

HSI-AN SHIH

National Cheng Kung University/Institute of International Business, Taiwan

**NAVIGATING THE UNKNOWN: UNLEASHING INNOVATION
THROUGH EMOTION REGULATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS
WHEN FACED WITH RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT.**

Abstract:

Differences of opinion often occur within teams and organizations, and disagreement can boost innovation, but relationship conflict often creates dysfunctional dynamics that hinder it. This study draws on the emotional regulation framework to propose how emotion regulation in response to conflicts affects innovation. Moreover, we investigate the influence of emotion regulation strategies on social interactions and their implications for employees' innovative performance. This research was performed through a two-wave multi-source questionnaire survey to the subjects of Taiwanese companies from 357 participants nested in 111 groups to examine our hypotheses empirically. The results support the hypothesis of our study that expressive suppression in response to relationship conflict leads to interaction avoidance, and impedes employee innovation. At the same time, cognitive reappraisal serves as a more adaptive emotion regulation strategy because it enables social expansion, thereby benefitting innovative performance. The results, however, did not support the indirect effect moderating effect of team reflexivity. Our research emphasizes the previously overlooked positive aspects of relationship conflict by highlighting the contrasting effects of response-focused and antecedent-focused emotion regulation strategies on innovation. Theoretical and managerial implications are also provided.

Keywords:

relationship conflict, emotion regulation, innovation