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Faces in the mirror: Exploring conflict styles of adults in school communities using the face - negotiation theory

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2009

ABSTRACT

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Exploring Conflict Styles of Adults in School Communities Using the Face-Negotiation Theory
by

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M.S. University of Nevada, Reno, 2000
B.S. University of Nevada, Reno, 1992

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning

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ABSTRACT

This correlation study focused on the lack of understanding of the relationship between social self-image "face" and conflict styles among adult employees on school campuses. An individual's social self-image may involve concerns for the social representation of oneself, another individual, or a relationship. Limited research pertaining to the degree face concerns affect conflict styles within school communities is a problem for school administrators because conflict styles can influence conflict outcomes and impact workplace quality on school campuses. This study relied on Ting-Toomey's face-negotiation theory, which proposes that individuals prefer conflict styles based upon face concerns. Research questions explored correlations between self-face, other-face, and mutual-face concerns with dominating, emotional expressive, neglect, integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles. The sample consisted of 192 adults employed on 3 school campuses located in a large metropolitan region in the western region of the United States. Participants completed a survey by recalling a conflict with an adult coworker. Participants responded to items measuring social self-image and behavioral responses to conflict. Results were analyzed using multiple regression tests. Findings suggest that preferences for conflict styles were very different in the presence of self-face than in the presence of other-face and mutual-face, and face-concerns were either weak predictors or nonpredictors for avoiding and third-party help. This study has the potential to enhance workplace quality on school campuses in that it suggests mutual-face concerns for relationships associate with cooperative conflict styles that tend to promote constructive conflict outcomes.

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DEDICATION

This doctoral study is dedicated in honor and loving memory of Ernie, a witty old man who believed a tall eighth-grade girl with braces was just as beautiful and capable as the rest. Ernie embodied the essence of entertainment as he thought spending his fun money was equally as important as paying his monthly bills. His deep, grumbling laughter could be heard while he was picking blueberries, playing backgammon, and eating a good meal, as well as when he was merely thinking of being either the instigator or the receiver of a humorous prank. He was a kindhearted soul with a heart made of gold who always said, “Pat yourself on your own back for a job well done.” As I complete this doctoral study and reach to pat my back, I realize that Ernie’s hands of encouragement have been patting my back for years.

To my mother, Mary, your dedication to and love for our family provide the foundation that everyone returns to in challenging as well as in cheerful times. Whether you are providing care to patients, raising children and grandchildren, tending to flowers and apple trees, or bumping along on a muddy road in Africa, your life to this point truly resembles a scrapbook of wonderful memoirs. I continue to lean on your heritage of strength and wisdom.

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To my dissertation committee; Dr. Colleen Halliday-Boykins, Dr. Lisa Reason, and Dr. Nathan Long, this doctoral study would not have been possible without the three of you. Dr. Halliday-Boykins, I am grateful for your honesty, knowledge, and suggestions throughout this process. Your attention to detail was invaluable. Dr. Reason, your encouragement with my doctoral proposal continued well into my doctoral study. I was always assured constructive feedback within a timely manner. Dr. Long, as committee chair, your guidance and leadership provided efficient and effective communication. Without your expertise this study could not have been completed. You were the "wizard behind the curtain" with your coordination skills and knowledge of doctoral study requirements. I also thank your wife, as she most probably "ran cover" for life's logistics while you reviewed my documents and spoke at all hours on the phone.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES v

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY 1
Background 1
Problem Statement 5
Nature of the Study 7
Research Questions 8
Purpose of the Study 11
Theoretical Framework 12
Definition of Terms and Variables 12
Assumptions 16
Delimitations 16
Limitations 17
Significance of the Study 17
Implications for Social Change 19
Summary 20

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 21
Introduction 21
Interpersonal Conflict in the Workplace 22
Conflict Styles 27
Characteristics of Conflict Styles 31
Conflict Research 35
The Concept of Face, Face Content, and Face Concern 42
Concept of Face 42
Face Content 44
Face Concern 44
The Face-Negotiation Theory 45
Historical Overview 45
Theoretical Propositions 47
Summary 51

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD 54
Introduction 54
Research Design 55
Population and Sample 57
Survey Instrument 59
Demographic Data 60
Construct Validation 61
Data Collection 62
Data Analysis 64

Research Questions 65
Limitations 68
Summary 69

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS 70
Introduction 70
Data Collection Procedures 71
Data Analysis 72
Demographic Data 74
Descriptive Statistics for Variables 75
Research Question 1 77
Research Subquestion 1 88
Research Subquestion 2 90
Research Subquestion 3 92
Summary 93

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 96
Introduction 96
Major Findings 98
Research Question 1 99
Research Subquestion 1 100
Research Subquestion 2 101
Research Subquestion 3 102
Theoretical Foundation 103
Findings Related to the Literature 108
Implications for Social Change 111
Recommendations for Future Research 113
Conclusion 114

REFERENCES 117

APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM 127

CURRICULUM VITAE 128

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographic Data 75

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for Research Variables 77

Table 3. Pearson r Correlations Between Face Concerns and Conflict Styles 78

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Dominating..... 80

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Emotion Exp..... 81

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Neglect 82

Table 7. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Integrating 83

Table 8. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Obliging..... 84

Table 9. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Avoiding..... 85

Table 10. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Compromising... 86

Table 11. Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Third-P Help..... 87

Table 12. Beta Coefficients and Pearson r Coefficients for Self-Face with Dominating, Emotional Expression, Neglect, Avoiding, and Third-Party Help 89

Table 13. Beta Coefficients and Pearson r Coefficients for Other-Face with Integrating, Obliging, Compromising, Third-Party Help, and Avoiding 91

Table 14. Beta Coefficients and Pearson r Coefficients for Mutual-Face with Integrating, Obliging, Compromising, Third-Party Help, and Avoiding 93

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background

The commonality of conflict has been noted as "a fact of human life occurring in all kinds of settings" (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007, p. 2), and that "where there are humans there are conflicts" (Combs, 2004, p. xi). In addition, Cupach and Canary (1997) noted that "individuals have a 99.9 percent probability they have experienced and will continue to experience interpersonal conflicts" (p. 5). Therefore, it is not surprising that school campuses provide ideal social environments for occurrences of interpersonal conflicts and that these conflicts significantly impact the workplace quality of school communities. On an organizational level, among adult populations, conflict has been associated with increased workplace aggression (Hershcovis, Turner, Barling, & Sivanathan, 2007), lack of teamwork effectiveness (Aritzeta, 2005), reduced organizational commitment (Thomas & Bliese, 2005), and ineffective workgroup communication (Ayoko, Hartel, & Callan, 2002). Likewise, conflict has also been linked to increased levels of employee creativity (Kurtzberg, 2005), enhanced group innovation (Nijstad & Dreu, 2002), and school improvement and organizational growth (Uline, Tschannen-Moran, & Perez, 2003). The impact of destructive conflict on workplace quality has been documented at local levels within school districts. In 2008, the Teaching and Learning Conditions (TLC) survey revealed that interpersonal conflict remained a concern for adult employees within the Clark County School District in Las Vegas, Nevada. In this survey, teachers responded to items measuring concerns, such as: availability of appropriate instructional materials, safe working environments, opportunities for teacher decision making, effective processes for

solving conflicts, trust for resolving conflicts, trust and mutual respect within schools, and effective school leadership communication. Survey results indicated that teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that effective conflict management skills were lacking in relation to communication within the workplace (Clark County School District, TLC, 2008). The potential for interpersonal conflict frequently stems from different paradigms individuals may have concerning the school environment based upon various employment positions. Employment positions were the topic of a recent *Las Vegas Review-Journal* article. The newspaper article drew attention to employment budget cuts within the Clark County School District, the United States' fifth-largest school district. The article outlined many challenges that may potentially contribute to conflicts within the workplace. Specifically, all 353 schools in the district were staffed at 97% of projected needs (Haug, 2009). Consequently, budget cuts resulting in reduced staffing may influence expectations of employee responsibilities on school campuses and contribute to interpersonal conflict. Cole (1991) suggested principals and counselors may view responsibilities of a school counselor very differently. Principals may view the counseling position as one of an auxiliary role that assists to remove obstacles from a student's life to promote academic achievement. However, a counselor may view school counseling as a valid end in itself to engage students in decision making about social and educational issues. Uline et al. (2003) proposed that empowerment of teacher leadership within a school community frequently results in constructive conflict between teachers and principals. The researchers concluded that as teachers increased feelings of empowerment they were more likely to engage in conflict interactions with supervisors

that resulted in constructive outcomes to change outdated norms and practices. Educational research that solely focuses on conflict prevention is inconsistent with research that demonstrates the constructive influences of interpersonal conflicts and as previously suggested, conflict prevention may itself be an improbable task (Combs, 2004; Cupach & Canary, 1997; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007).

The current study contributes to social change by exploring human behaviors associated with the destructive and constructive duality of interpersonal conflict. Tidd, Currall, and Tsai (2000) suggested that how individuals respond to conflict shapes a person's social experiences with conflict. Conflict strategies or styles refer to "behavioral responses to conflict" (Putnam & Poole, 1987, p. 550). Rahim (1983) proposed five styles of handling interpersonal conflicts: dominating, obliging, compromising, integrating, and avoiding. Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) expanded the five styles into eight styles to include emotional expressive style, neglect style and third-party help. Numerous studies support the notion that conflict styles have a mediating effect on whether interpersonal conflicts will result in destructive or constructive outcomes (Aquino, 2000; Aritzeta, Ayestaran, & Swailes, 2005; Brewer, Mitchell, & Weber, 2002; Cornille, Pestle, & Vanwy, 1999; Gross & Guerrero, 2000; Kuhn & Poole, 2000; Morris-Rothschild & Brassard, 2006; Rahim, 2002). The mediating effects of conflict styles are frequently judged by assessing the competence of communication strategies employed surrounding a conflict episode (Cupach & Canary, 1997). Chapter 2 provides an examination of conflict styles and the characteristics associated with each style.

Understanding conflict styles of adult populations on school campuses is foundational to exploring conflict at the organizational level of school communities. One theoretical advance to understanding conflict styles is the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). An assumption of the face-negotiation theory is that social self-image "face" is an explanatory factor for conflict styles. The connotation of self-image as face has been defined as "the positive social value a person claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman, 1955, p. 5) and "an individual's claimed sense of positive image in the context of social interactions" (Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 20). Ting-Toomey's definition extends to include "self-face" as the concern for one's own image, "other-face" as the concern for another's image, and "mutual-face" as the concern for the image of the relationship. Self-face, other-face, and mutual-face are commonly referred to as "face concerns." Scholars have studied face concerns in relation to intentions to apologize (Park & Guan, 2006), attitudes about money (Lim, 2003), and friendship solidarity (Cupach & Messman, 1999). Notably, Ting-Toomey (1988) argued that individuals prefer to use different conflict styles because of different levels of face concerns.

In 1998, Ting-Toomey and Kurogi suggested self-face associated positively with dominating and competing conflict styles, other-face associated positively with avoiding and obliging styles, while mutual-face associated positively with relational maintenance conflict styles. In 2003, Oetzel and Ting-Toomey conducted an empirical test of the face-negotiation theory with a 768-sample of participants from a previous investigation regarding self-face/other-face concerns and dominating, avoiding, and integrating conflict

styles. The scholars discovered that self-face related positively with dominating conflict styles while other-face related positively with avoiding and integrating conflict styles. The results supported the earlier theoretical assumption.

Following Ting-Toomey and Kurogi's theoretical suggestions, Oetzel, Myers, Meares, and Estefana (2003) conducted the first investigation regarding the influence of face concerns on conflict styles. Participants were employees in a large moving company and a manufacturing business. The researchers concluded that self-face concern was positively associated with dominating and emotionally expressive conflict styles, while other-face and mutual-face concerns were associated positively with integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles. In addition they suggested that avoiding styles may be related to all three face concerns.

Problem Statement

The problem in school communities, specifically, is the lack of understanding concerning the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities. Despite theoretical assumptions (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998) and research results (Oetzel et al., 2003; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003) that face concerns affect conflict styles, educational research is lacking in regard to the degree to which face concerns affect conflict styles within school communities. Results from an investigation of interpersonal conflict within school communities may reveal different findings in respect to Oetzel et al.'s (2003) study in which the sample population consisted of 61 managers and 117 non managers from manufacturing and moving companies. Within a school community, the school

administration is often viewed as management. School administration represents a small number of individuals in comparison to the numerous coworker employment positions of equal status, such as; teachers, counselors, psychologists, librarians, and nurses. Therefore, while the current sample population of 300 individuals includes supervisory positions of approximately 3 principals, 6 assistant principals, and 6 deans the majority of the participants will represent coworkers of equal status. Research reveals differences have been found in connection to conflict styles between supervisory and subordinate positions within organizations (Hershcovis et. al, 2007; Rahim, 2002; Slabbert, 2004). With respect to the numerous coworker positions of equal status on a school campus, the current researcher expects results obtained from a sample population on school campuses to vary from previous research.

Numerous scholars have written books in relation to interpersonal conflicts (Combs, 2004; Crum, 1987; Cupach & Canary, 1997; Dana, 2001; Eddy, 2003; Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2005; Horn, 1996; Maravelas, 2005; Ursiny, 2003; Vansant, 2003; Weeks, 1992; Wiebe-Oudeh & Oudeh, 2006; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). In addition, several authors have published books specifically on interpersonal conflicts in school communities (Girard & Koch, 1996; Jones & Compton, 2003; Teolis, 2002), yet currently no studies exist in available academic and scholarly research literature on conflict styles that address the degree to which face concerns affect conflict styles among adult populations within school communities.

The lack of understanding the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles may impact school communities. Interpersonal conflict provides a situation in

which social self-image becomes threatened. Because face concerns have the potential to influence conflict styles (Oetzel et al., 2003; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003), and conflict styles are potential mediating factors for conflict outcomes in workplace environments (Aritzeta et al., 2005; Morris-Rothschild & Brassard, 2006; Thomas & Bliese, 2005), understanding the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles increases the probability of understanding conflict within school communities. This study contributes to the body of knowledge needed to address this problem by exploring conflict styles of adult populations within school communities through the theoretical framework of the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998).

Nature of the Study

The nature of this quantitative correlation study was to understand the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles. Qualitative and mixed method designs were rejected because the researcher sought to measure the distinctive variables of the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 2005), which posits that face concerns affect conflict styles, and a quantitative design assisted in measuring the distinctive variables of this theoretical assumption.

The population consisted of approximately 300 adult individuals from three different school campuses located in a large metropolitan region in the western portion of the United States. One hundred and ninety-two participants completed the survey. Demographic data gathered by the survey, such as gender, age, education level, and ethnicity, provided characteristics and traits for response assessments.

In an effort to extend previous investigation regarding face concerns and conflict styles into a new population, the current researcher utilized Oetzel et al.'s (2003) pre-established instrument for this doctoral study. Participants were asked to recall a conflict with a co-worker that occurred within a workday and reflect upon how they thought and acted during the conflict. The Likert scale survey included 12 items to measure face concerns and 32 items to measure conflict styles. Chapter 3 provides specific information concerning data collection and the survey instrument.

The researcher contacted three middle school administrators to gain permission to survey the adult populations on the school campuses. With Institutional Review Board approval and school district consent, the current researcher utilized Zoomerang online software to distribute the surveys to the schools. The researcher compiled survey results using SPSS software. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation statistics, and multiple regressions. Demographic data were analyzed by comparing mean frequencies. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research methodology and outlines the data analysis employed for the study.

Research Questions

Research questions were grounded by theoretical assumptions and previous scholarly research. The questions were arranged as follows: (a) Question 1 focused on the overall inquiry into relationships between face concerns and conflict styles; (b) Subquestion 1specifically addressed self-face concern; (c) Subquestion 2 specifically addressed other-face concern; and (d) Subquestion 3 specifically addressed mutual-face concern. Within each subquestion, the researcher hypothesized only positive correlations

between face concerns and conflict styles. Exploring positive correlations allowed the researcher to approach future professional development dialogue explicit to the presence of face concerns with positive associations for tendencies or preferences of conflict styles.

Research Question 1

The relationship between face concerns and conflict styles has been hypothesized at a theoretical level (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Moreover, research results conclude that a relationship does exist between face concerns and conflict styles (Oetzel et al., 2003; 2001; Oetzel and Ting-Toomey, 2001; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). Thus, this researcher expected that a relationship between face concerns and conflict styles existed among adult populations within school communities.

Research Question 1: Does a relationship exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities?

H0 (Null): A relationship does not exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities.

H1 (Alt): A relationship does exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities.

Research Subquestions 1, 2, 3

In their 2003 study, Oetzel et al. concluded that self-face positively associated with dominating and emotional expression conflict styles and other-face and mutual-face concerns associated positively with integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles. Other-face and mutual-face were not correlated with avoiding or third-party help,

yet other-face and mutual-face were negatively associated with passive aggression (neglect) while other-face was negatively associated with emotional expression and dominating styles (Oetzel et al., 2003). The researchers suggested that the lack of significance for avoiding and third party help may be due to the fact that these conflict styles can be used for all three face concerns. The current researcher sought to reexamine avoiding and third party help in relation to the three face concerns; consequently, self-face concerns were expected to associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles, and other-face and mutual-face were expected to associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

Research Subquestion 1: Does self-face concern associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles?

H0 (Null): Self-face concern does not associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles.

H1 (Alt): Self-face concern does associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles

Research Subquestion 2: Does other-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

H0 (Null): Other-face concern does not associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

H1 (Alt): Other-face concern does associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

Research Subquestion 3: Does mutual-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

H0 (Null): Mutual-face concern does not associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

H1 (Alt): Mutual-face concern does associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative correlation study was to test the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998) that relates face concerns to conflict styles for three school communities in a large metropolitan region in the Western portion of the United States. Face concern was defined as "self-face, the concern for one's own image, other-face, the concern for another's image, and mutual-face, the concern for the image of the relationship" (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p. 74). Conflict styles - integrating, compromising, dominating, obliging, avoiding, emotional expressive, neglect, and third-party help - were defined as patterned responses to conflicts (Ting-Toomey et al. 2000). The goal of the study was to explore the degree to which face concerns associate with preferences for conflict styles of adult populations within school communities. Conflict styles have the potential to influence conflict outcomes (Aquino, 2000; Brewer et al., 2002; Gross & Guerrero, 2000; Rahim, 2002). Therefore, it was important to explore preferences for conflict styles of adult populations on school campuses to better understand constructive and destructive outcomes of interpersonal

conflicts at the organizational level of school communities and to improve workplace quality.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Face-negotiation theory takes into account face and facework within conflict issues. Face-negotiation theory proposes that: (a) people in all cultures attempt to negotiate face during communications; (b) the negotiation of face is particularly difficult when the identities of communicators are called into question; (c) cultural variability, individual-level variables, and situational factors influence face concerns, and (d) consequently, cultural, individual-level, and situational factors influence the use of conflict strategies (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Chapter 2 provides a historical overview of the face-negotiation theory, and presents the cultural-level, individual-level, and situational-level propositions that related face concerns to conflict styles.

Definition of Terms and Variables

Wilmot and Hocker (2007) defined conflict as “a struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals” (p. 9). The definition for conflict utilized in the survey instrument for this study was "any intense disagreement between two parties which involves incompatible goals, needs, or viewpoints" (Oetzel et al., 2003; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000).

Conflict styles represent how individuals prefer or tend to respond to conflict (Putnam & Poole, 1987). Rahim (1983) defined conflict styles in relation to concern for self and concern for others, and proposed the following five styles: integrating, avoiding, dominating, compromising, and obliging. The survey instrument utilized in the current study (Oetzel et al., 2003) incorporated Rahim's five conflict styles, and in addition included third party help, neglect, and emotional expressive conflict styles. Two studies, Ting-Toomey et al.(2000) and Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, and Yee-Jung's (2001), integrated the eight styles to acknowledge ethnic differences during conflict episodes and demonstrated that the eight styles could be measured as distinct conflict style variables. This section provides a brief definition for each of the conflict styles. The eight conflict styles and their definitions include:

1. *Avoiding:* Low concern for self and low concern for other. The avoiding style involves a withdrawal from the conflict and therefore does not address self or other concerns. The avoiding style is characterized by statements such as "I tried to ignore the conflict and behaved as if nothing happened."
2. *Compromising*: Moderate concern for self and moderate concern for other. The compromising style involves a give-and-take in which some gains and some losses occur for each individual. The compromising style is characterized by statements such as "I win some and lose some so that a compromise can be reached."
3. *Dominating:* High concern for self and low concern for other. The dominating style involves a win-lose situation where conflict is viewed as a battle and the

goal is to win. The dominating style is characterized by statements such as "I use my influence to get my ideas accepted."

4. *Emotional expression:* High concern for self and moderate concern for other. Emotional expression involves the use of animated and confrontational behaviors as a way to guide behavior during a conflict. The emotional expression style is characterized by statements such as "I use my feelings to guide my conflict behaviors" (Oetzel et al., 2003; Rahim, 2002).
5. *Integrating:* High concern for self and high concern for other. The integrating style involves a high concern for all interests and seeks a solution to the conflict that is acceptable to all individuals in the conflict. The integrating style is characterized by statements such as "I work with the other person to reach a joint resolution to our conflict."
6. *Neglect:* High concern for self and moderate concern for other. Neglect involves passive-aggressive behavior in an attempt to withdraw from the conflict yet concurrently seeks a reaction from the other individual in the conflict. The neglect style is characterized by statements such as "I tried to hurt the other person indirectly."
7. *Obliging:* Low concern for self and high concern for other. The obliging style involves a concern for the other individual's interests at the expense of personal interests, i.e. personal concerns are neglected. The obliging style is characterized by statements such as "I try to satisfy the expectations of the other person."

8. *Third party help:* Moderate concern for self and moderate concern for other. Third party help involves inviting an individual, not involved in the conflict, to mediate the conflict. The third party help style is characterized by statements such as "I rely on a third person to help negotiate a resolution to the conflict."

The eight conflict styles may be categorized into three groups based on concern for self and concern for other (Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, & Yee-Jung, 2001): (a) dominating, emotional expression, and neglect; (b) avoiding, obliging, and third party help; and (c) integrating and compromising. Chapter 2 provides an overview of characteristics and levels of effectiveness that the conflict styles provide to communication processes.

Ting-Toomey's (2005) face-negotiation theory proposes that individuals prefer to use different conflict styles based on different levels of "face concern." Face concerns are based upon, face, "the positive social value a person claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman, 1955, p. 5). Face concern was defined as:

1. *Mutual-face:* Mutual-face is a concern for the social image of the relationship and is illustrated by statements such as "An important concern for me is to protect relationships" (Oetzel et al., 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1988).
2. *Other-face:* Other-face is a concern for another's social image and is illustrated by statements such as "Helping to maintain the other person's pride is important to me."
3. *Self-face:* Self-face is a concern for one's own social image and is illustrated by statements such as "I am concerned with protecting my personal pride."

Assumptions

There are three important assumptions concerning this study. First, it was assumed that adult individuals who participated in this study were adult members of school communities; second, it was assumed that the participants had the ability to recall a conflict with a co-worker that occurred during a workday, on a school campus; and third, it was assumed that participants honestly and completely responded to survey questions.

Delimitations

This study explored the correlation between face concerns in relation to conflict styles within three school communities. This scope was delimited to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade teachers (core curricular/extracurricular and teacher assistants), support personnel (counselors, custodians, cafeteria managers, campus monitors, office specialists, bus drivers, librarians, and nurses), and administrators (deans, assistant principals, and principals). Although the scope included various employment positions, school campuses differ in the quantity and type of adult employment positions based on student enrollment numbers. Therefore, not all school campuses comprised the same adult subgroup populations. Moreover, due to the intent of the current study to understand variables among adult populations, the study was nondependent upon proportional subgroup statistics to measure variables among individuals. Specific information concerning sampling techniques and data collection are further explained in chapter 3.

Limitations

This study was limited by internal and external threats to validity. Since the researcher was constrained by access to individuals experiencing current conflicts, this study relied on recall instead of studying actual conflict behaviors. An individual's ability to accurately recall a conflict may have limited understanding of true conflict behavior rather than perceptions of conflict behaviors. Another limitation was that only three school campuses were represented. While the sample size was large enough to develop conclusions, an external threat to validity remains if incorrect generalizations are reported beyond the participants of the school communities included in the study. An additional limitation is the use of a convenience sample as this sampling approach frequently leads to self-selection bias; however, almost every sample may be biased because it is impossible to ensure a perfectly random sample and it is impossible to ensure that all participants will complete surveys even if the researcher uses a probability approach (Trochim, 2001). The current researcher acknowledged and addressed possible sampling biases in the methodology and discussion chapters.

Significance of the Study

This study offers theoretical and practical significance to the field of administrative leadership for teaching and learning. Theoretically, scholarly research has supported the evolution of the face-negotiation theory (Brew & Cairns, 2004; Oetzel, 1998; 2003; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000; Ting-Toomey et al., 2001). The current researcher intended to add to this evolving scholarly research by expanding the face-negotiation theory into the field of educational leadership. In addition to a general effort to enhance

existing literature, in practice, there are several local and specific implications for adult employees on school campuses as effective conflict management remains a concern for school employees (Clark County School District, TLC, 2008). Specific concerns range from economic budget cuts, which may increase workplace stress and conflict to appropriate behavior and communication surrounding conflict interactions. Education is a profession contextualized in communication (Lindsey et al., 2005), and often unintentional, individuals shape communication through use of conflict strategies. The researcher expects to increase workplace quality by providing teachers, support personnel, and administrators with awareness for the potential connections between threats to social self-image and conflict styles. This awareness may help individuals make informed decisions about behaviors during conflict. As Friedman et al. (2000) concluded, "One's work environment is not just an external entity that is shared by those who sit in the same office, but rather it is shaped by each employee as he or she engages with others in particular ways" (p. 49). This study may also improve the process of leadership by helping school administrators recognize face concerns and how face concerns impact human behaviors within group situations. Reeves (2006) suggested, "Many school plans fail not because of a feckless principal but because they are built upon faulty assumptions of human behaviors" (p. 32). This study will provide information to help leaders recognize the importance of rewarding individual work as well as teamwork based upon the relationship between self-face, other-face, and mutual-face concerns and conflict styles. The researcher intended to show that as school community members gain awareness for personal conflict styles they can begin to adjust behaviors by increasing

personal responsibility for how they choose to respond to interpersonal conflicts, and therefore, how they shape, to some degree, their experiences of workplace quality on school campuses.

Implications for Social Change

A conceptual shift is necessary to better appreciate interpersonal conflict among adult populations within school communities. It is plausible to assume that if an individual repetitively experiences conflict as destructive, behavior will adjust accordingly, and this behavior will negatively impact an "individual's wider sphere of influence" (Slabbert, 2004, p. 84).

Research has shown that a cooperative approach to conflict often results in constructive outcomes. Oetzel et al. (2003) suggested that cooperative conflict approaches, integrating and compromising, occurred when individuals had mutual and other face concerns. However, school administrators frequently reward and recognize individual employees rather than teamwork efforts, and thus reinforce self face concerns. Therefore, the current study may specifically assist with social change by re-conceptualizing the relationship between social self-image and conflict through promoting collaborative efforts to enhance levels of mutual and other face concerns within school communities. This study provides exploration into face concerns and conflict styles within school communities, and in turn, provides new breakthroughs into the human condition and social phenomena of interpersonal conflict among adult populations within school communities.

Summary

Chapter 1 provided background information for this doctoral study. The introduction included a statement of the problem, nature of the study, research questions and hypotheses, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, definitions, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, significance, and implications for social change. The introduction established a rational motive for research on the degree to which face concerns affect conflict styles. Investigating conflict styles through face-negotiation theory is important to better appreciate interpersonal conflicts in school communities.

In the following chapters of this doctoral study, main points introduced in Chapter 1 will be clarified. Chapter 2 will provide a detailed review of the literature related to the problem statement supporting the rationale for the doctoral study. Chapter 3 will explain the quantitative research design and methods to be used in the study. Chapter 4 will provide the results of the study. Chapter 5 will offer conclusions and suggest recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This review of literature focuses on research related to the face-negotiation theory, face concerns, conflict styles, and interpersonal conflict within the context of workplace environments. The review attempts to identify the strong points and limitations in the existing scholarly literature advocating the rationale for this doctoral study. Various strategies were utilized to conduct the literature review. First, interpersonal conflicts, among adult populations within school communities, were examined to contextualize conflict in the workplace. Second, to offer perspective for conflict styles in relation to destructive and constructive conflict outcomes and communication competence, the dual-concern approach for analyzing conflict styles was reviewed, research pertaining to conflict styles was provided, and characteristics of conflict styles were identified. Third, to conceptualize social self-image as face and recognize conflict as a threat to face, the concepts of face, face content, and face concern were presented. Fourth, to position the current research within the theoretical framework of the face-negotiation theory, a historical overview of Ting-Toomey's face-negotiation theory (1988, 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998) was provided and contemporary face-negotiation propositions were reviewed. The review of literature relied upon professional publications, books, textbooks, and research studies related to the topic. In addition, the following databases were used: ERIC, Academic Search Premier, SocINDEX, Education Resource Complete, ProQuest Central, SAGE, Education, SAGE Management and Organization, and PsycINFO. The following list includes many of the

key terms used in the literature review search: *interpersonal conflict, constructive conflict, destructive conflict, conflict styles, conflict management, workplace quality, school community, middle school, k-12 education, face-negotiation theory, face*, and *face concerns.* In general, studies were included or excluded based upon relevancy to the current study's topic with respect to both current publication and historical publication dates to contextualize and outline the study.

Interpersonal Conflict in the Workplace

This section summarizes the limited research concerning interpersonal conflict among adult populations within school communities and examines the destructive and constructive consequences of conflict in the workplace. Identifying the lack of research on the topic of face concerns and conflict styles within school communities further establishes the rational for this doctoral study.

Conceptualization of Interpersonal Conflict

The survey instrument used for the current study defines conflict as "any intense disagreement between two parties which involves incompatible goals, needs, or viewpoints" (Oetzel et al., 2003; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). However, over the years, interpersonal conflict has been defined by numerous scholars. Cupach and Canary (1997) suggested conflict was based upon episode and behavior. Folger et al., (2005, p. 4) proposed conflict was "the interaction of interdependent individuals who perceive incompatibility with the possibility of interference from others resulting from incompatibility." Wilmot and Hocker (2007, p. 9) defined interpersonal conflict as "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible

goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals". Scholars have emphasized different aspects of conflict. For example, Cupach and Canary's definition highlighted communication competence, effectiveness and appropriateness, whereas, Folger et al. focused on the interpersonal aspect of conflict, while Wilmot and Hocker suggested conflict was only present when the parties involved perceived or acknowledged conflict behaviors. Despite numerous definitions of conflict, Barki and Hartwick (2004) argued that there is a lack of an operational definition for interpersonal conflict. Therefore, the scholars have suggested a two-dimensional framework that would allow researchers to compare studies and accumulate knowledge. The first dimension identified disagreement, negative emotion, and interference, and the second dimension classified task and interpersonal relationship. The authors suggested conceptualization of interpersonal conflict must take into account an individual's perception of conflict to establish the variance levels in a conflict episode.

Interpersonal Conflict and Workplace Quality

Interpersonal conflict is a common occurrence in workplace environments that affects workplace quality (Folger et al., 2005; Friedman, Tidd, Currall, & Tsai, 2002; Giebels & Janssen, 2005; Kurtzberg, 2005; Maravelas, 2005; Uline et al., 2003; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). The effect of conflict may be destructive or constructive. Friedman et al. (2002) investigated conflict within the workplace in relation to the amount of stress felt by individual employees. Research results suggested that conflict affected employees' levels of stress, yet employees capable of creating less stressful workplace environments by using integrative conflict styles reported increased levels of workplace

quality and satisfaction. Further, Giebels, and Janssen (2005) examined tensions directly related to interpersonal conflict. One hundred and eight participants completed a questionnaire relating conflict to well-being at work. The researchers found that stresses due to conflict were positively associated with emotional exhaustion and worker absenteeism. Conversely, Uline et al. (2003) examined interpersonal conflict within schools as an avenue to increase organizational growth. The researchers conducted a year long study to investigate a high school campus engaged in school reform. The scholars concluded that when school leaders provided a context that invited communication, with no winners or losers, conflict and controversy played a valuable role in school reform and workplace quality. In a longitudinal study, Kurtzberg (2005) examined the effects of conflict on creativity in the workplace. The researcher reviewed daily diaries of 228 employees to monitor perceived creativity, and suggested that conflict related to task correlated to higher perceived individual creativity within the workplace.

Conflict affects the workplace environment, so the limited amount of research on the topic of conflict among adult populations employed on school campuses is surprising. The topic of interpersonal conflict has been extensively examined among student populations to understand crime reduction (Kenney & McNamara, 2003), school violence (Bennett-Johnson, 2004; Breunlin et al. 2006), school safety (Sprague et al. 2001), anti-bullying (Crothers et al. 2006), peer conflict (David et al. 2004), adolescent aggression (Unger et al. 2003), peer mediation (Selfridge, 2004; Stevahn et al. 2002;), classroom behavior (Cooper et al., 2000; Hofer, 2007), and academic achievement (Munoz & Portes, 2001). Furthermore, conflict has been studied among parent, student, and teacher

populations to understand classroom conflict (Murray & Murray, 2004), teacher negativity and student behavior (Hamre & Pianta, 2001), conflict behavior between parents and teachers (Attanucci, 2004), teachers' perceptions of student conflict resolution (Rique & Lins-Dyer, 2003), parents' and teachers' perceptions of adolescent conflict and risk-taking (Hines & Paulson, 2006), family conflict resolution and children's classroom behavior (Dykeman, 2003), cultural differences between home conflict and school conflict (Hedegaard, 2005), and community violence (Farver et al., 2005). Yet, relatively few studies in the available academic literature exist that explore interpersonal conflict among all adult individuals employed on school campuses, and no studies were found that specifically address the topic of face concerns and conflict styles in relation to interpersonal conflict among adult individuals within school communities.

Although often unintentional, research into school climate has to some extent contributed to research literature concerning conflict among adult populations within school communities. School climate has regularly been termed the "personality" of a school (Hoy et al., 2003, p. 30), and trusting interpersonal relationships among school community members has correlated to healthy school climates. Bulach (1999) reported on a study that examined conflict behaviors in relation to supervision issues that influenced school climate. Two hundred teachers, from a variety of K-12 schools, completed surveys that asked participants to describe their principal's supervisory behavior in relation to educational leadership and human relations, such as conflict, trust, and decision making. School climate was found to be generally positive across all schools, yet lowest scores were in the conflict domain while highest scores were in the

trust domain. Principals were rated low for avoiding conflict with influential parents, assertive teachers, and regional supervisors. School climate appeared more positive in schools with higher ratings in the human relations domain in which a principal's conflict management was perceived as more confident.

Recommendations for teacher conflict management training arose from an investigation concerning teacher empowerment, conflict, and school climate. Short (1993) examined teacher empowerment and school climate. A component to the empowerment dimension was conflict resolution and group process. Two hundred teachers from eight schools completed two survey instruments, a school climate questionnaire and a school empowerment scale. A negative correlation between empowerment and school climate revealed that as the level of empowerment increased the perception of a positive school climate decreased. In the study, teacher empowerment appeared to increase levels of organizational conflicts and decrease perceptions for positive school climates. The researchers suggested that principals, creating environments for increased levels of teacher empowerment, must also provide teachers with professional development opportunities for problem-solving skills and conflict resolution training.

Due to the high probability of occurrences of conflict in social settings (Combs, 2004; Cupach & Canary, 1997; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007), and the possible benefits of constructive conflict outcomes, the current study did not address conflict avoidance or termination of interpersonal conflict within the workplace, but rather explored how

individuals respond to conflict in an effort to minimize the destructive outcomes and enhance the constructive outcomes of conflict.

Conflict Styles

Conflict styles refer to reactions to conflict. The purpose of the current study was to examine conflict styles using the assumption that face concerns; self, other, and mutual, influence conflict styles. The dual-concern model has frequently been utilized as a tool to study conflict styles in research related to concern for self, other, and relationships. This section provides information concerning the dual-concern model and characteristics of conflict styles.

There are several approaches for analyzing conflict styles. For example, the two style approach of cooperation and competition (Tjosvold, 1990), the three style method of non confrontation, solution orientation, and control (Putnam & Wilson, 1982), the four style approach of yielding, problem solving, inaction, and contending (Pruitt, 1983), and the five style classifications of collaboration, competition, accommodation, compromise, and avoidance (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Kilmann & Thomas, 1974), as well as the previously defined styles of dominating, integrating, compromising, obliging, and avoiding (Rahim, 1983).

The historical development of dual-concern models to study conflict styles began in 1964. Blake and Mouton's (1964) managerial grid classified conflict behaviors into five categories based on two dimensions, concern for people and concern for production. The scholars defined concern for people as "needs met in human relationships" and concern for production as "organizational output of good and services" (p. 135). The grid

organized styles into five point measurements with one depicting a minimum concern and nine representing a maximum concern. Blake and Mouton (1967) suggested a five style grid:

1. *Accommodation:* nine on people concern and one on production concern.
2. *Avoidance:* one on people concern and one on production concern.
3. *Collaboration:* nine on people concern and nine on production concern.
4. *Competition:* one on people concern and nine on production concern.
5. *Compromise:* five on people concern and five on production concern.

Several models evolved from this dual-concern approach.

Over time, the Thomas-Kilmann model (1974) outlined behaviors based on attempts of satisfying one's own concerns or satisfying the concerns of others in relation to assertiveness, defined as the forceful involvement in a conflict; and cooperativeness, defined as the willingness to work together to resolve a conflict. The model arranged behaviors into five conflict styles:

1. *Accommodation:* low concern for self and high concern for others with low assertiveness and high cooperation.
2. *Avoidance:* low concern for self and low concern for others with low assertiveness and low cooperation.
3. *Collaboration:* high concern for self and high concern for others and the most cooperative and assertive style.
4. *Competition:* high concern for self and low concern for others with high assertiveness and low cooperation.

5. *Compromise:* moderate concern for self and moderate concern for others with moderate assertiveness and cooperation.

Approximately 10 years later, Rahim (1983) suggested that individuals respond to conflict based on concern for self or concern for others. As described in Chapter 1, and further explained in the next section, Rahim (2002, p. 217) proposed a model that produced five conflict styles:

1. *Avoiding:* low concern for self and low concern for other.
2. *Compromising:* moderate concern for self and moderate concern for other.
3. *Dominating:* high concern for self and low concern for other.
4. *Integrating:* high concern for self and high concern for other.
5. *Obliging:* low concern for self and high concern for other.

Popular survey instruments for measuring conflict styles developed from these dual-concern models, for example; the Managerial Grid Questionnaire (Blake & Mouton, 1964), the Thomas- Kilmann Instrument (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974), the Management-of-Difference Exercise Measurement (Kilmann & Thomas, 1977), the Organizational Communication Conflict Instrument (Putnam & Wilson, 1982), and Rahim's (1983) Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI-II).

In addition to conventional models, authors have relied on the dual-concern approach to introduce innovative conflict styles. In "Wired for Conflict" the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was used to identify personality types defined by Carl Jung (VanSant, 2006). The personality types ranged from extraversion to introversion and were placed into the Thomas- Kilmann Instrument. This approach attempted to

predict conflict styles of individuals based on archetypical personality types. In “Conflict is for the Birds” readers were asked to complete a 50-question survey related to conflict. The responses were tallied and placed on a two axes grid of concern for self and concern for others. The five conflict styles were analogized to characteristics of bird species; woodpecker as dominating, owl as integrating, hummingbird as obliging, ostrich as avoiding, and parakeet as accommodating (Oudeh & Oudeh, 2006). The authors encouraged individuals to “migrate” from one style to another depending on the conflict situation.

Although dual-concern models and subsequent measurement instruments frequently dominated conflict research, scholars criticized the approaches by arguing instruments developed from dual-concern models were developed for use at organizational levels and were not appropriate at the interpersonal level (Fink et al., 2006). Critics also argued that the dual-concern model’s assumptions of high and low scales did not significantly associate with conflict styles (Sorenson et al., 1999, p. 28), and the conflict scales limited the styles to “verbal fixed behaviors” (Knapp et al., 1988, p. 420). These critics suggested expanding the predominantly five style approach to include additional styles, examining conflict at the relationship level, and viewing styles as a combination of strategies (Davis, Capobianco, & Kraus, 2004; Fink, Cai, & Wang, 2006; Knapp, Putnam, & Davis, 1988; Sorenson et al., 1999).

In acknowledgement of criticism for a five style approach and to address ethnic variations in conflict, Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) and Ting-Toomey et al., (2001) developed a modified version of Rahim’s (1983) five style model to include items from

the Disputing Process Instrument (Morrill & Thomas, 1992), the Dissatisfaction in Friendship Instrument (Healey & Bell, 1990, and the Affective Orientation Scale (Booth-Butterfield, 1990) (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). In this modified version, third party help, neglect, and emotional expression were added to dominating, integrating, compromising, obliging, and avoiding styles to produce an eight style approach. Rahim's dimensional model of concern for self and concern for other, and Ting-Toomey's reliance on the cultural influences of individualistic-collectivistic values, makes the dual-concern model a suitable match with the face-negotiation theory as individualistic values regularly support self concerns while collectivist values frequently align with concern for others.

The current study utilized Oetzel et al.'s (2003) survey which draws from Ting-Toomey et al.'s (2000) measurement for conflict styles and Ting-Toomey and Oetzel's (2001) measurement for face concerns. In 2000, Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Yokochi, Masumoto, and Takai investigated facework during conflicts and demonstrated that, although third party help, neglect, and emotional expression are different than the other five styles, the three styles "fit within the self and other framework" (Oetzel et al., 2003, p. 107). Therefore, the following section examines the characteristics of the eight conflict styles and the advantages and disadvantages of each style.

Characteristics of Conflict Styles

Conflict styles have been assessed by the degree of communication competence the styles provided in contexts of different situations. Cupach and Canary (1997) suggested that 'effectiveness and appropriateness' were two essential criteria for assessing communication competence (p. 107). While research reveals that certain

conflict styles, and a combination of various styles, frequently provide higher levels of competence (Aritzeta et al., 2005; Kuhn & Poole, 2000; Munduate et al., 1999; Van de Vliert et al., 1995), a normative statement of competence would be inappropriate unless the effectiveness and appropriateness of conflict styles were taken into consideration within each particular intercultural context.

Consequently, for purposes of the current study, it is not plausible to discuss which conflict style is the most effective and appropriate for all situations, all the time. However, review of the literature did reveal instances when particular conflict styles were found more advantageous than other styles and thus increased levels of communication competence. Therefore, for all eight conflict styles presented in the following section, the advantages and disadvantages are considered speculative in nature.

Integrating: high concern for self/ high concern for other

This style is recognized for openness and cooperation in which individuals work together to discuss the conflict and construct mutually satisfying solutions. Integrating is advantageous when generating new ideas is important and commitment is required from individuals to implement solutions, yet disadvantageous when investment in the relationship is low and time and energy are not worth the effort (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007; Rahim, 2002). The integrative style is considered to be partnership approach to conflict management and often shows to individuals that conflict outcomes can be productive.

Dominating: high concern for self/low concern for other

The style is competitive and frequently characterized by uncooperative behavior unless all individuals agree that a competitive approach is necessary. Dominating can be

advantageous when a quick decision is necessary, the issue is more important to one individual than the other, and an individual wants a solution unpopular to others. Dominating is considered disadvantage as it can harm the relationship between individuals and cause individuals to use covert means to make the other individual pay (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007).

Obliging: low concern for self/ high concern for other

This style is associated with behavior which is yielding in an attempt to bring harmony to the conflict situation. Obliging is considered advantageous in situations in which an individual believes he or she may be wrong or if the issue is more important to the other person, yet obliging can disadvantageously foster resentment, further an individual's lack of power, and may reduce commitment to the relationship (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007).

Avoiding: low concern for self/low concern for other

Avoiding involves an attempt to escape from or get away from the conflict situation. Advantages include times when a cooling off period is needed or if the issue is trivial, yet avoiding can be disadvantageous when the issue needs to be resolved and often reinforces the view that conflict is destructive and better when ignored (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). Noteworthy, avoiding and obliging may be perceived as passive in Western society, yet from an Asian perspective, avoiding and obliging may provide one method for 'giving and saving face' (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000).

Compromising: moderate concern for self/ moderate concern for other

Compromise is not the same as collaboration since individuals perceive the potential conflict solutions as fixed rather than mutually created. Compromise may allow individuals to advantageously accomplish goals in less time than collaboration, yet it can restrict the development of creative ideas (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). Compromise is deemed best when attempts to use other conflict styles have resulted in unsuccessful outcomes.

Third Party Help: moderate concern for self/moderate concern for other

Third party help involves use of a neutral party to mediate the conflict episode. Third party help is not the same as social support provided by various individuals surrounding the conflict situation, but rather involves active participation of an individual to mediate the conflict outcome. Research findings suggest that third party help is a successful conflict strategy to prevent negative outcomes of conflicts in organizations (Giebels & Janssen, 2005), yet third party help may inadvertently or purposefully involve a biased mediator resulting in a biased conflict outcome.

Neglect: high concern for self/moderate concern for other

Neglect involves passive-aggressive behavior in which behavior is both passive without confrontation and aggressive with antagonistic actions. This style is identified by an individual's attempt to both bypass the conflict situation and concurrently evoke reaction from the other individual involved in the conflict.

Emotional Expression: high concern for self/moderate concern for other

The emotional expressive style is characterized by animated, energetic, and lively interactions during conflict episodes. The emotional expressive style is best understood by research conducted to investigate conflict style preferences of African American individuals. Research suggests that African American females tend to rely on emotional expression more than African American males and European females and males (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000).

Conflict Research

Canary and Spitzberg (1989) examined communication competence in relation to conflict strategies. One hundred and thirty-eight students enrolled in a southeastern university responded to three surveys that assessed conflict strategies, competence measures, and relational measures. Conflict behaviors were assessed as appropriate and competent. These assessments were found to then affect relational trust, intimacy, and satisfaction. The researchers concluded that strategies that supported relational objectives were positively linked to competence while strategies that supported individual objectives were negatively linked to competence. Findings that suggested relational objectives linked to communication competencies were consistent across additional studies within the literature (Gross & Guerrero, 2000; McKinney et al, 1997).

McKinney et al. (1997) investigated the relationship between conflict styles and the dimensions of communication competence. The study examined communication adaptability in association with conflict situations to understand if highly competent communicators tended to use conflict styles that were more appropriate for specific

situations. One hundred and fifty one undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory communication course completed the Communicative Adaptability Scale (Duran, 1982) and the Conflict Management Message Style (Ross & DeWine, 1988). The researchers suggested that other-oriented and issue-oriented conflict styles were associated with communication competence while self-oriented conflict styles were negatively related to all the dimensions of communication competence. The researchers found that strategies with a dual concern for self and other "mutual-self" were more competent than strategies concerned with only self or only the other individual. The current researcher believes the self-oriented style may be analogized with self-face concerns and may provide insights into dimensions of communication competencies for face concerns.

Scholars have addressed specific goals within conflict episodes. Gross and Guerrero (2000) investigated the appropriateness and effectiveness of conflict styles. Two hundred students enrolled in business courses participated in the study. In an organizational simulation, students were assigned to groups with the task of dismissing employees, reaching a consensus about which employees to dismiss, and writing a report to mutually support the group's decisions. The integrating conflict style was perceived as most appropriate for social interactions and also most effective in completing tasks. The dominating style was perceived as inappropriate when used by other people. The obliging and compromising styles were viewed as neutral. Interestingly, some participants perceived themselves to be ineffective when using the obliging style, and viewed the compromising style as appropriate when used by other individuals on the team. The avoiding style was observed as ineffective and inappropriate. The researchers discovered

an inconsistency with the Competency Model and study results. The Competency Model suggests that integrating and dominating styles, both focusing on the self, should be equally effective. In contrast, the study found integrating to be a much more effective conflict style. Based on study results, Gross and Guerrero suggested that successfully achieving a personal goal may not only be contingent on supporting one's beliefs but also on considering the ideas of others. Intriguingly, competencies were related to task and relationship issues. Wilmot and Hocker (2007) supported the notion that conflict styles fluctuate in relation to task goals and relationship goals by suggesting that conflict surrounding task goals more frequently involves cooperative styles.

Morris-Rothschild and Brassard (2006) explored the relationships between teachers' conflict management styles and classroom management skills. Two hundred and eighty-three teachers, 48% elementary and 50% secondary, responded to survey questionnaires. Teachers reporting higher classroom management efficacy also reported use of integrating, compromising, and obliging styles. The more years of teaching correlated with a tendency to use an integrating style rather than an obliging style. Teachers' classroom management efficacy was closely associated with conflict styles characterized by a concern for self and a concern for another person. The researchers suggested that increasing teachers' knowledge about conflict styles, through professional development, would help teachers create more positive experiences in the classroom for themselves and for others. Morris-Rothschild and Brassard recommended future studies explore conflict styles of the school's administrative team to contextual school related variables.

Due to mutual-face concerns, cooperative conflict styles, and workplace quality, the current researcher found it important to review studies incorporating group work with conflict. Aritzeta et al. (2005) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between individual behaviors used to facilitate team progress with conflict styles. One hundred and sixty-nine undergraduate students took part in the study over three successive years. The researchers concluded that a submissive and self controlled team role associated positively with avoiding styles and negatively with the dominating style, a sincere and reliable team role associated positively with integrating and compromising styles and negatively with the dominating style, a defensive and not interested team role associated positively with dominating and avoiding styles and negatively with integrating and compromising styles , and a decision maker and trusting team role associated positively with dominating and integrating styles and negatively with avoiding and obliging styles. Clearly from the literature examined so far, the current researcher believes the Aritzeta et al. study assist to clarify characteristics of conflict styles. For example, submissive roles associate with avoiding, reliable roles associate with integrating and compromising, and defensive roles associate with dominating styles. More importantly, the effect of time was evident. As team roles became more defined, stronger correlations with conflict styles changed and emerged. The scholars suggested that while conflict styles related to cooperation could be seen as weak, and conflict styles related to competition could escalate conflict, conflict styles, used jointly, had the potential of bringing creative results to teamwork.

Kuhn and Poole (2000) examined the relationship between group conflict styles and effectiveness of group decision making. The goal was to investigate group conflict styles rather than individual conflict styles. Participants were members of 11 groups in two large organizations. A twenty month longitudinal design was used to observe sessions of video-taped meetings. Group conflict style was identified by determining how the group consistently handled conflict issues in 4 or more sessions. Nine of the 11 groups developed a consistent conflict management style. Groups that developed integrating conflict styles were rated as more effective in decision making than groups that neither developed a consistent style or groups that used dominating and avoiding styles. The current researcher believes this aligns to future suggestions of professional development as a school campus represents not only individual traits but also group characteristics. Kuhn and Poole suggested that the complexity of a group's task influenced the group's conflict style which then had a direct relationship with decision making effectiveness.

Aquino (2000) conducted a study with four-hundred and ninety employees of a public utility organization to examine the relationships between workplace victimization (verbal harassment and threats), hierarchical status, and conflict styles. The study attempted to clarify why some individuals were victimized while others were not. The researcher paralleled behaviors associated with conflict styles and permissive and aggressive behaviors associated with victimization. As predicted, obliging and avoiding styles were positively related to victimization, yet obliging was more strongly related among employees of lower status. Contrary to prediction, the integrating style was also

related to victimization, but again only among lower status employees. Aquino theorized that low status employees using obliging and integrating styles may unknowingly present themselves as permissive due to a lack of authority in position. No evidence was found that dominating styles increased victimization. Aquino proposed that organizations often reward dominating and aggressive behaviors while permissive behaviors are frequently perceived as easy targets for exploitation. The current researcher does not completely agree with findings of this study as avoiding has numerous complexities not presented in the study.

Human sociology and psychology are complex constructs; therefore individuals may tend to rely on a combination of conflict styles. Munduate, Ganaza, Peiro, and Euwema (1999) explored the effectiveness of specific combinations of conflict styles: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. Two hundred and fifty eight managers were asked to role play a conflict situation with a superior and a subordinate. Five patterns of handling conflict were identified:

1. Frequent use of compromising, integrating, and dominating with infrequent use of avoiding and obliging.
2. High use of dominating and integrating with low use of the other three styles.
3. Infrequent use of any of the five styles.
4. Predominant use of dominating style and low use of the other four styles.
5. Predominant use of integrating with low use of the other four styles.

The researchers organized the five conflict patterns by scale and suggested the greater the number of conflict styles in which the pattern combined increased the effectiveness of the

pattern. Therefore, the most ineffective pattern would be the first one which seldom used any particular style, while the most effective pattern would be the third one which combined compromising, integrating, and dominating. The scholars suggested the study provided empirical evidence that conflict styles did not operate independently.

Further expanding upon ideas that conflict styles may be utilized in unison, Huismans (1995) investigated handling conflict as a conglomeration of conflict style behaviors. One hundred and fifteen police sergeants were videotaped while role playing a conflict with a superior and a subordinate. The researchers documented behavioral variables: forcing (dominating), problem solving (integrating), compromising, accommodating, and avoiding. The effectiveness of the conglomeration of conflict styles was similar for superior and subordinate roles. Effective behaviors were identified as the 'ladder of effectiveness' which included components of behaviors in the following sequence: dominating, avoiding, compromising, and integrating. The researchers concluded that an increase in integrating tended to have a positive effect on the parties' mutual relationship, an increase in unassertive compromising was effective for supervisory roles, yet an increase in unassertive avoiding was less effective for subordinate roles. The findings in this study support the current researcher's beliefs that differences in conflict styles occur for individuals in supervisory roles and individuals in subordinate roles.

The Concept of Face, Face Content, and Face Concern

Concept of Face

The metaphor of 'face' has been influential in phrases such as "face-to-face," "in your face," and "saving face" (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2006, p. 10). Over the years, face has been a powerful figure of speech to portray the self in interpersonal relationships. One of the earliest scholars to define face was Hu (1944). Hu described the concept of face as "lien," "the confidence of society in the moral character of the ego," and "mien-tzu," "the social prestige gained through success and reputation" (Hu, 1944, p. 61). Hu suggested the two components of face differed in that lien was an entitlement by virtue of birth and mien-tzu was dependent on social reputation.

Goffman's (1967) article "On Face-Work" brought the 2,000-year-old Chinese concept of face to contemporary Western literature. Goffman defined face as "the positive social value a person claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman, 1967, p. 5). Although influenced by the Eastern Chinese definition, Goffman's Western definition was slightly different. According to the ancient belief, face was largely consistent over time unless there was a "significant change" in public perception or social status (Ho, 1994, p. 274). Yet, in Goffman's earlier writings, he had explained social interactions as "encounters" where actors influenced one another through "performances" which influenced the social value of the people involved (Goffman, 1959, p. 15). In this view, Goffman described face as a condition of social interactions specific to social situations rather than to significant changes in perception or status. Following Hu and Goffman, Ho (1976) defined face as, "the

reciprocated compliance, respect, and deference that each party expects from, and extends to, the other party" (p. 883). Ho suggested that face was an interdependent phenomenon not an independent construct and therefore not a personality trait.

In 1988, Ting-Toomey conceptualized face as a favorable social image of one's self in relation to others in a relational context (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Ting-Toomey (2005) further defined the concept of face as "the emotional significance that individuals attached to personal social self-worth and the social self-worth of others," and suggested that face was a precious resource in communication that could be "bargained, threatened, undermined, and enhanced" (p. 73).

Several scholars agree face is a social commodity that may be lost, saved, protected, or threatened (Cupach & Metts, 1994; Domenici & Littlejohn, 2006; Ting-Toomey, 2005; Wilson, 1992), consequently, for clarification purposes, it is necessary to briefly introduce the term 'facework'. Facework is a common term found in connection to the face-negotiation theory and related literature, and has been used as a term to describe the actions taken to maintain face. Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1987) offered an initial theory to examine threats to face. Facework behaviors, such as, remain calm, pretend, deny, apologize, and use humor have been identified to maintain face. It is important to note that facework and conflict styles are similar but not the same since conflict styles are normally used during conflict interactions while facework behaviors may be used before, during, or after a variety of social interactions. Nonetheless, of particular significance to the current study is the notion that face can be threatened and that interpersonal conflict provides a format for face threatening episodes.

In summary, the theoretical writings of Hu, Goffman, Ho, and Ting-Toomey, portray face as having relevancy only during interpersonal interactions, and therefore conceptualize face as a social concept rather than a psychological or intrapersonal construct.

Face Content

Different face wants or needs within diverse communication interactions influence how an individual wants to be seen by others and how an individual treats others. Lim (1994) identified three types of face: autonomy, fellowship, and competence, and suggested that autonomy face involved a feeling of freedom and an idea of privacy, whereas fellowship face involved a feeling of connection with others as a friend, and competence face involved the image of a good reputation and capability in society. Ting-Toomey (2005) discussed three additional types of face: status face, the need for others to acknowledge power and material worth; reliability face, the need for others to recognize loyalty and dependability; and moral face, the concern for others to respect integrity and dignity.

Face Concern

Face concern refers to the direction and energy an individual adjusts and orients face within a social interaction, and "face movement" refers to the options an individual encounters when deciding to maintain, defend, or improve face (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005). As previously mentioned face is usually unnoticed in everyday interactions through familiar and socially accepted communication. However, a perceived threat to an individual's social self-image can evoke a mixture of image related concerns. These concerns may develop into self-face, the protective concern for one's own social image;

other-face, the concern for the other person's social image; and mutual-face, the concern for the social image of the relationship (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p. 74). The next section provides cultural-level, individual-level, and situational-level explanations for face concern behaviors.

The Face-Negotiation Theory

Several models have been designed to explain face (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Lim & Bowers, 1991; Rogan & Hammer, 1994). Although helpful, these models were not specifically designed for application to conflict situations. The majority of research relating face concerns and conflict styles has been influenced by Ting-Toomey's face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). This section provides an overview of the face-negotiation theory by reviewing the earliest 1988 version to the current 2005 theoretical version through the evolutionary additions of the cultural-level, individual-level, and situational-level propositions.

Historical Overview

The foundational groundwork for the face-negotiation theory can be found in Ting-Toomey's (1982) article, "Toward a Theory of Conflict and Culture." In this earlier article, Ting-Toomey relied on Hall's framework of high-context and low-context cultures to discuss the influences of culture on conflict. The article emphasized the communication process in high-context cultures which value group orientation and low-context cultures which value individual orientation. In 1988, the face-negotiation theory was officially introduced in the editorial "Intercultural Conflict Styles: A Face-Negotiation Theory" (Ting-Toomey, 1988). In this article, Ting-Toomey applied Brown

and Levinson's (1978) politeness theory and elaborated on positive and negative face concepts to introduce the idea that an individual's social image could perhaps be threatened. Ting-Toomey elaborated on politeness theory assumptions that propose individuals have a positive face need related to approval from others and a negative face need related to claims of autonomy. Further, Ting-Toomey extended high-context and low-context cultural concepts to cultural values and beliefs, and reviewed Rahim's (1983) conflict typology and cross-cultural conflict studies in relation to the dual-concern approach for studying conflict styles. This original face-negotiation theory contained twelve theoretical propositions derived from individualism-collectivism concepts and cross-cultural conflict styles (p. 226), and focused on the cultural-level to explain face and conflict styles. The term "individualism-collectivism" was used to refer to "a grouping of beliefs and attitudes for a range of people" (p. 224). Individualism refers to value beliefs stressing an individual's identity rather identity as part of a group while collectivism highlights the importance of how individuals view themselves as a group member. Individualism may be analogized to "I" while collectivism may be analogized to "we." Presented in this original version, and of particular significance to the current doctoral study, was Ting-Toomey's theoretical assumption that social self-image, face, is an explanatory factor for conflict styles.

In 1998, an updated version of the face-negotiation theory appeared in the article "Face Competence in Intercultural Conflict: An Updated Face-Negotiation Theory" (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). In this version, the concept of "self-construal" was introduced as an individual-level component and defined as "the degree to which

individuals perceive themselves as independent or dependent to others" (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998, p. 196). Power-distance was added at the cultural-level to explain the extent to which individuals accept power distribution within a society. The 1998 theory presented seven assumptions and thirty-two propositions based on cultural-level and individual-level components.

In 2005, Ting-Toomey once again modernized her original theory in "The Matrix of Face: An Updated Face-Negotiation Theory". In this version a third level was introduced to explain relational-level and situational-level factors. Relationship factors incorporated aspects of familiarity and intimacy among individuals while situational factors included different levels of conflict intensity and the geographic location of public/private settings. The relationship factor of in-groups and out-groups was also introduced and is further explained in the next section. The most recent version of the face-negotiation theory incorporates the seven theoretical assumptions derived from the previous versions, and includes twenty four revised theoretical propositions; twelve cultural-level propositions, ten individual-level propositions, and two relational and situation-level propositions. Due to the quantity of theoretical propositions, the following section examines only propositions and literary research directly related to the theoretical assumption that face concerns are explanatory factors for conflict styles.

Theoretical Propositions

Cultural-Level Theoretical Propositions

Theoretical Propositions 1 through 12 provide a summary of cultural-level explanations for face and conflict styles. Two key components to the cultural-level

propositions that address differences in the meaning of face across cultures are the value dimensions of individualism-collectivism and large/small power distances.

Hofstede (1991) explained individualism as an emphasis on the goals of an individual more than the goals of a group, and collectivism as an emphasis on the goals of a group over goals of an individual. Research suggests that individualistic cultures focus on the "I" image while collectivistic cultures focus on the "we" image. In most Western cultures, for example, the United States, the core of self-image is based on individual autonomy while in most Eastern cultures the core of self-image is interdependent with others (Brewer & Chen, 2007, p. 133). Research has revealed that China is classified as collectivist, Japan as moderately collectivist, Germany as moderately individualistic, and the United States as individualistic (Hofstede, 1991). The individualism-collectivism approach has been criticized for its lack of acknowledgement for individual differences within cultures. The face-negotiation theory addresses this criticism through individual-level propositions.

Power distance is the extent to which a society accepts that power is distributed equally or unequally (Hofstede, 1991). Individuals in large-power cultures believe that power should be distributed unequally and accept hierarchical relations while individuals in small-power cultures believe that "power should be distributed equally and people should enjoy equality without status" (Oetzel et al., 2001, p. 239). Connections have been suggested between power distance and individualism-collectivism. Triandis and Gelfand (1998) suggested that individualism and collectivism emphasized vertical and horizontal social relationships, and proposed that horizontal patterns assumed individuals were

equal while vertical patterns consisted of hierarchies and assumed individuals were unequal. The scholars suggested that horizontal patters related to collectivistic cultures with small-power distance values and vertical patterns related to individualistic cultures with large-power distance values.

The face-negotiation theory proposes that members of individualistic cultures tend to express a greater degree of self-face concerns while members of collectivist cultures tend to express a greater degree of other-face and mutual-face concerns. In relation to conflict styles, members of individualistic cultures tend to use more dominating/competing, emotionally expressive, and assertive and aggressive conflict styles than members of collectivist cultures, while members of collectivist cultures tend to use more avoiding, obliging, and compromising to integrating conflict styles than members of individualistic cultures (Ting-Toomey, 2005).

Individual-Level Theoretical Proposition

Theoretical Propositions 13 through 22 summarize the individual-level explanations regarding face concerns, self-construals, and conflict styles.

Self-construal relates to the concept of self in relation to the surrounding context and is composed of an independent and interdependent self. The independent self-construal is defined as "the self separate from the social context that highlights internal abilities and feelings", and the interdependent self-construal is "the self that emphasizes social status, belongingness and relationships" (Singelis & Brown, 1995, p. 359). Ting-Toomey et al., (2001) examined the effects of ethnicity, gender, and self-construal types on conflict styles and suggested that a combination of the two self-construal types

resulted in a "bi-construal" type, a combination of high levels of independent and interdependent self images; and an "ambivalent" type, a combination of low levels of independent and interdependent self images (p. 92).

The face-negotiation theory proposes that the independent self is associated positively with self-face concerns and the interdependent self is associated positively with other-face and mutual-face concerns. Self-face maintenance is associated with dominating and competing conflict styles while other-face maintenance is associated positively with avoiding, obliging, compromising, and integrating conflict styles. The independent self-construal type is associated positively with dominating and competing conflict styles while the interdependent self-construal type is associated positively with avoiding, obliging, compromising, and integrating conflict styles. Bi-construal is associated positively with compromising and integrating conflict styles and the ambivalent type is associated positively with neglect and third-party conflict styles (Ting-Toomey, 2005).

Relational and Situational-Level Theoretical Propositions

Theoretical Propositions 23 and 24 delineate the situational-level explanations regarding face concerns and in-group/out-group conflict situations.

In-group/out-group relates to relational closeness. In-groups are groups of individuals that people care about one another's welfare, such as, families, friends, and co-workers, while out-groups are strangers or people not liked (Triandis, 1995). Differences have been found between individualistic cultures and collectivistic cultures in regards to relational closeness and face concerns. Members of individualistic cultures

tend to have self-face concerns with both in-groups and out-groups, yet members of collectivistic cultures tend to have self-face concerns with out-groups and other-face concerns with in-groups (Oetzel et al., 2001).

The face-negotiation theory proposes that individualists or independent-self personalities tend to express a greater degree of self-face maintenance concerns and less other-face maintenance concerns in dealing with both in-group and out-group conflict situations, and collectivists or interdependent-self personalities tend to express a greater degree of other-face concerns with in-group members and a greater degree of self-face concerns with out-group members in inter-group conflict situations (Ting-Toomey, 2005).

Summary

This literature review uncovered the lack of available academic literature on the topic of the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles among adult individuals employed on school campuses, highlighted the lack of educational research on this topic, and established a rational for this doctoral proposal. Research supports the importance of understanding conflict styles within workplace environments and reveals instances when particular conflict styles are found more advantageous than other styles.

As previously noted, Canary and Spitzberg (1989) concluded that integrative strategies that supported relational objectives were positively linked to competence. McKinney et al. (1997) found that integrative strategies with a dual concern for self and other were more competent than strategies concerned with only self or only the other individual. Gross and Guerrero (2000) found that the integrating conflict style was

perceived as most appropriate for social interactions and also most effective in completing tasks. Morris-Rothschild and Brassard (2006) suggested that teachers reporting higher classroom management efficacy also reported use of integrating, compromising, and obliging styles. Aritzeta, Ayestaran, and Swailes (2005) suggested that while conflict styles related to cooperation could be seen as weak, and conflict styles related to competition could escalate conflict, conflict styles, used jointly, had the potential of bringing creative results to teamwork. Kuhn and Poole (2000) proposed groups that developed integrating conflict styles were rated as more effective in decision making than groups that neither developed a consistent style or groups that used confrontation and avoiding styles. Aquino (2000) found obliging and avoiding were positively related to victimization, yet obliging was more strongly related among employees of lower status. The integrating style was also related to victimization, but again only among lower status employees. Munduate et al. (1999) explored the effectiveness of specific combinations of conflict styles and suggested the study provided empirical evidence that conflict styles did not operate independently.

As research suggests, conflict styles can be determining factors as to whether conflict episodes will result in destructive or constructive outcomes. Therefore, a need exists to explore factors that may influence preferences for conflict styles. Ting-Toomey's face negotiation theory provides an appropriate theoretical framework for this exploration. In review, the face negotiation theory proposes that members of individualistic cultures, with independent self-construals, tend to express a greater degree of self-face concerns and tend to use more dominating, emotionally expressive, and

aggressive conflict styles in dealing with both in-group and out-group conflicts. Members of collectivist cultures, with interdependent self-construals, tend to express a greater degree of other-face and mutual-face concerns, tend to use more avoiding, obliging, compromising, and integrating conflict styles with in-group conflicts, yet express a greater degree of self-face with out-group conflict situations.

While theoretical assumptions and research data reveal an association between face concerns and preferences for conflict styles (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998), more research is needed to determine the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities. Chapter 3 will explain the quantitative research design and methods used in the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

Introduction

This section explains the researcher's rational for conducting this study, clarifies the research questions, research design, population and sample, survey instrument, data collection, data analysis, and limitations of this doctoral study.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to test the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998) that relates face concerns to conflict styles. Since conflict styles have the potential to influence conflict outcomes (Aquino, 2000; Brewer et al., 2002; Rahim, 2002), it is important to explore factors that affect preferences for conflict styles among adult individuals employed on school campuses to better understand interpersonal conflicts at the organizational level of school communities.

One overall research question and three subquestions were used to explore the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles.

Research Question 1: Does a relationship exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities?

H0 (Null): A relationship does not exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities.

H1 (Alt): A relationship does exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities.

Subquestion1: Does self-face concern associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles?

H0 (Null): Self-face concern does not associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles.

H1 (Alt): Self-face concern does associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles

Subquestion 2: Does other-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

H0 (Null): Other-face concern does not associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

H1 (Alt): Other-face concern does associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

Subquestion 3: Does mutual-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

H0 (Null): Mutual-face concern does not associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

H1 (Alt): Mutual-face concern does associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

Research Design

The problem addressed in this study was the lack of understanding for the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles among adult individuals employed on school campuses. To address this problem, a correlation study was used to test assumptions of the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 2005) that face concerns affect conflict styles. A quantitative approach was the most appropriate method to use to

test a theory or explanation (Creswell, 2003). Further, given that theory verification follows a positivist approach in which data collection assists in shaping knowledge through reductionism, the current researcher did not believe a qualitative design was appropriate (Coleman & Briggs, 2005). In addition, the researcher rejected a qualitative approach as the current study utilized an established survey instrument with predetermined hypotheses and variables while a qualitative design frequently encourages research instruments to change during a study and variables to emerge from data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). A mixed-method design was not considered as the researcher utilized a pre-established survey (Oetzel et al., 2003) to test the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 2005), and use of a mixed-method design does not guarantee improvement of the survey instrument.

A correlation method was used to allow the researcher to make observations of the variables, face concerns and conflict styles, and to examine the relationship between the variables. An experimental method was not considered as the goal of the current research was to examine the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles rather than to explain the cause-and-effect of the relationship.

Consequently, the intent of the current doctoral study aligned to characteristics of quantitative methodologies. First the purpose of the study sought to confirm or validate relationships between face concerns and conflict styles. Second, the current study's processes followed carefully structured guidelines defined before the study began. Third, data collection specifically related to variables of face concerns and conflict styles. Fourth, data analysis began with the face-negotiation theory as a premise and drew

logical conclusions from the theoretical assumptions, and lastly, findings either supported or did not support theoretical assumptions of the face-negotiation theory.

Population and Sample

Data for this quantitative correlation study was collected on three school campuses in a large metropolitan region in the Western portion of the United States. One school district serves the entire region. This is a culturally diverse region in which the ethnicity of adult individuals employed on school campuses frequently reflects the ethnicity of the local geographic community. Therefore, within this metropolitan region, while some adult populations within school communities are culturally diverse other adult populations are not. The three school campuses in this study were specifically chosen because the adults employed on the school campuses represented an ethnically diverse population. The demographics of all three middle schools are very similar. Each school has approximately one thousand three-hundred students on campus. The student populations comprise of approximately 60% Hispanic or Latino, 20% Black or African American, and 20% White or Caucasian. The schools are geographically located in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods with over 65% of students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program. While the ethnic percentages of the adult populations do not exactly mimic the ethnic percentages of the student populations, the adult populations within these three school campuses are more diverse than surrounding school campuses. The adult populations represent approximately 40% White or Caucasian, 25% Hispanic or Latino, 25% Black or African American, 5% Asian, and a small percentage of other ethnicities.

Although the researcher sought to understand variables among all adult populations, and the current study was nondependent upon subgroup statistics, the researcher believed data obtained from ethnically diverse populations would assist individuals employed within these diverse school communities to better appreciate interpersonal conflict within diverse work environments. The total population consisted of approximately 300 individuals, above the age of 18 years old, as each school campus comprise approximately 100 adult employees. The adult employees held employment positions as teachers (sixth, seventh, and eighth grades), support personnel (teaching assistants, librarians, cafeteria staff, custodians, registrars, school nurses, and magnet school coordinators), and administrators (deans, assistant principals, and principals).

To obtain a sample population, the researcher used a convenience sampling approach for each of the three selected school campuses. The researcher believed convenience sampling was an appropriate method for this doctoral research for the following reasons: (a) the research questions being asked by the current researcher could adequately be answered using a convenience sample; (b) the researcher did not seek to infer from the sample population to the total population; (c) the research results were distributed to each of the three school campuses as a compiled document to assist with common discussions concerning face concerns and conflict styles rather than as a document that attempted to identify or represent each or all school populations; and (d) asking for anonymous volunteer participants reduced the potential risks of the researcher's administrative position within the school district wherein the three school campuses are located. Self-selection bias is a possible correlation between a participant's

characteristics and effects to a study that may arise when individuals have the option to participate in a survey (Trochim, 2001). The researcher was aware of the self-selection bias and acknowledges this possible data collection bias in chapter 4 and chapter 5.

Survey Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a pre-established Likert scale survey from Oetzel et al.'s (2003) study. The current researcher contacted Professor Oetzel and requested permission to utilize his survey. Professor Oetzel sent the survey instrument to the current researcher and provided written authorization for use of the survey.

In 2003, Oetzel's survey instrument was used to investigate interpersonal conflict within a large moving company and a moderately sized manufacturing company. The survey asked participants to recall a conflict with a co-worker and reflect upon how they thought and acted during the conflict. To address face concerns, Oetzel et al.'s (2003) instrument utilizes a measurement originally derived from Ting-Toomey and Oetzel's (2001) study. This measurement includes 12 items; 4 items measuring self-face, 4 items measuring other-face, and 4 items measuring mutual-face. Items such as "I am concerned with not bringing shame to myself" (self-face), "I am concerned with helping the other person maintain his/her credibility" (other-face), and "A peaceful resolution is important" (mutual-face) were used to measure specific face concerns. The range of possible scores fell between 1 and 5; 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *indifferent*, 4 = *disagree*, and 5 = *strongly disagree*. A higher score was an indication that a participant more strongly disagreed with a statement while a lower score indicated a participant more strongly

agreed with a statement. Cronbach's alpha reliabilities were reported as ".80 for self-face, .87 for other-face, and .77 for mutual-face" (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel 2001, p. 244).

To address conflict styles, Oetzel et al.'s (2003) instrument utilized a measurement originally derived from Ting-Toomey et al.'s (2000) study and Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, and Yee-Jung's (2001) study. The measurement contains 4 items for each of the 8 conflict styles. In Ting-Toomey et al.'s (2000) study the instrument's reliability of conflict styles ranged from ".78 to .88" (Oetzel et al. 2003, p. 109). Items such as "I use my influence to get my ideas accepted" (dominating), "I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks" (compromising), "I rely on a third person to help negotiate a resolution to the conflict" (third party), "I say nasty things about the other person to other people" (neglect), "I use my feelings to guide my conflict behaviors" (emotion), "I say nothing and wait for things to get better" (avoiding), "I work with the other person to reach a joint resolution to our conflict" (integrating), and "I try to satisfy the expectations of the other person" (obliging) were used to measure conflict styles. The same scale utilized in the face-concern measurement was employed to measure the response options for conflict styles; 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *indifferent*, 4 = *disagree*, and 5 = *strongly disagree*. A higher score indicated more strongly disagreed while a lower score indicated more strongly agreed.

Demographic Data

The survey asked the participant's gender, age, educational level, and ethnicity. These demographic data were gathered to provide characteristics and traits for response assessments rather than for statistical analysis.

Construct Validation

Reliability

One measure of reliability is how internally consistent the questions measure the qualities that are suppose to be measured (Fink, 2006). The instrument used in this study was derived from two surveys that previously yielded high coefficient alpha calculations. The section for face concern measurements reported Cronbach alpha reliabilities of ".80 for self-face; .87 for other-face; and .77 for mutual-face", and the section for conflict style measurements reported Cronbach alpha reliability of ".78 to .88" (Oetzel et al. 2003, p. 109). Previously, in Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, and Yee-Jung's (2001) study, the Cronbach alpha reliabilities were reported as: avoiding (.88), integrating (.87), third party help (.88), neglect (.83), compromising (.75), dominating (.73), obliging (.59), and emotional expression (.75). These Cronbach reliabilities compare favorably with those of existing instruments: the Thomas- Kilmann Instrument ".61 to .68" and Rahim's Organizational Conflict Inventory-II ".72 to .77" (Rahim, 1983).

Validity

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Fink (2006) suggested that one way to increase the probability that an instrument is valid is to use one that a previous researcher has shown to be reliable and valid. The instrument for the current study was a pre-established survey from Oetzel et al.'s (2003) investigation. The adequacy of the measurement for face concerns was initially established in Ting-Toomey and Oetzel's (2001) study as the survey items measured face concerns as identified in the research questions. The

adequacy of the measurement for conflict styles was originally established in Ting-Toomey et al.'s (2000) study and Ting-Toomey et al.'s (2001) study. Ting-Toomey et al.'s (2000) study examined the influence of ethnic identity on conflict styles. Six hundred and sixty-two participants completed the survey instrument. The measurement for conflict styles yielded a factor analysis that identified seven of the eight conflict styles across various ethnic groups. The scholars suggested the obliging conflict style dropped out due to the bias of acquaintance conflicts, yet suggested the addition of neglect, third party help, and emotional expression styles strengthened measurements for conflict styles by providing "important conflict style factors across diverse ethnic groups" (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000, p. 78). Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, and Yee-Jung's (2001) study utilized data from Ting-Toomey et al.'s (2000) study to investigate the effects of self construal types on conflict styles. Scale confirmation again confirmed the survey items for conflict styles measured the styles as identified in the research questions. Furthermore, Oetzel et al. (2003) stated "the measure used in the study to address face concerns provided an operational concept of face that could be used in future studies related to communication behaviors" (p. 112).

Data Collection

The researcher contacted three middle school administrators to gain permission to survey the adult populations on the school campuses. The current researcher selected schools based upon diversity within the adult employment populations. The adult populations represented approximately 40% White or Caucasian, 25% Hispanic or Latino, 25% Black or African American, 5% Asian, and a small percentage of other

ethnicities. With Institutional Review Board approval (IRB #04-30-09-0317614) and school district consent, the current researcher contacted the site administrator of each school. The current researcher sent the letter of participation, disclaimer letter, consent form, survey, and instructions to the site administrators for review. In agreement, the site administrator signed the letter to participate. The researcher then utilized Zoomerang software to distribute the surveys to the schools. Each school has an e-mail address to conduct business and communicate to staff. The site administrator used the e-mail addresses for each of the three schools to post the disclaimer letter, consent form, survey, and instructions. An employee was provided the opportunity to participate by first reading the disclaimer letter and consent form presented in the e-mail message. Included in an additional section of the e-mail, individuals interested in participation were then requested to review the instruction letter. The instruction letter guided participants to the Zoomerang link which provided access to the survey. Participants were asked to respond to the survey within a three week period, beginning on May 13, 2009, ending on May 29, 2009. One hundred and ninety-two surveys were completed. The researcher compiled survey results using SPSS software.

Consideration for ethical principles around the relationship of the researcher and participants was resolved by following sampling procedures with anonymous volunteer participants. After weighing the benefits with the time requirements of the participants, the researcher believed it was worthwhile to conduct the study. It is the researcher that must decide how to conduct research as ethically as possible to reduce the “interruption into people’s lives” (Coleman & Briggs, 2005, p. 87). The researcher provided

aggregated research results to the three school site administrators. The researcher organized a binder that contained: (a) a brief description of the research problem, purpose, and significance; (b) overview of data analysis; (c) a brief description of research results and conclusions; and (d) recommendations for how a school administrator may utilize the research findings as a discussion tool for a professional development dialogue. The researcher believes individuals may gain awareness for the relationship between conflict and social self-image, increase personal responsibility for how they choose to respond to interpersonal conflicts, and improve the quality of workplace environments on school campuses.

Data Analysis

The fundamental research questions for this study were related to the relationships between face concerns and conflict styles. To explore the strength of the relationships between the variables, and as conducted in Oetzel et al.'s (2003) study, data was analyzed using correlation statistics. Specifically, data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation statistics, and multiple regression statistics. In addition, demographic data was analyzed by calculating the frequencies of statistical means. The rational for the researcher's choices to use certain statistical tests, and the assumptions associated with each test, are outlined in the following paragraphs.

SPSS version 16.0 for Windows was used to enter the data. First, the researcher constructed an Excel spreadsheet, generated from Zoomerang software, to identify survey items by numeric value. Second, since the 5-point Likert scale survey measured four items for each of the eleven variables, the researcher computed the sums for each of the

four corresponding items to produce eleven target variables. Third, the data were treated as interval data and analyzed using parametric tests. This method was appropriate as summed Likert scale items with equal units of measurement may be treated as interval data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005), and "parametric statistics are appropriate measurements for interval data" (Coleman & Briggs, 2005, p. 236).

Descriptive statistics were examined to provide information on how closely variables within the data were correlated around a point of central tendency. This doctoral study did not attempt to make inferences of a large population by gathering data from a smaller population; therefore inferential statistics were not used (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Descriptive statistics included the frequencies and percentages as well as the means and standard deviations. Standard deviations measured the spread of values within the data, otherwise known as the statistical dispersion. If the data points were all valued close to the mean value, then the standard deviation was identified as close to zero, as it did not deviate much from the norm. Frequency distributions were computed to analyze demographic data.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: Does a relationship exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities?

Subquestion1: Does self-face concern associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles?

Subquestion 2: Does other-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

Subquestion 3: Does mutual-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

To examine the research questions, eight multiple regression analyses were conducted to assess if the face concerns (self-face, other-face, and mutual-face) predicted the conflict styles (dominating, emotional expression, neglect, integrating, obliging, avoiding, compromising, and third-party help). Multiple regressions are an appropriate analysis when the goal of research is to assess the extent of a relationship among a set of dichotomous or interval/ratio predictor variables on an interval/ratio criterion variable. The following regression equation (main effects model) was used: $y = b1*x1 + b2*x2 + c$; where y = estimated dependent, c = constant (which includes the error term), b = regression coefficients and x = independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

The enter method for standard multiple regression testing was used. The standard method enters all independent variables simultaneously into the model. Unless theory sufficiently supports the method of entry, the standard multiple regression is the appropriate method of entry. Variables should be evaluated, "in terms of what they add to prediction of the dependent variable that is different from the predictability afforded by all the other predictors" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p.131). The *F* test was used to assess whether face concerns collectively predicted the conflict styles. The multiple correlation coefficient of determination, *r*-squared, was reported and used to determine how much variance in the dependent variables (conflict styles) could be accounted for by the set of independent variables (face concerns). The *t* test was used to determine the significance of each predictor and unstandardized beta coefficients were used to

determine the extent of prediction for each independent variable. In relation to significant predictors, for every one unit increase in the predictor the dependent variable will increase or decrease by the number of unstandardized beta coefficients.

The assumptions of multiple regression (linearity, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity) were assessed. Linearity assumes a straight line relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variable. Homoscedasticity assumes that scores are normally distributed about the regression line. Linearity and homoscedasticity were assessed by examination of scatter plots. The absence of multicollinearity assumes that predictor variables are not too related and was assessed using Variance Inflation Factors (VIF). VIF values over 10 suggested the presence of multicollinearity (Stevens, 2002).

As standard practice for multiple regression analysis, a Pearson correlation matrix was included in Chapter 4 to show associations between variables. Correlation is an appropriate statistical measure when the research purposes "are concerned primarily with finding out whether a relationship exists and with determining its magnitude and relationship" (Pagano, 1990, p. 117). Pearson *r* correlation (product-moment correlation) is a bivariate measure of association (strength) of the relationship between two variables. Pearson *r*, "is the slope of the least-squares linear regression line when the scores are plotted as *z* scores and measures the extent to which paired scores occupy the same or opposite positions within their own distributions" (Pagano, 1990, p. 119-120).

For all correlation calculations in this study, alpha levels of either (.05) or (.01), showing correlations significantly different than zero, were documented as statistical significance rather than as chance occurrences. The relationships between the variables

were reported within the range of +1 to -1 to asses the correlations of perfect positive to perfect negative. Data was reported in two decimal places to designate the degree of correlation. The researcher reported a positive correlation if high values occurred for both variables and reported a negative correlation if high values occurred for one variable and low values occurred for the remaining variable. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the correlation coefficient; .2 represented a weak association between the two variables, .5 represented a moderate association, and .8 represented a strong association (Howell, 1992).

Limitations

Since the researcher was constrained by access to individuals experiencing current conflicts, this study relied on recall instead of studying actual conflict behaviors. Self-report measures that rely on an individual's perceptions of conflict styles rather than studying actual conflict behaviors may reduce insight into how an individual truly responds to conflict episodes, and thus limit an understanding of the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles. Another limitation was that only three school campuses were represented. While the sample size was large enough to develop conclusions, an external threat to validity exists if incorrect generalizations are reported beyond the participants of the school communities included in the study. An additional limitation was the use of a convenience sample as this sampling approach frequently leads to self-selection bias. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) suggest that a researcher point out how bias may have influenced the research design in efforts to assist with appraising the research realistically and judging its merits honestly. Implications for this bias may include

irregular representation in the sample population as individuals had a choice to self-select themselves into the study. This approach may have created a sample population with tendencies and characteristics unrepresentative beyond the sample population. The current researcher acknowledged possible sampling biases in the data collection and data analysis processes, and consequently did not make generalizations beyond the sample population in the study.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the methodology used to conduct the research. A quantitative correlation design was used to explore the degree to which face concerns associated with conflict styles for three school populations in a large metropolitan region in the Western portion of the United States. Data collection and data analysis involved quantitative strategies, use of a pre-established survey instrument (Oetzel et al., 2003), and correlation methods to determine statistically significant findings. Threats to reliability and validity were reduced as much as possible by utilizing a pre-established survey with Cronbach's alpha reliabilities of ".80 for self-face, .87 for other-face, and .77 for mutual-face" and Cronbach's alpha reliability of ".78 to .88" for conflict styles (Oetzel et al. 2003, p. 109). Ethical issues were dealt with by distribution of appropriate disclaimer and consent forms and use of voluntary and anonymous sampling techniques. Chapter 4 will explain the results of this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

Chapter 4 is organized around the research questions and hypotheses in this study. The chapter presents a review of data collection procedures, data analysis tied to research questions, tables descriptive of statistical findings for each research question, and conclusions to outcomes in relation to each research question.

The purpose of this doctoral study was to explore the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles through the theoretical framework of the face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). One hundred and ninety-two adult employees on three middle school campuses voluntarily completed an anonymous survey.

The following research questions and hypotheses were used for this study:

Research Question 1: Does a relationship exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities?

H0 (Null): A relationship does not exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities.

H1 (Alt): A relationship does exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities.

Subquestion1: Does self-face concern associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles?

H0 (Null): Self-face concern does not associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles.

H1 (Alt): Self-face concern does associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles

Subquestion 2: Does other-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

H0 (Null): Other-face concern does not associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

H1 (Alt): Other-face concern does associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

Subquestion 3: Does mutual-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

H0 (Null): Mutual-face concern does not associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

H1 (Alt): Mutual-face concern does associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were obtained through use of a pre-established Likert scale instrument (Oetzel et al., 2003). The survey asked participants to recall a conflict with a co-worker and reflect upon how they thought and acted during the conflict. Twelve items addressed face concerns, 4 items for each of the three face concerns; and 32 items addressed conflict styles, 4 items for each of the 8 conflict styles. Demographic data; gender, age, educational level, and ethnicity were gathered to provide characteristics for response assessments.

Zoomerang software was utilized to distribute the consent form and survey to three separate middle school campuses. The survey remained posted on each school e-mail address for three weeks, beginning on May 13, 2009, and ending on May 29, 2009. The total population for this study was approximately 300 adult employees. Of this population, 262 individuals opened the survey. Within this group of 262 individuals 56 individuals did not begin the survey, 14 individuals partially completed the survey, and 192 individuals completed the survey. Only the 192 completed surveys were included and analyzed in this study. The researcher calculated 192 as a sufficient sample population with a 95% confidence level and a 4.25 confidence interval.

Data Analysis

The 5-point Likert scale survey utilized in the current study measured 4 items for each of the 11 variables; therefore, the sums for each of the 4 corresponding items were calculated to produce 11 target variables. The data was treated as interval data and analyzed using parametric tests. This method was appropriate as summed Likert scale items with equal units of measurement may be treated as interval data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005), and "parametric statistics are appropriate measurements for interval data" (Coleman & Briggs, 2005, p. 236).

The nature of the current study was to explore relationships between variables with no attempt to control or manipulate the variables. Therefore, the current researcher utilized the statistical technique of correlation measurements. Correlation is an appropriate statistical measure when the research purposes are to measure the direction, form, and degree of relationships between variables (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). It was

valuable to review Pearson *r* coefficients to assess the degree of linear relationships between variables as well as utilize multiple regression statistics to measure the strength of predicted values.

To examine the research questions, eight multiple regressions were conducted with the predictors of self-face, other-face, and mutual-face concerns, and each of the eight outcome variables of dominating, emotional expression, third party, neglect, avoiding, integrating, obliging, and compromising. The assumptions of regressions, linearity and constant variance, were assessed. Multiple regressions are an appropriate analysis when the goal is to describe relationships between a set of interval independent variables and interval dependent variables (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). The multiple regression tests provided statistical analysis for the predictability of face concerns with conflict styles as hypothesized in the research questions. As appropriate, the regression equation (main effects model) was used: $y = b1*x1 + b2*x2 + c$; where y = estimated dependent, c = constant, b = regression coefficients and x = independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). As common practice for regressions analysis, Pearson *r* correlations were reviewed to assess the linear relationships between variables. The Pearson coefficient is an appropriate statistics to review when the data is interval and relies on parametric statistics (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Due to multiple variables within each of the four research questions, the current researcher chose to reject or retain null hypotheses based upon distinct relationships between individual variables. The researcher believed the alpha values provided convincing evidence that relationships did exist between variables and that the null

hypotheses for distinctive relationships among these specific variables were wrong. The following section presents analysis and findings in relation to the research questions.

Demographic Data

The frequencies and percentages for work location, gender, age, education, and ethnicity for the sample population in this study (n = 192) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Data

	Frequency	Percentage
Work location		
School 1	65	33.9
School 2	63	32.8
School 3	64	33.3
Gender		
Male	70	36.5
Female	122	63.5
Age		
18 to 30	49	25.5
31 to 45	89	46.4
46 to 65+	54	28.1
Education		
High school grad	12	6.3
College grad	80	41.7
Postgraduate	98	51.0
Other	2	1.0
Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaskan	-	-
Asian	3	1.6
Black/African American	41	21.4
Hispanic/Latino	64	33.3
Hawaiian/Pacific Island	1	.5
White/Caucasian	82	42.7
Other	1	.5

Descriptive Statistics for Variables

The general purpose of descriptive statistics is to organize a set of data for analysis. Central tendency is a common measure to identify the center of distribution within a data set. The arithmetic average or mean is a preferred measure of central tendency when data is from an interval scale (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). As the current data is interval in nature, the mean was calculated for each of the eleven variables to

provide a central value. Variability describes the distribution within a data set. The current researcher believed variability was important to review as data in the current study was gathered from people and people are not all the same. Standard deviation is the "square root of variance" (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005, p. 91), and provides a measure of the typical distance from the mean or average. Since the mean and the standard deviation are the most common values to describe a set of data (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005, the current research reviewed the mean and standard deviations to better understand the differences in human responses for the face concern and conflict style variables. The means and standard deviations for the research variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Research Variables

Variable	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*
Self-face	4.00	20.00	10.11	4.08
Other-face	4.00	20.00	11.19	3.85
Mutual-face	4.00	20.00	9.28	3.87
Dominating	4.00	20.00	12.79	4.00
Emotional Expression	6.00	17.00	11.23	2.72
Neglect	5.00	20.00	13.91	3.40
Integrating	4.00	19.00	10.45	3.38
Obliging	4.00	19.00	11.23	3.33
Compromising	4.00	18.00	9.75	3.16
Third-Party Help	5.00	20.00	12.53	3.27
Avoiding	4.00	19.00	10.28	2.80

Research Question 1

Regression analysis was used to examine research questions in the current study. Pearson *r* correlations are commonly presented in conjunction with regression analysis to show the entire association between all variables in a study. Consequently, fifty-five Pearson *r* correlations were conducted to assess if relationships existed among self, other, mutual, dominating, emotional, neglect, integrating, obliging, compromising, third party

and avoiding. The results of the Pearson *r* correlations are presented in Table 3 and reveal forty significant relationships. Correlation coefficients with a negative sign indicate the presence of an inverse relationship while positive coefficients indicate a direct relationship exists.

Table 3

Pearson r Correlations Between Face Concerns and Conflict Styles

	Self	Other	Mutual	Domin.	Emo.	Neglect	Integ.	Obliging	Comp.	Third Party
Other	-.036									
Mutual	-.016	.374**								
Dominating	.546**	.297**	-.456**							
Emotional	.463**	.204**	-.071	.292**						
Neglect	.229**	.444**	-.603**	.612**	.238**					
Integrating	.438**	.368**	.470**	-.499**	.193**	-.558**				
Obliging	.452**	.424**	.375**	-.591**	.273**	-.505**	.633**			
Compromising	.431**	.348**	.586**	-.640**	.235**	-.646**	.750**	.669**		
Third Party	-.087	-.035	-.209**	.057	.072	.250**	.063	.161*	.068	
Avoiding	-.164*	-.011	-.148*	-.140	-.047	.048	-.081	.228**	-.044	.175*

Note. * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

The first multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face, and mutual-face predict dominating. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 65.908, p <.001, and the independent variables accounted for 50.5% of the variance in dominating. The results are presented in Table 4 and suggest that for every one unit increase in self-face, dominating will increase by 0.53 units. For every one unit increase in other-face, dominating will decrease by 0.13 units. For every one unit increase in mutual-face, dominating will decrease by 0.41 units. The assumptions of multiple regression, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met. Linearity assumes a straight line relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variable and homoscedasticity assumes that scores are normally distributed about the regression line. Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) were less than 10, suggesting the absence of multicollinearity (Stevens, 2002).

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Dominating

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	12.81	0.87		14.77	0.001
Self-face	0.53	0.05	0.54	10.50	0.001
Other-face	-0.13	0.06	-0.13	-2.33	0.021
Mutual-face	-0.41	0.06	-0.40	-7.29	0.001

The second multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face and mutual-face predict emotional expression. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 20.832, p <.001 and the independent variables accounted for 23.8% of the variance in emotional expression. The results are presented in Table 5 and suggest that for every one unit increase in self-face, emotional expression will increase by 0.30 units. For every one unit increase in other-face, emotional expression will decrease by 0.14 units. Mutual-face was not a significant predictor for emotional expression. The assumptions of multiple regression, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met.

Table 5

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Emotion Exp

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	9.61	0.73		13.10	0.001
Self-face	0.31	0.04	0.46	7.21	0.001
Other-face	-0.14	0.05	-0.19	-2.80	0.006
Mutual-face	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.12	0.907

The third multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face and mutual-face predict neglect. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 54.37, p <.001 and the independent variables accounted in 45.6% of the variance for neglect. The results are presented in Table 6 and suggest that for every one unit increase in self-face, neglect will increase by 0.18 units. For every one unit increase in other-face, neglect will decrease by 0.22 units. For every one unit increase in mutual-face, neglect will decrease by .45 units. The assumptions of multiple regression, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met.

Table 6

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Neglect

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	18.69	0.77		24.21	0.001
Self-face	0.18	0.04	0.21	3.98	0.001
Other-face	-0.22	0.05	-0.25	-4.27	0.001
Mutual-face	-0.45	0.05	-0.51	-8.83	0.001

The fourth multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face and mutual-face predict integrating. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 49.97, p <.001 and the independent variables accounted in 43.5% of the variance for integrating. The results are presented in Table 7 and suggest that for every one unit increase in self-face, integrating will decrease by 0.35 units. For every one unit increase in other-face, integrating will increase by 0.18 units. For every one unit increase in mutual-face, integrating will increase by .34 units. The assumptions of multiple regression, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met.

Table 7

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Integrating

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	8.83	0.78		11.27	0.001
Self-face	-0.35	0.05	-0.42	-7.79	0.001
Other-face	0.18	0.05	0.21	3.57	0.001
Mutual-face	0.34	0.05	0.39	6.56	0.001

The fifth multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face and mutual-face predict obliging. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 46.29, p <.001 and the independent variables accounted in 41.6% of the variance for obliging. The results are presented in Table 8 and suggest that for every one unit increase in self-face, obliging will decrease by 0.36 units. For every one unit increase in other-face, obliging will increase by 0.27 units. For every one unit increase in mutual-face, obliging will increase by 0.22 units. The assumptions of multiple regression, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met.

Table 8

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Obliging

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	9.78	0.79		12.45	0.001
Self-face	-0.36	0.05	-0.44	-7.89	0.001
Other-face	0.27	0.05	0.32	5.28	0.001
Mutual-face	0.22	0.05	0.25	4.20	0.001

The sixth multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face and mutual-face predict avoiding. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 3.40, p = 0.019 and the independent variables accounted in 3.6% of the variance for avoiding. The results are presented in Table 9 and suggest that for every one unit increase in self-face, avoiding will decrease by 0.11 units. For every one unit increase in mutual-face, avoiding will decrease by 0.12 units. Other-face was not a significant predictor for avoiding. The assumptions of multiple regression, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met.

Table 9

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Avoiding

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	12.17	0.85		14.37	0.001
Self-face	-0.11	0.05	-0.17	-2.32	0.021
Other-face	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.60	0.548
Mutual-face	-0.12	0.06	-0.17	-2.19	0.030

The seventh multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face and mutual-face predict compromising. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 72.64, p <.001 and the independent variables accounted in 52.9% of the variance for compromising. The results are presented in Table 10 and suggest that for every one unit increase in self-face, compromising will decrease by 0.32 units. For every one unit increase in other-face, compromising will increase by 0.11 units. For every one unit increase in mutual-face, compromising will increase by .43 units. The assumptions of multiple regression, including, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met.

Table 10

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Compromising

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	7.78	0.67		11.66	0.001
Self-face	-0.32	0.04	-0.42	-8.41	0.001
Other-face	0.11	0.04	0.14	2.52	0.012
Mutual-face	0.43	0.04	0.53	9.88	0.001

The eighth multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess if self-face, other-face and mutual-face predict third-party help. The results of the regression analysis were significant F (3, 188) = 3.55, p = 0.016 and the independent variables accounted in 3.9% of the variance for third-party help. The results are presented in Table 11 and suggest that for every one unit increase in mutual-face, third-party help will decrease by 0.19 units. No other independent variables were significant predictors of third-party help. The assumptions of multiple regression, including, linearity, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity, were met.

Table 11

Multiple Regression Analysis on Face Concerns Predicting Third-P Help

	B	SE	β	*t*	Sig.
(Constant)	14.59	0.99		14.75	0.001
Self-face	-0.07	0.06	-0.09	-1.25	0.212
Other-face	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.61	0.543
Mutual-face	-0.19	0.07	-0.23	-2.98	0.003

There were significant levels of prediction between variables in each of the eight multiple regression tests, suggesting relationships existed between face concerns and conflict styles. The initial significance revealed: self-face was in direct opposition to other-face and in direct opposition to mutual-face as predictors for dominating, emotional expression, neglect, integrating, obliging, and compromising; mutual-face was a non-predictor for emotional expression; although weak, mutual-face was the only predictor for third-party help; and self-face and mutual-face were weak predictors for avoiding. Therefore; the results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for research question one.

Research Subquestion 1

Research Subquestion 1 explored the specific relationships between self-face concern and dominating, emotional expression, neglect, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles. As shown in the previously presented multiple regression analyses for every one unit increase in self-face dominating, emotional expression, and neglect will increase; avoiding will decrease; and no association was found between self-face and third-party help. Furthermore, review of Pearson *r* coefficients reveals positive correlations between self-face and dominating, emotional expressive, and neglect: dominating, ($r = .55$, $p < .01$); emotional expression, ($r = .46$, $p < .01$); and neglect, ($r = .23$, $p < .01$); a negative correlation between self-face and avoiding: ($r = -.16$, $p < .05$); and no significant correlation between self-face and third-party help; ($r = -.09$, $p = .23$). The unstandardized beta coefficients and Pearson *r* coefficients specific to Subquestion 1 are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12

Beta Coefficients and Pearson r Coefficients for Self-Face with Dominating, Emotional Expression, Neglect, Avoiding, and Third-Party Help

Self-Face	B	*r*
Dominating	0.53**	0.55**
Emotional Expression	0.31**	0.46**
Neglect	0.18**	0.23**
Avoiding	-0.11*	-0.16*
Third-Party Help	-0.07	-0.09

Note. * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

The initial significance revealed that when self-face concerns increased; dominating, emotional expression, and neglect conflict styles also increased. However, when self-face concerns increased, the avoiding conflict style slightly decreased. There was not a significant correlation between self-face and third-party help. For research Subquestion 1: dominating, emotional expression, and neglect were significantly and positively correlated with self-face; therefore, results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for dominating, emotional expression, and neglect. Self-face had a negative correlation with avoiding and no significant correlation with third-party help; therefore, results were sufficient to retain the null hypothesis for avoiding and third-party help.

Research Subquestion 2

Research Subquestion 2 explored the relationship between other-face concern and integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles. As shown in the previous multiple regression analyses, for every one unit increase in other-face integrating, obliging, and compromising will increase; and no associations were found between other-face with third-party help and avoiding. Additionally, review of Pearson *r* coefficients revealed positive correlations between other-face and integrating, obliging, and compromising: integrating, ($r = .37$, $p < .01$); obliging, ($r = .42$, $p < .01$); and compromising, ($r = .35$, $p < .01$). No significant correlations were found between other-face and third-party help, ($r = -.04$, $p = .63$); and between other-face and avoiding, ($r = -.01$, $p = .88$). The unstandardized beta coefficients and Pearson *r* coefficients specific to Subquestion 2 are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13

Beta Coefficients and Pearson r Coefficients for Other-Face with Integrating, Obliging, Compromising, Third-Party Help, and Avoiding

Other-Face	B	*r*
Integrating	0.18**	0.37**
Obliging	0.27**	0.42**
Compromising	0.11**	0.35**
Third-Party Help	0.04	-0.04
Avoiding	0.03	-0.01

Note. * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

The initial significance revealed that when other-face concerns increased; integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles also increased. However, there were no significant correlations between other-face concerns with avoiding and third-party help conflict styles. For research Subquestion 2: integrating, obliging, and compromising were significantly and positively correlated with other-face; therefore, results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for integrating, obliging, and compromising. Other-face had no significant correlations with third-party help or avoiding; therefore, results were sufficient to retain the null hypothesis for third-party help and avoiding.

Research Subquestion 3

Research Subquestion 3 explored the relationship between mutual-face concern and integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles. As shown in the previous multiple regression analysis, for every one unit increase in mutual-face integrating, obliging, and compromising will increase; and third-party help and avoiding will decrease. Further, review of Pearson *r* coefficients revealed positive correlations were found between mutual-face and integrating, obliging, and compromising: integrating, ($r = .47$, $p < .01$); obliging, ($r = .38$, $p < .01$); and compromising, ($r = .59$, $p < .01$), and negative correlations between mutual-face and third-party help, ($r = -.21$, $p < .05$); and between mutual-face and avoiding, ($r = -.15$, $p < .05$). The unstandardized beta coefficients and Pearson *r* coefficients specific to Subquestion 3 are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14

Beta Coefficients and Pearson r Coefficients for Mutual-Face with Integrating, Obliging, Compromising, Third-Party Help, and Avoiding

Mutual-Face	B	*r*
Integrating	0.34**	0.47**
Obliging	0.22**	0.38**
Compromising	0.43**	0.59**
Third-Party Help	-0.19**	-0.21**
Avoiding	-0.12*	-0.15*

Note. * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

The initial significance revealed that when mutual-face concerns increased; integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles also increased. However, when mutual-face concerns increased, avoiding and third-party help conflict styles slightly decreased. For research Subquestion 3: integrating, obliging, and compromising were significantly and positively correlated with mutual-face; therefore, results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for integrating, obliging, and compromising. Mutual-face had negative correlations with third-party help and avoiding; therefore, results were sufficient to retain the null hypothesis for third-party help and avoiding.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles through the theoretical framework of the face-negotiation theory. After

data was collected it was analyzed with parametric statistics as appropriate for the respective research questions. Data analysis supported that relationships did exist between face concerns and conflict styles, significantly: (a) as self-face increased dominating, emotional expression, and neglect increased while integrating, obliging, avoiding, and compromising decreased; (b) as other-face increased integrating, obliging, and compromising increased while dominating, emotional expression, and neglect decreased; (c) as mutual-face increased integrating, obliging, and compromising increased while dominating, neglect, avoiding, and third-party help decreased. The current researcher chose to reject or retain the null hypotheses based upon relationships between individual variables. The following list provides hypotheses results for the research questions:

Research Question 1: the null hypothesis was rejected.

Subquestion 1: results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for dominating, emotional expression, and neglect, and results were sufficient to retain the null hypotheses for third-party help and avoiding.

Subquestion 2: results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for integrating, obliging, and compromising, and results were sufficient to retain the null hypotheses for third-party help and avoiding.

Subquestion 3: results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for integrating, obliging, and compromising, and results were sufficient to retain the null hypotheses for third-party help and avoiding.

These results show issues of statistical, practical, and theoretical significance. Chapter 5 of this doctoral study will discuss conclusions from these results and offer recommendations for action and future research.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The nature of this correlation study was to understand the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles. Research suggests understanding the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles increases understanding of interpersonal conflicts. Understanding interpersonal conflict within school communities is vital to maintaining and improving workplace quality on school campuses as conflict styles may influence conflict outcomes in relation to destructive or constructive results. However, no studies were found in the available academic scholarly literature that explored face concerns and conflict styles within school communities. Therefore, the current researcher had a strong desire to introduce research surrounding face concerns and conflict styles into educational literature to increase understanding of interpersonal conflicts within school communities. The study was designed as a quantitative study because the researcher wanted to test the face-negotiation theory with predetermined hypotheses and variables, and as Creswell (2003) confirmed, "a quantitative approach is an appropriate method to use to test a theory or explanation" (p. 22).

One overarching research question and three subquestions were used to explore the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles for adult individuals employed on three different middle school campuses:

Research Question 1: Does a relationship exist between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities?

Subquestion1: Does self-face concern associate positively with dominating, emotional expression, third-party help, neglect, and avoiding styles?

Subquestion 2: Does other-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

Subquestion 3: Does mutual-face concern associate positively with integrating, obliging, compromising, third-party help, and avoiding conflict styles?

A sample population of 192 adults, on three middle school campuses in a Western region of the United States, participated in this study. The sample population represented a relatively equal percentage of participants from each of the three school campuses. Seventy males and 122 females participated. Participant ages ranged from 18 years to 65 years and older with 89% between the ages of 31 and 45 years old. Some had high school education, yet 41% were college graduates while 51% of individuals had postgraduate degrees. Ethnicity fell into three main categories with 21% African American or Black, 33% Hispanic or Latino, and 43% Caucasian or White individuals.

The researcher utilized Zoomerang software to distribute surveys to schools beginning on May 13, 2009, and ending on May 29, 2009. The participants completed a 5-point Likert scale survey with 12 face concern items, 32 conflict style items, and 5 demographic items.

The null hypothesis for research question one was rejected as relationships did exist between face concerns and conflict styles. For subquestion 1; results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for dominating, emotional expression, and neglect. For subquestion 2; results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for integrating,

obliging, and compromising. For subquestion 3; results were sufficient to reject the null hypothesis for integrating, obliging, and compromising. In all three subquestions; results were sufficient to retain the null hypotheses for third-party help and avoiding.

Major Findings

It is possible to distinguish certain conclusions from the results of this study. The results will be interpreted in reference to findings for each of the four research questions. The results will then be related to theoretical assumptions and propositions of the face-negotiation theory. The results will also be incorporated into existing research on face concerns and conflict styles and recommendations for future research will be made. Recommendations for action will be included in the conclusion section. This study has clear implications for social change, as preliminary results from this study introduce the topic of face concerns and conflict styles into literature concerning school communities.

The current researcher acknowledges that sampling bias may have influenced research findings. Sampling bias is any influence that may have disturbed the randomness of selection for a sample population (Leedy, & Ormrod, 2005). The current researcher is in a supervisory position on one of the three school campuses surveyed in this study. To prevent coercion to participate, a voluntary and anonymous sampling approach was utilized to gather data, as the researcher felt ethical issues outweighed all other factors. In particular, self-selection bias may have influenced findings as an individual's choice to select themselves into this sample population may have created irregular representation in the sample. To address this bias, the researcher has taken great precaution not to make

inferences beyond the sample population to the larger populations of the three school campuses.

Research Question 1

After examination of the data, major findings were discovered. In relation to Question 1: (a) relationships did exist between face concerns and conflict styles; (b) self-face was in direct opposition to other-face and in direct opposition to mutual-face as predictors for dominating, emotional expression, neglect, integrating, obliging, and compromising; (c) mutual-face was a non-predictor for emotional expression; (d) although weak, mutual-face was the only predictor for third-party help; and (e) self-face and mutual-face were weak predictors for avoiding. These findings suggest that, with exceptions for avoiding and third-party help styles, individuals in the sample population with self-face concerns tended to prefer very different conflict styles (actually opposite) than individuals in the sample population with other-face and mutual-face concerns.

Predominantly, self-face and mutual-face were interesting predictors for dominating and integrating conflict styles. For every one unit increase in self-face, dominating increased by .53 units while for every one unit increase in mutual-face, dominating decreased by .41 units. For every one unit increase in self-face, integrating decreased by .35 units while for every one unit increase in mutual-face, integrating increased by .34 units. Consequently, within the sample population, the dominating style increased and the integrating style decreased in the presence of self-face concern. Oppositely, in the presence of mutual-face concerns, the integrating style increased and the dominating style decreased. The results reflect the contrast between the competitive

dominating style and the cooperative integrating style in relation to concern for self and concern for relationships. The dissimilarities between reactions to conflict in the presence of self-face and mutual-face are quite apparent and important for school administrators to understand. This consideration can motivate administrators to increase mutual-face concerns through frequent acknowledgment of teamwork rather than mere recognition of individual employee accomplishments.

Surprisingly, the findings indicate that within the sample population all three face concerns were either weak or non-predictors for avoiding and third-party help. As proposed in the next section, this may be due to the complex goals of these conflict styles. Unpredicted, in comparison to self-face and mutual-face concerns, the other-face concern was an overall weaker predictor of the conflict styles.

Research Subquestion 1

In relation to Subquestion 1: (a) dominating, emotional expression, and neglect had weak to moderate positive correlations with self-face; (b) avoiding had a weak and negative correlation with self-face; and (c) third-party help had no significant correlation with self-face. The findings suggest that individuals in the sample population with self-face concerns tended to prefer dominating, emotional expressive, and neglect conflict styles. The weak negative correlation between self-face and avoiding suggests that research participants with self face concerns had minimal decreases in avoiding conflict.

Noteworthy, the dominating conflict style had the strongest positive correlation with the self-face concern. This was expected as the dominating style is characterized by high concern for self and low concern for other. Both emotional expression and neglect

are characterized by high concern for self and moderate concern for other; therefore, the researcher expected emotional expression and neglect to show similar correlations with self-face. However, emotional expression was close to moderate at .46 while neglect was numerically half at .23 as referenced from Cohen's standards. These results indicate a stronger correlation between self-face and emotional expression versus self-face and neglect. For the sample population, as self-face concerns increased, the avoiding conflict style slightly decreased. There was not a significant correlation between self-face and third-party help. This negative or lack of correlation may be due to the complexities of avoiding conflict and the conceptualization of third-party help. Future sections offer explanations for findings related to avoiding and third-party help.

Research Subquestion 2

In relation to Subquestion 2: (a) integrating, obliging, and compromising had weak to moderate positive correlations with other-face; and (b) avoiding and third-party help had no significant correlation with other-face. The findings suggest that individuals in the sample population with other-face concerns tended to prefer integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles.

As proposed, other-face was positively correlated to integrating, obliging, and compromising. Integrating is characterized by high concern for self and high concern for other, obliging as low concern for self and high concern for other, and compromising as moderate concern for self and moderate concern for other. Therefore, it was not surprising that obliging had the strongest correlation with other-face. However, the researcher was surprised that no correlations existed between other-face with avoiding

and third-party help as these conflict styles were hypothesized to correlate with all three face concerns.

Research Subquestion 3

In relation to Subquestion 3: (a) integrating, obliging, and compromising had weak to moderate positive correlations with mutual-face; and (b) avoiding and third-party help had weak negative correlations with mutual-face. The findings suggest that individuals in the sample population with mutual-face concerns tended to prefer integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles. The findings also suggest that research participants with mutual-face concerns had minimal decreases for both avoiding conflict and relying on third-party help.

Although findings show that mutual-face was negatively correlated with avoiding and third-party help, specific to the subset questions, mutual-face was the only face concern with significant correlations between all five proposed conflict styles. Mutual-face concern had the strongest correlation with compromising. The positive correlation between these two variables was not unexpected as compromising is characterized by a moderate concern for self and a moderate concern for other. The researcher did anticipate a stronger correlation between integrating and mutual-face as the integrating style is characterized by high concern for self and high concern for other and this would assist with relational maintenance goals. Mutual-face concern was a non-predictor for emotional expression. In Oetzel et al.'s (2003) study, mutual-face and emotional expression had no significant correlation. Therefore, the current researcher did not hypothesize that a relationship would exist between the two variables in the current study.

The conflict style, neglect, is characterized by high concern for self and moderate concern for other; therefore, it was not surprising that as mutual-face concern increased, the neglect conflict style decreased.

Theoretical Foundation

To interpret the results of this doctoral study, it is necessary to revisit the theoretical propositions and assumptions of the face-negotiation theory in which this study was grounded. A prevailing assumption of the face-negotiation theory is that individuals prefer to use different conflict styles based on different levels of face concerns (Ting-Toomey, 2005). Results of the eight multiple regressions tests indicate face concerns accounted for the following variances for each of the eight conflict styles: 50.5% dominating; 23.8% emotional expression; 45.6% neglect; 43.5% integrating; 41.6% obliging; 3.6% avoiding; 52.9% compromising; and 3.9% third-party help. Evidenced in this study, at varying levels within the sample, face concerns were found to be predictors for conflict styles. Overall, results of the current study support the theoretical assumption of the face-negotiation theory as individuals in the sample population with self-face concerns tended to prefer very different conflict styles than individuals in the sample with other-face and mutual-face concerns.

At the individual-level, in terms of Subquestion 1, results indicate that individuals in the sample population with self-face concerns tended to prefer dominating, emotional expressive, and neglect conflict styles. These findings lend support for individual-level Proposition 15: self-face is associated positively with dominating and competing conflict styles (Ting-Toomey, 2005). In terms of Subquestions 2 and 3, results indicate that

individuals in the sample population with other-face concerns and mutual-face concerns tended to prefer integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles. Interestingly, these findings do not lend support for one factor in Proposition 16: other-face is associated positively with avoiding and obliging conflict styles, as there was no significant relationship between other-face and the avoiding conflict style in the current study results. Research findings lend support for individual-level Proposition 17: other-face is associated positively with integrating and compromising conflict styles (Ting-Toomey, 2005).

All three subquestions predicted that avoiding and third-party help would positively correlate with the three face-concerns. These hypotheses were based upon previous research results in which suggestions were made that "both avoiding and third-party help could be employed for all three face concerns" (Oetzel et al., 2003). The current researcher was very interested to reexamine the relationships between face concerns with avoiding and third-party help; therefore, in the current study, avoiding and third-party help were hypothesized to positively correlate with all three face concerns. The findings indicate that within the sample population all three face concerns were either weak or non-predictors for avoiding and third-party help. Specifically, Subquestion 1 hypothesis predicted a positive correlation between self-face and avoiding. While the results were significant, the reverse of this prediction was found. No significant correlations were found between self-face and third-party help. Subquestion 2 predicted a positive correlation between other-face with avoiding and third-party help. No significant correlations were found. Subquestion 3 predicted a positive correlation between mutual-

face with avoiding and third-party help. While the results were significant, the reverse of this prediction was found.

One plausible explanation as to why face concerns were weak or non-predictors of avoiding conflict may be due to the nature of the sample population in the study. The sample population was comprised of one hundred and ninety-two adults in a Western region of the United States. In most Western cultures, for example, the United States, the core of self-image is based on individual autonomy (Brewer & Chen, 2007). Further, research has suggested that China is classified as collectivist, Japan as moderately collectivist, Germany as moderately individualistic, and the United States as individualistic (Hofstede, 1991). Therefore, the face-negotiation theory Proposition 4: individualistic cultures tend to use greater degree of direct styles, and Proposition 10: collectivistic cultures tend to use more avoiding conflict styles than individualistic cultures may assist with the interpretation of results for avoiding styles in this study. Perhaps the cultural influences of data collected from a sample population within the United States reduced the association between face concerns and the avoiding conflict style. As research and theoretical assumptions suggest, Western cultures such as the United States may tend to use less avoiding styles, therefore this may have influenced data collection from a sample population located in the United States. The current researcher suggests there may have been less variability in relation to the avoiding style as few participants in the sample population represented Eastern cultures. However, since the intent of the study was unrelated to cultural research, the current researcher remains cautious to suggest any normative statement related to ethnicity and culture in relation to

results from this study. To further understand the avoiding conflict style, Oetzel et al. (2003) proposed that avoiding may be used in all three face concerns. Individuals may avoid conflict to protect their social self image and therefore express a self-face concern. An individual may avoid conflict to protect the other person's social self image and therefore express other-face concerns. Individuals may avoid conflict to preserve the relationship and therefore express a mutual-face concern. According to Oetzel et al. (2003), and supported by the current researcher, additional research is necessary to isolate the multiple goals that can be accomplished with avoiding conflict.

In relation to third-party help, Giebels and Janssen (2005) proposed that individuals felt social support when coworkers of equal status were involved with third-party help rather than when supervisors mediated conflicts. As proposed in the face-negotiation theory, at the relational-level, in-group/out-group relates to relational closeness. In-groups are groups of individuals that people care about one another's welfare, such as, families, friends, and coworkers, while out-groups are strangers or people not liked (Triandis, 1995). The current researcher suggests that participants within the sample population may view coworkers of equal status differently than supervisors and that this also changes in-group/out-group relations and feelings of support for third-party help. Ting-Toomey's (2005) relational and situational-level Propositions 23 and 24, suggest that members of individualistic societies tend to have self-face concerns with both in-groups and out-groups, yet members of collectivistic societies tend to have self-face concerns with out-groups and other-face concerns with in-groups. For the sample population in the current study, face-concerns had no significant correlation with third-

party help. Future research is required to offer a plausible explanation as to how third-party help relates to feelings of social support by coworkers of equal status rather than when supervisors mediated conflicts in relations to in-groups/out-groups and face concerns.

To further increase understanding of results related to third-party help, it is helpful to review individual-level propositions in which self-construal types assist to explain individual traits. Self-construal is the independent and interdependent self of an individual. Individual-level Propositions 13 – 22 of the face-negotiation theory suggest that the independent self is associated positively with self-face concerns and dominating and competing conflict styles while the interdependent self is associated positively with other-face and mutual-face concerns and obliging, compromising, and integrating conflict styles. Within the context of self-construal, the ambivalent type is defined as low on independent and low on interdependent orientations. As stated in Proposition 22: the ambivalent type is associated positively with neglect and third-party help (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p. 86). Ting-Toomey et al. (2001) examined the combinations of self-construal types on conflict styles and contributed to the development of Proposition 22. However, the scholars suggested that third-party help needed further study within the conflict literature. The researchers were unclear as to whether individuals seeking third-party help during conflicts were acting constructively or passive aggressively complaining to a third-party. Therefore, while Proposition 22 is helpful, the current researcher supports the suggestion that third-party help requires further conceptualization to accurately research the third-party help conflict style in relation to face concerns.

Findings Related to the Literature

The problem addressed in this study was the lack of understanding for the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations within school communities. A major contribution to this problem was the lack of available academic and scholarly research literature on conflict styles which distinctively addressed the degree to which self-face, other-face, and mutual-face affected integrating, obliging, dominating, compromising, avoiding, emotional expression, third-party help, and neglect among adult populations within school communities. Therefore, the current study clearly introduces new research into existing literature.

Results of this study support the underlying principles of the face-negotiation theory, a theory that has contributed to literature over the past twenty-three years. The groundwork for the face-negotiation theory can be found in Ting-Toomey's article, "Toward a Theory of Conflict and Culture" (Ting-Toomey, 1982). In 1988, the face-negotiation theory was officially introduced in the editorial "Intercultural Conflict Styles: A Face-Negotiation Theory" (Ting-Toomey, 1988). In 1998, an updated version of the face-negotiation theory appeared in the article "Face Competence in Intercultural Conflict: An Updated Face-Negotiation Theory" (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998), and in 2005, the theory was again updated in "The Matrix of Face: An Updated Face-Negotiation Theory" (Ting-Toomey, 2005).

While the current study's overarching finding that relationships exist between face concerns and conflict styles is supported by literature, a finding from the current study not supported by existing literature relates to other-face and avoiding. The finding

that other-face was not significantly correlated with avoiding does not support findings from Oetzel and Ting-Toomey's (2003) study. In Oetzel and Ting-Toomey's study, other-face related positively with both avoiding and integrating conflict styles. One possible explanation for this contradiction may be that the sample population in the Oetzel and Ting-Toomey study consisted of participants from China, Germany, Japan, and the United States. Thus, perhaps cultural influences were more prevalent in this population than in the current study's sample population. According to Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) avoiding and obliging may be perceived as passive in Western society, yet from an Asian perspective, avoiding and obliging may provide one method for "giving and saving face." Further, in a study conducted by Brew and Cairns (2004) other-face and self-face were studied in relation to direct and cautious communication styles. The researchers found preferences for more direct communication strategies in the presence of self-face and more cautious communication styles in the presence of other-face. The current study lends support to these findings, as other-face associates with obliging and compromising styles, styles that are less confrontational than the dominating style. Additionally, findings from the current study indicate self-face is positively correlated with dominating and other-face is positively correlated with integrating. These findings are supported by Oetzel and Ting-Toomey's (2003) study.

Oetzel et al.'s (2003) study of participants from a large moving company and a moderate-sized manufacturing company provided the foundation from which the current study was launched. The current study's findings indicated a relationship between self-face and dominating, emotional expression, and neglect. Similarity, Oetzel et al.'s (2003)

study found correlations between self-face with dominating and emotional expression, but the study did not find a correlation between self-face and neglect. This difference in findings may be due to differences in the sample population. Characteristics as passive aggressive behaviors may change in regard to relationship status of supervisor or subordinate. However, the current study supports Oetzel et al.'s (2003) findings for positive correlations between other-face and mutual-face with integrating, obliging, and compromising. The current study's findings indicated a negative correlation between neglect (passive aggression) with other-face and mutual-face; and negative correlations between dominating and emotional expression with other-face. These findings support Oetzel et al.'s (2003) study results. A significant finding indicated in both studies was the lack of significant correlations between self-face, other-face and mutual-face with avoiding and third-party help. Oetzel et al. (2003) did not hypothesize that a significant relationship between self-face with avoiding and third-party help would exist; therefore, the current study's finding that self-face was negatively associated with avoiding and had no association with third-party help are neither supported nor disproved by existing literature. Nonetheless, Oetzel et al. (2003) suggested, and based on the possible complex goals of the avoiding style in connection with an individual's social self-image, the current researcher concurs that avoiding may be utilized for all three face concerns, and additional research is required to interpret the complexities for both avoiding and third-party help conflict styles.

Implications for Social Change

This study has the potential to influence educational leadership. School campuses provide social environments for occurrences of interpersonal conflicts, and conflicts can significantly impact the workplace quality of school communities either by destructive or constructive outcomes. Research has shown that a cooperative approach to conflict often results in constructive outcomes (Aritzeta et al., 2005; Canary & Spitzberg, 1989; Gross & Guerrero, 2000; Kuhn & Poole, 2000; McKinney et al., 1997; Morris-Rothschild & Brassard, 2006). The current study may specifically assist with social change by reconceptualizing the relationships between social self-image and conflict through promoting collaborative efforts to enhance levels of mutual and other-face concerns within school communities.

School administrators can promote collaborative efforts by conducting professional develop workshops to increase understanding for the significant correlations between face concerns and conflict styles in relation to conflict outcomes and workplace quality. Attention to workplace quality is vital to the atmosphere of a school campus both because adult behaviors are role model behaviors for students and because a quality workplace environment promotes wellbeing for all employees. Stress from conflict is responsible for reduced wellbeing in terms of "emotional exhaustion, absenteeism, and turnover intentions" (Giebels & Janssen, 2005, p. 137). Training teachers and support personnel concerning the potential connections between threats to social self-image and conflict styles may help individuals make informed decisions about behaviors during

conflict. This could lead to increased personal responsibility for how adults experience workplace quality on school campuses.

Therefore, this study reveals the need for professional development on how self-face, other-face, and mutual-face concerns correlate with conflict styles in relation to destructive and constructive conflict outcomes and workplace quality. The proposed professional development training will include literature related to; the face-negotiation theory, face content domains, conflict communication styles, and aggregated research results from the current study as well as other related face concern and conflict style studies. Participants will be invited to complete questionnaires to assess their conflict style preferences, discuss how threats to their social self image during conflict situations relate to conflict style preferences, and participants will be encouraged to review communication competence studies in respect to conflict styles and conflict outcomes. The goal of this training will be to increase teacher and support staff awareness for the approaches individuals can take during conflict and the consequences of these choices.

Further implications for social change focus on improving the process of leadership by helping school administrators understand avoiding and third-party help conflict styles. As demonstrated in this study's sample population, face concerns were either weak or non-predictors for avoiding and third-party help. It is apparent that a conceptual shift is necessary to better appreciate the nature of avoiding and third-party help. Individuals may avoid conflict to escape harm (self-face), protect the other person's feelings (other-face), or ignore the conflict to save the relationship (mutual-face). Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) suggested avoiding conflict may provide one method for giving and

saving face. Concerning third-party help, Giebels and Janssen (2005) proposed that third-party help may be regarded as two separate constructs. The researchers found that third-party help was moderately correlated with social support from colleagues but not with social support by a direct supervisor (p. 152). School administrators, in supervisory positions, should remain aware of these findings to truly understand the social phenomena of interpersonal conflict among adult populations within school communities.

Recommendations for Future Research

The purpose of this study was to explore relationships between face concerns and conflict styles among adult populations employed on school campuses. The study's strengths and limitations supported recommendations for future research. Key strengths included: (a) results supported the underlying principles of the face-negotiation theory and strengthened theoretical assumptions and propositions; (b) research conducted on school campuses contributed to the existing body of literature on face concerns and conflict styles; (c) research methodology introduced Oetzel et al. (2003) survey into scholarly educational literature; and (d) results provided a foundation in which to begin professional dialogue in relation to face concerns, conflict styles, and work place quality on school campuses.

Limitations to this study included: (a) the study focused on participant recall rather than observation of actual conflict behaviors; (b) only three school campuses were represented; and (c) the sampling approach was voluntary and anonymous which may effect sampling bias. The current researcher suggests the following recommendations for future research:

1. A replication of the current study on additional school campuses could further test the research questions within a larger sample population.
2. A qualitative study to specifically explore self-face, other-face, mutual-face, avoiding, and third-party help through actual observation of conflict episodes and participant interviews could provide understanding for the complex relationships between face concerns, avoiding, third-party help, and in-group/out-group relationships.
3. A mixed methods study using Oetzel et al.'s (2003) instrument in conjunction with interview techniques could increase understanding for participant conflict styles in relation to the results of the current study in which self-face was in direct opposition to other-face and mutual-face for dominating, emotional expression, neglect, integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict styles.
4. An action research study in which the researcher takes an active role to: survey participants; interview participants about conflict; observe conflict interactions; provide professional development workshops concerning face concerns and conflict styles in relation to conflict outcomes and workplace quality; and interview participants to assess changes in conflict styles and perceptions of experiences with conflict outcomes and workplace quality.

Conclusion

This study has implications for school administrators as the challenge for many school administrators is the destructive impact of conflict on workplace quality. Slabbert (2004, p. 84) stated, "Individuals repetitively experiencing conflict as destructive will

negatively impact a wider sphere of influence." The importance of the current study is that an association has been identified with face concerns and conflict styles. Understanding this association may increases awareness for constructive conflict outcomes. The appropriateness of the eight conflict styles examined in this study must be considered within context, however; research reveals that compromising may allow individuals to collectively accomplish goals and integrating frequently fosters openness and cooperation. For the sample population, cooperative conflict approaches, integrating and compromising, increased when individuals had other-face and mutual-face concerns while a more uncooperative conflict approach, dominating, increased when individuals had self-face concerns.

The current study's results offer a guide for future professional development discourse. As school administrators increase consciousness to the implications that mutual-face concerns associate with cooperative conflict styles, and cooperative conflict styles tend to promote constructive conflict outcomes, school administrators can increase attention to interpersonal relationships on school campuses. Professional conversations concerning the associations between face concerns and conflict styles can empower employees on school campuses to create quality workplace environments within school communities. To contribute to constructive conflict outcomes and enhance workplace quality, school administrators must encourage employees to look into the proverbial mirror and reflect upon personal conflict styles, because as Friedman et al. (2000, p. 49) proposed, "An individual's work environment is, at least partly, of his or her own making".

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

To Whom It May Concern:

You are invited to take part in a research study to explore social self-image and interpersonal conflict within school communities. You are invited to participate in this study because you are an adult member of a school community.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Christine Gross, who is a doctoral student at Walden University and an assistant principal in the Clark County School District. Your participation in this ten minute survey is voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. No one in the Clark County School District will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to complete the survey, you can still change your mind during the survey. If you feel stressed during the survey you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions that you feel are too personal.

Risk:

- The researcher has taken precautionary steps to reduce the risk of perceived coercion to participate by clearly communicating that the survey is for the researcher's doctoral study and not related to workplace duties, posting the survey on schools' non-business related email sites, and using a sampling approach to ensure that participation is anonymous and voluntary.

Benefits:

- Provide information to help leaders recognize the importance of rewarding individual work as well as teamwork based upon the relationship between social self-image and conflict styles.
- Increase workplace quality by providing teachers, support personnel, and administrators with awareness for the potential connections between threats to social self-image and conflict styles. This awareness may help individuals make informed decisions about behaviors during conflict, and therefore, how they shape, to some degree, their experiences of workplace quality on school campuses.

Any information you provide will be kept anonymous. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include anything else that could identify you in any reports of the study. You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 702-898-1251 and cdbgross@yahoo.com. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **04-30-09-0317614** and it expires on **April 29, 2010.**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By completing and submitting the survey, I am agreeing to the terms described above.

CURRICULUM VITAE

CHRISTINE DENISE GROSS

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

2006-2009	WALDEN UNIVERSITY, Minneapolis, Minnesota Doctoral Candidate in Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning
2000-2003	CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, Sacramento, California Administrative Services Credential
1998-2000	UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO, Reno, Nevada Masters in Education, Curriculum and Instruction
1987-1992	UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO, Reno, Nevada Bachelor of Science, Secondary Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2007-present	ROY MARTIN MIDDLE SCHOOL, Las Vegas, Nevada Assistant Principal
2006-2007	BOB MILLER MIDDLE SCHOOL, Las Vegas, Nevada Dean of Students
2005-2006	THURMAN WHITE MIDDLE SCHOOL, Las Vegas, Nevada Teacher
2003-2005	AMERICAN SCHOOL OF YAOUNDE, Cameroon, Africa Acting Assistant Director/Teacher
2000-2003	GRANT UNION HIGH SCHOOL, Sacramento, California Administrator/Teacher
1998-2000	UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO, Reno, Nevada Graduate Assistant/Student
1996-1998	MALIBUNGA HIGH SCHOOL, Papua New Guinea, S. Pacific United States Peace Corps Volunteer

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS/WORKSHOPS

2009	INTERNATIONAL BAUCELAUREATE MYP WORKSHOP Las Vegas, Nevada Conducted Standards and Practices/Evaluation Prep workshops
2007	INTERNATIONAL BAUCELAUREATE PROGRAM Newark, New Jersey Conducted a level-one workshop for principals and coordinators
2006	SUMMER SCIENCE INSTITUTE Las Vegas, Nevada Instructed science teachers with new curriculum programs
2005	INERACTIVE MEETINGS Cameroon, Africa Facilitated workshops for school faculty
2003	SCHOOL-WITHIN-A-SCHOOL San Jose, California Presented an innovative program to conference members
2002	READING AND WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM Sacramento, California Conducted workshops for teachers in all curriculum areas
1997	CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND CULTURE Papua New Guinea, South Pacific Assisted new-to-country U.S. Peace Corps volunteers