Chapter 13
Constructive Conflict Management in Organizations: Taking Stock and Looking Forward

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Conflict management research recognizes that conflicts in organizations between employers and employees are inevitable, and can take a constructive or destructive course. The benefits of conflict are much more likely to arise when conflicts are discussed openly, skillfully promoting new ideas and generating creative insights and agreements (Coleman et al. 2014; De Dreu and Gelfand 2008; Euwema et al. 2015; Tjosvold et al. 2014).

Whether the participants in a conflict have a cooperative orientation or a competitive one is decisive in determining its course and outcomes (Deutsch 2014). The positive characteristics of cooperative relations have been introduced in various chapters of this handbook (see Tjosvold, Wan & Tang, Chap. 4 and Jordaan & Cillie, Chap. 9 in this volume). Effective communication, use of reasoning strategies, sense of basic similarity in beliefs and values, and the willingness to enhance the other's power, are all characteristic of cooperative relations. Competitive dynamics in industrial relations are reflected in asymmetric communication, use of coercive tactics, critical rejection of ideas, and seeking to enhance own power. As for the effects on the outcomes, it has been stated also in this volume (see Fells & Prowse, in Chap. 5 and Nauta, Van de Ven & Strating in Chap. 7 in this volume) that a cooperative-constructive process of conflict resolution leads to beneficial outcomes such as mutual benefits and satisfaction, strengthening relationships between managers and

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employees, positive psychological effects in both parties, and so on, while a competitive-destructive process leads to material losses and dissatisfaction, worsening relations between parties, and negative psychological effects for at least one party – the loser of a win-lose contest (Deutsch 2014).

We have to notice also, that a cooperative approach in industrial relations does not exclude competitive conflict behaviors. The review by Garcia, Pender, and Elgoibar in this handbook shows clearly that in many cases a combination of cooperative and competititive behaviors contributes to effective outcomes for both parties, and certainly for employees and their representatives. This is in line with the theory of conglomerate conflict behavior (Munduate et al. 1999). Such competitive behavior is related to balancing power, and gaining influence (Emans et al. 2003; Munduate and Gravenhorst 2003), however should be preferably framed within cooperative relations between employers and employees. This is related to tactics as putting or even forcing to have issues on the agenda (Van de Vliert et al. 1995), and normative forcing (Euwema and Van Emmerik 2007).

Before further exploring the development of such cooperative and trusting relations, we have to recognize that cooperative relations between employers and employees, and particularly the collectives of employees, is essentially absent in many organizations around the world. Too often organizations minimize the influence of employees through individual contracting and limiting their participation in organizational decision making. Exploitation of workers and neglecting their rights to unionize and negotiate collectively, express clearly a contrasting view on industrial relations, that is, fundamentally a model of conflict and competition between employers and employees. Usually, this is related to strong power imbalances, with most power on the side of employers. Defining employment relations as essentially cooperative and of a positive interdependence, as is the premise of this book, therefore is not at all to be taken for granted. However, much research demonstrates the benefits of such a cooperative approach, for all stakeholders, including sustainability, profit and growth for organizations. Cooperation and trust flourish best under conditions of power balance and empowerment for the relative weaker party (Bollen and Euwema 2013a, b; 2014). The different contributions in this volume demonstrate the value of cooperation over competition. Employers, politicians and policy makers, as well as employees should therefore aim to create conditions which foster such cooperative relations at organizational level. Essentially, this is a value based choice of organizing.

Cooperative Outcome Interdependence and Constructive Conflict Management: The Intervening Role of Trust

Current conflict management research addresses the central intellectual and practical challenge of how and when managers and employees can discuss and deal with their conflicts for the benefit of the organizations and for both parties themselves (Tjosvold et al. 2014). While scholars have long ago recognized that perceived

cooperative outcome interdependence may set the stages for constructive and open-minded exchange of labor conflict relevant information (Deutsch 1973; Tjosvold 1998), it is unclear whether cooperative outcome interdependence per se is a necessary and sufficient condition for constructive conflict resolution (De Dreu 2007). Research shows that trust perceptions play a crucial mediating role in the development of cooperation between parties (Ferrin et al. 2008). Trust encourages the initiation of mutual cooperative relationships (Deutsch 1958), results in greater relationship commitment, and satisfaction (Campbell et al. 2010), contributes to making relationship conflicts constructive (Lau and Cobb 2010), while broken trust between parties can be a demise of social relations (Lewicki and Bunker 1996; Lewicki, Elgoibar & Euwema, Chap. 6 in this volume). Ferrin et al. (2008) observed that cooperation is reciprocated only because of its effect on perceived trustworthiness where people expect support and believe that they have a relationship with the other party where they can discuss issues and rely upon each other. In their meta-analytic review, Balliet and Van Lange (2013, p. 1090) made the following observation: "Many theories of trust emphasize that trust is most relevant to behavior in situations involving conflicts of interest (…) According to an interdependence perspective, trust becomes an especially strong determinant of behavior in situations involving larger, compared to smaller, conflicting interests".

A common assumption of the works included in this volume is that trust and cooperation are fundamental elements of contemporary industrial relations. These two concepts are involved in the relationship between employers and employees, because they arise from the strong belief that employers and employees are essentially and positively dependent on each other, their dialogue is both key and necessary and should be constructive. The assumption shared by the authors of this volume has a long tradition in the analysis of organizations and labor relations. Cooperation is considered crucial for the survival of organizations (e.g. Barnard 1938), and trust has been cited as one of the variables that has the strongest influence on interpersonal and group relations (e.g., Golembiewski and McConkie 1975). Researchers have long recognized that trust and cooperation may influence each other. Therefore, the general assumption of the volume is supported by the theory and practice of employment relations (see conflict management interventions cases developed by Nauta et al., Chap. 7 in this volume). As Tjosvold et al. point out (2014, p. 548) "the idea that conflict can be productive, as opposed to destructive at all times, is much more than a belief or an ideology. Research using a variety of theoretical frameworks has demonstrated that conflict can actually affect whether managers and employees accomplish a wide range of important tasks (…). These studies also indicate that the benefits of conflict are much more likely to arise when conflicts are discussed openly and skillfully".

In this concluding chapter we want to elaborate two 'grant' theories, to analyze employers' and employees' perception of positive interdependence and the effectiveness of their relationship: the *theory of Cooperation and Competition* (Deutsch 1973; 2014; Johnson and Johnson 1989; Tjosvold 1998) and the *Social Exchange Theory (SET)* (Blau 1964; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). The first one is more related to the topic of conflict management by promoting constructive controversy

between partners (Johnson et al. 2014) and the later with the distinction between social and economic exchanges in the employment relations, and the expectation of reciprocity as an important social exchange outcome (Coyle-Shapiro and Conway 2004). As a follow-up to the review carried out by Garcia et al. in this volume, in this chapter we analyze the theoretical frameworks that sustain the guiding thread of the book (SET and Constructive Controversy) and then address some implications for future research to foster the construction of trust and constructive conflict management in organizations.

Analytic Frameworks to Build Trust and Manage Conflict Constructively in Organizations

Several chapters in this volume (Gartzia, Amillano, & Baniandres, Chap. 12; Elgoibar, Munduate & Euwema, Chap. 1; Guest, Chap. 8; Martinez-Lucio, Chap. 2) have analyzed the changes that have taken place in the industrial relations system, highlighting the transition from a more collectivistic system – with its roots embedded in the beginnings of the industrial era of the twentieth century- towards an individualized model of labor relations, more in line with the knowledge era and the competitive context of the twenty-first century. Martinez Lucio in Chap. 2 includes a detailed analysis of the evolution from the post-war period where industrial relations were mainly concerned with the development of stable and formalized collective institutions and procedures with the involvement of trade unions and management representatives in collective bargaining and joint consultation (Dunlop 1993; Kochan et al. 1986), towards new relationship forms between employees and employers, in which a decline in the collective orientation, alternative forms of employees' representation, and promotion of individualized employment relations is clear (Allvin 2004; Guest 2004). As stated by Guest already in 2004 (p. 542), "Traditional systems of industrial relations have begun to break down, more notably in countries such as the US and the UK where there has been only a weak legal framework to support it, but also, to varying degrees, in European countries where there has been stronger institutional support. This breakdown is reflected most noticeably in the decline of trade union membership and in some of the collective values associated with it". This trend has clearly continued over the past 10 years (see Guest, Chap. 8 in this volume). These new relationship models have developed around the changes occurred in the nature of work, such as the growing knowledge-intensive business services, or technological advances, as well as changes occurred in the context of work, such as the growing proportion of women in the workforce, or the requirements of flexibility in diverse areas as work-life balance (Guest, Chap. 8 as well as Gartzia et al., Chap. 12 in this volume). The new forms of relationships have been operationalized under structural changes in labor relations, with new forms of employment contracts, the decline of collective relations in favor of more individualistic frameworks of employment, or the decline in trade union

membership together with new union strategies to respond proactively to it. Martinez Lucio, in this volume, for example, points out the emergency of trade unions renewal due to the difficulties that employee representatives have to cope with the complexity of the labor environment demands. The changes can also be perceived in the evolution of the processes of management of employees, that have shifted from a model based on distrust, control and systematic antagonism -more in line with the Taylorist principles of production and management-, towards a model of social dialogue, with flexibility, based on mutual trust and commitment among the parties involved – more in line with the alchemy of flexibility and trust (Benson and Lawler 2003; Kożusznik & Polak, Chap. 10 in this volume; Stone and Arthurs 2013). Old certainties, assumptions and values have been re-examined and a watershed moment arrived reconsidering the rights and responsibilities of being a manager, being an employee and being a competitive organization at the same time (Budd 2004; Gartzia et al., Chap. 12 in this volume). An essential challenge here, is to find a new balance between the traditional forms of indirect representation of employees (through elected and protected representatives), and direct forms or representation and participation of employees. This is one of the cornerstones of the Tree of Trust, introduced by Lewicki, Elgoibar and Euwema (Chap. 6 in this volume).

Although collective bargaining and its different institutional and legal frameworks in different countries seem to be accepted as the essence of employment relations (see Cruz Villalon, Chap. 11 in this volume), the changes that have taken place in the industrial and employment structures in advanced industrial economies are so substantial (Guest 2004; Allvin 2004) that they affect the base of the industrial relations model and they require a new framework that will help us to analyze it. A good starting point to understand the core social processes involved in the changing relationship between employers and employees in organizations is the conceptual paradigm of social exchange theory (SET) (e.g. Blau 1964) based on interdependent interactions. This multidisciplinary paradigm emphasizes that multiple kinds of resources can be exchanged following certain rules and that interdependent transactions have the potential to generate high quality relationships. The quality of social exchange relationships is a general background embraced by contemporary scholars for analyzing the new industrial relations field (e.g. Coyle-Shapiro and Conway 2004; Shore and Barksdale 1998; Tsui et al. 1997) and is a relevant contribution towards understanding this field of study.

The Rise of Social Exchange Theorizing in Employment Relations

A central theme in the exchange literature is that employees and employers may develop exchanges for social and for economic reasons (see Garcia, Pender & Elgoibar, Chap. 3 and Guest, Chap. 8 in this volume). It is common to view exchange in traditional industrial relations in terms of economic value. That is, economic

outcomes are those that address financial needs and tend to be tangible such as wages or working conditions. However, exchanges are also shown to have symbolic relevance and exchange can stand for something beyond plain material needs. Social outcomes address parties' social and esteem needs and tend to be symbolic, such as justice or organizational support. For example, Organ and Knovsky (1989) state that organizational fairness fosters a sense of trust on the part of the employees, involving a mutual provision of diffuse, vaguely defined obligations delivered over an open-ended time frame. Moreover, social outcomes send the message that the other party is valued and/or treated with dignity (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005; Shore and Barksdale 2006). The incorporation of the social exchange dimension to the strict economic exchange provides us with a good analytic framework for understanding industrial relations. In line with this, the rules of exchange with the principle of reciprocity that we will analyze later will serve as guidelines to analyze exchange processes involved in industrial relations.

According to Blau (1964), social exchanges entail unspecified obligations so that when one partner does another party a favor, there is an expectation of some return. For example, it is expected that being fair to worker representatives should foster reciprocated actions on their part. If the favor will be returned and in what form, is often unclear. As a result, social exchange relationships depend on trust (Shore et al. 2006). As Emerson (1981, p. 35) points out, "obligations, trust, interpersonal attachment, or commitment to specific exchange partners are not incorporated into economic exchange relationships". Rather, economic transactions between parties are not long term or ongoing, but represent concrete, financially oriented, and more tangible aspects of the exchange relationships.

Shore et al. (2006, p.839), have analyzed the major distinctions between social and economic exchange relationships that have been emphasized in the literature and that provide us guidance to reflect the changes occurring in the industrial relations field. First, *trust is viewed as the basis for the relationship underlying social exchanges*. In the same way, the revision of trust and conflict management in industrial relations in this volume by Garcia et al. (Chap. 3), has concluded that "organizations investing in a trusting relation with employee representatives, empowering these representatives in decision making (…) will have more constructive conflict management, reach more integrative and innovative agreements, which results in long term effectiveness of the organization". Second, *investment in the relationship is critical to social exchange, but is not an aspect of economic exchange*. As can be concluded from the previous statement, investment and trust are central and intertwined issues in industrial relations. As stated in exchange relationships (Blau 1964; Cotterell et al. 1992; Shore et al. 2006), managers and employee representatives invest in the other party with some inherent risk that the investment will not be repaid, requiring trust. Third, *social exchanges require a long-term orientation, since the exchange is ongoing and based on feelings of obligation.* In the same conclusion mentioned before the long-term nature of the implications of industrial relations is highlighted. And fourth*, the emphasis on financial (e.g., pay and benefits) as compared to social (e.g., being taken care of by the organization) aspects of exchange*. Both aspects of exchange are consubstantial to industrial relations but

precisely these relational aspects – operationalized through indicators such as trust, commitment, empowerment and organizational support (Munduate et al. 2012) – are in the recent times increasing in their relevance.

The SET literature in several fields (Guest, Chap. 8 in this volume; 2004; Rousseau 1995) considers that the inclusion of the social dimension does not imply the exclusion of the economic dimension, rather that social and economic exchanges may be operating concurrently. In the context of labor relations, some studies (Tsui et al. 1997; Shore et al. 1998, 2006) developed diverse categorical variables to represent exchange strategies between parties, based on social or economic exchange. Tsui et al. (1997) analyzed inducements offered by employers and contributions expected of employees, and Shore et al. (1998) analyzed different types of perceived obligations between parties. These studies confirm that there are two relatively independent aspects of exchange in employment relations -economic and social exchange- and that parties engage in both exchanges concurrently. Furthermore, their results also suggest that when the organizational contribution is perceived to be low (e.g., in terms of organizational commitment), employees may infer that the economic aspects of the employment relations are the primary basis of exchange with the organization. On the other hand, research suggests that when employees perceive that the organization is emphasizing social exchange aspects of the relationship (e.g., perceived organizational support), they are more likely to engage in behavior that is supportive of organizational goals (Eisenberger et al. 1990; Wayne et al. 1997). This process is described by Kelly and Thibaut (1978) as a *recurring pattern of exchange sequences;* organizational investment associated with strong social exchange relationships create feelings of obligation in employees, stimulating them to reciprocate through behaviors that exceed minimal requirements for employment and are beneficial to the organization, such as higher levels of job performance and organizational citizenship behaviors (Eisenberger et al. 1990; Shore, et al. 2006; Wayne et al. 2002). While the majority of these studies address a more individualized level in the context of employment relations, the importance of organizational actions for influencing the nature of industrial relations can be induced from them as well.

Social Exchange Outcomes: Reciprocal Behaviors

The dynamic of contingent transactions to the actions of the other party discussed above refer us to another close concept in SET: reciprocal behaviors in situations of interdependence in the outcomes. It is precisely this interdependence that needs mutual and complementary arrangements, which requires certain *'rules of exchange'* so that the relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments. These rules are defined as normative definitions of the situation that emerge between exchange participants (Emerson 1976). An important characteristic of reciprocal exchange is that it usually does not include explicit bargaining or binding agreements. Rather, as one party's actions are contingent on the other's,

interdependence reduces risk and encourages cooperation (Molm et al. 2007). "The process begins when at least one participant makes a 'move' and if the other reciprocates, new rounds of exchange initiate. Once the process is in motion, each sequence can create a self-reinforcing cycle. The sequence is likely to be continuous, making it difficult to organize into discrete steps" (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005, p. 876). Therefore, this process which is developed in an implicit way and that is guided by the expectation of reciprocity, is different from the negotiation of exchange rules that the parties develop in order to reach beneficial agreements for both parties. These negotiated agreements tend to be more explicit, more related to specific aspects, generally with a more bounded temporal dimension and more linked to contractual aspects, such salary or working condition negotiations. More importantly, the obligations and remunerations are detailed, whereas reciprocity tends to be more prolonged in time and is not linked to legal or contractual pressures (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). In this sense, negotiated exchanges are often part of economic transactions while reciprocal exchanges are part of social relations.

As stated before, economic and social exchange can occur simultaneously and the parties can develop reciprocal and negotiated exchanges together (Lawler 2001), while the consequences can be different for the relations between the parties (Lau and Cobb 2010; Molm 1997; Molm et al., 2007). For example, Molm's research (1997, 2007) found that reciprocal exchange produces stronger trust, feelings of commitment to the partner and the relationship, and greater social union perception than negotiated exchange, and that behaviors signaling the partner's trustworthiness have greater impact on trust in reciprocal exchange. Under these conditions, the risk and uncertainty of exchange provide the opportunity for partners to demonstrate their trustworthiness.

The norm of reciprocity is well suited for exploring why beneficial actions on the part of the organizations might result in beneficial actions on the part of employees and employee representatives promoting the self-reinforcing cycle. For example, Ferrin et al. (2008) have used such a norm as a basis for analyzing how trust perceptions become reciprocated, how mutual trust and mutual cooperation develop over time, and how early levels of perceived trustworthiness and cooperation influence subsequent development of mutual trust and cooperation. Due to its prevalence, Ferrin et al. (2008) state that the norm of reciprocity functions not only to stabilize social relationships, but also as a "starting mechanism" to initiate social interactions in interdependent exchanges (Cialdini 2001; Gouldner 1960). Because the norm of reciprocity is so omnipresent and powerful, and because reciprocal exchange does not include explicit bargaining, a party of a reciprocal exchange who is inclined toward initiating cooperation can do so with the confidence that the counterpart will feel obligated to respond cooperatively (Ferrin, et al. 2008; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). The implications of reciprocity are also relevant for the trustworthiness-cooperation spiral, in such that Ferrin et al. (2008) found that cooperation is reciprocated only because of its effect on perceived trustworthiness, and perceived trustworthiness is reciprocated only because of its effect on cooperation. Munduate et al. (2012), and Euwema et al. (2015) apply these principles to organizational relations, showing that investing in relationship building by employers as well as by

employee representatives, starts a cycle of trust development, which often lasts and grows over years. In their different studies this is clearly demonstrated by both parties, stating that they have their formal negotiation tables, however also have many moments of informal exchanges, sharing information, empowering publicly each other position, and consulting each other in delicate matters. Within such social exchange relations, 'hard' negotiations are easier to manage and result in more integrative agreements.

Constructively Managing Conflicts in Organizations: Constructive Controversy

A different natural framework to analyze industrial relations in organizations is provided by the *theory of Cooperation and Competition* (Deutsch 1973; 2014; Johnson and Johnson 1989; Tjosvold 1998). However, as mentioned by Garcia et al. in their revision in Chap. 3 in this volume, it has been hardly used in the industrial relations domain. The theory is based on the perceived goal interdependence between parties, so that the extent to which protagonists believe that their goals are cooperative (positively related) or competitive (negatively related) affects their interaction and thus their outcomes. Different implications of the theory related to how to promote a cooperative orientation and the benefits of constructive controversy are an important issue for effective conflict management in organizations.

In the recent review of Tjosvold et al. (2014) and in their contributions to this volume, they explore the intervention strategies in organizations for effective conflict management. The authors define conflicts as incompatible activities rather than incompatible goals and state that incompatible activities occur in both cooperative and competitive contexts. A core element in their proposal of constructive conflict management is that protagonists' beliefs about whether their goals are cooperative or competitive affect their interaction and thus their outcomes (Tjosvold et al. 2014; Tjosvold et al., Chap. 4 in this volume). In a similar way, Deutsch points out (2014, p. 15): "The most important implication of cooperation-competition is that a cooperative or win-win orientation to resolving a conflict enormously facilitate constructive resolution, while a competitive or win-lose orientation hinders it". An additional implication of the Cooperation and Competition theory is that it is easier to develop and maintain a win-win attitude when there is social support that comes from coworkers, employers, or the culture of the organization (Deutsch 2014). Therefore, constructive conflict management occurs when people conclude that the benefits from the conflict outweigh the incurred costs, and these benefits are easier to arise when conflicts are discussed openly and skillfully. Tjosvold and colleagues (2014) state that having mutual benefit relationships is the key underlying condition that helps managers and employees discuss their diverse ideas open-mindedly.

The strategy of *constructive controversy* is defined as the open-minded discussion of conflicting perspectives for mutual benefit, which occurs when protagonists express their opposing ideas that obstruct resolving the issues, at least temporarily

(Tjosvold et al. 2014). Indicators of constructive controversy include listening carefully to each other's opinion, trying to understand each other's concerns, or using opposing views to understand the problem better. These skills are considered vitally important for developing and implementing cooperative problem-solving processes successfully an effectively. Deutsch (2014) states that there haven't been many systematic discussions on the skills involved in constructive solutions to conflict, and he proposes three main types of skills for constructive conflict management: *rapport building skills* involved in establishing effective relationships between parties – such as breaking the ice; reducing fears, tensions and suspicion; overcoming resistance to negotiation and fostering realistic hope and optimism – ; *cooperative conflict resolution* skills concerned with developing and maintaining a cooperative conflict resolution process among the parties involved – such as identifying the type of conflict in which the parties are involved; reframing the issues so that conflict is perceived as a mutual problem to be resolved cooperatively; active listening and responsive communication; distinguishing between being involved in establishing effective relationships between parties and positions; encouraging, supporting and enhancing the other; being alert to cultural differences and the possibilities of misunderstanding arising from them; and controlling anger, among others-; and *group process and decision-making* skills involved in developing a creative and productive process – such as monitoring progress toward group goals; eliciting, clarifying, coordinating, summarizing, integrating the contributions of the various participants; and maintaining group cohesion among others.

Tjosvold et al. (2014) and Johnson et al. (2014) also elaborate on the skills that managers and employees have been encouraged to develop in order to facilitate open-minded discussions and constructive controversy. They developed four mutually reinforcing aspects to manage conflict constructively: (a) *developing and expressing one's own view*. Managers and employees need to know what each of the others wants and believes, and expressing one's own needs, feelings and ideas is essential to gain that knowledge. Strengthening expression of their own positions, both parties can learn to investigate their position, present the best case they can for it, defend it vigorously, trying at the same time to refute opposing views. However, expressing one's own position needs to be supplemented with open-mindedness to the others' position; (b) *questioning and understanding others' views.* Listening and understanding opposing views as well as defending one's own views makes discussing conflicts more challenging but also more rewarding, therefore managers and employees can point out weaknesses in each other's' arguments to encourage better development and expression of positions by finding more evidence and strengthening their reasoning; (c) *integrating and creating solutions*. The creation of new alternatives lays the foundations for genuine agreements about a solution that managers and employees can accept and implement. However, protagonists may have to engage in repeated discussion to reach an agreement, or indeed they may be unable to create a solution that is mutually acceptable, and then, they can both learn to become less adamant, exchange views directly and show that they are trying to understand and integrate each other's ideas so that all may benefit; and (d) *agreeing to and implementing solutions.* Managers and employees can learn to seek the best reasoned

judgement, instead of focusing on "winning"; to criticize ideas not people; to listen and understand everyone's position, even if they do not agree with them; to differentiate positions before trying to integrate them; and to change their minds when logically persuaded to do so. Implications of constructive conflict management in organizations, previously revised, have important practical proposals for participants. These clearly support the well-known tradition of integrative negotiation developed by Walton and McKersie (1965) in their *Behavioral Theory of Labor Negotiations*. The operationalization of constructive controversy is close to the proposal of these authors that integrative agreements are more likely when protagonists freely exchange accurate and credible information about their interests, avoid win-lose behaviors, or argue their own position until they are convinced otherwise. Walton's emphasis on achieving organizational change by combining cooperative labor-management relations with a strong emphasis on psychological commitment and involvement of individuals reflects the links between integrative and attitudinal sub processes of their theory (Kochan 1991) that has been well developed by subsequent work on constructive conflict management (Euwema et al. 2015). Here, the framework of conglomerate conflict behavior (CCB) is most helpful (Munduate et al. 1999; Van de Vliert and Euwema 1994; Van de Vliert et al. 1995). Through a series of studies combining different conflict behaviors is shown to result in better joint outcomes for both parties. This implies that parties should not only concentrate on problem solving behaviors. Particularly in complex, multi issue conflicts such as labor management negotiations, distributive bargaining is also inevitable. Problem solving combining with forcing, accommodating and compromising behaviors should therefore be recognized as creative and valid behavior (Garcia et al. 2015).

One of the specific challenges in current organizations is the agent role of worker representatives (Munduate et al. 2012). Building trust between management and worker representatives is only one side of effective negotiations. At least as important is the relationship between representatives and their constituents, the employees (Medina et al. 2009). Especially in organizations where more and more direct connections between management and employees have been developed, the dynamics can easily become feeded by distrust (Lewicki et al., Chap. 6 in this volume). A situation in organizations where two parallel processes develop, one where management invests in a direct and trusting relationship with employees, based on social exchange, while the worker representatives are marginalized in their relationships with management and employees. In such a situation, individualized and team relations are using a constructive controversy approach, while in the official dialogue, creativity and constructive controversy is minimized. Most likely, idiosyncratic deals at individual and group level will challenge collective agreements at organizational level, with implications for the development of trust and distrust at different levels (Lewicki et al., Chap. 6 in this volume). The agency theory is an underlying theory to negotiations involving representatives (Eisenhardt 1989). Different studies show the importance of a close relation with the principal parties and the agent, to motivate the agent to fight and negotiate to the limit, without accommodating (Moffitt and Bordone 2005). Particularly, the trust dilemma between principal and agent states that the more the WR – as an agent – is trusted and supported by the

coworkers – as the principal-, the more able the WRs will be to create value through negotiation (Mnookin and Susskind 1999). Creating value in negotiation involves not accommodating but taking a proactive role at the table (Lax and Sebenius 1985). On the other hand, the more the WRs accommodate to the opposing party, the harder it will be for the coworkers to trust and support the WRs (Mnookin and Susskind 1999). As a recent study among a large sample of employers by Garcia et al. (2015) shows, employee representatives gain influence in decision making most, by combining cooperative and competitive behaviors.

A recent study exploring this issue among WRs in an European sample showed that in a competitive industrial relations climate (e.g. Spain, Portugal and Estonia), being close to your coworkers is essential to feel empowered at the negotiation table and that contrary, being close to the management can be detrimental for perceiving support from your coworkers (Munduate et al. 2012). In this context, in which agents are the ones sitting at the table to bargain, the trust from those agents in the other party will strongly determine the team trust in the other team as these attitudes are not independent (Bliese 2000). In other words, this can begin a process of "trust contagion" under trust circumstances or "distrust contagion" under distrust circumstances. The new concept of the Tree of Trust (Lewicki et al., Chap. 6 in this volume), suggests that both processes can take place at the same time: development of trust and distrust between the partners and constituents. Given the strongly changing structures and dynamics of employment relations in today's organizations, understanding these complex processes of trust and distrust development are at the core of a practice-theory for agents in organizations.

Implications for Future Research

This volume has witnessed the rise of SET as an important lens for analyzing changing industrial relations in organizations, with important implications for expectations of reciprocity, together with the valuable lens of Cooperation and Competition and constructive controversy's strategies for effective conflict management. In addition to exploring the propositions reflected in our revision, future research might explore issues arising from both analytic frameworks. An important line of research to develop refers to the indicators of social exchange quality in the industrial relations field. To the extent that cooperation predicts reciprocal behaviors over time by fostering a social exchange relationship, the operative question posed by other research areas such as justice (Colquitt et al. 2013; Cropanzano and Byrne 2000) has been the best way to capture that relationship, that is, what are the intervening variables needed to be able to capture the obligatory dynamics at play in exchange relationships. The meta-analysis of Colquitt et al. (2013) in justice research has identified some variables that better capture the quality of social exchange. These include trust, organizational commitment, perceived organizational support, and leader-member exchange. To what extent these variables are mediators between constructive conflict management and industrial relations effectiveness in

organizations, and to what extent the inclusion of more variables to the equation is needed, is something that has been expressed in the debate of the chapters of this volume. This requires further investigation in the field of study.

New developments of the norm of reciprocity for the industrial relations domain are of major interest. An important aspect of the new forms of employment relations is the incorporation of the social exchange dimension to the traditional economic exchange dimension. This involves analyzing the expected reciprocal exchanges that are implicit, that do not require a quid pro quo, that involve intangible and symbolic resources as well as tangible ones, and that occur over an undefined time period. Following Cropanzano and Mitchell's (2005) proposal to explore exchange relationships in addition to forms of exchange, we highlight the necessity to analyze how negotiated and reciprocal exchange can function within the same exchange relationship between management and employees, and how they can function together to increase both parties' outcomes. The studies carried out by Molm (2003, 2013), Lawler (2001), and Lau and Cobb (2010) encourage focusing on the different nature and degree of risk that both exchanges pose for the parties involved in the transaction. Future research could follow up on the predictions of Lau and Cobb (2010) on the effects of relationship conflicts on different forms of trust, how this, in turn, affects the dynamic of reciprocal and negotiated exchanges, and finally how this kind of exchanges affects in-role, extra-role, and attitudinal outcomes of both parties.

Falling between the domain of SET research is also the psychological contract framework, in which the norm of reciprocity plays a core role (Guest 2004). This conceptual framework examines employee reciprocity in terms of contract fulfillment. Employees reciprocate the treatment they receive by adjusting their own obligations to their employer. This framework expands the conceptualization of reciprocity by incorporating a cognitive dimension, the feelings of employees about what are their obligations (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2002). The chapter developed by Guest in this volume makes a great contribution and opens an important research line by proposing the feasibility and utility of the psychological contract to understand expectations of reciprocity at a psycho-social or collective level of contract.

Despìte the importance ascribed to mutual trust and cooperation by the chapters of this volume, several critical issues remain largely unaddressed in the domain of the norm of reciprocity. Ferrin et al. (2008) state the necessity to explore the intricate dance that involves the development of mutual trust and cooperation, and how both of them are affected over time by partner's initial moves. Following this suggestion, some critical questions arise in industrial relations research: how trust perceptions become reciprocated between management and employees? How might partner's initial interdependent moves and perceptions of trustworthiness and cooperation affect the nature and evolution of mutual trust and mutual cooperation over time?

Although the norm of reciprocity is argued to be universal across cultures (Gouldner 1960), the degree to which people and cultures apply reciprocity principles varies (Cropanzano et al. 2005). More research is needed to explore expected reciprocities developed between employees and their employing organization in different organizational cultures (Guerra et al. 2005; Medina et al. 2008) and across

national cultures (see Brett 2000; Guina et al. 2012). For example, Martin and Harder (1994) found that Americans tend to assign socioemotional resources equally, while economic benefits were assigned in proportion to performance. However, Chen et al. (2008) found that Chinese managers assigned both economic and socioemotional outcomes in proportion to performance (Cropanzano et al. 2005).

Unfortunately, potential synergies between exchanged-based reciprocity and reciprocation in Cooperation and Competition framework domain remain unknown because scholars tend to choose one framework or the other when planning and executing their work. Organizational science has produced an impressive literature on workplace negotiation and deal making (e.g. Bazerman and Neale 1994; Brett 2014). However, this work has generally not been considered in the light of SET. One explanation for that dearth of integrative work is the relatively recent focus of SET in the field of industrial relations and conflict management. Another explanation, however, is practical. Exchange-based work tends to focus on relationships with institutions, often in the field, often combining qualitative (e.g. interviews or case studies) with quantitative (e.g. surveys measures) methods that reference an extended time period, while scholars from the organizational behavior realm who analyze conflict management in organizations tend to focus on events and occurs either in the field in the laboratory or with experience-sampling methodology studies that focus on the here and short term perspective. This volume provides a path for possible integration.

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