Perspective-taking, attributions, and conflict resolution : evidence from high-fidelity intercultural simulations

Tan, Mei Ling

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**NANYANG
TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY**

**PERSPECTIVE-TAKING, ATTRIBUTIONS,
AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION:
EVIDENCE FROM HIGH-FIDELITY INTERCULTURAL
SIMULATIONS**

**TAN MEI LING
NANYANG BUSINESS SCHOOL**

2015

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AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION:
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SIMULATIONS**

TAN MEI LING

Nanyang Business School

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Summary

In this study, I advance perspective-taking research in three important ways. First, I focus on perspective-taking accuracy, rather than perspective-taking trait or active perspective-taking, as an antecedent of integrative conflict resolution. Second, I examine the mediating role of isomorphic attributions in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution. Third, I examine perspective-taking of multiple targets simultaneously, rather than of single targets, and do so by adopting a third-party observer's view of conflicts that involve two parties. To reflect the nuances of perspective-taking effects and the complexities of attributional processing in situations that involve multiple targets, I conceptualize a new form of attributional bias – *selective fixedness in attribution for conflict* (SFAC; the fixedness on selected parties as the cause of conflict). I examine SFAC as a moderator in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC).

I tested the moderated mediation model in two studies. In Study 1, I tested the model using 408 sets of responses to high-fidelity intercultural simulations collected from 102 university seniors from 18 countries. Analyses using random coefficient modeling with crossed random effects demonstrate that IAC partially mediates the relationship between perspective-taking

accuracy and integrative conflict resolution, and that this mediated relationship is significant only when a conflict is attributed to joint causes, and not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict. Study 2, based on 580 sets of responses to high-fidelity intercultural simulations collected from 145 employees of 37 different nationalities from an international industry organization, replicate the findings in Study 1.

This study makes three key contributions to research on perspective-taking. First, this study shows that it is perspective-taking accuracy, rather than perspective-taking *trait*, that is more strongly associated with integrative conflict resolution. Second, this study supports theoretical arguments that IAC acts as a mediator in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution. Third, this study demonstrates the importance of accounting for selective fixedness biases in attributional processing when examining the mediating role of isomorphic attributions in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and conflict resolution decisions in multiple-target contexts.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Perspective-taking, which refers to seeing the world from another person's viewpoint, is regarded as a "fundamental human process that influences all meaningful human interaction" (Parker, Atkins, & Axtell, 2008, p. 188). However, our understanding of how perspective-taking affects important interpersonal outcomes at the workplace is still limited (Parker et al., 2008).

In particular, as noted by Parker et al. (2008), there is limited understanding of 1) whether it is the act of perspective-taking or the accuracy of the act that is the critical influence on interpersonal outcomes; 2) what are processes underlying relationships between perspective-taking and interpersonal outcomes; 3) what are boundary conditions of perspective-taking; and 4) what happens when people are expected to take perspective of multiple targets simultaneously. As such, significant research opportunities await in the field of perspective taking.

In this study, I address some of these questions to advance perspective-taking research and theory. I do so by examining the relationship between perspective-taking and conflict resolution. Compared to other interpersonal outcomes such as helping (e.g., Axtell, Parker, Holman, & Totterdell, 2007; Kamdar, McAllister, & Turban, 2006; Parker & Axtell, 2001), interpersonal

citizenship behaviors (e.g., Allen, Fecteau, & Fecteau, 1991; Ho & Gupta, 2012; Settoon & Mossholder, 2002), stereotyping (e.g., Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Todd, Bodenhausen, & Galinsky, 2012), and prejudice (e.g., Batson et al., 1997b; Dovidio et al., 2004; Finlay & Stephan, 2000; Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2010; Todd, Bodenhausen, Richeson, & Galinsky, 2011), conflict resolution has received far less research attention in perspective-taking research. This is very surprising because it is widely accepted that an accurate understanding of each conflict party's perspective forms the basis of constructive conflict resolutions (Parker et al., 2008). Yet, to date, there is virtually no empirical research that directly supports this argument.

I examine perspective taking and conflict resolution in the context of work-based intercultural conflicts. At the workplace, intercultural interactions are especially prone to conflict because of cultural differences in work norms (Triandis, 1994). Work norms refer to unconsciously held "schema-based behavior and behavior sequences" (Gioia & Poole, 1984, p. 449) appropriate to specific work situations and contexts. Work norms facilitate interdependent work because it allows people to anticipate each other's behaviors (Lord & Kernan, 1987). However, work norms tend to differ greatly across cultures (Black, 1988; Earley & Ang, 2003). When one works with someone from a different culture, differences in unconscious and ingrained work interaction habits often lead to conflict (Hall, 1976; Weldon, Carlston, Rissman, Slobodin, & Triandis, 1975). For example, one's preferences for time utilization, mental

models of joint work, and perceptions of deadlines may be contradictory to the other person's, leading to conflict (e.g., Arman & Adair, 2012; Gibson, Waller, Carpenter, & Conte, 2007).

At the same time, human beings have cognitive biases that reduce their capacity to take perspective of culturally-different others and to understand others' work norms. First, human beings exhibit the *false consensus effect* (Mullen et al., 1985), whereby if they believe X, then they think that the majority of human beings also believe X. For example, they may believe that everybody else believes that their way of working is the right way. Second, human beings have strong ethnocentric biases (Triandis, 1990), especially if they only know one set of cultural norms (Triandis, 2006). Hence, these cognitive biases blind us to the perspectives of culturally-different others.

The inability to understand and appreciate divergent perspectives of culturally-different others is often the primary cause of intercultural conflict (Triandis, 1977). Given the importance of perspective taking and the prevalence of conflict in intercultural interactions, it is thus highly appropriate, in this dissertation, to examine the relationship between perspective taking and conflict resolution in an intercultural context.

I focus on third-party observers who evaluate and resolve intercultural conflicts that involve two parties. While prior conflict resolution research has

typically focused on the conflict resolution styles of parties directly involved in conflicts, it is also important to examine the reactions of third-party observers for three key reasons. First, in multicultural teams, third parties—such as supervisors and peers—who are not directly involved in dyadic intercultural conflicts can nonetheless play an active and important role in diffusing tension and resolving the conflicts. Second, in line with the deontic model of justice (Folger, 2001)—which posits that individuals have evolutionary-based instincts to engage in retributive behavior towards justice rule violators because of future personal implications (Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler, & Schminke, 2001), their standing within a group (Tyler & Blader, 2000), and/or moral duties or rights (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003, 2005)—research on workplace incivility shows that observers of incivility tend to punish instigators (Reich & Hershcovis, 2015), suggesting that observers of intercultural conflicts may exacerbate the conflicts by behaving towards the party they deem as the conflict perpetrator in aggressive, retributive, or punitive ways. Third, given that the negative effects of interpersonal conflicts can spill over, and infect and detrimentally affect the performance of uninvolved others (Frost, 2003), to the extent that uninvolved (third-party) observers can envision ways to resolve observed conflicts in constructive and integrative ways, their performance is less likely to be affected by the spillover tension associated with those ambient conflicts (Chua, 2013).

This focus on third-party observers of intercultural conflicts is consistent with arguments in organizational research that individuals are embedded in broader social systems that shape their cognitions, behaviors, and performance at work (Frost, 2003; Lilius, Worline, Maitlis, Kanov, Dutton, & Front, 2008; Porath, & Erez, 2009; Schneider & Reichers, 1983; Scott, 1992; Zhou, 2003). It contributes to the growing body of empirical research that examines the responses of and impact on uninvolved observers of workplace interactions—such as abusive supervision (e.g., Farh & Chen, 2014; Hannah et al., 2013), incivility (e.g., Lotz, Okimoto, Schlösser, & Fetchenhauer, 2011; Reich & Herscovis, 2015; Schat & Kelloway, 2003; Turillo, Folger, Lavelle, Umphress, & Gee, 2002), and interpersonal conflicts (e.g., Chua, 2013; Sheppard & Aquino, 2013)—by examining how uninvolved observers would resolve conflicts and how their conflict resolution strategies are associated with their perspective-taking accuracy.

I organize the rest of this dissertation as follows. In Chapter 2, I review prior empirical research on perspective-taking and conflict resolution. In Chapter 3, I develop specific hypotheses for the relationships between perspective-taking, attributions, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, and integrative conflict resolution. Specifically, I draw on attributional theory to develop hypotheses for the mediating role of isomorphic attribution for conflict and the moderating role of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict

resolution. In Chapters 4 and 5, I present two empirical studies that test the hypotheses. In Study 1 (reported in Chapter 4), I test the hypotheses using 408 sets of responses to high-fidelity intercultural simulations collected from 102 university seniors from 18 different countries. Study 2 (reported in Chapter 5) is an empirical replication of Study 1, based on 580 sets of responses to high-fidelity intercultural simulations collected from 145 employees from 37 different countries working in an international industry organization.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I review prior empirical research linking perspective-taking and conflict resolution to understand what empirical research has demonstrated so far and to identify significant ways in which we can advance research and theory. Before I do so, it is helpful to discuss specific definitions and conceptualizations of the key constructs of perspective-taking and conflict resolution.

2.1 Perspective-taking

Perspective-taking, also termed the cognitive dimension of empathy (Davis, 1983), is conceptualized in four distinct ways. First, perspective-taking is conceptualized as a *stable trait*. Perspective-taking as a stable trait refers to an individual's innate tendency or motivation to take perspective of others or to understand others' viewpoints (Davis, 1983) and mental states (Malle & Knobe, 2001), where viewpoints and mental states refer to beliefs (Young & Tsoi, 2013), thoughts (Galinsky, Maddux, Gilin, & White, 2008), intentions (Trötschel, Hüffmeier, Loschelder, Schwartz, & Gollwitzer, 2011), and emotions (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997a),

Second, perspective-taking is conceptualized as an *active psychological process* (Gehlbach, 2004; Parker et al., 2008). Active perspective-taking “occurs when an observer tries to understand, in a non-judgmental way, the thoughts, motives, and/or feelings of a target, as well as why they think and/or feel the way they do” (Parker et al., 2008, p. 151). Active perspective-taking is distinct from perspective-taking trait because a person with a strong motivation to take perspective of others may not do so in every situation. Active perspective-taking is an intentional and goal-directed cognitive process (Parker et al., 2008) that draws on scarce cognitive resources (Ruby & Decety, 2000). As such, whether a person with high perspective-taking trait chooses to engage in active perspective-taking in a particular situation depends on the availability

of cognitive resources at that moment. The availability of cognitive resources may be reduced by situational factors such as cognitive load (Roßnagel, 2000) and negative affect (Dolcos & McCarthy, 2006). Further, the motivation to allocate scarce cognitive resources to active perspective-taking in specific situations may also be reduced by beliefs that perspective-taking is irrelevant (Parker et al., 2008), interpersonal dislike (Frantz & Janoff-Bulman, 2000), and a competitive work context (Parker et al., 2008).

Third, perspective-taking is conceptualized as *perspective-taking accuracy*. Perspective-taking accuracy refers to “the degree to which the observer has a relatively accurate, comprehensive, and objective understanding and appreciation of the target’s thoughts and/or feelings and the reasons they are thinking and/or feeling that way” (Parker et al., 2008, p. 152). It also means that the observer appreciates the legitimacy of the target’s perspective for the target (Leith & Baumeister, 1998), without necessarily agreeing with the target’s perspective (Frantz & Janoff-Bulman, 2000). Perspective-taking accuracy includes, but is broader than, the concept of empathic accuracy (Ickes, 1993). Empathic accuracy focuses only on accuracy in identifying a target’s emotions. Perspective-taking accuracy is distinct from active perspective-taking because a person can attempt to understand a target’s perspective without necessarily doing so effectively or accurately (Gehlbach, 2004; Parker et al., 2008). This is especially so when one is unfamiliar with the target (Marangoni, Garcia, Ickes, & Teng, 1995) or when the target lacks expressiveness

(Gehlbach, 2004). Whether active perspective-taking translates into perspective-taking accuracy is contingent on an individual's perspective-taking related abilities, such as cognitive complexity (Alcorn & Torney, 1983) and emotional regulation abilities (Eisenberg & Okun, 1996; Labouvie-Vief, 2003).

Fourth, perspective-taking is conceptualized as a *skill*. Perspective-taking skill refers to an individual's proficiency in understanding the thoughts, emotions, and intentions of others (Rockstuhl, 2013). While perspective-taking accuracy refers to the accuracy of understanding others' perspectives in specific moments or interactions (Parker et al., 2008), perspective-taking skill is an individual difference variable that captures cross-situational proficiency in perspective-taking (Rockstuhl, 2013; Stone & Moskowitz, 2011). In other words, both perspective-taking accuracy and perspective-taking skill refer to how accurately an individual can understand the perspective of others. However, while perspective-taking accuracy refers to the extent to which an individual has an accurate understanding of others' perspectives *in a specific situation*, perspective-taking skill refers to the extent to which an individual generally has an accurate understanding of others' perspectives *across situations*. Perspective-taking skill is distinct from perspective-taking accuracy because an individual high in perspective-taking skill may not demonstrate perspective-taking accuracy in every situation (Rockstuhl, 2013). Likewise, a person who demonstrates high perspective-taking accuracy in one particular situation may have generally low perspective-taking accuracy across situations.

In sum, perspective taking is conceptualized in four ways: 1) as a stable trait, 2) as an active psychological process, 3) as accuracy, and 4) as a skill. As I will show later, perspective-taking research has thus far focused on the trait and process conceptualizations of perspective taking and paid less attention to the accuracy and skill conceptualizations (Gehlbach, 2004; Parker et al., 2008).

2.2 Conflict Resolution

Conflict refers to a situation in which “two or more individuals engage in incompatible activities” (Tjosvold, Wong, & Chen, 2014, p. 547). Conflict can occur between people with or without opposing interests, and in cooperative or competitive settings (Tjosvold et al., 2014). For example, even when people have shared interests, conflict can arise from differences in norms or values (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Organizational researchers have extensively examined conflict resolution using theoretical frameworks of conflict management styles (Rahim, 1983; Rahim & Magner, 1995; K. W. Thomas, 1976; Van de Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990). Conflict management style refers to a patterned response to conflict whereby the same tactics are repeatedly used to resolve conflicts (Hocker & Wilmot, 1991).

Prior research has identified and validated five styles of conflict management based on two orthogonal dimensions of ‘concern for self’ and ‘concern for other’ - 1) dominating, 2) obliging, 3) avoiding, 4) compromising, and 5) integrative (Rahim, 1983; see K. W. Thomas, 1976; Van de Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990 for similar frameworks but different terminology). The *dominating* style emphasizes meeting one’s own needs over another’s. The *obliging* style is the opposite of the dominating style. It reflects a high concern for others and low concern for self, in which one readily accedes to the needs or preferences of the other party. The *avoiding* style involves aversion or

reluctance to engage in discussion about conflict. It is generally regarded as an ineffective approach (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001) that can cause conflicts to fester and worsen (Eisenhardt, Kahwajy, & Bourgeois, 1997). Thus, it reflects a low concern for meeting either self or the other's needs. The *compromising* style falls at the intersection of the two dimensions of concern for self and concern for others and reflects solutions that satisfy each party only partially. The *integrative* style refers to generating resolutions that maximally address the concerns of both parties (Rahim, 1983).

The integrative and compromising styles are both mutually-focused in that they both place importance on concerns of self *and* other. However, the integrative style, also termed the collaborative or win-win style (K. W. Thomas, 1976; Van de Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990), is a better strategy as it seeks to *maximize* benefits to both parties and is constructive in the widest range of situations (Van de Vliert, Euwema, & Huismans, 1995; Van de Vliet, Nauta, Giebels, & Janssen, 1999).

2.3 The Relationship between Perspective-taking and Conflict Resolution

Having clarified the definitions and conceptualizations of perspective-taking and conflict resolution in the previous sections, I now review research linking perspective-taking and conflict resolution. I begin by describing the theoretical arguments linking perspective-taking and conflict resolution before reviewing empirical research that tests the link.

Conflict management literature emphasizes the importance of perspective-taking for constructive conflict management. Conflict management research prescribes *open-minded discussion* as the means to achieve integrative and constructive resolutions (Tjosvold et al., 2014). Open-minded discussion refers to the situation when “people work together to understand each other’s ideas and positions, impartially consider each other’s reasoning for these positions, and seek to integrate their ideas into mutually acceptable solutions” (Tjosvold et al., 2014, p. 549). In essence, seeking out, understanding, and accepting the legitimacy of each other’s perspectives lie at the heart of open-minded discussion and pave the way for integrative resolutions.

These prescriptive arguments mirror theoretical arguments put forth in perspective-taking research. According to perspective-taking theory, perspective-taking promotes integrative or mutually-focused conflict resolution

because understanding each party's perspective forms the basis of solutions that meets both parties' needs (Parker et al., 2008). With a more accurate understanding of each party's perspectives, i.e., high perspective-taking accuracy, one can generate conflict resolution strategies that meet both parties' needs. Conversely, a poor understanding of each party's perspectives, i.e., low perspective-taking accuracy, is likely to result in maladaptive conflict resolution strategies (e.g., Bissonnette, Rusbult, & Kilpatrick, 1997).

Having described the theoretical arguments linking perspective-taking and conflict resolution, I now review empirical research that tests the link. Although I was primarily interested in examining perspective-taking and conflict resolution within organizational contexts, I found that empirical studies on perspective-taking and conflict resolution have mostly been conducted in the context of romantic or marital relationships. Given the paucity of research in organizational contexts, I included all the empirical studies that I could find, regardless of the context in which it was conducted.

Prior studies on perspective-taking and conflict resolution typically assess perspective-taking using dispositional self-report measures (e.g., Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI); Davis, 1980), which assess perspective-taking trait. An exception is Buzzanell and Liu's (2007) study, which captured active perspective-taking by instructing participants to take perspective of others. Conflict resolution is typically assessed using trait-like measures of

conflict management styles (e.g., Rahim, 1983, 1990) or inferred from open-ended responses describing how a conflict ended (e.g., Leith & Baumeister, 1998). I organize the review based on the studies' conceptualization and operationalization of perspective-taking.

2.3.1 Perspective-taking Trait and Conflict Resolution Styles

O'Connell Corcoran and Mallinckrodt (2000) examined the relationship between perspective-taking trait and conflict resolution styles using a sample of 124 adults engaged in romantic relationships. They asked participants to report on their perspective-taking trait (as assessed by the IRI; Davis, 1980), as well as their conflict resolution style (as assessed by the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II; Rahim, 1983, 1990) when they experienced conflict with their romantic partners. They found that perspective-taking trait is positively related to the integrating ($r = .39$), compromising ($r = .29$), and obliging ($r = .09$) conflict resolution styles, and negatively related to the dominating ($r = -.36$) and avoiding ($r = -.12$) conflict resolution styles. This shows that perspective-taking is positively related to mutually-focused and other-oriented conflict resolution styles and negatively related to self-oriented and relationship-damaging conflict resolution styles.

Another study by Rizkalla, Wertheim, and Hodgson (2008) generally showed a similar pattern of results. 122 adults reported on their conflict resolution styles, as assessed by the 20-item short version Dutch Test for Conflict Handling (DUTCH; De Dreu, Evers, Beersma, Kluwer, & Nauta, 2001), when they experienced conflict with their significant other. Results showed that perspective-taking trait, as assessed by the IRI (Davis, 1980), is positively related to the integrating ($r = .45$) and yielding ($r = .30$) conflict

resolution styles and negatively related to the fighting style ($r = -.32$). However, unlike O'Connell Corcoran and Mallinckrodt (2000), this study found that perspective-taking is positively related to the avoiding conflict resolution style ($r = .14$).

A third study by Franzoi, Davis, and Young (1985) tested the relationship between perspective-taking trait and conflict resolution style in a sample of 131 undergraduate couples. Similar to the two previous studies, perspective-taking trait was assessed using the IRI (Davis, 1980). However, unlike the two previous studies that assessed conflict resolution style using established scales, this study assessed conflict resolution style with a single item ("When disagreements between you and your partner arise, they generally result in: a) You giving in; b) Partner giving in; c) Neither giving in, d) Agreement by mutual give-and-take"). Nonetheless, results also showed that higher perspective-taking trait was positively related to mutually-focused conflict resolution – males with higher perspective-taking trait reported a higher level of mutual give-and-take ($r = .24$), as did females ($r = .15$).

2.3.2 Active Perspective-taking and Conflict Resolution

In a qualitative study within an organizational context, Buzzanell and Liu (2007) elucidated the role of perspective-taking in successful maternity leave conflict management. Based on interviews with women who managed maternity leave conflicts either successfully ($N = 11$) or unsuccessfully ($N = 15$), the authors found that women who took the perspective of the management managed maternity leave conflicts more successfully because they a) could understand managerial concerns, b) focused on the underlying interests rather than on rigid positions about maternity leave, and c) were skilled in using integrative negotiation strategies to maximize mutual interests (Buzzanell & Liu, 2007).

2.4 Mediators of the Relationship between Perspective-taking and Conflict Resolution

While perspective-taking may directly improve interpersonal outcomes because of better understanding of other parties' needs, the effects of perspective-taking may also be mediated by intra-psychic affective-cognitive responses (Parker et al., 2008; Todd & Galinsky, 2014). In the following sections, I review conceptual and empirical research on the mediating roles of 1) affective responses, 2) locus of causality of attributions, and 3) isomorphic attributions.

2.4.1 The Mediating Role of Affective Responses

Empathic concern, an affective response closely associated with perspective-taking (Davis, 1983), is widely theorized as a mediator of perspective-taking and helping (Parker et al., 2008). Empathic concern refers to feeling emotions of warmth, concern, and compassion toward a target. It is the affective dimension of empathy (Davis, 1983) and is also referred to as reactive empathy (Stephan & Finlay, 1999) or sympathy (Eisenberg, 2000). Active perspective-taking can trigger such feelings of empathic concern (Batson, 2011), which in turn increases the motivation to engage in prosocial behaviors such as helping (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002).

However, empathic concern has not been specifically theorized as a mediator of the effects of perspective-taking on conflict resolution, which is not that surprising, given that empathic concern is typically triggered in the context of a target in distress (Goetz, Keltner, & Simon-Thomas, 2010), rather than in a conflict context. Further, empathic concern is triggered by the *act* of perspective-taking (Batson, 2011; Davis, 1983), rather than by how effectively one can take perspective, and is thus less pertinent to integrative conflict resolution. There is little research on affective mediators of perspective-taking and conflict resolution. To date, there is only one study that examines affective responses of guilt and shame as mediators of perspective-taking and conflict resolution (Leith & Baumeister, 1998).

In Leith and Baumeister's (1998) study, the authors asked the undergraduate participants ($N = 69$) to recall the most intense event of interpersonal conflict in the last six months. They were asked to recall the interpersonal conflict twice, first from their own perspective, and then from the other person's perspective. Participants reported the interpersonal conflicts (between friends, romantic partners, parents, or children) by providing two written accounts each.

The written accounts were then typed and coded for perspective-taking, feelings of guilt and shame, as well as relationship outcomes. Perspective taking was assessed by whether the account from the other person's perspective was meaningfully different from the account from one's own perspective (i.e., the second account contained new information that was not mentioned in the first story). Relationship outcomes were coded based on whether there was a deterioration or dissolution of the relationship (coded as 1), a maintenance of relationship status quo (coded as 2), or an ultimate improvement of the relationship (coded as 3). Higher scores on relationship outcomes suggest more constructive conflict resolution.

Path analysis indicated that situational guilt (but not shame) mediated the effects of perspective-taking on relationship outcomes (perspective-taking $\rightarrow$ situational guilt: $\beta = .26$; situational guilt $\rightarrow$ relationship outcomes: $\beta = .40$),

suggesting that perspective-taking may result in more integrative conflict resolution because it induces feelings of guilt in the perspective-taker.

Leith and Baumeister (1998) replicated the above study in another sample of 37 undergraduates, but limited the types of relationships to those that can be terminated. Results of the replication study similarly indicated that situational guilt mediates the effects of perspective-taking on relationship outcomes (perspective-taking $\rightarrow$ situational guilt: $F(1, 36) = 20.14, p < .001$; situational guilt $\rightarrow$ relationship outcomes: $F(3,36) = 2.78, p < .05$).

2.4.2 The Mediating Role of Locus of Causality of Attributions

Perspective-taking researchers also theorize that perspective-taking improves interpersonal outcomes via secondary cognitive responses (Parker et al., 2008). In particular, prior research proposed that perspective-taking improves interpersonal outcomes because it reduces attribution error (Heider, 1958; Parker et al., 2008). Attributions refer to one's explanations for others' behaviors or for observed events (Weiner, 2008) and are a key feature of social interactions (Heider, 1958). When inferring attributions, the primary distinction that one makes is the *locus of causality* - whether the cause is internal or external (Weiner, 1985). Internal attributions refer to causal factors within a person, such as dispositional or behavioral characteristics (e.g., effort, ability, and impulses), while external attributions refer to situation factors outside the person, such as physical context and other people's expectations (Malle, 2004).

Attribution errors often arise from the actor-observer bias (Jones & Nisbett, 1971). The actor-observer bias (Jones & Nisbett, 1971) describes the tendency for observers to attribute the behavior of others to internal, person factors (such as disposition) but to attribute their own behavior to situation factors. Thus, attribution errors occur because observers tend to overlook situational conditions faced by the actor.

The actor-observer bias has been shown to reduce with perspective-taking (e.g., Regan & Totten, 1975; Storms, 1973). For example, Regan and Totten (1975) showed that when asked to take the target's perspective, participants made the same attributions for the target as they (observers) did for themselves in that situation. This phenomenon whereby the observer adopts an actor's perspective in making attributions (for the actor's behavior) and infer external attributions for an actor's negative behaviors or plight is also referred to as positive attributions (Parker & Axtell, 2001).

Parker et al. (2008) argued that these changed attribution processes triggered by perspective-taking will have follow-on effects on interpersonal outcomes (Parker et al., 2008). This argument is grounded in attributional theories (Weiner, 1995, 2000) and research (Harvey, Madison, Martinko, Crook, & Crook, 2014; Rudolph, Roesch, Greitemeyer, & Weiner, 2004), which indicate that positive attributions increase prosocial responses and reduce antisocial responses. Since positive attributions trigger 'concern for others' and encourage other-oriented responses, this suggests that positive attributions can also promote constructive conflict resolution.

The mediating effect of locus of causality of attributions on perspective-taking and conflict resolution has only been explored in a preliminary way in one study. Howe (1987) instructed undergraduate participants ($N = 72$) to watch video vignettes of a couple in a marriage counseling session from the

perspective of a) the wife, b) the husband, or c) the counselor, using a within-subjects design. The participants were asked to report on their attributions for the cause of the conflict. They were not directly asked to resolve the conflict; instead, they were asked how they thought the argument would end.

Results showed that when people adopted a third-party perspective of the conflict (i.e., counselor's perspective), they were more likely to attribute the cause of the conflict to joint causes (i.e., both wife and husband are causes of the conflict) ($F(2, 122) = 4.58, p < .05$). When they adopted the perspective of either the wife or the husband, they were more likely to attribute the cause of the conflict to the spouse.

In turn, the attributions for the cause of the conflict were related to predictions of how the participants thought the argument would end. Joint causes attributions were associated with predictions that both parties had to change for the relationship to improve ($F(2, 135) = 7.92, p < .01$). Wife-focused or husband-focused attributions were associated with predictions that the responsible party had to change for the relationship to improve. In sum, taking different perspectives when viewing a conflict situation changed the observer's attributions for the conflict, which in turn affected their expectations of which parties should change for the conflict to be resolved.

2.4.3 The Mediating Role of Isomorphic Attributions

In the field of cross-cultural psychology, theoretical links between perspective-taking, attributions, and conflict resolution have been extensively applied to inform practice on cross-cultural training (Triandis, 1994). This body of literature argues that when caught in conflict with culturally-different others, people who adopt ethnocentric perspectives and evaluate the ‘odd’ behaviors of culturally-different others based on their own cultural lens are likely to attribute these behaviors to negative, person causes (i.e., negative internal attributions), which triggers negative attitudes and hostile reactions (Triandis, 1975; Weldon et al., 1975).

However, if people engage in and are effective in taking the perspective of the culturally-different other, they are more likely to infer *isomorphic attributions for behaviors*, and form accurate expectations of how to respond to the conflict in a way that is acceptable for the culturally-different other (Triandis, 1994, 2006). An isomorphic attribution for other’s behavior occurs when an observer O attributes the behavior of a target T to the same causes to which T attributes his own behavior (Triandis, 1975). Therefore, isomorphic attributions for behaviors are based on the observer’s accurate inferences of the target’s perspectives (Heider, 1958; Malle, 2001), while negative internal attributions are negative trait inferences based on an ethnocentric evaluation of the target’s behaviors.

In other words, when caught in an intercultural conflict, whether one can take perspective of the other party effectively determines one's attributions for the other party's behaviors, which in turn influences one's responses towards the other party. Based on these perspective-taking and attribution precepts, cross-cultural psychology literature has long emphasized isomorphic attributions training as the key way to prepare people for managing intercultural conflict when they enter a foreign culture (Bhawuk & Brislin, 2000; Cushner & Brislin, 1996).

Isomorphic attributions training programs are called culture assimilators (Fiedler, Mitchell, & Triandis, 1971). In culture assimilators, trainees are exposed, via written vignettes, to a set of 100 to 200 episodes where people from two specific cultures (one from the trainee's culture, the other from a foreign culture which the trainee will enter after the training) experience a conflict. Each episode is followed by four or five explanations, or attributions, of why the person of the foreign culture has acted in a way counter to the trainee's culture's expectations (Cushner & Brislin, 1996).

The trainee then selects one of the attributions and is asked to refer to another page where feedback on the selected attribution is provided. The feedback corresponding to the isomorphic attribution (i.e., the attribution most likely to be made by people from the foreign culture) will describe in detail the beliefs and norms underlying the behavior of the person from the other culture

(Triandis, 1994). The effectiveness of the culture assimilator as an intercultural training tool has been tested in both laboratory and field settings. I summarize five of these validation efforts, as reported in Fiedler et al. (1971).

Chemers, Lekhyananda, Fiedler, and Stolurow (1966) tested a US-Arab culture assimilator using a laboratory study. Participants, who were American Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets, were randomly assigned to one of two cross-cultural training programs: 1) the culture assimilator program ($N = 14$) and 2) instruction on Arab country geography ($N = 13$). After training, each participant was asked to perform three tasks as a leader of a three-man group, which included two Arab students from the University of Illinois Arab Student Association. Results showed that differences for 9 of the 11 indices of leader-member relations were in the hypothesized direction, but given the extremely small sample size, only one reached the $p < .05$ level and another the $p < .10$ level. Of the 11 indices, three were leader (participant) ratings, five were member (Arab students) ratings, and three were ratings of group climate, based on combined ratings of leader and group members. However, there were no significant differences in task performance between culture assimilator-trained and geography-trained leaders. The investigators concluded that culture assimilator training was effective for interpersonal relations but not for task performance.

Mitchell and Foa (1969) tested a US-Thai culture assimilator developed by Foa, Mitchell, Santhak, Wichiarajote, and Wichiarajote (1967) using a laboratory study. Participants, who were American Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets were randomly assigned to one of two cross-cultural training programs: 1) the culture assimilator program ($N = 16$) and 2) a geography program ($N = 16$). After training, each participant had to supervise two foreign students (one Thai, one from another Asian country) to construct a toy building in the shortest time possible. There were 16 foreign student pairs and each foreign student pair worked under a culture assimilator-trained leader and a geography-trained leader. After the task, the foreign student pairs and a Thai observer evaluated the leader's handling of the group and his treatment of group members. They also rated the group climate. Results showed that the Thai group member and Thai observer gave statistically higher ratings to the culture assimilator-trained leader but there were no differences in ratings from the other Asian member. There was also no significant difference for group effectiveness, which was based on the number of mistakes made in the construction and the time taken to finish the task. Similar to the study described earlier, the investigators concluded that culture assimilator training was effective for interpersonal relations but not task performance.

O'Brien, Fiedler, and Hewett (1970) tested a US-Honduras/Guatemala culture assimilator developed by Symonds, O'Brien, Vidman, and Hornik (1967) in a field study involving US teenagers participating in a program to

establish and operate public health clinics in Honduras and Guatemala.

Participants were assigned to one of two cross-cultural training programs 1) the culture assimilator program ($N = 119$) or 2) area training ($N = 146$). They were evaluated via performance ratings by program staff and self-reported adjustment scores. Results showed that culture assimilator-trained teenagers performed better and reported higher adjustment. In contrast to the laboratory studies described earlier, this study showed that culture assimilator training was effective not only for interpersonal relations, but also for task performance.

Worchel and Mitchell (1970) tested the United States-Thai assimilator developed by Foa et al. (1967) using a field study involving officers of the United States Military Advising and Assistance Group and civilians from the United States. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two cross-cultural training programs: 1) the culture assimilator program and 2) another form of culture training. The effectiveness of the two training programs was compared via participants' self-ratings on items such as their work relationship with Thais, their health, and their motivation to return to Thailand several months after training. Ratings on 12 of these 15 items were higher for the culture assimilator-trained group, with 4 items statistically significant. Of the 3 items with differences counter to the hypothesized direction, none were significant. The investigators concluded that the culture assimilator training could be regarded as successful for interpersonal relations.

Worchel and Mitchell (1970) also tested a United States-Greece culture assimilator developed by Mitchell, Gagerman, and Schwartz (1967).

Comparisons were made between a group of culture assimilator-trained American military and civilian advisors in Greece and a control group. Compared to the control group, the culture assimilator-trained group self-reported better interpersonal relations with Greeks, greater effectiveness in obtaining cooperation from Greeks, better understanding of the Greeks, greater enjoyment of their tour of duty, greater adjustment to the Greek culture, and higher productivity. The investigators concluded that the culture assimilator training was effective for both interpersonal relations and task performance.

Taken together, these validation studies of culture assimilator training provide some evidence that culture assimilator training is effective for improving interpersonal relations and task performance in intercultural contexts, in both laboratory and field conditions. However, while these studies compare intercultural effectiveness outcomes for culture assimilator-trained individuals and individuals trained via other methods, they do not directly assess pre- or post-training attributions, and hence do not provide a direct test of the link between attributions and intercultural effectiveness. Nor do they assess conflict resolution specifically, and hence also do not provide any empirical link between attributions and conflict resolution. There are other cross-cultural training validation studies that assess pre- and post-training attributions, but these studies also do not assess conflict resolution specifically. I review two

such studies below (Bhawuk, 1998; Bird, Heinbuch, Dunbar, & McNulty, 1993).

Using a sample of 102 undergraduate exchange students, Bhawuk (1998) compared the effectiveness of three types of culture assimilator training programs - 1) culture-specific, 2) culture-general, and 3) culture theory-based. Culture-specific culture assimilators prepare trainees for interactions in one specific culture, similar to those described earlier. Culture-general assimilators teach trainees to control their own prejudices across different intercultural settings (Brislin, Cushner, Cherrie, & Yong, 1986). Culture theory-based culture assimilators teach trainees about cultural differences using the theoretical concepts of individualism and collectivism (Bhawuk & Triandis, 1996).

Post-training attributional accuracy (i.e., isomorphic attributions) was assessed using nine intercultural critical incidents (Brislin et al., 1986; Cushner, 1989). Results showed that the culture-general culture assimilator was the most effective training program for making isomorphic attributions in intercultural critical incidents ($F = 3.02$, $df = 3$, $p < .05$). Participants were also asked to interact in the capacity of a manager with a Japanese worker (a confederate) to assess their intercultural interaction effectiveness. The audiotaped interaction was assessed on interaction effectiveness, using combined criteria of personal concern, soliciting employee input, maintaining harmony, emphasizing group

consensus, and reducing conflict. The correlation between isomorphic attributions and interaction effectiveness was positive ($r = .11$). Thus, this study suggests that people who make more isomorphic attributions for intercultural conflicts are less likely to *get into* conflict situations with culturally-different others. However, it does not provide a clear and direct link between isomorphic attributions and conflict *resolution*.

Another study evaluating the effectiveness of area studies training as an intercultural training program assessed both pre- and post-training attributions (Bird et al., 1993). A group of American secondary school teachers were assigned to one of two training conditions: 1) a treatment group that received information on Japan over a six day period ($N = 18$) and 2) a control group that received an educational curriculum development training over a six day period ($N = 25$). Before and after training (an eight-day interval), participants were assessed on their attributional knowledge of behaviors in Japan, as well as on their attitudes and behavioral intentions towards Japanese. Attributional knowledge was assessed based on responses to eight intercultural critical incidents (Stolurrow, 1965).

Results showed that the group that received informational training on Japan had higher post-training scores on isomorphic attributions than the control group (t -test of differences between pre-test means of isomorphic attributions = .30, *ns*; t -test of differences between post-test means of

isomorphic attributions = 2.96, $p < .01$). However, within the treatment group that received informational training on Japan, results showed that improvements in isomorphic attributions did not improve attitudes towards Japanese culture or increase intentions to adapt to the Japanese culture. In fact, improvement in isomorphic attributions correlated negatively with attitudes towards Japanese culture ($r = -.09$), Japanese management ($r = -.26$), and Japanese products ($r = -.16$). Improvement in isomorphic attributions also correlated negatively with adaptive intentions ($r = -.15$); surprisingly, it also correlated negatively with intentions to resist experiencing the Japanese culture. However, the investigators cautioned that these correlations are merely exploratory have to be interpreted conservatively due to the small sample size ($N = 18$).

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

Perspective-taking theory makes three specific predictions about how perspective-taking relates to conflict resolution. First, perspective-taking accuracy increases the likelihood of achieving integrative or mutually-focused conflict resolution. Second, the relationship between perspective-taking and conflict resolution is mediated by the locus of causality of attributions (Parker et al., 2008). Third, the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and conflict resolution is mediated by isomorphic attributions (Triandis, 1994).

The preceding literature review shows that there is as yet sparse empirical research that provides direct support for the first prediction. Although conceptual work argues that it is the *accuracy* of perspective-taking that enables individuals to achieve integrative or mutually-focused solutions in specific incidences of conflict (Parker et al., 2008), most research assessed the effects of perspective-taking *trait* on conflict resolution *styles* (e.g., Franzoi et al., 1985; O'Connell Corcoran & Mallinckrodt, 2000; Rizkalla et al., 2008). Other studies instructed participants to take perspective, thereby capturing the effects of *active* perspective-taking (e.g., Howe, 1987; Leith & Baumeister, 1998). As described earlier, perspective-taking trait and active perspective-taking do not automatically translate into effective perspective-taking in a particular situation (Gehlbach, 2004; Parker et al., 2008). Various person and situation factors affect whether a person high in perspective-taking trait actually engages in

perspective-taking trait in specific interactions, and whether a person who intentionally engages in perspective-taking does so effectively. Therefore, notwithstanding consistent findings in terms of a positive relationship between perspective-taking trait and integrative conflict management styles (Franzoi et al., 1985; O'Connell Corcoran & Mallinckrodt, 2000; Rizkalla et al., 2008), these studies do not provide direct tests of the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution.

There is also to date very little research that supports the second prediction that the locus of causality of attributions mediates the relationship between perspective-taking and conflict resolution. Thus far, there is only one study that examined the locus of causality of attributions as a mediator (Howe, 1987). In Howe's (1987) study, taking different perspectives (wife, husband, or counselor) when observing a marital conflict situation changed the observers' attributions for the conflict, which in turn affected their expectations of which parties should change for the conflict to be resolved. While the findings are generally consistent with predictions that locus of causality of attributions mediate the effects of perspective-taking on conflict resolution, this study does not specifically assess the extent to which participants propose solutions that are integrative.

Similarly, there is little research that supports the third prediction that isomorphic attribution mediates the relationship between perspective-taking

accuracy and conflict resolution. This is because there are very few empirical studies that assess isomorphic attributions and in studies that do assess isomorphic attributions, there are no direct assessments of conflict resolution strategies.

In sum, the preceding literature review reveals that empirical research on perspective-taking and conflict resolution is still very much in nascent stages. As such, there are significant ways in which this body of research can be advanced. I discuss these exciting research opportunities next.

2.6 The Need for Further Research

The importance of perspective-taking for integrative conflict resolution is virtually unquestioned, both in perspective-taking (Parker et al., 2008) and conflict management literature (Tjosvold et al., 2014). Yet, as the preceding literature review shows, this proposition is built on a very slim empirical base. Although the small body of empirical research does show consistent findings in terms of a positive relationship between perspective-taking trait and integrative conflict management styles, there are significant ways in which empirical research on perspective-taking and conflict resolution can and should be advanced.

First, empirical research should focus on perspective-taking accuracy, rather than on perspective-taking *trait* or *active* perspective-taking. The arguments for the effects of perspective taking on integrative conflict resolution are based on the accuracy of perspective taking, rather than on the trait or process aspects of perspective-taking (Parker et al., 2008). While an individual with a stronger innate tendency to take perspective is more likely to do so (Leith & Baumeister, 1998) and may also be more effective in doing so (Rockstuhl, 2013), this is not always the case. Parker et al. (2008) has described many individual (e.g., negative affect towards/dislike of target) and situational factors (e.g., lack of outcome interdependence) that discourage engagement in perspective-taking in specific situations, even amongst individuals strong in

perspective-taking trait. Similarly, they have explained factors (e.g., use of ineffective perspective-taking strategies and lack of knowledge of context) that may reduce the perspective-taking accuracy of individuals who do engage in perspective-taking. Therefore, perspective-taking trait and active perspective-taking are distal and less pertinent antecedents of integrative conflict resolution, compared to perspective-taking accuracy. Adopting the accuracy conceptualization of perspective taking also aligns with the argument that perspective taking and its effects are interaction-specific (Parker et al., 2008).

Although the skill conceptualization of perspective taking also refers to how effectively an individual understands the perspective of others, it refers to the individual's general perspective-taking accuracy across situations. However, it is possible that one has high perspective-taking skill in general, but low perspective-taking accuracy for a specific interaction. Likewise, it is possible that one has low perspective-taking skill in general, but high perspective-taking accuracy for a specific interaction. In such cases, using perspective-taking skill to examine the relationship between perspective taking and conflict resolution (for a specific episode of conflict) would lack internal validity. Therefore, to test the relationship between perspective taking and conflict resolution in a way that matches conceptual arguments, I focus on perspective-taking accuracy, rather than perspective-taking skill. Using perspective-taking accuracy to predict integrative conflict resolution in specific situations is also in line with Ajzen's (2005) principle of matching predictors and criterion based on context.

Second, there should be more empirical research to investigate attributions as a mediator of the relationship between perspective-taking and conflict resolution. The attributional process is theorized as an important mediator (Parker et al., 2008; Todd & Galinsky, 2014), yet there is thus far little research to lend support to this proposition. More importantly, isomorphic attributions training, which is a key component of cross-cultural training programs, is based on the proposition that perspective-taking accuracy increases the likelihood of inferring isomorphic attributions, which in turn leads to more constructive resolutions for intercultural conflict (Triandis, 1994). Yet thus far, this widely-accepted proposition has not been empirically-grounded, as there are no studies that assess and demonstrate linkages between perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attributions, and conflict resolution strategies.

Third, there should be more research on perspective-taking and conflict resolution in organizational contexts. Prior empirical studies have focused on conflicts in the contexts of marital or romantic relationships. In marital or romantic relationships, people take perspective of only one person – their spouse or romantic partner. The organizational context is unique because it often requires individuals to take perspective of multiple targets simultaneously (Parker et al., 2008). To compound the complexity, these perspectives can be conflicting (Parker et al., 2008). Examining perspective-taking of multiple conflicting perspectives offers an exciting avenue for future research.

In summary, my review of the literature on perspective-taking and conflict resolution has revealed three critical ways to advance empirical research: 1) focus on perspective-taking accuracy, rather than on perspective-taking trait or active perspective-taking, as the antecedent of integrative conflict resolution; 2) examine isomorphic attributions as the mediator of the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution; and 3) explore the complexities of taking perspective of multiple targets simultaneously.

To advance empirical research in these three important ways, I examine perspective-taking accuracy, attributions, and conflict resolution in the context of work-based intercultural conflicts, in which observers are required to take perspective of all conflict parties simultaneously. Intercultural interactions are prone to interpersonal conflicts, ethnocentric biases, and misattributions (Triandis, 2006), and offer a highly appropriate context to examine linkages between perspective-taking accuracy, attributions, and conflict resolution. The intercultural work setting offers a unique context in which to examine simultaneous perspective-taking of multiple targets with conflicting perspectives.

Anchoring on attributional theories (Heider, 1944; Malle, 2004; Triandis, 1975, 2006; Weiner, 1995, 2006), I propose the mediating role of isomorphic attribution for conflict in the relationship between perspective-

taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution. To reflect the complexities of taking perspective of multiple targets simultaneously, I conceptualize a new form of attributional bias—*selective fixedness in attribution for conflict* (the fixedness on selected parties in the intercultural conflict as the cause of the conflict)—as a moderator in the relationship between isomorphic attribution for conflict and integrative conflict resolution. In sum, I propose a moderated mediation model that highlights isomorphic attribution for conflict as a mediator and selective fixedness in attribution for conflict as a moderator in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution.

Chapter 3: Theory and Hypotheses

In this chapter, I present the proposed moderated mediation model of integrative conflict resolution (Figure 3-1). Drawing on attributional theories (Heider, 1944; Malle, 2004; Triandis, 1975, 2006; Weiner, 1995, 2006), I propose relationships between perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC), and integrative conflict resolution. I conceptualize a new form of attributional bias—*selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)*—to reflect the complexities of taking perspective of multiple targets simultaneously. I propose SFAC as a moderator in the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution. As I shall explain later, fixedness on selected parties as the cause of a conflict is likely to weaken the positive relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution.

Figure 3-1

A Moderated Mediation Model of Integrative Conflict Resolution

In line with the conceptualization of perspective-taking and attributional analysis as interaction-specific processes (Heider, 1958; Parker et al., 2008), I develop my model in the context of specific intercultural interactions, in which an observer observes and responds to an intercultural conflict between two parties. Such a context is especially relevant to leaders in global and multicultural organizations, as such leaders play a key role in resolving conflicts that often arise between culturally-different members (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2001). As discussed earlier, people from different cultures often have contradictory perspectives of how to behave in work situations and interactions, which inevitably leads to conflict (Hall, 1976; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2001).

The proposed model advances research on perspective-taking and conflict resolution by introducing IAC and SFAC as a mediator and moderator respectively. As these novel constructs are both grounded in attributional theory, I begin by describing attributional theory and explaining, in general terms, how attributions link perspective-taking and conflict resolution. I then expound on the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and IAC more specifically. Following that, I introduce the concept of SFAC and theorize on how it moderates the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution. Finally, I combine the arguments and theoretical perspectives to propose that SFAC moderates the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC.

3.1 Attributional Theory

Attributional processes are triggered by unexpected and surprising behaviors or by unexpected or negative goal-related events (Weiner, 1985). Attributional theory argues that people search for causes of such unexpected behaviors or negative events, i.e., infer causal attributions, so that they can respond in adaptive ways, as well as anticipate or influence such behaviors or events in the future (Weiner, 1995, 2000). As such, causal attributions are important determinants of one's response to the negative stimuli – in classic work that dates back seventy years, Heider (1944) noted “our reaction to a disagreeable experience ... is greatly influenced by the attribution to a source” (p. 367).

When inferring causal attributions for unexpected and surprising behaviors of others, the primary distinction that one makes is whether the cause is internal or external (Weiner, 1985). Internal (within-person) attributions refer to dispositional or behavioral characteristics (e.g., traits, effort, ability, and impulses), while external (outside the person) attributions refer to situational factors, such as physical context, other people's expectations, and cultural norms (Heider, 1958; Malle, 2004; Weiner, 1985).

3.1.1 Isomorphic Attributions for Others' Behaviors

Isomorphic attribution, as conceptualized in classic cultural assimilator research (Triandis, 1975), can be regarded as a specific form of external attribution. Isomorphic attribution is defined as the situation in which the observer O attributes the behavior of a target T to the same causes to which T attributes his own behavior (Triandis, 1975); however, the term is also commonly used to refer to an attribution that identifies cultural norms or cultural differences as the cause of an intercultural conflict (Weldon et al., 1975, Triandis, 2000). An isomorphic attribution is considered an external attribution because it refers to external causal history factors—cultural norms—to explain the behaviors of a person that one is in conflict with (Malle, 2004). External causal history attributions point to background factors that bring on a person's behaviors or an event. External causal history attributions suggests that even though a person could have acted intentionally in a certain way, there are external factors that lay in the background of, and lead up the person's reasons for acting in the way, such as upbringing and culture (Malle, 1999, 2004).

When an individual infers isomorphic attributions for the behavior of a person they are in conflict with, he/she is less likely to blame the other party for the conflict, as he/she understands that there are socio-cultural factors that led to the other party's conflicting behaviors. Hence, he/she is more motivated to respond to the conflict in ways that are acceptable to and reflect concern for the

other party (Weiner, 1995, 2006). On the other hand, if an individual infers negative internal attributions (e.g., barbaric, incompetent, thoughtless) for a conflict, this triggers negative interpersonal attitudes and increases the likelihood of hostile reactions towards the conflict parties (Triandis, 2006).

3.1.2 Isomorphic Attributions for Observed Conflict

The existing concept of isomorphic attribution was developed in the context of an individual directly involved in a conflict and inferring attributions for the *behavior* of the other party that he/she is in conflict with. In other words, the individual is inferring attributions for the *behavior* of the other party and not for the *conflict event* (given that the cause of the conflict can be person A, person B, both persons A and B, or even factors outside of persons A and B). In other words, existing work has focused on “Why is he/she behaving in this manner?” rather than “Why is there a conflict between A and B?” Therefore, extending the concept of isomorphic attribution to third-party observers of conflicts, I define isomorphic attribution for observed conflict to refer to *accurate causal attributions for the behaviors of the party/parties identified (by the observer) as the “perpetrator” (or cause) of the intercultural conflict*. In this definition, accurate causal attributions refer to the situation in which the observer attributes the behaviors of the party/parties P(s) identified as the “perpetrator(s)” of the conflict to the same causes to which P(s) attributes his/their behaviors or an attribution that identifies cultural norms or cultural differences as the cause of an intercultural conflict (Triandis, 1975; Weldon et al., 1975).

Based on prior arguments that isomorphic attribution for culturally-different other’s unexpected or surprising behaviors increases the likelihood of

intercultural adaptation (Triandis 2006), I expect isomorphic attribution for observed conflict to increase the likelihood of constructive conflict resolution. In turn, isomorphic attribution for observed conflict calls for perspective-taking accuracy. In the following sections, I expound on the relationships between perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attribution for conflict, and integrative conflict resolution in greater detail.

3.2 Perspective-taking accuracy and Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict

As described earlier, perspective-taking accuracy refers to “the degree in which the observer has a relatively accurate, comprehensive, and objective understanding and appreciation of the target’s thoughts and/or feelings and the reasons they are thinking and/or feeling that way” (Parker et al., 2008, p. 152). In this current study, I am interested in simultaneous perspective-taking of multiple (two), culturally-different targets. Hence, in this study, perspective-taking accuracy refers *to the degree to which an observer has an accurate, comprehensive, and objective understanding and appreciation of the perspectives of two culturally-different parties in an episode of conflict.*

As described earlier, isomorphic attribution for other’s behaviors occurs when an observer O attributes the behavior of a target T to the same causes to which T attributes his own behavior (Triandis, 1975). In his classic work, Heider (1958) proposed that to avoid attribution errors (i.e., attributions that are non-isomorphic with the target’s), “whether one perceives and interprets according to one’s outlook or whether one is able to assume the position of the person who is the source of action in question” (p. 121) is of prime importance. Subsequent research on theory of mind (Perner & Wimmer, 1985) similarly suggest that to accurately understand the causes of targets’ behaviors, observers need to be able to infer targets’ mental states, where mental states refer to

intentions, desires, and beliefs (Malle & Knobe, 2001; Young & Tsoi, 2013).

This is because mental states drive agentic and purposive actions (Heider, 1958). Therefore, to accurately explain the causes of targets' behaviors, observers must be able to decipher these covert mental states.

On the other hand, if observers do not understand the mental states driving targets' behaviors, they would rely on the most salient information available to infer attributions, which are typically the targets' overt behaviors (Gilbert, 1989; Gilbert & Malone, 1995). When behaviors of culturally-different others do not conform to one's accustomed manner of conduct and expectations, there is an instinctive ethnocentric bias to attribute these 'odd' behaviors to negative, uncomplimentary traits, or to adverse intentions (Triandis, 2006).

This highlights the role of perspective-taking, and perspective-taking accuracy in particular, in inferring isomorphic attributions for observed conflicts. When observers understand the perspectives of parties in a conflict, regardless of who they deem as conflict "perpetrator(s)", they are more likely to identify accurately the causes of behaviors of the party/parties whom they judge as conflict "perpetrators" (Heider, 1958).

On the other hand, when observers are not effective at perspective taking, they fall back on ethnocentric perspectives (Triandis, 1975) and rely on

their interpretations of observed overt behaviors to infer attributions for the behaviors of the conflict “perpetrator(s)” (Gilbert, 1989; Gilbert & Malone, 1995). When observers are not cognizant of the perspectives that are driving the conflict perpetrator(s)’ actions, they would rely on their interpretation of the overt actions, as interpreted through their own cultural lens, rather than on each party’s rational perspective, as the raw input from which to infer attributions (Triandis, 2006). Hence, they would likely commit the fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1977) and associate the overt actions with corresponding traits, e.g., incompetent, or with adverse intentions, e.g., refusal to be cooperative.

While there is no prior research that explicitly tests the link between perspective-taking accuracy and isomorphic attribution for conflict, studies have shown that the act or process of perspective-taking increases external attributions. Specifically, experimental studies have shown that, compared to participants who were not instructed to take perspective of a target, those who were instructed to take perspective of a target tended to make more external attributions. These external attributions are related to: a target’s need for help (Betancourt, 1990), a Black student’s difficulties (Vescio, Sechrist, & Paolucci, 2003), an out-group member’s experienced racial inequality (Todd et al., 2012), and a target’s offensive behavior (Takaku, 2001). While these studies do not provide direct evidence of a link between perspective-taking accuracy and isomorphic attribution, they do indicate a general relationship between

perspective-taking and causal attributions. Therefore, based on the above arguments and empirical research, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1: Perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC).

3.3 Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict, Selective Fixedness in Attribution for Conflict, and Integrative Conflict Resolution

3.3.1 Selective Fixedness in Attribution for Conflict

Attributions literature is replete with evidence of attributional biases that demonstrate selective sampling of social information when inferring attributions (Malle, 2008). Prevalent attributional biases include the actor-observer bias (Jones & Nisbett, 1971), the self-serving bias (Miller & Ross, 1975), the ultimate attribution error (Pettigrew, 1979; Hewstone, 1990), and cognitive miser and top-of-the-head explanations (McArthur & Post, 1977).

The actor-observer bias describes the tendency for observers to attribute the behavior of others to internal, person factors (such as disposition) but to attribute their own behavior to situation factors (Jones & Nisbett, 1971). The self-serving bias describes the tendency for people to explain their own positive and negative outcomes so as to maintain favorable self-perceptions or public impressions (Miller & Ross, 1975). The ultimate attribution error describes the tendency for people to explain out-group members' negative behaviors as flaws in their personality, and to explain out-group members' positive behaviors as a result of chance or circumstance (Pettigrew, 1979; Hewstone, 1990). The ultimate attribution error also refers to the belief that positive acts performed by in-group members are a result of personality, whereas if in-group members

behave negatively, it is the result of situation factors (Hewstone, 1990).

Cognitive miser and top-of-the-head explanations refer to the tendency for people to be cognitive misers (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) who prefer to conserve cognitive resources unless accuracy is critical. As such, they often draw quick and unsophisticated judgments that are heavily influenced by whatever causal force is the most salient (McArthur & Post, 1977).

In this study, I conceptualize another specific form of attributional bias – *selective fixedness in attribution for conflict*. While most attributional biases reflect over- or under-weighting of person or situation factors when inferring attributions for the behaviors or outcomes of a single individual, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict reflects the over-weighting of selected person(s) as the cause of a conflict that involves several persons. Specifically, I define *selective fixedness in attribution for conflict* (SFAC) as the phenomenon whereby a third-party observer focuses on selected parties when explaining the cause of a conflict that involves several parties. In the case of a conflict that involves two parties, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict refers to the third-party observer fixating on one party as the cause of the conflict. By contrast, a third-party observer does not demonstrate selective fixedness in attribution for conflict when he or she sees both parties as joint contributors to the conflict (joint causes).

While conflict researchers recognize that “it takes two to have a conflict” (Tjosvold et al., 2014, p. 549), third-party observers may focus on only one party as the cause of the conflict, despite having an accurate understanding of the perspectives of both parties. This is because even when observers accurately understand the perspectives of both parties in a conflict, it does not always mean that they will agree with how each of them think and act. For example, due to their deeply-ingrained cultural value systems or socialization experiences (e.g., in strong organizational cultures), they may still think, “yes, in his culture, they tend to see and do things this way, but in this situation, he really should have ... (done a different action instead).” In other words, they deem the behavior of one party as particularly surprising or inappropriate for that given situation and the behavior of the other party as ‘normal’, expected and appropriate for that situation. Therefore, it is possible for an observer to have high perspective-taking accuracy of both conflict parties and yet demonstrate selective fixedness in attribution for conflict.

3.3.2 The Moderating Role of Selective Fixedness in Attribution for Conflict in the Relationship between Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict and Integrative Conflict Resolution

In this study, I examine the moderating role of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) in the relationship between isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) and integrative conflict resolution. I expect no relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution when observers demonstrate selective fixedness in attribution for conflict because such selective fixedness restricts observers' attentional focus and limits the range of solutions that they consider when generating resolutions for conflicts. Attribution theorists have long argued that we 'fix' what we deem to be the causes of problems (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Heider, 1944; Joseph & Douglas, 2004). When observers focus on one party as the cause of the problem, their focus would be to 'fix' the problems associated with that party, rather than to address the concerns of both parties.

In inferring isomorphic attributions for conflict with selective fixedness, observers deem one party to have triggered the conflict through his behaviors but recognize the rationale for those behaviors, e.g., cultural norms. As the observers have identified those cultural norms as the cause of the conflict, their solution would focus on addressing this cause (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Heider, 1944; Joseph & Douglas, 2004). For example, they are likely to resolve the

situation by suggesting one-sided adaptation (to the party whose is seen as the cause of conflict). However, adapting to one party can result in psychological costs for the other party (Molinsky, 2007, 2013) and is thus not concurrently optimal for both parties, i.e., not integrative.

By contrast, I expect a positive relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution when observers attribute the conflict to joint causes, i.e., when there is no selective fixedness in their attribution for conflict. When observers infer isomorphic attributions for conflict but do not demonstrate selection fixedness in their attributions, it indicates that they understand the rational basis for each party's behaviors but do not single out one party as the sole conflict "perpetrator". Instead, they view the conflict as arising from the *divergent* perspectives of the *two* and hence, jointly-caused. Therefore, based on arguments in attributional literature, they would see the *divergent* perspectives as the cause of the conflict that needs to be fixed (Joseph & Douglas, 2004). At the same time, given that they infer isomorphic attributions for the behaviors of each party, they would be more understanding towards both parties and more motivated to generate solutions that are constructive to both parties. Moreover, since they are cognizant of each party's concerns, they are more likely to generate integrative solutions that satisfy both parties. Based on the above arguments, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 2: Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) moderates the relationship between isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) and integrative conflict resolution, such that (a) IAC has a positive relationship with integrative conflict resolution when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party (as the cause of the conflict).

3.4 The Moderated Mediation Model of Integrative Conflict Resolution

The preceding two hypotheses propose that perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) (Hypothesis 1) and that selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) moderates the relationship IAC and integrative conflict resolution, such that (a) IAC has a positive relationship with integrative conflict resolution when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party (as the cause of the conflict) (Hypothesis 2).

Taken together, these two hypotheses also suggest an indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, and moderated by SFAC. This constitutes a case of moderated mediation (Edwards & Lambert, 2007). Specifically, this is a case of second-stage moderated mediation, in which SFAC moderates the mediated relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution by exerting its moderating effect on the second-stage of the mediation, i.e., the link between IAC and integrative conflict resolution. Therefore, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3: Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) moderates the positive indirect relationship between perspective-taking

accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC), such that (a) the indirect relationship is positive and significant when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective fixedness in attribution for conflict on a single party (as the cause of the conflict).

In sum, I have proposed a moderated mediation model that incorporates three cognitive processes—perspective-taking accuracy, IAC, and SFAC—as determinants of integrative conflict resolution. In Chapters 4 and 5, I report two studies that test the model.

Chapter 4: Study 1

4.1 Overview of empirical studies

I tested my model and hypotheses in two studies. Study 1 used 408 sets of responses from a sample of 102 senior university students from 18 different nationalities attending an international organizational behavior course. In this study, I assessed the hypothesized relationships between perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC), selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC), and integrative conflict resolution via the participants' responses to four high-fidelity intercultural simulations depicting prototypical intercultural critical incidents.

In Study 2, I tested the same set of hypotheses (Hypotheses 1 to 3) and used responses from a sample of working adults. Specifically, I used 580 sets of responses from a sample of 145 employees from 37 different nationalities and their peers from an international industry organization. Participants responded to the same set of high-fidelity intercultural simulations used in Study 1. Together, the two studies aimed to test the generalizability of findings across student and working adult samples.

4.2 Study 1: Method

4.2.1 Sample and Procedure

Participants comprised 102 senior university students from 18 countries (including countries in Asia, Europe, and North America, such as China, Japan, Singapore, Austria, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, and USA) participating in an international organizational behavior course at a university in Singapore. The mean age of the participants was 22 years ($SD = 1.9$ years). Fifty-seven percent of the participants were female, and 16% of the participants spoke English as a first language. On average, participants had lived in 2 different countries ($SD = 1.03$) before attending the course.

I collected data at two points in time. At Time 1, before course commencement, participants completed an online survey assessing their demographic characteristics and individual differences. Two weeks later, at Time 2 participants responded to a series of high-fidelity simulations as part of an in-class exercise to elicit and assess their perspective-taking accuracy, attributions, and conflict resolution strategies.

I used four video vignettes from a series of high-fidelity intercultural simulations (Ang, Rockstuhl, & Ng, 2014) to elicit and assess perspective-taking accuracy, attributions, and conflict resolution strategies. High-fidelity video vignettes provide realistic portrayals of real-life situations with vivid details and richness (Poulou & Norwich, 2001; Sled, Durrheim, Kriel, Solomon, & Baxter, 2002). Compared to written vignettes, which are commonly used in attributions research, video vignettes promote a stronger sense of reality and are more concrete and unambiguous (Taggar & Neubert, 2004). Videos can capture essential features of the phenomenon such as facial expressions or body movement, and allow for direct observation of behavior. Prior studies indicate that for investigating complex behavioral processes, such as interactions in international or intercultural contexts, it is more appropriate to use high-fidelity video vignettes than written vignettes (D. C. Thomas & Meglino, 1995). Further, prior attributions research has noted similar patterns across attributions and interpersonal behavioral intent in video vignettes and attributions and interpersonal behaviors in actual interactions (e.g., Lanza, Carifio, Pattison, & Hicks, 1997; Taggar & Neubert, 2004).

The video vignettes were developed jointly by intercultural experts and professional scriptwriters and were filmed using a professional film crew and professional actors. For more information on the development and validation of these video vignettes, please refer to Ang et al. (2014).

Each video vignette depicts a conflict between two parties of different nationalities during a work interaction. The video vignettes reflect work norm conflicts arising from differences in cultural values. Specifically, the video vignettes depict cultural value differences in individualism-collectivism, power distance, high-low context communication, and uncertainty avoidance, based on prior research suggesting that these are key cultural value dimensions that give rise to difficulties in intercultural interactions (e.g., Hall, 1959; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin, Korac-Kakabadse, & Savery, 2001; Sanchez-Burks, Lee, Choi, Nisbett, Zhao, & Koo, 2003; Triandis, 1994; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). In addition to showing the interaction between the two parties, each video vignette also provides some contextual information about the task-at-hand. The four video vignettes covered a range of nationalities.

After watching each video, participants responded to open-ended questions on perspective-taking, attributions and conflict resolution. Participants were given fifteen minutes to respond to each video.

4.2.2 Measures

Dependent variable

Integrative conflict resolution. The dependent variable in this study is integrative conflict resolution, which refers to the generation of solutions that maximally meet the concerns of both parties in the intercultural conflict.

Two raters—both doctoral candidates specializing in cross-cultural management—with significant experience in intercultural work interactions and blind to the hypotheses rated all the responses based on the extent to which they provided integrative resolutions. I trained the raters, using frame-of-reference training based on procedures described by Pulakos (1984). I provided the raters with the definition of integrative conflict resolution and examples of high- and low-quality responses for each video vignette to set a common frame-of-reference (Pulakos, 1984). I discussed with the raters ratings of sample responses. The raters then practiced making ratings independently and I then gave them feedback. After that, each rater began rating actual responses. I met with them to assess inter-rater agreement and to resolve differences. The raters then proceeded to rate all the remaining responses independently.

I used ICC(2,1) to assess inter-rater reliability and agreement (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979). LeBreton and Senter (2008) suggested that ICC(2,1) values

between .70 and .85 are sufficient to justify aggregation across raters. ICC(2,1) was .89 ($p < .01$), which meets prescribed criteria to justify aggregation across raters (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Hence, I averaged the ratings for integrative conflict resolution from the two raters.

Independent variables

Perspective-taking accuracy. Perspective-taking accuracy refers to the extent to which an observer understands the situation through the viewpoint of each person in the intercultural conflict. Perspective-taking accuracy was assessed based on an open-ended question on perspective-taking. Specifically, participants were asked to take perspective of the two parties in each video vignette (Rockstuhl, 2013) and list their thoughts, feelings, and intentions.

Two raters—one post-doctoral fellow and one doctoral candidate who are both cross-cultural psychology experts—blind to the hypotheses and different from the ones who rated integrative conflict resolution, scored all the responses for the extent to which they demonstrated perspective-taking accuracy. I trained the raters by providing them with the definition of perspective-taking accuracy and a coding manual that described scale anchors with examples of responses with varying levels of perspective-taking accuracy for each video vignette. The coding manual sets a common frame-of-reference (Pulakos, 1984) and increases the objectivity of the rating process. The scale

anchors and sample responses were derived from previous studies (Ang et al., 2014). I discussed with the raters ratings of sample responses. The raters then practiced making ratings independently using sample responses and I then gave them feedback. After that, each rater began rating actual responses. I met with them to assess inter-rater agreement and to resolve differences. The raters then proceeded to rate all the remaining responses independently.

Similar to integrative conflict resolution, I assessed inter-rater reliability and agreement with ICC(2,1) (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979). ICC(2,1) was high (.92, $p < .01$), which justifies aggregation across raters. Hence, I averaged ratings of perspective-taking accuracy from the two raters.

Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC). Isomorphic attributions for conflict explain the cause of a conflict by referring to and accurately describing the mental states that underlie the conflict “perpetrator’s” behaviors.

While attributions may also be assessed via structured, close-ended measures, I used an open-ended measure as there are no validated measures to assess attributions for conflicts. Much empirical work on attributions focuses on individual performance outcomes; hence existing measures typically assess attributions for performance outcomes of a single focal person (e.g., McAuley, Duncan, & Russell, 1992; Thomson & Martinko, 2004). In prior work, attribution categories are very well-elaborated in terms of internal and external

attributions for individual performance outcomes but little has been done in terms of dyadic or interactive contexts. For areas in which causal attributions have not been previously examined, open-ended formats are recommended and called for (Eberly, Holley, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2011; Elig & Frieze, 1979).

The open-ended responses to the attribution-eliciting question were coded based on procedures adapted from Howe (1987) and The Leeds Attributional Coding System (LACS; Stratton, Munton, Hanks, Heard, & Davidson, 1988). First, each open-ended response was unitized into coding units based on procedures described by Howe (1987) to determine the number of attributions it contains. Two raters—one doctoral candidate and one research assistant, both cross-cultural psychology experts— blind to the hypotheses and different from the ones who rated integrative conflict resolution and perspective-taking accuracy, independently unitized each open-ended response. Inter-rater agreement for unitizing open-ended responses, based on percentage of agreement, was .97. There were 11 cases of disagreement, which were reconciled by review and consensus.

After establishing the coding units (of attributions), responses were rated based on the extent to which they were isomorphic. I met with the raters to discuss ratings of sample responses. The raters then practiced making ratings independently and I then gave them feedback. After that, each rater began rating actual responses. I met with them to assess inter-rater agreement and to

resolve differences. The raters then proceeded to rate all the remaining responses independently. I assessed inter-rater reliability and agreement with ICC(2,1) (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979). ICC(2,1) was high (.92, $p < .01$), which justifies aggregation across raters. Hence, I averaged ratings of isomorphic attribution for conflict from the two raters.

Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC). Attributions were also assessed on whether they selectively attribute the cause of the conflict to a single party (single-person cause) or whether they attribute the conflict to both parties (joint causes). Single-person cause attributions focus on what one party does, does not do, or is. Joint-cause attributions are those that mention what both parties do, do not do, or are (Howe, 1987). The two raters, the same ones who rated isomorphic attribution for conflict, independently rated attributions for selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (0 = no selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, joint causes; 1 = selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, single-person cause). I met with the raters to discuss ratings of sample responses. The raters then practiced making ratings independently and I then gave them feedback. After that, each rater began rating actual responses. I met with them to assess inter-rater agreement and to resolve differences. The raters then proceeded to rate all the remaining responses independently. I assessed inter-rater agreement using Cohen's kappa (Cohen, 1960). Inter-rater agreement was .91 ($p < .01$) (similar to prior studies, e.g., Howe, 1987) and is considered

good (Fleiss, 1971). There were 14 cases of disagreement that were resolved through review and consensus.

Attributions that refer to factors other than the two parties depicted in the video vignette, e.g., features of the situation, such as time and place, or other people (Eberly et al., 2011) were coded as *external attributions*. There were insufficient cases for them to be considered as a focal construct (only 10% of responses contained such attributions). Hence, I analyzed it as a control variable.

Control variables

I controlled for participant's *sex*, *country of origin*, *English is first language*, *international experience*, and *intercultural perspective-taking trait*. I controlled for *sex* (coded as 0 = male; 1 = female) as prior studies have found that females have greater perspective-taking accuracy than males (Ickes, Gesn, & Graham, 2000) and that females are more likely than males to infer external attributions (Worthington, Mobley, Franks, & Tan, 2000). I controlled for *country of origin* (coded as 0 = other; 1 = Western) as prior research suggests that Westerners have lower tendencies of inferring external attributions (Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, & Peng, 2012).

I controlled for *English is first language* (coded as 0 = English is not first language; 1 = English is first language) given that the measure of integrative conflict resolution, perspective-taking accuracy, and attributions utilized the English language in the video dialogue and in the responses to the video stimuli; hence native English speakers may have an advantage over participants who speak English as a second or third language. I controlled for *international experience* (total number of countries lived in for at least six months). Living abroad for an extended amount of time provides opportunities for close and prolonged intercultural contact in one's day-to-day life, which has been found to be associated with the increased use of external and culturally-sensitive attributions (Vollhardt, 2010). Prior research also suggests relationships between international experience and perspective-taking accuracy (Aberson & Haag, 2007).

I controlled for *intercultural perspective-taking trait*, which refers to the tendency or motivation to take perspective of culturally-different others, as prior research shows that individuals high in intercultural perspective-taking trait are more effective at intercultural perspective-taking (Rockstuhl, 2013). Prior research also suggests that individuals high in perspective-taking trait are more likely to make joint causes attributions (Howe, 1987). Intercultural perspective-taking trait was assessed with four items (Rockstuhl, 2013, adapted from Davis, 1983). Cronbach's alpha for this measure was .80.

I controlled for *social attribution style*, which refers to observers' cross-situational stability in making attributions, as prior work suggests that observers may have tendencies to make either internal or external attributions across situations, rather than base their locus of causality of attributions (internal versus external) on information and cues present in specific situations (Joseph & Douglas, 2004; Thomson & Martinko, 2004). Social attribution style was based on three items from Thomson and Martinko (2004). Internal consistency reliability for this measure was low ($\alpha = .49$). This low reliability mirrors findings in prior studies. For example, in Thomson and Martinko (2004, Study, 1), Cronbach's alpha was .53, suggesting that cross-situational consistencies for locus of causality (internal versus external) attributions may not be strong. Nonetheless, to control for possible effects of trait-like social attribution style on attributions for specific situations as depicted in the video vignettes, I retained social attribution style in the analyses.

As mentioned earlier, I also included *external attribution* in each video vignette response as a control variable as prior research has found that external attributions tend to be associated with more positive interpersonal responses (Allred, Malozzi, Matsui, & Raia, 1997; Weiner, 2006), suggesting that they could affect integrative conflict resolution responses in similar ways.

4.2.3 Preliminary Analyses

I assessed the convergent and discriminant validity of the two individual-level (Level 2) latent variables—intercultural perspective-taking trait and social attribution style—using LISREL 8.80 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006) with maximum-likelihood estimation procedures. The hypothesized two-factor model had better fit to the data ($\chi^2(13) = 28.04, p < .01$; GFI = .94, RMSEA = .09, and SRMR = .08) than the alternative one-factor model, ($\chi^2(14) = 47.66, p < .001$, GFI = .91, RMSEA = .13, SRMR = .09, $\Delta \chi^2(1df) = 19.62, p < .001$). Therefore, results indicate discriminant validity of the measures of intercultural perspective-taking trait and social attribution style. The composite reliability for intercultural perspective trait exceeded 0.70 (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$). As mentioned earlier, the composite reliability of social attribution style did not reach 0.70 (Cronbach's $\alpha = .49$). Nonetheless, to control for possible effects of trait-like social attribution style on attributions for specific situations as depicted in the video vignettes, I included social attribution style as a Level 2 in the analyses.

I also assessed the discriminant validity of variables that are derived from participants' responses to the video vignettes with confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.80 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006) with maximum-likelihood estimation procedures. The rating/coding from each rater is modelled

as an indicator of each vignette-based latent construct. Table 4-1 summarizes the results of the confirmatory factor analysis.

As Table 4-1 shows, the hypothesized five-factor model (integrative conflict resolution, isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC), selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC), external attribution, and perspective-taking accuracy) has better fit to the data ($\chi^2(25) = 40.76, p < .05$, GFI = .98, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .02) than three plausible alternative models, including (i) a three-factor model that combines IAC, SFAC, and external attribution into a single latent construct ($\Delta \chi^2[7df] = 3030.60, p < .001$), (ii) a two-factor model that combines IAC, SFAC, external attribution, and perspective-taking accuracy into a single latent construct ($\Delta \chi^2[9df] = 4951.43, p < .001$), and (iii) a single-factor model ($\Delta \chi^2[10df] = 6024.25, p < .001$). Hence, the discriminant validity of the five variables derived from responses to the video vignettes is supported.

Table 4-1

Model Comparison for Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Vignette-level (Level 1) variables (Study 1)

Model	Description	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta \chi^2$	Δdf
Model 1	Hypothesized five-factor model	40.76*	25	1.63	.98	.04	.02		
Alternative models:									
Model 2	Three-factor model combining isomorphic attribution for conflict, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, and external attribution	3071.36***	32	432.94	.67	.43	.21	3030.60***	7
Model 3	Two-factor model combining isomorphic attribution for conflict, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, external attribution, and perspective-taking accuracy	4992.19***	34	550.16	.60	.53	.25	4951.43***	9
Model 4	Single-factor model	6065.01***	35	602.43	.54	.58	.27	6024.25***	10

Notes. N (Level 1) = 408. GFI = Goodness of Fit Index. RMSEA = Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation. SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

The data set consists of 408 vignette responses nested in a multilevel structure with a combination of two random effects. Each vignette response is based on one of four videos (random effect of video at Level 1) by one participant (random effect of participant at Level 2). Hence, the vignette responses may not be independent, which would violate underlying assumptions of ordinary least squares estimation (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). To examine the structure of the data, I estimated the amount of variance in perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attribution for conflict and integrative conflict resolution predicted by variation between individuals by computing ICC(1), which represents the proportion of variance in these variables that reside between individuals. As expected, results show a significant amount of variance in perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attribution for conflict, and integrative conflict resolution between individuals. ICC(1) was .25 ($p < .001$) for perspective-taking accuracy, .30 ($p < .001$) for isomorphic attribution for conflict, and .14 ($p < .001$) for integrative conflict resolution, indicating that 25% of the variance in perspective-taking accuracy, 30% of the variance in isomorphic attribution for conflict, and 14% of the variance in integrative conflict resolution resided between individuals.

4.2.4 Statistical Approach

To model appropriately the structure of the data, I tested the hypotheses by analyzing *random coefficient models with crossed random effects*—408 vignette responses nested within 4 videos and within 102 individual participants—which would specify fixed effects for predictors, while controlling for random effects of individual videos and individual participants (Bates, 2010; Hofmann, 1997; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). I analyzed the random coefficient models with crossed random effects using version 2.0-6 of the Tests for random and fixed effects for linear mixed effect models (lmerTest) program for R (Kuznetsova, Brockhoff, & Bojesen, 2014). All predictors in the model were grand-mean centered prior to analyses (Cohen et al., 2003; Hofmann & Gavin, 1998). I computed effect sizes using overall pseudo- R^2 (Snijders & Bosker, 2012) for the models, which estimates the variance explained by predictors in the model.

In sum, vignette-level (Level 1) variables in this study include one control variable (i.e., external attribution), one independent variable (i.e., perspective-taking accuracy), one mediating variable (i.e., isomorphic attribution for conflict; IAC), one moderating variable (i.e., selective fixedness in attribution for conflict; SFAC), and one dependent variables (i.e., integrative conflict resolution). Individual-level (Level 2) variables include seven control

variables: sex, age, country of origin, English is first language, international experience, intercultural perspective-taking trait, and social attribution style.

I used a hierarchical approach for hypotheses testing. To test Hypothesis 1 (perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to IAC), I ran three models for IAC. In Model 1, I added Level 2 control variables. In Model 2, I added the Level 1 control variable. In Model 3, I added main effects for perspective-taking accuracy. To test Hypothesis 2, (SFAC moderates the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution, such that (a) IAC has a positive relationship with integrative conflict resolution when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict), I ran six models. Models 1, 2, and 3 added Level 2 control variables, Level 1 control variable, and perspective-taking accuracy respectively. Model 4 added main effects for IAC. Model 5 added main effects for SFAC, while Model 6 added the interaction of IAC and SFAC.

Hypothesis 3 proposes that SFAC moderates the positive indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, such that (a) the indirect relationship is positive and significant when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective attribution fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict. To test Hypothesis 3, I followed established procedures for analyzing

Level 1 moderated mediation within multilevel models (e.g., Bauer & Curran, 2005; Bauer, Preacher, & Gil, 2006; Preacher & Selig, 2012). Also, in line with Edwards and Lambert (2007), although I hypothesize second-stage moderation, I analyzed total effects moderation and tested Hypothesis 3 based on a model that controls for first-stage and direct effects moderation as well. I then computed conditional indirect effects for single-person cause (selective fixedness in attribution for conflict) and joint causes (no selective fixedness in attribution for conflict). To assess the magnitude of the conditional indirect effects, I used confidence intervals constructed from Monte Carlo simulation based on 1000 simulations (Preacher & Selig, 2012). Conditional indirect effects are considered significant if their 95% confidence intervals exclude zero.

4.3 Study 1: Results

4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4-2 presents the descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all vignette-level (Level 1) variables in Study 1. Table 4-3 presents the descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all individual-level (Level 2) variables in Study 1. It also presents the internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) coefficients for individual-level (Level 2) latent variables. Consistent with the hypothesized model, there are positive and significant correlations between perspective-taking accuracy and isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) ($r = .38, p < .01$), and between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution ($r = .25, p < .01$). Also of note is that although the correlation between perspective-taking accuracy and selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) is negative and significant, it is rather weak ($r = -.12, p < .05$), suggesting that observers who understand the perspectives of both parties accurately may not always attribute the conflict to joint causes. As I have argued earlier, such observers may still focus on a single party as the cause of the conflict, perhaps because they have strong views about appropriate behaviors for that particular situation.

Table 4-2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Vignette-level (Level 1) Variables (Study 1)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Level 1 control variable</i>								
1. External attribution	0.10	0.33	-					
<i>Level 1 independent variables</i>								
2. Perspective-taking accuracy	3.41	0.85	.21**	-				
3. Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC)	2.55	0.97	.10*	.38**	-			
4. Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) (0 = Joint causes; 1 = Single-person cause)	0.20	0.40	.01	-.12*	-.34**	-		
<i>Level 1 dependent variables</i>								
5. Integrative conflict resolution	2.00	0.73	.14**	.25**	.39**	-.09	-	

Notes. *N* (Level 1) = 408.* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 4-3

Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations for Individual-level (Level 2) Variables (Study 1)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Sex (0 = Male; 1 = Female)	0.58	0.49	-						
2. Age	22.00	1.87	-.15	-					
3. Country of origin (0 = Other; 1 = West)	0.57	0.50	-.24**	.20*	-				
4. English is first language (0 = No; 1 = Yes)	0.16	0.37	.14	-.30**	.04	-			
5. International experience	2.07	1.02	-.14	.46**	.48**	-.23**	-		
6. Intercultural perspective-taking trait	5.34	1.00	.04	.04	-.18*	-.05	-.01	(.80)	
7. Social attribution style	3.60	0.86	.11	-.19*	-.18*	.10	-.18*	.02	(.49)

Notes. *N* (Level 2) = 102.* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Alpha reliabilities are shown in parentheses along the diagonal.

4.3.2 Hypotheses Tests

Results of random coefficient modeling with crossed random effects for isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) and integrative conflict resolution are shown on Tables 4-4 and 4-5 respectively.

Hypothesis 1 proposes that perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to IAC. Model 3 in Table 4-4 shows the random coefficient modeling results for IAC, controlling for sex, age, country of origin, English is first language, international experience, intercultural perspective-taking trait, social attribution style, and external attribution. As Model 3 indicates, perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to IAC ($b = .37, s.e. = .05, p < .001$). Therefore, results support Hypothesis 1¹. It is also important to note that the trait measures—intercultural perspective-taking trait ($b = .00, s.e. = .06, ns$) and social attribution style ($b = -.02, s.e. = .07, ns$)—are not significantly related to IAC. I discuss the implications of these findings in the discussion section.

Hypothesis 2 proposes that selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) moderates the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict

¹ To examine the relative importance of trait and accuracy measures of perspective-taking, I conducted additional analyses to test the relative importance of perspective-taking accuracy vis-à-vis intercultural perspective-taking trait. Dominance analysis (Luo & Azen, 2013) shows that the additional contribution in explained variance of IAC by intercultural perspective-taking trait is 0% while the additional contribution of perspective-taking accuracy is 14%. This suggests that perspective-taking accuracy has a stronger relationship with IAC, compared with intercultural perspective-taking trait.

resolution, such that (a) IAC has a positive relationship with integrative conflict resolution when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party (as the cause of the conflict). Model 5 in Table 4-5 shows that the interaction between IAC and SFAC is significantly related to integrative conflict resolution ($b = -.28$, $s.e. = .11$, $p < .01$). Simple slopes analyses (Bauer & Curran, 2005) indicate a significant positive simple slope of IAC when there is joint causes attribution ($\beta = .28$, $s.e. = .04$, $p < .001$) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict ($\beta = -.01$, $s.e. = .11$, ns) (see Figure 4-1). Therefore, the significant moderation effect and the specific pattern of simple slopes support Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 proposes that SFAC moderates the positive indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, such that (a) the indirect relationship is positive and significant when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective attribution fixedness on a single party (as the cause of the conflict). Results of tests for Hypothesis 3 are shown in Table 4-6. In support of Hypothesis 3, there is a significant and positive indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC when there is joint-causes attribution (conditional indirect effect = .10, 95% CI [.06, .14]) but no indirect relationship when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict (conditional

indirect effect = .00, 95% CI [-.07, .06]), and these conditional indirect effects differ significantly (difference in conditional indirect effects = .10, 95% CI for differences [.04, .18]). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

It should also be noted that the current findings suggest that IAC partially, rather than fully, mediates the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution. Results on Table 4-5 show that perspective-taking accuracy has a positive and significant relationship with integrative conflict resolution (Model 3: $b = .18$, $s.e. = .04$, $p < .001$), which became weaker, albeit still significant (Model 4: $b = .13$, $s.e. = .04$, $p < .01$), after accounting for IAC².

² Given that perspective-taking accuracy has a direct relationship—in addition to an indirect relationship—with integrative conflict resolution, I conducted additional analyses to test the relative importance of perspective-taking accuracy vis-à-vis intercultural perspective-taking trait. Dominance analysis (Luo & Azen, 2013) shows that the additional contribution in explained variance of integrative conflict resolution associated with intercultural perspective-taking trait is 1% while the additional contribution associated with perspective-taking accuracy is 6%. This suggests that the perspective-taking accuracy has a stronger relationship with integrative conflict resolution, compared with intercultural perspective-taking trait.

Table 4-4

Random Coefficient Modeling with Crossed Random Effects - Results for Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict (IAC) (Study 1)³

Level and Variable	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 2 control variables</i>										
Sex (0 = Male; 1 = Female)	.21 (.12)	.10	.20 (.12)	.11	.17 (.11)	.13	.14 (.11)	.20	.14 (.11)	.20
Age	.04 (.04)	.27	.04 (.04)	.27	.04 (.03)	.19	.04 (.03)	.18	.04 (.03)	.19
Country of origin (0 = Other; 1 = West)	.25 (.14)	.09	.24 (.14)	.09	.24 (.13)	.08	.20 (.12)	.11	.20 (.12)	.11
English is first language (0 = No; 1 = Yes)	-.15 (.17)	.39	-.15 (.17)	.37	-.22 (.16)	.17	-.21 (.15)	.16	-.21 (.15)	.15
International experience	.07 (.07)	.35	.07 (.07)	.36	.07 (.07)	.32	.04 (.06)	.49	.04 (.06)	.50
Intercultural perspective-taking trait	.00 (.06)	.95	.01 (.06)	.93	-.01 (.06)	.87	-.02 (.05)	.73	-.02 (.05)	.74
Social attribution style	-.02 (.07)	.77	-.02 (.07)	.78	-.04 (.07)	.56	-.02 (.06)	.69	-.02 (.06)	.71
<i>Level 1 control variable</i>										
External attribution			.06 (.13)	.65	-.06 (.13)	.65	-.01 (.13)	.94	-.01 (.13)	.93

³ Results of hypothesis tests (Hypothesis 1) remain robust when Big Five personality traits (Goldberg, 1999) are included as additional control variables. The addition of Big Five personality traits increased the amount of explained variance in isomorphic attribution by 2% to 28%; however, the amount of explained variance in IAC associated with perspective-taking accuracy remained consistent at 14%.

Table 4-4 (Cont.)

Level and Variable	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 1 independent variables</i>										
Perspective-taking accuracy					.37 (.05)***	.00	.36 (.05)***	.00	.38 (.06)***	.00
Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) (0 = Joint causes; 1 = Single-person cause)							-.51 (.11)***	.00	-.52 (.11)***	.00
<i>Level 1 interaction</i>										
Perspective-taking accuracy X Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)									-.09 (.12)	.48
Overall pseudo $\sim R^2$	.05		.05		.19		.26		.26	

Notes. *N* (Level 1) = 408; *N* (Level 2) = 102.

Parameter estimates are unstandardized. Values in parentheses are standard errors.

*** *p* < .001.

Table 4-5

Random Coefficient Modeling with Crossed Random Effects - Results for Integrative Conflict Resolution (Study 1)⁴

Level and Variable	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>		<u>Model 6</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 2 control variables</i>												
Sex (0 = Male; 1 = Female)	.00 (.08)	.97	-.01 (.08)	.90	.00 (.08)	.95	-.01 (.08)	.91	.00 (.08)	.98	.04 (.08)	.58
Age	.01 (.02)	.54	.02 (.02)	.50	.02 (.02)	.32	.02 (.02)	.37	.02 (.02)	.38	.04 (.02)	.12
Country of origin (0 = Other; 1 = West)	.02 (.09)	.81	.02 (.09)	.85	.01 (.09)	.93	-.04 (.09)	.66	-.03 (.09)	.70	-.10 (.09)	.27
English is first language (0 = No; 1 = Yes)	.10 (.10)	.32	.09 (.10)	.39	.06 (.10)	.32	.08 (.10)	.43	.08 (.10)	.44	.07 (.11)	.52
International experience	.05 (.05)	.26	.05 (.04)	.29	.04 (.04)	.55	.03 (.04)	.49	.03 (.04)	.44	.03 (.04)	.54
Intercultural perspective-taking trait	-.03 (.04)	.42	-.02 (.04)	.52	-.04 (.04)	.31	-.04 (.04)	.25	-.04 (.04)	.28	-.05 (.04)	.16
Social attribution style	.09 (.04)*	.03	.09 (.04)*	.03	.07 (.07)	.08	.07 (.04)	.09	.07 (.04)	.10	.06 (.04)	.20

⁴ Results of hypothesis tests (Hypothesis 2) remain robust when Big Five personality traits are included as additional control variables. The addition of Big Five personality traits did not increase the amount of explained variance in integrative conflict resolution (total explained variance remained consistent at 21%); the amount of explained variance in integrative conflict resolution associated with perspective-taking accuracy and IAC also remained consistent at 15%.

Table 4-5 (Cont.)

	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>		<u>Model 6</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 1 control variable</i>												
External attribution			.22 (.10)*	.03	.16 (.10)	.10	.18 (.10)	.07	.17 (.10)	.08	.18 (.10)	.06
<i>Level 1 independent variables</i>												
Perspective-taking accuracy					.18 (.04)***	.00	.13 (.04)**	.00	.12 (.04)**	.00	.15 (.04)***	.00
Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC)							.21 (.04)***	.00	.22 (.04)***	.00	.27 (.04)***	.00
Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) (0 = Joint causes; 1 = Single-person cause)									.10 (.08)	.21	-.08 (.10)	.41
<i>Level 1 interaction effects</i>												
Perspective-taking accuracy X Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)											-.10 (.09)	.29
Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) X Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)											-.28 (.11)**	.01
Overall pseudo $\sim R^2$	.02		.03		.09		.18		.18		.21	

Notes. *N* (Level 1) = 408; *N* (Level 2) = 102.

Parameter estimates are unstandardized. Values in parentheses are standard errors. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 4-1

Interaction between Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict (IAC) and Selective Fixedness in Attribution for Conflict (SFAC) on Integrative Conflict Resolution (Study 1)⁵

⁵ Pattern of simple slopes remain robust when Big Five personality traits are included as additional control variables.

Table 4-6

Indirect Effects of Perspective-taking Accuracy on Integrative Conflict Resolution through Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict (IAC) for Joint Causes versus Single-person Cause (Study 1)⁶

Moderator		Conditional indirect effect	95% CI for conditional indirect effect	Difference in conditional indirect effects	95% CI for difference in conditional indirect effects
Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)	Joint causes (No selective fixedness)	.10	[.06, .14]		
	Single-person cause (Selective fixedness)	.00	[-.07, .06]	.10	[.04, .18]

⁶ Results of hypothesis tests (Hypotheses 3) remain robust when Big Five personality traits are included as additional control variables.

As indicated by pseudo- R^2 values (on Tables 4-5), overall pseudo- R^2 for integrative conflict resolution was .21. Perspective-taking accuracy and IAC increased explained variance in integrative conflict resolution by 15%. The interaction between IAC and SFAC increased explained variance in integrative conflict resolution by an additional 3%.

4.4 Study 1: Discussion

These results provide support for my hypothesized model. In line with my first hypothesis, when observers understand the perspectives of culturally-different persons in a specific episode of intercultural conflict, they are more likely to infer isomorphic attributions for the behaviors of the party whom they deem as having caused the conflict.

I also found support for my arguments regarding the moderating effects of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC). Specifically, SFAC moderates the relationship between isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) and integrative conflict resolution, such that the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution is positive and significant only when the dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes. By contrast, when observers focus on one party as the cause of a dyadic conflict, the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution is not significant. Further, SFAC moderates the indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, such that the indirect relationship is positive and significant when conflict is attributed to joint causes but not significant when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict. The null relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution when there is selective fixedness in attribution for conflict indicates the importance of accounting for this attributional bias when

we invoke isomorphic attribution as the underlying mechanism of perspective-taking accuracy for third-party observers .

These findings are encouraging as they provide initial support for my predictions that accounting for the moderating effect of SFAC will increase the precision of using isomorphic attributions to explain the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution for third-party observers of conflicts. However, it is important to conduct a replication study to strengthen confidence in the validity and generalizability of the findings (Schwab, Abrahamson, Starbuck, & Fidler, 2011; Tsang & Kwan, 1999). Therefore, I conducted a second study, Study 2, which tests the same set of hypotheses using the same methods and procedures, but in a different population, to determine the empirical generalizability (Tsang & Kwan, 1999) of findings from Study 1. The following chapter, Chapter 5, will describe Study 2.

CHAPTER 5: Study 2

Results from Study 1 showed the relationship between three cognitive processes—perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attribution for conflict, and selective fixedness in attribution for conflict—and integrative conflict resolution. Specifically, perspective-taking accuracy has a positive indirect relationship with integrative conflict resolution mediated by isomorphic attribution for conflict, but only when there is joint-causes attribution and not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of an intercultural conflict.

While these results are encouraging, they require replication given that selective fixedness in attribution for conflict is new concept in research. Replication studies are particularly important for examining phenomena for which there is little prior research and provides a more solid empirical base for new bodies of knowledge (Schwab et al., 2011; Tsang & Kwan, 1999). In this case, I am examining new phenomena (selective fixedness in attribution for conflict) and new relationships (isomorphic attribution for conflict as a mediator of perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution), which warrants empirical generalization (Schwab et al., 2011). As Rosenthal and Rosnow (1984) noted, genuine scientific knowledge depends greatly on replicability.

I also wanted to rule out the potential effect of cultural knowledge on isomorphic attributions for conflict. Individuals with greater knowledge about differences in thought-action scripts across cultures are more likely to infer isomorphic attributions – this argument underpins cultural assimilator training (Triandis, 1994). For example, if an individual knows that people with a certain profile of cultural values tend to exhibit certain behaviors in a given situation because of culturally-ingrained thought-action repertoires, they are more likely to infer isomorphic attributions, rather than negative dispositional attributions. Therefore, it is important to examine the incremental validity of perspective-taking accuracy beyond cultural knowledge by controlling for cultural knowledge.

Thus, I conducted Study 2 using a sample from a different population to provide empirical generalization for findings from Study 1 (Tsang & Kwan, 1999). I describe the methods and findings for Study 2 in the following sections.

5.1 Study 2: Method

5.1.1 Sample and Procedure

Participants comprised 145 employees of 37 different nationalities (including countries from the Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, North America, and South America, such as Australia, Singapore, France, Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Yemen, Canada, Argentina, and Brazil) from five offices (Geneva, Madrid, Miami, Montreal, and Singapore) of an international industry organization. The present study (Study 2) was part of a larger study on intercultural competencies within this organization. The mean age of the participants is 38.92 years ($SD = 7.45$ years). Forty-four percent of the participants are female. Seventy-eight percent of the participants are of Western origin and 22% are of non-Western origin. On average, participants have 10.63 years of international experience ($SD = 9.79$ years).

Study 2 tests the same set of hypotheses (Hypotheses 1 to 3) as Study 1. Data collection procedures were similar to those used in Study 1, except that I collected an additional measure of cultural knowledge and that participants' English language proficiency was assessed via peer ratings. Two peers provided ratings of each participant's English language proficiency. At Time 1, participants completed an online survey to report on their intercultural experience and intercultural perspective-taking trait. They also completed a

quiz that assessed their cultural knowledge in the online survey. At the same time, their peers completed another online survey to rate the participants' level of English language proficiency. Two weeks later, at Time 2, participants responded to a series of high-fidelity intercultural simulations to assess their perspective-taking accuracy, attributions, and conflict resolution strategies.

The materials used were similar to those utilized in Study 1, i.e., participants responded to four high-fidelity simulations depicting work-related cultural value conflicts between two parties of different nationalities.

5.1.2 Measures

Dependent variables

Integrative conflict resolution. Similar to Study 1, participants were asked to provide conflict resolution strategies. Two raters, the same ones who rated integrative conflict resolution in Study 1 and blind to the hypotheses, rated all the responses based the extent to which they provided integrative resolutions. Inter-rater reliability and agreement ($ICC(2,1) = .85, p < .01$) met prescribed criteria to justify aggregation across raters (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Hence, I averaged the ratings for integrative conflict resolution from the two raters.

Independent variables

Perspective-taking accuracy. Similar to Study 1, perspective-taking accuracy was assessed based on an open-ended question on perspective-taking. Two raters, the same ones who rated perspective-taking accuracy in Study 1, rated every response.

Inter-rater reliability and agreement ($ICC(2,1) = .85, p < .01$) met prescribed criteria to justify aggregation across raters. Hence, I averaged ratings of perspective-taking accuracy from the two raters.

Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC). Similar to Study 1, attributions for the conflict in each video vignette were assessed with an open-ended question. Each open-ended response was first unitized into coding units to determine the number of attributions it contains. Two raters, the same ones who rated isomorphic attribution in Study 1 and blind to the hypotheses, independently unitized each open-ended response. Inter-rater agreement for unitizing open-ended responses, based on percentage of agreement, was .98. There were 14 cases of disagreement, which were reconciled by review and consensus.

After establishing the coding units (of attributions), attributions for the conflict were assessed based on the extent to which they were isomorphic. Inter-rater reliability and agreement ($ICC(2,1) = .90, p < .01$) met prescribed criteria to justify aggregation across raters (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Hence, I averaged ratings of isomorphic attributions from the two raters.

Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC). Attributions were also assessed on whether they focused on a single party (single-person cause/selective fixedness in attribution for conflict) or mention both parties as the cause of the conflict (joint causes/no selective fixedness in attribution for conflict). Attributions that focus on a single party are those that focus on what one party does, does not do, or is. Joint causes attributions are those that mention what both parties do, do not do, or are (Howe, 1987). The two raters

who rated isomorphic attribution for conflict independently coded the attributions for selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (0 = no selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, joint causes; 1 = selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, single-person cause) Inter-rater agreement as assessed by Cohen's kappa (Cohen, 1960) was .92 ($p < .01$), which is similar to prior studies (e.g., Howe, 1987) and is considered good (Fleiss, 1971). There were 18 cases of disagreement that were resolved through review and consensus.

Similar to Study 1, attributions that refer to factors other than the two parties depicted in the video vignette, e.g., features of the situation, such as time and place, or other people (Eberly et al., 2011) were coded as *external attributions*. There were insufficient cases for them to be considered as a focal construct (only 9% of responses contained such attributions) and were hence analyzed as a control variable.

Control variables

Similar to Study 1, I controlled for participant's *sex, age, country of origin, international experience, English language proficiency, intercultural perspective-taking trait, and cultural knowledge* (Level 2 control variables), as well as *external attribution* (Level 1 control variable). However, unlike Study 1, I did not include social attribution style as the scale demonstrated poor reliabilities and did not increase explained variance for IAC in Study 1. Data for

sex was obtained from organizational records and was as coded 0 = male and 1 = female. Data for *country of origin* was also obtained from organizational records and was based on the listed nationality of each participant. It was coded as 0 = not of Western origin and 1 = of Western origin. Western country of origin included countries in North America and Europe.

International experience was measured by the total number of years the participant had spent outside his or her country of origin for work or education. *English language proficiency* was assessed based on peer ratings of three items (“I can easily understand this person’s written English”; “I can easily understand this person’s ideas in his/her written English”; and “I can easily understand this person’s reasoning in his/her written English”) ($\alpha = .96$). Each participant was rated by 2 peers. The inter-rater agreement for peer ratings was .93 ($r_{wg(j)}$), which meets the recommended minimum criteria of .70 to justify aggregation (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Hence, I averaged peer ratings of English language proficiency. *Intercultural perspective-taking trait* was assessed using the same four items as Study 1 ($\alpha = .79$). *Cultural knowledge* was assessed using a quiz consisting of multiple-choice questions. Given that the video vignettes depicted cultural value differences in individualism-collectivism, power distance, high-low context communication, and uncertainty avoidance, the questions tested participants on their knowledge of norms associated with each of these cultural value dimensions ($\alpha = .32$).

Similar to Study 1, I also included *external attribution* in each video vignette response as a control variable as prior research has found that external attributions tend to be associated with more positive interpersonal responses (Allred et al., 1997; Weiner, 2006), suggesting that they could affect integrative conflict resolution responses in similar ways.

5.1.3 Preliminary Analyses

I assessed the convergent and discriminant validity of the three individual-level (Level 2) latent variables—English language proficiency, intercultural perspective-taking trait, and cultural knowledge—using LISREL 8.80 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006) with maximum-likelihood estimation procedures. The hypothesized three-factor model had better fit to the data ($\chi^2(51) = 50.86$, *ns*; GFI = .95, RMSEA = .00, and SRMR = .05) than three plausible alternative models, including (i) a two-factor model that combined English language proficiency with intercultural perspective-taking trait ($\chi^2(53) = 69.79$, *ns*, GFI = .93, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .06, $\Delta \chi^2[2df] = 18.93$, $p < .001$), (ii) a two-factor model that combined English language proficiency and cultural knowledge ($\chi^2(53) = 236.20$, $p < .001$, GFI = .78, RMSEA = .14, SRMR = .14, $\Delta \chi^2[2df] = 185.34$, $p < .001$), and (iii) a single-factor model, ($\chi^2(54) = 253.31$, $p < .001$, GFI = .77, RMSEA = .15, SRMR = .14, $\Delta \chi^2[3df] = 202.45$, $p < .001$).

The composite reliability for cultural knowledge was below 0.70 ($\alpha = .32$). This low internal consistency is likely due to the inherent limitation of the multiple-choice quiz format – the effect of chance factors whereby participants identify correct answers by sheer guessing (Krumm, Lievens, Hüffmeier, & Lipnevich, 2015; Murphy & Davidshofer, 2005). However, composite reliabilities for the other two individual-level constructs—English language

proficiency and intercultural perspective-taking trait—exceeded 0.70 (for English language proficiency, $\alpha = .96$; for intercultural perspective-taking trait, $\alpha = .79$). Overall, results indicated convergent and discriminant validity of the measures of English language proficiency, intercultural perspective-taking trait, and cultural knowledge.

I also assessed the discriminant validity of the four vignette-level (Level 1) variables that were derived from participants' responses to the video vignettes with confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.80 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006) with maximum-likelihood estimation procedures. The rating/coding from each rater is modelled as an indicator of each vignette-based latent construct. Table 5-1 summarizes the results of the confirmatory factor analysis.

As Table 5-1 shows, the hypothesized five-factor model (integrative conflict resolution, isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC), selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC), external attribution, and perspective-taking accuracy) has good fit to the data ($\chi^2(25) = 46.20, p < .01$, GFI = .99, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .01) and has better fit than three plausible alternative models, including (i) a three-factor model that combines IAC, SFAC, and external attribution into a single latent construct ($\Delta\chi^2[7df] = 518.11, p < .01$), (ii) a two-factor model that combines IAC, SFAC, external attribution, and perspective-taking accuracy into a single latent construct ($\Delta\chi^2[9df] = 34.68, p < .01$), (iii) a

single-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2[10df] = 1676.31, p < .01$). Hence, the discriminant validity of the give vignette-based variables is supported.

Table 5-1

Model Comparison for Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Vignette-level (Level 1) variables (Study 2)

Model	Description	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf
Model 1	Hypothesized five-factor model	46.20**	25	1.85	.99	.04	.01		
Alternative models:									
Model 2	Three-factor model combining isomorphic attribution for conflict, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, and external attribution	3799.13***	32	536.13	.72	.42	.18	3752.93***	7
Model 3	Two-factor model combining isomorphic attribution for conflict, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, external attribution, and perspective-taking accuracy as one construct	7316.64***	34	807.83	.55	.57	.27	7270.44***	9
Model 4	Single-factor model	5633.35***	35	558.72	.59	.49	.23	5587.15***	10

Notes. N (Level 1) = 580. GFI = Goodness of Fit Index. RMSEA = Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation. SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

The data set consists of 580 vignette responses nested in a multilevel structure with a combination of two random effects. Each vignette response is based on one of four videos (random effect of video) by one participant (random effect of participant). Hence, the vignette responses may not be independent, which would violate underlying assumptions of ordinary least squares estimation (Cohen et al., 2003). To examine the structure of the data, I estimated the amount of variance in perspective-taking accuracy, IAC, and integrative conflict resolution predicted by variation between individuals by computing ICC(1), which represents the proportion of variance in these variables that reside between individuals. As expected, results show a significant amount of variance in perspective-taking accuracy, IAC, and integrative conflict resolution between individuals. ICC(1) was .18 ($p < .001$) for perspective-taking accuracy, .22 ($p < .001$) for IAC, and .14 ($p < .001$) for integrative conflict resolution, indicating that 18% of the variance in perspective-taking accuracy, 22% of the variance in IAC, and 14% of the variance in integrative conflict resolution resided between individuals.

5.1.4 Statistical Approach

To model appropriately the structure of the data, I tested the hypotheses by analyzing *random coefficient models with crossed random effects*—580 vignette responses nested within 4 videos and within 102 individual participants—which would specify fixed effects for predictors, while controlling for random effects of individual videos and individual participants (Bates, 2010; Hofmann, 1997; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). I analyzed the random coefficient models with crossed random effects using version 2.0-6 of the Tests for random and fixed effects for linear mixed effect models (lmerTest) program for R (Kuznetsova et al., 2014). All predictors in the model were grand-mean centered prior to analyses (Cohen et al., 2003; Hofmann & Gavin, 1998). I computed effect sizes using overall pseudo- R^2 (Snijders & Bosker, 2012) for the models, which estimates the variance explained by predictors in the model.

In sum, vignette-level (Level 1) variables in this study include one control variable (i.e., external attribution), one independent variable (i.e., perspective-taking accuracy), one mediating variable (i.e., isomorphic attribution for conflict; IAC), one moderating variable (i.e., selective fixedness in attribution for conflict; SFAC), and one dependent variable (i.e., integrative conflict resolution). Individual-level (Level 2) variables include seven control variables: sex, age, country of origin, English language proficiency,

international experience, intercultural perspective-taking trait, and cultural knowledge.

I used a hierarchical approach for hypotheses testing. To test Hypothesis 1 (perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to IAC), I ran three models for IAC. In Model 1, I added Level 2 control variables. In Model 2, I added the Level 1 control variable. In Model 3, I added main effects for perspective-taking accuracy. To test Hypothesis 2, (SFAC moderates the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution, such that (a) IAC has a positive relationship with integrative conflict resolution when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict), I ran six models. Models 1, 2, and 3 added Level 2 control variables, Level 1 control variable, and perspective-taking accuracy respectively. Model 4 added main effects for IAC. Model 5 added main effects for SFAC, while Model 6 added the interaction of IAC and SFAC.

Hypothesis 3 proposes that SFAC moderates the positive indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, such that (a) the indirect relationship is positive and significant when dyadic conflict is attributed to joint causes (b) but not when there is selective attribution fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict. To test Hypothesis 3, I followed established procedures for analyzing

Level 1 moderated mediation within multilevel models (e.g., Bauer & Curran, 2005; Bauer et al., 2006; Preacher & Selig, 2012). Also, in line with Edwards and Lambert (2007), although I hypothesize second-stage moderation, I analyzed total effects moderation and tested Hypothesis 3 based on a model that controls for first-stage and direct effects moderation as well. I then computed conditional indirect effects for single-person cause (selective fixedness in attribution for conflict) and joint causes (no selective fixedness in attribution for conflict). To assess the magnitude of the conditional indirect effects, I used confidence intervals constructed from Monte Carlo simulation based on 1000 simulations (Preacher & Selig, 2012). Conditional indirect effects are considered significant if their 95% confidence intervals exclude zero.

5.2 Study 1: Results

5.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 5-2 presents the descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all vignette-level (Level 1) variables in Study 1. Table 5-3 presents the descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all individual-level (Level 2) variables in Study 2. It also presents the internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) coefficients for individual-level (Level 2) latent variables. Consistent with the hypothesized model, there are positive and significant correlations between perspective-taking accuracy and isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) ($r = .41, p < .01$), and between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution ($r = .28, p < .01$). Similar to Study 1, Study 2 shows a weak correlation between perspective-taking accuracy and selective fixedness in attribution for conflict ($r = -.10, ns$), consistent with my arguments that individuals high perspective-taking accuracy may still focus on a single party as the cause of a dyadic conflict.

Table 5-2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Vignette-level (Level 1) Variables (Study 2)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Level 1 control variable</i>							
1. External attribution	0.09	0.28	-				
<i>Level 1 independent variables</i>							
2. Perspective-taking accuracy	2.12	1.00	.26**	-			
3. Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC)	2.59	1.04	.19**	.41**	-		
4. Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) (0 = Joint causes; 1 = Single-person cause)	0.35	0.48	-.10*	-.15**	-.43**	-	
<i>Level 1 dependent variables</i>							
5. Integrative conflict resolution	2.07	0.91	.11*	.28**	.44**	-.22**	-

Notes. N (Level 1) = 580.* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 5-3

Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations for Individual-level (Level 2) Variables (Study 2)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Sex (0 = Male; 1 = Female)	0.44	0.50	-						
2. Age	38.92	7.45	-.06	-					
3. Country of origin (0 = Other; 1 = West)	0.78	0.42	-.05	.02	-				
4. English language proficiency	6.22	0.68	.10	.19**	.19**	-			
5. International experience	10.63	9.79	-.24**	.11	.06	.01	-		
6. Intercultural perspective-taking trait	5.98	0.68	.10	.07	-.02	-.03	.03	(.80)	
7. Cultural knowledge	2.32	1.14	.03	.07	.18*	.07	.03	.13	(.32)

Notes. N (Level 2) = 145.

Alpha reliabilities are shown in parentheses along the diagonal.

** $p < .01$.

5.2.2 Hypotheses Tests

Results of random coefficient modeling with crossed random effects for isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) and integrative conflict resolution are shown on Tables 5-4 and 5-5 respectively.

Hypothesis 1 proposes that perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to IAC. Model 3 in Table 5-4 shows the random coefficient modeling results for IAC, controlling for sex, age, country of origin, English language proficiency, international experience, intercultural perspective-taking trait, cultural knowledge, and external attribution. As Model 3 indicates, perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to IAC ($b = .36$, $s.e. = .04$, $p < .001$). Therefore, results support Hypothesis 1⁷.

In addition, similar to Study 1, the trait measure of perspective taking—intercultural perspective-taking trait—is not significantly related to isomorphic attribution ($b = .05$, $s.e. = .08$, ns). I discuss the implications of this finding in the discussion section.

⁷ To examine the relative importance of trait and accuracy measures of perspective-taking, I conducted additional analyses to test the relative importance of perspective-taking accuracy vis-à-vis intercultural perspective-taking trait. Dominance analysis (Luo & Azen, 2013) shows that the additional contribution in explained variance of IAC by intercultural perspective-taking trait is 0% while the additional contribution of perspective-taking accuracy is 13%. This suggests that the perspective-taking accuracy has a stronger relationship with IAC, compared to intercultural perspective-taking trait.

Table 5-4 also shows that when perspective-taking accuracy is not included in the equation, cultural knowledge is significantly related to IAC (Model 1: $b = .11$, $s.e. = .05$, $p < .05$). However, when perspective-taking accuracy is included, cultural knowledge is no longer significantly related to IAC (Model 3: $b = .08$, $s.e. = .04$, ns). This indicates the significant incremental validity of perspective-taking accuracy beyond cultural knowledge and provides additional support for the link between perspective-taking accuracy and IAC (i.e., Hypothesis 1).

Hypothesis 2 proposes that selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) moderates the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution, such that (a) IAC has a positive relationship with integrative conflict resolution when there is joint-causes attribution (b) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of a conflict. Model 6 in Table 5-5 shows that the interaction between IAC and SFAC is significantly related to integrative conflict resolution ($b = -.21$, $s.e. = .08$, $p < .001$). Simple slopes analyses (Bauer & Curran, 2005) indicate that IAC is positively related to integrative conflict resolution when there is joint-causes attribution ($\beta = .33$, $s.e. = .05$, $p < .001$) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict ($b = .11$, $s.e. = .10$, ns) (see Figure 5-1). Therefore, the significant moderation effect and the specific pattern of simple slopes support Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 proposes that SFAC moderates the indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, such that (a) the indirect relationship is positive and significant when there is joint-causes attribution (b) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of a conflict. Results of tests for Hypothesis 3 are shown on Table 5-6. In support of Hypothesis 3, perspective-taking accuracy has a significant and positive indirect relationship with integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC when there is joint-causes attribution (conditional indirect effect = .12, 95% CI [.08, .16]) but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict (conditional indirect effect = .03, 95% CI [-.00, .07]), and these conditional indirect relationships differ significantly (difference in conditional indirect effects = .09, 95% CI for differences [.03, .14]). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

Similar to Study 1, the current findings suggest that IAC partially, rather than fully, mediates the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution. Results shown in Table 5-5 indicate that perspective-taking accuracy has a positive and significant relationship with integrative conflict resolution (Model 3: $b = .19$, $s.e. = .03$, $p < .001$), which

became weaker, albeit still significant (Model 4: $b = .09$, $s.e. = .04$, $p < .05$), after accounting for IAC⁸.

⁸ Given that perspective-taking accuracy also has a direct relationship with integrative conflict resolution, I conducted additional analyses to test the relative importance of accuracy (perspective-taking accuracy) versus trait (intercultural perspective-taking trait) measures of perspective-taking. Dominance analysis (Luo & Azen, 2013) shows that the additional contribution in explained variance of integrative conflict resolution by perspective-taking accuracy is 5% while the additional contribution of intercultural perspective-taking trait is 0%. This suggests that the perspective-taking accuracy has a stronger relationship with integrative conflict resolution, compared to intercultural perspective-taking trait.

Table 5-4

Random Coefficient Modeling with Crossed Random Effects - Results for Isomorphic Attribution (IAC) (Study 2)⁹

Level and Variable	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 2 control variables</i>										
Sex (0 = Male; 1 = Female)	-.08 (.11)	.43	-.11 (.10)	.30	-.14 (.09)	.15	-.05 (.09)	.53	-.05 (.09)	.52
Age	-.01 (.01)	.07	-.01 (.01)	.07	-.01 (.01)	.13	-.01 (.01)	.11	-.01 (.06)	.12
Country of origin (0 = Other; 1 = West)	.12 (.13)	.33	.13 (.12)	.29	.12 (.11)	.28	.14 (.10)	.16	.15 (.10)	.15
English language proficiency	-.03 (.08)	.67	-.04 (.08)	.64	-.05 (.07)	.46	.02 (.06)	.73	.02 (.06)	.73
International experience	.00 (.01)	.61	.00 (.01)	.78	.00 (.00)	.98	.00 (.00)	.99	.03 (.00)	.99
Intercultural perspective-taking trait	.05 (.08)	.48	.05 (.07)	.49	.06 (.07)	.36	.06 (.06)	.36	.06 (.06)	.35
Cultural knowledge	.11 (.05)*	.02	.09 (.05)*	.04	.08 (.04)	.06	.07 (.04)	.06	.07 (.04)	.07
<i>Level 1 control variable</i>										
External attribution			.75 (.15)***	.00	.43 (.15)**	.00	.38 (.13)**	.00	.36 (.13)**	.01

⁹ Results of hypothesis tests (Hypotheses 1) remain robust when Big Five personality traits are included as additional control variables. The addition of Big Five personality traits increased the total amount of explained variance in IAC by 1% to 35%, and the amount of explained variance in IAC associated with perspective-taking accuracy increased by 1% to 14%.

Table 5-4 (Cont.)

	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 1 independent variable</i>										
Perspective-taking accuracy					.36 (.04)***	.00	.31 (.04)***	.00	.34 (.04)***	.00
Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) (0 = Joint causes; 1 = Single-person cause)							-.80 (.08)***	.00	-.81 (.08)***	.00
<i>Level 1 interaction effects</i>										
Perspective-taking accuracy X Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)									-.10 (.08)	.20
Overall pseudo $\sim R^2$	.03		.07		.20		.33		.34	

Notes. *N* (Level 1) = 580; *N* (Level 2) = 145.

Parameter estimates are unstandardized. Values in parentheses are standard errors. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table 5-5

Random Coefficient Modeling with Crossed Random Effects - Results for Integrative Conflict Resolution (Study 2)¹⁰

Level and Variable	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>		<u>Model 6</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 2 control variables</i>												
Sex (0 = Male; 1 = Female)	-.06 (.08)	.45	-.09 (.08)	.29	-.10 (.08)	.20	-.06 (.07)	.41	-.05 (.07)	.49	-.05 (.07)	.46
Age	.00 (.01)	.54	.00 (.01)	.53	.00 (.01)	.76	.00 (.00)	.82	.00 (.00)	.84	.00 (.00)	.82
Country of origin (0 = Other; 1 = West)	.09 (.10)	.35	.10 (.10)	.30	.10 (.09)	.29	.06 (.09)	.46	.07 (.09)	.41	.07 (.09)	.40
English language proficiency	.05 (.06)	.61	.05 (.06)	.41	.04 (.06)	.47	.06 (.05)	.31	.06 (.05)	.23	.06 (.05)	.28
International experience	.00 (.00)	.40	.00 (.00)	.43	.00 (.00)	.30	.00 (.00)	.27	.00 (.00)	.26	.00 (.00)	.25
Intercultural perspective-taking trait	.14 (.06)*	.02	.14 (.06)*	.02	.14 (.05)*	.01	.12 (.05)*	.02	.13 (.05)*	.02	.12 (.05)*	.02
Cultural knowledge	.05 (.04)	.18	.04 (.04)	.33	.03 (.03)	.41	.01 (.03)	.86	.01 (.03)	.83	.01 (.03)	.85
<i>Level 1 control variable</i>												
External attribution			.66 (.13)***	.00	.49 (.13)***	.00	.37 (.12)**	.00	.37 (.12)**	.00	.35 (.12)**	.01

¹⁰ Results of hypothesis tests (Hypothesis 2) remain robust when Big Five personality traits are included as additional control variables. The addition of Big Five personality traits increased the amount of explained variance in integrative conflict resolution by 3% to 24%; the amount of explained variance in integrative conflict resolution associated with perspective-taking accuracy and IAC increased slightly from 17% to 18%. However, the results of tests of Hypothesis 2 remain robust.

Table 5-5 (Cont.)

	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>		<u>Model 4</u>		<u>Model 5</u>		<u>Model 6</u>	
	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>	Parameter estimate	<i>p</i>
<i>Level 1 independent variables</i>												
Perspective-taking accuracy					.19 (.03)***	.00	.09 (.04)*	.01	.09 (.04)*	.01	.07 (.04)	.08
Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC)							.27 (.03)***	.00	.25 (.04)***	.00	.32 (.05)***	.00
Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) (0 = Joint causes; 1 = Single- person cause)									-.12 (.08)	.11	-.19 (.08)*	.02
<i>Level 1 interaction effects</i>												
Perspective-taking accuracy X Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)											.03 (.08)	.73
Isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) X Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)											-.21 (.08)***	.01
Overall pseudo $\sim R^2$	.02		.03		.08		.20		.20		.21	

Notes. *N* (Level 1) = 580; *N* (Level 2) = 145.

Parameter estimates are unstandardized. Values in parentheses are standard errors. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 5-1

Interaction between Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict (IAC) and Selective Fixedness in Attribution for Conflict (SFAC) on Integrative Conflict Resolution (Study 2)¹¹

¹¹ Pattern of simple slopes remain robust when Big Five personality traits are included as additional control variables.

Table 5-6

Indirect Effects of Perspective-taking Accuracy on Integrative Conflict Resolution through Isomorphic Attribution for Conflict (IAC) for Joint Causes versus Single-person Cause (Study 2)¹²

Moderator		Conditional indirect effect	95% CI for conditional indirect effect	Difference in conditional indirect effects	95% CI for difference in conditional indirect effects
Selective fixedness in attribution for conflict	Joint causes (No selective fixedness)	.12	[.08, .16]		
	Single-person cause (Selective fixedness)	.03	[-.00, .07]	.09	[.03, .14]

¹² Results of hypothesis tests (Hypothesis 3) remain robust when Big Five personality traits are included as additional control variables.

As indicated by pseudo- R^2 values (on Tables 5-5), overall pseudo- R^2 for integrative conflict resolution was .21. Perspective-taking accuracy and IAC increased explained variance in integrative conflict resolution by 17%. The interaction between IAC and SFAC for conflict increased explained variance in integrative conflict resolution by an additional 1%.

5.3 Study 2: Discussion

These results generally replicated the findings of Study 1. Specifically, perspective-taking accuracy is positively related to isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC). In turn, IAC is positively related to integrative conflict resolution and this relationship is moderated by selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC), such that there is a positive relationship only in the absence of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (i.e., when conflict is attributed to joint causes).

That Study 2 has a higher proportion of responses with selective fixedness in attribution for conflict than Study 1 is also an interesting finding (Study 1: 20%; Study 2: 35%). Recall that Study 1 was conducted using a sample of university seniors, while Study 2 was conducted using a sample of employees from an international industry organization. The university seniors in Study 1 had just embarked on a new school term and probably had a high level of available cognitive resources. By contrast, the employees in Study 2 worked under constant time pressure in a results-oriented environment and may have had less cognitive resources available as they were viewing the video vignettes, due to preoccupation with work demands. With less available cognitive resources, they might have been more prone to selective sampling of social information when inferring causal attributions (McArthur & Post, 1977; Roßnagel, 2000). Another possible explanation is that the working sample may

have been socialized in strong organizational cultures with tight work norms, such that they have strong views about what are considered “appropriate” behaviors for particular work situations. Hence their bias when inferring attributions for conflicts. Therefore, as I discuss later in the Limitations section, a fruitful avenue of future research would be to identify antecedents of SFAC.

Lastly, similar to Study 1, Study 2 found that perspective-taking accuracy has a conditional indirect relationship with integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, such that the indirect relationship is positive and significant when the conflict is attributed to joint causes (i.e., no selective fixedness) but is not significant when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the dyadic conflict. Together, the findings from the two studies support a more nuanced view of the effects of perspective-taking accuracy and isomorphic attributions in a context where one has to take perspective of multiple targets simultaneously. In the next chapter, I discuss implications of these findings.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Main Findings

First, I found support for the hypothesis that perspective-taking accuracy has a positive relationship with isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC). In other words, when observers have a more accurate understanding of the perspectives of parties in a conflict, they attribute the behaviors of the party/parties whom they deem as the conflict “perpetrator(s)” to these perspectives, instead of erroneously attributing the cause of the conflict perpetrator(s)’ behaviors to negative personal characteristics or to inimical intentions.

Related to the first finding, I also found that the trait measure perspective taking—intercultural perspective-taking trait—is not significantly related to IAC. Additional dominance analysis comparing the relative importance of intercultural perspective-taking trait and perspective-taking accuracy for explaining variance in IAC also shows that the accuracy measure of perspective-taking has a stronger relationship with IAC than the trait measure. This suggests the conceptual distinctiveness of the trait and accuracy measures of perspective taking and that one’s innate motivation for or habit of taking perspective of others does not necessarily translate to an accurate reading of their mental states, especially in intercultural contexts.

Also related to the first finding, I found that the trait measure of attribution—social attribution style—is not related to IAC. One possible reason for the non-significant relationship is the poor reliability of the social attribution style measure ($\alpha = .49$), which measures an individual's tendency to infer internal versus external attributions across situations. Consistent with an earlier study (Thomson & Martinko, 2004: $\alpha = .53$), Study 1 shows that individuals appear not to have trait-like or dominant tendencies for locus of causality (internal versus external) of attributions. Rather, there is significant cross-situation variance in individual's locus of causality of attributions. Hence, the low reliability of the social attribution style measure could have attenuated its relationship with IAC. This suggests the importance of using isomorphic or accuracy measures of attributions, rather than trait measures, when predicting situation-specific outcomes.

Second, I found support for the hypothesis that selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) moderates the relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution, such that the relationship is positive when the conflict is attributed to joint causes but not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict. In other words, when third-party observers deem a conflict as jointly-caused by both parties and are able to infer isomorphic attributions for each party's behaviors, they are more likely to resolve the conflict in a way that is constructive and optimal for both parties. By contrast, when observers focus on one party as the cause of the conflict, the

relationship between isomorphic attribution and integrative conflict resolution is not significant. Results also suggest that individuals who can accurately assess the perspectives of both conflict parties do not automatically attribute the conflict to joint causes; they may still focus on one party as the cause of the conflict.

This finding points to a more nuanced view of the role of isomorphic attributions on integrative conflict resolution and suggests that to generate solutions that are optimal for both parties in a dyadic conflict, it is not helpful for observers to perceive one party as ‘acting appropriately’ and the other party as ‘acting inappropriately’, even if they do understand that the ‘inappropriate’ actions have a rational basis. Instead, observers should perceive the conflict as arising from a *divergence* in beliefs and preferences, with neither party being ‘right’ nor ‘wrong’. This may require self-regulation and deliberate cognitive effort, especially if the observer identifies with one party’s beliefs and preferences more than the other.

Finally, I found a conditional indirect relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, such that there is a positive indirect relationship when a conflict is attributed to joint causes, but no indirect relationship when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict. In sum, I found support for the moderated mediation model of integrative conflict resolution that I have advanced in this

dissertation. This is one of the first few studies to integrate mediators *and* moderators of perspective-taking and answers calls for more complex and sophisticated theorizing of perspective-taking (Parker et al., 2008; Todd & Galinsky, 2014).

6.2 Theoretical Contributions and Implications

This study makes several theoretical contributions to research in perspective-taking. First, this study adds to the small body of empirical research that investigates the effect of perspective-taking on conflict resolution. Although it is extensively theorized that perspective-taking is important for constructive conflict resolution, there is surprisingly limited systematic empirical research to validate this theoretical proposition. In addition, while conceptual research suggests that it is the *accuracy* of perspective-taking that has a positive impact on conflict resolution (Parker et al., 2008; Tjosvold et al., 2014), most prior empirical research examined the effects of perspective-taking *trait* (e.g., Franzoi et al., 1985; O'Connell Corcoran & Mallinckrodt, 2000; Rizkalla et al., 2008) or *active* perspective-taking (e.g., Howe, 1987; Leith & Baumeister, 1998), rather than perspective-taking accuracy.

In this study, I controlled for the effects of perspective-taking trait (by collecting self-reported measures) and found that it was the accuracy aspect of perspective taking, rather than the trait aspect, that has a stronger relationship with integrative conflict resolution. Therefore, this study provides much-needed empirical support to the largely taken-for-granted proposition that perspective-taking accuracy enhances integrative conflict resolution. This is one of the few studies to investigate the relationship between perspective-taking and conflict resolution in a way that closely aligns with theoretical arguments, as well as to

compare the effects of different aspects of perspective-taking. Most importantly, the findings indicate that for greater theoretical precision, future research on perspective-taking should distinguish carefully between the trait and accuracy conceptualizations of perspective taking.

As a second contribution to perspective-taking research, this study tested and found support for isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) as a mediator in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution (although this mediated relationship is conditional, as I shall explain later). Just as there is limited empirical research examining relationships between perspective-taking and conflict resolution, there is even more limited empirical research to investigate its underlying processes. At the same time, cross-cultural attributional training, which is a key component of cross-cultural training programs, is based on the proposition that perspective-taking accuracy leads to isomorphic attributions, which in turn leads to more constructive intercultural conflict management (Triandis, 1994). Yet, virtually no empirical research has explicitly demonstrated linkages between perspective-taking, attributions, and conflict resolution, whether in mono- or inter-cultural contexts. Therefore, this study not only illuminates an underlying process of the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution, it also provides much-needed empirical support for a widely accepted but as yet un-validated cross-cultural training practice.

This study also makes a significant contribution to attributions research. I advanced the concept of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC) as an attributional bias that refers to the fixedness on selected parties when inferring the cause of a conflict. While most attributional biases reflect over- or under-weighting of person or situation factors when inferring attributions for the behaviors or outcomes of a single individual, SFAC reflects the over-weighting of selected person(s) as the cause of a conflict that involves several persons. More importantly, I demonstrated the importance of accounting for SFAC when using attribution explanations for perspective-taking accuracy. As I had theorized, results from this study show that accounting for SFAC reveals a more nuanced relationship between IAC and integrative conflict resolution, as IAC is positively related to integrative conflict resolution only when there is no selective fixedness in attribution for conflict. In the current study, I examined selective fixedness in attribution for conflicts that involve two parties. Moving forward, future research can extend the concept of SFAC to conflicts involving three or more parties, to test the generalizability of this study's findings.

Finally, by focusing on observers' solutions to workplace conflict, this study also makes a unique contribution to conflict resolution research. Prior research on observer reactions to workplace conflict have focused on the detrimental consequences of ambient conflict, such as poorer work attitudes (e.g., Sheppard & Aquino, 2013), lower performance (e.g., Chua, 2013), and perceptions of negative personal and organizational implications (e.g., Sheppard

& Aquino, 2013), and not on how observers can contribute to conflict resolution. The present focus on observers' conflict resolution strategies extends prior empirical research—which have focused on the negative spillover effects of conflict on uninvolved observers—to advance the alternative view that observers can play active roles in conflict resolution, and not merely react passively to and suffer the detrimental impact of ambient conflict.

6.3 Practical Implications

The findings from this study have several implications for human resource practices. The findings show that people generate more integrative solutions for resolving a conflict when they understand the perspectives of the parties in conflict, when they infer isomorphic attributions for the cause of the conflict, and when they do not focus on selected persons as the cause of the conflict. As such, these results highlight potential benefits of training interventions that focus on developing individuals' perspective-taking accuracy and their ability to infer isomorphic attributions, and on reducing selective fixedness in attribution for conflict.

To develop perspective-taking accuracy, organizations can offer experiential learning methods such as team interaction training (Marks, Zaccaro, & Mathieu, 2000) or cross-training (Marks, Sabella, Burke, & Zaccaro, 2002), as perspective-taking accuracy accrues from familiarity with and knowledge of targets (Parker et al., 2008). To increase the ability to make isomorphic attributions, organizations can develop culture assimilators, or adapt from existing ones (e.g., Cushner & Brislin, 1996). To reduce selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, organizations can offer mindfulness training (e.g., Trungpa, 1975). Mindfulness refers to the process of "bringing one's complete attention to the present experience on a moment-to-moment basis" (Marlatt & Kristeller, 1999, p. 68) and "paying attention in a particular

way, on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). Mindfulness training trains one to be fully conscious of one’s cognitive and affective experiences and can enhance one’s self-awareness of selective attention biases when processing social stimuli (Jha, Krompinger, & Baime, 2007). Thus, with heightened self-awareness of selective fixedness biases, one would be in a better position to regulate one’s attention focus.

In light of the pervasiveness of intercultural conflicts in culturally-diverse workplaces and prior research that demonstrate negative spillover effects of ambient conflict (Chua, 2013), this study also suggests the value of training that develops an active problem-solving mindset when observing workplace conflict. For example, leaders of multicultural teams should be sensitized to potential intercultural conflicts and integrative conflict resolution strategies so that they can mitigate potential negative spillover consequences on uninvolved others when some of their team members are in conflict.

6.4 Limitations

Despite the consistent results across two samples, this study has limitations that provide rich avenues for future research.

First, the moderated mediation model that I have advanced would not apply to conflicts where integrative conflict resolutions are not possible, i.e., conflicts that are win-lose scenarios. Relatedly, the model is also more applicable to conflicts where a long-term relationship between the two parties is expected, such that an integrative conflict resolution would be most beneficial in terms of maintaining goodwill for future interactions. Therefore, to further refine our knowledge on the effects of perspective-taking and attributions on conflict resolution, future research can explore the effects of perspective-taking accuracy and attributions on conflict resolution decisions in conflict situations where integrative conflict resolutions are not possible or where conflict parties are only engaged in one-time interactions.

Second, measures of core constructs were collected from the same source and at the same time. Specifically, measures of perspective-taking accuracy, attributions, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict, and conflict resolution strategies were all based on the participants' responses to high-fidelity simulations of intercultural conflicts and were thus collected at the same time. Given that the factors affecting integrative resolution of intercultural

conflicts is under-examined, such a design allows us to understand the complex cognitive processes underlying conflict resolution decisions in a more comprehensive and richer way. However, such a design precludes causal inferences. Hence, the current findings should be interpreted as correlations, rather than causal relationships, between perspective-taking, attributions and conflict resolution. Future research based on random assignment experiments can help to establish causal links between perspective-taking accuracy, isomorphic attribution for conflict, and integrative conflict resolution, and further validate the current research model.

Lastly, the current studies do not measure actual conflict resolution behaviors. Instead, they measure conflict resolution strategies, or decisions. Yet the ability to generate integrative conflict resolution strategies is a precondition to actually resolving conflicts in an integrative manner. Therefore, it is possible that effects of perspective-taking accuracy on actual conflict resolution behaviors are weaker than what is suggested by relationships between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution (strategies) found in the current studies. However, prior attributions research has noted similar patterns across attributions and interpersonal behavioral intent in video vignettes and attributions and interpersonal behaviors in actual interactions (e.g., Lanza et al., 1997; Taggar & Neubert, 2004). Nonetheless, future research can further validate the current research model by examining actual conflict resolution behaviors.

6.5 Future Research

In addition to the possible future research described above, the proposed moderated mediation model can be further extended in several ways.

First, in this dissertation, I introduced the concept of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict and examined it in the context of a dyadic intercultural conflict. However, the phenomenon of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict can certainly apply to conflicts that involve more than two parties. Given that the present studies have established evidence for selective fixedness in attribution for conflict in a two-party context, future research can extend to contexts with three or more parties in order to test the generalizability of the current findings.

Second, the research model will have even greater practical relevance if it incorporated antecedents of selective fixedness in attribution for conflict. Therefore, future research can focus on identifying factors that affect selective fixedness. One possible antecedent is cognitive load, given that prior research has found that cognitive load increases attributional biases (e.g., Biernat, Kobrynowicz, & Weber, 2003; Gilbert, 1989). Another possible antecedent is whether individuals have strong beliefs regarding specific work norms.

Third, while I had focused on selective fixedness of attributions, selective fixedness can apply to perspective-taking as well. For example, a participant may focus on the perspective of only one party because he/she identifies more closely with that party (Parker et al., 2008) than with the other party. In this dissertation, I had explicitly asked participants to take perspective of both parties, so that I can address the question: If observers can effectively take perspective of both parties in a given conflict situation, what is their pattern of attributions and conflict resolution? Nonetheless, notwithstanding this explicit instruction, it is still possible that some participants have greater motivation and capabilities to take perspective of one party than the other. Therefore, future research can examine a more complex model in which selective fixedness may start from perspective taking. This calls for a different research design, in which participants are not explicitly prompted to take perspective of both parties.

In addition, creativity literature also provides a basis for additional avenues of future research. Creativity research suggests that solving challenging and complex problems such as intercultural conflicts requires creativity (Mumford & Gustafson, 1988, 2007). Therefore, future research can look to creativity research for additional antecedents of integrative conflict resolution in intercultural contexts. For example, task creativity research suggests numerous cognitive (e.g., crystallized knowledge), conative (e.g., creative self-efficacy, proactive personality, intrinsic motivation), affective (e.g., positive affect), and

contextual factors (e.g., leader and co-worker behaviors, goals, social networks, and autonomy) that interact in different ways to affect task creativity (Zhou & Hoever, 2014; Zhou & Shalley, 2011). Similarly, integrative conflict resolution in intercultural contexts may be affected by a complex combination of person and environment factors. Thus, future research can draw on empirical research on task creativity to identify and test additional antecedents of integrative conflict resolution.

Relatedly, some stage theories of creativity suggest creative thinking requires an incubation period where one suspends conscious thought on the problem (e.g., Wallas, 1926). Experimental studies by Dijksterhuis and Meurs (2006) showed support for this. In a series of experiments, research participants were asked to generate items according to one of three experimental conditions: 1) generate items immediately after receiving instructions, 2) generate items immediately after a few minutes of conscious thought, and 3) generate items after a few minutes of distraction during which time unconscious thought is assumed to take place. Findings indicated that participants in the unconscious thought conditions generated more creative responses than participants in the other two conditions. The current study did not provide a 'pure' incubation period. In the current study, participants were asked to generate resolutions for intercultural conflict after responding to open-ended questions on perspective-taking and attributions based on the depicted intercultural conflict; all responses had to be completed in fifteen minutes. Future research could introduce

experimental conditions that include an incubation period, in which participants perform tasks or respond to questions completely unrelated to the intercultural conflict, to assess if introducing an incubation period yields more integrative resolutions for intercultural conflicts.

Another future research direction is to develop and validate *creativity templates* for integrative conflict resolution. Creativity templates are facilitative tools for systematic creative idea generation based on predefined inventive routes (Goldenberg, Nir, & Maoz, 2006). The predefined inventive routes are derived from patterns or formulas discerned from prior successful ideas (Altschuller, 1985, 1986). Creativity templates have been successfully applied to negotiation (Goldenberg et al., 2006), technological innovations (Maimon & Horowitz, 1999), new product idea generation (Goldenberg, Mazursky, & Solomon, 1999a), and advertising (Goldenberg, Mazursky, & Solomon, 1999b). For example, Goldenberg et al. (2006) developed and validated four creative templates for negotiation - the attribute dependency template, the multiplication template, the replacement template, and the displacement template. Each of these creative templates provides specific guidelines to channel thinking in negotiation situations in a way that increases the chances of integrative outcomes. As negotiation and conflict situations share many commonalities, future research can draw on creative templates for negotiation (Goldenberg et al., 2006) to develop creative templates for integrative conflict resolution.

6.6 Conclusion

This study advances research on perspective-taking in three important ways. First, it demonstrates relationships between perspective-taking accuracy (vis-à-vis perspective-taking trait) and conflict resolution. Second, it examines isomorphic attribution for conflict as the mediator of the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution. Third, it explores the complexities of taking perspective of multiple targets simultaneously.

To advance research in these important ways, I developed and tested a moderated mediation model of integrative conflict resolution in the context of an intercultural conflict between two parties. I also conceptualized a new form of attributional bias—selective fixedness in attribution for conflict (SFAC)—that refers to fixedness on selected parties when explaining the cause of a conflict that involves several parties. In the case of a conflict between two parties, selective fixedness in attribution for conflict refers to the fixedness on one party as the cause of the conflict. The model proposes isomorphic attribution for conflict (IAC) as the mediator and SFAC as the moderator in the relationship between perspective-taking accuracy and integrative conflict resolution.

I tested the moderated mediation model of integrative conflict resolution using responses to high-fidelity intercultural simulations provided by two multisource, multinational samples (international students and working adults). Across both samples, I consistently found that perspective-taking accuracy has a positive indirect relationship with integrative conflict resolution mediated by IAC, but this relationship holds only when dyadic conflicts are attributed to joint causes and not when there is selective fixedness on a single party as the cause of the conflict. I encourage further research into additional antecedents of integrative conflict resolution, so that individuals and organizations can manage work relationships, especially intercultural ones, more effectively.

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