performed well together when the members perceived respect in the group. Therefore, I suggest that managers and group leaders to beware of the social attitudes and preferences of their group members. They should promote positive group norms such as respect that do not negate or threaten the social identities of the group members but facilitates cooperation and positive group performance and outcomes. In addition the group members should also learn the importance of respecting the members who may be dissimilar but as worthy of respect as they expect themselves to be respected.

In chapter 4, I discussed the need to have well-defined roles and responsibilities and group norms to decrease conflicts due to nationalistic attitudes. Chances of exhibiting nationalistic derogation can be reduced when the group environment facilitates open communication. Clearly defined tasks and routines also remove reasons for confusion and for the members to find ways to behave according to their attitudes and beliefs. Chapter 4 was a scenario study where there was no direct contact between the different nationalities, however, I still found that social distances and negative stereotypes affected group processes and outcomes. Managers must be knowledgeable of social differences among the group members and that these social differences can lead to social distances and stereotypes. Social distances and negative national stereotypes negatively affect the group processes and outcomes but I learnt that these are context-dependent such that their negative effects are modified when the group was more diverse than homogenous. The managers must know how to
maximize the diversity potential by finding the appropriate diversity composition. Diversity trainings of workgroups should promote diversity beliefs and openness norms to curtail segregations or exclusions on the basis of social attitudes and beliefs such as social distances and stereotypes. In view of the social distances, group members from similar nations may have less negative nationalistic feelings against each other even though they come from two different nations. This observation points at the option of introducing national diversity keeping in mind the nationality composition of the groups. That is, a group can benefit from national diversity while avoiding issues of nationalistic attitudes by including members from nationalities with smaller social distances. If that is not feasible, then social distances can be improved within workgroup members, even if nationalism is difficult to alter, by promoting respect.

In chapter 5, although not hypothesized, the results showed noted that diversity decreased similarity preference. This is similar to the effects of diversity hypothesized in chapter 4, that is, diversity positively moderates the effects of social attitudes and opinions. However, respect was also lower in diverse workgroups. Both observations are important for the managers and can add to value in diversity. With the effectively managed diversity composition, managers can encourage a group with members willing to interact more and thus decrease social distances (from chapter 4). Decreased social distances mean increased acceptance of dissimilar members or lowered contact preferences. Although similarity preferences may not be eliminated from group members’ set of attitudes guided by their social identities, they can be lessened within workgroups through modified social distances. Whereas diversity modifies negative attitudes, it could also increase confusion and relational stress which reduces perceived respect and consequently increased conflict experience. By providing choices of interaction (increased diversity) and encouraging the acceptability of dissimilar others (respect), the managers can assure that the groups will perform efficiently and effectively. Respect can be promoted by introducing and managing diversity related beliefs and norms in the group (cf. Homan, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & De Dreu, 2007; Van Knippenberg, Haslam, & Platow, 2007). To benefit from contact opportunities, workgroup members need to be encouraged to be open,
flexible, and willing to learn as they interact with other members of their group. These practices, in turn, facilitate group processes positively and improve individual as well as group experiences.

Managers and group leaders should also pay attention to conflicts within the workgroups. I found some main effects of diversity but I noted that conflicts had a significant role in the relationship between diversity and outcomes. The workgroups experience the differences (such as those of nationality) that carry negative attributes, but not the positive characteristics of diversity that can benefit these groups. First of all, there is a need to gain knowledge about diversity, accept it through improved attitudes toward those who are different, and develop the necessary skills for responsive experiences (Manning, 2000).

Interaction with a willingness to learn can help improve negative attitudes. A careful formal re-categorization beginning with an introductory orientation to avoid anxiety and conflict can help discourage subgroup segregations and encourage mutual cooperation as well as learning. The orientation is important to explain the purpose of job-focused group formations and for the active cognizant involvement of the group members. Several researchers have elaborated recategorizations with the help of inclusive group boundaries to reduce the negative effects of intergroup biases (e.g., Kramer & Brewer, 1984; Polzer, Stewart, & Simmons, 1999). Any recategorization should be carefully introduced so that personal identities are not neglected or disregarded. Not denying the promise of superordinate identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mackie & Goethels, 1987), any such identity should be introduced with a clear orientation with a personal motive and meaning. The differences that divide a group are unique to that group and each aspect should be scrutinized to assure a clear understanding of the situation and foster befitting mutual adaptation (Jackson et al., 2003; Pettigrew, 1998; Thomas, 1995).

Another option is to undertake strategies to keep the focus on positive inclusion and respect where every member is perceived as equally important for the group performance (chapter 5). These may include announcements where individual performance is clearly related to group performance; incentives for the best group instead of individuals; and norms and incentives as well as formal structures for cooperation and
collaboration in place of individual progress. Respect gives reassurance and serves for the self-verification purposes of the members that everyone is accepted and included as a significant member of the group. Without respect, cooperation is difficult while cooperation is crucial for group functioning and progress (Byrne, 1993; Jackson, 1991; Smith, Carroll, & Ashford, 1995). The economic and employment facts of several countries show that members will remain in the group whether they like it or not for the sake of their job, but the cooperation will likely be low. Chen, Chen, and Meindl (1998) discuss cooperation in view of the common group identity and superordinate identity (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gaertner et al., 2000), specifically in collectivist cultures. They believed that within a culture, cooperation may be fostered through establishing positive goal relationships among the members. That is, the focus should be task-directed relationship which could then lead to a change at interpersonal and attitudinal levels as well. Rewards and incentives are two of the most attractive attainments that a job can offer. The recognition awards should be announced based on a variety of criteria including task-related behaviors as well as behaviors that help promote diversity (such as diversity affirmative actions, cooperation, helping, information sharing, and citizenship behavior). That may develop a communal feeling that relegates the tendencies to categorize and discourages biases. Respect, openness, communication, interpersonal contact and learning, trust, and social integration are more likely to bring a positive change and bring out the value in diversity (see chapter 5). Managers must provide a safe environment (social and organizational) and not only an opportunity to work in order to encourage and sustain diversity in the workplace.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

I theorized about the moderating role of attitudes in the diversity to conflict and outcome relationships. The empirical chapters provide results to explain this relationship and emphasize the role of individuals within groups, that is, we cannot ignore the individuals when studying group processes and performance. Through this dissertation, I have described some findings which also suggest a number of interesting pathways for future research on diversity and conflict. Nationalistic attitudes have not
been thoroughly studied in group research previously. Focusing on
nationalistic attitudes, further research can investigate the levels of
nationalism and its specific aspects (national favoritism and derogation).
Also, nationalism can be studied at the group level. However, the group-
level studies must be considered carefully since nationalism is a rather
complicated individual-level construct. Researchers can look to the recent
developments in the study of asymmetry of attitudes and perceptions of
group members (Jehn, Greer, Rispens, Barreto, & Rink, 2006; Jehn,
Rupert, & Nauta, 2008; Rispens, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2005). This research
examines and captures the differences in group members and how this can
influence group processes and outcomes (Jehn & Chatman, 2000). In
addition, nationality faultlines (see Lau & Murnighan, 1998) can also
explain the consequences of national diversity. The group members may be
more nationalistic in behavior when they are in the majority. Also, a
member may be or perceive to be a target of nationalism more when her/his
nationality is a minority subgroup with the workgroup. The role of minority
influence as noted in chapter 3 and the importance of faultlines also points
to the need of studying group composition as discussed below.

I found that group composition may alter the effects of nationalism,
and also that this composition may have a significant effect based on how
group members perceive the group. Further investigation then should
consider the perceptions and realities of diversity composition. I also found
that nationalistic outgroup derogation may not reduce the positive group
processes depending on members’ perceptions of diversity as the results in
chapter 3 showed that members of nationally diverse workgroups
experienced enhanced task conflict in the presence of nationalistic outgroup
derogation. This shows that workgroups can benefit from such diversity
and research should explore how the positive aspects of diversity can be
enhanced. How can the nationally diverse workgroups be redirect to shift
their focus from national differences to that of combining their skills and
unique knowledge? I have shown that the effects of social distances and
negative national stereotypes can be modified while respect can positively
influence the group. Research should investigate diversity, attitudes, and
group norms and culture in this direction. In addition, I have studied these
attitudes and beliefs at an individual level, while as noted above for
nationalism, the social attitudes and norms can be studied at the group level. Studies can also compare the differences among the effects of different levels of these variables.

Another interesting aspect to add to the model is time. Although attitudes such as nationalism are known to be deeply-ingrained and quite difficult to change (Green & Seher, 2003; Sears & Funk, 1999), they are also known to be stimulated within particular contexts. Since group diversity is not fixed, alterations in diversity composition may also affect the members’ nationalistic attitudes. Research can also explore if intragroup contact and exposure to diversity can have a positive effect on nationalism. My model incorporates both demographic diversity (national diversity) and deep-level attitudes (nationalism) which is again an interesting model to examine over time (cf., Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998) to see if and how simultaneous weakening of one effect and strengthening of another occur. Since nationalism implies lack of interaction among the different national groups, an environment that facilitates open and accepting communication can improve the group processes and performance. Future research based on this model, therefore, can explore and observe how work environments can facilitate positive interaction, communication and cooperation, and cross-national learning. Task types and task interdependence is also important to consider as they determine cooperation and interaction. A highly interdependent group must resolve their differences in order to progress and that interdependence could compel the group members to respect other members’ contributions so that their own performance, as dependent upon the group performance, does not suffer.

I studied respect within diverse workgroups as a positive group norm that can facilitate the group towards performance, but research has also acknowledged that respect is a multifaceted concept that needs much elaboration for to understand clearly. Whereas researchers struggle to define respect in an unambiguous way, respect means different things across cultures. I, therefore, used a direct measure of respect in an effort to capture individuals’ perception of respect within her/his workgroup. Further research could examine asymmetry in the perceptions of respect to consider the differences in perceptions. Also, respect may be explored with
reference to specific group characteristics, noticing also what is more important for the group members. For example, the members of a group may seek respect for their achievements, ideas, or specific identities.

**Conclusion**

The main focus of this dissertation was to explain the relationship between diversity and performance through the moderating effects of social attitudes. To elaborate on the moderating effects of attitudes, I explored the proposed models with field surveys in organizations and scenario studies. In this dissertation, I proposed that social attitudes can be considered as moderators of diversity within workgroups. Specifically focusing on nationalistic attitudes in nationally diverse workgroups, I proposed that nationalism negatively affects workgroups such that group members experience more relationship and process conflicts and less task conflict when members of a nationally diverse workgroup hold nationalistic attitudes towards other members within their group. I followed the theoretical model with an empirical study where I distinguished between two elements of nationalism, namely, national preference and nationalistic outgroup derogation. Results showed that outgroup derogation was the stronger moderator which increased relationship conflict and task conflict. Further investigation showed that attitudes such as social distance and national stereotypes can induce conflicts but that diversity can moderate the relationship between these attitudes and conflicts such that diversity increases task conflict and decreases relationship and process conflicts. In an attempt to explore how a group can experience positive conflict and perform despite nationalistic attitudes, I studied perceived respect and similarity preference. Whereas similarity preference negatively affected the group, respect helped increase task conflict and performance while decreasing relationship and process conflicts.
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Empirisch onderzoek heeft aangetoond dat diversiteit problemen kan veroorzaken in de processen en prestaties van groepen. Er zijn echter ook positieve gevolgen van diversiteit die een belangrijke en gewenste bijdrage kunnen leveren aan groepsprocessen en groepprestaties. Voor het effectief beheren van diversiteit is er binnen organisaties veel onderzoek gedaan naar diversiteit en de effecten daarvan. Diversiteit wordt gedefinieerd als de perceptie van verschillen in bepaalde karakteristieken zoals demografie, persoonlijkheid en waarden. Binnen het onderzoek naar diversiteit is conflict aangemerkt als de sleutelfactor (Williams & O’Reilly, 1998) die verklaart waarom de prestaties van een diverse groep matig kunnen zijn. Conflicten worden zodoende algemeen beschouwd als negatief. Onderzoekers en managers van organisaties zijn echter van mening dat conflicten binnen werkgroepen ook positief en wenselijk zijn doordat deze leiden tot vruchtbaardere discussies en betere beslissingen. Indien in een werkgroep leden plaatsnemen met diverse achtergronden zullen er zeker conflicten ontstaan. Het is daarom belangrijk om de samenhang tussen conflict, prestaties en diversiteit beter te begrijpen, bijvoorbeeld om te doorgronden welke soort diversiteit welk type conflict tot gevolg heeft.

Werkgroepen zijn samengesteld uit mensen die bij elkaar gebracht zijn om naar gemeenschappelijke doelen toe te werken. Wanneer groepsleden van elkaar verschillen op bepaalde kenmerken is er sprake van diversiteit. Bij de eerste ontmoeting zijn de meest invloedrijke diversiteitkenmerken de leeftijd, sekse, etnische achtergrond en nationaliteit van de groepsleden. Belangrijke verschillen bij langdurige omgang tussen de groepsleden zijn ervaring, kwalificatie, persoonlijkheid, waarden en attitudes. In deze dissertatie is gekeken naar één bepaald type diversiteit, namelijk diversiteit op basis van nationaliteit. Het doel van deze dissertatie was om te het onderzoeken hoe de hoeveelheid conflict binnen werkgroepen waarin de groepsleden verschillen met betrekking tot nationaliteit beïnvloed wordt.
door sociale attitudes zoals nationalisme (voorkeur voor de eigen nationaliteit en afwijzing van de andere nationaliteit), sociale afstand (het vermijden van interactie door sociale verschillen), stereotypes gebaseerd op nationaliteit, en respect.

Leden van een werkgroep moeten samenwerken, zijn afhankelijk van elkaar, en moeten gezamenlijke activiteiten coördineren. Conflicten kunnen ontstaan wanneer mensen moeten samenwerken met anderen die waarneembaar verschillen ten opzichte van hen. Dit gebeurt vooral wanneer deze waarneembare verschillen groot zijn. Daarom is de samenstelling van een werkgroep met betrekking tot diversiteit essentieel om te begrijpen wanneer een conflict wel of niet ontstaat binnen een werkgroep. Een man zou zich bijvoorbeeld meer kunnen storen aan het moeten samenwerken met een andere man met een andere nationaliteit dan aan het moeten samenwerken met een vrouw van diezelfde nationaliteit. Als groepsleden geen problemen hebben met de nationaliteit van de andere groepsleden wordt er geen individu als lid van de zogenaamde outgroup bestempeld en afgewezen. Groepsleden kunnen meer conflicten ervaren indien zij er negatieve stereotypen over de nationaliteit van andere groepsleden op houden. Nationalistische attitudes (voorkeur voor de nationale ingroup en afwijzing van de outgroup met een andere nationaliteit), sociale afstand (het vermijden van interactie door sociale verschillen), en nationale stereotypes (negatief imago) kunnen conflicten laten ontstaan tussen diverse leden van een groep. De verschillen kunnen niet weggenomen worden zonder de diversiteit in de groep te beperken, te meer omdat attitudes zeer moeilijk te veranderen zijn. Wel kan men positieve groepsnormen onder de aandacht brengen om het conflict beheersbaar te houden. Als groepsleden elkaar respecteren zullen zij zich minder bedreigd voelen door de verschillen die zij zien of de sociale attitudes die met deze verschillen geassocieerd zijn. Om die reden onderzocht ik de rol van sociale attitudes (nationalisme, sociale afstand en nationaliteitsgerelateerde stereotypes) als moderator van de relatie tussen diversiteit in nationaliteit en conflict. Mijn hypothese was dat ook respect deze relatie tussen diversiteit en conflict negatief zou beïnvloeden.

In dit proefschrift is er een onderscheid gemaakt tussen drie typen conflict (Jehn, 1997), namelijk relatie conflict, taak conflict en proces conflict. Bij relatieconflict is er sprake van een inter-persoonlijk
antagonisme dat geen betrekking heeft op het uitvoeren van een taak maar wel de prestaties van de groep kan beïnvloeden. Taak conflict betreft oneenigheid die een direct verband heeft met de taak van de groep en procesconflict heeft betrekking op een meningsverschil over de verantwoordelijkheid en de logistiek van het uitvoeren van de taak. Diversiteit in nationaliteit definieerde ik als het aantal verschillende nationaliteiten binnen een groep. Een groep waarin zich leden bevinden met vier verschillende nationale achtergronden is divers qua nationaliteit in vergelijking met een groep waarin de leden dezelfde nationale achtergrond delen. De gegevens werden verzameld middels veldstudies bij werknemers van multinationals en middels scenariostudies bij studenten binnen universiteiten in Nederland en Pakistan. Het doel van deze studies was om de relatie te onderzoeken tussen diversiteit in nationaliteit, conflict en prestaties in licht van de sociale attitude van de groepsleden. Anders gesteld: is diversiteit in nationaliteit sterker of zwakker geassocieerd met taak, relatie-, of procesconflict wanneer groepsleden er specifieke sociale attitudes op na houden en leiden deze verschillende conflicten tot meer of minder prestaties?

Om te beginnen stelde ik dat nationalistische attitudes (voorkeur en afwijzing) conflict zouden verergeren in groepen waarin groepsleden verschillende nationaliteiten bezitten. Ik beschreef nationalisme als een attitude die meer kans heeft geactiveerd te worden als verschillende nationaliteiten worden samengebracht. Verschillen in nationaliteit worden beter waarneembaar wanneer de leden de neiging hebben zichzelf en anderen op basis van nationaliteit te categoriseren in termen van ‘ingroup’- en ‘outgroup-leden’ en zich als zodanig gedragen. Ik voorspelde daarom dat nationalisme conflicten verergerd zodat wanneer groepsleden een nationalistische attitude hebben er meer conflict ontstaat in een groep bestaande uit verschillende nationaliteiten. Volgens dit theoretische model voerde ik een veldstudie uit en verzamelde gegevens van multinationale werkgroepen. Mijn resultaten lieten zien dat er sprake was van veel conflict wanneer leden van werkgroepen bestaande uit verschillende nationaliteiten er nationalistische attitudes op na hielden. Om verder te weten te komen hoe nationalistische attitudes conflicten activeren onderzocht ik sociale afstand en nationale stereotypen. Een grote sociale afstand van een groepslid
SUMMARY IN DUTCH

betekent dat men bij voorkeur samenwerking met dit lid zou vermijden. Als een lid negatief gestereotyeperd is of als er aan deze persoon negatieve eigenschappen zoals oneerlijk of onbetrouwbaar worden toegekend dan zal dit groepslid bij voorkeur gemeden worden. Mijn hypothese dat er meer conflict in werkgroepen is wanneer er sociale afstanden tussen de groepsleden zijn en er sprake is van negatieve nationale stereotypen werd bevestigd.

In dit proefschrift is ook gekeken of de samenstelling van nationaliteiten binnen een groep positieve effecten had op deze sociale attitudes. Inderdaad bleek uit mijn resultaten dat in geval van een grote diversiteit in nationaliteiten de negatieve effecten van sociale afstanden en negatieve nationale stereotypen kleiner werden. Deze onderzoeksresultaten steunden het idee dat diversiteit waardevol kan zijn voor groepsgeschen en prestaties door het modereren van de effecten van sociale attitudes. Om verder groepskarakteristieken te onderzoeken en te ontrafelen hoe diversiteit, ondanks negatieve sociale attitudes, positieve effecten kan hebben, zette ik een volgende studie op: Ik onderzocht gelijkenis voorkeuren en respect in een kader van raciaal/etnische diversiteit. Ras en etniciteit zijn altijd een basis geweest voor discriminerende attitudes waarbij men een voorkeur heeft voor de gelijke andere. Daarom zijn deze attitudes oorzaak van conflict. Uit de eerste twee empirische studies bleek al dat attitudes van ingroup preferentie en outgroup afwijzing de relatie tussen diversiteit in nationaliteit en conflict kunnen verergeren. In mijn derde empirische studie observeerde ik dat diversiteit positieve effecten kan hebben in een groep. Om een groepsnorm te vinden die mogelijkerwijs het omgaan met diversiteit kon vergemakkelijken, bestudeerde ik respect binnen raciaal/etnische diverse werkgroepen. Ik hield daarbij ook rekening met gelijkenispreferentie om te zien of respect zelfs positieve effecten had wanneer er sprake was van een dergelijke negatieve attitude. Statistische analyses bevestigden mijn hypothese dat binnen raciaal/etnische diverse groepen gelijkenispreferentie het positieve effect van diversiteit op conflict vergrootte en de prestaties verlaagde. Respect verminderde de hoeveelheid conflict en deed de prestaties toenemen.

Samengevat, ik heb data verzameld in Nederland en Pakistan door middel van veldstudies en scenariostudies om een aantal hypotheses te testen.
die ik had opgesteld op basis van de bestaande literatuur. Het doel hiervan was om het onderzoek naar diversiteit, conflict, en groep prestaties verder uit te breiden. Mijn resultaten toonden aan dat sociale attitudes een significant modererend effect hebben op groepsprocessen, en ook prestaties van diverse werkgroepen. Ik vond ook dat diversiteit in nationaliteit positieve gevolgen kan hebben als groepsleden positieve groepsnormen zoals respect ervaren.
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