CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ISLAMABAD


# In the Eyes of Beholder; Unfolding the Phenomenon of Employees' Attribution for Leader-Instigated Task Conflict and its Multilevel Consequences: A Job Demands-Resources Perspective

by

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*Dedicated to my beloved parents whose care and support has always been my guiding light. Their unconditional love, encouragement and unshaken confidence in me kept my spirits high even in the challenging hours of my life. Their prayers for me always work as a catalyst in my way to success*

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## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in the dissertation, entitled "**In the Eyes of Beholder; Unfolding the Phenomenon of Employees' Attribution for Leader-Instigated Conflict and its Multilevel Consequences; A Job Demands-Resources Perspective**" was conducted under the supervision of **Dr. S. M. M. Raza Naqvi**. No part of this dissertation has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This dissertation is submitted to the **Department of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the field of **Management Sciences.** The open defence of the dissertation was conducted on **August 20, 2024**.

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# *List of Publications*

It is certified that following publication(s) have been made out of the research work that has been carried out for this dissertation:-

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# *Abstract*

The current dissertation aimed to extend the existing body of literature on workplace conflict and creativity by highlighting a unique role of leaders in group conflict termed as leader-instigated task conflict and attempted to resolve the paradox of mixed findings of task conflict regarding its outcomes. For this purpose, a multilevel model of leader-instigated task conflict was proposed by highlighting the constructive or destructive path it can take to shape creativity based outcomes at individual and group level. Drawing on attribution theory, the current study proposed that the emotional, behavioral and performance-related outcomes of leader-instigated task conflict are not the sole response of leader behavior itself, rather they are a response to causal attributions that employees develop about leader-instigated task conflict behaviors. Hence this study highlighted the role of employee attributions in response to leader-instigated task conflict and their multilevel consequential effects on creativity at individual and team level. Moreover, taking overarching support from job demands-resources theory, the current study conceptualized leader-instigated task conflict as a job demand that can take either constructive or destructive path via employee attributions with their resultant emotional states thereby shaping employee job crafting behaviors which can consequentially influence creativity at individual and team level. Moreover, empowering leadership and team emotional regulation were proposed as conditional team-level factors to cope with these job demands. Time lagged, multisource data were collected through questionnaire-based surveys from 510 employees and 107 leaders working in teams in different organizations across Pakistan. Multilevel data analysis was carried out on MPlus to test the hypothesized associations. Results provided support for the majority of the hypotheses. More specifically leader-instigated task conflict was positively associated with constructive conflict instigation attributions, however, it was negatively related to destructive conflict instigation attributions. Furthermore these relations were found to be moderated by empowering leadership. In addition, the study found that constructive conflict instigation attribution positively influences creativity not only on individual level but also on team level. It was also positively related to positive emotions

and resultant promotion-focused job crafting behaviors. Empirical evidence from current study also presents indirect effects of constructive conflict instigation attribution on individual and team creativity via promotion-focused job crafting. Conversely, destructive conflict instigation attribution did not have a significant effect on employee creativity at individual level, however, interestingly it predicted team creativity negatively. Moreover, destructive conflict instigation attribution triggered negative emotional experiences of individuals which thereby shape their prevention-focused job crafting behaviors. Significant indirect effects were also observed from destructive conflict instigation attribution to team creativity while no indirect effect exist for individual creativity. Overall, the findings of this study are anticipated to help researchers and practitioners alike in understanding the dynamics of task conflict and leaders' imperative role in generating it effectively by also keeping a careful consideration of the attributions that employees develop in response to leader behaviors. Findings of this study also clarify the mechanism through which leader-instigated conflict can result in desirable outcomes. The multilevel phenomenon studied in the current dissertation provides theoretical implications for literature on conflict management, leadership, employee behaviors, and creativity. Furthermore, it provides practical implications to managers for both individuals and teams.

**Key words: Leader-instigated Task Conflict, Task Conflict, Empowering Leadership, Attributions, Emotions, Job Crafting, Employee Creativity, Team Creativity.**

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# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **AVE** | Average Variance Extracted |
| **CCIA** | Constructive Conflict Instigation Attribution |
| **CFA** | Confirmatory Factor Analysis |
| **CFI** | Comparative Fit Index |
| **CR** | Composite Reliability |
| **DCIA** | Destructive Conflict Instigation Attribution |
| **EL** | Empowering Leadership |
| **IC** | Individual Creativity |
| **IFI** | Incremental Fit Index |
| **IMM** | Index of Moderated Mediation |
| **LITC** | Leader-Instigated Task Conflict |
| **MCFA** | Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis |
| **MSEM** | Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling |
| **NE** | Negative Emotions |
| **PE** | Positive Emotions |
| **Prevention JC** | Prevention-focused Job Crafting |
| **Promotion JC** | Promotion-focused Job Crafting |
| **RMSEA** | Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation |
| **SEM** | Structural Equation Modeling |
| **SRMR** | Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual |
| **TC** | Team Creativity |
| **TER** | Team Emotion Regulation |
| **TLI** | Tucker-Lewis Index |
| **VIF** | Variance Inflation Factor |

# Chapter 1

# Introduction

This dissertation proposes and examines a multilevel research framework on the phenomenon of leader-instigated task conflict, its resultant attributions and their consequential effects. This chapter delineates a background for the study along with highlighting the research gaps in the light of previous studies. It further defines the current study's problem statement followed by research questions and research objectives. The significance of study in the light of theory and practice is also covered in addition to overarching and supporting theories for the proposed research model.

## 1.1 Background

Over more than last five decades, group conflict in the workplace has received considerable scholarly attention owing to its all-pervasive nature and its propensity to substantially shape its performance based individual and group level consequences (Amason & Schweiger, 1994; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Deutsch, 1990; Tekleab, Quigley, & Tesluk, 2009; Caputo, Kargina, & Pellegrini, 2023). It is regarded to be an inevitable process of team dynamics due to the interdependent goals and interactions among team members (Jehn, 1995).

De Dreu and Gelfand (2007) define intragroup conflict as a process that emanates from perceived incompatibilities or disagreements among team members. Owing

to its dual nature of fostering both propitious and ominous performance outcomes, it is desired by some organizations while avoided by others.

In order to further expound the phenomenon of intragroup conflict, researchers have distinguished among its different types (Jehn, Greer, Levine, & Szulanski, 2008). Generally, conflicts are divided into two principal types: constructive (cognitive, functional or good conflict) which is contended to enhance performance and destructive (affective, dysfunctional or bad conflict) which hinders performance and achievement of group goals (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Recent convention follows a tridimensional classification of group conflict into three types namely task, relationship and process conflict (DeChurch, Mesmer-Magnus, & Doty, 2013; Jehn, 1997). Task conflict is characterized by differing viewpoints and alternative opinions regarding work related content, activities and ideas (Pinkley, 1990). Relationship conflict refers to personal clashes, animosity and dislikes based on interpersonal incompatibilities while process conflict involves disagreements regarding the allocation of resources and assignment of responsibilities (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003).

There is a generic consensus that relationship and process conflict are dysfunctional and associated negatively with team and individual outcomes (De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012; de Wit, Jehn, & Scheepers, 2013; Tsai, 2024). However findings about the mechanism and outcomes of task conflict are mixed (Liao, Harris, Li, & Han, 2024) and hence encompass different schools of thoughts. The traditionalist view of conflict suggests that it should be avoided in teams owing to its disparaging consequences such as reduced satisfaction from job and diminished well-being (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2017; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Lee & Shin, 2020; Liu et al., 2023). However, the human relations view of conflict advocates its bright side by accepting that it is an inevitable and unavoidable phenomenon at workplace. Lastly, the interactionist view of conflict acknowledges that conflict can be both constructive and destructive on the basis of its nature and its handling. Studies with this view appreciate and desire task based constructive conflict at the workplace proposing that it is necessary for inspiring creativity (De Clercq & Pereira, 2021, 2023; Liao et al., 2024).

More specifically, in the organizations seeking to enhance employee and group creative performance, group think and excessive group consensus are poison for creative ideas. Disagreements among team members are required in order to generate constructive criticism, debates and sharing of opinion. Hence, researchers argue that task conflict should be promoted at work because it generates constructive debates and enhances creative decision making (DeChurch & Marks, 2001; Mu, Yang, Zhang, Lyu, & Deng, 2021; Pratkanis & Turner, 2013; Simons & Peterson, 2000; Um & Oh, 2021). This puts organizations in a position to look for suitable ways to incite task related conflict within teams.

Past research on workplace conflict has identified a number of factors that shape this phenomenon including individual factors such as personality and conflict handling style of team members, as well as team related factors such as team climate, trust within group and collective experiences (Bradley, Klotz, Postlethwaite, & Brown, 2013; Cullen-Lester, Leroy, Gerbasi, & Nishii, 2016; Giebels, de Reuver, Rispens, & Ufkes, 2016; Kuypers, Guenter, & van Emmerik, 2018; Rahim & Katz, 2020; Um & Oh, 2021; Zhang, Gong, & Zhou, 2017). Literature has also identified the role of leaders in influencing team conflict (Adamovic et al., 2020; Ågotnes, Einarsen, Hetland, & Skogstad, 2018; Al Kurdi, Alrawabdeh, Alshurideh, & Alkurdi, 2023; De Clercq & Pereira, 2021; De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2017; Joo, Yoon, & Galbraith, 2023). In this regard, several research scholars have identified that leaders have an imperative role in conflict regulation, handling and management. These roles are extensively studied in past literature. (Babalola, Stouten, Euwema, & Ovadje, 2018).

Considering that effective leadership entails a major role towards the achievement of team goals by creating demands and resources for employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021), leaders can incite task related disagreements and debates as a job demand to pave a way to enhance creativity (De Clercq & Pereira, 2021). This additional role of leaders in conflict is termed as leader's task conflict instigation which is characterized by behaviors of leaders that involve initiation or generation of task related debates and discussions of alternative viewpoints regarding work among group members (Zhao, Thatcher, & Jehn, 2019). Research in this additional role of leaders in conflict is in its nascent

stages. *The current study is an attempt to contribute to this field of inquiry by identifying how, when and why leader instigated task conflict can turn on the route of its positive or negative work outcomes.*

Additionally, although it is believed by many researchers that task conflict is a constructive workplace phenomenon which yields desirable work outcomes, however, its propensity to result in both positive and negative outcomes makes it a paradox. Therefore, it is suggested to adopt a cautious approach while estimating the effects of task conflict. Further, research is needed to understand how and when conflict may adopt a positive or negative route of its effects. The current study posits that the effects of task conflict on emotional, behavioral and performance related outcomes are not as proximal as they are generally studied, rather, it involves distal effects via the causal attributions of individuals who experience it.

In this regard, drawing on attribution theory, a number of studies suggest that employees assign causal attributions to events or behaviors that they encounter (Chen et al., 2020; Follmer, Neely, Jones, & Hunter, 2019; Harvey, Ickes, & Kidd, 2018; Qin, Chen, Yam, Huang, & Ju, 2020; Xing, Sun, & Jepsen, 2019; Wang & Jiang, 2023). These attributions have an imperative role in shaping their emotional as well as behavioral reactions towards the events they experience. More specifically, individual's positive or negative emotional and behavioral reactions are not solely based on the event itself, rather they are a function of causal attributions that they assign to the event or behavior thus observed or experienced.

Employees ascertain management's or leader's motives behind the implementation of organizational practices such as HR practices or CSR and leader's ethical or abusive behavior and positive or negative feedback and respond to them accordingly (Han, Sun, & Wang, 2020; Yang, Liu, Stackhouse, & Wang, 2020; Farooq, Farooq, & Arshad, 2020). Hence, based on premise that leader's behaviors are construed by followers through the attributions based on leader's motives for certain behaviors which shape their emotional and behavioral responses (Follmer et al., 2019), it is suggested that the causal ascriptions that followers associate with conflict instigation behavior of their leader develops a clarity about their positive or negative emotional and behavioral response towards it (Zhao et al., 2019). *This*

*study provides a way forward in leadership and conflict by identifying the multi-level phenomenon of leader-instigated task conflict and the resultant attributions of employees which consequentially trigger employees' emotional response, behaviors and their individual and group outcomes.*

## 1.2 Gap Analysis

### 1.2.1 Leader's Role in Group Conflict Instigation

Although a vast stream of literature has expounded the phenomenon of task conflict, however, due to the inconsistent findings and the lack of clarity in conflict dynamics, recent studies continue to call for research in task related team conflict (Alfes, Veld, & Fürstenberg, 2021; Bogilovic & Berry, 2018; Bradley, Anderson, Baur, & Klotz, 2015; De Clercq & Pereira, 2021; Lee, Avgar, Park, & Choi, 2019; Mu et al., 2021; Liao et al., 2024). Further, based on the premise that leaders have imperative role in shaping the process and outcomes of conflict, the latest research accentuates that there is limited exploration of role of leaders in conflict which needs to be addressed (Lee et al., 2019; Adamovic et al., 2020).

In the domain of leadership and conflict, it is observed that there is an immense amount of mainstream literature with majority emphasis on the role of leaders in conflict management and regulation only. Studies in this domain revolve around leadership styles for conflict management (Hendel, Fish, & Galon, 2005), conflict management approaches and five styles of conflict management (Barbuto Jr & Xu, 2006; Green, 2008; Way, Jimmieson, & Bordia, 2020, 2016; Yin, Jia, Ma, & Liao, 2020). In short, existing research has largely focused on how leaders can regulate, handle and resolve group conflict with an excessive focus on nullifying the disparaging effects of conflict.

However, based on the functional potential of task conflict with its the propensity to reduce group think and go-fever or launch fever, and its potential to promote the generation and exploration of new ideas, opinions and alternatives it is desirable in creative organizations (Kiernan, Ledwith, & Lynch, 2020; Lee et al., 2019;

Mu et al., 2021; O'Neill & Mclarnon, 2018; Pratkanis & Turner, 2013; De Clercq & Pereira, 2023; Pringle & Robinson, 2024). Since leaders create demands and environment for teams necessary to achieve work outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), this highlights the role of leaders whereby they instigate conflict among team members to stimulate creative outcomes. However, it is surprising to note that literature is non-existent in capturing this role of leaders in conflict. This omission in research is serious because having studied the role of leaders as conflict instigators, it can provide insights about the mechanism of conflict and its outcomes.

Zhao et al. (2019) in their conceptual study have described the roles of leaders in conflict through an IEM (instigation, engagement, management) framework. Apart from engagement and management, this study introduces an additional role of leaders as conflict instigators. The authors label it as a neglected area and invite researchers' attention towards this phenomenon. Despite the missing links, there are studies that have contended that leaders help teams to promote the positive outcomes of conflict (Ågotnes et al., 2018; De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2017; Fusch Ph D & Fusch Ph D, 2015; Kessler, Bruursema, Rodopman, & Spector, 2013).

Further, a handful of studies have examined the unintentional instigation of conflict due to leadership styles (van der Kam, Janssen, van der Vegt, & Stoker, 2014). Recent studies have begun to study this phenomenon to identify the role that leaders play in shaping group conflict in order to promote group performance (Babalola et al., 2018; Bai, Harms, Han, & Cheng, 2015). However, to date, no study has empirically examined the role of leaders in conflict instigation.

Although an expanse literature is devoted to leaders' role in influencing group conflict, it is surprising to note that leader's role in instigating conflict has been overlooked and given the promising prospects of team task conflict, this omission in literature needs the attention of researchers. The current study responds to calls for research in task conflict and role of leaders by highlighting leaders as conflict instigators and extends literature in this domain.

### 1.2.2 Cross Level Effects of Leader Instigated Team Conflict on Conflict Instigation Attributions; Attributions as Challenge and Hindrance Demands

A plethora of studies in conflict revolve around traditional conflict types and management styles, nonetheless recent theoretical studies are inviting research to describe the concept of conflict apart from traditional and oversimplified models on content of conflict and its management styles. More specifically research is invited in studying the processual and experiential aspects of conflict by identifying how it is perceived, reacted and responded by individuals (Mikkelsen & Clegg, 2019; Notelaers, Van der Heijden, Guenter, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2018). Caputo, Marzi, Maley, and Silic (2019) in their review study of ten years of conflict management place call for pressing attention in exploring the employees' perspective in conflict and its management highlighting that this area has barely been explored.

The employees' perspective in conflict is important to be studied since the consequences of conflict are a function of how individuals perceive about it (Ma, Zhang, & Kim, 2018; Way et al., 2020). The perception that individuals ascertain based on causal ascriptions they assign to an event or behavior is known as attribution. In this regard, research in attribution suggests that the reaction engendered to an event or behavior is not solely based on the event or behavior itself, rather it is a subsequent response to the individual's perception or causal attribution assigned to the behavior of the actor (Arevshatian, Alfes, Shantz, & Bailey, 2016; Harvey et al., 2018; Shantz, Arevshatian, Alfes, & Bailey, 2016). More intriguing is the fact that individual's reaction to an event or behavior can entirely inverse based on their appraisal of the event and attribution assigned to it (Z. Liao, Lee, Johnson, Song, & Liu, 2021; Qin et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2020). This notion brings attention towards the role of attributions of individuals about leader-instigated task conflict which has great propensity to shape their response towards it.

Despite its potential to explain employee reactions and behaviors, there is a paucity of attribution related research in leadership contexts (Jiao & Wang, 2023), suggesting a need for continued research to explore subordinates' attributions of leaders'

behaviors (Martinko, Harvey, & Dasborough, 2011; Martinko, 2018). Further, recent studies implicate that leaders behaviors have been expansively explored from a leader-centric perspective based on one-sided and incomplete assumptions relying on leader's demonstration of certain behaviors and assuming their resultant consequences regarding employees states and behaviors, while largely ignoring the importance of employee attribution that is developed for leader's behaviors (Jiao & Wang, 2023). However, it is crucial to study leader behaviors from employee attribution perspective considering that employees attribute leader behaviors that have subsequent effect on their emotions and behaviors. Apart from this omission in literature, research is budding in this domain with recent handful of studies including followers' attributions about leaders' behavior such as abusive supervision, servant leadership, leader's negative feedback of follower, leader's silence, leader's humility and leader's errors (Burton, Taylor, & Barber, 2014; Chen et al., 2020; Follmer et al., 2019; Z. Liao et al., 2021; Liu, Liao, & Loi, 2012; Qin et al., 2020; J. Sun, Liden, & Ouyang, 2019; Xing et al., 2019; Wang & Jiang, 2023; Ali & Hassan, 2023). However, it is observed that while different studies have explored specific attributions related to leader behaviors, and despite the established results of the effects of attributions on employee behavior and performance, to date no study has examined employee attributions and their effects regarding conflict, and more specifically leader instigated group conflict.

Past researchers have conceptualized that employees generally attribute the behaviors of their leaders on the basis of constructive or destructive motives (Oedzes, Rink, Walter, & Van Der Vegt, 2019; Tepper, Moss, & Duffy, 2011; Tepper et al., 2011). In the same way, employees may develop constructive or destructive attributions of their leader's task conflict instigation behavior. Constructive intent is attributed when employees perceive leader's conflict instigation behaviors to be facilitative such as to provoke team members to share their ideas and expediting information processing. Destructive conflict instigation attributions are developed when employees assign malignant causal ascriptions to their leaders' behaviors such as in order to criticize followers, cause harm or to retaliate employees. As team conflict has its manifestations at multiple levels including individual, interpersonal and unit level (Korsgaard, Soyoung Jeong, Mahony, & Pitariu, 2008), research on

employee attributions as individual level causal ascriptions of conflict instigation is non-existent. In the current study, employee constructive and destructive attributions towards leader-instigated task conflict are addressed as its manifestation at individual level in the form of causal ascriptions of conflict instigation.

Moreover, considering leader instigated group conflict as a job demand created by leader, drawing on Job Demands-Resources theory suggests that employees can categorize job demands as either challenge or as a hindrance. Although this distinction has been made between challenge and hindrance demands, this conceptualization of job demands is still rare due to lack of sufficient empirical evidence (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener, Gusy, & Wolter, 2019; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). The current study introduces role of leader in creating job demand through instigating team conflict which further unfolds into constructive attribution as challenge demand and destructive attribution as hindrance demand. Similar conceptualization of attributions as job demands based on JD-R theory has been applied by previous studies (for example, see Van De Voorde & Beijer, 2015).

Further, studies on conflict assert that different team members in a team can have diverse opinions about team conflict which cultivates perceptual asymmetry about conflict and its nature within team (Ma et al., 2018). Similarly, individuals develop perception of job-demands as challenge or hindrance differently (Li, Taris, & Peeters, 2020). Hence, the evidence on differential perceptions of individuals regarding conflict in their team (Mikkelsen & Clegg, 2019) makes it crucial to unfold their attributions regarding it, which will then help to provide a clear picture of their responses and its consequences. Based on this premise the current study highlights the cross level association of employee attributions of constructive or destructive leader motives related to leader instigated team conflict.

### 1.2.3 Multilevel Effects of Conflict Instigation Attributions Indirect Effect of Leader-Instigated Task Conflict

Studies on task conflict elucidate its highly variable capacity to yield both positive and negative individual and group consequences (De Clercq & Pereira, 2021;

De Wit et al., 2012; Lee & Shin, 2020; Um & Oh, 2021). These ambiguous and mixed findings of task conflict continue to make it a paradox hence it is difficult to provide clear implications regarding its outcomes thereby opening a room for further research in this domain (De Wit et al., 2012; Greer, Caruso, & Jehn, 2011). Other studies have highlighted that the inconsistent findings on task conflict are largely due to lack of the clarity of mechanisms and processes through which task conflict is manifested (DeChurch et al., 2013; Jehn & Bendersky, 2003; Jehn et al., 2008; Maltarich, Kukenberger, Reilly, & Mathieu, 2018). This requires a shift towards focusing more on the processual factors that unfold in group conflict dynamics to shape its outcomes. Based on this lack of processual explanatory mechanisms that shape positive or negative outcomes specifically of task conflict instigated by leader, the current study brings forth individual attributions regarding the conflict as a promising missing link that can provide clearer explanation of mixed consequences of task conflict.

In the domain of attributional studies, it is observed that attributions have much more higher prospects to shape the outcomes of an event rather than the event itself (Matta, Sabey, Scott, Lin, & Koopman, 2020). In this regard, studies associate attributions with resultant behaviors and performance for example, voice behavior in response to conflict with leader and coworkers (Chen et al., 2020), workplace deviant behavior in response to leader humility (Qin et al., 2020), work engagement and performance in response to leader's negative emotionally expressive behavior (Li et al., 2020). Although the outcomes of attributions are proposed to unfold at multiple levels, research has just started to bud in investigating the multilevel process and outcomes of attributions (for example see Lee & Shin, 2020; Z. Liao et al., 2021).

Despite the established evidence on employee attributions and their diverse outcomes, there is paucity of research on conflict instigators and individuals' attribution about the instigators and their outcomes (Jamieson, Valdesolo, & Peters, 2014) at both individual and team level. This thesis extends past literature by studying individual and team creativity as the consequences of constructive and destructive conflict attributions, as these outcomes have generally provided mixed and ambiguous findings for task conflict (Bang & Park, 2015; Lee et al., 2019;

Petrou, Bakker, & Bezemer, 2019; Liao et al., 2024; Eissa & Lester, 2024). The current study resolves this paradox by explaining that that constructive conflict instigation attribution leads to its positive individual and group outcomes while destructive conflict instigation attribution leads to negative individual and group outcomes.

### 1.2.4 Moderating Role of Empowering Leadership

Literature highlights dearth of research in identification of conditional factors that can shape employee attribution and responses towards task conflict. More specifically, research is required to establish clearer understanding of when employees might respond positively or negatively to task conflict which will consequently help in facilitating its more positive outcomes and control its negative effects (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2017). In this regard, how employees interpret leader behaviors may also influence when and why leader-instigated task conflict may be attributed as constructive or destructive (Zhao et al., 2019). Hence, research is needed to identify which leadership styles are more likely to promote constructive or destructive conflict instigation attribution.

Although research is almost non-existent in identifying leadership styles that promote constructive or destructive conflict instigation attribution, there are a few studies that have addressed destructive conflict instigation of leaders as perceived by followers. These studies suggest that destructive conflict instigation occurs when the motives of leaders are attributed to be abusive, bullying or retributive (Harris, Harvey, & Kacmar, 2011; Tepper et al., 2011). This kind of conflict instigation is more likely to be developed by dark leadership styles including narcissism, psychopathy and Machiavellianism (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). These leaders use exploitative and manipulative tactics and become a source of discords and havoc in the group (W. K. Campbell & Campbell, 2009).

Limited yet noteworthy studies have investigated the relationship between leadership behaviors and styles influencing destructive conflict instigation, suggesting a broad interest in the negative behaviors of occupants in powerful positions. It is

evident that there is an unbalanced focus on the dark side of leadership with respect to conflict. It is currently unclear which leadership styles facilitate constructive conflict instigation attribution and obstruct destructive conflict instigation attribution (Zhao et al., 2019).

Insights collected from previous studies suggest that leader generated conflict with other teams was considered constructive by followers and yielded positive intragroup relations (Abrams, Randsley de Moura, & Travaglino, 2013). However, within the group, conflict is attributed to be constructive when it is generated by leaders who are open to contradictions, new ideas and alternative solutions to problems, hence it fosters group creativity and performance (Bai et al., 2015). Therefore, leaders with constructive intentions behind their conflict instigation behaviors are focused on achieving its positive outcomes (Abrams et al., 2013; Vera & Crossan, 2005).

Leaders who create disagreements among group members in order to promote sharing of alternative ideas and free expression are more likely to be assigned constructive conflict instigation attribution by followers. Empowering leadership is characterized by allowing free expression and sharing of ideas and generating challenges for employees (Oedzes et al., 2019; Joo, Yoon, & Galbraith, 2023). Moreover empowering leaders provide autonomy to followers along with resources to meet their job demands, therefore this study is an attempt to introduce empowering leadership as a leadership style that facilitates constructive and impedes destructive conflict instigation attribution.

### 1.2.5 Conflict Instigation Attributions and Emotional Reaction

Attribution theory and attribution related research suggests that attributions trigger emotional reactions of individuals (Weiner, 2018). An understanding of individual's emotional reactions towards an event as a more proximal outcome provides a clearer understanding of its distal outcomes such as behavioral reactions. Although studies have uncovered generation of emotions as a result of individual's attributions towards an event or behavior (Matta et al., 2020; Montag-Smit & Smit,

2021; Van De Voorde & Beijer, 2015), there is limited attention of researchers towards this process and more research is required to study how attribution influences the emotions and behaviors of individuals in organizations (Hewett, Shantz, Mundy, & Alfes, 2018; Martinko & Mackey, 2019).

In organizational domain, few studies have highlighted emotional reactions of employees towards their attribution regarding organizational phenomenon and leadership (Alfes et al., 2021; Özçelik & Uyargil, 2022). However, previous research has not undertaken emotional responses of employees in reaction to attribution regarding conflict inducing behavior of leaders. Due to this omission, it is unclear whether employees encounter differential emotional experiences when leader-instigated task conflict is attributed to destructive intentions versus constructive intentions.

Conversely, in the domain of conflict, a vast variety of studies have investigated the emotions encountered by individuals in response to conflict. These studies suggest that positive or negative emotional reactions emerge depending upon the nature of conflict. Previous studies in this domain argue that constructive conflict is a source of motivation and energy for individuals hence triggers positive emotions (Tjosvold, 2006, 2008; De Wit et al., 2012). On the other hand, studies on destructive conflict demonstrate that it incites negative feelings of anger, frustration and anxiety among team members and hence it becomes a source of stress for the workgroup (Behfar, Peterson, Mannix, & Trochim, 2008; Jehn, 1995). However, the distinction of constructive or destructive nature of conflict is inherently a subjective experience and may differ for different individuals. The reason lies in the appraisal tendencies and differentiated construal of events such as beneficial or harmful, justifiable or unjustifiable, constructive or destructive (Shaw, Lien, Ruthruff, & Allen, 2011). Hence, there is a need of researchers' attention towards the less explored individual attributions developed on the basis of their subjective experience of leader-instigated task conflict and resultantly the generation of positive or negative emotions.

This study examines individual attributions of leader-instigated task conflict as the proximal predictor of their affective outcomes. In addition, as a response to call for research by recent studies (Van Kleef & Cote, 2018), the current study

focuses on the experience of conflict itself and its underlying mechanisms instead of conflict resolution and regulation.

### 1.2.6 Conflict Instigation Attributions and Job Crafting

Overall as suggested earlier that there are fewer studies in attribution and its behavioral reactions in leadership domain in general but there is more paucity in conflict domain specifically. To our knowledge no study has identified employee behavioral reactions towards their attributions regarding conflict, hence invites researchers to put emphasis towards this phenomenon.

Generally, individual responses towards their attribution of an event or behavior engender their behavioral reaction (Hewett et al., 2018). Our understanding of employee attribution towards leader-instigated task conflict will be limited if we fail to consider the behavioral reactions of individuals towards it. The current study introduces job crafting as a behavioral response towards conflict instigation attributions which entails physical and cognitive changes that individuals make in their task or relational boundaries. Theorizing for such an impact is to be additionally based on JD-R theory which provides strong conceptualization of job crafting as coping behavior in response to the differential motivational and energy depletion processes triggered as a result of challenging and hindering job demands as perceived by employees respectively (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

The current study, on the basis of JD-R theory premises postulates that constructive conflict instigation attribution conceptualized as challenge demands will result in motivational process leading to promotion-focused job crafting behaviors aimed at advancement, improvement, growth and accomplishment (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Demerouti, Cropanzano, Bakker, & Leiter, 2010). Conversely, destructive conflict instigation attribution conceptualized as hindrance demands will result in self-undermining or withdrawal behaviors more specifically prevention-focused job crafting in order to cope with hindrance demand. This study is so far the first one to identify job crafting as a regulatory/coping mechanism of leader-instigated task conflict attribution, as proposed by

JD-R model. Nonetheless, studies have introduced job crafting as coping mechanism for leader's behaviors such as abusive leadership (see Masood, Karakowsky, & Podolsky, 2021), and hence pave a direction for job crafting to be studied as a coping mechanism apart from the mainstream coping responses to conflict.

In addition, recent studies have highlighted that although job crafting can be studied at two levels of focus i.e. prevention-orientation (or avoidance orientation) and promotion-orientation (or approach orientation), however literature on job crafting has mainly focused on approach orientation of job crafting (Demerouti, Bakker, & Gevers, 2015; Peeters, Arts, & Demerouti, 2016; Petrou et al., 2019; Vogt, Hakanen, Brauchli, Jenny, & Bauer, 2016; Bauer, Hämmig, Schaufeli, & Taris, 2014). Since there is scarcity of research in avoidance orientation job crafting and based on the call for research in this aspect (Boehnlein & Baum, 2022; Bruning & Campion, 2018; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2019, 2019; Rofcanin, Bakker, Berber, Gölgeci, & Las Heras, 2019), the current study takes into consideration both aspects of job crafting and their effects to address the motivation and self-undermining cycles as generated by constructive and destructive conflict instigation attribution.

### 1.2.7 Indirect Effect of Emotions with Cross Level Effect of Team Emotional Regulation

Research suggests to study not only the proximal outcomes of conflict and its perception, it also suggests to study the distal outcomes to see how they unfold overtime and through which process (De Clercq & Pereira, 2021; Mikkelsen & Clegg, 2019). Given that the affective experiences of individuals in the form of positive or negative emotions as proximal outcomes of conflict instigation attributions motivate different behavioral responses from them as their distal outcomes, it is critical to understand the underlying mechanism of this phenomenon through emotions. In this regard, how individuals undergo their emotional experiences in response to conflict perception is critical in order to understand their behavioral responses, thus calling for research in this domain to be extended (Van Kleef & Cote, 2018; Yousaf, Shaukat, & Umrani, 2021).

In addition, recent studies suggest to improve the understanding of team processes and their outcomes through identifying factors related to team resources as potential moderators between group inputs, their resultant emergent states and team outcomes (Boros, 2020; Mello & Delise, 2015). Further, previous studies have highlighted the role of intra group trust (Desivilya, Somech, & Lidgoster, 2010), emotional awareness (Boros, 2020), team tenacity, and other team resources such as relationships, trust and capability to manage conflict that helps in effective response to it (Kay & Skarlicki, 2020; Suifan, Alhyari, & Sweis, 2020; Wu, Zheng, Zhao, & Zuo, 2020; Yin et al., 2020).

Since team resources play an important role to deal with emotions, the current study extends literature by identifying team emotional regulation as a resource that helps group members to cope with the emotions generated in response to conflict instigation attribution and thereby shapes their job crafting behaviors.

It must be noted that group emotional regulation is a stronger resource as compared to individual emotional regulation provided that individual's behaviors are also affected by other group member's emotions, owing to different emotional intensities of team members, individuals will be able to respond with constructive behaviors if team members can effectively regulate their emotions. In addition, it is argued that individuals are more likely to craft their jobs and engage in work when their coworkers support them emotionally (Shin, Hur, & Choi, 2020). Team emotional regulation would enable individuals to craft their jobs more effectively. Therefore the current study considers team emotional regulation as a cross level conditional group resource that shapes the job crafting behaviors of employees in response to the emotions generated as a result of leader-instigated task conflict attribution.

### 1.2.8 Multilevel Indirect Effects of Conflict Instigation Attributions via Job Crafting

Conflict instigation attributions and their behavioral reaction will yield inadequate implications if we ignore their performance related outcomes on both individual and group levels. Studies on attribution are needed to unveil their potential to

shape outcomes at multiple levels via behavioral reactions. Drawing from JD-R theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017, 2018), and based on prior evidence that promotion focused job crafting leads to positive work outcomes while prevention focused job crafting leads to negative work outcomes (Harju, Kaltiainen, & Hakanen, 2021; Petrou & Xanthopoulou, 2021; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Lopper, Horstmann, & Hoppe, 2020), we suggest explanatory mechanism for constructive and destructive conflict instigation attribution to shape individual and team creativity via promotion and prevention focused job crafting.

### 1.2.9 Cultural and Contextual Gap

Different nations have different cultures based on their value systems which are translated into the organizations as sub-systems. Pakistan is considered to be moderate in power distance (score = 55) and high in collectivism (score = 95) (Hofstede, 2009, 2016, 2023). While authority is duly respected and abided by in this culture, decisions from superiors are rarely challenged (Khilji, 1995). Social ties, harmony, and group cohesion get prioritized over other goals (Ferris et al., 2005). Members of a team are more susceptible to conforming and developing excessive consensus with their leaders or colleagues while repressing and withholding their ideas and opinions in order to abide by the authority and to avoid harm to relationships. Therefore, in Pakistani workplace, individuals at workplace generally have a tendency to not bring up their creative ideas in order to secure their relationships and to maintain hierarchical adherence. Further, Pakistan also rates high on uncertainty avoidance (score = 70) (Hofstede, 2023), which implies that people prefer to maintain rigid beliefs and behaviors whereby they have an unwelcoming attitude towards unorthodox ideas and behaviors. In the work context of Pakistan, people have an inner urge to go by the conventional procedures and routines, and resist novelty and innovation, which leads to lack of discussion of creative ideas and solutions. This go-by-the-conventions atmosphere is destructive for organizations where creative inputs from all team members are required, hence they look to engage their employees in activities that can boost up their creativity (Pringle & Robinson, 2024). More specifically, teams working in marketing

and advertising, creative content creation, consultancy teams etc have big role in achievement of organizational goals. In a country like Pakistan with collectivist, power distant and uncertainty avoidance culture, it is crucial for leaders to engage their employees in task related debates in order to spark their creativity. In this regard, the current study attempts to highlight the crucial role of leaders that they can play in triggering employees to get involved in debates and discussions on alternative viewpoints through task conflict instigation for developing creative solutions.

### 1.2.10 Methodological Gap

The current dissertation also contributes methodologically towards the advancement of literature in the domain of conflict management, leadership, attributions and their outcomes at both individual and team level. Previous research has explored the effects of task conflict, however, most studies have examined it from a standalone process of team dynamics by studying it either at individual level, or at team level while ignoring the role of individual attributions, their resultant emotions and behaviors(Yousaf et al., 2021; Somaraju, Griffin, Olenick, Chang, & Kozlowski, 2024). This narrow focus overlooks the complexity of dynamics of conflict from attributional perspective (Jiao & Wang, 2023), where individual attributions of team-directed leader behaviors aimed at instigating task related conflict within team offer a better explanation of its resultant emotions and behaviors that shape its outcomes both at individual as well as team level.

Recognizing leader-instigated task conflict as a team-directed leader behavior, and the resultant attributions, emotions and behaviors of employees at individual level, it is inherently a multilevel phenomenon. This study addressed the gap by proposing and empirically testing multilevel model of leader-instigated task conflict and its resultant attributions. By using multilevel data analysis techniques in MPlus, this research captured both individual and team-level effects, as well as cross-level interactions. Moreover, the use of time-lagged, multi source data mitigates common method bias and enhances the robustness of the findings, providing a more nuanced understanding of how leader-instigated task conflict influences creativity

through employee attributions. This approach offers a more comprehensive view of the multilevel processes involved, which has been under-explored in previous studies.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

Organizations strive to achieve competitive advantage through creativity, however excessive consensus, group think or go-fever impair participative decision making and creative problem solving of work groups. It is essential for leaders to incite task related debates, disagreements and sharing of opinion among employees in order to promote creative outcomes. This additional role of leaders in conflict has received only scanty attention in literature. Further, in order to see a clear picture of its consequences, it is crucial to study the missing link of motives that followers attribute to their leader's conflict instigation as attributions of followers about leader's behavior shape their positive or negative emotions, promotion or prevention behavioral responses, and thereby their performance. Also, it is currently unclear whether empowering leadership facilitates constructive and reduces destructive attributions of followers regarding leader-instigated task conflict. In short, we need a clearer understanding of how, when and why employees might respond positively or negatively to leader generated task conflict and the resultant attributions which turn on beneficial or harmful effects for individuals as well as for teams.

## 1.4 Research Questions

The research questions that the current dissertation aims to address are as follows:

**Research Question 1:**

**1.1:** Is leader-instigated task conflict related to leader-instigated task conflict attributions?

**1.2:** Does empowering leadership moderate this relationship?

**Research Question 2:**

What are the multilevel effects of leader-instigated task conflict attribution on individual level creativity and team creativity?

**Research Question 3:**

**3.1:** Are leader-instigated task conflict and employee attributions related to active emotions?

**3.2:** Is leader-instigated task conflict indirectly associated with active emotions via employee attributions?

**Research Question 4:**

**4.1:** Are leader-instigated task conflict attributions significantly associated with job crafting behavior?

**4.2:** Do active emotions mediate this link?

**4.3:** Does cross level team emotional regulation act as a conditional factor in this association?

**Research Question 5:**

Is job crafting related to individual and team creativity?

**Research Question 6:**

**6.1:** Does leader-instigated task conflict attributions have indirect effect on individual level creativity and team level creativity via the mediation of job crafting?

**6.2:** Does leader-instigated task conflict have indirect effect on individual level creativity and team level creativity via the serial mediation of leader-instigated task conflict attribution, active emotions and job crafting?

## 1.5 Research Objectives

Specific objectives of the study are as follows:

**Research Objective 1:**

To find out the relationship of leader-instigated task conflict with constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution.

**Research Objective 2:**

To find out whether empowering leadership moderates the relationship of leader-instigated task conflict with constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution.

**Research Objective 3:**

To assess the multilevel effects of constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution on individual creativity and team creativity.

**Research Objective 4:**

To examine the associations of leader-instigated task conflict with positive and negative active emotions.

**Research Objective 5:**

To test the association of and constructive conflict instigation attribution with positive active emotions and destructive conflict instigation attribution with negative active emotions.

**Research Objective 6:**

To assess the indirect effect of leader-instigated task conflict on positive and negative active emotions via the mediation of constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution.

**Research Objective 7:**

To examine the association of constructive conflict instigation attribution with promotion-focused job crafting and destructive conflict instigation attribution with prevention-focused job crafting.

**Research Objective 8:**

To test the indirect effect of constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution on promotion and prevention job crafting via positive and negative active emotions.

**Research Objective 9:**

To test the conditional indirect effect of team emotional regulation in the association of constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution on job crafting via positive and negative active emotions.

**Research Objective 10:**

To investigate the effects of promotion-focused and prevention-focused job crafting on individual creativity and team creativity.

**Research Objective 11:**

To assess the multilevel effects of constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution on individual creativity and team creativity via the mediation of promotion-focused and prevention-focused job crafting.

**Research Objective 12:** To examine the indirect effect of leader-instigated task conflict on individual creativity and team creativity via the serial mediation of leader-instigated task conflict attribution, active emotions and job crafting.

## 1.6 Significance of Study

This study offers several theoretical, practical and cultural considerations that intend to contribute to literature, industry and context.

### 1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study intends to offer multifold theoretical contributions. By proposing a multilevel model of leader-instigated task conflict and related attributions, this study extends the literature on task conflict, leadership, attribution, emotions, job crafting, individual and team creativity. Firstly this study identifies a unique but largely ignored leadership role in conflict at workplace by highlighting instigation of team based task conflict. Further, this dissertation seeks to resolve the paradox of conflict (De Dreu, Gelfand, et al., 2008; De Wit et al., 2012) by examining it as a multilevel phenomenon and identifying employee attributions and resultant emotions about leader-instigated task conflict to clearly unfold "how", "why" and "when" it takes a constructive route or follows a destructive route. Hence this

study seeks to provide a *missing piece* to the puzzle in order to elicit the dual nature of conflict having antagonistic effects on individual and team work outcomes.

Moreover, by studying promotion and prevention focused job crafting as coping mechanisms to conflict and attributions related to conflict, this study extends theoretical insight that employees can cope with conflict with behaviors other than the extensively studied specific coping strategies related to conflict management (Beitler, Scherer, & Zapf, 2018; Pluut & Curşeu, 2013; Rispens & Demerouti, 2016). This research extends JD-R theory by being the first study which specifies challenge and hindrance demands through introducing conflict attributions. Having an extensive body of research based on JD-R theory, the literature in the domain of challenge and hindrance demands is very limited (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). While research falls short in explanatory mechanisms in this theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2023), this study extends it through emotions and promotion and prevention focused job crafting. Also, as invited by the pioneers of JD-R theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018), this study further extends the theory by explicating the interaction between multiple levels and studying multilevel outcomes of the phenomenon. The current study also intends to contribute to attribution theory by being one of the handful of studies that apply attribution to organizational context (Martinko & Mackey, 2019). This is the first study in the extensive research in attribution theory that highlights an additional specific attribution related to intentionality of conflict as invited by experts of this theory (Harvey, Madison, Martinko, Crook, & Crook, 2014). This specification of attribution further helps in strengthening the tenants of attribution theory by explaining how and when these attributions are developed and the resultant emotions and behaviors associated with them (Martinko & Mackey, 2019).

### 1.6.2 Practical Significance

In order to address the practical aspects of this research, first it is necessary for practitioners to understand why there is a need of team based task conflict in the organizations and what difference it will bring about in the organizations?

The answer to this is obvious, as managers have to deal with problems such as excessive consensus, norms of conformity, group-think and social loafing among team members, these issues are poison for organizations and teams where creativity is the objective. If such issues are not given due consideration by leaders, it can cause detrimental effects in individual and team creative performance outcomes. Hence, managers need an approach that can provoke team members to speak up about their ideas and opinions. Leader instigated task conflict can be a magic wand to trigger team members to discuss alternatives and debate about their merits and demerits and to finally solve the problem at hand creatively. However, this magic wand ought to be used sparingly as employee attributions generated about this conflict can trigger positive or negative emotional states resulting in constructive or destructive behaviors and outcomes, reassuring that conflict is a double edged sword which can offer both favorable and detrimental effects. The current study adopts a multilevel lens to study this organizational phenomenon and its findings will promulgate practical insights to managers in devising strategies and managing work outcomes for multiple levels.

## 1.7 Supporting Theory

The current study is supported by two theories which are widely applied on OB research frameworks. Attribution theory provides support to the proposed research model as an underpinning theory which explains micro links. The overarching framework is supported by Job Demands-Resources Theory.

### 1.7.1 Attribution Theory and Contribution by Current Study

Attribution theory comprises of different theoretical frameworks (Heider, 2013; Kelley, 1967; Weiner, 1985) built on the notion that people are naive psychologists having an inherent tendency to make sense of what they encounter. In doing so, individuals try to make causal ascriptions and assign attributions about an

event or behaviors of others. Central to attribution theory are the causal dimensions which shape attributions such as locus of causality, stability and control. Some additional causal dimensions have been identified lately one of which is the perception of individuals about motives or intentions as the cause of particular behaviors (Harvey et al., 2014). It suggest that the reaction of individuals is not to the event or behavior itself, it is based on the observer's attribution of motives of actor's behavior. The theory further proposes that the causal attributions assigned to behaviors of others influence the affect, behavior and performance of individuals.

#### 1.7.1.1 Current Study's Contribution to Attribution Theory

The influential researchers in attribution theory assert that despite its potential to explain organizational phenomena, this theory has been underutilized and unappreciated in organizational sciences and its potential in contributing to OB has not been realized yet, *therefore calling for more research in attribution related research in organizations* (Harvey et al., 2014; Martinko et al., 2011; Martinko & Mackey, 2019). Second, it is suggested to revisit the attribution studies and *identify attributions related to specific events, behaviors or contexts.* It is essential to study specific attributions in order to prevent generic attributions and focus on the meaningful attributional explanations that make the most sense for certain types of behaviors or events (Harvey et al., 2014). Third, *recent studies call for examining employees' attribution related to leader behaviors since there is paucity of research which creates an unrealized potential in this domain* (Follmer et al., 2019; Martinko et al., 2011). Fourth, although studies based on attribution theory have explored the general attributional dimensions, there are other dimensions that can provide meaningful explanations about attributions such as intentionality and globality (Harvey et al., 2014), however, *they are largely unnoticed and need to be explored.* Fifth, since the theory proposes that emotional processes generate as a result of attribution, there is limited attention of researchers towards this process and *hence more research is required to study how attribution influences the emotions and behaviors of individuals in organizations* (Martinko & Mackey, 2019).

Lastly, although it is generally believed that the effect of attribution on emotions and behavioral reactions occur quickly, however, it must be acknowledged that attributions and their responses result over time after multiple observations of trigger events (Douglas et al., 2008). The initial attributions developed instantaneously during or after trigger event might change after more experience and observation. It is suggested that attributions become more solidified and resultant emotions become more intense and pronounced after multiple experiences. Hence, *there is a need of temporal research design in attribution theory in order to study how attributions are formed and how they are translated into emotions and behaviors at workplace* (Harvey et al., 2014).

The current study extends its contribution in the domain of attribution theory by highlighting employees' specific attributions about the intentionality of leader's behavior (conflict instigation), their emotional response and further elaborates the process through elucidating employees' behaviors and performance in the form of job crafting and creativity. The study follows a temporal time lagged design to elucidate the attributional processes as they uncover.

### 1.7.2 Job Demands and Resources Theory and Contribution by Current Study

Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) theory (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) provides an overarching support to the research model of current study. This theory proposes two general categories related to work characteristics: job demands and job resources. These two categories evoke two different and independent psychological processes: health impairment process and motivational process.

Jobs demands are the work related psychological, physical, social or organizational aspects that are associated with certain psychological or physical costs as they require continual cognitive, emotional and physical skills or efforts. High job demands induce health impairment process due to sustained requirements of efforts and hence they lead to impairment of energy, motivation and health (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007). Whereas job resources

are those psychological, physical, social or organizational factors that help in dealing with and reducing job demands and their associated costs. The availability of job resources evoke motivational process which enhances motivation, commitment and job engagement. Due to their motivational potential, job resources help employees in deriving fulfilment through stimulating personal growth, learning and development, and achieving work goals (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). The jobs that offer a combination of high demands with high resources create challenge for employees to learn new things and adopt new behaviors at work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

A two categories differentiation related to job demands was introduced later in the theory (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005). The job demands or work circumstances that cause excessive or undesirable obstacles in achieving individual's work goals by limiting or interfering with their abilities are referred to as hindrance demands. The job demands that promote personal growth, learning, achievement and fulfilment of work goals are termed as challenge demands. Challenge demands are considered to be rewarding and motivating experiences and hence the discomfort involved is justified. Challenge demands follow the same route as job resources while hindrance demands ought to follow the route of job demands.

The theory further suggests that job resources including personal resources buffer the undesirable effects of job demands and boost the desirable effect of (challenge) demands. A later addition in JD-R theory was made through job crafting proposing that employees who are motivated by job resources or challenge demands adopt job crafting behaviors that influence performance. On the other hand, hindrance demands lead to self-undermining behaviors resulting in decreased performance. Finally, the motivational process impacts job performance positively while health and motivation impairment process results in declined performance.

#### 1.7.2.1 Current Study's Contribution to Job Demands and Resources Theory

While the theory has matured well over two decades since its inception, the pioneers of JD-R have placed calls for more research in its unresolved issues and

future directions. The current study is an attempt to contribute to this theory in several ways. First, *although a distinction has been made between challenge and hindrance demands and the dual pathways they initiate, this phenomenon and its effects are still unknown due to lack of sufficient empirical evidence* (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019) Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Second, few studies have found that the same demands can be evaluated as both challenging and hindering (Searle & Auton, 2015; Webster, Beehr, & Love, 2011), *research is required for uncovering the conditions identifying when same job demand is taken as either challenge or hindrance* (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker & de Vries, 2021; Liu, Zhu, Liu, & Fu, 2020). Third, *recent agenda in JD-R calls to study the role of leaders in creating job demands and resources* (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). The current study introduces role of leader in creating job demand through instigating team conflict which further unfolds into constructive attribution as challenge demand and destructive attribution as hindrance demand and further identifies empowering leadership as a conditional factor in shaping these demands.

Fourth, JD-R proposes that job and personal resources buffer the undesirable impact of hindrance demands and boost the desirable impact of challenge demands on positive outcomes. However, *due to inadequate evidence, there are calls for more research to test and validate the interaction effects of job demands and job/personal resources* (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker & de Vries, 2021). Fifth, since a majority of research on JD–R model has been carried out at single level with a handful of studies on multilevel or cross level (such as Bakker, Van Emmerik, & Van Riet, 2008; Demerouti et al., 2001; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009), *recent research agenda in JD-R calls to examine the phenomena from multilevel and cross level perspective* (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017, 2018; Bakker et al., 2023) . More specifically, it is suggested to integrate predictors or moderators (such as team resources) from another level in the model and also by looking at outcomes (such as performance) at multiple levels. Lastly, although there is burgeoning discernment that job crafting involves two main categories approach/promotion focused and avoidance/prevention focused (Bindl, Unsworth, Gibson, & Stride, 2019; Zhang & Parker, 2019; Petrou & Xanthopoulou, 2021).

While JD-R covers job crafting and self-undermining behaviors, and studies have undertaken the role of increasing demands and resources and reducing job demands in JD-R, *surprisingly, it has not integrated them as promotion and prevention job crafting as a holistic model which requires researchers' attention.*

In the current study, the motivational mechanism is proposed to unfold via positive active emotions (referred as motivation or engagement in JD-R) which subsequently lead to promotion job crafting. On the other hand the motivation impairment process unfolds via negative active emotions in individuals (referred as energy depletion or stress in JD-R) which subsequently lead to prevention job crafting (referred as undermining in JD-R), resulting in creative performance outcomes at individual and team levels. In addition, the current study examines the conditional cross level team resource emotional regulation as well as the multilevel outcomes at both individual and team level.

## 1.8 Definitions of Variables

### 1.8.1 Leader-Instigated Task Conflict

Leader instigated task conflict is defined as leader's behaviors that are involved in initiating or generating debates and disagreements among group members regarding task activities, ideas, issues and content (Zhao et al., 2019).

### 1.8.2 Constructive and Destructive Conflict Instigation Attributions

Leader-instigated task conflict is attributed by followers as either constructive or destructive. Constructive conflict instigation attribution refers to subordinates attribution that leader has instigated conflict in order to evoke discussions and debates on alternative ideas and divergent opinions among team members. Destructive conflict instigation attribution refers to subordinates ascription of leaders' conflict instigation behavior with the motive to criticize followers or to retaliate employees (Zhao et al., 2019).

### 1.8.3 Empowering Leadership

Empowering leadership refers to the process of enabling employees to participate in decision making by granting autonomy, shifting responsibilities to employees, expressing trust and confidence in their capabilities, and removing hindrances that limit achievement of goals (Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

### 1.8.4 Positive and Negative Emotions

This study conceptualizes positive emotions as the affective states or feelings of being interested, attentive, active or energetic which are triggered due to experience of conflict (Weingart, Bear, & Todorova, 2009). Negative emotions are the affective states or feelings of being frustrated, angry, annoyed or tense which are triggered due to experience of conflict (Weingart et al., 2009).

### 1.8.5 Promotion and Prevention Focused Job Crafting

Promotion-focused job crafting behaviors (increasing social and structural job resources and demands) refer to physical and cognitive changes that individuals make in their task or relational boundaries aimed at advancement, improvement, growth and accomplishment. Prevention-focused job crafting behaviors (decreasing hindering demands) of employees refer to self-undermining or withdrawal behaviors with the aim to cope with hindrance demands at work (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018).

### 1.8.6 Team Emotional Regulation

Team emotional regulation refers to team members' ability to control their emotional and cognitive dynamics (B. Thompson, 2004). It helps team members in reducing and dealing with the influence of emotions and facilitate cognition based problem solving.

### 1.8.7 Employee Creativity

Employee creativity is defined as the degree to which an individual employee develops novel and useful ideas (Tierney, Farmer, & Graen, 1999).

### 1.8.8 Team Creativity

Team creativity refers to the degree to which teams as a whole generate novel and useful ideas (Shin & Zhou, 2007).

## 1.9 Scope of Study

The focus of the current study is to propose and empirically investigate the unique role of leader-instigated task conflict and its resultant employee attributions and their consequential emotional, behavioral and performance based effects within various organizations in Pakistan. A multilevel research model was developed drawing on attribution theory and job demands-resources theory. The study implied quantitative research methodology whereby data were collected from leaders and their subordinates working in teams through multisource questionnaire based surveys by adopting a time-lagged design. Data were analyzed using MPLUS for multilevel data analysis to test the hypothesized associations. The current study focuses specifically on task conflict instigated by the leaders to understand the dual paths (constructive or destructive) that it may adopt to provide implications for conflict management, leadership, employee emotions and behaviors, and creativity within the organizational settings.

## 1.10 Chapter Summary

To summarize, research scholars have paid a substantial amount of attention towards group conflict in the workplace. Considering the propensity of task conflict in promoting performance based outcomes mainly creativity at both individual levels, past research contends that it is not always a negative phenomenon, rather

it is desirable and welcomed in certain organizational settings where creativity is the goal. The current study highlights leader's task conflict instigation as a non-traditional role of leaders in this domain to effectively generate task conflict in their work groups. However, owing to the mixed findings for task conflict and its effects, the current study looks with a deeper lens to identify the mechanism based on attributions that can switch on its constructive or destructive route. On these grounds, this chapter has detailed the overview of purpose and significance of this dissertation.

# Chapter 2

# Literature Review

This chapter presents background from past literature for all variables of the study. Further, hypotheses development is carried out in the light of arguments and evidence from previous scholarly work. More specifically, direct hypothesis and indirect effect hypothesis are developed for leader-instigated task conflict and employee attributions and emotions with support from literature. Further, literature is discussed for direct effects and mediation effects of employee attributions, job crafting and creativity at both individual and team level. This chapter also describes the moderating role of empowering leadership and team emotional regulation. Overall, this chapter presents theoretical and literature support for direct, indirect, conditional and conditional indirect effects proposed in the study.

## 2.1 Background of Variables

### 2.1.1 Group Conflict at Workplace

Group conflict at work continues to gain the attention of researchers since more than half a century (Su & Rungruang, 2023). It is defined as a process that is emanated when one party perceives that another party has or is about to negatively affect something the first party values (Thomas, 1992). Team conflict stand out as the most impactful workplace conflict, exerting a profound influence on team performance. It is believed to arise because of real or perceived differences or

incompatibilities among group members that can interfere with the achievement of their goals (Kolb & Putnam, 1992).

The history of workplace conflict is as long as the history of organizations which encompasses different perspectives on conflict in different eras. Earlier during the 1930-40's era, it was believed to be a disparaging phenomenon in the organizations having detrimental consequences for organizations (J. D. Thompson, 1960). Hence, workplace conflict was considered to be bad and undesirable in workplace settings and research in this era revolved around looking for ways to avoid workplace conflict.

Later on during the 1940-70's, literature witnesses a different realization by researchers regarding group conflict whereby it was agreed that it is a ubiquitous and unavoidable phenomenon at work which is an inevitable component of group dynamics (Pondy, 1967). Hence, researchers started to accept it as a naturally occurring phenomenon in groups. However, it was still believed to be a negative phenomenon which causes disruption in the achievement of organizational goals. Therefore, researchers laid their focus on managing and handling conflict effectively during this time period (Ruble & Thomas, 1976). However, during this era, researchers had begun to contend that conflict can lead to constructive controversy and promote creativity. Hence, conflict emerged into two dimensions including functional or constructive, and dysfunctional or destructive on the basis of its effects (Pondy, 1967). Functional conflict is focused on enhancing team performance by aligning with the goals set by the team (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). These conflicts emphasize reaching a mutually agreeable resolution that is acceptable to the parties involved in the conflict (Nunkoo & Sungkur, 2021). Functional conflict results in positive group and organizational outcomes such as increased creativity, innovation and productivity. On the other hand, dysfunctional conflict arises when individuals over prioritize their personal goals in comparison to the group members and group goals (Dash, Nguyen, Cengiz, & Sharma, 2023). Destructive conflicts may lead to various detrimental consequences, such as cost overruns, communication breakdown, resistance to change, heightened stress, missed project deadlines, reduced performance and productivity, profit loss, strained business relationships (Rahim & Katz, 2020).

Literature further focused on identifying different levels of conflict on the basis of subjects involved (Tajfel, Turner, Austin, & Worchel, 1979). The first level is intrapersonal which arises within individual because of divergent internal tendencies (Gibson, Dunlop, & Raghav, 2021), second is interpersonal which involves two or more persons (Kundi & Badar, 2021), third comprises group conflict whereby conflict arises within or between members of a group(s) (Joo, Yoon, & Galbraith, 2023) while the fourth level includes conflict at the organizational (Tanjitpiyanond, Jetten, & Peters, 2023).

Since 1980's onwards, the traditional perspective of research scholars regarding conflict has shifted considerably. The contemporary perspective of conflict advocates that conflict is an essential part or group and organizational dynamics (Rahim, 2023). In the present times, conflict in the workplace is contended to be a positive phenomenon which should be encouraged and promoted (Su & Rungruang, 2023). Current research highlights a number of positive outcomes of conflict including effective decision making, discussion on divergent viewpoints leading to lesser errors, decrease in premature and excessive consensus (Guerra, Martínez, Munduate, & Medina, 2020; Aghaei, Haghani, & Limunga, 2022; Kay & Skarlicki, 2020). Further, it is found be positively associated with creativity and innovation. However, considering the dual nature of conflict to be both functional and dysfunctional, it is essentially highlighted that conflict must be managed effectively in order to promote its functional outcomes and minimize its dysfunctional outcomes (Guerra et al., 2020). Consequently, it can be inferred that conflict is necessary to promote creativity, effective decision making and other positive outcomes (Kay & Skarlicki, 2020), however, its negative outcomes must be carefully avoided.

### 2.1.2 Types of Group Conflict

Another strong pillar in the conflict literature was added when Jehn (1994) introduced its tridimensional typology including task, relationship and process conflict (Caputo et al., 2019). This groundbreaking study led to a new stream of research in the literature of group and organizational conflict offering the general insight

that different types of conflict result in different effects on outcomes (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999).

Task conflict is defined as a disagreement about the content or substance of the tasks or objectives at hand, involving varying opinions, perspectives, or interpretations within a group or team (De Wit et al., 2012). While task conflict is mostly found to promote constructive effects (Aghaei et al., 2022), however, its negative effects have also been reported by previous studies (Eissa & Lester, 2024). Relationship conflicts are characterized by personal disagreements, tension, hostility, or animosity between individuals and have adverse effects on team performance, causing a decline in motivation, heightened stress levels, and a breakdown in teamwork (Shrestha & Singh, 2023; Singh & Waldia, 2024; Telecan, Rus, & Curșeu, 2023). Furthermore, process conflict is defined by disagreement about the logistics of task completion, involving variations in roles, responsibilities, and levels of work engagement within a group or team. Both relationship and process conflict are generally regarded as destructive because of their detrimental effects (Singh & Waldia, 2024). Finally, it is summarized that conflict is inevitable in organizational life which is found to have both positive and negative effects which makes it an important area for research inquiry to understand the dynamics of its process and consequences (Su & Rungruang, 2023; Guerra et al., 2020; Aghaei et al., 2022).

### 2.1.3 Task Conflict and its Mixed Effects

Task conflict entails discussions or debates on alternative viewpoints of team members regarding the task at hand (De Wit et al., 2012). Literature shows mixed findings about this type of conflict which make it a paradox and hence more research is needed in this area to clarify its dynamics (De Wit et al., 2012). Some researchers believe that task conflict is negative phenomenon arguing that it results in diminished collaboration, difficulties in coordination, and decreased productivity among team members (Shrestha & Singh, 2023; Eissa & Lester, 2024; Hwang & Shin, 2023; Liu et al., 2023). The proponents of this perspective are more convinced towards its darker side as compared to its positive effects.

However, a vast literature offers opposing argument that when conflicts are oriented towards tasks rather than individuals, they are more constructive and result in enhanced team performance (Kay & Skarlicki, 2020; Brykman & O'Neill, 2021; Telecan et al., 2023). This is because task conflict encourages team members to engage in discussion of their unique ideas and alternative viewpoints which facilitates creativity and innovation (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021). Having debates on each other's perspectives raises level of knowledge of team members and fosters better understanding of each other's viewpoints.

Further, different members of team possess differential cognitive skills which combined can enhance the cognitive diversity of the team overall. When team members approach problems from their perspective, it helps them to analyze different alternatives which leads to better and effective decision making and problem solving (De Clercq & Pereira, 2021). A number of studies have reported positive outcomes of task conflict including creativity, innovation, productivity and performance among others (De Clercq & Pereira, 2021; Um & Oh, 2021; Eissa & Lester, 2024).

These contradicting empirical findings gained further attention of researchers to understand how and when the task conflict results in positive or negative consequences. Till date, researchers are attempting to resolve the paradox of conflict and its mixed outcomes by identifying the antecedents, conditional factors, and mechanism to offer a clearer understanding about its consequential effects (Eissa & Lester, 2024; Hwang & Shin, 2023; Liu et al., 2023). However, recent research further highlights the need to study its dynamics from different perspectives that could yield clarity about its process. Further it is suggested to identify those mechanisms and circumstances through which task conflict facilitates positive effects.

### 2.1.4 Role of Leaders in Conflict

Traditionally, conflicts were perceived as undesirable and to be avoided, but in a contemporary perspective, conflicts are acknowledged as inevitable, requiring effective management, and often hold constructive potential. Given the propensity

of conflict to shape the individual and group outcomes, leaders are believed to have the central responsibility in shaping the outcomes and mechanism of workplace conflicts (Nunkoo & Sungkur, 2021; Hwang & Shin, 2023). Leaders can perform different roles in shaping the workplace conflict including conflict instigation, conflict engagement and conflict management (Zhao et al., 2019). Leader conflict instigation refers to leader behaviors whereby they initiate or start a conflict within the workgroup (Zhao et al., 2019). Leaders may instigate conflict intentionally or unintentionally. Conflict engagement refers to behaviors of leaders that include their involvement and participation in group conflict actively or strategically. Lastly, conflict management role of leaders involve handling, resolution and regulation of group disagreements (Saundry, Fisher, & Kinsey, 2021). While leaders may occupy different roles in influencing workplace conflict, literature has extensively focused on the conflict management role the leaders while conflict engagement is lesser explored area while conflict instigation role has barely been identified (Zhao et al., 2019).

Conflict management involves leader behaviors aimed at regulating and handling intragroup conflicts in an effective manner (Behfar et al., 2008). Past literature has extensively highlighted different conflict handling approaches and behaviors that are adopted by leaders including leadership styles (Currie, Gormley, Roche, & Teague, 2017) such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, servant leadership among others (Xiu, Lv, & van Dierendonck, 2023; Brykman & O'Neill, 2023). Literature has identified numerous conflict handling approaches by leaders. In this regard, dual concern model has attained vast attention of researchers which proposes five conflict handling styles including competing, compromising, collaborating, avoiding and accommodating along the dimensions of concern for self vs concern for others (Thomas & Kilmann, 1978). Additionally, past research as also extensively studied leadership styles that contribute to effective or ineffective conflict handling including transactional leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership, ethical leadership (Soomro, Saraih, & Ahmad, 2023; Mukhtar, Risnita, & Prasetyo, 2020; Niu, Xia, & Liu, 2022; Dahlan, Al-Atwi, Alshaibani, Bakir, & Maher, 2023). Lastly, leaders are studied to perform the role of a negotiator or mediator in managing conflict (McCarter et al.,

2020). Both of these roles are aimed at effective conflict resolution.

Leaders behaviors are also highlighted to play a crucial role in determining the influence of leader in group conflicts. For instance, leaders who exhibit concern for followers tend to engage in constructive problem-solving behaviors when dealing with third-party conflicts and avoid or force less. On the other hand, leaders with authoritarian tendencies are more likely to employ avoiding and forcing behaviors in third-party conflict situations (Obi, Bollen, Aaldering, & Euwema, 2021). Additionally, leaders who allow participation of employees foster the adoption of cooperative conflict management styles while hindering the adoption of competitive and avoidant styles, resulting in positive outcomes such as enhanced team performance and increased team member satisfaction (Bhayana, Gupta, & Sharda, 2021)

In summary, although conflict handling and conflict resolution roles of leaders in conflict management have been highlighted and emphasized extensively, however, both of these roles lay their foundation on the belief that conflict needs to be avoided and removed from the workgroups (Zhao et al., 2019). Considering the previous literature where is was established that conflict can be constructive and essential for certain workplace settings, it is argued that it should not be removed from the workplace, rather it should be promoted and encouraged by leaders. Hence, there is a need to explore other roles of leaders in conflict including its instigation. The current study attempts to highlight the conflict instigation role of leaders.

### 2.1.5 Leader Task Conflict Instigation

Leader conflict instigation is defined as the behaviors of leaders directed towards initiating or starting debates and disagreements among group members. Research suggests that leaders may instigate conflict in their workgroup intentionally or unintentionally (Zhao et al., 2019). Unintentional conflict instigation behaviors may include leader behaviors that lead to conflict without their conscious attempt of generating a conflict. Certain leader-related factors may serve as antecedents to unintentional conflict instigation such as demographics including leader's ideas and

experiences or values of the leader. Furthermore, leadership styles characterized by certain specific behaviors and values also pave a way for unintentional instigation of conflict (Skogstad, Einarsen, Torsheim, Aasland, & Hetland, 2007). Additionally leadership styles such as transformational and transactional leadership may also influence generation of conflict and its outcomes (Doucet, Poitras, & Chênevert, 2009).

Intentional conflict instigation by the leader corresponds to leader behaviors whereby they generate conflict within their workgroup on purpose with a conscious awareness. The intentional instigation of conflict by the leader is attributed to either constructive or destructive motives (Zhao et al., 2019). Constructive motivation for conflict instigation is backed by the notion that leaders develop the environment and provide necessary resources to the team members to help the achievement of group goals. Leaders generate conflict intentionally when they deem it to be essential and beneficial. In this regards, JD-R theory suggest that leaders create demands and resources necessary for the subordinates to engage them actively in desired behaviors which thereby leads to better performance outcomes (Tummers & Bakker, 2021). Previous research has identified a positive relationship between a leader's dialectical thinking and their generation of constructive conflict which promotes both employee creativity and in-role performance (Bai et al., 2015). Leaders, under this domain of conflict instigation, usually generate task conflict among group members since it is mostly found to yield desirable processes such as constructive discussion among group members regarding work and critical debates on divergent opinions and ideas. This task-conflict instigation by leaders is seen as an opportunity to effectively engage the team members in task conflict.

On the other hand, destructive motives for conflict instigation revolve around leader's personality such as the dark triad, as well as destructive leadership styles such as destructive or abusive leadership (Boddy, Miles, Sanyal, & Hartog, 2015; Farh & Chen, 2014; Skogstad et al., 2007). Leaders engage in such destructive behaviors with the motives of retribution, revenge or punishment. The consequences of this conflict instigation may be very alarming. The current study focuses on the intentional instigation of task conflict by leaders termed as leader-instigated task

conflict which is characterized by leader behaviors whereby they engage in initiating and starting disagreements and debates among group members regarding the task and its contents. Considering the positive nature of task conflict characterized by aiming to engage team members in productive discussions regarding task at hand, this conflict instigation is proposed to be a positive phenomenon. However, its consequences largely depend upon how group members perceive it, as discussed in the next section.

### 2.1.6 Employee Attributions of Leader Behaviors

Attribution theory provides lens to identify the more proximal effects of group based task conflict instigated by leader. Attribution theory proposes that people are naive psychologists and they attempt to understand the behaviors of others by assigning causal ascriptions to those behaviors which then shape their emotional, behavioral and performance based outcomes (Heider, 2013; Kelley, 1967; Weiner, 1985). It is further posited that the observers assign causal attributions in the basis of four different dimensions (Weiner, 1985). First dimension is locus of causality where observers assess the behaviors of others to be caused due to external vs internal sources. The second dimension is stability where individuals observe the consistency of same pattern of behavior by the actor. Third dimension comprises controllability whereby individuals judge the degree to which the actor has control over the behavior thus displayed or the event. Lastly, the recent dimension suggested by attribution theory is intentionality which makes individuals ascribe the intentions behind the actor's behaviors. While the first three attributional dimensions have been largely studied in past research, the dimension of intentionally needs the scholarly attention since it can shape the emotional, behavioral and performance based outcomes of individuals (Harvey et al., 2014). The current study highlights this dimension to study the intentionality of leader instigated task conflict behaviors and their resultant emotional, behavior and performance based outcomes.

In the domain of leadership, past studies suggest that the responses of employees are solely not directed towards leader behaviors only, rather these responses are

a result of the causal attributions that employees may develop for their leader's behaviors. Several researchers have shed light on employees' responses to specific leader behaviors. Past studies have discovered that employees' attributions of leadership behavior play a crucial role in shaping their behavior (Fruhen, Andrei, & Griffin, 2022). For example, when employees interpret their leader's commitment to safety as authentic concern for employee well-being, it fosters heightened awareness of personal safety, encouraging employees to adapt their behaviors accordingly. Additionally, it is asserted that a strong attribution of authenticity by employees towards their leader not only cultivates a heightened sense of trust but also positively influences and elevates their task performance (Jiao & Wang, 2023). Conversely, when there is a low employee attribution of authenticity, employees are inclined to perceive leadership as hypocritical, resulting in a decline in their engagement in organizational citizenship behavior. Other studies have also highlighted employee attributions regarding leader behaviors and their consequences (Fein, Tziner, & Vasiliu, 2023; Ali & Hassan, 2023; Lyu, Wu, Ye, Kwan, & Chen, 2023).

### 2.1.7 Employee Attributions for Leader-Instigated Task Conflict

Attributions are commonly characterized by the judgments individuals make about the causes of another person's behavior. Previous studies on attributions of employees regarding leader behaviors assert that employees mainly develop two kind of attributions for the behaviors of their leaders, positive (constructive) and negative (destructive) attributions (Liu et al., 2012; Shen, Liang, Brown, Ni, & Zheng, 2021). Positive or constructive attributions develop belief in employees regarding positive intentionality of behavior of their leaders and hence tend to respond positively through their behavioral response (Kim, Atwater, Latheef, & Zheng, 2019). On the other hand, negative attributions of leader behavior lead to negative behavioral response from the followers (Kim et al., 2019). Along the similar lines, the current study follows the approach followed by recent research, to distinguish the motives perceived by employees regarding leader conflict instigation

to be constructive and destructive. Constructive task conflict instigation attribution refers to the causal ascription by the followers with a belief that leader has initiated the conflict with positive intentions such as to achieve group goals whereas destructive task conflict instigation attribution comprises the negative beliefs of employees regarding their leader's task conflict instigation such as with the motive to cause harm or insult, or to take revenge (Zhao et al., 2019). Literature suggests that while developing attributions about group conflict, individuals are likely to undergo asymmetric perceptions about conflict hence making it an individual-level effect (Jehn, Rispens, & Thatcher, 2010). This is because different members of the group may perceive the intentionality of their leader's conflict instigation differently. Hence, the current study conceptualizes the attributions of employees regarding leader instigated group task conflict at the individual level (within-group level).

### 2.1.8 Empowering Leadership

Empowering leadership is a dynamic process characterized by the sharing of power and the delegation of autonomy and responsibilities to followers. This is accomplished through the enhancement of the meaningfulness of work, the facilitation of participation in decision-making, the expression of confidence in high performance, and the provision of autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (Cheong, Spain, Yammarino, & Yun, 2016).

The empowering leadership approach is further characterized by several key elements that set it apart from other leadership styles (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). Central to this approach is the delegation of authority, downward power-sharing, the granting of autonomy, and the encouragement of followers' self leadership. Past research identifies two main characteristics of empowering leadership (Tung & Chang, 2011). The first pertains to the leader's behavior encompassing autonomy, power sharing, and the allocation of responsibilities among employees. Moreover, empowering leadership also nurtures positive employee attitudes by fostering motivation and job satisfaction (Tung & Chang, 2011). Further, it is

suggested that empowering leadership positively influences employees' innovative behavior through heightened job engagement (Li, Qiu, Zeng, & Wang, 2023).

Research has found that empowering leadership promotes positive work outcomes such as enhanced creativity and innovative work behavior (Yadav, Prakash, & Dalal, 2023). Empowering leaders allow followers to the autonomy to make decisions about their work (Yadav et al., 2023), which develops positive beliefs and trust in them for their leader. These leaders also facilitate the positive consequences of conflict within groups. Empowering leaders can do so by fostering open communication, creating a safe environment for employees to voice their opinions, and actively facilitating conflict resolution within teams.

Further, empowering leaders shaping a positive work environment by leveraging two key underlying mechanisms: social exchange-based and resource-based mechanisms (Rai & Kim, 2021). In doing so, empowering leaders shape follower behaviors by establishing a positive social exchange relationship (Lee, Willis, & Tian, 2018). Through social exchange-based dynamics, leaders engender a reciprocal relationship with followers, establishing a foundation of trust and mutual commitment, which becomes a driving force behind desirable work behaviors, as followers respond to the support and autonomy provided by leaders with increased dedication and engagement (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007). Past research further asserts that empowering leader behaviors have the potential to expand followers' available resource pool while also serving to replace or reinforce deficient resources, which is consistent with resource-based mechanism (Schoorman et al., 2007). The combined effect of these mechanisms not only promotes positive work behaviors but also diminishes undesirable ones, creating a workplace culture underpinned by collaboration, trust, and continuous development.

### 2.1.9 Employee Creativity

Creativity is defined as the generation and introduction of novel ideas and solutions (Da Costa, Páez, Sánchez, Garaigordobil, & Gondim, 2015). Liu et al. (2020) conceptualize creativity as a behavior that transcends conventional boundaries and is inherently present within a system. Creativity doesn't always result in

entirely novel creations, it can also manifest as the combination or recombination of existing elements.

Employee creativity is vital for organizational success (Lua, Liu, & Shalley, 2024) since it enhances the capacity for change (Ulrich, 1998). Hence, employee creativity involves the capacity of individuals in an organization to produce innovative and valuable solutions, procedures, products, and services (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996).

Researchers have dedicated substantial efforts to discerning the characteristics of employees, work contexts, and events that either facilitate or impede employee creativity (Lua et al., 2024). The contextual factors including leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping creativity within an organizational context (Judge & Robbins, 2009). In this regard leader behaviors are found to hold a central pace in shaping the creativity based outcomes of employees.

Moreover, leadership communication encourage employees to seek diverse feedback, fostering enhanced creativity within the organization (Lee & Barnes, 2021). Research provides empirical support for the favorable connection between leadership styles and employee creativity (Phuong & Takahashi, 2021; Ribeiro, Duarte, Filipe, & Torres de Oliveira, 2020).

### 2.1.10 Team Creativity

Team creativity is defined as the collaborative generation of original and valuable ideas pertaining to products, services, processes, and procedures by a group of employees working collectively (Shin & Zhou, 2007). It is the collective capacity of a group to generate original ideas, solutions, and strategies through collaborative and synergistic efforts, fostering creative thinking, and yielding unique outcomes that surpass individual achievements by integrating diverse perspectives, expertise, and abilities within the team (Gaytan, Rafiuddin, Sisodia, Ahmed, & Paramaiah, 2023). Characteristics of team creativity include open communication, brainstorming, the free exchange of ideas, constructive criticism, and a supportive environment that encourages risk-taking and experimentation (El Khatib, Al Blooshi, & Al-Habeeb, 2016). These characteristics empower teams to tackle

challenging problems, identify opportunities, and generate innovative solutions that distinguish them from competitors, fostering innovation and contributing to the overall success of the organization (Al Kurdi et al., 2023). Team creativity, crucial for gaining a competitive advantage, enables teams to develop unique products, services, and strategies, maintaining a leading position by adapting to market changes and identifying new opportunities in a dynamic environment (Lua et al., 2024).

In addition, team creativity serves as a platform for expression, problem-solving, and personal development (Nadzri et al., 2023). Researches have shown a mixed result for the impact of task conflict on team creativity. Task conflict within teams fosters a diversity of ideas and knowledge among team members, potentially contributing to an enhancement of team creativity (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Lee et al., 2019).

Literature also suggests that that team conflict prompts team reflexivity, a process where team members collectively reflect on their experiences and functioning (Khan, Shafi, Khan, & Khan, 2020). This reflective practice is believed to foster creativity within the team by encouraging a deeper understanding of challenges, diverse perspectives, and innovative solutions that contribute to overall team creativity. Therefore, effective task conflict management is instrumental in elevating team performance and achieving positive organizational outcomes. This is achieved through the promotion of enhanced communication, cultivation of creative thinking, and the facilitation of effective decision-making processes.

### 2.1.11 Employee Positive and Negative Emotions in Response to Workplace Conflict

Workplace conflicts are recognized for triggering negative emotions (Hahn, 2000). However, when we delve into the specifics of these conflicts—whether they revolve around tasks, work processes, or relationships—it becomes apparent that the emotions evoked can vary depending on the nature of the conflict (Jehn, 1997).

While a unified definition capturing the essence of emotions remains elusive, literature describes emotions as brief, purposeful, expressive, and bodily responses

(Reeve, 2018). These responses play a crucial role in helping individuals adapt to the opportunities and challenges presented during significant life events. Research classifies emotions into positive and negative categories based on the type of response they evoke (Fredrickson, 2001). Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory posits that negative emotions typically have a focused nature and are linked to specific thought-action patterns (e.g., anger leading to a focus on overcoming obstacles), whereas positive emotions tend to stimulate expansive thinking, broadening an individual's awareness.

Empirical evidence suggests that positive emotional experiences, over time, contribute to positive outcomes, for instance, increased resilience, resourcefulness, social connections, and optimal functioning through broad-minded coping efforts (Fredrickson, 2013). On the contrary, literature has also found that the daily encounters with relationship and process conflicts at work are correlated with heightened negative emotions, resulting in a decline in both in-role and extra-role performance on the subsequent workday (Rispens & Demerouti, 2016). This highlights the enduring impact certain negative emotions can have on an individual's professional capabilities, influencing not only their primary job responsibilities but also their additional contributions to the workplace.

Previous literature identifies various types of emotions experienced in the context of different conflicts (Bar-Tal, Halperin, & De Rivera, 2007). Fear, identified as a fundamental aversive emotion, emerges in situations perceived as threatening and dangerous (Öhman, 1993), prompting adaptive responses through unconscious processing (LeDoux, 1998). In contrast, hatred is a profound and enduring emotion directed at a specific individual or group, denouncing them as inherently malevolent (Sternberg, 2003). It often arises in response to prolonged harm perceived as deliberate and unjust, occasionally fueling a desire to remove the hated group. Security is considered a fundamental need for human well-being, entailing feelings of satisfaction, tranquility, contentment, and peace (Smith & Lazarus, 1993). It is rooted in cognitive foundations and a general sense of well-being. This process involves the appraisal of events as indicators of threat or danger (primary appraisal) and an evaluation of defenses and coping abilities (secondary appraisal). Individuals, in turn, form beliefs about their security based on the absence of perceived

threats or the confidence in overcoming them (Bar-Tal, Jacobson, & Klieman, 1998).

Shifting to hope, it comprises cognitive elements of aspiring and expecting positive goals, coupled with positive feelings about anticipated outcomes (Snyder, 2000). This denotes the pursuit of positive objectives that individuals and groups aspire to and genuinely believe that they can achieved (Averill, 1990). In summary, these emotions fear, hatred, security, and hope contribute to the intricate tapestry of human responses in diverse contexts including conflict at work, shaping behaviors, and other outcomes (Dijkstra, Beersma, & Cornelissen, 2012).

### 2.1.12 Job Crafting

The term job crafting was initially introduced by (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). They defined it as the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work.

Another way to define job crafting is within framework of job demands resources theory characterizing it as the changes that employees may make to balance their job demands and job resources with their personal abilities and needs (Tims & Akkermans, 2017). Through this, job crafting is divided into four dimensions: (1) increasing structural job resources (e.g., improving opportunities for development), (2) augmenting social job resources (e.g., seeking feedback from a supervisor), (3) increasing challenging job demands (e.g., taking on additional tasks), and (4) diminishing hindering job demands (e.g., ensuring that the job is emotionally less intense). From a regulatory-focus perspective, it is suggested that individuals craft their jobs with either promotion-focus or prevention-focus. Promotion focused job crafting is aimed at growth, advancement, learning and improvement and it found to yield positive outcomes. Employees who are motivated and driven are more likely to bring changes to their aspects of job which leads them to positive outcomes. However, prevention-focused job crafting primarily relates focuses on staying safe and secure and is mainly related to negative outcomes. Job crafting can also be classified into three types wherein employees actively shape their work identities and infuse greater meaning into their tasks: task crafting, relational

crafting, and cognitive crafting (Zhang & Parker, 2019). Task crafting involves modifying the parameters of job tasks, such as adjusting the number, scope, or type of tasks performed. This may include incorporating tasks aligned with personal interests. In contrast, relational crafting centers on altering the relational dynamics of the job, with an emphasis on improving the quality and quantity of interactions with colleagues at work. For example, a computer technician might engage in relational crafting by assisting coworkers to foster more connections. Cognitive crafting is directed at transforming how individuals perceive or conceptualize their roles. An example is a hospital janitor viewing their job as a contribution to the healing of ill individuals rather than a mere cleaning task.

Both theoretical perspectives suggest that employees have the capability to expand, such as by incorporating additional tasks or relationships, or contract, such as by reducing their workload, within the scope of their jobs and roles (Zhang & Parker, 2019). However, the divergence arises in how they define the essence of crafting and what is the fundamental purpose it serves. Nevertheless, job crafting is the active process through which employees make intentional changes to their own job designs (Berg, Dutton, & Wrzesniewski, 2008). This proactive approach can yield a range of positive outcomes, including increased engagement, job satisfaction, resilience, and a sense of thriving (Berg et al., 2008). Researchers have predominantly utilized work design theory, particularly job demands–resources theory to explain outcomes of job crafting (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This approach posits that when individuals actively interact with job resources and challenges, their motivation is enhanced, resulting in positive outcomes related to work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Kardas, 2023; Thai, To, Tran, Ho, et al., 2023; Wrzesniewski, LoBuglio, Dutton, & Berg, 2013).

### 2.1.13 Team Emotion Regulation

Research on shared emotion regulation is a recently emerging field (Kazemitabar, Lajoie, & Doleck, 2022). In 1998, James Gross defined emotion regulation from a response-tendency perspective (Gross, 1998). According to Gross, "emotion regulation refers to the processes by which individuals influence which emotions they

have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions." This multifaceted phenomenon acknowledges the fluid and ever-changing nature of emotions within the human psyche, highlighting the active role individuals play in navigating their emotional landscape. Emotion regulatory processes can manifest as automatic or controlled responses, operating at conscious or unconscious levels (Gross, 1998). Research identifies that emotion regulation within a team is a critical factor that significantly impacts its overall performance (Yang, Sheng-feng, Zhu, Harrison, & Woo, 2023). Further, it is emphasized that emotion regulation has the pivotal role in the intricate dynamics of teamwork, especially in the face of challenges inherent in complex collaborative efforts (Kazemitabar et al., 2022). This interconnectedness underscores the importance of examining emotion regulation not merely at an individual level but extending the focus to the team level. At this collective level, the concept of Socially-shared Emotion Regulation (SSER) takes center stage (Ujitani & Volet, 2008), highlighting collaborative and interactive processes employed by team members (Ujitani & Volet, 2008). Comparing the emotion regulation practices of the best and worst-performing teams, recent research sheds light on the benefits of implementing shared emotion regulation strategies (Kazemitabar, Lajoie, & Doleck, 2023). The findings reveal that when team proactively practice shared emotional regulation, it not only cultivates a collective team spirit, but also nurtures synergies among team relationships. This shared emotion regulation plays a pivotal role in facilitating effective collaboration within the team, ultimately enhancing their collective ability to achieve shared goals.

## 2.2 Hypotheses Development

### 2.2.1 Leader-Instigated Task Conflict and Conflict Instigation Attributions

Intragroup conflict is characterized by perceived incompatibilities and discords among team members (Jehn, 1995). Leader-instigated task conflict is characterized by leaders' behaviors aimed at generation, promotion and facilitation of

task-related debates on alternative ideas and discussions of divergent viewpoints of team members (Zhao et al., 2019). The motives behind generating a conflict are twofold: constructive and destructive. Constructive motive for conflict instigation is exercised for engaging team members in constructive discussions and debates.

Literature suggests that excessive consensus and conformity in teams is not necessarily beneficial (Razinskas, 2023). More specifically, teams that have creative goals, the participation and discussion on ideas by all members is required (Kellermanns, Walter, Floyd, Lechner, & Shaw, 2011; Pringle & Robinson, 2024). Groups try to maintain their relational bonding and thereby may reserve their critical opinions and ideas to themselves to develop conformity with fellow workers (Jamieson et al., 2014). This impairs healthy discussions and debates relating to alternative ideas and critical analysis regarding the task and hence may lead to ineffective solutions. Considering this, it is argued that leaders can play a role in generation of task conflict among team members with the motive of provoking group members to share their ideas and reach a novel solution. On the other hand, some leaders may initiate conflict among team members for destructive reasons such as with hurtful or retaliating intentions.

However, the response of employees to leader-instigated task conflict is subject to their perception about the reason with which leader has generated the conflict. Attribution theory suggests that individuals assign and react to the motives they ascribe about the behavior of an actor for generating an event (Weiner, 1985). Empirical and theoretical evidence from recent research shows that employees develop attributions related to their leader's behaviors (Chang, Bai, & Li, 2015; Follmer et al., 2019). It is argued that employees assign positive or negative causal attributions to their leaders behaviors that is task conflict instigation as constrictive or destructive conflict instigation attributions respectively. Consequently, their response towards leader's instigation of task conflict will be a result of their own attribution that they assign to their leader's behavior.

Constructive conflict instigation attribution refers to the reasons that follower assign to leader generated group conflict as to promote and achieve group goals while destructive conflict instigation attribution refers to the causal inferences that employees associate with leader generated group conflict as to cause hurt or

injury and to criticize the group members (Zhao et al., 2019). Individuals in same group can develop different perceptions about conflict and hence may attribute it differently (Jehn et al., 2010). Since individuals understand and report conflict in a group differently, even when team members experience a conflict jointly, each member is likely to have different experience of it (Ma et al., 2018), based on their attribution. Hence, owing to attribution theory, it is suggested that different individuals are likely to attribute same event differently, that may include positive or negative attribution of the event thus observed.

Based on the premise that within group conflict asymmetry exists (Ma et al., 2018) and attributions of individuals generally differ from each other (Harvey et al., 2014), it is argued that conflict instigation attribution is individual level psychological phenomenon, and hence leader generated conflict can lead to constructive as well as destructive conflict instigation attributions of employees thereby supporting for the development of following hypotheses:

***Hypothesis 1:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with constructive conflict instigation attribution*

***Hypothesis 2:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with destructive conflict instigation attribution*

### 2.2.2 Moderating Role of Empowering Leadership

Functional leadership theories argue that one of the most important role of leaders is to achieve group goals while helping teams to improve their performance especially in the areas where it is not up to the mark (Fleishman et al., 1991; Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam, 2010; Adegbola, Adegbola, Amajuoyi, Benjamin, & Adeusi, 2024). Few previous studies provide insights that leader generated conflict with other teams was considered constructive by followers and yielded positive intragroup relations (Abrams et al., 2013). However, within the group, conflict is attributed to be constructive when it is generated by leaders who are open to contradictions, new ideas and alternative solutions to problems, hence it fosters group creativity and performance (Chang et al., 2015). Therefore, leaders with constructive intentions behind their conflict instigation behaviors are focused on achieving

high performance, tolerance and cohesion among group members (Abrams et al., 2013; Vera & Crossan, 2005).

Employees develop constructive conflict attributions about conflict induced by leader when they believe that their leader is helping, guiding and wants to promote group performance (Lyu et al., 2023). Empowering leadership is a promising style of leadership which ensures the achievement of creative group goals by overcoming obstacles that hinder the achievement of group goals (Raub & Robert, 2010; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). These leaders promote motivated information processing among followers through various ways (Guo, Peng, & Zhu, 2023). In doing so, empowering leaders promote participative decision making among group members by allowing each member to share their opinions openly and express their ideas thereby enhancing information sharing in group (Arnold, Arad, Rhoades, & Drasgow, 2000; Lorinkova, Pearsall, & Sims Jr, 2013; Simons & Peterson, 2000; Sharma & Kirkman, 2015). Such free sharing of ideas and opinions is also prone to disagreements among group members, however it may enhance the tendency of team to consider these disagreements as constructive (Oedzes et al., 2019). Moreover, empowering leaders may also generate a dissent among group members in order to generate debate among them to share their opinions (Joo, Yoon, & Galbraith, 2023). Since the leader encourages debates and participative decision making, and focused to contribute to achieve group goals (Joo, Yim, Jin, & Han, 2023), the followers are more likely to attribute empowering leader-instigated task conflict to be constructive and less likely to develop destructive attribution when their leader is empowering. These arguments provide support for the following hypotheses:

***Hypothesis 3:*** *Empowering leadership moderates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is stronger when empowering leadership is high than when it is low.*

***Hypothesis 4:*** *Empowering leadership moderates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and destructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is weaker when empowering leadership is high than when it is low.*

### 2.2.3 Multilevel Effects of Conflict Instigation Attribution

Studies on conflict provide evidence that task conflict is a multilevel phenomenon (Jehn et al., 2010; Korsgaard et al., 2008) which can have its manifestations at individual level or at dyadic or unit level (Zahlquist et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2023). At the individual level, it reflects individual perceptions regarding the aspects and nature of conflict. The current study takes into account individual attributions about leader generated conflict as its individual level manifestation and its outcomes at individual and team level constituting individual creativity and and team creativity.

Employee creativity is defined as the generation and exploration of novel and useful ideas and knowledge related to work (Amabile et al., 1996; Oldham, 2003; Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993). In order to develop new ideas at work, employees are required to have information regarding the issues and tasks at hand (Amason & Schweiger, 1994). The information can be sought through different sources such as from coworkers (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Ford & Staples, 2010). Hence, employee creativity is a function of information acquisition and constructive discussions among employees (Ford & Staples, 2010). It is argued that employees with constructive attribution about conflict instigation provide and gather more perspectives, information and diverse viewpoints by engaging in constructive debates. This helps them in expanding their knowledge base which supports them in devising creative solutions and ideas.

Constructive attributions about leader-instigated task conflict make them feel motivated to engage in debates and present different opinions and ideas about the task at hand. In addition, for each individual group member, the optimal solution is to generate a wider array of opinions and perspectives (Bai et al., 2015). Hence, conflict attributed to be generated in order to promote positive group outcomes encourage cooperative strategic choice designed to foster attainment of work team goals and strengthen collective and creative problem solving among team members (Desivilya et al., 2010; Telecan et al., 2023). This would ultimately lead to a better understanding of the problem individually as well as collectively and help team

members to devise a better and creative solution for the group as a whole based on the diverse information exchanged during the dissent and debate (Dahlan et al., 2023).

In addition, previous studies demonstrate that competition among group members to perform better makes them set high goals and strive to achieve them which increases group performance (Brown, Cron, & Slocum Jr, 1998; Fletcher, Major, & Davis, 2008). Group members engaged in constructive criticism regarding task related activities are more likely to come up with better solutions through adequate analysis of alternatives (Amason & Schweiger, 1994; Cosier & Rose, 1977; Schweiger, Sandberg, & Rechner, 1989). The focus of these team members will be on tasks and problems instead of personal attacks, therefore team members will focus on their individual performance and shared team performance goals through engaging in cooperative problem solving (Maltarich et al., 2018). However, group members are only likely to respond to disagreements in a constructive way when they consider it to be a source to enhance their individual and group goals. Hence, employees having constructive attribution of conflict instigation focus on common ground and shared goals and demonstrate their interest in mutual assistance and respect other members' ideas which benefits them individually as well as team as a whole (Maltarich et al., 2018).

On the other hand employees with destructive attribution are more likely to misattribute the behaviors of others and view them as obstacles interfering with their group and individual goals. Such destructive escalatory dynamics discourage information exchange among coworkers and increases the likelihood of power struggles as well as decreases the capacity of analytical thinking and creative solutions thereby reducing individual and team creativity (Desivilya et al., 2010). Moreover, employees engage in hostile interactions and unhealthy team dynamics where information is not shared (De Dreu & Van Knippenberg, 2005), the team members are less able to foster creative solutions since they direct their resources more towards personal clashes which reduces the creative performance of group as a whole.

Based on the above arguments, the following hypotheses are proposed:

***Hypothesis 5:*** *Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.*

***Hypothesis 6:*** *Destructive conflict instigation attribution is negatively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.*

### 2.2.4 Conflict Instigation, Attributions and Emotions

Emotions arise as a response to individual's appraisal of an event as positive or negative relative to the goals of individual (Han, Lerner, & Keltner, 2007; Lazarus, 1999; Smith & Ellsworth, 1985). Several studies have demonstrated that conflict incites emotional response (Telecan et al., 2023). It further presents that perception of constructive conflict generates positive emotions while destructive conflict generates negative emotions. However, latest studies have identified that task conflict is not always constructive (Jehn et al., 1999; Langfred & Moye, 2014; Lovelace, Shapiro, & Weingart, 2001; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999). These studies provide evidence for likelihood of generation of both positive as well as negative emotions associated with task conflict (Todorova, Bear, & Weingart, 2014; Watson & Tellegen, 1985; Watson, Wiese, Vaidya, & Tellegen, 1999; Telecan et al., 2023). These studies suggest that task conflict can trigger positive emotions in individuals perceiving and experiencing it. However, it can equally trigger negative emotions in other individuals experiencing it at the same time. Hence, it is argued that task conflict can generate both positive and negative emotions of different individuals. On the same grounds, when a team leader generates debates among group members, the followers are likely to equally feel interested or to get frustrated. Hence, it may trigger positive emotions in some individuals while negative emotions in other individuals which is subject to their own experience and perception of it. This suggests that likelihood that task conflict induced by leader can generate positive as well as negative emotions of followers.

***Hypothesis 7:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to positive active emotions.*

***Hypothesis 8:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to negative active emotions.*

The generation of emotions related to conflict is based on the appraisal of an event, either constructive or destructive. Attribution theory (Kelley & Michela, 1980) provides insights that when individuals attribute positive intentions behind an action, they are more likely to feel positive about it. Additionally, literature suggests that conflict can generate motivation and positive emotions for engaging in team disagreements (Tjosvold, 2006).

Attribution theory provides support for the argument that the attributions of individuals regarding other's behaviors (as leader generated conflict) elicits their emotions (Lazarus, 1999; Weiner, 1985). The attribution of conflict generation can be assigned to an individual which generates negative emotions such as anger (Betancourt & Blair, 1992) as compared to when it is attributed to be generated as a need of the situation such as to improve group performance (Jehn, 1995). Employees who perceive that their work context is supportive and helps them to execute their tasks generally feel excited in such situations (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997; Newman, Nielsen, Smyth, & Hooke, 2015; Weber, Shantz, Kistruck, & Lount Jr, 2023). Employees who feel that their leader incites conflict in order to help group members to achieve their goals through generation of new ideas and collective solutions are likely to feel positive about it.

On the other hand, negative assessment of intentional ascriptions lead to feelings of stress and anger (Olson, Astington, & Zelazo, 2023). Hence attributions regarding intentionality of conflict emanate the affective responses of individuals (Olson et al., 2023). Such as the reason asserted for feeling negative emotions in response to task conflict is ascribed to the perception regarding conflict as a source of distraction from their task, and as an obstacle to achieve their individual and group goals (Telecan et al., 2023). Experiencing conflict which is perceived to be destructive invokes uncomfortable feelings such as anxiety, anger, and fear (Dijkstra, van Dierendonck, Evers, & De Dreu, 2005; Jehn, 1995). This comes at the expense of dedicating energy toward exploring and learning from alternative viewpoints about the task (Behfar et al., 2008; Weber et al., 2023). Moreover, employees who develop attribution that leader instigates conflicts for destructive purposes i.e. to hinder their individual and group goals, respond to it with negative emotions and feel stressed about it (Dijkstra et al., 2005; J. Yang & Mossholder, 2004). This

makes them feel angry, frustrated and irritated in its response due to the disruptive nature of conflict (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012; Jehn et al., 2008; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Todorova et al., 2014). Moreover, considering that leader-instigated task conflict for destructive reasons also increases the cognitive load of employees, it makes them negatively emotionally charged (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012).

***Hypothesis 9:*** *Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to positive active emotions.*

***Hypothesis 10:*** *Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to negative active emotions.*

Further, it is explained in the previous sections in detail that leader-instigated task conflict is likely to unfold in the form of two kinds of attributions, constructive and destructive. Also, it is argued that constructive attribution promotes positive emotions while destructive attribution promotes negative emotions. Studies argue that employees who engage in task conflict can experience negative emotions and feel less satisfied (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012; Jehn et al., 2008; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). Hence, it is inferred that a same event can trigger subjective experience of distinct emotions for different members. The reason lies in the appraisal tendencies and differentiated construal of events such as constructive or destructive (Mackie & Smith, 2018; Shaw et al., 2011; Weber et al., 2023). Attribution theory suggests that the emotional reactions of individuals to an event are based on the causal attribution they assign to the event (Tandung, 2016). Hence it is devised that the emotional reaction of individuals will be based on their attributions of leader's instigation of the conflict.

Individuals who perceive that leader generated conflict is incited in order to help the team members achieve group goals are likely to feel motivated and challenged about it (Weber et al., 2023). This makes individuals experience positive emotions On the other hand, employees who attribute that leader instigated the conflict for destructive reasons are more likely to consider it as an obstacle towards achieving their goals. This makes them feel angry, frustrated and irritated in its response (Todorova et al., 2014). Considering destructive conflict motives to retaliate and

harm employees, individuals who attribute these reasons to leader-instigated task conflict are more prone to feeling negative emotions.

Moreover, drawing on JD-R theory suggests that employees can take job demands as either challenge or as a hindrance. Challenge demands generate positive emotions, engagement and motivation in individuals while hindrance demands induce negative emotions, stress and anxiety. It seems obvious that when employees perceive that leader instigated group conflict in order to generate new and divergent ideas, opinions and to improve performance, they consider it as a challenge demand and this positive appraisal is likely to generate positive emotions such as feeling interested. On the other hand destructive conflict attribution which is taken as a hindrance demand by employee as a source of retribution, is more likely to generate negative emotions whereby employee feels undermined.

Based on the argument that leader instigated task conflict invokes employee attributions which drive their affective response, This provides support for the mediating role of conflict instigation attributions. Henceforth the following hypotheses are proposed:

***Hypothesis 11:*** *Constructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and positive active emotions.*

***Hypothesis 12:*** *Destructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and negative active emotions.*

### 2.2.5 Conflict Instigation Attributions and Job Crafting

Research on JD-R model suggests that when employees encounter challenging work situations, they engage in constructive behaviors since challenge demands provoke and motivate them to grow, learn and meet their goals (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Demerouti et al., 2010). On the other hand, hindrance demands demotivate employees whereby they feel stressed and respond with withdrawal behaviors. The job demands can be shaped by management and leaders (Nielsen, Randall, Yarker, & Brenner, 2008) such as generating conflict, which further influence job crafting behaviors (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019).

Job crafting has been conceptualized in job demands-resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) which is defined as self-initiating changes in the job regarding job demands and resources in order to deal with existing job demands (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019; Bakker & de Vries, 2021). Previous research distinguishes job crafting behaviors into three categories including increasing job resources (structural and social), increasing job challenges and reducing job demands (Fried, Grant, Levi, Hadani, & Slowik, 2007). Increasing structural and social job resources may be identified by activities aimed at enhancing one's work related knowledge and social ties respectively which can be indicated by an employee seeking advice from a colleague or learning new ways of doing his task. Further, increasing job challenges can be exhibited by an employee who makes new commitment for accomplishing extra task. Lastly, reducing job demands entail withdrawal behaviors and limiting the scope of demands for example by avoiding dealing with unpleasant customers or clients (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012). Previous studies also offer another classification of job crafting behaviors namely expansive or approach or promotion-focused job crafting which include the facets of increasing challenging job demands (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), or limiting or avoidance or prevention-focused job crafting which is characterized by reducing job demands (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018).

Individuals who assign constructive motives of conflict instigation approach it with constructive responses. The current study argues that individuals who ascribe their leader behavior of conflict instigation to be constructive considering the intentions of leader to generate participation of team members in debates and discussions regarding task at hand, and foster positive relationships through healthy discussion may respond to it through positive behaviors such as engaging in learning new things of doing their work. For such individuals, constructive conflict instigation attribution can be seen as a challenge demand which motivates them to engage in work related activitives aimed at advancement, growth and accomplishment (Bakker et al., 2014). In addition, these individuals may consider task related debates and discussions as initiated by leader as an opportunity to enhance their current knowledge and acquire new ideas. These constructive attributions also urge team members to keep cooperative interrelationships with

their team with a focus on achieving collective and collaborative outcomes. Hence, they engage in bringing positive changes and improvements in their ways of work that they consider to be helpful thereby adopting promotion-focused job crafting behaviors.

On the other hand employees with destructive attribution engage in destructive spirals of conflict. Heated debates among group members create tension, stress and frustration which is lead to self-undermining behaviors (De Dreu, Van Dierendonck, & Dijkstra, 2004). Destructive conflict instigation attributions are more likely to make the employees feel obstructed and distracted from their goals. They are more likely to misattribute the behaviors of others and view them as obstacles interfering with their goals. This obstruction triggers the feeling of reduced control over their tasks and goals (Giebels et al., 2016). In addition, team members feel their self-esteem threatened which leads to avoidance and withdrawal behaviors whereby employees don't see learning and improvement opportunities in leader generated conflict. Hence they are more likely to try to reduce their tasks and limit their social resources in order to avoid interactions with other coworkers and to reduce hindrance job demands which leads to prevention oriented job crafting.

***Hypothesis 13:*** *Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to promotion-focused job crafting.*

***Hypothesis 14:*** *Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to prevention-focused job crafting.*

### 2.2.6 Indirect Effect of Conflict Instigation Attribution on Job Crafting via Emotions

Studies on conflict suggest that since conflict is a stimulating event that emanates arousal (Dijkstra et al., 2005). The emotional response to conflict is in the form of active emotions that are characterized by high level of activation and arousal as compared to passive emotions which are characterized by low level activation and response tendencies (Todorova et al., 2014). When task conflict is appraised as a positive event which is generated for constructive motives i.e. in order to help the

team members in achieving group or individual goals, it is more likely to generate positive emotions. Whereas it is likely to generate negative emotions when it is appraised as an event generated in order to harm or retaliate team members. It is therefore crucial to identify how attributions regarding intentionality of conflict emanate the affective responses of individuals, since emotions are succeeded by actions and behavioral response tendencies (Ekman, 1992).

Individuals who attribute constructive motives for leader generated task conflict are more likely to encounter conflict as an opportunity to learn. Debates about different opinions and ideas may energize employees through invoking positive emotions because the information they acquire through discussions helps them better perform their task (Todorova et al., 2014). Moreover members become motivated and try to find out solutions impartially (Maltarich et al., 2018). Such as leader instigated debates about naming a product, or discussing its design and features, or the activities to be carried out in order to execute a project or event efficiently and effectively can engender energy, interest and enthusiasm in team members. Such conflict helps team members to exchange their perspectives and ideas (Hinsz, Tindale, & Vollrath, 1997; Van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004) which helps in performing their tasks in a better way (Homan et al., 2008; Homan, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & De Dreu, 2007; Van Kleef & Cote, 2018). Exchanging of information allows team members to learn new ideas and alternatives which helps them to make constructive changes to their tasks thereby engaging in promotion oriented job crafting behaviors.

On the other hand negative emotions such as anger and frustration are usually associated with conflict with and found to have detrimental effects on individual and group outcomes (Dijkstra et al., 2005; Jehn et al., 2008; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). Individuals who appraise leader generated conflicts to be associated with destructive motives i.e. as a source of hindering the achievement of individual and group goals, feel negative emotions (Dijkstra et al., 2005; J. Yang & Mossholder, 2004). Individuals with these destructive ascriptions consider leader generated conflict as a means of generating grudges among team members. Disagreements among team members deemed to be a source of hindrance may also make members feel undermined and result in negative assessment of their own abilities and competencies

(Maltarich et al., 2018). This generates stress and makes them respond with withdrawal behaviors where members attempt to reduce their task activities as well as limit their interactions with team members through prevention oriented job crafting in order to avoid further dissents. Based on these argument the following hypotheses are developed:

***Hypothesis 15:*** *Positive emotions mediate the relation between constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting.*

***Hypothesis 16:*** *Negative emotions mediate the relation between destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting.*

### 2.2.7 Conditional Effects of Cross Level Emotional Regulation

JD-R model suggests that job demands trigger motivating or stressful emotions and states of individuals, which may undermine or enhance their constructive or withdrawal behaviors i.e. job crafting (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). However, access to sufficient and suitable resources can attenuate the harmful effects of hindrance job demands and facilitate positive effects of challenge demands (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Hence, effective response to leader-instigated task conflict motives of leaders depends to a large extent on team's resources that can help team members to deal with it constructively. Employees cope up with job demands by actively changing the aspects of their jobs through job crafting (Parker & Ohly, 2008). In response to calls to explore contingency factors in shaping conflict process and its outcomes (De Clercq, Thongpapanl, & Dimov, 2009; Jehn & Bendersky, 2003), the current study highlights the role of group emotional regulation as a team resource that might function as a conditional factor in shaping the job crafting behaviors of employees in response to conflict instigation attribution.

JD-R theory proposes that employees who experience positive states at work proactively bring improvements to their job, thereby practice promotion oriented job crafting (Tims et al., 2012). On the other hand, individuals who experience negative states will use self-undermining behaviors for coping with hindrance demands

at work (Bakker et al., 2014; Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019). A latest addition in JD-R theory has been introduced by (Bakker & de Vries, 2021) with the proposition that personal and organizational resources such as emotional intelligence moderate the relation between affective states and promotion-focused job crafting and self-undermining behaviors. Drawing on this proposition, the current study introduces emotional regulation as a conditional factor between positive and negative emotional states triggered because of employee constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution and their relation with job crafting behaviors involving promotion-focused job crafting and prevention-focused job crafting.

Emotional regulation is the ability to control emotional dynamics and responses. Emotional regulation helps individuals to cope up with emotions by decreasing their disrupting influence and putting the cognitive energies in solving the problem at hand (Cole, Martin, & Dennis, 2004). Group emotional regulation is similar to individual emotion regulation (Ashkanasy, Härtel, & Daus, 2002), however its manifestation is collective, amplified and at a higher level that is group (Jiang, Zhang, & Tjosvold, 2013). Group emotion regulation sets the group norms to deal with issues which relate to emotions and further result in diverting cognitive skills towards the positive aspects of conflict and to deal with problems constructively by engaging in constructive behaviors (De Dreu, 2008). Group emotion regulation is a better resource to deal with negative emotions since members of a group influence each other. Individual level emotion regulation exerts a weaker effects as compared to group level emotion regulation in dealing with emotions related to conflict (Jiang et al., 2013). Groups that are high in emotional regulation manage the negative emotions and focus on the positive side of conflicts which helps them in engaging in problem solving and cooperative behaviors. Similarly, individuals having destructive attribution of leader generated conflict can take help from their group norms of emotional regulation whereby group members focus on dealing with negative emotions and engaging in constructive behaviors.

***Hypothesis 17:*** *Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting via positive active emotions such that the mediated relationship is stronger when team*

*emotional regulation is high than low.*

***Hypothesis 18:*** *Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting via negative active emotions such that the mediated relationship is weaker when team emotional regulation is high than low.*

### 2.2.8 Individual and Group Outcomes of Job Crafting

Research on job crafting indicates that it shapes individual and group related outcomes at work (Rudolph, Katz, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017). However, it might not always foster positive outcomes for individuals and organizations (Lyons, 2008). This clarifies the role of distinction between prevention focused and promotion focused job crafting whereby promotion job crafting is generally found to be related with positive individual and organizational outcomes while prevention focused job crafting yields negative performance outcomes (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2019).

Job crafting allows individuals to shape their jobs in order to improve its characteristics according to situational and environmental demands at work (Demerouti et al., 2001). This helps employees improve their job characteristics and enhance their fit according to the job (C.-Y. Chen, Yen, & Tsai, 2014). In this way, promotion focused job crafting helps the employees to deal with challenging job demands.

Creativity involves the production of novel and valuable ideas, products and services, procedures or processes (Amabile et al., 1996; Woodman et al., 1993). Creativity generally involves idea generation process as well as problem solving processes (Shalley, Zhou, & Oldham, 2004). There are a few studies that have examined the relation between job crafting and creativity. In this regard it is argued that job crafting allows individuals to take control of their work in order to bring improvements in it which helps in achieving task goals (Gordon et al., 2018). In addition, promotion focused job crafting allows employees to learn new things and take use of the opportunities to apply their ideas and knowledge to achieve their task related individual and group goals (Demerouti et al., 2001). By crafting the job, individuals attain knowledge and resources through different sources that have

an overall impact on the group which enhances creativity of group. On the other hand, prevention focused job crafting involves undermining behaviors whereby individuals tend to reduce interactions and tasks they deem to be hindering. This creates exclusion and limited interactions among team members hinder the flow of information, ideas and discussion. Moreover while focusing on self-undermining behaviors, team members may subsequently lose sight of the creative team goal or become frustrated by the lack of progress. This is likely to reduce the creativity at individual level as well as group level since individual performance converges to manifest itself in a collective frame of reference at group level.

Therefore it is hypothesized that:

***Hypothesis 19:*** *Promotion-focused job crafting is positively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.*

***Hypothesis 20:*** *Prevention-focused job crafting is negatively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.*

### 2.2.9 Mediating Role of Job Crafting

Task conflict characterized by constructive perception is dealt more rationally and impersonally by team members (Jehn, 1997, 1995). Individuals having constructive attribution about conflict are more likely to engage in constructive behaviors. Moreover, research suggests that when team members emphasize less on interpersonal conflict and focus more on tasks and the problems, it helps them to reach effective and collective solutions and achieve individual and group goals through constructive behaviors (Maltarich et al., 2018). Hence engaging in conflict with constructive attribution allows members to engage in behaviors which are beneficial for carrying out their jobs and thereby result in promotion oriented job crafting.

Job crafting allows individuals to adapt their jobs through self-initiated changes which helps them to create a better fit with their job and environment. In addition, past research advocates that by the proactive regulation of their work, individuals feel sense of control over their work (Vogt et al., 2016). This enhances their

self-concept whereby they feel confident to exercise their creative and novel ideas which enhances their creative performance. In addition, job crafting is also suggested as a coping mechanism for dealing with a difficult situations at work (Vogt et al., 2016). In difficult scenarios, employees may seek advice from coworkers. Job crating provides employees a control over their environment which enhances their well-being and overall performance. Moreover, based on JD-R theory, it is postulated that challenge job demands promote approach oriented job crafting behaviors while hindrance job demands foster withdrawal and undermining behaviors i.e. avoidance job crafting which then lead to creative performance outcomes.

It is argued that when employees attribute that leader has generated conflict for constructive purposes i.e. to improve team performance this provokes team members to speak about their ideas. In addition, this creates an environment where individuals exchange information and scrutinize the task at hand effectively thereby crafting their job with a promotion focus. Greater information exchange where each team member engages in constructive debate allows team members to learn from each other and devise better solutions for working, which increases creativity of individuals as well as the team (Hülsheger, Anderson, & Salgado, 2009; Shalley et al., 2004).

Moreover, constructive conflict attributions develop individuals' perceptions about being guided and supported by leader to come up with alternative solutions to problems. Moreover, having known that the team leader promotes disagreements in order to promote group goals, individuals are more likely to respect differing opinions of others and look at them from a variety of angles thereby exercising crafting of their job in order to improve their individual and group performance. In addition, constructive conflict attribution facilitate individuals to analyze the joint problems and finding out creative solutions which are beneficial for individuals and well as their work group. In other words, when individuals attribute that their leader has generated a conflict for their growth and learning purpose, they are more likely to initiate productive adaptations to their job accordingly. Moreover they are more likely to learn from alternative ideas discussed among team members which help them to alter their job activities in a better way which enhances their creativity individually and group as a whole.

Past research indicates that in order to generate creative individual and group solutions, team members should be engaged in debates and disagreements which they deem to be helpful for providing exposure to them about diverse perspectives. Such confrontations challenge team members to voice their opinion and come up with new perspectives and deal with it cooperatively (Puck & Pregernig, 2014) and creatively. Studies on conflict and creativity give the insights that individual's attribution about constructive team conflict foster their cooperative and constructive behaviors, whereby they get involved in divergent thinking, reduce premature consensus and devise ways to improve their tasks (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001; West & Richter, 2011), through crafting their jobs to improve them.

Moreover, destructive conflict instigation motives are characterized by employees' perception of them as an obstacle to achieve their work goals and leading to stress. Employees who face job demands as obstacle to their work goals undermine and avoid them and hence exercise avoidance job crafting through reducing job demands. Reducing the job demands reduces individual capacity to generate novel ideas and solutions and the capability to evaluate available information. In addition, it limits the ability of team members to apply divergent thinking approaches and to converge to a comprehensive solution.

Consequently, it deviates the team members from collective and collaborative goals. It also causes mental blockages and disturbance among team members due to lack of progress towards accomplishment of goals. Prevention focused job crafting does not help the employees to cope up with job demands in a constructive way since it involves withdrawal behaviors which do not help in achieving individual and group goals (Rudolph et al., 2017). Hence it may reduce individual and team creativity.

***Hypothesis 21:*** *Constructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via promotion-focused job crafting.*

***Hypothesis 22:*** *Destructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via prevention-focused job crafting.*

### 2.2.10 Indirect Effect of Leader-Instigated Task Conflict on Individual and Team Creativity via Sequential Mediation

It has been hypothesized previously that leader-instigated task conflict results in constructive and destructive attributions of employees. These effects have been proposed drawing from argumentation based on attribution theory which suggests that individuals develop causal attributions of events of behaviors of actor that they observe. Further, it is also hypothesized that constructive conflict instigation attributions are positively associated with positive emotions while destructive conflict instigation attributions are proposed to be positively associated with negative attributions. Previous sections also hypothesize that constructive and destructive conflict instigation attributions are positively related to promotion-focused job crafting and prevention-focused job crafting respectively. Finally, both promotion and prevention-focused job crafting are hypothesized to be associated with individual and team creativity. These hypothesized paths pave a way for sequential mediation path from leader-instigated task conflict to individual and team creativity through the explanatory mechanism of attributions, emotions and job crafting.

This sequential mediation is supported by attribution theory, which suggests that individuals form causal attributions for an event or behavior (Malle, 2022). Hence, its is argued that individuals will develop constructive and destructive attributions of their leader's task conflict instigation behavior. Further, studies on attribution suggest that attributions of individuals trigger their resultant emotions which thereby shape their behavioral responses (Yu & Duffy, 2021). The constructive conflict instigation attributions are characterized by positive beliefs regarding leader's initiation of task conflict hence they trigger positive emotional responses such as attentiveness and interest. These positive emotions will promote promotion focused job crafting behaviors whereby individuals are likely to bring improvements in the ways they do their job in order to achieve work goals. These new ways of working through promotion focused job crafting enhance creation of novel ideas by team members both individually and in teams as a whole (Karatepe, Ampofo,

Kim, & Oh, 2024). Conversely, destructive conflict instigation attributions characterized by negative perceptions of employees regarding instigation of conflict have the propensity to generate negative emotional experiences for individuals such as anger and annoyance. These negative emotions then influence individuals to respond to the leader-instigated conflict with self-undermining behaviors whereby individuals try to cope with the task conflict by withdrawing from the situation and adopt avoidance behaviors at work. These prevention-focused job crafting behaviors then limit the ability of individuals to generate new ideas owing to their limited connection and involvement in task related debates and discussions which will hamper their creativity both individually and teams as a whole.

Further, JD-R theory also suggests that leaders create job demands and resources for their followers. Further, the job demands are classified as challenge and hindrance demands. Different individuals may develop different perceptions of job demands to be either challenge or hindrance job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2024). Hence, it is argued that different individuals are likely to develop with constructive or destructive attributions of leader-instigated task conflict by perceiving it as challenge or hindrance demand. Further, research on job demands-resources theory provides evidence that challenge demands or job resources initiate a motivational cycle following the process of positive emotional states which foster job crafting behaviors thereby resulting in enhanced performance at both individual and team level (Pletzer, Breevaart, & Bakker, 2024). Contrary to this, hindrance job demands trigger an energy and health impairment cycle whereby negative emotional states are activated which result in self-undermining behaviors in individuals and consequently diminishing performance at both individual and team level (Pletzer et al., 2024). In this regard, the current study considers the motivational and health-impairment cycles from JD-R theory and suggest sequential mediation effects from leader-instigated task conflict to individual and team creativity. The motivational cycle of indirect effect from leader-instigated task conflict to creativity unfolds via the explanatory mechanism of constructive conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion focused job crafting. On the other hand, the energy impairment cycle of indirect effect

from leader-instigated task conflict to creativity unfolds via the explanatory mechanism of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative active emotions and prevention focused job crafting. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

***Hypothesis 23:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via the serial mediation of constructive conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion-focused job crafting.*

***Hypothesis 24:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via the serial mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative active emotions and prevention-focused job crafting.*

## 2.3 Reason for Multilevel Modeling with Respect to Literature

A number of studies have highlighted task conflict as a team-level phenomenon since it is inherently a collective phenomenon by nature (Yousaf et al., 2021; Bari, Abrar, Shaheen, Bashir, & Fanchen, 2019). The reason lies in the fact that task conflict is a group-based phenomenon which involves two or more persons. Further, leader behaviors directed towards team are also inherently a multilevel phenomenon having their outcomes for both individuals and teams as suggested by a number of previous studies. Additionally, JD-R theory suggests to study leader behaviors in creating job demands and resources for employees and examine their outcomes at multiple levels(Bakker et al., 2023). It further suggests to identify the cross level interaction effects that cross level variables may have in shaping the process of the JD-R model (Bakker et al., 2023). Considering these notions, our understanding of leader-instigated task conflict will remain insufficient if we ignore it as a team level phenomenon, or if we ignore the team-directed or team based conditional factors in understanding its mechanism and outcomes related to individuals and teams.

Further, attribution theory contends that individuals develop attributions of the events or behaviors they observe (Harvey et al., 2014). These attributions are highly individualized phenomenon subject to the perception that individuals draw from their observation and experience of the event of behavior(Weiner, 1985). Hence, attributions of individuals for a certain group-directed leader behavior will be highly individualized mechanism on the basis of their experience and observation of leader behaviors. The current study, based on attribution related research, therefore proposes that employee's attributions in response to team-level leader-instigated conflict will be individual level phenomenon. Additionally, considering previous research that acknowledges that perceptual asymmetries may exist in group member's perception of group conflict (Ma et al., 2018), it further suggests to explore individual perceptions as more individualized cognitions regarding group conflict. Hence, the current study highlights this individualized phenomenon as employee attributions regarding leader's team conflict instigation.

Finally, it is proposed by attribution theory that attributions of individuals trigger their individualized emotional and behavioral responses. These attributions make sense as individual-level construct since experiencing emotions as a consequence of an individualized attribution of a subjective First hand experience is based on the observer's subjective evaluation of the event itself. Nontheless, these individualized attributions and their resultant individualized emotions can have their consequential effects at both micro as well as macro levels hence warranting to study them as multilevel phenomenon.

## 2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter covered a comprehensive literature review of the variables of the study and their proposed interrelationships. The research framework showing the graphical representation of study variables is also presented along with a summary of the study hypothesis.

## 2.5 Theoretical Model

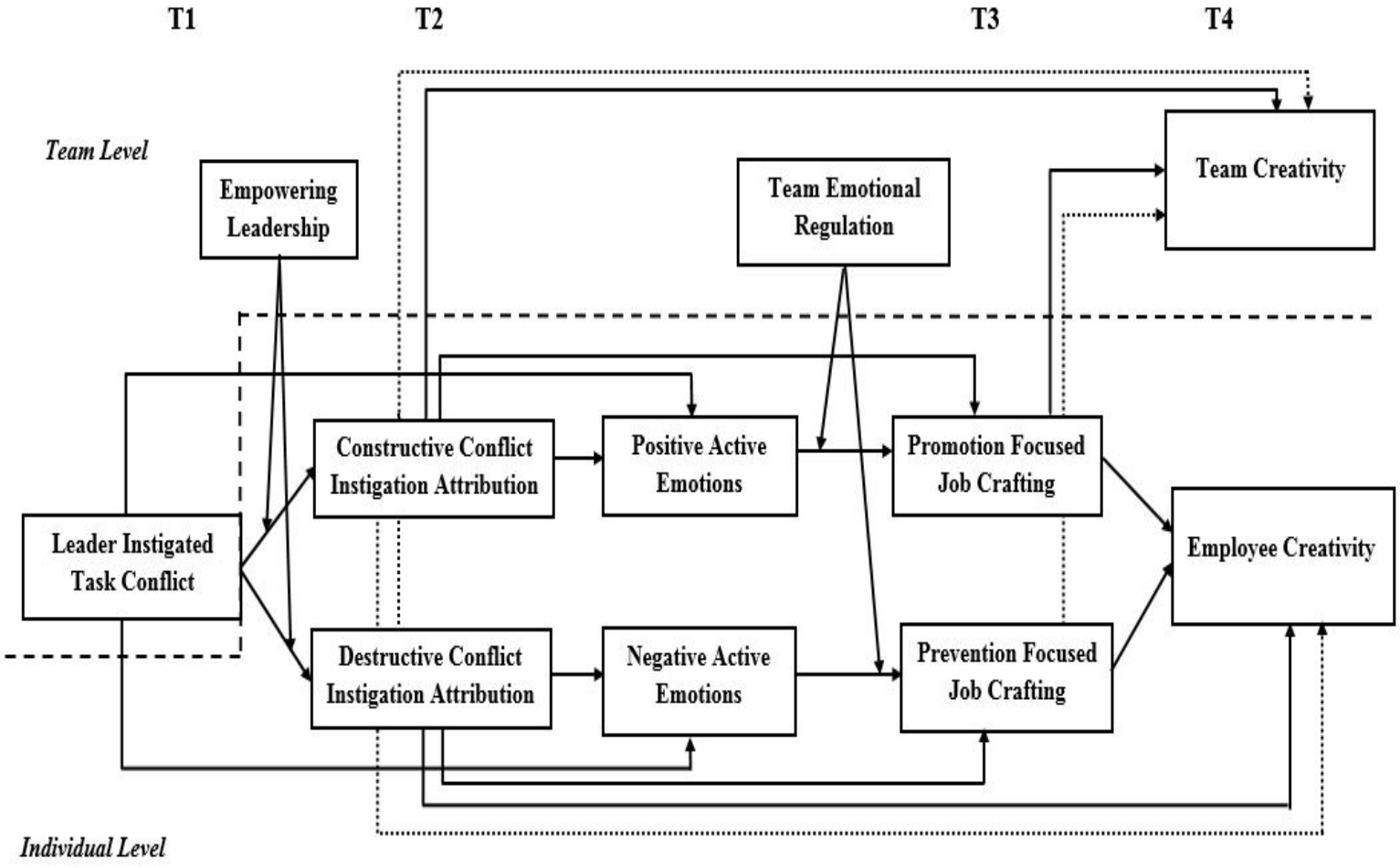


FIGURE 2.1: Theoretical Framework

## 2.6 Research Hypotheses

Table 2.1: Research Hypotheses

| Sr. No | Statement |
|---|---|
| Hypothesis 1 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with constructive conflict instigation attribution |
| Hypothesis 2 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with destructive conflict instigation attribution |
| Hypothesis 3 | Empowering leadership moderates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is stronger when empowering leadership is high than when it is low. |
| Hypothesis 4 | Empowering leadership moderates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and destructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is weaker when empowering leadership is high than when it is low. |
| Hypothesis 5 | Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity. |
| Hypothesis 6 | Destructive conflict instigation attribution is negatively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity. |
| Hypothesis 7 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to positive active emotions. |
| Hypothesis 8 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to negative active emotions. |
| Hypothesis 9 | Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to positive active emotions. |
| Hypothesis 10 | Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to negative active emotions. |
| Hypothesis 11 | Constructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and positive active emotions. |
| Hypothesis 12 | Destructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and negative active emotions. |
| Hypothesis 13 | Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to promotion-focused job crafting. |
| Hypothesis 14 | Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to prevention-focused job crafting. |

Continued Table 2.1: Research Hypotheses

| **Sr. No** | **Statement** |
|---|---|
| Hypothesis 15 | Positive emotions mediate the relation between constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting. |
| Hypothesis 16 | Negative emotions mediate the relation between destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting. |
| Hypothesis 17 | Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting via positive active emotions such that the mediated relationship is stronger when team emotional regulation is high than low. |
| Hypothesis 18 | Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting via negative active emotions such that the mediated relationship is weaker when team emotional regulation is high than low. |
| Hypothesis 19 | Promotion-focused job crafting is positively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity. |
| Hypothesis 20 | Prevention-focused job crafting is negatively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity. |
| Hypothesis 21: | Constructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via promotion-focused job crafting. |
| Hypothesis 22: | Destructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via prevention-focused job crafting. |
| Hypothesis 23: | Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via the serial mediation of constructive conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion-focused job crafting. |
| Hypothesis 24: | Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via the serial mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative active emotions and prevention-focused job crafting. |

# Chapter 3

# Research Methodology

## 3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter describes detailed research philosophy and paradigm, approach, design and methodology applied to achieve current study's objectives. Research design provides an overall map of the research methodology in the light of proposed research model based on theory (Sekaran, 2006). This chapter provides details for elements of research design including type of study, purpose of study, time horizon, study setting, unit of analysis, population and sampling, sample characteristics, data collection procedure, operationalization and instrumentation of variables for data collection, and data analysis techniques.

## 3.2 Research Philosophy and Paradigm

Research philosophy encompasses important assumptions about the worldview of the researcher (Della Porta & Keating, 2008). These assumptions further guide the research strategy and methodology followed by the researcher (Ryan, 2018). Several philosophies exist in management research that maybe be adopted by the researcher including positivism, interpretivism, realism and pragmatism (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The current dissertation adopts positivistic philosophy of research.

In consideration of research philosophy, two major ways of thinking are examined. First aspect is Ontology, which is concerned with nature of reality, depicts the researcher's assumptions about the way the world operates (Saunders et al., 2009). Different ontological approaches allow researchers to produce valid knowledge in management sciences. The current study adopts objectivism as ontology, whereby the researcher holds the position that reality exists external to the considerations of social actors of its existence, hence truth is objective and outside researcher's mind. The second aspect is Epistemology, which is concerned with what constitutes acceptable knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009). The current study is based on positivist epistemology which assumes that truth can be discovered through application of scientific method (Hatch, 2018).

Positivism believes in adopting a scientific approach to research, while working with observable social reality, using existing theory to draw hypotheses, using highly structured methodology with emphasis on quantifiable observations analyzed through sophisticated statistical techniques, examining the hypotheses to confirm or refute them leading to further theoretical contribution and guidelines for future research (Sekaran, 2006; Wahyuni, 2012). This approach adopts value-free perspective where data collection process is not influenced by feelings of the researcher.

Research paradigm is defined as the way of examining a social phenomenon in order to offer its understanding and explanation in useful ways (Wahyuni, 2012). Four research paradigms have been identified in social theory research including functionalism, interpretivism, radical structuralism and radical humanism (Saunders et al., 2009). The current dissertation is based on functionalism paradigm of research which is based on objectivist ontology and positivistic philosophy. Majority of business research falls under this paradigm owing to its practical problem-oriented approach aimed to provide practical solutions.

## 3.3 Research Design

The research design is the blueprint that specifies the purpose and procedure carried out to collect data for research. It is the entire map or master plan of

data collection, measurement and analyzing the process. It guides the process of research by considering research objectives and ensuring robust methodological approaches that can help in achieving study objectives. An effective research design serves as a road map that help in achieving the research study objectives while addressing its potential limitation.

### 3.3.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study is hypothesis testing whereby multiple direct, indirect and conditional hypotheses are developed in the light of previous literature are assessed and examined through the collected data.

### 3.3.2 Study Setting

The present study were conducted in a non-contrived setting by distributing questionnaires among employees and their respective supervisors working in natural environment. No alterations were made to the normal flow of work.

### 3.3.3 Type of Investigation

The current study applies a deductive reasoning approach whereby hypotheses are deduced on the basis of past literature and theory. Quantitative research approach is further followed where data were collected through survey based questionnaires and analyzed through robust quantitative data analysis tools and techniques. The proposed hypothesis are examined by calculating the direction and strength of proposed associations.

### 3.3.4 The Extent of Researcher's Interference

The data from the respondents were collected in a natural work setting through surveys which were analyzed and interpreted on the basis of quantitative techniques, the interference of researcher was minimal in order to ensure researcher's neutral approach.

### 3.3.5 Unit of Analysis

Unit of analysis constitutes the specific entity or level of observation on which the research study is focused. It refers to the specific element or object for which the researcher aims to collect data, analyze, make inference and draw conclusions. Unit of analysis can vary for each study including individual, dyad, group, organization or nation. The current study focused on leader's behaviors as observed by team members, their individualized responses, along with individual and team level conditional factors and outcomes at individual and team level. Data were collected from leaders for their individual team members and teams as a collective as well as from individual employees. Findings of the results provide implications for both individual and team level outcomes. Hence the unit of analysis for the current study is both individuals and teams.

### 3.3.6 Time Horizon

The data for current study were collected in four-time lags, and the minimum gap between each lag were of two weeks in order to avoid method bias. At time-1 data for demographics, leader instigated task conflict and empowering leadership were collected. At time-2, employees responded for attributions, emotions and emotional regulation. Further, data for job crafting behaviors were collected at time-3 while creativity for individuals and teams were measured at time-4.

## 3.4 Population and Sampling

Population refers to the entire group of individuals, cases or elements for which the researcher aims to conduct research, draw conclusion and generalize findings to for that specific group. The population of current dissertation includes full time employees working in teams and their immediate supervisors or team leaders in different public and private sector organizations across Pakistan. The rationale behind choosing work teams from both private and public sector organizations is the reason that the variables under study may equally prevail and have their

implications across these organizations. Multiple research scholars have conducted their research on task conflict or creativity in different sectors in Pakistan (Bari et al., 2019; Nawaz, Ishaq, Ahmad, Faisal, & Raza, 2022; Yousaf et al., 2021) which provides the evidence that these variables are not constrained to a certain specific industry or sector in Pakistan.

This approach of choosing multiple sectors where the variables under study are relevant enhances generalizability of the study findings. However, the research sample for current study was drawn according to the relevance of respondents including leaders and subordinates nested in work teams with the scope of study on the basis of purposive sampling technique. The sample was drawn from organizations operating in multiple industries including marketing and advertising, information technology, telecommunication, design and creative industries, and consulting industry. The study sample consisted of work teams from different departments including marketing and advertising, creative content development, software and web development, digital marketing and media management. The rationale for applying purposive sampling technique for selecting work teams is discussed in the next section.

### 3.4.1 Sampling Technique

Study sample represents a subgroup or subset of the larger population for which the results of research study are generalized. Generally, probability sampling techniques are considered to be more desirable as compared to non-probability sampling techniques (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), however, probability sampling requires an accurate sampling frame which is not possible to be attained owing to the lack of information about number of employees working in teams in public and private sector organizations of Pakistan. The current study applied purposive sampling technique to select work teams in order to ensure the relevance of study sample to the study variables. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique which allows the researcher to select participants on the basis of a pre-defined criteria based on specific attributes of participants (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This is an effective sampling technique which enhances rigor and trustworthiness of

the study as it allows to match the study sample with the research objectives (Campbell et al., 2020). This technique allows the researcher to choose participants who have specific characteristics or experiences which align with the study objectives. Sample is selected on the basis of inclusion criteria established by the researcher (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). This technique was applied for the current study because teams were selected on the basis of a screening criteria for which information was taken from managers prior to inviting team members to participate in the study.

The selection criteria for work groups was developed on the basis of three characteristics as per relevance to current study's objectives. First, Teams with at least three team members reporting to their team leader/immediate supervisor. Previous studies have also applied this criteria to select sample for multilevel research (Arain, Hameed, Umrani, Khan, & Sheikh, 2021). Second, teams working in domains where creativity is desired and expected from all team members. Third, team leaders were asked to confirm if their team members had regular interactions in order to accomplish their tasks and whether their tasks are interdependent. This due consideration was taken for the reason that task conflict is anticipated to be dealt in a constructive way provided that team members have interdependence and interconnectedness in their work goals (Hurt & Welbourne, 2018).

Using purposive sampling technique and a leader-subordinate nested sampling design, HR managers, directors or general managers of different organizations were contacted on the basis of personal and professional contacts. Information was initially obtained from respective managers about teams to make sure that teams consistent with the selection criteria are approached for data collection. The relevant HR managers, directors or general managers directed the researcher to most relevant teams as per the selection criteria. The study sample consisted of teams working in organizations from multiple industries including marketing and advertising (advertising agencies, digital marketing firms), IT industry (software development companies, IT consulting firms), telecommunication (internet service providers), design and creative industries (media production companies), and consultancy firms. Respondents worked in departments or teams including marketing and advertising (59 teams), creative content development (09 teams),

software and web development (14 teams), digital marketing (21 teams) and media management (04 teams).

These teams constitute a relevant sample for the current study owing to the nature of their job where creativity is desired such as marketing and advertising teams engage in designing, presenting, advertising the products and services to the target market, it excessively desired from members of the team to be creative and actively involved in sharing and discussing their creative ideas and offer novel solutions (Das, Patel, Sharma, & Shukla, 2023). Hence, the role of leaders in inciting task related disagreements in these teams can be inevitable to achieve the creativity based goals. Moreover, studies on conflict endorse that employees deal with conflict constructively if the goals of different members are interdependent, which implies if they are working in team. Since data were collected from employees that are given team-based targets, they have interdependent goals which make these teams an appropriate sample for the current study.

### 3.4.2 Sample Size

Sample size was determined using G*Power sample calculator (version 3.1.7.9) given by Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, and Lang (2009). G*Power sample calculator is a widely used software to determine adequacy and power of study sample since a number of studies have determined sample size accuracy and power using this calculator (Azeem, Irshad, & Khan, 2024; Qasim, Irshad, Majeed, & Rizvi, 2022; Sarwar, Irshad, Zhong, Sarwar, & Pasha, 2020). The number of predictors were set as eight considering the total number of arrows pointing towards the dependent variables. As recommended by Faul et al. (2009), sample size was calculated by keeping the default parameters with medium effect size = 0.15, alpha level = 0.05 and high power = 0.95. The calculator suggested *a priori* sample size of 160. In addition, a *post-hoc* test to compute achieved power was conducted for the total sample of 510 for the current study, which revealed a power of 0.99, which is greater than the threshold value of 0.80 (Cohen, 2013). Hence, the G*power calculator results for *a priori* and *post-hoc* analyses reveal that current study's sample size of 510 is appropriate.

In addition, the sample size for the current study is also in accordance with the rule of thumb of 5:1 which suggests that there must be five respondents for every item for which data are collected (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). In the current study, total items constituting the survey instrument are 74 which constitute a 5:1 ratio of 370:74. The data collected for the current study is 510 which exceeds the sampling adequacy threshold. Further, several other researchers provide guidelines to determine sample size such as the sample size calculation table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) which is based on total population size suggests a sample size of 384 as adequate for a population size of 100000 or more. Similarly, Sekaran and Bougie (2016) suggest sample size of 382 for population size of 1000000. In addition, Saunders et al. (2009) suggest sample size 383 for population of 100000 with five percent margin of error. Considering the public and private sector organizations across Pakistan, the number of employees in these organizations is greater than 100000. Hence the sample size for the current study is greater than minimum sample size suggested by these researchers. Finally, based on the nested nature of data in the current study where individual respondents are nested in groups (Heck & Thomas, 2020). It is recommended to maintain a minimum of 100 clusters to conduct multilevel data analysis (Maas & Hox, 2005). The data considered for multilevel analysis in the current study comprised of 510 employees nested in 107 clusters which exceeds the minimum requirement.

### 3.4.3 Sample Characteristics

**Table 3.1** and **3.2** provide details regarding sample demographics for subordinates and leaders in the samples respectively. The final employee sample consisted of 501 employees nested in 107 teams hence the leader sample consisted of 107 leaders. The employee sample consisted of majority of males constituting 80.6% while females represented 19.4% of overall sample. Further, majority of the respondents belonged to age group 26-30 making 46.8% of overall sample followed 26.9% having age 25 years or less. 22.7% had age group 31 to 35 years while 3.1% belonged to 36 to 40 years age group. Only 0.4% respondents were from age group 41 to 45 years. No respondent had age above 45 years. Most of the participants of current

study had a bachelor degree constituting 87.3% followed by 10.8% having master degree and 1% holding an MPhil and 1% intermediate degree. Finally, most of the study participants had job experience of 3 to 6 years constituting 47.6%. 42.7% respondents had experience of less than three years. 6.3% respondents from employee sample had experience 7 to 10 years. In the leader sample, majority respondents were male that is 86.3% while females accounted for 13.7% of the sample respondents. Majority of supervisors belonged to age group of 36 to 40 years making 52.4% of entire sample followed by 22% corresponding to age group 31 to 35 years. 41 to 45 years of age group included 18.8% of overall sample however, 3.9% of the leaders in current study belonged to 46 to 50 years of age. Only 1.2 and 1.8 percent respondents in the leader sample belonged to age group 51 to 55 and 26 to 30 years respectively. Furthermore, most of the respondents in leader sample had tenure of 11 to 14 years constituting 45.3%. Other respondents in leaders sample had experience of 7 to 10 years (32%), 3 to 6 years (3.9%) and 15 years and above (17.1%).

Table 3.1: Summary of Demographics of Subordinates

| **Attributes** | **Categories** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Male | 411 | 80.6 |
| | Female | 99 | 19.4 |
| **Age** | 25 years or Less | 137 | 26.9 |
| | 26-30 years | 239 | 46.9 |
| | 31-35 years | 116 | 22.7 |
| | 36-40 years | 16 | 3.1 |
| | 41-45 years | 2 | 0.4 |
| **Qualification** | Intermediate | 5 | 1 |
| | Bachelors | 445 | 87.3 |
| | Masters | 55 | 10.8 |
| | MPhil | 5 | 1 |
| **Tenure** | Less than 3 years | 218 | 42.7 |
| | 3-6 years | 243 | 47.6 |
| | 7-10 years | 32 | 6.3 |
| | 11-14 years | 8 | 1.6 |
| | 15 years or above | 9 | 1.8 |

Note: n = 510.

Table 3.2: Summary of Demographics of Leader

| Attributes | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Male | 92 | 86.3 |
| | Female | 15 | 13.7 |
| **Age** | | | |
| | 26-30 years | 2 | 1.8 |
| | 31-35 years | 24 | 22 |
| | 36-40 years | 56 | 52.4 |
| | 41-45 years | 20 | 18.8 |
| | 46-50 years | 4 | 3.9 |
| | 51-55 years | 1 | 1.2 |
| **Qualification** | | | |
| | Bachelors | 7 | 6.7 |
| | Masters | 81 | 75.5 |
| | MPhil | 12 | 11.6 |
| | PhD | 7 | 6.3 |
| **Tenure** | Less than 3 years | 2 | 1.8 |
| | 3-6 years | 4 | 3.9 |
| | 7-10 years | 34 | 32 |
| | 11-14 years | 48 | 45.3 |
| | 15 years or above | 18 | 17.1 |

Note: n = 107.

## 3.5 Procedure

For requesting the organizations to participate in the study, eighteen public and private sector organizations located in Pakistan were approached through their administrative authorities on the basis of personal and professional contacts. The administrative authorities of these organizations include directors, general managers, HR managers or departmental managers who either had the authority to grant approval for collecting data for current study, or they provided connection

to their concerned authorities to discuss the study purpose and invite their organization for participation in the current study. The purpose of current study was communicated through a verbal request to allow access to their work teams to participate in the current study. Sixteen organizations gave willingness to participate while two organizations did not allow access to collect data for the study owing to the busy schedule and deadline based targets of their work teams.

After getting approval for access to participants for data collection, respective managers were requested to provide initial information to ensure that relevant teams are approached for data collection on the basis of screening criteria. Mainly, information about team size, creative performance desirability and standards, and team member's interdependence and interaction was obtained verbally from the respective managers (HR managers, directors or departmental heads). After receiving information about relevant teams of the participating organizations, team members along with their team leaders were approached and were informed the purpose of study and were requested to participate in it. Verbal consent was obtained to become a part of the current study and the employees who were willing to participate were distributed with survey questionnaires. The survey enclosed a cover letter that described the purpose of study and included statement that ensured the confidentiality of data. Participants were assured that their responses to the questionnaire surveys will remain confidential and the data analysis will be carried out at aggregate level to generalize the findings for educational purposes only and inferences will be deducted from them over the larger population of study.

Organizations were approached via personal and professional contacts because data collection is a big challenge in a society where research awareness is less as compared to developing countries. Further, the multisource, multilevel and time-lagged design adds to the seriousness and complexity of the data required for the current study. Hence, it was not possible to access team leaders and team members working in teams at four different points of time without personal and professional contacts. Similar resources of personal and professional contacts for data collection have been utilized by a number of past researchers in Pakistan (Majeed & Fatima, 2020; Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020; Sarwar et al., 2020). The data collection for this dissertation started in November 2021 and ended in August 2022 since multiple

organizations participated in the research and data were collected from them as per their accessibility for the researcher to ensure that data can be collected in four time lags consecutively with a two weeks lag between each point of data collection time.

At time-1, 1000 questionnaires were distributed among employees working in teams out of which 809 filled questionnaires were received back. Six questionnaires were discarded because of unengaged responses or missing values accounting for more than ten percent of total items leading to 803 complete questionnaires to be used in the study. At time-2, the 803 employees who completed responses at time1 were contacted again to fill form A-II after a gap of two weeks. A total of 756 responses were collected out of which 740 were useable responses that matched with responses from time-1. At time-3, those 740 employees received questionnaires who responded at time-2 were distributed form A-III out of which 612 matched and useable forms were received. At time-4, immediate supervisors or team leaders of 612 employees who had completed all three forms were contacted who rated creativity of their individual team members as well as the team through form B-I. A total of 150 team leaders were distributed the questionnaires considering responses from 612 team members out of which 123 leaders returned the filled survey forms for employee and team creativity. Subsequently, the 612 employee-reported surveys and 123 leader-reported surveys were matched out of which the unusable forms due to unmatched or unengaged responses were eliminated. Finally, 510 employee reported surveys and 107 leader reported surveys were successfully matched and used for analysis for the current study constituting a response rate 51 percent for employee sample and 71.3 percent for leaders' sample. Consequently, the final study sample consisted of 510 employees nested in 107 teams. Average cluster size was 4.71.

## 3.6 Time-Lagged Data Collection Approach

Since the current study followed a multisource data collection approach, two separate surveys were designed for employees and their team leaders. Form A was

distributed to employees in multiple time lags while their team leaders or immediate supervisors filled for B.

### 3.6.1 Data Collection at Time-1

Firstly, in the Time-1 phase, form A-I was distributed to employees to provide data of their demographics, leader-instigated task conflict and empowering leadership. Unique IDs were assigned to all respondents at Time-1 in order to match data collected through different forms at different points of time.

### 3.6.2 Data Collection at Time-2

At Time-2 of the data collection, employees who responded to form A-I were distributed form A-II for providing data about their constructive and destructive conflict instigation attribution and their resultant positive and negative emotions. Employees were also asked to rate their emotional regulation at time-2.

### 3.6.3 Data Collection at Time-3

In third time lag, (Time-3), only those employees who had filled and returned form A-I and A-II of the study were contacted and were given form A-III to provide data for their job crafting behaviors.

### 3.6.4 Data Collection at Time-4

In the Time-4 respective supervisors of employees were distributed Form B-I to provide data regarding their demographics, employee creativity and Form B-II to rate team creativity.

## 3.7 Instrumentation

All these measures of the present study will be adopted or adapted from different sources which have established these scales in earlier studies.

### 3.7.1 Leader-Instigated Task Conflict

The questionnaire for this variable was adapted from the refined version (Behfar, Mannix, Peterson, & Trochim, 2011) of the Intragroup Conflict Scale originally developed by Jehn (1994, 1995). This three item scale measures task conflict which is operationalized as the extent of debates on divergent ideas, discussion about alternatives and opinions of team members about their task. These items constituted semantic nuances by Behfar et al. (2011) to represent task conflict as discussing and debating opinions about the content of the work rather than using the terms conflict and incompatibilities in order to avoid negative interpretations by team members. A five point Likert scale with options ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree were used. A sample item includes: To what extent do you agree that your team leader invites your team members to discuss evidence for alternative viewpoints. The psychometric properties of this adapted instrument were examined through a pilot study described in section 3.6.3.

### 3.7.2 Empowering Leadership

Empowering leadership was measured with 12 items scale developed by Ahearne, Mathieu, and Rapp (2005). This measure comprises of four dimensions, however, it has been studied as a unidimensional composite variable by Zhang and Bartol (2010) and other studies. This scale were measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item is: My manager helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company.

### 3.7.3 Constructive and Destructive Conflict Instigation Attributions

This scale was adapted from a scale developed for attributions about leaders abusive behavior developed by Liu et al. (2012) which comprises of two motives including injury initiation (destructive) and performance pressure (constructive).

Although the current thesis intends to study the constructive and destructive motives regarding leader conflict instigation behavior, the scale developed by Liu et al. (2012) covers the employee attribution of constructive and destructive motives of leaders with similar operationalization. Injury initiation motive is defined as employee attribution about leaders behavior with the motive of purposefully harming subordinates while performance promotion motive is operationalized as employees attribution about leaders behavior with the motive of enhancing subordinate performance or to achieve performance goals. Hence, this scale was used for the current study however, it was slightly adapted for leaders conflict instigation. A five point Likert scale with options ranging from ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) were used. Sample item for constructive and destructive attributions include: "Desire to elicit high performance from me", and "Desire to hurt my feelings respectively".

As scales for leader-instigated task conflict and attributions were slightly adapted, their face and content validity was established prior to using them for the hypothesized research model for the current study. In this regard, a pilot study was conducted with survey including definitions and items for leader-instigated task conflict, constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution. Respondents included six doctoral faculty members and six PhD scholars who attended a research training at a public sector university in Islamabad. Respondents were provided with questionnaires and were asked to depict whether they agree or not regarding the representation of each question on its respective construct according to its given definition. 96 percent of the respondents classified the respective items to be representing their respective variables.

In the next step, in order to assess the psychometric properties of the adapted instruments, exploratory factor analysis, reliability analysis and validity analysis were carried out (Hinkin, 1995). For this purpose, a separate questionnaire survey was developed including three items for leader-instigated task conflict, five items for constructive and five items for destructive conflict instigation attribution. Questionnaires were distributed to 380 professionals currently working as either full-time or part-time employees who were enrolled in MBA Executive program

at three different universities located in Islamabad. A total of 323 questionnaires were collected back and were used as a part of process of validating the adapted instruments. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted which revealed a three factor solution for leader-instigated task conflict, constructive conflict instigation attribution and destructive conflict instigation attribution with all items having strong factor loadings ranging from 0.71 to 0.96. The inter-item correlations were also found to be significant. Further, no cross-loadings of items were found for different factors. The strong factor loadings and presence of no cross-loadings determine the establishment of both convergent and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Cronbach for all three variables also showed good scale reliability (leader-instigated task conflict = 0.91, constructive conflict instigation attribution = 0.86, destructive conflict instigation attribution = 0.89). Based on these findings, these scales were considered to be psychometrically robust measures to be used for the current study to collect data and further examine the measurement and structural models.

### 3.7.4 Positive and Negative Emotions

A scale based on four items each for positive and negative active emotions related to experience of conflict developed by Weingart et al. (2009) was used. Each employee is asked to report his or her emotions when engaged in a task conflict. This scale was measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very slightly) to 5 (extremely). ). Sample items for positive and negative active emotions are: "Active, energetic" and "angry, annoyed".

### 3.7.5 Team Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation was measured with four items scale taken from emotional intelligence scale developed by Wong and Law (2017). This scale has been aggregated at team level by previous studies to study team emotional regulation (Jiang et al., 2013). This scale was measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1

(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample item is: I have good control of my own emotions.

### 3.7.6 Job Crafting

Job crafting were measured with 21 items scale developed by Tims et al. (2012). This scale was measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This scale has four dimensions which are compiled as promotion-oriented (increasing social and structural job resources and demands) and prevention-oriented (decreasing hindering demands) job crafting by Lichtenthaler and Fischbach (2018). Sample item for promotion-oriented job crafting is: I try to learn new things at work. Sample item for prevention-oriented job crafting is: I try to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense.

### 3.7.7 Individual Creativity

A four-item instrument developed by Tierney et al. (1999) was used to measure employee creativity in work. In order to avoid self-reported bias, supervisors were asked to rate each employee for their creativity. This scale was measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample item is: This employee seeks new ideas and ways to solve problems.

### 3.7.8 Team Creativity

Since the current study involves measures of creativity at both individual and team level, in order to rule out the chances of common method bias, the approach used by Gong, Kim, Lee, and Zhu (2013) was followed; a different scale was used to measure team creativity. A four item scale developed by Shin and Zhou (2007) was used which is designed specifically to measure creativity at team level. Team creativity was reported by team leaders whereby team leaders assessed the degree to which their teams generate novel and useful ideas. This scale was measured

on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Sample item includes: How well does your team produce new ideas?

## 3.8 Data Analysis Procedure

In current study, SPSS version (22) and Mplus version (7.0) was used to conduct following procedures/tests:

- Data Screening
- Missing values
- Outliers
- Multivariate Normality
- Linearity
- Heteroscedasticity
- Multicollinearity
- Construct reliability
- Confirmatory factor analysis
- MCFA (multilevel confirmatory factor analysis)
- Discriminant and convergent validity
- Absolute fit index: chi square, RMSEA, SRMR
- Incremental fit index: CFI and TLI
- Correlation Analysis
- Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling (MSEM)
- Multilevel Analysis for direct, indirect, conditional and conditional indirect effects

### 3.8.1 Data Screening

The screening of data is the preliminary step prior to moving to further data analysis (Hair et al., 2019). It confirms that the data is clean and accurate for conducting further analyses. Data screening is done to ensure the reliability, validity and usability of the data to be used to test causal relationships. The data screening was done through frequency tables and descriptive statistics which showed that there was no incorrectly entered data hence the data file for further analysis was accurate.

### 3.8.2 Missing Values

Missing data were also examined through descriptive statistics, since missing data can account for influence over analysis results. As a threshold, ten percent missing data needs attention and treatment (Cohen & Mallows, 1983). The data collected for this dissertation had no specific pattern of missing data for any particular variable and the cases deleted accounted for an acceptable range with less than ten percent.

### 3.8.3 Outliers

Outliers represent cases that are distinctly different from rest of the records in the same data set. These cases are typically highlighted as unusual extreme values that stand out from rest of the observations (Aguinis, Gottfredson, & Joo, 2013). Outliers are of two types, univariate and multivariate. Univariate outliers represent extreme values for one variable. These can be identified through boxplots in SPSS that give a graphical representation of extreme values along with a table representing case wise extreme values in upper and lower quartile. Multivariate outliers refer to different variables that exhibit different pattern among correlations of variables than rest of the dataset. In the current study, results were analyzed with and without outliers, which showed that outliers had no significant difference on overall goodness of the model fitness. It is common to have small number of outliers in any dataset, hence after identification of outliers it is upon the

discretion of the researcher to retain or delete or transform them (Hair et al., 2019). Further Hair et al. (2019) suggest retaining outliers as they may be representative of observations in the population and ensure generalizability for entire population. Hence, the small number of outliers shown by the boxplots were retained for further analysis without performing any transformation.

### 3.8.4 The Assumption of Normality for Multivariate Analysis

Normality refers to the shape of data distribution for a particular variable. Normal distribution of data can be assessed through shape of distribution or through skewness and kurtosis (Bollen, 1989). Shape of distribution is assessed through histograms with normal curve plots. The histograms that match normal curve show normality of data. Kurtosis refers to peakedness or flatness of the data distribution as compared to normal distribution. A taller distribution from normality is termed as leptokurtic whereas flatter distribution is called platykurtic data. The kurtosis for normal data is zero however its value less than or equal to seven are acceptable (Kline, 2023). Skewness measures the asymmetry or unbalance shift of data towards one side of the scale either right or left. It shows the distribution of data from the mean. Data distributed towards left presents positive skewness whereas a distribution shifted towards right is negatively skewed. A normal distribution has skewness value of zero (B. Thompson, 2004). The threshold values for skewness range from -2 to +2 (Kline, 2023). Hence, data normality can be examined graphically as well as statistically. Some histograms showed data distribution slightly different from normal curves. To examine further, skewness and kurtosis were assessed which indicated all variables has skewness and kurtosis values within acceptable range therefore data normality was established.

### 3.8.5 Homoscedasticity

The assumption of homoscedasticity suggests that equal level of variance is exhibited by the dependent variable across different levels of the independent variable.

Homoscedasticity is desirable as it gives an equal dispersion across different values of variable, however, an unequal dispersion leads to heteroscedasticity which violates the assumption. To test this assumption, as suggested by (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010), graphical tests for equal variance dispersion tests through scatterplots were conducted which showed that heteroscedasticity was not present in the current study data.

### 3.8.6 Linearity

This is an implicit assumption for multivariate analysis which implies that the associations among variables must be linear. Linearity can be examined through random scatterplots of variables representing the pattern of relationship among variables whereby straight line depicts linear relationship (Hair & Joseph, 2010).

### 3.8.7 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity refers to the overlapping of variance explained by different independent variables in the dependent variable. It exists when high correlation is observed among independent variables ($r > .9$). Multicollinearity can be examined through variance inflation factor (VIF) (threshold less than 10) and tolerance value (threshold $>.10$) (O'brien, 2007). Large VIF and small values of tolerance indicate the issue of multicollinearity in the variables. The current study included one predictor variable, however other variables were examined for multicollinearity since they were hypothesized as predictor variables for effects on dependent variables. Results indicated variance inflation factor and tolerance values within acceptable range indicating that multicollinearity was not an issue in the current study.

### 3.8.8 Reliability Analysis

Instrument reliability refers to the extent to which a variable consistently measures what it intends to measure. This can be observed through consistency in

responses of a respondent for multiple items of same construct (Peter, 1979). Instrument reliability can be calculated for items of a construct and for the overall composite construct. In order to calculate reliability of an instrument, item-to-total correlation (threshold >.50) and inter-item correlation which implies that there should be strong intercorrelation between items or indicators of the same construct (threshold >.30) is examined. Further, the most widely used measure of reliability is reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha (threshold >.70) (Cronbach, 1951) and estimate of composite reliability as a more robust measure of reliability for SEM models. In the current study, all variable instruments were reliable to be used for further analysis.

### 3.8.9 Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling is a widely used robust multivariate technique which combines the aspects of multiple regression and confirmatory factor analysis of latent variables to simultaneously examine multiple interrelated relationships of dependence (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). SEM conducts path analysis on latent variables therefore giving substantively meaningful models that have good model fitness (Byrne, 2012). Structural equation modeling uses confirmatory approach in examining the hypothesized structural paths in research model that is developed in the light of theory in order to explain variance in the data. The current study used SEM since it provides model fitness and structural model that can simultaneously test direct, indirect and conditional hypothesized relationships between multiple variables of the study.

For the current study, as suggested by Bechger (1998), maximum likelihood estimation was used since it is considered to be most appropriate for sample size larger than 200 and for data in which assumption of normality is satisfied. The current study considered multiple indices for assessing model fitness (Kline, 2023). The current study followed stepwise approach for structural equation modeling as suggested by (Kline, 2023). This approach suggests six steps for SEM which are presented below:

#### 3.8.9.1 Model Specification

Model specification in SEM refers to the representation of study's hypotheses as either equations or research model diagram which shows interrelationships among variables of the study. It includes the presentation of latent multi-item outcome variables referred as endogenous variables that have at least one presumed causal variable having an effect on the endogenous variable. Endogenous variables can be dependent (outcome) variables as well as mediators (intervening variables) in the study. Further, exogenous variables are also identified which are the latent multi-item independent variables of the study that have effect on endogenous variables. In the current study exogenous variables and endogenous variables are identified through the proposed hypotheses. The first and second chapter of current dissertation delineates this step.

#### 3.8.9.2 Model Identification

In this step, model is identified through the representation of theory. A conventional SEM model includes measurement model and structural model. The current study assessed measurement model through confirmatory factor analysis in order to confirm the factor structure proposed with the help of theory. Structural model was examined through parameter estimates for interrelationships among the current study variables.

#### 3.8.9.3 Selection of Measuring Instruments, Data Collection and Preparation

This step includes operationalization of constructs, identifying suitable measuring instruments along with measurement scales. Further, data are collected, prepared and further screened and analyses for psychometric properties of the collected data are carried out in order to establish reliability and validity. The current study followed these steps thoroughly as detailed in different sections of chapter 3 and 4.

#### 3.8.9.4 Analysis of the Proposed Model

This step involves examination of model fitness through multiple indices criteria. If the goodness of model fitness is established, then further analyses for structural hypothesis are carried out and parameter estimates are calculated and interpreted. In order to test the current study's hypothesized model, MPlus is used. Model fitness was examined through multiple indices criteria. Relative chi-square (CMIN/df) is the most sensitive and fundamental fit index (Byrne, 2012) which has a threshold of less than three (Bollen, 1989) and p-value greater than .05 (Byrne, 2012). Incremental fit index (IFI) which is a relatively independent to sample size baseline model fit index and has a threshold value of .90 for sufficient model fitness (Kline, 2023). Comparative fit index (CFI) measures the extent to which model fitness changes from null measurement models to specified model comparatively, and has a threshold value of greater than .90. Acceptable values for RMSEA range from .05 to .08 indicate sufficient goodness of model fit (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). After examining the model fitness for hypothesized model, multivariate multilevel data analysis was conducted to test the structural relationships as hypothesized. For hypothesis testing, estimates with p-value less than .05 indicate significant relationships and thereby account for cut-off criteria.

#### 3.8.9.5 Model Respecification

This step is carried out in the case of poor model fitness for the proposed model. Model respecification is done in the light of theoretical justification. This step is optional and subject to inadequate or poor model fit results. For the current study, since the model fit indices presented adequate metrics therefore this step was not required.

#### 3.8.9.6 Reporting the Results

The results for current study are reported in APA format in the chapter 4 including parameter estimates, significance (p-values), standard errors, confidence intervals for bootstrap results as per relevance and applicability.

## 3.9 Analysis Techniques

### 3.9.1 Clarification of Research Question

Clarifying the research questions that any study intends to address is an initial and important step because it provides direction to the researcher for decision making regarding further data analysis techniques (Aguinis et al., 2013). The research questions of current study involve examining interrelationships among variables for individual and group levels. Generally, the individual level variables and their interrelationships are addressed at level 1 and group level variables and their interrelationships are addressed at level 2. In the current study, individual level variables are reported by subordinates and group level variables are reported by subordinates and leaders. Subordinates are clustered or nested within groups according to their leaders. The current dissertation aimed to study the impact of study variables across the two levels. Considering the nature of research questions examining interrelationships at individual and group level of analysis, current study employed multilevel modeling and multilevel analysis approach.

### 3.9.2 The Need for Multilevel Modeling

This modeling involves data at multiple levels which results from nested data structure (Heck & Thomas, 2020). Multilevel modeling allows nesting of individuals within higher groupings. Hence multilevel modeling enables to propose and examine variability in means and covariance across multiple groups. It allows researchers to examine hierarchical data structures in which individuals are clustered in higher level groups allowing each individual to be nested in level two units. Variation at each level in the data warrants the development of a multilevel model. Hence there must be sufficient variation at each level in data in order to design useful and meaningful multilevel models.

The decision of conducting a multilevel analysis is subject to identification of presence of partitioned variance in the variable of interest at within and group level (Muthén & Asparouhov, 2011). In simple words, the first step is to determine whether a variable has variation at within and between group level. If there is no

or little variance at the between level, multilevel analysis is not required, rather the analysis can be conducted through ordinary least squares multiple regression. However, existence of sufficient variance at both levels warrants multilevel analysis. This assumption is tested by partitioning variance of a variable at two levels, within (level 1) and between (level 2) components. The extent to which variance exists at within group (level 1) and between group (level 2) is measured by intraclass correlation (ICC). ICC is defined as the portion of variance that exists between groups (level 2) which is a part of total variance explained in the outcome variable. ICC determines the amount of variation that is not attributed to any predictor variables rather it is explained by the grouping variable. Therefore, examining ICC values is essential in order to assess variance across individual and group levels. However, no zero ICCs alone cannot warrant the multilevel analysis, rather, the development of multilevel model needs to be justified in the light of theory.

### 3.9.3 Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MCFA)

Upon deciding to conduct multilevel analysis for the study, the strategy for analyzing multilevel models must be defined (Heck, Thomas, & Tabata, 2013; Hox, Moerbeek, & Van de Schoot, 2017). In the current study, multilevel confirmatory factor analysis was used to examine measurement while multilevel structural equation modeling was used to assess the structural paths for the multivariate multilevel model proposed. Mplus was used to conduct these analyses. MPlus provides multilevel analysis by assuming a population of individuals nested within groups. Each respondent's total score is decomposed into two levels: within-group component which represents the deviation of individual score from group mean, and between-group component which represents the disaggregated group means (Muthén & Asparouhov, 2011). This approach of decomposition provides covariance matrices for both within-group and between-group components separately (Heck & Thomas, 2020). Further, multilevel CFA (MCFA) allows to conduct refined and improved analyses to establish construct validity at different hierarchical levels by providing item loadings, factor variances, covariances and error terms at both with-group and between-group levels separately.

### 3.9.4 Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling (MSEM)

Single level analysis constrains researchers to aggregate individual level data to group level in order to conduct group level analysis. This technique entails calculating group means for a group level variable from individual scores in a particular group and assigning the same group mean to all individuals within that group. This approach represents a compromise in modeling each response separately within the same model (Heck & Thomas, 2020). Contrary to MLM (through regression), MSEM allows to examine variation at both individual and group levels in the data and hence it allows to observe the variance brought by predictors in the outcomes at each level of analysis (Muthén & Asparouhov, 2011).

Multilevel structural equation modeling is an extension of single-level SEM which is the most robust technique to analyze multilevel models that simultaneously examines direct, indirect and reciprocal effects (Heck & Thomas, 2020; Hox, Maas, & Brinkhuis, 2010; Hox et al., 2017; Muthén & Asparouhov, 2011). MSEM provides analysis for direct and indirect effects between latent variables presented by multiple observed indicators identified at two or more levels. MSEM provides several benefits to researchers. It allows examining direct and indirect effects for latent variables in data where individuals may be nested within groups. Hence it provides the ability to develop and test complex relationships among variables in a heterogeneous population.

MSEM is most appropriate for examining multilevel effects for multivariate structural relationships hypothesized for within-group and between-group level involving direct and indirect effects. MSEM allows the variance decomposition into within-group component and between-group component. This approach of decomposing the variance allows a better, more refined analysis of differences in interrelationships among variables between groups in multilevel data structure.

## 3.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the elements of research design were discussed for the current dissertation. Further, details for population and sample of the study were discussed

along with the procedure that was followed for data collection. Instrumentation for the study variables in order to collect data was also discussed. Finally, a detailed description and rationale for data analysis methods used to tests the proposed interrelationships among study variables was presented.

# Chapter 4

# Results and Findings

This chapter presents analytical basis and results of quantitative analysis for the assessment of proposed hypothesized associations. It provides results for multivariate data analysis assumptions, psychometric properties of the data, multilevel confirmatory factor analysis, correlation analysis, followed by hypotheses testing for antecedents, conditional effects, indirect effects and conditional indirect effects at multilevel through multilevel path analysis in MPlus.

## 4.1 Data Preparation

Prior to conducting quantitative analyses, data preparation is performed. Preparing the data for conducting analyses involves different steps including data entry and editing, coding and tabulating (Cooper & Marshall, 1976). During this process, data were entered carefully in SPSS by examining for errors and eliminating inappropriate responses. Questionnaires were matched through team IDs for their respective group.

## 4.2 Data Analysis

The analyses performed include empirical assessment of assumptions for multivariate analysis, sample characteristics, reliability, convergent and discriminant validity, assumptions for multilevel analysis, confirmatory factor analysis at both

single and multilevel, bivariate correlations at within and between levels, followed by for hypothesis testing through multilevel structural equation modeling including direct, indirect, conditional and conditional indirect effects.

As suggested by Byrne (2012), three steps analysis strategy was followed for analysis of the multilevel data. First, a single level confirmatory factor analysis was carried out. Second multilevel confirmatory factor analysis was conducted and ICCs were calculated for conducting further analysis at within and between levels. Third, multilevel structural equation modeling was conducted to tests the proposed hypothesis.

## 4.3 Normality

To test whether the data are normally distributed, skewness and kurtosis are considered to be appropriate indicators which tell about symmetry and sharpness of distribution of data. Data that has skewness ranging from -2 to +2 and kurtosis ranging from -7 to +7 is considered to be normally distributed (Hair & Joseph, 2010). In the current study's data, as presented in **Table 4.1**, all variables had skewness and kurtosis within acceptable range hence depicting the normal distribution of data.

## 4.4 Construct Reliability

Reliability measures the degree of internal consistency of indicators of a latent construct. Reliability of a construct can be measured through different estimates. The current study examined internal consistency of instruments through Cronbach alpha and construct reliability. The threshold value for Cronbach alpha is greater than 0.70 that represents the reliability of the instrument (Ursachi, Horodnic, & Zait, 2015). As presented in **Table 4.2**, the reliability value for all the variables was greater than 0.70 indicating internal consistency within acceptable range. Although Cronbach alpha is the most commonly used estimate for measuring instrument reliability, it is probable to understate reliability (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics and Normality

| | Indicators | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Error | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Latent Variables** | | | | | | | |
| **LITC** | LITC1 | 1 | 5 | 3.34 | 0.06 | -0.35 | -1.24 |
| | LITC2 | 1 | 5 | 3.42 | 0.06 | -0.44 | -1.22 |
| | LITC3 | 1 | 5 | 3.42 | 0.06 | -0.39 | -1.30 |
| **EL** | EL1 | 1 | 5 | 3.20 | 0.03 | -0.17 | 0.30 |
| | EL2 | 1 | 5 | 3.22 | 0.03 | -0.19 | 0.36 |
| | EL3 | 1 | 5 | 3.13 | 0.04 | 0.01 | 0.13 |
| | EL4 | 1 | 5 | 3.24 | 0.05 | 0.08 | -0.26 |
| | EL5 | 1 | 5 | 3.18 | 0.08 | -0.14 | 0.02 |
| | EL6 | 1 | 5 | 3.15 | 0.03 | 0.23 | 0.09 |
| | EL7 | 1 | 5 | 3.15 | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.18 |
| | EL8 | 1 | 5 | 3.14 | 0.06 | 0.10 | -0.05 |
| | EL9 | 1 | 5 | 3.16 | 0.04 | -0.23 | 0.28 |
| | EL10 | 1 | 5 | 3.16 | 0.04 | -0.08 | 0.21 |
| | EL11 | 1 | 5 | 3.15 | 0.03 | -0.02 | 0.87 |
| | EL12 | 1 | 5 | 3.34 | 0.04 | -0.26 | -0.32 |
| **CCIA** | CCIA1 | 1 | 5 | 3.35 | 0.05 | -0.40 | -1.12 |
| | CCIA2 | 1 | 5 | 3.40 | 0.05 | -0.40 | -1.11 |
| | CCIA3 | 1 | 5 | 3.47 | 0.05 | -0.40 | -1.18 |
| | CCIA4 | 1 | 5 | 3.43 | 0.05 | -0.47 | -1.04 |
| | CCIA5 | 1 | 5 | 3.46 | 0.06 | -0.46 | -1.12 |
| **PE** | PE1 | 1 | 5 | 3.47 | 0.05 | -0.54 | -0.77 |
| | PE2 | 1 | 5 | 3.52 | 0.05 | -0.52 | -0.81 |
| | PE3 | 1 | 5 | 3.48 | 0.05 | -0.64 | -0.62 |
| | PE4 | 1 | 5 | 3.49 | 0.05 | -0.59 | -0.70 |

Continued Table: 4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Normality

| | Indicators | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Error | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PROJC** | PRO_JC1 | 1 | 5 | 3.35 | 0.06 | -0.40 | -1.21 |
| | PRO_JC2 | 1 | 5 | 3.33 | 0.05 | -0.32 | -1.14 |
| | PRO_JC3 | 1 | 5 | 3.34 | 0.06 | -0.35 | -1.11 |
| | PRO_JC4 | 1 | 5 | 3.36 | 0.06 | -0.29 | -1.08 |
| | PRO_JC5 | 1 | 5 | 3.32 | 0.06 | -0.42 | -1.12 |
| | PRO_JC6 | 1 | 5 | 3.34 | 0.06 | -0.31 | -1.15 |
| | PRO_JC7 | 1 | 5 | 3.37 | 0.05 | -0.44 | -1.04 |
| | PRO_JC8 | 1 | 5 | 3.38 | 0.06 | -0.39 | -1.15 |
| | PRO_JC9 | 1 | 5 | 3.40 | 0.05 | -0.40 | -1.10 |
| | PRO_JC10 | 1 | 5 | 3.43 | 0.06 | -0.45 | -1.13 |
| | PRO_JC11 | 1 | 5 | 3.42 | 0.06 | -0.50 | -1.24 |
| | PRO_JC12 | 1 | 5 | 3.38 | 0.06 | -0.48 | -1.27 |
| | PRO_JC13 | 1 | 5 | 3.35 | 0.06 | -0.45 | -1.35 |
| | PRO_JC14 | 1 | 5 | 3.36 | 0.06 | -0.43 | -1.27 |
| | PRO_JC15 | 1 | 5 | 3.49 | 0.06 | -0.44 | -1.20 |
| **DCIA** | DCIA1 | 1 | 5 | 2.71 | 0.06 | 0.34 | -1.21 |
| | DCIA2 | 1 | 5 | 2.69 | 0.05 | 0.34 | -1.35 |
| | DCIA3 | 1 | 5 | 2.72 | 0.06 | 0.32 | -1.25 |
| | DCIA4 | 1 | 5 | 2.76 | 0.06 | 0.37 | -1.39 |
| | DCIA5 | 1 | 5 | 2.74 | 0.05 | 0.45 | -1.27 |
| **NE** | NE1 | 1 | 5 | 2.66 | 0.06 | 0.35 | -1.19 |
| | NE2 | 1 | 5 | 2.62 | 0.05 | 0.38 | -1.10 |
| | NE3 | 1 | 5 | 2.63 | 0.05 | 0.33 | -1.21 |
| | NE4 | 1 | 5 | 2.65 | 0.05 | 0.35 | -1.15 |

Continued Table: 4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Normality

| | Indicators | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Error | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PREJC** | PRE_JC1 | 1 | 5 | 2.53 | 0.06 | 0.63 | -1.05 |
| | PRE_JC2 | 1 | 5 | 2.55 | 0.07 | 0.60 | -1.00 |
| | PRE_JC3 | 1 | 5 | 2.47 | 0.05 | 0.62 | -1.01 |
| | PRE_JC4 | 1 | 5 | 2.52 | 0.03 | 0.51 | -1.12 |
| | PRE_JC5 | 1 | 5 | 2.56 | 0.05 | 0.61 | -1.11 |
| | PRE_JC6 | 1 | 5 | 2.56 | 0.06 | 0.63 | -1.02 |
| **IC** | IC1 | 1 | 5 | 3.49 | 0.06 | -0.59 | -0.95 |
| | IC2 | 1 | 5 | 3.47 | 0.05 | -0.53 | -0.94 |
| | IC3 | 1 | 5 | 3.56 | 0.06 | -0.51 | -1.07 |
| | IC4 | 1 | 5 | 3.51 | 0.05 | -0.50 | -1.01 |
| **TER** | TER1 | 1 | 5 | 3.09 | 0.03 | -0.43 | 1.37 |
| | TER2 | 1 | 5 | 3.26 | 0.04 | -0.28 | 0.03 |
| | TER3 | 1 | 5 | 3.28 | 0.05 | -0.22 | -0.02 |
| | TER4 | 1 | 5 | 3.23 | 0.03 | -0.35 | 0.82 |
| **TC** | TC1 | 1 | 5 | 3.61 | 0.06 | -0.74 | -0.68 |
| | TC2 | 1 | 5 | 3.55 | 0.06 | -0.67 | -0.82 |
| | TC3 | 1 | 5 | 3.67 | 0.05 | -0.75 | -0.76 |
| | TC4 | 1 | 5 | 3.49 | 0.06 | -0.81 | -0.65 |

Continued Table: 4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Normality

| Indicators | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Error | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Observed Variables** | | | | | | |
| **LITC** | 1 | 5 | 3.39 | 1.37 | -0.42 | -1.36 |
| **EL** | 1 | 5 | 3.18 | 0.72 | -0.37 | 0.26 |
| **CCIA** | 1 | 5 | 3.42 | 1.27 | -0.51 | -1.20 |
| **PE** | 1 | 5 | 3.49 | 1.16 | -0.65 | -0.88 |
| **PRO** | 1 | 5 | 3.36 | 1.30 | -0.54 | -1.25 |
| **DCIA** | 1 | 5 | 2.72 | 1.30 | 0.37 | -1.32 |
| **NE** | 1 | 5 | 2.63 | 1.33 | 0.35 | -1.25 |
| **PRE** | 1 | 5 | 2.53 | 1.34 | 0.69 | -1.18 |
| **IC** | 1 | 5 | 3.51 | 1.28 | -0.64 | -1.03 |
| **TC** | 1 | 5 | 3.57 | 1.25 | -0.87 | -0.87 |
| **TER** | 1 | 5 | 3.21 | 0.78 | -0.78 | 1.19 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

An additional measure for internal consistency is the construct reliability estimate (threshold > or equal to .70) which is mostly used in structural equation modeling techniques and considered to be more suitable measure for for SEM models instead of Cronbach alpha (Hair et al., 2019). As compared to Cronbach alpha, the composite reliability estimate does not assume equally weighted loadings of indicators (Hair et al., 2019). The current study examined both Cronbach alpha (presented in **table 4.2**) and composite reliability (presented later in this chapter in **table 4.7**, **4.8** and **4.9** for construct reliability at single level, between-group level and within-group level respectively).

TABLE 4.2: Scale Reliability

| Variable | Cronbach Alpha |
|---|---|
| LITC | 0.95 |
| EL | 0.78 |
| CCIA | 0.95 |
| DCIA | 0.95 |
| PE | 0.93 |
| NE | 0.96 |
| PRO | 0.94 |
| PRE | 0.95 |
| IC | 0.95 |
| TER | 0.79 |
| TC | 0.93 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

## 4.5 Multicollinearity

As some of the inter correlations between some variables are moderate to high, multi-collinearity diagnostic test was carried out in order to check whether the high

correlations between variables are a problem. For this purpose it is recommended to examine the value of variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance (Rogerson, 2001). It is a rule of thumb that a value of variance inflation factors less than ten is considered to be acceptable and a value of tolerance above 0.1 is considered to be acceptable and represents that multi-collinearity is not a problem in the research being carried out (Hair et al., 2019). As given in **Table 4.3**, results for the current study indicate that none of the variables constituted the value of variance inflation factors above ten and tolerance value for all variables is also greater than 0.1, therefore it is found that in the current study, there is no issue of multi-collinearity between variables.

TABLE 4.3: Multicollinearity Test Results of Constructs

| **Variables** | **Tolerance** | **VIF** |
|---|---|---|
| LITC | 0.66 | 1.51 |
| EL | 0.36 | 2.75 |
| CCIA | 0.43 | 2.32 |
| DCIA | 0.48 | 2.05 |
| PE | 0.42 | 2.36 |
| NE | 0.43 | 2.27 |
| PROJC | 0.49 | 2.00 |
| PREJC | 0.40 | 2.48 |
| IC | 0.40 | 2.50 |
| TC | 0.17 | 5.07 |
| TER | 0.42 | 2.35 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

## 4.6 Independence of Observations and Empirical Justification for Multilevel Analysis

The sample for current study consisted of 107 teams where 510 individual team members were nested into teams. This data structure suggests violation of the assumption of independence of observations and hence ordinary least square regression is not performed and multilevel analysis is warranted. In order to empirically test whether multilevel analysis can be carried out on the given data, a statistic called intra-class correlation ICC is calculated. ICC gives the ratio between the between-group and total variance in a variable. While there is no specific threshold for intraclass correlation, ICC values range from zero to one. High values of ICC provide justification for conducting multilevel analysis.

Further is recommended to test within group agreement by computing ICC1 and ICC2 (Bliese 2000; (Bliese, Halverson, & Schriesheim, 2002). ICC1 provides the proportion of total variability that is due to variability between groups. ICC1 is also referred as index of interrater reliability which the degree to which raters within a group are substitutable because of similarity in their scores (Bliese 2000). ICC1 values greater than 0.05 give justification for multilevel analysis (Frenzel, Goetz, Lüdtke, Pekrun, & Sutton, 2009). ICC2 is termed as the estimate of reliability of the group mean rating and its values .70 or greater provide justification of multilevel analysis. The current study examined ICC1 and ICC2 and rwg as presented in **Table 4.4**. The intraclass correlations for current study variables range from 0.70 to 0.97 that provide justification to conduct multilevel analysis.

TABLE 4.4: Inter-rater Reliability and Inter-rater Agreement

| **Factors** | **Average Item ICC(1)** | **Average Item ICC(2)** | **Muthen's ICC** | **Average Group rWG(J)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| LITC | 0.66 | 0.89 | 0.92 | 0.93 |
| EL | 0.54 | 0.76 | 0.78 | 0.89 |
| TER | 0.57 | 0.70 | 0.71 | 0.82 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ICC = Intra-class correlation, LITC = LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, TER = Team Emotion Regulation.*

## 4.7 Measurement Model (Confirmatory Factor Analysis)

A measurement model refers to a model that gives relation between observed variables and their respective latent construct (also knows as factor). In order to assess the measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on latent variables for examining model fitness and to confirm the factor structure of the data. Model fitness indicates how well the variables in collected data set fit the theoretically proposed model.

The indices include relative chi square $\chi^2$/DF having threshold value less than 3, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) having threshold value greater than 0.95, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) with threshold .90 or above, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) having threshold value less than 0.08 and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) with a threshold ranging from .08 to .05 (Bentler, 1990; Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2009). Considering the clustered nature of data, measurement model was assessed at both single and multilevel.

### 4.7.1 Single Level Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

To examine the measurement model at single level, confirmatory factor analysis was carried out for all variables under study. This analysis provides information about model fitness, overall validity and correlations among latent factors in the study.

Result of CFA with all eleven variables of the study indicated good model fitness after co-varying the residual errors of two items of the moderating variable empowering leadership and three items of promotion focused job crafting as suggested by large modification indices. After co-varying the residuals, model fitness of the overall eleven-factor model approached good model fitness ($\chi^2$/df = 2.00, p = .000, CFI = .961, TLI =.958, RMSEA = .046, SRMR = 0.026). The results of CFA are shown in **Figure 4.1** and **Table 4.5**. After the single level confirmatory factor analysis, multilevel CFA was estimated.

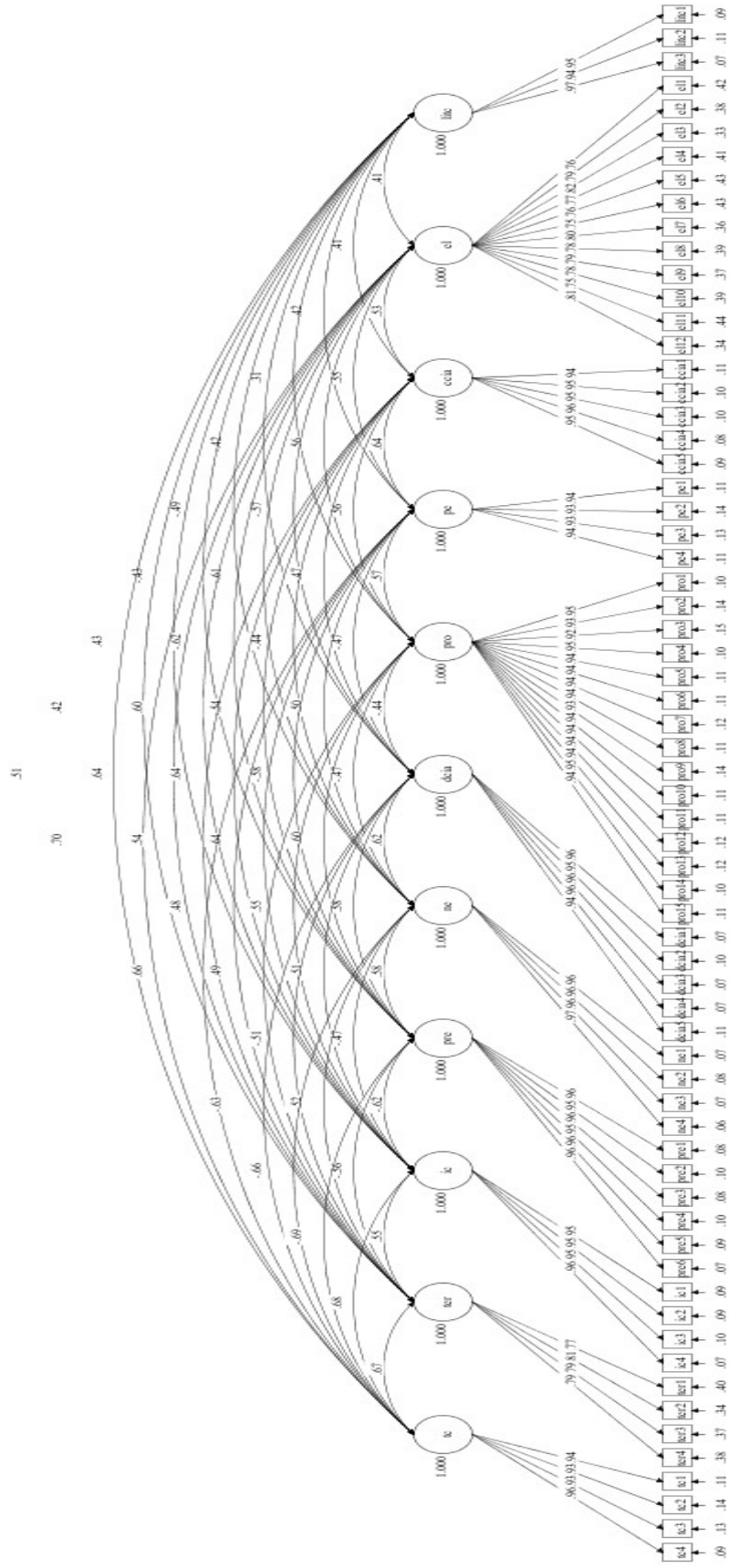

FIGURE 4.1: CFA Model

Table 4.5: Single Level Measurement Model Fit Indices of Tested and Potential Alternative Models

| **Models** | **CMIN/df** | **CFI** | **TLI** | **RMSEA** | **SRMR** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| One-factor model (all variables combined) | 15.16 | 0.431 | 0.415 | 0.167 | 0.21 |
| Six-factor model (LITC,EL, CCIA+DCIA+PE+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC+TC) | 9.92 | 0.561 | 0.532 | 0.141 | 0.177 |
| Seven-factor model (LITC, EL, CCIA+PE, DCIA+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC+TC) | 9.01 | 0.598 | 0.587 | 0.134 | 0.165 |
| Seven-factor model (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC+TC) | 8.69 | 0.695 | 0.682 | 0.123 | 0.138 |
| Eight-factor model (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | 7.66 | 0.736 | 0.724 | 0.114 | 0.136 |
| Nine-factor model (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE+NE, PROJC, PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | 5.48 | 0.824 | 0.815 | 0.094 | 0.107 |
| Ten-factor model (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE, NE, PROJC, PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | 3.95 | 0.884 | 0.878 | 0.076 | 0.087 |
| Full model (LITC, EL, CCIA, DCIA, PE, NE, PROJC, PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | 2.00 | 0.961 | 0.958 | 0.046 | 0.026 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

### 4.7.2 Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MCFA)

Considering the multilevel nature of data and proposed hypotheses at individual and group level, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to examine two-level measurement model including all variables under study. The MCFA revealed acceptable model fit indices ($\chi^2$/df = 2.44, p = .000, CFI = .942, TLI =.919, RMSEA = .046, SRMRw = .070, SRMRb = .063). Further, in order to assess whether the proposed model has comparatively better fit from its alternative models, a series of alternative confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to account for the model fitness of the competing models (Hair et al., 2019). This comparison allows to establish the confidence that the hypothesized measurement model suits the best by showing better model fitness than the alternative models. As presented in **Table 4.6** It was established that the proposed model with all eleven variables has better model fitness overall as compared to competing models with combined factors.

## 4.8 Common Method Variance

The presence of common method bias is due to something external to the measures that can influence the responses. It is likely to occur if data are collected from single source, or by using single method for example survey questionnaires. The presence of common method bias in the data can inflate. First, Harman's single factor test can be conducted which suggests evidence for CMV if a single factor emerges from exploratory factor analysis conducted on all variables or if the variance explained by a single factor constitutes the majority or overall variance. Second, a common latent factor test can be conducted in CFA to account for common variance among the variables. Although multiple time lagged design was used for data collection in order to avoid common method bias, considering that data for most of the variables (excluding individual and team creativity) were collected from single source that is employees, and considering the same type of scale for most of the variables was used (Hair & Joseph, 2010), it was necessary to rule out the possibility of common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

TABLE 4.6: Multilevel Measurement Model fit Indices of Tested and Potential Alternative Models at within-group and between-Group Levels

| **Models** | **CMIN/df** | **CFI** | **TLI** | **RMSEA** | **SRMR$_w$** | **SRMR$_b$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| One-factor model at within-group and between group levels (all variables combined) | 14.34 | 0.33 | 0.313 | 0.191 | 0.292 | 0.299 |
| Six-factor model at within-group and between group levels (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA+PE+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC+TC) | 11.82 | 0.412 | 0.407 | 0.163 | 0.222 | 0.231 |
| Seven-factor model at within-group and between group levels (LITC, EL, CCIA+PE, DCIA+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC+TC) | 10.11 | 0.499 | 0.494 | 0.154 | 0.204 | 0.212 |
| Seven-factor model at within-group and between group levels (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC+TC) | 9.90 | 0.491 | 0.48 | 0.141 | 0.199 | 0.201 |
| Eight-factor model at within-group and between group levels (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE+NE, PROJC+PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | 8.01 | 0.599 | 0.524 | 0.124 | 0.176 | 0.191 |
| Nine-factor model at within-group and between group levels | 5.95 | 0.621 | 0.651 | 0.098 | 0.11 | 0.142 |

Continued Table 4.6: Multilevel Measurement Model fit Indices of Tested and Potential Alternative Models at within-group and between-Group Levels

| **Models** | **CMIN/df** | **CFI** | **TLI** | **RMSEA** | **SRMR$_w$** | **SRMR$_b$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE+NE, PROJC, PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | | | | | | |
| Ten-factor model at within-group and between group levels | 3.99 | 0.787 | 0.741 | 0.086 | 0.096 | 0.091 |
| (LITC, EL, CCIA+DCIA, PE, NE, PROJC, PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | | | | | | |
| Full model at within-group and between group levels | 2.44 | 0.942 | 0.919 | 0.046 | 0.071 | 0.063 |
| (LITC, EL, CCIA, DCIA, PE, NE, PROJC, PREJC, TER, IC, TC) | | | | | | |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

For this purpose, Harman's single factor test was conducted through exploratory factor analysis by constraining the number of extracted factors to one. It was observed that single factor did not account for majority of variance in the data.

Further, an unrotated factor solution was examined on the basis of Eigen values greater than one. The unrotated factor solution gave a cumulative variance of 85.99% with 33.01% variance explained by the largest factor which was not the majority of variance explained. Hence, common method variance is not present in the data.

The model fit indices from CLF were compared with another model with all latent factors of the proposed model. Further, variance obtained through common latent factor in the confirmatory factor analysis was assessed. A common latent factor was added and connected to all observed variables in CFA. The model fit indices from CLF were compared with another model with all latent factors of the proposed model.

It was observed that one-factor measurement model gave a poor model ($\chi^2$/df = 14.34, CFI = .330, TLI =.313, RMSEA = .191, SRMRw = .292, SRMRb = .299). Hence, the presence of common method bias was ruled out showing that variables do not have biased common shared variance.

## 4.9 Construct Validity and Reliability

After confirmatory factor analysis, convergent and discriminant validity and composite reliability was assessed for all variables in order to demonstrate adequate validity and consistency of measures. Construct validity and reliability are essential concepts in research specifically when the purpose of research is hypothesis testing through data collected in the form of questionnaire based surveys. The construct validity examines the degree to which an instrument measures the concept it is intended to measure. It can be assessed through content, convergent and discriminate validity. Further, construct reliability examines the consistency of a measure.

### 4.9.1 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity measures the degree to which items of a variable correspond to similar constructs (Garver & Mentzer, 1999). Convergent validity is established if Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2009). For the current study, convergent validity was examined at single level as well as multilevel for within-group and between-group levels. As shown in **Table: 4.7** (for single level convergent validity) and **Table 4.8** and **Table: 4.9** (for between-group and within group level respectively), the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all variables was greater than 0.50 indicating convergent validity of the data for the current study.

### 4.9.2 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity measures the degree to which items of one variable are distinguished from dissimilar constructs (Garver & Mentzer, 1999). Discriminant validity depicts the extent to which a construct is distinct from other constructs in the study. For the establishment of discriminant validity, the square root of AVE must be greater than correlations between variables (Hair et al., 2019). For the current study, as shown in **table 4.7**, square root of AVE was greater than intercorrelations between variables hence indicating the discriminant validity of variables.

### 4.9.3 Construct Reliability

Construct reliability gives the internal consistency of a set of indicators measured through an instrument. This indicator of instrument reliability is considered to be more robust for SEM models as compared to Cronbach alpha (Hair et al., 2019). A construct reliability of 0.70 or higher indicates internal consistency. For the current study, construct reliability was examined at single level as well as multilevel for within-group and between-group levels. As shown in **table 4.7** (for single level composite reliability) and **table 4.8** and **4.9** (for between-group and within-group level respectively), all variables have construct reliability within acceptable range.

TABLE 4.7: Convergent and Discriminant Validity of Constructs at Single Level

| | CR. | AVE. | LITC | EL | CCIA | PE | PRO | DCIA | NE | PRE | IC | TER | TC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LITC** | 0.96 | 0.91 | **0.95** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **EL** | 0.94 | 0.61 | 0.41* | **0.78** | | | | | | | | | |
| **CCIA** | 0.97 | 0.9 | 0.40* | 0.52* | **0.95** | | | | | | | | |
| **PE** | 0.96 | 0.87 | 0.42* | 0.55* | 0.63* | **0.93** | | | | | | | |
| **PRO** | 0.99 | 0.88 | 0.30* | 0.55* | 0.56* | 0.56* | **0.94** | | | | | | |
| **DCIA** | 0.98 | 0.91 | -0.41* | -0.57* | -0.47* | -0.47* | -0.43* | **0.95** | | | | | |
| **NE** | 0.98 | 0.93 | -0.49* | -0.61* | -0.43* | -0.49* | -0.47* | 0.62* | **0.96** | | | | |
| **PRE** | 0.98 | 0.91 | -0.43* | -0.62* | -0.53* | -0.57* | -0.60* | 0.58* | 0.57* | **0.95** | | | |
| **IC** | 0.97 | 0.91 | 0.43* | 0.59* | 0.63* | 0.64* | 0.54* | -0.50* | -0.47* | -0.61* | **0.95** | | |
| **TER** | 0.87 | 0.62 | 0.41* | 0.63* | 0.54* | 0.47* | 0.49* | -0.51* | -0.51* | -0.56* | 0.55* | **0.79** | |
| **TC** | 0.96 | 0.88 | 0.50* | 0.70* | 0.72* | 0.65* | 0.73* | -0.62* | -0.65* | -0.69* | 0.67* | 0.66* | **0.93** |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity, values on the diagonal present square root of AVE*

TABLE 4.8: Factor Loadings of Indicators, Validity and Composite Reliability at Between-Group Level

| **Constructs** | **Items** | **Standardized Factor Loadings** ($\lambda$) | **AVE** | **CR** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LITC_b** | LITC1 | 1.001*** | 0.992 | 0.997 |
| | LITC2 | 0.995*** | | |
| | LITC3 | 0.992*** | | |
| **EL_b** | EL1 | 0.971*** | 0.974 | 0.997 |
| | EL2 | 0.987*** | | |
| | EL3 | 0.999*** | | |
| | EL4 | 0.980*** | | |
| | EL5 | 0.997*** | | |
| | EL6 | 0.984*** | | |
| | EL7 | 0.970*** | | |
| | EL8 | 0.983*** | | |
| | EL9 | 0.996*** | | |
| | EL10 | 1.000*** | | |
| | EL11 | 0.986*** | | |
| | EL12 | 0.959*** | | |
| **CCIA_b** | CCIA1 | 0.997*** | 0.991 | 0.997 |
| | CCIA2 | 0.987*** | | |
| | CCIA3 | 0.995*** | | |
| | CCIA4 | 0.996*** | | |
| | CCIA5 | 1.000*** | | |
| **PE_b** | PE1 | 0.986*** | 0.973 | 0.993 |
| | PE2 | 0.984*** | | |
| | PE3 | 0.992*** | | |
| | PE4 | 0.983*** | | |
| **PROJC_b** | PRO_JC1 | 0.993*** | 0.991 | 0.998 |
| | PRO_JC2 | 0.995*** | | |
| | PRO_JC3 | 0.992*** | | |
| | PRO_JC4 | 0.999*** | | |
| | PRO_JC5 | 0.999*** | | |
| | PRO_JC6 | 0.997*** | | |
| | PRO_JC7 | 0.999*** | | |
| | PRO_JC8 | 1.000*** | | |
| | PRO_JC9 | 0.989*** | | |
| | PRO_JC10 | 0.992*** | | |
| | PRO_JC11 | 1.000*** | | |
| | PRO_JC12 | 1.000*** | | |
| | PRO_JC13 | 0.998*** | | |
| | PRO_JC14 | 1.000*** | | |
| | PRO_JC15 | 0.994*** | | |

Continued Table 4.8: Factor Loadings of Indicators, Validity and Composite Reliability at Between-Group Level

| **Constructs** | **Items** | **Standardized Factor Loadings ($\lambda$)** | **AVE** | **CR** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **DCIA_b** | DCIA1 | 0.998*** | 0.986 | 0.996 |
| | DCIA2 | 0.996*** | | |
| | DCIA3 | 0.995*** | | |
| | DCIA4 | 0.994*** | | |
| | DCIA5 | 0.983*** | | |
| **NE_b** | NE1 | 0.996*** | 0.996 | 0.998 |
| | NE2 | 1.000*** | | |
| | NE3 | 0.997*** | | |
| | NE4 | 1.000*** | | |
| **PREJC_b** | PRE_JC1 | 0.993*** | 0.981 | 0.996 |
| | PRE_JC2 | 0.983*** | | |
| | PRE_JC3 | 0.986*** | | |
| | PRE_JC4 | 0.989*** | | |
| | PRE_JC5 | 1.000*** | | |
| | PRE_JC6 | 0.990*** | | |
| **IC_b** | IC1 | 0.998*** | 0.991 | 0.998 |
| | IC2 | 0.992*** | | |
| | IC3 | 0.991*** | | |
| | IC4 | 1.001*** | | |
| **TER_b** | TER1 | 0.962*** | 0.947 | 0.986 |
| | TER2 | 0.966*** | | |
| | TER3 | 1.011*** | | |
| | TER4 | 0.953*** | | |
| **TC_b** | TC1 | 0.937*** | 0.882 | 0.968 |
| | TC2 | 0.929*** | | |
| | TC3 | 0.931*** | | |
| | TC4 | 0.960*** | | |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

Table 4.9: Factor Loadings of Indicators, Validity and Composite Reliability at Within-Group Level

| **Constructs** | **Items** | **Standardized Factor Loadings** ($\lambda$) | **AVE** | **CR** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LITC_w** | LITC1 | 0.569*** | 0.345 | 0.601 |
| | LITC2 | 0.415*** | | |
| | LITC3 | 0.734*** | | |
| **EL_w** | EL1 | 0.523*** | 0.287 | 0.803 |
| | EL2 | 0.528*** | | |
| | EL3 | 0.608*** | | |
| | EL4 | 0.521*** | | |
| | EL5 | 0.454*** | | |
| | EL6 | 0.509*** | | |
| | EL7 | 0.580*** | | |
| | EL8 | 0.495*** | | |
| | EL9 | 0.523*** | | |
| | EL10 | 0.534*** | | |
| | EL11 | 0.536*** | | |
| | EL12 | 0.577*** | | |
| **CCIA_w** | CCIA1 | 0.761*** | 0.641 | 0.899 |
| | CCIA2 | 0.832*** | | |
| | CCIA3 | 0.784*** | | |
| | CCIA4 | 0.847*** | | |
| | CCIA5 | 0.775*** | | |
| **PE_w** | PE1 | 0.847*** | 0.687 | 0.898 |
| | PE2 | 0.803*** | | |
| | PE3 | 0.808*** | | |
| | PE4 | 0.857*** | | |
| **PROJC_w** | PRO_JC1 | 0.770*** | 0.559 | 0.927 |
| | PRO_JC2 | 0.693*** | | |
| | PRO_JC3 | 0.734*** | | |
| | PRO_JC4 | 0.753*** | | |
| | PRO_JC5 | 0.732*** | | |
| | PRO_JC6 | 0.737*** | | |
| | PRO_JC7 | 0.738*** | | |
| | PRO_JC8 | 0.740*** | | |
| | PRO_JC9 | 0.773*** | | |
| | PRO_JC10 | 0.759*** | | |
| | PRO_JC11 | 0.747*** | | |
| | PRO_JC12 | 0.727*** | | |
| | PRO_JC13 | 0.744*** | | |
| | PRO_JC14 | 0.748*** | | |
| | PRO_JC15 | 0.762*** | | |

Continued Table 4.9: Factor Loadings of Indicators, Validity and Composite Reliability at Within-Group Level

| **Constructs** | **Items** | **Standardized Factor Loadings ($\lambda$)** | **AVE** | **CR** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **DCIA_w** | DCIA1 | 0.841*** | 0.677 | 0.913 |
| | DCIA2 | 0.798*** | | |
| | DCIA3 | 0.837*** | | |
| | DCIA4 | 0.849*** | | |
| | DCIA5 | 0.786*** | | |
| **NE_w** | NE1 | 0.877*** | 0.765 | 0.929 |
| | NE2 | 0.859*** | | |
| | NE3 | 0.869*** | | |
| | NE4 | 0.893*** | | |
| **PREJC_w** | PRE_JC1 | 0.852*** | 0.694 | 0.932 |
| | PRE_JC2 | 0.824*** | | |
| | PRE_JC3 | 0.859*** | | |
| | PRE_JC4 | 0.818*** | | |
| | PRE_JC5 | 0.794*** | | |
| | PRE_JC6 | 0.851*** | | |
| **IC_w** | IC1 | 0.809*** | 0.698 | 0.902 |
| | IC2 | 0.857*** | | |
| | IC3 | 0.831*** | | |
| | IC4 | 0.843*** | | |
| **TER_w** | TER1 | 0.673*** | 0.376 | 0.705 |
| | TER2 | 0.653*** | | |
| | TER3 | 0.530*** | | |
| | TER4 | 0.587*** | | |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

## 4.10 Control Variables

In order to identify covariates in the current model, one way ANOVA tests were conducted for demographic variables of leaders (for between-group level) and subordinates (for within-group level). It was found that no significant difference exists on between-group level for team creativity and leader's gender ($F = 1.04$, $p > 0.05$), leader's age ($F = 1.44$, $p > 0.05$), and leader's experience ($F = 1.86$, $p > 0.05$). Further, no significant differences were found on within-group level between employee gender, age and experience on constructive conflict instigation attribution (age: $F = .861$, $p > 0.05$, gender: $F = 1.80$, $p > 0.05$, experience: $F = .099$, $p > 0.05$), destructive conflict instigation attribution (age: $F = 1.20$, $p > 0.05$, gender: $F = 1.56$, $p > 0.05$, experience: $F = 1.65$, $p > 0.05$), positive emotions (age: $F = 1.20$, $p > 0.05$, gender: $F = 1.56$, $p > 0.05$, experience: $F = 1.65$, $p > 0.05$), negative emotions(age: $F = 0.87$, $p > 0.05$, gender: $F = 1.91$, $p > 0.05$, experience: $F = 1.01$, $p > 0.05$), promotion focused job crafting (age: $F = 1.37$, $p > 0.05$, gender: $F = 0.65$, $p > 0.05$, experience: $F = 1.08$, $p > 0.05$), prevention focused job crafting (age: $F = 1.55$, $p > 0.05$, gender: $F = 1.05$, $p > 0.05$, experience: $F = 0.62$, $p > 0.05$), and employee creativity (age: $F = 0.90$, $p > 0.05$, gender: $F = 1.45$, $p > 0.05$, experience: $F = 1.71$, $p > 0.05$). Therefore, the effects of these variables were not controlled in further analysis.

## 4.11 Multilevel Inter-Construct Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis provides bivariate association between two variables by indicating the significance, strength and direction of the relation (Field, 2013). The values of Pearson bivariate correlations range from -1 to +1 which is represented as "r". The numerical value of r indicates strength of the association. The strength of association becomes greater as magnitude of correlation approaches one from zero, hence, values closer to 1 indicate strong correlation while values closer to zero indicate weak correlation. The positive or negative sign indicates direction

of relationship. Positive sign indicates a positive correlation whereby two variables have same direction such that if one variable is increasing, the other variable also increases. On the other hand, negative sign represents a negative association whereby two variables have inverse direction in a way that if one variable increases, the other variable decreases.

**Table 4.10** presents between-group level bivariate correlations among the variables under study. Leader-instigated task conflict was positively associated with constructive conflict instigation attribution ($r = .427$, $p < .01$, between-group level) while it was negatively associated with destructive conflict instigation attribution ($r = -.447$, $p < .01$, between-group level). Further, constructive conflict instigation attribution was positively related to positive emotions ($r = .724$, $p < .01$, between-group level), promotion-focused job crafting ($r = .622$, $p < .01$, between-group level), individual creativity ($r = .559$, $p < .01$, between-group level) and team creativity ($r = .727$, $p < .01$, between-group level).

Likewise, destructive conflict instigation attribution was positively related to negative emotions ($r = .700$, $p < .01$, between-group level) and prevention-focused job crafting ($r = .625$, $p < .01$, between-group level), however, it was negatively associated with individual creativity ($r = -.458$, $p < .01$, between-group level) and team creativity ($r = -.465$, $p < .01$, between-group level). Additionally, positive emotions were positively correlated with promotion-focused job crafting ($r = .614$, $p < .01$, between-group level), individual creativity ($r = .444$, $p < .01$, between-group level) and team creativity ($r = .627$, $p < .01$, between-group level). Similarly, negative emotions were positively correlated with prevention-focused job crafting ($r = .631$, $p < .01$, between-group level), and negatively correlated with individual creativity ($r = –.437$, $p < .01$, between-group level) and team creativity ($r = –.442$, $p < .01$, between-group level). Furthermore, promotion-focused job crafting was positively related to individual creativity ($r = .374$, $p < .01$, between-group level) and team creativity ($r = .729$, $p < .01$, between-group level) while prevention-focused job crafting was negatively associated with individual creativity ($r = –.505$, $p < .01$, between-group level) and team creativity ($r = –.434$, $p < .01$, between-group level).

Empowering leadership was positively associated with Leader-instigated task conflict (r = .420, p < .01, between-group level) and constructive conflict instigation (r = .478, p < .01, between-group level) while it was negatively correlated with destructive conflict instigation attribution (r = –.635, p < .01, between-group level). Finally, team emotional regulation was positively related to constructive conflict instigation attribution (r = .293, p < .01, between-group level), positive emotions (r = .303, p < .01, between-group level) and promotion-focused job crafting (r = .394, p < .01, between-group level) while it was negatively associated with destructive conflict instigation attribution (r = –.384, p < .01, between-group level), negative emotions (r = –.400, p < .01, between-group level) and prevention-focused job crafting (r = –.576, p < .01, between-group level). The results of between-group correlations support majority of hypotheses developed at group level.

**Table 4.11** presents within-group level and within-level bivariate correlations among the variables under study. Leader-instigated task conflict was not significantly associated with constructive conflict instigation attribution (r = .029, ns, within-group level) destructive conflict instigation attribution (r = -.116, ns, within-group level). Constructive conflict instigation attribution was positively related to positive emotions (r = .397, p < .01, within-group level), promotion-focused job crafting (r = .392, p < .01, within-group level) and individual creativity (r = .325, p < .01, within-group level). Furthermore, destructive conflict instigation attribution was positively related to negative emotions (r = .424, p < .01, within-group level) and prevention-focused job crafting (r = .500, p < .01, within-group level), however, it was negatively associated with individual creativity (r = -.131, p < .01, within-group level). Additionally, positive emotions were positively correlated with promotion-focused job crafting (r = .486, p < .01, within-group level) and individual creativity (r = .302, p < .01, within-group level). Similarly, negative emotions were positively correlated with prevention-focused job crafting (r = .500, p < .01, within-group level), and negatively correlated with individual creativity (r = –.191, p < .05, within-group level). Furthermore, promotion-focused job crafting was positively related to individual creativity (r = .502, p < .01, within-group level) while prevention-focused job crafting was negatively associated with individual creativity (r = –.307, p < .01, between level). Empowering

leadership was not significantly associated with Leader-instigated task conflict (r = -.049, ns, within-group level), constructive conflict instigation (r = .004, ns, within-group level) and destructive conflict instigation attribution (r = .011, ns, within-group level).

Finally, team emotional regulation not significantly related to constructive conflict instigation attribution (r = .080, ns, within-group level), positive emotions (r = .134, ns, within-group level), promotion-focused job crafting (r = .028, ns, within-group level), destructive conflict instigation attribution (r = -.004, ns, within-group level), negative emotions (r = .076, ns, within-group level) and prevention-focused job crafting (r = -.107, ns, within-group level). The results of within-group correlations support majority of hypotheses developed at individual level.

Overall, the results of bivariate correlations at between-group and within-group levels indicate that majority of the proposed interrelationships between variables under study are supported at their respective level of hypothesized association. However, it is interesting to note that some associations that are found significant at between-group level, are not significant at the within-group level such as leader-instigated task conflict is significantly associated with constructive and destructive attributions at between-level, while it is not significantly correlated with these attributions at the within-group level. This finding indicates that leader-instigated task conflict is a group-level phenomenon having its noticeable effects on attributions of employees.

Additionally, empowering leadership and team emotional regulation were also found to have their significant correlations with variables under study at the between-group level only. This further empirically validates the conceptualization of these variables at the group level. A number of previous studies indicate similar pattern whereby interrelationships among variables exist at one level of analysis while they do not show significant relationships at the other level of analysis (Petrou et al., 2019; Sun, Wang, Zhu, & Song, 2020; C.-J. Wang, 2022). Nonetheless, this pattern provides validation to multilevel research models showing that several phenomena may exist at one out of either group or individual level while they may not manifest at the other level.

Table 4.10: Multilevel Inter-Construct Correlations Between-Group Level

| | **LITC** | **EL** | **CCIA** | **DCIA** | **PE** | **NE** | **PRO** | **PRE** | **IC** | **TER** | **TC** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LITC** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **EL** | .420** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| **CCIA** | .427** | .478** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| **DCIA** | -.447** | -.635** | -.204** | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| **PE** | .493** | .394** | .724** | -.233** | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| **NE** | -.559** | -.485** | -.255** | .700** | -.291** | 1.00 | | | | | |
| **PRO** | .360** | .314** | .622** | -.156** | .614** | -.195** | 1.00 | | | | |
| **PRE** | -.386** | -.412** | -.170** | .625** | -.194** | .631** | -.130** | 1.00 | | | |
| **IC** | .408** | .600** | .559** | -.458** | .444** | -.437** | .374** | -.505** | 1.00 | | |
| **TER** | .498** | .531** | .293** | -.384** | .303** | -.400** | .394** | -.576** | .560** | 1.00 | |
| **TC** | .481** | .617** | .727** | -.465** | .627** | -.442** | .729 | -.434** | .665** | .608** | 1.00 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated team conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

Table 4.11: Multilevel Inter-Construct Correlations Within-Group Level

| | **LITC** | **EL** | **CCIA** | **DCIA** | **PE** | **NE** | **PRO** | **PRE** | **IC** | **TER** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LITC** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| **EL** | -.049 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| **CCIA** | .029 | .004 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| **DCIA** | -.116 | .011 | -.103* | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| **PE** | -.037 | -.009 | .397** | .004 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| **NE** | .048 | -.005 | .001 | .424** | -.002 | 1.00 | | | | |
| **PRO** | -.043 | .079 | .392** | -0.06 | .486** | .024 | 1.00 | | | |
| **PRE** | -.024 | -.109 | -.001 | .500** | .034 | .500** | -.156* | 1.00 | | |
| **IC** | .007 | .096 | .325** | -.131 | .302** | -.191* | .502** | -.307** | 1.00 | |
| **TER** | .003 | .020 | .080 | -.004 | .134 | .076 | -.028 | -.107 | .027 | 1.00 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

## 4.12 Hypothesis Testing Through Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling (MSEM)

The data for this dissertation were collected from two different levels of respondents including employees working in teams and their leaders. This indicates multilevel nature of data whereby individual responses were nested in teams, hence hypotheses were tested through multilevel structural equation modeling in MPlus. The variables reported by individual employees nested in teams include Leader-instigated task conflict, constructive conflict instigation attribution, destructive conflict instigation attribution, positive and negative emotions, promotion and prevention-focused job crafting, empowering leadership and team emotional regulation. However, leaders reported creativity of individual subordinates and the creativity of overall team. Since employees were nested in teams under their leaders, in such data which involves nesting in two levels, it is recommended to split the variance in outcomes into two levels, within-group and between-group. Considering this, variance in outcomes was accounted for at two levels constituting the within level (level 1) and between level (level 2).

In the current study, team members were nested in 107 clusters. Each cluster represents the number of employees reporting to team leader in a specific team. Average cluster size was 4.24. In order to conduct multilevel analysis, empirical justification for aggregation of responses from individual ratings to unit ratings is recommended. For this purpose, intra class correlation is calculated. ICC indicates the significance of nesting and the proportion of variance at group level. An ICC value greater than 0.70 is considered to be acceptable range that warrants the need to conduct multilevel analysis. The estimated ICCs for variables under study Leader-instigated task conflict, empowering leadership, team emotional regulation demonstrate the need to conduct analysis following multilevel approach.

Direct and indirect effects of Leader-instigated task conflict were examined on employee attributions and emotions at level 2. Conditional effects of empowering leadership and team emotional regulation were also examined at level 2. Further the effects on outcome team creativity was examined at level 2. However, the

direct and indirect effects among variables at individual level including employee attributions, emotions and behaviors and individual creativity were assessed at individual level considering the hypotheses proposed.

MPlus coding syntax was used to examine the configurations for direct, indirect, conditional, conditional indirect effects at both level 1 and 2. Multilevel structural equation modeling was used to test the hypothesis simultaneously. Direct and mediation effects were accounted for through statistical significance and confidence intervals. Further, moderation was assessed through significance of interaction term and effects on high and low values of moderator. Moderation graphs were plotted to examine the nature and direction of interaction effects. Finally, moderated mediation was tested through conditional indirect effects across high and low values of moderator along with index of moderated mediation. Confidence interval values for indirect and conditional indirect effects were assessed. For mediation, confidence intervals that do not have zero between them exhibit significant indirect effect.

## 4.13 Hypotheses Testing

The direct, conditional, indirect and conditional indirect effects proposed in the hypotheses were examined through on multilevel structural equation modeling and the results are presented in **Table 4.12**, **4.13, 4.14, 4.15** and **4.16** that give standardized effects along with significance, as well as results for bootstrapping with 95% confidence intervals.

***Hypothesis 1: Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with constructive conflict instigation attribution.***

A positive relation was found between Leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution ($\gamma = .441$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [LL = .263, UL = .618], between-group level) thereby hypothesis 1 which proposed a positive association between Leader-instigated conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution is accepted. **Table: 4.12** presents these results.

Table 4.12: Multilevel Hypothesis Testing for Direct Effects at Within and Between-Group Level

| **Relationship** | | **Between Level** | | | | **Within Level** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | $\gamma$ | **t** | **LLCI 95%** | **ULCI 95%** | $\gamma$ | **t** | **LLCI 95%** | **ULCI 95%** |
| LITC → | CCIA | .441*** | 4.85 | .263 | .618 | | | | |
| LITC → | DCIA | -.462*** | -4.83 | -.65 | -.275 | | | | |
| CCIA → | IC | | | | | .168* | 2.14 | .014 | .297 |
| CCIA → | TC | .383*** | 3.38 | .162 | .605 | | | | |
| DCIA → | IC | | | | | .001 | .002 | -.099 | .083 |
| DCIA → | TC | -.204* | -1.99 | -.382 | -.027 | | | | |
| LITC → | PE | .229* | 2.07 | .013 | .446 | | | | |
| LITC → | NE | -.325*** | -3.54 | -.504 | -.145 | | | | |
| CCIA → | PE | | | | | .399*** | 4.14 | .210 | .587 |
| DCIA → | NE | | | | | .435*** | 4.86 | .260 | .610 |
| CCIA → | Pro JC | | | | | .224** | 2.83 | .069 | .379 |
| DCIA → | Pre JC | | | | | .351*** | 4.38 | .194 | .508 |
| Pro JC → | IC | | | | | .407*** | 5.70 | .267 | .546 |
| Pro JC → | TC | .435** | 3.04 | .154 | .715 | | | | |
| Pre JC → | IC | | | | | -.254** | -3.33 | -.403 | -.105 |
| Pre JC → | TC | -.199* | -1.88 | -.490 | -.122 | | | | |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

***Hypothesis 2: Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with destructive conflict instigation attribution.***

A negative relationship was found between Leader-instigated task conflict and destructive conflict instigation attribution ($\gamma$ = -.462, p < .001, 95% CI [LL = -.650, UL = -.275], between-group level). **Table: 4.12** presents these results. The hypothesis 2 predicted a significant positive relationship. The result shows significant effect however the negative direction between destructive conflict instigation attribution is contrary to the hypothesis, hence the hypothesis 2 is not supported.

***Hypothesis 3: Empowering leadership moderates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is stronger when empowering leadership is high than when it is low.***

The conditional effect was estimated through interaction effect of empowering leadership and Leader-instigated task conflict. As shown in **Table: 4.13**, a positive and significant interaction effect was found on constructive conflict instigation attribution ($\gamma$ = .753, p < .001, 95% CI [LL = .585, UL = .894], between-group level). Further, to examine the direction of interaction effect, moderation graph was drawn by obtaining high and low values of empowering leadership at -1 and +1 SD. As shown in **Figure 4.2**, it was found that the positive relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution is stronger when empowering leadership is high than low. Hence the hypothesis 3 which proposed a stronger relationship between Leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution when empowering leadership is high is accepted.

***Hypothesis 4: Empowering leadership moderates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and destructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is weaker when empowering leadership is high than when it is low.***

A negative interaction effect was found on destructive conflict instigation attribution ($\gamma$ = -.895, p < .001, 95% CI [LL = -1.05, UL = -.760], between-group level), as presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Multilevel Hypotheses Testing For Conditional Effects Between-Group Level

| | | **DV: CCIA** | | | | **DV: DCIA** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Predictor** | $\gamma$ | **t** | **LLCI 95%** | **ULCI 95%** | $\gamma$ | **t** | **LLCI 95%** | **ULCI 95%** |
| EL x LITC | .753*** | 8.71 | 0.585 | 0.894 | -.895*** | -11.0 | -1.050 | -0.760 |
| Low EL | -1.10*** | -5.11 | -1.530 | -0.750 | 1.45*** | 8.10 | 1.100 | 1.750 |
| Medium EL | -0.038 | -0.37 | -0.239 | 0.130 | 0.108 | 0.84 | -0.140 | 0.319 |
| High EL | 1.031*** | 4.30 | 0.561 | 1.420 | -1.24*** | -4.59 | -1.760 | -0.790 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution.*

Further, to examine the direction of interaction effect, moderation graph was drawn by obtaining high and low values of empowering leadership at -1 and +1 SD. As shown in **Figure 4.3**, it was found that the negative relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution is stronger when empowering leadership is high than low. Although the relation is significant, its direction is contrary to hypothesis 4 which proposed a weaker relationship between Leader-instigated task conflict and destructive conflict instigation attribution when empowering leadership is high, hence H4 is not accepted.

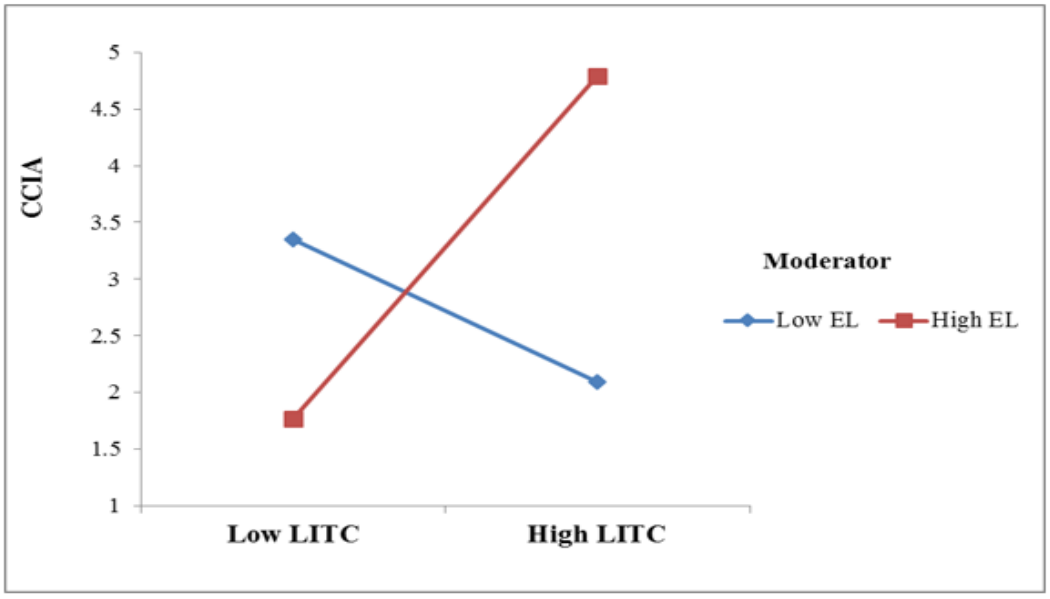


FIGURE 4.2: Interaction of LITC and EL on CCIA

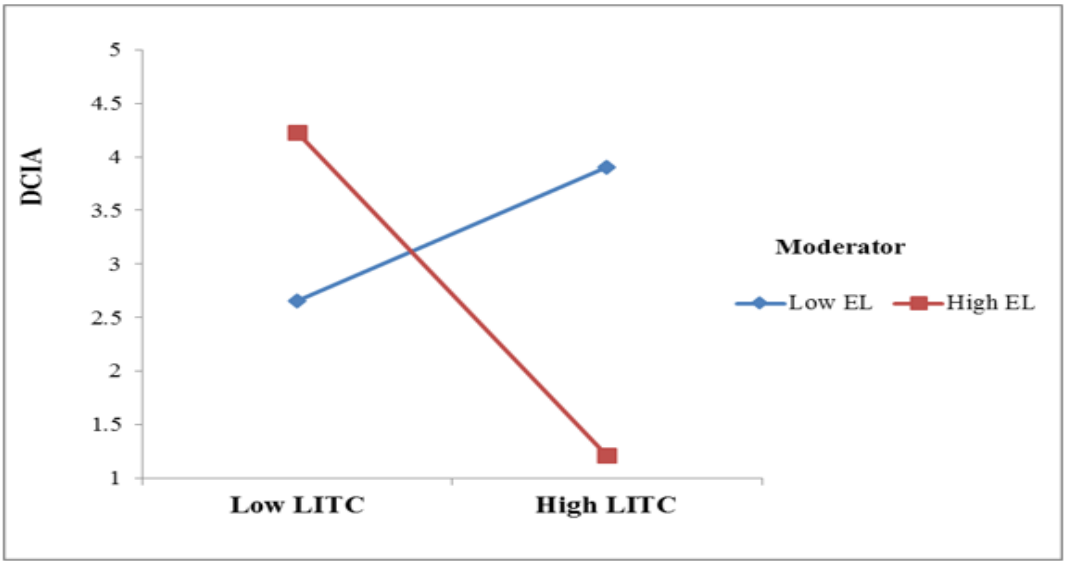


FIGURE 4.3: Interaction of LITC and EL on DCIA

***Hypothesis 5: Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.***

Results show that constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively associated with both individual creativity ($\gamma$ = .168, p < .05, within-group level, 95% CI [LL =.014, UL = .297]) and team creativity ($\gamma$ = .383, p < .001, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = .162, UL = .605]), see table 4.12 Therefore hypothesis 5 that anticipated positive association of constructive conflict instigation attribution with individual creativity and team creativity is supported.

***Hypothesis 6: Destructive conflict instigation attribution is negatively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.***

Findings reveal that there was no significant relationship between destructive conflict instigation attribution and individual creativity ($\gamma$ = .001, ns, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.099, UL = .083]). However, at team level, destructive conflict instigation attribution was found to be negatively related to team creativity ($\gamma$ = -.204, p < .05, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.382, UL = -.027]). Hence, hypothesis 6(a) is not supported while 6(b) is supported. These results are presented in **Table: 4.12**.

***Hypothesis 7: Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to positive active emotions.***

Results presented in **Table 4.12** show that Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with positive active emotions ($\gamma$ = .229, p < .05, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = .013, UL = .446]) thereby supporting hypothesis 7 which proposed a positive relationship between Leader-instigated task conflict and positive active emotions.

***Hypothesis 8: Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to negative active emotions.***

Results summarized in **Table 4.12** show that Leader instigated task conflict is negatively associated with negative active emotions ($\gamma$ = -.325, p < .001, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.504, UL = -.145]). This finding is contrary to hypothesis which proposed a positive relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and

negative active emotions. Hence, hypothesis 8 is not supported.

***Hypothesis 9: Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to positive active emotions.***

A positive relation was found between constructive conflict instigation attribution and positive active emotions ($\gamma$ = .399, p < .001, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .210, UL = .587]) as shown in **table 4.12**. Hence, hypothesis 9 which proposed a positive association between conflict instigation attribution and positive active emotions is supported.

***Hypothesis 10: Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to negative active emotions.***

It was found that destructive conflict instigation attribution was positive associated with negative active emotions ($\gamma$ = .435, p < .001, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .260, UL = .610]) as presented in **table 4.12**. Hence, hypothesis 10 is accepted. Hence, hypothesis 10 is accepted.

***Hypothesis 11: Constructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and positive active emotions.***

As shown in **table 4.14**, the indirect effect of Leader-instigated task conflict on positive active emotions via constructive conflict instigation attribution was found to be significant ($\gamma$ = .274, p < .001, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = .127, UL = .422]). Therefore hypothesis 11 is supported.

***Hypothesis 12: Destructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and negative active emotions.***

Results shown in **table 4.14** indicate that Leader-instigated task conflict has a significant indirect effect on negative active emotions through the mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution ($\gamma$ = -.254, p < .001, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.392, UL = -.116]) thereby accepting hypothesis 12.

TABLE 4.14: Multilevel Hypotheses Testing For Indirect Effects Within and Between-Group Levels

| **Relationship** | | | **Between Level** | | | | **Within Level** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | **95% CI** | | | | **95% CI** | |
| | | | $\gamma$ | **t** | LLCI | ULCI | $\gamma$ | **t** | LLCI | ULCI |
| LITC → | CCIA→ | PE | .274*** | 3.64 | 0.127 | 0.422 | | | | |
| LITC → | DCIA→ | NE | -.254*** | -3.60 | -0.392 | -0.116 | | | | |
| CCIA → | PE→ | Pro JC | | | | | .162** | 2.57 | 0.039 | 0.285 |
| DCIA → | NE→ | Pre JC | | | | | .153*** | 3.25 | 0.061 | 0.244 |
| CCIA→ | Pro JC→ | IC | | | | | .091** | 2.25 | 0.041 | 0.272 |
| CCIA → | Pro JC→ | TC | .163** | 2.52 | 0.001 | 0.324 | | | | |
| DCIA → | Pre JC→ | IC | | | | | -.089 | -1.27 | -0.187 | 0.054 |
| DCIA → | Pre JC → | TC | -.070* | -1.77 | -0.227 | -0.029 | | | | |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, EL = Empowering Leadership, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

***Hypothesis 13: Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to promotion-focused job crafting.***

As presented in **table 4.12**, constructive conflict instigation attribution was found to have positive relation with promotion-focused job crafting ($\gamma = .224$, $p < .01$, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .069, UL = .379]) which leads to support the hypothesis 13.

***Hypothesis 14: Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to prevention-focused job crafting.***

Destructive conflict instigation attribution was found to be positively associated with prevention-focused job crafting ($\gamma = .351$, $p < .001$, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .194, UL = .508]), as depicted in **table 4.12**. Hence, hypothesis 14 is accepted.

***Hypothesis 15: Positive emotions mediate the relation between constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting.***

The indirect effect of constructive conflict instigation attribution on promotion-focused job crafting via the mediation of positive emotions was found to be significant ($\gamma = .162$, $p < .01$, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .039, UL = .285]), as shown in **table 4.14** which supports hypothesis 15. Which proposed the mediating role of positive emotion.

***Hypothesis 16: Negative emotions mediate the relation between destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting.***

It was found that destructive conflict instigation attribution has a significant indirect effect on prevention-focused job crafting via the mediation of negative emotions ($\gamma = .153$, $p < .001$, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .061, UL = .244]), as presented in **table 4.14**, thereby providing support for hypothesis 16. Which proposed mediating role of negative emotion.

***Hypothesis 17: Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting via positive active emotions such that the mediated relationship is stronger when team emotional regulation is high than low.***

The conditional indirect effect of team emotional regulation in the relationship of constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting via positive active emotions was examined through the interaction term of team emotional regulation and constructive conflict instigation attribution. This effect was found to be non-significant ($\gamma$ = .144, p = *ns*, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.122, UL = .808]), see **table 4.15**. The moderated mediation effect was further examined at high and low values of moderator team emotional regulation at -1 and +1 SD. No significant effects were observed.

***Hypothesis 18: Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting via negative active emotions such that the mediated relationship is weaker when team emotional regulation is high than low.***

No significant conditional indirect effect of team emotional regulation in the relationship of destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting via negative active emotions was found ($\gamma$ = -3.79, p = *ns*, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.398, UL = 002]), see **table 4.15**. Further, the index of moderated mediation was also non-significant. Therefore the hypothesis 18 is not accepted.

***Hypothesis 19: Promotion-focused job crafting is positively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.***

Results presented in **table 4.12** show positive and significant associations of promotion-focused job crafting with both individual creativity ($\gamma$ = .407, p < .01, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .267, UL = .546]) and team creativity ($\gamma$ = .435, p < .001, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = .154, UL = .715]) which leads to support hypothesis 19.

Table 4.15: Multilevel Hypotheses Testing For Conditional Indirect Effects Between Level

| Predictor | PRO JC | | | | PRE JC | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 95% CI | | | | 95% CI | |
| | $\gamma$ | t | LLCI | ULCI | $\gamma$ | t | LLCI | ULCI |
| ***CCIA via PE*** | | | | | | | | |
| IMM | 0.064 | 0.252 | -0.153 | 0.473 | | | | |
| TER x CCIA | 0.144 | 0.791 | -0.122 | 0.808 | | | | |
| Low TER | 0.096 | 0.241 | -0.691 | 0.757 | | | | |
| Medium TER | 0.160 | 1.001 | -0.153 | 0.423 | | | | |
| High TER | 0.224 | 1.390 | -0.035 | 0.483 | | | | |
| ***DCIA via NE*** | | | | | | | | |
| IMM | | | | | 0.107 | 0.358 | -0.092 | 0.366 |
| TER x DCIA | | | | | -3.790 | -0.281 | -0.398 | 0.002 |
| Low TER | | | | | -6.001 | -1.030 | -9.230 | 0.002 |
| Medium TER | | | | | -2.820 | -1.220 | -7.892 | 1.210 |
| High TER | | | | | -0.644 | -0.292 | -0.992 | 0.431 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, Pro JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Pre JC = Prevention focused job crafting, TER = Team Emotion Regulation.*

***Hypothesis 20: Prevention-focused job crafting is negatively associated with (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity.***

Prevention-focused job crafting was found to be negatively associated with both individual creativity ($\gamma$ = -.254, p < .01, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.403, UL = -.105]) and team creativity ($\gamma$ = -.199, p < .05, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.490, UL = -.122]), as shown in **table 4.12**, thereby accepting hypothesis 20.

***Hypothesis 21: Constructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via promotion-focused job crafting.***

The indirect effect of constructive conflict instigation attribution on individual creativity through the mediation of promotion-focused job crafting was found to be significant ($\gamma$ = .091, p < .01, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = .041, UL = .272]). Further, it was found that promotion-focused job crafting mediates between constructive conflict instigation attribution and team creativity having a significant indirect effect ($\gamma$ = .163, p < .01, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = .001, UL = .324]). These results are presented in **table 4.14**. Hence the hypothesis 21 is accepted.

***Hypothesis 22: Destructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via prevention-focused job crafting.***

Consistent with the hypothesis that proposed significant indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution on individual creativity and team creativity, these indirect effects were found to be non-significant for individual creativity ($\gamma$ = -.089, ns , within-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.187, UL =.054]) therefore hypothesis 22(a) is not supported, while it was significant for team creativity ($\gamma$ = -.070, p < .05, within-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.227, UL = -.029]). These results are presented in **table 4.14**. Therefore the hypothesis 22(b) is accepted.

***Hypothesis 23:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via the serial mediation of constructive*

*conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion-focused job crafting.*

The indirect effect of Leader-instigated task conflict on creativity through the sequential mediation of constructive conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion-focused job crafting found non-significant for individual creativity ($\gamma$ = .002, *ns*, 95% CI [LL = -.118, UL = .419]) and significant for team creativity ($\gamma$ = .041, p < .05, 95% CI [LL = .019, UL = .203]), see **table 4.16**. Hence hypothesis 23(a) is not accepted while hypothesis 23(b) is accepted.

***Hypothesis 24:*** *Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on (a) individual creativity and (b) team creativity via the serial mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative active emotions and prevention-focused job crafting.*

The indirect effect of Leader-instigated task conflict on creativity through the sequential mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative active emotions and prevention-focused job crafting was found to be non-significant for both individual creativity ($\gamma$ = -.031, *ns*, 95% CI [LL = -.121, UL = .009]) as well as for team creativity ($\gamma$ = -.018, *ns*, between-group level, 95% CI [LL = -.157, UL = .014]). These results are presented in **table 4.16**. Hence the therefore hypothesis 22(a) and hypothesis 22(b) are not supported.

Table 4.16: Hypotheses Testing for Sequential Mediation Effects

| **Relationship** | **Between Level** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **95% CI** | |
| | $\gamma$ | **t** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
| LITC → CCIA → PE → Pro JC → IC | 0.002 | 0.14 | -0.118 | 0.419 |
| LITC → CCIA → PE → Pro JC → TC | 0.041* | 1.90 | 0.019 | 0.203 |
| LITC → DCIA → NE → Pre JC → IC | 0.031 | 1.35 | -0.121 | 0.009 |
| LITC → DCIA → NE → Pre JC → TC | 0.018 | -1.00 | -0.157 | 0.014 |

*Note. N (subordinates) = 510, N (leaders) = 107, ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, * p<0.05, LITC = Leader-instigated task conflict, CCIA = Constructive conflict instigation attribution, DCIA = Destructive conflict instigation attribution, PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, Promotion JC = Promotion focused job crafting, Prevention JC = Prevention focused job crafting, IC = Individual Creativity, TC = Team Creativity.*

Table 4.17: Summary of Direct, Indirect and Total Effects at Within and Between-Group Levels

| **Relationship** | **Between Level** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Direct Effect** | | **Specific Indirect Effect** | | **Total Indirect Effect** | | **Total Effect** | |
| | $\gamma$ | **t** | $\gamma$ | **t** | $\gamma$ | **t** | | **t** |
| LITC→CCIA→PE | .229* | 2.07 | .274*** | 3.64 | | | .504*** | 5.22 |
| LITC→DCIA→NE | -.325*** | -3.54 | -.254*** | -3.6 | | | -.579*** | -7.3 |
| CCIA→PRO JC→TC | .383*** | 3.38 | .163** | 2.57 | .255** | 2.57 | .639*** | 6.71 |
| DCIA→PRE JC→IC | -.204* | -1.99 | -.070* | -1.77 | -0.105 | -1.13 | -.309* | -2.39 |
| **Relationship** | **Within Level** | | | | | | | |
| | **Direct Effect** | | **Specific Indirect Effect** | | **Total Indirect Effect** | | **Total Effect** | |
| | $\gamma$ | **t** | $\gamma$ | **t** | $\gamma$ | **t** | $\gamma$ | t |
| CCIA→PE→PRO JC | .224** | 2.83 | .162** | 2.57 | | | .385*** | 3.73 |
| DCIA→NE→PRE JC | .351*** | 4.38 | .153*** | 3.25 | | | .504 *** | 5.38 |
| CCIA→PRO JC→IC | .168* | 2.14 | .091** | 2.25 | .157** | 2.65 | .325*** | 3.48 |
| DCIA→PRE JC→IC | -0.001 | -0.002 | -0.089 | -1.01 | -0.028 | -.0.50 | -0.029 | -0.64 |

## 4.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented details for analysis conducted for empirical examination of data collected from 510 employees nested in 107 groups, for appropriateness for multivariate analysis. For this purpose, psychometric properties of data were assessed. Further, model fitness was examined through multilevel confirmatory analysis along with reliability and validity tests. Lastly, proposed hypotheses of the study were tested through multilevel structural equation modeling.

## 4.15 Results Summary

Table 4.18: Results Summary

| **Hypothesis** | **Statement** | **Result** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with constructive conflict instigation attribution | Supported |
| 2 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively associated with destructive conflict instigation attribution | Not Supported |
| 3 | Empowering leadership moderates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is stronger when empowering leadership is high than when it is low. | Supported |
| 4 | Empowering leadership moderates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and destructive conflict instigation attribution such that the relationship is weaker when empowering leadership is high than when it is low. | Not Supported |
| 5a | Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively associated with individual creativity. | Supported |
| 5b | Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively associated with team creativity. | Supported |
| 6a | Destructive conflict instigation attribution is negatively associated with individual creativity. | Not Supported |

Continued Table 4.16: Results Summary

| **Hypothesis** | **Statement** | **Result** |
|---|---|---|
| 6b | Destructive conflict instigation attribution is negatively associated with team creativity. | Supported |
| 7 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to positive active emotions. | Supported |
| 8 | Leader-instigated task conflict is positively related to negative active emotions. | Not Supported |
| 9 | Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to positive active emotions. | Supported |
| 10 | Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to negative active emotions. | Supported |
| 11 | Constructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and positive active emotions. | Supported |
| 12 | Destructive conflict instigation attribution mediates the relation between Leader-instigated task conflict and negative active emotions. | Supported |
| 13 | Constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to promotion-focused job crafting. | Supported |
| 14 | Destructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to prevention-focused job crafting. | Supported |
| 15 | Positive emotions mediate the relation between constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting. | Supported |
| 16 | Negative emotions mediate the relation between destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting. | Supported |
| 17 | Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting via positive active emotions such that the mediated relationship is stronger when team emotional regulation is high than low. | Not Supported |
| 18 | Team emotional regulation moderates the indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention-focused job crafting via negative active emotions such that the mediated relationship is weaker when team emotional regulation is high than low. | Not Supported |

Continued Table 4.16: Results Summary

| **Hypothesis** | **Statement** | **Result** |
|---|---|---|
| 19a | Promotion-focused job crafting is positively associated with individual creativity. | Supported |
| 19b | Promotion-focused job crafting is positively associated with team creativity. | Supported |
| 20a | Prevention-focused job crafting is negatively associated with team creativity. | Supported |
| 20b | Prevention-focused job crafting is negatively associated with individual creativity. | Supported |
| 21a | Constructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on individual creativity via promotion-focused job crafting | Supported |
| 21b | Constructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on team creativity via promotion-focused job crafting | Supported |
| 22a | Destructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on individual creativity via prevention-focused job crafting | Not Supported |
| 22b | Destructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on team creativity via prevention-focused job crafting | Supported |
| 23a | Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on individual creativity via the serial mediation of constructive conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion-focused job crafting. | Not Supported |
| 23b | Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on team creativity via the serial mediation of constructive conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion-focused job crafting. | Supported |
| 24a | Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on individual creativity via the serial mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative active emotions and prevention-focused job crafting. | Not Supported |
| 24b | Leader-instigated task conflict has indirect effect on team creativity via the serial mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative active emotions and prevention-focused job crafting. | Not Supported |

# Chapter 5

# Discussion and Conclusion

## 5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the results of current study by providing explanation of findings for the research questions in the light of theory and practice and findings from past literature. The insights for theoretical and practical implications of the study are also discussed. Further, limitations and constraints in the scope of current study and future recommendations for advancing knowledge in the relevant area are also explained.

## 5.2 General Discussion

Several researchers have highlighted that conflict at work is an ubiquitous phenomenon which is anticipated to continue in the future. Further, the consequences of task conflict at work have been found to have mixed findings owing to its propensity to lead to both positive and negative outcomes (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Several researchers have also highlighted the positive role of task conflict in promoting creative performance of individuals and teams at work, hence providing a way forward to leaders to facilitate and promote task conflict where creative performance is desired from individuals and teams (De Clercq & Pereira, 2021). However, in order to promote positive outcomes of task conflict, the role of leaders is crucial. The current study attempted to propose and empirically examine a

newly identified unique role of leaders in conflict referred as leader-instigated task conflict at group level whereby leaders become a source of inciting task related disagreements among team members. This study expounded the multiple aspects of task conflict instigated by leader as a multilevel phenomenon that can provide explanation of how task conflict at work can have mixed findings for creative performance at both individual and group levels.

Overall, a good support was found for majority of proposed hypotheses. The findings suggest that task conflict instigation by leaders results in group members' relevant attributions which further shape the resultant positive or negative emotional states. These emotional states further lead to the consequential behaviors of employees. This finding is supported by attribution theory which proposes that behavioural reactions of individuals are a result of their attributions observing a particular behaviour or event.

The overall findings of current study are further in alignment with job demands and resources theory which posits that job demands either taken as challenge or hindrance demands result in positive or negative states such as stress or motivation which facilitative either promotive behaviors termed as job crafting or self-undermining behaviors respectively (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017, 2018). The findings of current study receive support from this theory in explaining the proposed research model by providing empirical evidence that leader-instigated task conflict taken as a job demand results in respective emotional states which thereby are found to shape behavioural responses of individuals in the form of promotion or prevention focused job crafting. As suggested by job demands-resources theory, these job crafting behaviors are further found to shape job performance taken as creativity in the current study. Further, as suggested by job demands-resources theory, the results of current study found support for the hypotheses predicting conditional role of empowering leadership as a resource to deal with leader-instigated task conflict as a job demand.

The current study findings generally indicate that leaders may play a crucial role in enhancing creative performance of individuals and groups in a way that they can incite task related disagreements in order to promote healthy and constructive debates among group members. Further, careful consideration needs to be

taken into account by leaders to maintain positive route of consequences of leader-instigated task conflict with the help of empowering leader behaviors. Hence, it is to be noted that task conflict at work is not a disruptive phenomenon, rather its can be a source of creativity if it is initiated by leaders exhibiting empowering behaviors to facilitate followers to develop constructive attributions of this phenomenon. The current study may provide clarity to our existing knowledge by discussing role of leaders in conflict from a new perspective and understanding its route that may lead to constructive or destructive consequences in addition to the contingency factors.

Keeping in view the complex nature of task conflict offering mixed findings for its consequences by previous studies (De Wit et al., 2012; Greer et al., 2011), the findings of current dissertation adds to our understanding regarding attributions of individuals observing conflict instigation behaviors of leaders that may facilitate the emergence of constructive or destructive route of its outcomes. These findings enable the understanding of acknowledging the role of leaders in promoting task conflict and in promoting its positive outcomes through the exhibition of empowering leader behaviors. Current study findings also present an understanding that attributions instead of actual events or observed behaviors are the main cause of resultant emotional states, behaviors and performance. Hence leaders must focus on fostering positive attributions among their team members regarding their initiation of team based task conflict to facilitate positive consequences in terms of creative performance of individuals and groups. The overall findings of current study may generate new directions for advancing research in the domain of workplace conflict, leadership, attributions, employee behaviors and creativity.

## 5.3 Discussion on Research Model

### 5.3.1 Research Question 1

The first research question aimed to examine the relationship of leader-instigated task conflict and resultant attributions of employees. Moreover, this research question examined the conditional effects of leader-instigated task conflict in the

association between leader-instigated task conflict and employee attributions. This research question lead to development of four hypothesis. Research question 1 was split intro two sub-queries including research question 1.1 and 1.2.

#### 5.3.1.1 Research Question 1.1

Research question **1.1** stated: Is leader-instigated task conflict related to leader-instigated task conflict attributions?

Under this research question, two hypotheses were formulated. The first and second hypothesis anticipated that leader-instigated task conflict is positive related to both constructive and destructive conflict instigation attribution. Findings of the current study indicate that the first hypothesis was supported while the second hypothesis was not supported. Findings provide evidence that respondents agreed that their leaders engage in instigating task conflict and employees respond to these behaviours in the form of resultant attributions. Leader instigated conflict was found to be positively associated with constructive conflict instigation attribution, however, contrary to the hypothesis, findings reveal a negative association of leader-instigated task conflict with destructive conflict instigation attribution. These findings are consistent with attributions literature highlighting that employees develop attributions regarding behaviors of leaders (Chang et al., 2015; Follmer et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2012; Qin et al., 2020; J. Sun et al., 2019).

More specifically, task conflict instigated by leader results in positive intentional attributions of followers. This proves that leaders task conflict instigation behaviors constitute positive beliefs of employees whereby they believe that leaders engage in such behaviors in order to promote positive outcomes and overall improvement in performance as a result of debates and discussions related to task at hand. Additionally, it is found that leader-instigated task conflict does not develop destructive attributions of employees suggesting that employees do not develop a belief that leaders engage in inciting task conflict in order to let them down or retaliate. These findings advocate that leader-instigated task conflict is a positive phenomenon whereby when leaders are themselves involved in generating task related debates among team members, it is proven to have positive effects on

the beliefs employees hold regarding the conflict and its instigation behaviour by the leader.

Considering task conflict as a double edged sword having both positive and negative outcomes (Puck & Pregernig, 2014), the current study findings suggest that it is more likely to lead to positive outcomes if leaders initiate this phenomenon in the work group, since it is generated, facilitated, supervised, promoted and appreciated by the leader. Hence, followers also develop more positive beliefs about such behaviour of leader initiated by the leader. Since, the respondents of current study constituted work teams from marketing, advertising, and other creative teams from different organizations across Pakistan, it provides implications for these functions across organizations. Marketing, advertising, creative content development functions usually require input of ideas from all members of the team, which can be done by engaging in task related conflict. Finding of current study suggest that leaders should incite task related debates and disagreements among team members with constructive motives which will facilitate constructive attributions of employees for engaging in task related debates.

#### 5.3.1.2 Research Question 1.2

Research question **1.2** was: Does empowering leadership moderate the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and attributions?

Under this research question, two hypotheses were developed. The third and fourth hypothesis postulated the conditional role of empowering leadership in the association of leader-instigated task conflict with both constructive and destructive conflict instigation attributions. It was proposed that high levels of empowering leadership strengthen the relation between leader-instigated task conflict and constructive conflict instigation attribution. Findings of the current study support this hypothesis and it was found that empowering leader behaviors facilitate the development of constructive attributions of employees. This finding is consistent with previous literature suggesting that empowering leaders facilitate and influence positive perceptions, beliefs and psychological states in team members through their behaviors that develop sense of mutual trust, collaboration, open

communication and participation (Raub & Robert, 2010; Sharma & Kirkman, 2015).

However, the fourth hypothesis is not supported by findings. This hypothesis predicted that empowering leadership moderates the relation between leader-instigated task conflict with destructive conflict instigation attributions such that this relation is weaker under high levels of empowering leadership and stronger when empowering leadership is low. Findings of the current study reveal that high levels of empowering leadership strengthen the negative association between leader-instigated task conflict and destructive conflict instigation attribution. These findings suggest that leaders who look forward to their group members to develop beliefs that they incite task related disagreements with constructive intentions such as for facilitating healthy discussions and debates among group members regarding task as hand must display empowering behaviors. These empowering leader behaviors encourage and support group members to participate in discussions openly and to share their viewpoints regarding task at hand. Further, empowering leader behaviors directed towards their teams develop a sense of autonomy, healthy communication, mutual trust and commitment (Arnold et al., 2000) which is a driving force towards shaping constructive beliefs of employees towards leader behaviors and mitigating the development of destructive beliefs in the form of destructive conflict instigation attributions.

It is to be noted further that the conditional effects of empowering leadership are found to facilitate constructive attributions and diminish destructive attributions under only high levels of empowering leader behaviors. It is further established through findings that these positive results are not maintained under low levels of empowering leadership rather these results become opposite under low levels of empowering leadership. In other words, findings reveal that when leaders are not encouraging and supportive, their task conflict instigation results in the development of destructive attributions of employees with beliefs that leaders incite task conflict for unproductive and unhealthy reasons. It is therefore suggested that the right blend of leader behaviors facilitates the development of positive beliefs of employees. In short, leaders needs to follow a careful consideration while using task

conflict as a tool to yield its positive effects by displaying empowering behaviors towards the team.

### 5.3.2 Research Question 2

This research question was: What are the multilevel effects of leader-instigated task conflict attribution on individual level creativity and team creativity?

The second research question aimed at testing the associations of employee attributions of leader-instigated task conflict and creativity at both individual and team levels. The findings reveal that hypothesis five which proposed that constructive conflict instigation attribution is positively related to both individual and team creativity. Empirical support was found for both of these associations suggesting that constructive attributions of employees regarding task conflict instigation of leaders promote creative behaviors of individuals and teams.

It was further postulated in sixth hypothesis of the study that destructive conflict instigation attribution is negatively related to both individual and team creativity. Contrary to the anticipated significant negative relation, it was found that destructive conflict instigation attribution was not significantly related to individual creativity. Conversely, team creativity was found to be positively predicted by destructive conflict instigation attribution as hypothesized.

These findings are consistent with directions from attribution theory by highlighting employee attributions for leaders' conflict instigation behaviours and their consequences (Harvey et al., 2014). Owing to the explanation from attribution theory, the current study contended that the behavioural response of employees to leader task conflict instigation behaviour is not a sole function of leader's conflict instigation, rather it would be a function of employees' causal ascriptions that they assign to their leader's conflict instigation behaviour in the form of constructive or destructive attributions. The findings of current dissertation reveal that employee attributions have significant effects on study outcomes individual and team creativity which are hence supported by attribution theory. These findings are consistent with the previous literature suggesting that attributions of employees regarding leaders behaviors have an influential role in shaping their behaviors

and performance (Eberly, Holley, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2017; Martinko, Harvey, & Douglas, 2007).

In other words, it is found that employee beliefs about leaders instigating task conflict matter a great deal towards shaping the outcomes of leader-instigated task conflict. These beliefs, in the shape of constructive or destructive conflict instigation attributions can either lead to enhanced or diminished creativity. These creativity based outcomes are subject to the development of individual attributions of leader conflict instigation. This finding provides clarity in understanding the mixed effects of task conflict among teams by suggesting that actually these are the attributions of individuals that shape the positive or negative outcomes of task conflict instead of the conflict itself. Therefore leaders who aim to promote enhanced creative problem solving and generation of new and improved ideas within their team must focus on developing constructive attributions of their team members.

Further, it is to be noted that destructive conflict instigation attribution was not found to be significantly related to individual creativity, however, it was found to be negatively related with team creativity. This finding reveals that destructive conflict instigation attribution has more disparaging effects at a collective level that is team. Therefore, the current study suggests that considering the non-significant effects of destructive attributions must not be ignored as they have their effects at a broader level, thereby causing damaging effects for the overall team. Hence, individuals perceiving that leader instigates task conflict in order to cause harm or retaliate respond to it at group level by not engaging in collaborative discussion of ideas and generation of creative output. This finding suggest that destructive conflict instigation attribution has a detrimental effects on creative output of the team as a whole. Considering the beliefs of employees regarding leader behaviour to be harmful, an atmosphere of mistrust, lack of openness and communication in addition to reduced collaboration may develop that hinder the synergistic effects for creative output at team level. This further results in breaking down of collaborative dynamics that are crucial for development of an environment whereby team members are able to generate and present novel ideas as a collective initiative.

For the finding that destructive conflict instigation attribution does not lead to significant effect on individual creativity, it is reasoned that considering the jobs, it is expected from employees to perform as per the established standards of performance and leader's expectations of performance. Employees that do not perform according to performance standards may receive negative feedback for their performance or other negative results that may hamper their job security, promotion or comparative performance. Hence, at an individual level, employees may continue to present their novel ideas in order to avoid negative performance evaluation or to secure their job. However, the quality and duration of creative ideas may not be guaranteed since in the longer run individuals might not be able to generate novel ideas as a result of not actively participating in task related discussions and debates owing to their beliefs of lack of support and harmful intentions of the leader.

It is intriguing that findings of the current study suggest that the hypothesized phenomenon of disparaging effects of destructive conflict instigation attribution are more pronounced at team level than the individual level. It is reasoned that since team creativity is measured by the collective and collaborative performance of all team members, whereby the individual contribution of each members is not accounted for and identifiable, team members do not fear the identification of their backed off efforts towards the accomplishment of team based creative goals and its probable harmful effects for them, hence they feel more confident in reserving their input that could lead to collective creative solutions. This finding suggests a careful consideration at the part of leaders to focus on development of constructive attributions of employees and mitigate the development of destructive conflict instigation attributions in order to promote creativity at both individual and team levels.

### 5.3.3 Research Question 3

Six hypotheses were developed and tested under third research question. Further, two sub-queries were postulated within research question 3.

#### 5.3.3.1 Research Question 3.1

This research question was: Are leader-instigated task conflict and employee attributions related to active emotions?

Under research question 3.1, the seventh and eighth hypotheses proposed positive relationship of leader-instigated task conflict with positive and negative emotions. According to the findings, leader-instigated task conflict was associated positively with positive emotions as proposed, however, it was found to be negatively related to negative emotions which is contrary to the proposed hypothesis.

The positive relation of leader-instigated task conflict with positive emotions is found to be in alignment with the proposed hypothesis suggesting that task conflict incited by leader can stimulate, engage and energize the team members. This finding suggests that leader-instigated task conflict is a positive phenomenon since leaders actively engage in this initiative sparked by them in order to engage their team members in discussions and debates regarding work.

On the other hand, findings also reveal contradictory results to the hypothesis anticipating a positive relation between leader-instigated task conflict and negative emotions. This suggests that leader-instigated task conflict did not evoke negative emotions like stress, anger or frustration among team members in the current study's respondents. The explanation of this finding may be reasoned that as leaders become the source of initiation of task related debates and disagreements among team members, they find it interesting and intriguing instead of frustrating considering that leader is also a part of this activity. Further, such task conflict initiation behaviors might be perceived by employees to be encouraging and inviting participation and involvement from them, thereby it would not result in negative emotions and would instead result in activation of positive emotions. These findings are supported by past studies which provide evidence that task conflict at work can generate positive emotions in employees characterized by feeling energized, interested and motivated (Todorova et al., 2014).

As anticipated in hypotheses 9 and 10, positive relationships of constructive and destructive conflict instigation attributions were found with positive and negative

emotions respectively. Specifically, findings of the current study indicate that constructive attributions of employees as a result of task conflict instigated by leader make them believe that leaders initiated task conflict for constructive motives such as drive for fostering generation of creative ideas, improved work behaviors or achievement of task related goals, they get more inclined towards the experience of positive emotional states such as interest, excitement and positive energy. This finding is consistent with past studies that emphasize the pivotal role that positive or constructive attributions related to conflict play in activating positive emotional states of individuals (Betancourt & Blair, 1992; Weiner, 1985). On the other hand, in line with past literature suggesting that negative attributions trigger negative emotional states, (Arevshatian et al., 2016), destructive attributions underlie the beliefs of individuals that conflict instigated by their leader is backed by harmful and undermining tactics, and hence, it was found to trigger the experience of negative emotional states like stress and frustration.

#### 5.3.3.2 Research Question 3.2

This research question was: Is leader-instigated task conflict indirectly associated with active emotions via employee attributions?

Two hypotheses were developed under this research question. As proposed in hypothesis eleven and twelve of the current study, it was found that both constructive and destructive conflict instigation attributions mediate the relationship of leader-instigated task conflict with positive and negative emotions respectively. In line with past research based on attribution theory and attribution related research (Betancourt & Blair, 1992; Eberly et al., 2017; Weiner, 2018), these findings provide evidence that attributions act as the mechanisms that explain the underlying process between leader behaviors and resultant emotions of individuals. The mediating role of attributions in understanding how leader-instigated task conflict can activate resultant emotions in employees provides clarity and knowledge about the mixed results of task conflict found by a number of past studies (Eissa & Lester, 2024; Kay & Skarlicki, 2020). This study adds clarity to resolve the paradox of task conflict by developing the understanding that the positive or negative

effects of task conflict are a result of causal ascriptions of individuals regarding the conflict in the form of their attributions.

Findings indicate that leader-instigated task conflict has an indirect effect on positive emotions via constructive conflict instigation attribution, indicating that individuals perceiving that their leader incites task conflict with constructive motives feel positive emotional responses such as excitement, interested, motivated and energized. On the other hand, the indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution between leader instigated task conflict and negative emotions implies that individuals who perceive that their leader initiates task related debates with destructive or harmful motives experience negative resultant emotional states such as stress, frustration and anger.

It is important to be noted that findings of current study show that although there is no significant direct effect of leader-instigated task conflict on negative emotions, it is evident that the indirect effect of the same construct on negative emotions is significant via destructive attributions. This finding presents and interesting notion that leader-instigated task conflict does not directly result in negative emotions, however, it may result in destructive conflict instigation attributions of individuals which resultantly activate the negative emotions in them. Hence, it is important for leaders to understand the role of attributions in this phenomenon. This finding provides understanding that leader who incite task conflict in their group must be vigilant about the perceptions regarding their intentions that employees develop since these perceptions in the form of their attributions activate their positive or negative emotional experiences.

### 5.3.4 Research Question 4

This research question was further split into three sub-queries.

#### 5.3.4.1 Research Question 4.1

The statement of this research question was : Are leader-instigated task conflict attributions significantly associated with job crafting behavior?

The hypothesis thirteen and fourteen were supported which suggested a positive association between constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion focused job crafting, and a positive association between destructive conflict instigation attribution and prevention focused job crafting. This finding highlights the significance of attributing conflict instigation by leaders to positive motives by employees and advocates that individuals tend to bring positive changes and improvements by adopting promotion oriented job crafting as a result of engaging in task conflict constructively. This finding is consistent with previous research which suggests that promotion-focused job crafting is a result of growth-orientation (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2019). This finding further highlights that positive attributions have resultant positive behaviors, more specifically promotion focused job crafting as evidence provided by current study. The explanation of this finding lies in the notion that employees who attribute leader-instigated task conflict to be based on positive motives of the leader, they take it as a positive phenomenon and engage in more constructive behaviors such as gaining new knowledge regarding work, learning new or improved ways of achieving the work objectives. They further delve into bringing positive changes to their work as a result of task-related discussions with colleagues.

Additionally, it was found that destructive conflict instigation attribution results in the display of prevention-focused job crafting behaviors by employees suggesting indicating that individuals who perceive conflict instigation of leader to be a sign of harmful intentions, they undergo self-undermining behaviors whereby they limit their contributions towards meeting only essential requirements by adopting a more reactive approach instead of proactive. These findings are supported by job demands-resources theory whereby it is posited that challenge demands influence individuals to craft their jobs in a constructive manner however, individuals dealing with hindrance demands respond through self-undermining behaviors (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2013).

By empirically examining these relationships, the current study highlights the pivotal role of employee attributions regarding leader behaviors directed towards inciting task conflict showing that these attributions influence the approaches that individuals adopt to craft their jobs within their organizational settings. This

finding is consistent with attribution theory suggesting that attributions, either constructive or destructive, influence individual behaviors (Martinko et al., 2007).

#### 5.3.4.2 Research Question 4.2

This research question was: Do active emotions mediate this link?

Findings also reveal that positive emotions mediate the relation between constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting as suggested in hypothesis fifteen. Likewise, the sixteenth hypothesis proposing an indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution on prevention-focused job crafting via negative emotions also showed support by the results. These findings highlight the emotional processes through which individual attributions of conflict instigation influence them to adopt proactive or reactive behavioural approaches as promotion-focused job crafting or prevention-focused job crafting. These findings are also supported by job demands-resources theory which suggests that challenge and hindrance demands shape behavioural responses in the form of proactive behaviors or reactive withdrawal behaviors through the process of triggering motivational or stressful emotional states respectively (Bakker et al., 2008; Bakker & Demerouti, 2018).

#### 5.3.4.3 Research Question 4.3

This research question stated that: Does cross level team emotional regulation act as a conditional factor in this association?

Hypotheses 17 and 18 theorized the conditional indirect effects of leader-instigated task conflict attributions on job crafting via active emotions. Hypothesis seventeen was not supported which proposed that team emotional regulation has conditional effect in shaping the mediating effect of positive emotions in the relation between constructive conflict instigation attribution and promotion-focused job crafting by showing a stronger indirect effect under high levels of team emotional regulation and weaker indirect effect under low levels of team emotional regulation. Further, support was not found for hypothesis eighteen as results did not prove a significant conditional effect of team emotional regulation in the association of destructive

conflict instigation attribution with prevention-focused job crafting. This finding is found to be contradicting with previous research which suggests that emotional regulation serves as a team resource to deal with triggered emotional states (Jiang et al., 2013; Meng, Fulk, & Yuan, 2015). The reasons for these findings may lie in the fact that since emotions are highly individualized experiences and may vary greatly on the basis of personal factors such as predispositions, personality, perceptions and coping mechanisms, their regulation may also happen at a more individualized level (Tamminen & Crocker, 2013). Since the current study did not account for the individualized experiences of emotional regulation, rather took them at a collective level as the shared emotional regulation of all team members, this might have led to a neglect in the intricacies that emotional regulation could have brought to shape the proposed relationships. Nonetheless, it was important to identify how team level resources can impact behaviors of individuals in response to their attributions and emotional experiences.

### 5.3.5 Research Question 5

The statement of the question was: Is job crafting related to individual and team creativity?

The fifth research question examined the association of job crafting with outcomes of the study as individual and team creativity. As hypothesized, promotion-focused job crafting was found to be positively related with creativity at both individual and team level. Support was also found for hypothesis twenty proving that prevention-focused job crafting negatively predicts individual and team creativity. These findings are consistent with existing literature that emphasized the proactive nature of promotion-focused job crafting aimed at learning, growth, advancement which encourages individuals to seek new challenges and opportunities, generate and test new ideas and explore new approaches of doing their job thereby results in both individual and team creativity (Bipp & Demerouti, 2015; Tian, Wang, & Rispens, 2021). Moreover, the negative association between prevention-foscused job crafting with individual and team creativity is also in alignment with previous

literature that has found that individuals with prevention-focused job crafting exhibit a risk averse, stability oriented, and withdrawal behaviors where they limit themselves to engage in exploring new ideas and approaches which inhibits their creativity (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

### 5.3.6 Research Question 6

Research question 6 was split into two sub-queries.

**6.1:** Does leader-instigated task conflict attributions have indirect effect on individual level creativity and team level creativity via the mediation of job crafting?

This research question proposed indirect effect of employees' attributions of leader-instigated task conflict on individual and team creativity through the mediation of job crafting. Consistent with the study's hypothesis 21, and in line with job demands-resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018), the findings of current study provide evidence that constructive conflict instigation attribution has an indirect effect on both individual creativity and team creativity via the mediation of promotion-focused job crafting. However, contrary to the hypothesis 22(a), support was not found for the proposed indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution on individual creativity through the mediation of prevention-focused job crafting. Further, support was found for the hypothesized indirect effect of destructive conflict instigation attribution on team creativity via the mediation of prevention-focused job crafting. It is noteworthy that the indirect effect of prevention-focused job crafting on creativity at individual level must not be ignored since these effects are more pronounced at team level that are more detrimental for organizational performance.

**6.2:** Does leader-instigated task conflict have indirect effect on individual level creativity and team level creativity via the serial mediation of leader-instigated task conflict attribution, active emotions and job crafting?

Findings of the study suggest that leader-instigated task conflict is not indirectly associated with individual creativity however, it is indirectly associated with team

creativity via the sequential explanatory mechanism of constructive conflict instigation attribution, positive active emotions and promotion focused job crafting (proposed in hypothesis 23a and 23b). These findings are consistent with the propositions of attribution theory hence providing empirical evidence to its propositions that individuals develop attributions of actor's behaviors that trigger their emotional and behavioral response in sequence (Weiner, 1985; Harvey et al., 2018). These findings are also consistent with studies on job demands-resources theory which suggests that leaders create challenge and hindrance demands for employees which trigger motivational and impairment process for them resulting in enhanced and diminished performance respectively (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Bakker et al., 2023) Contrary to the hypothesis 24, it was found that leader-instigated task conflict is not indirectly related to individual and team creativity therefore serial mediation of destructive conflict instigation attribution, negative emotions and prevention focused job crafting was not proved. This finding opens room for further research in this area in order to understand the differential indirect effects of leader-instigated task conflict.

## 5.4 Theoretical Implications

The current study offers several theoretical implications in the domain of leadership, conflict management, employee attributions, job-crafting behaviors and creativity at individual and team levels. First, the current study extends literature in the domain of conflict management and leadership by being one of the pioneer studies in theoretically proposing and empirically testing a unique role of leaders in workplace conflict termed as leader-instigated task conflict, apart from the vastly discussed traditional roles that leaders occupy in conflict handling, regulation and management (Joo, Yoon, & Galbraith, 2023; Kilag et al., 2024).

Second, considering the double-edged nature of task conflict from the past literature (Liao et al., 2024), findings of this study clarify how and why leader-instigated task conflict can follow dual pathways including its constructive or detrimental consequences through the mechanism of employee attributions. Hence, this study suggests that task conflict itself does not yield positive or negative outcomes, rather

the outcomes are a function of employee attributions that they develop about the conflict. Furthermore, findings of current study imply that leader behaviors do not directly shape behavioral and performance-based outcomes of employees, rather these outcomes are a result of the causal ascriptions that followers develop regarding their leader's behavior, hence validating the assumptions of attribution theory. This study suggests that attributions of employees must be taken into consideration while examining employee or team-directed leader behaviors. In this regard, this dissertation extends literature in the domain of attribution theory by studying employee attributions. More specifically, this study adds to the recently growing emphasis in the domain of specific attributions of employees regarding intentionality of leader behaviors (Jiao & Wang, 2023), apart from the largely studied dimensions of attributions.

Furthermore, the current study provides clarity in highlighting two routes that emerge from either constructive or destructive conflict instigation attributions, both leading to positive or negative subsequent emotions, promotion-prevention job crafting behaviors and creativity at both individual and team level respectively. Additionally, the findings of this dissertation suggest that empowering leader behaviors act as a conditional factor in yielding the constructive or destructive attributions of employees regarding leader-instigated task conflict. Hence it suggests answer to "when" leader-instigated task conflict can result in constructive or destructive attributions. In doing so, this study contributes to the ongoing exploration of research to resolve the paradox of task-conflict (De Wit et al., 2012; Joo, Yoon, & Galbraith, 2023) by providing a more nuanced understanding about empowering leadership as the conditional factor under which the positive outcomes of leader-instigated task conflict can be facilitated and detrimental outcomes can be buffered.

Moreover, apart from very limited research that has highlighted specific attributions from a demands-resources perspective from JD-R Theory lens (Van De Voorde & Beijer, 2015), this is the first study to highlight conflict instigation attributions as challenge or hindrance demands by adopting Job Demands-Resources theory perspective, thereby contributing to add in the challenge-hindrance demands

segregation. These attributions in turn have been found to initiate motivation and impairment process including positive and negative emotions, promotion and prevention focused job crafting behaviors and consequentially employee and team creativity.

The current study distinguishes between promotion-prevention focused job crafting behaviors to infer that employees adopt self-promotion or self-undermining behaviors, while experiencing motivation or impairment cycle respectively as suggested by JD-R Theory. However, this promotion-prevention distinction in job crafting behaviors has not been explored earlier from the JD-R perspective, despite the proposition that challenge demands lead to self-promotion behaviors while hindrance demands result in self-undermining behaviors. This study, considering the nature of these mutually distinct job crafting dimensions and conceptually similar to the constructs of self-promotion and self-undermining behaviors, provides an additional lense to look at these constructs from promotion-prevention focused job crafting perspective. Lastly, it is amongst the few studies that applied JD-R theory from a multilevel perspective, hence it responds to call for multilevel research by the pironeers of this theory. (Bakker et al., 2023) by examining creativity as both individual and team level outcome.

## 5.5 Practical Implications

Several scholars have implicated that the dynamic market environment highlights the pressing need to promote creativity based outcomes in the organizational setting in order to remain competitive (Zhang, Chen, Xiao, & Wang, 2022). In doing so, managers look for ways to promote creative performance of their subordinates at both individual and team levels (Lua et al., 2024; Liao et al., 2024). The findings of current study provide insights to the practitioners that team based task conflict is a means to influence employees to bring creative solutions. Managers today deal with challenges such as norms of conformity, excessive group consensus which are all detrimental to creativity based outcomes (Harvey & Mueller, 2021; De Clercq & Pereira, 2023).

Organizational settings where creative performance is required and expected form individuals and teams suffer a great deal because of these mentioned problems. Therefore managers need to take initiatives that can engage their team members in discussions of their divergent viewpoints and novel ideas. The current study provides insight that managers can do so by initiating task conflict in their teams and additionally adopt empowering behaviors which will provide an atmosphere of trust, mutual collaboration, healthy communication and discussion of ideas related to task at hand, and ensure participation of all members. Further, the process of this phenomenon is explained through employee attributions that play a pivotal role in routing the positive or negative cycle of consequences of the task conflict instigation by the leader.

Employees who develop an attribution that leader has generated task conflict for bringing improvement, to generate healthy discussion and constructive controversy experience positive emotional states which energize and motivate them to bring proactive improvements in their job by adopting promotion-focused job crafting behaviors. These behaviors allow them to explore new and improved ways of doing work, bringing novel ideas related to work and hence resulting in enhanced creativity for both individual and team levels. However, leaders who initiate task conflict in teams but are unable to empower their team members may face negative consequences in a loop whereby team members develop negative attributions of their conflict instigation behaviors considering it detrimental and obstructive in achieving their work goals hence they experience negative and stressful emotional states and adopt withdrawal and self-undermining behaviors in the form of prevention-focused job crafting. This, resultantly has negative effects for creativity of teams, although if not very prominent at individual creativity level. The current study provides managerial insights for leader initiation of task conflict by taking it as a multilevel phenomenon at individual and team levels which can provide managerial implications from a broader perspective.

Following are the specific practical implications offered by the current study for managers:

1. Task conflict at work is not always a negative phenomenon. It can have positive processes and outcomes if it is generated by leaders. Hence, leaders must be encouraged and appreciated to instigate task conflict at work where creativity is the target.

2. Organizations should train leaders about how to instigate task related debates and discussions on alternative viewpoints among team members.

3. Leaders who initiate task conflict among employees must keep a careful consideration of what attributions their team members develop for their conflict instigation behaviors because employee attributions play a central role in shaping its functional or dysfunctional outcomes.

4. Leaders who instigate conflict at work must display empowering leader behaviors towards their teams. Such behaviors allow team members to develop a sense of mutual trust, openness and confidence in sharing their divergent thoughts.

5. Empowering leader behaviors should be encouraged, appreciated and desired in the organizations that seek to promote their leaders to incite constructive task based conflict.

6. Leaders should be trained about the process that their conflict instigation may follow through employee attributions, emotions and behaviors in order to be able to influence its outcomes.

7. It is crucial for leaders to shape the attributions of their employees regarding their task conflict instigation through empowering behaviors.

8. Leaders must be trained about influencing employee attributions and their emotions so that they can facilitate promotion focused job crafting behaviors and mitigate prevention focused job crafting behaviors.

9. Leaders must make sure to not develop destructive attribution of employees regarding their task conflict instigation behaviors since destructive attributions have far reaching and broader disparaging effects.

10. Leaders can promote creativity of their employees and teams by promoting job crafting. Therefore, organizations must provide an atmosphere where employees can practice job crafting.

11. Overall, organizations should develop and promote an atmosphere where leaders can engage their teams in task related. Such leader behaviors should be desired, exhibited, appreciated and rewarded in order to achieve organizational goals of creativity.

## 5.6 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although the current dissertation has several strengths, it is constrained by specific limitations mainly owing to the time and cost constraints and specified scope of study in order to ensure parsimony of the research model. First, this study conceptualizes and considers leader-instigated task conflict behavior from the perspective of employees who observe their leader's behavior and not through the leader-centric perspective. Although research has identified that studies focusing on leader behaviors from a leader-centric perspective largely ignore the crucial role of employee attributions of leader's behaviors (Jiao & Wang, 2023), nonetheless there is a possibility of difference of ratings for same construct if responses from both leaders and employees are considered. Future studies can take into account this difference and capture the phenomenon from multiple sources that is leader and the follower to get a clearer picture of the phenomenon.

Nevertheless, the scope of current study was to record this concept from observer's perspective and to study their resultant responses in the form of attributions, emotions and behavioral responses, as suggested by attribution theory (Harvey et al., 2014). Hence, drawing on attribution theory proposing that individuals respond to their own observation of a behavior or event in the form of attributions, their resultant emotions and behaviors, and not to what actors perceive about their

own behaviors, it was not possible to study the mechanism without taking into account what employees perceive about behaviors of their leaders (Jiao & Wang, 2023). This dissertation invites further research to contribute to this domain by studying leader-instigated task conflict from the perspective of leaders as well as follower's perception of leader's behavior and examining the differences in ratings from both sources.

Moreover, employee attributions may be influenced by a number of conditional factors considering the conflict instigation behaviors of leaders including interpersonal, personal, group and organizational factors. Future studies can identify conditional factors that can shape individual attributions of leaders behaviors from attribution theory (Martinko et al., 2011) and other research related to attributions of employees. Additional moderating factors can also be identified with the help of research in conflict and its dynamics highlighting the factors that shape its process and effects. Other conditional factors can be identified by drawing on previous literature that have identified factors that shape the process and outcomes of conflict (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2021). Considering that team emotional regulation was not found to moderate the indirect effects of attributions on resultant job crafting behaviors via active emotions, future studies can study emotional regulation at individual level to see if conditional effects exist at individual level which will provide more clarity in understanding the dynamics of interplay of emotions as experienced by individuals and self-regulated and coped.

The current study also found that destructive conflict instigation attribution does not yield significant effects on employee creativity, however, interestingly it has detrimental effects on team creativity. This finding opens room for further research to be undertaken to understand these differential effects and mechanisms that result in these differential effects. Further, comparative analysis may provide clearer understanding of how these effects significantly differ at both levels and this understanding may also help in understanding how these detrimental effects can be mitigated at team level.

Additionally, current study proposed attributions, emotions and resultant employee job crafting behaviors at individual level. However, recent research suggests

that emotions can also be studied at collective levels because of the emotional contagion effects whereby individual emotions are reflected in teams through interaction among team members (Sirén et al., 2020; Xie, 2022). Further, job crafting behaviors can also be studied as team behaviours by adopting a collective behaviour approach.

Although the current study adopted strong methodological perspective in collecting multisource data from leaders and employees at multiple points of time in order to avoid common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003), and although empirical analysis revealed no evidence of common method variance, the likelihood of self-reported bias cannot be ruled out. Therefore, future studies are suggested to apply better techniques for data collection in future. Further, owing to the cross-sectional nature of data, causality cannot be claimed and hence future studies are recommended to adopt longitudinal research design in order to reinforce causal direction of the research model and further validate current study's results.

Finally, considering the multilevel nature of leader-instigated task conflict and its consequential outcomes, it is recommended to future to explore its additional outcomes at both individual and team levels. Drawing on job demands-resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018), it can be posited that performance-based outcomes alone cannot provide clear picture of phenomenon being studied as job demand since these job demands are found to have considerable impact on wellbeing of individuals. Future studies can explore how leader-instigated task conflict and resultant attributions influence wellbeing of employees. Additional team outcomes may also be identified such as team cohesion.

## 5.7 Conclusion

The current dissertation attempted to highlight and study a unique and less studied role of leaders in conflict as leader-instigated task conflict, apart from traditional conflict handling, regulation and management roles. Overall, this study addresses several significant gaps in the literature. It contributes towards conflict management literature by significantly advancing theorists knowledge by highlighting that task conflict can be a source of enhancing creative outcomes if it

is initiated and supervised by leaders who are empowering and facilitating. This study further attempts to resolve the paradox of task conflict proving to be having mixed findings as evidenced from past literature by highlighting the role of employee attributions regarding task conflict. Hence, in the support of attribution theory, this study clarifies that individual attributions towards leader-instigated task conflict can pave a way for its constructive or destructive outcomes. Conflict management research has received abundance of researchers' attention and empirical support in the domain of regulation strategies, however, this study deviates from the approach of avoiding or minimizing group conflict at work and offers a different perspective by highlighting both processes that can result in its promotional or detrimental cycle of consequences. This approach will help managers understand how to engage their teams in constructive debates and discussions of alternative viewpoints and develop creative solutions, by engaging in task related conflict. The current study also highlights the path that managers need to avoid in order to evade the detrimental outcomes that can emerge as a result of task conflict initiated by them. Overall the findings of current study may have implications for conflict management, leadership and creativity.

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# Appendix-A

**Dear Respondent,**

I am conducting a research project where I am inviting you to take part in this study by completing the attached questionnaire. The objective of the current study is to assess employees' perceptions about their supervisor and their resultant emotions and behaviors in different Pakistani organizations. I will be truly thankful to you on taking part in this research by providing your honest responses and helping us in assessing various aspects of supervisory responsibilities. The anonymity of the responses is assured and the information being collected under this study shall remain confidential. All the responses will be analyzed at aggregate level. For any clarification and query regarding this form research, kindly feel free to contact undersigned

Thanks a lot for your help and support!

Sincerely,

Ramsha Zakariya

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Table 5.1: Survey Forms Description

| **FORM NAME** | **TO BE FILLED BY** |
|---|---|
| FORM A-I | Employees working in team |
| FORM A-II | Employees working in team who filled form A-I |
| FORM A-III | Employees working in team who filled form A-I and A-II |
| FORM B-II | Team Leader regarding his/her demographics and his/her subordinate who filled form A-I, A-II and A-III |
| FORM B-II | Team Leader regarding his/her team |

**EMPLOYEE SURVEY**

**Form A-I**

Team ID: _____ Employee ID: _____

# Section 1: Demographics

**Gender:**

1-☐ Male

2-☐ Female

**Age:**

1-☐ Less than 25

2-☐ 26-30

3-☐ 31-35

4-☐ 36-40

5-☐ 41-45

6- ☐46-50

7- ☐51-55

7- ☐56 or more

**Qualification:**

1-☐ Intermediate

2-☐ Bachelors

3-☐ Masters

4-☐ Doctorate

**Experience:**

1-☐ Less than 3 yrs

2-☐ 3-6 yrs

3-☐ 7-10 yrs

4-☐ 11-14 yrs

5-☐ 15 yrs or more

## Section 2: Leader-Instigated Task Conflict

**Rate the following statements, while keeping in view your Team Leader/ Supervisor**.

**Response Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**.

| **Sr. No** | **To what extent do you agree that your team leader invites:** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Your team members to argue the pros and cons of different opinions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **2** | Your team members to discuss evidence for alternative viewpoints | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **3** | Your team members to engage in debate about different opinions or ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## Section 3: Empowering Leadership

**Rate the following statements, while keeping in view your Team Leader/ Supervisor**.

**Response Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**.

| **Sr. No** | **Questions** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | My manager helps me understand how my objectives and goals relate to that of the company. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | My manager helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | My manager helps me understand how my job fits into the bigger picture. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | My manager makes many decision together with me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | My manager often consults me on strategic decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | My manager solicits my opinion on decisions that may affect me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7 | My manager believes that I can handle demanding tasks. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | My manager believes in my ability to improve even when I make mistakes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | My manager expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | My manager allows me to do my job my way. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11 | My manager makes it more efficient for me to do my job by keeping the rules and regulations simple. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | My manager allows me to make important decisions quickly to satisfy customer needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Employee Survey**

**Form A-II**

Team ID: _____ Employee ID: _____

# Section 4: Conflict Instigation Attribution

**Response Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**

LITC is defined as leader's behaviors that are involved in initiating or generating debates and disagreements among group members regarding task activities, including differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions. To what extent, do you agree that the following may be the reason for or cause of your leader's initiation of task-related debates?

| **Sr. No** | **Constructive attribution** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Desire to elicit high performance from me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | Desire to stimulate me to share my ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | Desire to push me to work harder | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | Desire to push me to come out of comfort zone. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | Desire to stimulate me to meet my performance goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Destructive attribution** | | | | | |
| 1 | Desire to cause injury on me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | Desire to hurt my feelings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | Desire to cause tension between team members | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | Desire to make me feel bad about myself | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | Desire to retaliate me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

# Section 5: Positive and Negative Emotions

How do you feel when your leader engages you in a task related debate or discussion on alternative opinions among your team members?

This scale consist of words and phrases to describe different feelings and emotions. Please rate each of emotion on the following scale.

| 1= Very slightly | 2= A Little | 3= Moderately | 4= Quite a bit | 5= Extremely |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Positive Emotions**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interested | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Attentive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Active | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Energetic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Negative Emotions**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Frustrated | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Angry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Annoyed | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Tense | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

# Section 6: Emotional Regulation

**Indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the below statements**.

**Response Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**.

| **Sr. No** | **Questions** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | I have good control of my own emotions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Employee Survey**

**Form A-III**

Team ID: _____ Employee ID: _____

# Section 7: Job Crafting

**Indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the below statements**.

**Response Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.**

| **Sr.No** | **Increasing Structural Job Resources** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I try to develop my capabilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | I try to develop myself professionally | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | I try to learn new things at work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | I make sure that I use my capacities to the fullest | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | I decide on my own how I do things | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Decreasing hindering job demands** | | | | | |
| 6 | I make sure that my work is mentally less intense | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7 | I try to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | I manage my work so that I try to minimize contact with people whose problems affect me emotionally | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | I organize my work so as to minimize contact with people whose expectations are unrealistic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | I try to ensure that I do not have to make many difficult decisions at work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11 | I organize my work in such a way to make sure that I do not have to concentrate for too long a period at once | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Increasing social job resources** | | | | | |
| 12 | I ask my supervisor to coach me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13 | I ask whether my supervisor is satisfied with my work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14 | I look to my supervisor for inspiration | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15 | I ask others for feedback on my job performance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16 | I ask colleagues for advice | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Increasing challenging job demands** | | | | | |
| 17 | When an interesting project comes along, I offer myself proactively as project co-worker | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18 | If there are new developments, I am one of the first to learn about them and try them out | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19 | When there is not much to do at work, I see it as a chance to start new projects | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | I regularly take on extra tasks even though I do not receive extra salary for them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21 | I try to make my work more challenging by examining the underlying relationships between aspects of my job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Thank You! May you be blessed with eternal happiness**

**SUPERVISOR SURVEY**

**Form B-I**

Team ID: _____ Employee ID: _____

# Section 1: Supervisor Rated Employee Creativity

**Please rate Each Employee (based on employee ID) on the base of the following statements:**

**Response Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**.

| **Sr. No** | **Questions** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | This employee identifies opportunities for new ways of dealing work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | This employee seeks new ideas and ways to solve problems | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | This employee generates novel, but operable work-related ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | This employee demonstrates originality in his/her work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

# Section 2: Supervisor Information

# Section 1: Demographics

**Gender:**

1-☐ Male

2-☐ Female

**Age:**

1-☐ Less than 25

2-☐ 26-30

3-☐ 31-35

4-☐ 36-40

5-☐ 41-45

6- ☐46-50

7- ☐51-55

7- ☐56 or more

**Qualification:**

1-☐ Intermediate

2-☐ Bachelors

3-☐ Masters

4-☐ Doctorate

**Experience:**

1-☐ Less than 3 yrs

2-☐ 3-6 yrs

3-☐ 7-10 yrs

4-☐ 11-14 yrs

5-☐ 15 yrs or more

**SUPERVISOR SURVEY**

**Form B-II**

Team ID: _____ Employee ID: _____

# Section 3: Supervisor Rated Team Creativity

**Please rate THE SELECTED TEAM working under you on the basis of following statements**

**1= poor, 2= Bad, 3= Neither bad nor good, 4= Good, 5= Excellent**.

| **Sr. No** | **Questions** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How well does your team produce new ideas? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | How useful are those ideas? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | How creative do you consider your teams? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | How significant are those ideas to your organization? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Thank You! May you be blessed with eternal happiness**