

REPAIRING RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT: HOW VIOLATION TYPES AND CULTURE INFLUENCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESTORATION RITUALS

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Building on Goffman's (1967) notion of interaction rituals, we propose a process model, a causal model, and several propositions about effective relationship restoration behavior following relationship conflict. We conceptualize relationship restoration as a ritualistic process triggered by a violation. We identify two types of relationship violations and show how they are linked to different restoration processes. We also argue that culture governs restoration rituals for different violations. Therefore, effective relationship restoration results from an interaction of the disputants' cultures, the violation type, and the type of restoration mechanism offered.

In this paper we focus on relationship conflicts between members of dyads in which one party (the "offender") violates another's (the "victim's") expectations about meeting one or more of the victim's important core needs (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2005; Schutz, 1958). That action constitutes a violation or breach of the relationship because the offender's actions do not support the victim's expectations of how he or she should be treated (Goffman, 1967). The perceived violation generates conflict because "conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur" (Deutsch, 1978: 15). According to Sullivan (1949), the conflict is relational because it signals a lack of consensual validation between the parties. Further, this lack of consensual validation induces anxiety or tension in the relationship, which is manifested as an increase in the direct or indirect expression of negative emotions (Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954; Sullivan, 1949). Thus, increased emotionality goes hand in hand with relationship conflict.

Although conflict is part and parcel of organizational life (Coser, 1964; Pondy, 1967), relationship conflicts, in particular, produce severe negative consequences for individuals and organizations. When coworkers suffer a falling

out, the repercussions for disputants and their coworkers include anxiety, psychological strain, poor listening, reduced information processing, distraction from tasks, and erosion of satisfaction and commitment (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Since relationships are the lifeblood of organizations, these consequences impede individual, group, and organizational performance (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, 1995).

Because of such detrimental effects, it is important to find ways to restore relationships after relationship conflict has occurred. However, research on this topic has produced contradictory findings, yet to be reconciled, about the effects of various repair mechanisms. For example, some researchers argue that apology helps absolve transgressions because it signals responsibility taking and an intention to avoid similar violations in the future (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; Ohbuchi, Kameda, & Aгарie, 1989). Others claim that believable denials are more effective than apologies since they extend the benefit of the doubt to the offender (Schlenker, 1980). Controversy also exists over whether an external causal account (Crant & Bateman, 1993; Weiner, Amirkhan, Folkes, & Verette, 1987) reduces an offended party's anger or whether an internal attribution (Hodgins & Liebeskind, 2003; Tomlinson, Dineen, & Lewicki, 2004) better facilitates relationship repair. One explanation for these discrepancies may lie in the tendency of extant research to rely on a one-size-fits-all

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model of restoration behaviors. These studies have mainly focused on the type of restoration mechanism (e.g., apology, denial, compensation) without considering the relational or cultural environment in which the conflict erupts (cf. Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006). This failure to consider the social embeddedness of relationship conflict obscures our understanding of what provokes the conflict, what gets damaged, and, consequently, what needs to be repaired.

In this paper we build on Goffman's (1967) classic work on interaction rituals and highlight the importance of both relational and cultural factors in influencing the effectiveness of restoration behavior. According to Goffman, relationship violations disrupt the social order and engender the need for relationship repair. We extend this idea by proposing that different types of violations may jeopardize relationships in different ways, thereby requiring different kinds of repair mechanisms. Some research has already shown that this may be true for trust restoration (Kim, Dirks, Cooper, & Ferrin, 2006; Kim, Ferrin, Cooper, & Dirks, 2004). We extend this idea to relationship conflicts, arguing that violations induce conflict by jeopardizing different core needs (Schutz, 1958; Wortman & Brehm, 1975). Consequently, different types of repair mechanisms are required to restore the relationship. Failure to understand the nature of violations may partly account for the discrepancies in past research.

Goffman also stresses that relationship repair does not occur in a vacuum. Violations call into question the prevailing norms governing social interaction. Building on this idea, we emphasize that relationship restoration is a process that not only involves righting the wrong associated with a specific violation but also reestablishing the social order. That is, restoration attempts must reaffirm the norms governing interaction if effective repair is to occur.

Thus, national and ethnic cultures¹ play a pivotal role in relationship restoration because they prescribe and proscribe the norms that define violations and shape interactants' repertoires and choices of restoration mechanisms. Although many recent studies have shown that conflict behavior is strongly determined by cul-

tural mores (Brew & Cairns, 2004; Lee & Rogan, 1991; Tinsley, 2001; Tinsley & Brodt, 2004), recent research on relationship repair has focused on the assumed universality of this behavior (e.g., Bottom, Gibson, Daniels, & Murnighan, 2002; Kim et al., 2004, 2006; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; Nakayachi & Watabe, 2005; Reb, Goldman, Kray, & Cropanzano, 2006). Failure to consider culture, however, ignores the cultural appropriateness of remedies—a mistake that can impede conflict resolution and increase relationship damage (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002). Since culture shapes the norms that delineate violations and prescribes needed repair behaviors, we argue that inclusion of culture is essential in predicting appropriate mechanisms for relationship restoration. This is especially critical as organizational diversity increases through globalization.

Our paper offers four important contributions. First, we complexify Goffman's work (1967) on interaction rituals by highlighting the cultural embeddedness of relationship conflict. Rituals are stylized routines or patterns of behavior imbued with cultural significance (Ott, 1989). Viewing relationship conflict as a ritualistic process enables us to incorporate the influence of culture into the restoration process.

Second, we identify two types of relationship violations and explain how restoration processes differ with violation type.

Third, the major aim of our theorizing is to offer a causal model of how effective relationship repair results from an interaction of the disputants' culture, the violation type, and the type of restoration mechanism used. With this model we predict effective restoration outcomes for circumstances in which these three factors vary. We argue that, rather than being universal, repair processes are culturally embedded and outcomes are dependent on selecting a repair mechanism that matches both the violation type and the prevailing cultural norms. By emphasizing differences in violation types and introducing cultural variations in restoration mechanisms, we help to reconcile the current controversy over the effectiveness of restoration behaviors.

Fourth, we offer a new conceptualization of what it means to restore a relationship after a relationship violation. We posit that relationship restoration needs to be conceptualized at both the individual and dyadic levels. At the

¹ We limit our analysis in this paper to differences in ethnic and national cultures.

individual level the effectiveness of restoration rituals should be judged by (1) the extent of the victim's satisfaction with the offender's restorative actions and (2) the degree to which these rituals eliminate the interactants' negative emotions. At the dyadic level effective restoration depends on repairing ruptures of the social order. That is, past interaction norms are reestablished when the offender recommit to them and both parties express a willingness to interact in the future. Finally, it is important to note that while the relationship may be restored, trust may not be. Conflicting parties may eliminate their negative feelings and restore the relationship to preconflict conditions, but since trust restoration involves a deeper level of relationship (Wilmot, 1987), the effort required may be more concerted than what we address here.

In the next section we introduce Goffman's four-phase process model of relationship restoration. This model identifies the factors that are important for predicting successful relationship repair and serves as a basis for our subsequent theorizing about how violation type and culture jointly influence the effectiveness of restoration behaviors.

A RESTORATION PROCESS FOR RESOLVING RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

According to Goffman (1967), relationship restoration is a four-phase process triggered by violations of the expressive order. The expressive order is a set of shared rules specifying the responsibilities of interactants and regulating the flow of events in interaction (Goffman, 1967: 9). Individuals have a responsibility to themselves and to others to adhere to these rules to preserve their own pride, the honor of others, and the expressive order (Goffman, 1967). For Goffman, the rules of self-respect and considerateness are particularly important. During an encounter, an individual preserves self-respect by maintaining his or her own face and identity and displays considerateness by maintaining the face and identity of the other participants (Goffman, 1967; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Maintaining one's face means affirming "a claimed sense of desired social self-worth or self-image in a relational situation" (Ting-Toomey, 1994: 19–20). Even if individuals attempt to gain status for themselves, express their true beliefs, or introduce unflattering or deprecating

information about others, social decorum suggests appropriate and inappropriate methods for accomplishing these activities.

Despite common knowledge about appropriate behavior, Goffman also notes that people differ in their awareness of and social skills for adhering to social codes. Consequently, wittingly or unwittingly, people behave in ways that others perceive as threats to or violations of the social order. When these threats have negative personal implications for others, relationship conflict can ensue. According to Goffman:

When the participants in an undertaking or encounter fail to prevent the occurrence of an event that is expressively incompatible with the judgments of social worth that are being maintained, and when the event is of the kind that is difficult to overlook, then the participants are likely to give it accredited status as an incident—to ratify it as a threat that deserves direct official attention—and to proceed to try to correct for its effects (1967: 19).

Such an event causes a state of "ritual disequilibrium or disgrace" (Goffman, 1967: 19) and requires a corrective process for rebuilding the relationship and restoring the expressive order. Until such a process takes place, the resulting conflict impedes the parties' working relationship.

The relationship restoration process can be initiated by a person who feels offended, by the offender, or by a third party (e.g., a designated conflict resolver), but, to be successful, the repair process demands the efforts of both the offending and offended parties, since both play a critical role in maintaining the expressive order. Using a dramaturgical framework,² Goffman (1967) proposes that the restoration process involves four stages: challenge, offering, acceptance, and thanks. At each stage the "actors" are expected to perform socially prescribed interaction rituals that define the situation and manage impressions of themselves (Goffman, 1959).

Challenge

Once a relationship violation that causes interpersonal tension occurs, a challenge is needed in which the offended party calls atten-

² Dramaturgy emphasizes performative behavior that attempts to influence and motivate others (the audience) to act by shaping their definitions of the situation (Goffman, 1959).

tion to the offender's misconduct (Goffman, 1967). The challenge highlights the symbolic meaning of the act and conveys how worthy the victim is of respect (Goffman, 1967: 19). However, if the offender fails to notice these adverse reactions, the victim needs to express his or her negative reaction and draw the perceived harm-doer's attention to the conflict. Goffman refers to this as "ratifying it as a threat" (1967: 19), which involves naming—labeling the offense; blaming—attributing responsibility for the harm; and claiming—voicing the grievance (Felstiner, Abel, & Sarat, 1980–1981). By calling attention to the offense, the injured party is symbolically demonstrating that he or she is worthy of respect.

The challenge can be overt or covert. For example, some offended parties will exhibit strong nonverbal signals of offense without any verbal expression, whereas others may share their angry feelings with a third person but not directly with the perpetrator of the perceived misconduct. Unless the victim challenges the offender, the latter may not perceive that a violation occurred, understand that the problem is worthy of attention, or feel compelled to act (Tjosvold, 1991). Thus, for restoration to proceed, the victim must signal that an offense has occurred, and the offender must grasp that the victim has taken offense.

Offering

In the face of a challenge, an offender has several choices about how to respond (i.e., what offering to make). One of many remedial moves is possible, such as explanation, apology, recompense, and so forth (Goffman, 1971). These actions attempt to redefine the offensive act, provide compensation, or offer self-castigation and atonement (Goffman, 1967, 1971). Through these moves the offender conveys his or her knowledge of the offense and its attendant consequences for him/herself, the victim, and the social order governing their interactions. By means of the offering, the offender displays a desire to restore what has been jeopardized and tries to remove or ameliorate the victim's negative impression of him/her (Goffman, 1971).

Acceptance and Thanks

The victim, to whom the offering is made, then has the opportunity to accept or reject the offer-

ing, extend forgiveness or dispensation, and revise his or her negative impression of the offender. Once accepted, the offender is expected to show a sign of gratitude to the victim. Figure 1 offers a basic model of required ritualistic behavior for relationship restoration in which the symbolic efforts of both the victim and the offender contribute to reestablishing order in the relationship.

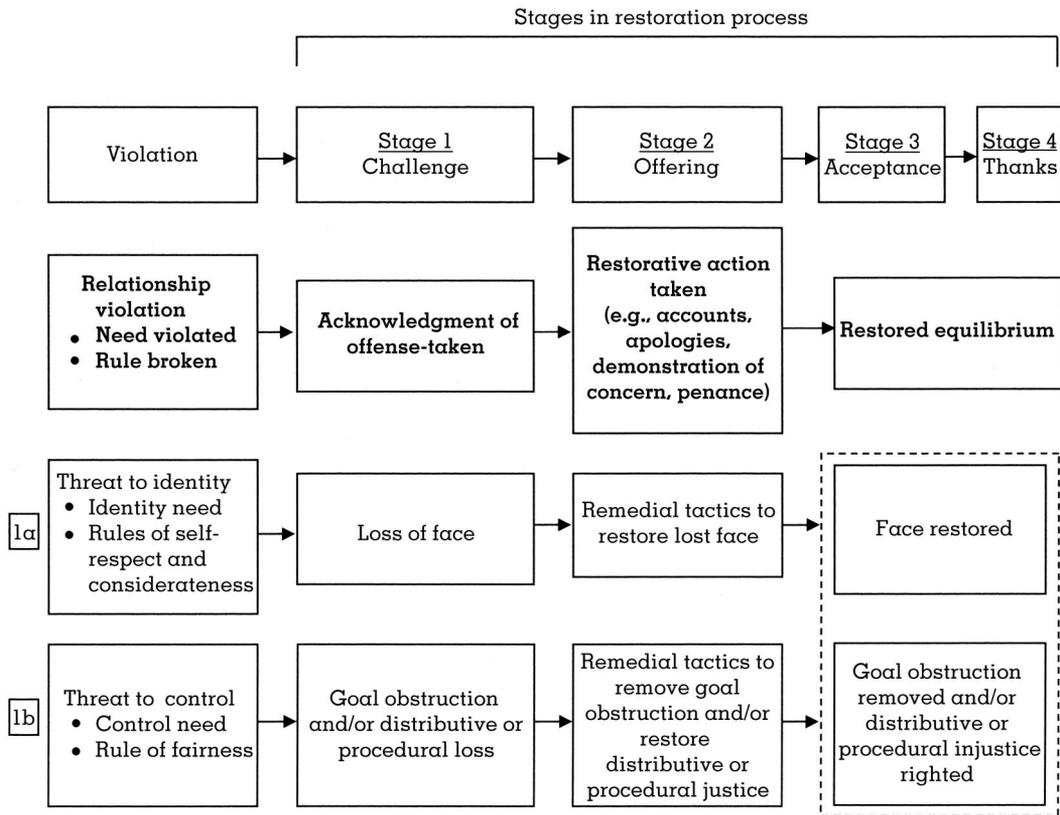
Goffman's work (1967, 1971) not only helps us understand the process by which relationships are repaired but also highlights the relational and contextual factors that are important in this process. As shown in Figure 1, the relationship restoration process is triggered by a violation. While Goffman (1967, 1971) offers a generic model of relationship violation and repair, we argue that the relationship restoration process differs with the type of violation triggering the conflict. Different relationship violations require different restoration processes because what is jeopardized (or what is at stake) within the expressive order differs. That is, different violations break different rules of conduct, threaten different needs, and lead to different types of offense-taken. To restore order or equilibrium, the restorative action needs to demonstrate the continuing viability of the rule (Goffman, 1967), in addition to restoring the status of the disputants.

On the other hand, Goffman (1967) also stresses the ritualistic aspect of relationship restoration and acknowledges its roots in cultural values. However, he does not explicitly consider the differences culture introduces into the restoration process. Viewing relationship conflict repair as a ritualistic process, we argue that culture shapes the norms that delineate violations and prescribes appropriate restoration behaviors. Therefore, the effectiveness of restorative actions (i.e., offering) is contingent on both the type of violation and culture. Below we first review various restoration mechanisms in the extant literature and the differential findings associated with them. We then theorize how violation types and culture influence the restoration process and the effectiveness of restoration rituals.

RESTORATION MECHANISMS

Organizational scholars have offered a typology of restoration mechanisms that closely par-

FIGURE 1
Restoration Process for Relationship Conflict



allels Goffman’s remedial moves (i.e., offering). This stream of research proposes four dominant tactics that offenders can use in restoring damaged relationships: accounts (explanations), apologies, demonstration of concern, and penance. We describe each briefly below.

Accounts

Research on organizational justice has highlighted the importance of accounts in rebuilding relationships (Bies, Shapiro, & Cummings, 1998; Shapiro, Buttner, & Barry, 1994; Sitkin & Bies, 1993). Offenders offer accounts for conflict-inducing actions to deny, reduce, or explain their culpability (Schlenker, 1980; Schlenker, Pontari, & Christopher, 2001). Through accounts, transgressors manage people’s perceptions of negative events in three ways (Shapiro, 1991; Sitkin & Bies, 1993). First, by externalizing, an offender can introduce mitigating circumstances, attributing responsibility for the violation to external factors that the accused did not

intend and over which he or she had no control (Tedeschi & Norman, 1985). An external explanation allows the victim to give the offender the benefit of the doubt because of the offender’s denial of guilt (Kim et al., 2004). Second, with an altruistic account, the offender can claim that the perceived misconduct was motivated by reasons other than self-interest. Actions by the harm-doer to further the aggrieved party’s own interest or the common interests of a group or the organization may garner dispensation from the victim (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Third, with a reframing account, the offender can attempt to change the victim’s frame of reference by comparing the victim to someone less well off or by promising the victim a brighter future (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Sitkin & Bies, 1993).

Apologies

An apology is often the first step in repairing conflict in a damaged relationship. People who have been hurt or humiliated often hope for an

apology to restore dignity and face. Through apology, the offender acknowledges that harm was done, shows regret for the misconduct, and explicitly or implicitly promises not to repeat the offense. An apology conveys the offender's willingness to take responsibility for the infraction and signals that the misconduct should not be construed as an accurate or typical reflection of his or her identity (Goffman, 1967; Heider, 1958; Schlenker, 1980).

Demonstration of Concern

Demonstration of concern for another's needs and interests is a prosocial behavior used to repair a damaged identity (Tedeschi & Norman, 1985) and also to enhance or restore perceptions of trust (Whitener, Brodt, & Werner, 1998). By showing consideration for another's welfare and acting in a way that protects another's interest, an offender demonstrates his or her benevolent intentions. By conspicuously engaging in behaviors that benefit others, the transgressor conveys that he or she has been rehabilitated and is again worthy of respect (Goffman, 1967; Tedeschi & Norman, 1985). Such behaviors signal renewed good intentions toward the victim and invite the victim to consider forgiving the offender (Aquino, Grover, Goldman, & Folger, 2003; McCullough et al., 1997).

Penance

Because the sincerity of any explanation or verbal apology is difficult to discern, penance in the form of compensation or restitution may be necessary for rebuilding some relationships, especially when the damaged party has suffered severe consequences (Bottom et al., 2002). For example, when one person's action unfairly blocks another person's goal, the victim may require that the offender not only compensate the victim for the loss but also suffer some substantive cost (e.g., a reduction of wages) as well. From the victim's point of view, this tangible punishment symbolizes the offender's culpability and regret. Penance carries the strongest admission of guilt by the offender, since he or she must acknowledge fault, engage in appropriate self-castigation, take full responsibility for his or her actions, and compensate the victim and/or suffer punitive consequences (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003).

Although research has demonstrated the effectiveness of each of these four mechanisms in restoring relationships, the results are inconsistent. In some studies researchers have concluded that explanations can mitigate feelings of disapproval, injustice, and revenge and can increase forgiveness (Riordan, Marlin, & Kellogg, 1983). Others have found that explanations are risky since they may sound defensive or appear to excuse bad behavior (Tomlinson et al., 2004). Some studies have shown that apologies are effective in reducing victims' negative emotions (Ohbuchi et al., 1989), whereas others have suggested that calling attention to one's guilt through apology leaves a lasting negative impression (Riordan et al., 1983). Moreover, both accounts and apologies are effective to a degree, but genuine forgiveness may require a consistent show of benevolent intentions (Whitener et al., 1998) or even more tangible and substantive actions (Bottom et al., 2002).

In two studies of trust repair, Kim et al. (2004, 2006) addressed these inconsistent findings, arguing that appropriate actions for repairing trust are contingent on the type of trust violation. Trust was repaired more successfully by apology if the trust violation was related to competence, and more successfully by denial if the violation was related to integrity. Similarly, restoration of justice depends on the match between the type of injustice and the type of organizational remedy (Reb et al., 2006). We build on and extend this literature by arguing that relationship violations matter since they initiate the conflict and effect what gets damaged and what needs to be repaired. Inattention to the type of violation and its subsequent effect on the relationship conflict process obscures insight into what restoration is needed in that context. In the next section we explore two types of possible violations and theorize about the link between violation types and restoration rituals.

VIOLATIONS THAT TRIGGER RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

As noted earlier, a relationship violation occurs when one party's behavior prevents another party from meeting an important need (Cropanzano et al., 2005; Schutz, 1958). The perceived violation produces what Wortman and Brehm (1975) refer to as *reactance*—a negative

psychological state that results from threats to individual freedom and that motivates individuals to restore what has been jeopardized. The degree of reactance is positively related to the importance and the number of freedoms perceived to be threatened (Gordon & Bowlby, 1989). Since reactance manifests itself in a variety of negative emotions and behaviors (e.g., increased aggression, decreased liking; Gordon & Bowlby, 1989), it usually accompanies relationship conflict.

Individuals need to be able to fulfill important basic needs, which Schutz (1958) identified as inclusion, affection, and control. Similarly, Cropanzano and colleagues (2005), working from an organizational justice perspective, also identified belonging and control as core needs. For organizational relationship conflicts, we suggest that two types of needs are most salient: those based on identity and those associated with control of desired outcomes. Threats to these needs are likely to provoke relationship conflict (Reb et al., 2006; Rothman, 1997).

Identity Violations

Identity needs are relational, including dignity, recognition, and safety, and subsume both inclusion and affection because identities form through meaningful attachments to others (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Identity violations occur when normative boundaries that preserve identity are wittingly or unwittingly crossed during an interaction.

Individuals adopt social identities to define who they are and what they stand for (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Identity attributions carry explicit or implicit expectations regarding the appropriate behavior identity holders should employ (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994) and the level of respect and deference others should display toward them (Goffman, 1967). However, others may ascribe identities to an individual and make attributions and judgments about that individual's identity that conflict with his or her own (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Consequently, identities are constantly being socially negotiated (Goffman, 1967), and the potential for violation exists. As noted earlier, social interaction rules attempt to regulate how members of any group are expected to purport themselves vis-à-vis others to preserve identity differences. The combined effect of these rules is

the expectation that each interactant will act to preserve his or her own face—that is, have *self-respect*—and to uphold the face of others by showing *consideration* for them (Goffman, 1967).

A person may be said to *have*, or *be in*, or *maintain face* when the line he effectively takes presents an image of him that is internally consistent, that is supported by judgments and evidence conveyed by other participants, and that is confirmed by evidence conveyed through impersonal agencies in the situation (Goffman, 1967: 7).

Violation of the rule of considerateness poses a threat to face for the victim and leaves the victim with the need to recover or restore lost face (Brown, 1977). It also breaks the rule of self-respect because the offender throws into question his or her own intention to preserve the expressive order.

"Face loss occurs when we are being treated in such a way that our identity claims are challenged or ignored" (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002: 20). For instance, destructive criticism (Baron, 1988), disrespect or public humiliation (Brown, 1977), and lack of appropriate deference (Goffman, 1967) jeopardize an individual's identity and cause him or her to feel "shamefaced" (Goffman, 1967: 8). Identity violations coincide with the loss of interactional justice, which is fostered by dignified and respectful treatment (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2004; Greenberg, 1993) and gives people information about where they stand within a group (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 1989). When a person's social identity is threatened, he or she becomes more emotional, less flexible, and more positional (Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, & Lerner, 2000). Rude treatment, for example, conveys a lack of respect, threatens one's face (Goffman, 1967), and is likely to engender negative emotions and provoke aggressive responses (Aquino et al., 2006; Bies & Tripp, 1996). Anger is particularly likely when an individual believes others are illegitimately obstructing the individual's ability to maintain his or her identity or to preserve his or her face (Rothman, 1997). Consequently, identity violations often trigger relationship conflicts.

Proposition 1: Identity violations lead to relationship conflict because they are associated with loss of face and threaten the twin rules of self-respect and considerateness.

Violations of Control

Relationship conflict also can occur when an individual's sense of control is threatened by another's actions. Control involves the ability to exert influence over one's desired goals and to realize expected outcomes (Cropanzano et al., 2005; Schutz, 1958).³ Social norms and ethical standards typically require interacting parties to behave fairly toward one another with respect to both outcomes and allocation procedures (Brockner, 2002; Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). When others block an individual's goals or impede access to resources or information the person believes he or she is entitled to (Gordon & Bowlby, 1989), these violations of control produce reactance. Such threats also raise questions about distributive and procedural justice by challenging expectancy and/or equity norms concerning fair allocations of resources and the procedures for distributing them (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998).⁴ Unfair reduction of an individual's outcomes violates the person's need for control, blocks goal achievement, and, in doing so, breaks the rule of fairness. Behaviors that intentionally break this rule are perceived as unfair and, consequently, create anxiety, lead to frustration (Buss, 1961) and other negative emotions (Degoey, 2000), and may even stimulate revenge behaviors (Bies & Tripp, 1996).

Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of decision outcomes, such as rewards and punishment (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2004; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). People are concerned with distributive justice because it is directly

associated with their outcomes (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Failure to get a fair bonus, being passed over for a promotion, or receiving a disproportionately onerous workload can all provoke negative emotions and even stronger aggressive responses because they all lead to outcome loss for the victim (Aquino et al., 2006).

While distributive justice affects tangible outcomes, procedural justice provides employees some potential to influence allocation decisions (Brockner, 2002). According to control theory (Thibaut & Walker, 1975), people care about process because it ensures them a sense of instrumental control over distributive outcomes. To evaluate whether their outcomes are reasonable, besides short-term outcome favorability, employees consider whether the decision is made using appropriate factual information and procedures (Tyler, 1989), which allow them more instrumental control over long-term outcomes (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). For instance, if a favorable bonus or a promotion was denied because the decision maker intentionally used unfair procedures, relationship conflict directed at the decision maker is more likely. In this case, hard feelings arise not only because of the current loss of a bonus or a promotion but also because the boss's faulty decision making blocks the employee's long-term goal achievement.

Proposition 2: Violations of control lead to relationship conflict because they are associated with goal obstruction and break the rule of fairness.

³ While Goffman (1967) does not specifically address this type of violation, we believe it is relevant for relationship conflict. We also acknowledge that there are other forms of control, such as control of uncertainty, that are beyond the scope of our theorizing.

⁴ Here we focus on direct offenses (i.e., outcome loss/goal obstruction) that distributive injustice generates for the victim and on instrumental theories of procedural justice (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). However, we acknowledge that unfair allocation of resources (distributive injustice) may also generate interactional consequences, such as disrespectful treatment, that constitute identity violations. Procedural justice, according to the group value model (Lind & Tyler, 1988), also carries symbolic meanings because it provides important information about people's social identity and status within a group. Thus, both distributive and procedural outcomes can also trigger identity violations (e.g., perceptions of disrespectful treatment), as we suggested in our discussion of interactional justice in the "Identity Violations" section.

Restoration Process for Identity and Control Violations

Because identity violations and violations of control break different rules of conduct, threaten different needs, and lead to different types of offense-taken, the restoration process as depicted in Figure 1 also differs for the two types of violations. Once an identity violation poses a threat to the victim's face, conflict ensues. This violation impels the party experiencing threat to challenge the offender and "acknowledge" the loss of face, overtly or covertly, to restore his or her dignity. This type of violation jeopardizes an identity need and breaks the twin rules of self-respect and considerateness. Efforts to repair this breach must restore (1) the face of the victim

and (2) the operable rules for the interaction. The former occurs by reestablishing an image of capacity and strength or avoiding projection of an image of weakness for the victim (Brown, 1977); the latter occurs when the offender recommitments to the rules and this recommitment is accepted by the victim. "An offensive act may arouse anxiety about the ritual; the offender allays this anxiety by showing that both the code and he as an upholder of it are still in working order" (Goffman, 1967: 22). The whole restoration process is complete when the offended party's face is restored and the social order is reestablished (see Figure 1a).

Conversely, once a control violation occurs, the victim needs to challenge the offender by pointing out the goal obstruction or distributive or procedural loss. Then remedial tactics are needed to correct the wrong and to reinforce the rule of fairness by either compensating for the loss engendered by the injustice (Reb et al., 2006) or by providing an adequate accounting of the process issues so that the victim feels satisfied (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; see Figure 1b).

So far, building on Goffman (1967), we have established a ritualistic process model for relationship restoration and theorized about how the process differs for two types of violations. In the next section we complexify this picture by considering the effects of culture on relationship restoration. As we noted above, although Goffman (1967) acknowledges that restoration rituals are rooted in culture, he does not theorize about how restoration processes vary across cultures. His work presents a Western model that stresses individual facework and direct confrontation and overlooks the possibility that the cultural dimensions regulating interactions vary. Recent research on relationship repair also adopts this universalistic stance (cf. Kim et al., 2006; Nakayachi & Watabe, 2005; Reb et al., 2006). Since rituals "are events in which much of the culture surfaces" (Trice & Beyer, 1993: 110), and culture shapes disputants' perceptions (Morris & Peng, 1994; Tinsley & Weldon, 2003) as well as their behaviors in conflict situations (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002), we argue that it is essential to incorporate culture into our theorizing about appropriate restorative behaviors for relationship conflict. Thus, we do not include any specific propositions concerning the direct influence of violation type on restoration mechanism since

we believe this relationship is moderated by cultural values.

CULTURE AND RESTORATION RITUALS

Culture is a socially shared knowledge structure that sanctions certain behaviors and prescribes other behavioral choices of its members (Poortinga, 1992). As Ott (1989) argues, rituals reflect, maintain, and communicate cultural values. Thus, ritual moves vary from one culture to another (Trice & Beyer, 1993) and differ from one particular conflict situation to the next (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002). Cultural values give rise to behavioral rules that convey obligations and expectations for appropriate conduct within the culture (Schwartz, 1992). More specifically, national culture influences the ritualistic process of conflict resolution by prescribing rules for how disputants should approach conflict situations (Tinsley & Brodt, 2004). We now briefly illustrate this using one cultural dimension—individualism/collectivism, which is particularly important to conflict research (cf. Aguinis & Henle, 2003; Gelfand & Christakopoulou, 1999)—to show how cultural values give rise to different behavioral rules in conflict situations. Because of space limitations, exploration of the differential effects of other cultural dimensions is addressed briefly in our agenda for future research.

The values of individualism/collectivism reflect deep-seated propensities to frame people as autonomous individuals or as members of embedded groups (Tinsley & Brodt, 2004). In individualistic cultures the self is construed as separate, unique, and independent from ingroup membership (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Individualistic cultures highlight the importance of developing one's own personal needs, preferences, and goals. In contrast, in collectivistic cultures the self is conceived of as interdependent with ingroup membership (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Collectivists emphasize the rules of preserving conformity, maintaining relatedness, and promoting others' needs or those of the group as a whole (Hofstede, 1984; Triandis, 1995).⁵

⁵ While we have talked about these as broad cultural categories, we recognize that there are variations among individuals within a culture. Therefore, in our propositions

These differences in self-construal between individualists and collectivists give rise to different behavior rules for conflict management (Hofstede, 1984; Triandis, 1995). Following Ting-Toomey (1999) and Ting-Toomey & Oetzel (2002), we argue that cultural construals manifest themselves in three types of rules that govern rituals for relationship restoration: language rules, display rules for emotions, and facework behavior rules. These three rules suggest that while the generic steps in the restoration process model (Figure 1) remain the same, the specific rituals for executing these steps vary by culture. We explain below what each of these rules refers to and illustrate how they vary between collectivists and individualists.

Language Rules

The first way culture influences restoration rituals is through language rules. Language "is governed by multilayered rules developed by members of a particular speech community" that delineate how its members name and organize their experiences (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002: 85). While there are many kinds of language rules, those most relevant for our purpose include semantic rules, which convey meanings attached to words, and pragmatic rules, which govern how language is articulated in a particular culture (Ting-Toomey, 1999). For example, pragmatic rules specify differences in masculine and feminine constructions of nouns and familiar and formal constructions of pronouns.

Especially important for our purpose is how language constructs identity and status through naming (Felstiner et al., 1980–1981) and how naming influences how people view themselves and others (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Gender and status relations are shaped by language (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998), as is what constitutes harmony versus conflict (Tinsley & Weldon, 2003). In collectivistic cultures group notions of harmony and indebtedness to others (interdependent self-construals) are embedded in familiar word choices (such as "wa") that may have no equivalents in individualistic cultures. These words invoke symbolic meanings and imply unstated

behavioral expectations. Whether a culture is considered high or low context is also prescribed by its language rules (Hall, 1976). In collectivistic cultures semantic meanings tend to be more implicit than explicit since indirect communication patterns are emphasized (Edwards, 1985; Hall, 1976). Alternately, individualists prefer to express intention or meaning through explicit verbal messages (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Emotional Display Rules

Relationship conflict manifests itself in the negative emotions experienced by disputing parties. Thus, another way culture influences restoration rituals for relationship conflict is by specifying the display rules for emotional expression in conflict situations (Hall, 1976; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002). Display rules are behavioral standards that regulate emotional expression (Ekman, 1973). They "indicate not only which emotions are appropriate in a given situation, but also how those emotions should be conveyed or publicly expressed" (Morris & Feldman, 1996: 988). Although individuals carry predispositions about expressing emotions overtly or covertly, culture also exerts powerful influences on the expression or suppression of emotions (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002). That is, emotional expression rituals vary across cultures, and cultural display rules regulate the latitude of emotional expressions within conflict situations. As Mesquita notes, "Emotions are likely to reinforce and sustain the cultural themes that are significant in individualistic and collectivistic cultures respectively. Emotions can themselves be seen as cultural practices that promote important cultural ideas" (2001: 73). Specifically, individualists tend to encourage the display of a wide range of positive and negative emotions, particularly self-focused emotions, such as personal anger, frustration, or resentment, while collectivists tend to suppress the display of extreme negative emotions (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1999) in the interest of preserving harmony and maintaining relatedness. Compared to individualists, collectivists also stress other-focused emotions, such as relational shame or embarrassment (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

we purposely use "individualists" and "collectivists," rather than "in collectivist (individualist) cultures," to refer to those who adhere strongly to the specific cultural values.

Facework Rules

The third way culture influences restoration rituals is by prescribing facework rules for individuals in conflict situations (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002). Facework refers to the communication tactics used to uphold, support, and challenge self-face and another's face (Goffman, 1967). It confirms individuals' identities by enacting their responsibilities, obligations, and commitments toward each other (Landrine, 1995). Individualists are more concerned with self-face threat because of their independent self-construal, whereas collectivists are more affected by other-face threat because of their emphasis on harmony and relatedness (Brew & Cairns, 2004). Therefore, in dealing with conflict, individualists prefer direct and confrontational facework strategies, while collectivists prefer mediational, nonconfrontational, or accommodating strategies (Lee & Rogan, 1991).

How Cultural Rules Influence the Restoration Process

Collectively, these three cultural rules set expectations for how disputants should construe themselves vis-à-vis others and how they should communicate with one another (i.e., explicitly or implicitly, with or without an overt display of emotions, and directly or indirectly). These choices have consequences for each of the steps in our process model (Figure 1): the acknowledgment of the offense, the choice of restoration action, and the signaling of a restored equilibrium.

Acknowledgment of the offense. Because of their display rules stressing minimal expression of interpersonal animosity, collectivists are likely to withhold negative emotions, even when offended (Liu & McClure, 2001). Instead, owing to their emphasis on other-face concern and language rules that stress implicit verbal communication (Ting-Toomey, 1999), collectivists are more likely to approach a third party or communicate in a certain scripted "code" (Tinsley & Brodt, 2004), rather than to challenge the perceived offender directly. In contrast, since individualists pay less attention to threats to the face of others and since self-independence is more salient (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), an individualist victim is more likely to challenge the perceived offender overtly either through *verbal*

or *nonverbal* expression. Such direct expression is considered honest, signals engagement (Ting-Toomey, 1999), and helps to clarify the problem. Thus, when an individualist is offended, the strong negative emotions evoked by self-face loss generate defensive, outspoken, or argumentative responses (Brew & Cairns, 2004). However, if the victim overtly challenges a collectivist offender, this behavior violates the offender's cultural expectations, further threatens group solidarity (Liu & McClure, 2001), and exacerbates relationship conflict. Hence, different language rules, display rules, and facework rules in both cultures indicate that relationship conflict may be more likely to be acknowledged directly between individualists than between collectivists.

Proposition 3: In intracultural conflict, individualists will be more likely than collectivists to acknowledge relationship conflicts directly.

Selection of the restorative action. Once the conflict is acknowledged and the offender is given a chance to repair the relationship, the rules also govern appropriate restorative actions. As argued above, compared with individualists, collectivists emphasize implicit verbal communication and covert expression of emotions. Therefore, in repairing a relationship, they tend to "select more roundabout ways to express themselves" (Tinsley & Brodt, 2004: 442) and refrain from displaying negative emotions. In the meantime, collectivists also attempt to protect both self-face and other's face to maintain inclusion and approval (Brew & Cairns, 2004). Therefore, an indirect facework tactic, like using a third party, will be more tempting for collectivists than for individualists.

Proposition 4: Offenders who are collectivists are more likely than those who are individualists to use implicit language, suppress negative emotions, and use indirect facework behavior in their efforts to repair intracultural relationship conflict.

Signaling of restored equilibrium. Culture also influences how the victim signals his or her acceptance of the offender's restorative action, thereby restoring equilibrium in the relationship (the third and fourth stages in Figure 1). Since communication in individualist cultures tends to be explicit, direct verbal messages will

likely be used to show acceptance. In contrast, in collectivist cultures acceptance is conveyed implicitly (e.g., by exhibiting friendly behavior toward the offender), rather than by direct acknowledgment. More specific predictions about culture's effects on restoration mechanisms and equilibrium depend on the type of violation—a topic we take up after we consider what constitutes effective restoration behavior.

EFFECTIVE RESTORATION BEHAVIOR FOR RELATIONSHIP CONFLICTS

Conceptualizing Effective Restoration

Now that we have considered the effect of violation type and culture on the relationship restoration process, we can offer a conceptualization of what constitutes effective restoration. We suggest that there are four important components of effective restoration. First, the victim feels satisfied with the restorative action offered by the offender. Second, the offender agrees to recommit to the rule or rules that were broken (e.g., considerateness, self-respect, and/or fairness). This implicit or explicit testimony to behave in accordance with these rules reconstitutes the expressive order by reestablishing norms that will govern the dyad's future interactions. Third, the emotions of both parties return to preconflict levels. This reduction in emotionality eliminates the tension in the dyad. Fourth, both parties experience a willingness to interact in the future. Thus, effective restoration not only involves forgiveness of the offender's wrongdoing by the victim but also involves the offender's recommitment to the broken rules and both parties' intentions to engage in future interactions. Since effective restoration is conceptualized from both parties' perspectives, our dependent variable goes beyond the forgiveness literature, which mainly uses the victim's responses as a standard for relationship restoration—for instance, the victim's release of negative emotions and willingness to engage in future interactions (Aquino et al., 2003).

A Causal Model of Effective Restoration

In Figure 2 we draw these various pieces together into a cross-level model of effective restoration. We propose that effective repair is the result of a three-way interaction among restora-

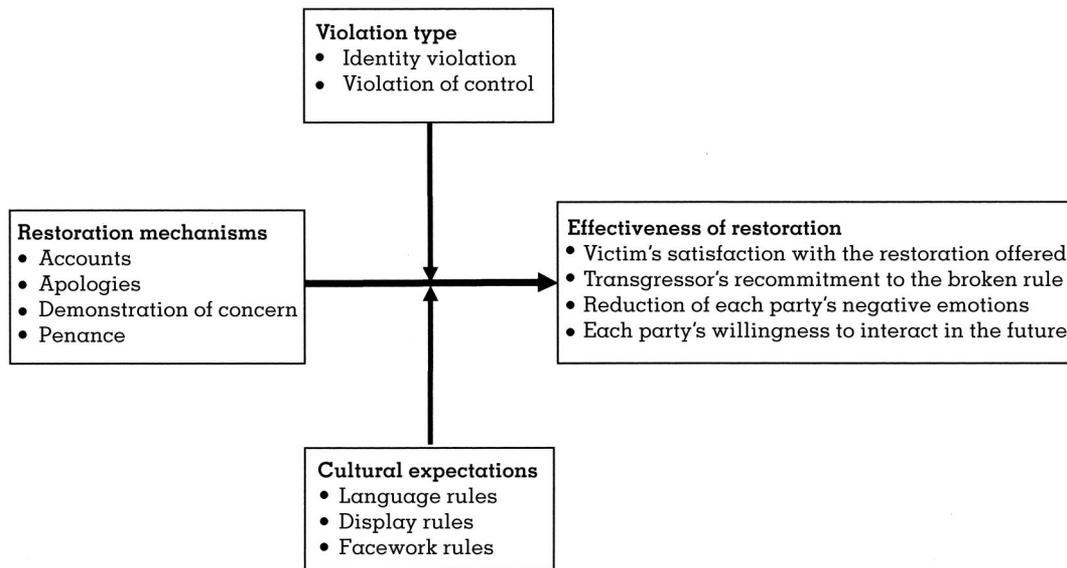
tion mechanism, type of violation, and cultural expectations. Instead of a universalistic view of restoration, we argue that violation types and cultural rules moderate the effect of restoration mechanisms on conflict outcomes. Only when the repair mechanism selected is suitable for the type of violation in a given culture will the relationship be restored to pretrigger equilibrium. Also, since, as noted above, effective restoration involves the efforts of both parties and success involves assessing both individual and dyadic behavior, our model operates at both the individual and dyadic level and emphasizes the interactive nature of dyadic relationship repair. At the same time, it also suggests that a mismatch among culture, violation type, and restoration mechanism may increase the level of conflict for one disputant but not the other.

The model shows that there is no single best practice for repairing relationship conflict. Instead, different restoration mechanisms will be deemed appropriate and necessary to address the need and to repair the broken rule in different cultures. To illustrate this, we again turn to individualism/collectivism to show how appropriate restoration mechanisms vary across different violation types and cultural values. Figure 3 summarizes the different restoration mechanisms appropriate for different contexts created by matching violations (in terms of needs jeopardized and rules broken) with cultural values. Only those mechanisms that address the specific needs and broken rules and meet cultural expectations will result in effective restoration.

Culture and identity violations. If an identity violation occurs, it conveys immediate disrespect and places the relationship in substantial jeopardy. In such cases effective remedial tactics need to affirm the victim's identity and reinstate the rules of considerateness and self-respect. The offender can give a plausible account to deny internal attribution of the harm and reduce the severity of the perceived offense, use socioemotional tactics (Reb et al., 2006) such as apology to restore the victim's face, or demonstrate concern to show respect to the victim.

In general, admitting that one has committed an identity violation is seen as an admission of flawed moral character (Tomlinson et al., 2004). For collectivists, however, such violations are equivalent to the "existential, social, and psychological death of the individual" (Landrine,

FIGURE 2
A Model of Effective Relationship Restoration



1995: 755), because their cultural expectations construe the disrespect associated with identity violations as a taboo (Fitness, 2000; Ting-Toomey, 1999). If ambiguity exists about the cause of the harm, providing external reasons for the misconduct prevents this attribution and mitigates collectivists' perceptions that a violation has occurred. By providing an external explanation for the misconduct, the offender effectively minimizes his or her apparent responsibility for it, protects his or her own face, and demonstrates the intent to uphold the rule of considerateness. Concomitantly, the explanation, at least to some extent, also restores the aggrieved party's face and reduces his or her negative emotions. Additionally, if the victim considers the incident an anomaly that is unlikely to occur again, this will ameliorate the severity of the violation and enhance the victim's willingness to interact in the future.

Individualists, however, care more about self-face (Brew & Cairns, 2004) and emphasize explicit communication, overt display of emotions, and direct facework. Since an identity violation constitutes an insult and a face-threatening event, individualists tend to prefer a direct and explicit apology from the offender. Providing external explanations that reduce personal responsibility taking may compromise the offender's credibility in the

eyes of the offended (Tomlinson et al., 2004). Also, individualists tend to put more blame on the individual than on situational factors (Morris & Peng, 1994), which produces more negative emotional reactions toward the offender (Heider, 1958) and requires more responsibility taking by that individual. Consequently, when an individualist's face is threatened, an immediate, direct, and explicit verbal apology from the harm-doer may be warranted. Although apologizing acknowledges guilt, it shows that the offender is willing to take personal responsibility for the violation. This assumption of responsibility restores the victim's identity and mitigates his or her discomfort and negative reactions. A promise of future good deeds coupled with apology may even be more effective, since it reveals the offender's recommitment to the rule in the future, thus promoting future interaction.

In comparison, because of their interest in saving face, collectivists are more reluctant to directly blame the offender and less likely to require responsibility taking from that individual. Instead, since collectivists tend to attribute "relationship violations" to the social context rather than to the individual (Morris & Peng, 1994), they will be more willing to accept external explanations.

FIGURE 3
Proposed Appropriate Restoration Behaviors Across Cultures and Violation Types

	Conflict resolution	
	Identity violation	Violation of control
Collectivism (interdependent self-construal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit verbal communication • Covert emotional expression • Indirect facework 	1. External explanations through a third party 2. Apology through a third party 3. Demonstration of concern	1. Reframing accounts through a third party 2. Altruistic accounts through a third party 3. Private penance
Individualism (independent self-construal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit verbal communication • Overt emotional expression • Direct facework 	1. Direct apology coupled with reframing accounts	1. Penance coupled with reframing account/external explanations

Proposition 5: Compared to apology, external explanations will be more effective in repairing identity-based relationship conflicts for collectivists than for individualists.

Although external explanations generally help ameliorate a conflict for collectivists, how they are expressed may intensify or diminish the perceived severity of the conflict. For collectivists, providing direct explanations that bring conflicts out in the open contradicts interdependent self-construals and is likely to disrupt group harmony (Dirks & Parks, 2003). Their concerns over self-face and other's face drive collectivists' use of more indirect facework tactics (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Consequently, collectivist offenders may appeal to a third party to offer a mitigating explanation (Singh & Sinha, 1992). Since direct, open communication can create embarrassment and increase tension between the parties (Von Glinow, Shapiro, & Brett, 2004), third-party explanations not only eliminate misunderstanding but preserve face for both parties.

While an external explanation is less effective for repairing identity violations than an

apology for individualists as compared to collectivists, if one is given, it should be delivered directly, since individualists prefer direct facework and explicit communication. Consequently, an external explanation extended through a third party will be less effective for individualists than for collectivists and may even exacerbate the conflict.

Proposition 6: Compared to direct external explanations, external explanations through a third party will be more effective in repairing identity-based relationship conflicts for collectivists than for individualists.

When there is no ambiguity about internal attribution, even for collectivists it is crucial that offenders take responsibility for their misconduct and offer an apology to restore the victim's face and show their willingness to recommit to the broken rule of considerateness. However, indirect apologies offer the greatest likelihood of success, because how the apology is conveyed is important. Because collectivists value indirect facework and implicit communication (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002), offenders can signal

their regret by apologizing in a scripted "code," but they must make sure the victim understands its meaning. An open and direct apology not only diminishes the status of the person apologizing but also brings the conflict out in the open, disturbs harmony, and likely will embarrass both the offender and the victim, as well as exacerbate the relationship conflict. Therefore, a common way for collectivists to offer apologies is through a third party, which helps both the offender and the victim maintain face (Leung, 1997). Since individualists prefer straight talk and direct facework to manage conflicts, and individualist cultural display rules more often encourage overt expression of emotions (Leung, 1997), using direct expressions of regret (e.g., a verbal apology) is less likely to embarrass individualists than collectivists.

Proposition 7: Compared to direct apology, apology through a third party will be more effective in repairing identity-based relationship conflicts for collectivists than for individualists.

Goffman (1967) also emphasizes that it is important for the offender to use a strong presentational ritual to restore what has been jeopardized. In a presentational ritual the offender makes "specific attestations to recipients concerning how he regards them and how he will treat them in the on-coming interaction" (Goffman, 1967: 71). This is especially important in collectivistic cultures, because relationship restoration is judged in terms of the long-term relationship of the parties rather than short-term consequences (Kamil, 1997). By consistent and repeated demonstration of concern to the victim, the offender signals considerateness and an intention to recommit to the broken rule and to avoid similar violations in the future. This enables the aggrieved party to conclude that the violation was an anomaly beyond the offender's control and it reduces the victim's concerns about continued vulnerability, thereby improving their long-term relationship. Demonstration of concern does not directly implicate the offender (as apology does), nor does it bring the conflict out in the open (as either explanation or apology does); it also focuses on future behavior. For all of these reasons, demonstration of concern better maintains harmony for collectivists and conforms to the cultural expectation for

indirect facework. In individualistic cultures, however, although demonstration of concern may help build trust (Whitener et al., 1998), during relationship conflict, it does not necessarily meet the victim's need for immediate, direct, and explicit reparation for the violation.

Proposition 8: Compared to either explanation or apology, demonstration of concern will be more effective in repairing identity-based relationship conflicts for collectivists than for individualists.

Culture and violations of control. As noted earlier, repair of a control violation requires righting the wrong by removing the obstruction to the victim's goals, mitigating any distributive or procedural injustice issues (Greenberg, 1987), and renewing commitment to the fairness rule. However, justice may be valued or interpreted differently by groups in different cultures (Cohen, 1991) or with different collective experiences of injustice (Davidson & Friedman, 1998). For instance, Brockner, Chen, Mannix, Leung, and Skarlicki (2000) demonstrated that the interaction between procedural justice and distributive justice is much stronger for collectivists than for individualists.

Besides the instrumental concerns (Thibaut & Walker, 1975), people value procedural justice because it reflects the nature of their social relationships (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Lind, Tyler, & Huo, 1997). Because the importance of social relationships differs across cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), the influence of procedural justice may also differ. Collectivists emphasize relationship maintenance more than individualists do (Markus & Kitayama, 1991); thus, procedural fairness is likely to be more salient in collectivistic than individualistic cultures. Therefore, when procedural justice is high, distributive justice will be much less influential for collectivists than for individualists (Brockner et al., 2000).

Following this reasoning, for control violations of a distributive nature between collectivists, one way to reconcile the conflict is to provide a mitigating explanation, attesting to the fairness of the decision-making procedure. As Kumar (2004) notes, collectivists tend to be more sensitive to violations of relational norms than to the failure to attain desired outcomes. Thus, to reduce the collectivistic victim's negative re-

actions to the outcome loss, the offender might want to cater to the victim's relational needs. A reframing account that signals the fairness of the decision-making procedures helps reiterate the positive nature of the relationship and reduce the victim's belief that he or she is being singled out for unfair treatment. In that case, although the collectivistic victim does not get the desired distributive outcome, nor does he or she benefit from the instrumental function of the perceived fair procedures, the symbolic aspects of the perceived procedural justice (i.e., the perception of fair relational norms) help mitigate the victim's negative reactions.

When the victim's negative emotions are evoked by unfair procedures, however, an altruistic account may prove useful. Altruistic accounts reframe the situation in terms of the larger good. They reinforce collectivists' interdependent self-construals, their emphasis on acquiescence and conformity, and their promotion of collective goals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Explanations are also more effective if they are indirect and conveyed implicitly, since explicit and direct accounts disrupt harmony and create embarrassment and "other-focused emotion" that collectivists want to avoid to protect both parties (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

When control violations occur in individualistic cultures and individuals are prevented from achieving their goals, anger is a likely reaction (Fitness, 2000). Altruistic accounts will be relatively less effective in individualistic cultures, however, since individuals are influenced more by their own self-interest than by collective goals. Thoughtful external explanations or reframing accounts of a perceived injustice may be necessary, but not sufficient. Because the victim's personal interest is affected negatively by the violation of control, providing instrumental remedies, such as penance in the form of compensation, is considered the most appropriate response (Reb et al., 2006). In addition to its tangible benefits, compensation serves as an admission of blame and conveys that the offender is taking full responsibility for the violation.

Although victims also seek compensation in collectivistic cultures, in general, compensation needs to be offered privately rather than publicly to minimize threat to the offender's face. Demands for public penance and its attendant face loss will likely produce a negative reaction from the offender and will exacerbate, rather

than ameliorate, the conflict. However, this is based on the assumption that the victim does not lose face publicly as a result of the violation of control. Violations of control may also carry symbolic meanings, and distributive and procedural injustice may reflect disrespectful treatment (Lind & Tyler, 1988) and make the victim feel shamefaced. Especially when the violation occurs in public, loss of outcomes often accompanies loss of face. In this case, private penance will not be sufficient for relationship repair because it will not help restore the collectivistic victim's public face. Thus, the coexistence of two types of violations complexifies the restoration process.

Proposition 9: Compared to penance, reframing accounts or altruistic explanations through a third party will be more effective in repairing control-based relationship conflicts for collectivists than for individualists.

Proposition 10: Compared to public penance, private penance will be more effective in repairing private, control-based relationship conflicts for collectivists than for individualists.

DISCUSSION

We have proposed a process and a causal model of relationship repair that overcome the one-size-fits-all prescriptions offered in previous studies. Extant research has examined restoration behaviors (i.e., apology, denial, compensation) as predictors of the outcomes of relationship conflict, but it has neglected to consider the social embeddedness of these conflicts. Lack of attention to relational and cultural factors yields underspecified predictions of relationship conflict outcomes. We have argued that both the victim's perception of the type of violation and the national cultural values governing the disputants' interaction affect the process of relationship restoration and its outcome, and we have introduced both a process and a causal model to explain these effects.

Our models contribute to the understanding of relationship conflict repair in several ways. First, we have highlighted the processual and the ritualistic aspects of relationship repair processes. Viewing relationship restoration as a ritualistic process illuminates both the cultural

embeddedness of social interaction in organizations (Von Glinow et al., 2004) and the symbolic or dramaturgical role of conflict in organizational affairs (Goffman, 1967). Relationship conflicts are not isolated events but play a larger role in preserving, disrupting, eroding, and even transforming the social order. Using our stepwise process model, researchers can now analyze several points of disjuncture in the process that may hamper successful relationship repair. And although we have focused on cross-cultural differences here, the model may be especially useful for explaining how and why intercultural encounters go awry.

Second, we have identified two types of relationship violations that are central to understanding the utility of different repair mechanisms. Since different types of violations jeopardize the expressive order in different ways—that is, break different rules and threaten different needs—the attendant behaviors required to reestablish the expressive order also differ.

Third, we have theorized that effective restoration behavior depends on the three-way interaction of violation type, culture, and restoration mechanism. Unless repair mechanisms are culturally suited to specific types of relationship infractions, efforts to repair the conflict may be ineffective and even escalatory. Culture shapes and sanctions interaction rituals in conflict situations. In different national cultures, different restoration behaviors will be deemed appropriate for different types of violations. By including the influence of culture and emphasizing this three-way interaction, our causal model is directly responsive to Kim et al. (2004), who called for systematic work on how cultural differences affect restoration behavior. It also helps to reconcile current inconsistent findings about the effects of restoration mechanisms on conflict outcomes. For instance, our model suggests that apologies are more critical for identity violations than for control violations and can be offered directly by individualists but need conveyance through third parties for collectivists. Reframing and altruistic accounts through a third party may be sufficient for repairing control violations for collectivists, but an account coupled with penance may be required for individualists.

Finally, we have offered a new conceptualization of what effective relationship repair entails

and have proposed concrete measures for gauging it. Since relationship violations not only threaten individuals' needs but also break interaction rules and jeopardize the expressive order, successful repair needs to right the wrong and restore the social order by addressing both the jeopardized need and the broken rule. Overall, our models and propositions spark a number of pressing issues for future research on the repair of relationship conflicts.

Implications for Research

First, empirical research is needed to test our three-way causal model to see whether it predicts the effectiveness of different restoration tactics. Additionally, researchers need to investigate how other cultural values, such as power distance and masculinity/femininity (Hofstede, 1984), influence the selection of appropriate restoration mechanisms and their outcomes, as well as how these values interact with collectivism/individualism. For example, superiors and subordinates in collectivist cultures may have different repertoires of repair behavior. Given greater expectations about deference, subordinates may challenge violations less and be more willing to accept blame than their supervisors. Also, collectivist subordinates may be less likely to speak out than their individualist counterparts. An equally important step is to extend our theorizing to intercultural conflicts since the potential for mismatch, misattribution, misunderstanding, and escalation is magnified in those settings (Cramton, 2001; Earley & Ang, 2003; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002; Von Glinow et al., 2004). Pressing questions include the following: What are the most likely disjunctures that derail intercultural exchanges? What are the most effective responses to prevent escalation and promote repair, given a confluence of cultural differences?

Second, it is particularly important to understand why disputants deviate from culturally accepted restoration processes and why some seemingly appropriate relationship restoration efforts fail. One explanation is that individuals may be ill-equipped to discern or to carry out the necessary rituals (Goffman, 1967). To study this, researchers could test if parties who are not "culturally intelligent" (Earley & Ang, 2003) make more cultural faux pas that provoke relationship conflict. Additionally, emotional intelli-

gence may also improve one's ability to repair relationship conflict, since disputants with high emotional intelligence may be better able to consider the multiple perspectives and to detect, assimilate, and manage the attendant emotions (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999). On the other hand, failed efforts may occur if victims develop person schemas (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) about offenders—attributing their behavior to an immutable personality trait (e.g., as a habitual offender) that ultimately will not change, despite restoration attempts. Historical factors may also prevent relationship repair since disputants make more of an effort to repair close than distant relationships (Hodgins, Liebeskind, & Schwartz, 1996), and extraordinary restoration efforts may be necessary if collective memory of past wrongs is especially salient (Barthel, 1996; Halbwachs, 1980/1950). Greater insight is also needed into how cultural values influence forgiving (Aquino et al., 2003) versus revenge-seeking responses. Linking unsuccessful conflict repair to larger organizational issues such as morale or voice is also a fertile area for additional study (cf. Cropanzano et al., 2005).

Finally, future theoretical and empirical work could extend the applicability of our models to the team and organization levels. One particularly intriguing question for future research is how dyadic relationship conflicts escalate into team conflict. For example, do dyadic relationship conflicts exist in the context of audiences, or do such conflicts draw in others and lead to subgrouping as they spread via friendship networks (LaBianca, Brass, & Gray, 1998)? Additionally, resolution processes for team-level conflicts are likely to be more complicated than what we propose here for dyadic relationships, since as more people become involved, violations may be perceived differently and different expectations regarding resolution are possible. As Von Glinow et al. (2004: 578) note, in multinational teams in particular, "interpretative barriers stemming from members' different values, beliefs, and language systems" are inevitable. Our theorizing helps to explain this inevitability by highlighting how culture influences the salience of violations and the appropriateness of restoration behaviors. Further complications are also introduced when teams operate virtually (Cramton, 2001).

Implications for Practice

Given the rise of global interactions among business associates and the attendant increases in levels of conflict and misunderstanding among coworkers (Cramton, 2001; Susman, Gray, Perry, & Blair, 2003), organizations cannot afford the costly consequences of protracted relationship conflict. Nonetheless, most managers and team members find relationship conflict frustrating and just want it to go away, since it wears people down and diverts attention from the task. Two modal responses are common: (1) scapegoating—that is, "writing off" one team member as the culprit and concluding "that person just won't change"—or (2) withdrawing and sweeping the conflict under the table as if nothing happened. The latter approach assumes that the conflict's effects on task work will be negligible. To reverse this trend, managers need to acknowledge the detrimental consequences of relationship conflict on performance and to realize that their own and their employees' ethnocentric actions may escalate rather than reduce conflict and negatively affect employee motivation and commitment, especially in global work arenas.

Managers can also take proactive steps to ensure that employees are equipped to process relationship conflicts constructively. First, they can increase their own cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003) and sensitivity to cultural patterns and contextualization conventions for dealing with relationship violations across cultures (Kirkman & Shapiro, 1997; Von Glinow et al., 2004). A concrete developmental goal for managers in multicultural contexts should be to develop a broader repertoire of responses that match the types of relationship violations and the culturally appropriate restoration behaviors of their various subordinates. Second, they can also build cultural intelligence among their subordinates. This could be done by holding meetings in which employees share their different cultural expectations about relationship violations and repair and reach agreement about desired repair processes. Third, managers can create informal dispute systems and train informal third parties who can assist those colleagues needing relationship repair, either directly or indirectly as cultural norms dictate. All of these steps are important, since fostering effective re-

lationship restoration is crucial to organizational success (Hambrick, Cho, & Chen, 1996).

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