

Negotiation Processes in the Resort Industry – An Exploration of the Link Between Contextual and Behavioural Factors

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Abstract

This exploratory paper debates the relevance of behavioural factors to negotiation success and the long-term sustainability of the agreement. Following a review of existing research, it is proposed that these include trust and transparency, negotiation styles and tactics as well as culture, gender and mood.

Based on secondary research, the paper introduces examples of negotiation processes taking place within the context of the resort industry. Amongst those considered are negotiations between hotel owners and operators, accommodation providers and travel intermediaries as well as resort planning scenarios.

Conclusions suggest that the process of trust- and relationship-building and the suitability of specific negotiation styles and tactics vary depending on the negotiation context. In this respect, organisational interdependence, industry dynamics and process rules are some of the contextual variables that were found to be of influence.

Further research will be required to develop a deeper understanding of the correlation between contextual and behavioural factors. Likewise, the influence of culture, gender and mood on negotiation patterns will require further investigation.

Keywords: behavioural factors, contextual factors, negotiation processes, resort industry

Introduction

The resort business is characterised by multi-stakeholder relationships and value-networks across various sectors within the tourism industry. Stakeholder interests and bargaining power within this business are influenced by complex and volatile macro-environmental and competitive forces. These include processes of integration and consolidation, source market dynamics, destination-life-cycles and various aspects of sustainability. Due to its diversity, complexity and dynamic nature, the resort industry provides an intriguing context for research into the principles underlying negotiation processes. Areas for investigation are resort planning, ownership and property management, accommodation contracting and distribution, supplier networks as well as labour and community relations.

Negotiation has been defined as “a means to reach mutual agreement through communication” (Downs, 2008 p. 1). Existing academic research into negotiation processes is wide-ranging, but limited within the context of the resort industry, which

generally has inspired “only a modest level of interest amongst tourism academics” (Murphy, 2008 p. 5). Previous industry-specific research particularly reflects a lack of conceptualisation of factors that impact on negotiation processes and outcomes.

Negotiation power of individual stakeholders has been identified primarily on the basis of power-relationships defined by, for example, access to financial resources, distribution channels or expert knowledge. A study by Ashley and Jones (2001) into joint ventures between communities and tourism investors and studies by Aguilo et al. (2001), Karamustafa (2000) and Klemm and Parkinson (2001) into the relationship between tour operators and resort hotels are examples of previous research that attributed negotiation power to such contextual, or “hard”, factors.

Wider literature suggests that, in addition, behavioural or “soft” factors influence negotiation outcomes. Significant contributions on the relevance of such factors have been put forward by Downs (2008) and Kennedy (2008). They propose that negotiation outcomes mirror how effectively those involved have managed the negotiation process by displaying and responding to specific negotiation styles, tactics and behaviours. Kennedy (2008), in fact, asserted that the process of negotiation is universal and that the same principles apply regardless of the situation. However, both experts stress the importance of context by emphasising that analysis and preparation are crucial to negotiate effectively and that the choice of appropriate behaviours and tools will depend on circumstances.

Unlike much of the existing research within the field of tourism planning, this approach suggests that success in negotiations is as much, or perhaps more significantly, determined by the behaviour displayed by individual negotiators as by the bargaining power that is imposed by contextual factors, such as power relationships, source market and destination dynamics or process rules. This also implies that whilst defining the negotiation context and framework, contextual factors may be of limited value when attempting to predict negotiation success and wider outcomes.

This paper therefore seeks to explore the potential significance of behavioural factors in influencing negotiation outcomes within the context of the resort industry. Based on a selected review of recent industry-relevant literature, the argument includes:

- An analysis of the particular characteristics of the resort industry and the implications of these for the diverse negotiation processes taking place within this context;
- A categorisation of diverse factors influencing negotiation processes;
- A review of the conclusions reached by previous research about the significance of behavioural factors in influencing negotiation processes and outcomes
- A discussion of whether behavioural patterns are linked to the negotiation context; and
- An exploration of areas for further research.

In this paper, it is assumed that negotiation success is measured by the degree to which the agreements that are reached through negotiation are mutually beneficial in economic and qualitative terms. The term “wider outcomes” refers to the long-term sustainability of the agreement.

Industry Characteristics and Negotiation Processes in the Resort Business

Stakeholder groups in the business of resort management include those that are directly and indirectly concerned with the operation and strategic pursuits of a resort property. Those directly affected are owners and operators, employees, customers, suppliers, intermediaries and special interest groups, whereas those indirectly concerned include community groups that are not directly dependent on the business, but affected by decisions of environmental, social or economic relevance (Murphy, 2008). Taking into consideration varying industry structures as well as market and destination lifecycles, this results in a complex system of co-operation, competition and interdependency between and among different stakeholders (Bastakis, Buhalis and Butler, 2004).

With regard to negotiations taking place within the resort industry, this means that the composition, nature and interests of stakeholders will vary from situation to situation (Murphy and Murphy, 2004). Researchers interested in the patterns underlying negotiation processes in this business will have to consider the following industry characteristics:

- *Diversity*: This refers to the composition of stakeholder relationships, the content of negotiations that take place within this context, as well as industry structures, demand patterns and cyclicity influencing business strategies in different resort destinations.
- *Multi-stakeholder relationships*: This refers to varying organisational interdependence, economically or defined by value networks, as well as conflicting interests.
- *Volatility*: This refers to predictable as well as unforeseen macro-environmental and competitive dynamics which may shift the bargaining power or interdependence of certain stakeholder groups.

In what follows, the degree to which negotiation processes may vary depending on external and inter-organisational circumstances is explored further. This will then lead to a discussion of how contextual and process factors defining the negotiation framework influence behavioural patterns and/or their significance to negotiation outcomes.

Previous Research into the Diverse Factors Influencing Negotiation Processes in the Resort Industry

This section explores the extent to which existing industry-relevant research addresses the importance of contextual and behavioural factors to the nature and outcome of negotiation processes. Examples of negotiation processes involving various stakeholder groups are introduced on the basis of increasing levels of complexity in organisational interdependence. Particular emphasis is placed on drawing conclusions about the relative significance of soft factors and the breadth and depth in which they have been researched.

Previous studies on negotiations between hotel owners and operators

Research by Eyster (1997) into the relationship between US-based hotel owners and operators pointed to the significance of external context in shaping negotiation processes and outcomes. Findings have shown that a shift in external context,

defined by the level of competition, industry consolidation and economic climate, changed the bargaining power of both parties and led to a redistribution of decision-making power in relation to corporate policies and strategies during and beyond the negotiation process. Although Eyster (1997 p. 15) acknowledged that the owner-operator relationship could often be described as "rough", no further reference was made to behavioural factors. Instead, the role of courts in delineating contractual obligations of both parties was addressed. This seems to imply that satisfactory results in such negotiations can be achieved through the removal of the behavioural component or at least the shifting of the same to interactions between external representatives rather than direct party-to-party interaction.

Previous studies on negotiations between hotels and customers or suppliers

Exploring the principles underlying successful negotiations between hotel organisations and suppliers, Simons and Tripp (1997) addressed the relevance of behaviour in addition to contextual and procedural factors. Their argument suggests that contextual and process factors are most relevant in the preparatory and initial stages of the negotiation process. Aspects covered at this stage are the determination of the party's priorities, BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) or resistance point, tools for evaluating alternatives during the negotiation process and mutually agreed fairness norms or reference points. Unless a negotiator pursues a highly personalised agenda, these variables are determined by competitive dynamics and organisational (corporate and operational) objectives and constraints.

Behavioural factors, variables determined by the individuals involved in the negotiation, seem to count most during more advanced stages of the negotiation process, i.e. when the subject and framework of the negotiation are established and party interactions are focused towards reaching an agreement. At this stage, the outcome of negotiations is likely to be influenced by the negotiation style of each party, culture, and the degree to which party representatives are able to build trust and identify and respond to the other party's priorities, BATNA and resistance points either intuitively or by encouraging transparency.

Previous studies on negotiations between accommodation providers and travel intermediaries

Also studies by Buhalis (2000), Medina-Munoz and Garcia-Falcon (2000) and Bastakis et al. (2004) on the business relationships between hotels and travel intermediaries took a holistic view of factors influencing negotiation processes. Similar to Eyster (1997), they recognised the relevance of competitive dynamics, access to end-consumers as well as destination life-cycles. Medina-Munoz and Garcia-Falcon (2000), for example, observed a shift in negotiated arrangements incurred by the growth of online-booking platforms which gave increased direct marketing and distribution power to hotel providers. Correspondingly, Buhalis (2000) and Bastakis et al. (2004) referred to the impact of price wars between travel intermediaries on their negotiations with accommodation providers. In relation to process factors, Buhalis (2000) demonstrated how the timing of contract negotiations arranged during the low season and significantly before the relevant business period placed intermediaries in a more advantageous bargaining position.

Concentrating more on identifying the principles underlying win-win situations, Medina-Munoz and Garcia-Falcon (2000) illustrated that high levels of inter-organisational communication and coordination were positively correlated with mutually satisfying outcomes. In addition, they (2000) attributed positive behavioural

aspects, such as focus on mutual trust, commitment and developing the strength of the relationship to successful negotiations and constructive conflict resolution. Similar arguments were put forward by Buhalis (2000) and Bastakis et al. (2004), whereby Bastakis et al. (2004) also acknowledged the influence of culture on negotiation processes and inter-organisational co-operation. Contrary to Eyster (1997), Medina-Munoz and Garcia-Falcon (2000) found that outside arbitration was negatively associated with success.

Previous studies on collaborative negotiations in resort planning scenarios

Ritchie (1999) concluded that within the context of resort and tourism planning scenarios, interest-based negotiation could be regarded as a powerful method to create collaborative partnerships through shared decision-making and the breaking down of strongly held positions. However, outcomes generated by other studies highlighted the need for a more critical analysis of this statement. Ashley and Jones (2001), for example, stressed the importance of outside mediation and third-party representation to minimise conflict. It appears though that this may be more relevant in scenarios involving less educated stakeholder groups.

Bousset et al. (2007) stated that, in some cases, collaborative negotiations might decrease the potential for conflicts between tourism stakeholders, but that at other times they might lead to a greater polarisation of stakeholders. The authors argued that an analysis of the positions and situations of individual stakeholders could assist in predicting which types of informal intra- and inter-organisational linkages might emerge as a result of collaborative negotiation processes. It was also said that a neutral stance might support stakeholders in increasing their capacity to influence the process.

According to Bousset et al. (2007) collaborative negotiation does not have any significant effect on the expectations of different stakeholder groups regarding the overall objective of future development policies. It might, however, lead to a shift in attitudes regarding the development method that should be employed. For example, those who initially favoured a resources-control policy joined supporters of a product-supply policy as long as their main interests were not compromised. Moreover, it was proposed that organisational circumstances influenced stakeholders' willingness to compromise. Well-resourced and well-networked stakeholders were found to be less likely to change their position. This was inevitably seen as a hindrance to effective collaborative negotiation involving such players and could perhaps be attributed to the organisational and external constraints that these were facing.

A study by Jamal and Getz (1999) into community roundtables for conflicts related to resort planning specifically pointed to the significance of process factors, such as entry rules, process rules and timescales, during the process of negotiation and consensus-building. Some consideration was given to behavioural factors, for example, by discussing the disruptive effect of displaying radical positions. Moreover, behavioural changes in party representatives were observed under the pressure of deadlines and when they were confronted with conflicts between stakeholder groups and the need to accommodate necessary compromise at the roundtable.

However, overall, Jamal and Getz (1999 p. 302) took the position that a defined protocol is powerful in influencing negotiation outcomes, which within the context of this case study is implied through the use of the term "manufactured consent". This euphemism is meant to reflect the effect of selective invitation dissemination and entry rules that promote the involvement of certain individuals and stakeholder

groups whilst excluding others. It is also reflective of process rules that restrict the actions and decisions of party-representatives once they get involved in the process.

"Hard" and "soft" factors influencing negotiation processes

When reviewing existing industry-relevant literature on negotiation processes, it emerged that the factors by which these are influenced can be divided into two broad categories. In this paper, these are described as "hard" and "soft" factors. Hard factors are those that define the context and process of a negotiation. As can be concluded from previous research, they are mainly dependent on industry and corporate dynamics and include:

- *Power-relationships,*
- *Organisational inter-dependence,*
- *Macro-environmental factors,*
- *Corporate and operational factors,*
- *Party representation,*
- *BATNA and resistance points,*
- *Process rules, and*
- *Timescales.*

Although not covered by previous studies reviewed in this paper, *negotiation medium* should also be considered as a relevant process factor. For example, telephone or video-conferencing typically limits the time-scale of a negotiation and reduces the opportunity to nurture relationships through informal conversation. Moreover, audiovisual media restrict negotiators in the transmission and interpretation of non-verbal, but potentially significant, clues.

Soft factors are those that define and influence behaviour beyond contextual and procedural factors. These factors are mainly dependent on individuals participating in the negotiation and, as suggested by previous studies, include:

- *Trust,*
- *Inter-organisational and personal relationships,*
- *Transparency,*
- *Culture, and*
- *Negotiation skills, personality and behaviour.*

Additional factors that have not been covered by industry-relevant research are *gender* and *mood*. The potential relevance of these factors is considered in the section below.

The Significance of "Soft" Factors for Negotiation Processes and Outcomes

Having categorised the diverse factors influencing negotiation processes, the next paragraphs will explore in more depth how behavioural patterns are interlinked with contextual factors. Likewise, the potential significance of the often interlinked "soft" factors to negotiation success and wider outcomes is discussed.

Where possible, the paper suggests scope for a possible generalisation of findings or alternatively the need for further comparative analysis. In doing so, it aims to provide a starting point for further research.

Trust and relationships

Whilst Simons and Tripp (1997) did not aim to provide scientific evidence about the relative importance of behavioural factors, their contribution raised assumptions about the significance of transparency and trust. With regard to trust, they proposed that the task of negotiating would be much easier if parties already knew and trusted each other. The authors did not raise the question of whether this would also result in mutually more advantageous deals.

In this respect, Tenbunsel, Wade-Benzoni, Moag and Bazerman (1999), who investigated the correlation between relationships and negotiation outcomes by means of simulation, found that, for example, strong relationships could be associated with positive social outcomes but had negative effects on economic outcomes, such as profitability. This appeared more relevant to players with high profit potential, whilst exploiting strong ties proved to be a beneficial strategy for players with low profit potential.

The findings presented by Tenbunsel et al. (1999) were generated through simulations within a higher education environment, which makes them subject to further testing within a corporate environment. However, Sulkowski and Roper's (2005) study into the relationships between tour operators and resort businesses also pointed to the significance of personal ties and trust in securing advantageous deals particularly for players with low profit potential and a niche market orientation.

Correspondingly, Bastakis et al. (2004 p. 158) characterised mass operators as "tougher in their co-operation", which was attributed to the highly competitive industry context. Considering particularly the perceptions of small- and medium-sized accommodation operators, they linked successful business ventures to a mutual emphasis on relationship-building and praised times where "a familiarisation trip, a warm dinner and sincere dialogue had always preceded a final agreement". Contrarily, personal relationships with mass tour operators were perceived as poor where the tour operator representative was described as "impersonal in their contacts and unresponsive and disrespectful to the needs and the characteristics of destinations". The apathy and the 'coldness' of the current negotiations were perceived as "actually more disappointing as the low or 'frozen' prices" (Bastakis et al., 2004 p. 158).

Whilst the above contributions suggest that strong relationships and trust are of particular importance to small- or medium-size players, findings of Medina-Munoz and Garcia-Falcon's (2000) study on the business relationships between hotels and travel agencies suggest scope for a wider generalisation. Reviewing a sample of organisations with high, medium and low profit potential, they found that inter-organisational trust, strong relationships and commitment would ensure a fair negotiation process and the most successful collaborative outcomes. In this context, success was measured by the perceived quality of the collaborative partner, the relationship between input and outcome, sales and profitability, promotional synergies and compatibility of travel agent clientele with the target clientele of hotel properties.

The conclusions presented by Medina-Munoz and Garcia-Falcon (2005) reflect obvious linkages between inter-organisational trust and relationships and approaches towards negotiation and conflict resolution. Constructive techniques such as joint problem-solving and persuasion, i.e. techniques where end-result depends significantly on the behaviours displayed by those involved in the process, lead to positive results. Destructive techniques, such as "harsh words" and the deliberate

display of bargaining power or outside arbitration were negatively associated with success. Similarly, previous research by Sulkowski and Roper (2005) showed that the use of constructive or consultative techniques during processes of negotiation and conflict resolution preceded positive long-term outcomes. Contrarily, destructive techniques typically signalled a step towards the termination of an existing agreement.

Correspondingly, Buhalis (2000) lamented that tactics frequently employed by tour operators when negotiating accommodation contracts with resorts hotels were based on deceit (reflected in misquoting of customer satisfaction surveys), false promises with the intention to create dependence (reflected in over-contracting and later revision of prices when bookings fail to materialise) and bullying (reflected in short release periods that do not allow the selling of unused rooms). His findings illustrate how fundamentally the misuse of trust and coercion during negotiations undermines fruitful long-term relationships. Bastakis et al. (2004) presented similar evidence. They also remarked that forceful negotiation tactics such as the threat of legal action are relatively more severe for more small- and medium-sized businesses that could be forced out of business due to lack of financial stability or permanent legal representation.

Overall, findings from previous research suggest that trust is an evident requirement for successful negotiations and mutually satisfying long-term relationships and that the development of trust is linked to behavioural factors such as transparency, culture and negotiation style. However, more in-depth studies are needed to develop a better understanding of how the significance of different behaviours in promoting or discouraging the development of trust during the negotiation process is linked to specific industry-specific scenarios or specific players of varying size and scope. Likewise, it appears that the correlation between inter-organisational relationships and specific or wider negotiation outcomes, such as sales or efficiency, will require further investigation.

Transparency

With regard to transparency, Simons and Tripp (1997) suggested that negotiators should be prepared to present all reasonable and relevant issues even if these were not of obvious importance to the other party. Particular reference was made to operational factors within the context of contract negotiations between hotels and food and beverage suppliers, that if unmentioned during the negotiation process would prevent both parties from considering workable or more desirable alternatives to the initial proposal.

Addressing the issue of transparency within the context of community roundtables and multiple stakeholder processes in a resort planning scenario, Jamal and Getz (1999), however, warned that too much transparency in the initial stages of a negotiation process may result in confrontation. They hence suggested that the process of trust-building may require the strategic withholding of interests and intentions until a relationship with the other parties is established. Correspondingly, Bousset et al. (2007) found that in collaborative negotiations within tourism planning scenarios, participants with a neutral attitude might increase their capacity to influence the process.

The difference between these scenarios is that the first described a negotiation about a business transaction between two parties driven by profitability and efficiency, and the other two collaborative negotiations involved conflicting stakeholder interests, whereby one was bound to an entry rule which strictly excluded groups and

individuals who rejected any plans for resort development. This demonstrates that the appropriateness of different negotiation tactics, or deliberate behavioural strategies, may depend on the context.

Culture

National culture and its influence on behaviour is a widely debated and complex subject. National culture as a variable is difficult, or even impossible, to separate from local sub-cultures, demographics, organisational cultures, personality and influences of globalisation. Findings from previous research are therefore overall inconclusive.

Industry-specific research into the influence of culture on negotiation processes is very limited. Bastakis et al. (2004), whose study was conducted within the context of European tourism source and supply markets, claimed that there were differences in the negotiation and collaborative styles of tour operators depending on their origin, whereby some were described as more difficult to work with than others. However, it is not clear from their argument if they were able to separate culture sufficiently from other possibly relevant variables.

Maintaining his general position, Kennedy (2008) proposed that the process of negotiation is universal across cultures and asserted that assuming differences in the negotiation styles on the basis of culture would be inappropriate and, in fact, insulting. He contested that nuances of negotiation styles could be found across all cultures and that a skilled negotiator would be able to respond appropriately to universal behaviours typically displayed during the negotiation process.

Opposed to that, Kivela and Leung (2005 p. 141) took the view that culture is of significance to the negotiation process and suggested that during negotiations with Chinese businessmen, "many Western hotel executives might find their values and principles challenged and their self-assurance shaken". Their investigation of behaviours displayed by Chinese negotiators during the process of forming hotel joint ventures with Western organisations is the only relevant contribution that could be found. However, the generalisation of non-Chinese business partners into foreign or 'Western' prevents a meaningful profiling and comparison of negotiation behaviour based on national culture.

Kivela and Leung's (2005) argument is supplemented with a list of supposedly characteristic behaviours of Chinese negotiators and an explanation of how these relate to their cultural background. A review of this list shows that many of these behaviours, such as repetitive questioning, the use of time pressure, taking advantage of weakness, reference to competitors' offers and reopening of previously closed/settled issues, are related to tactics and negotiation styles that are commonly applied and that are not culturally specific.

Kivela and Leung (2005) also argued that an emphasis on relationship-building, mutual commitment and a team approach was needed in order to negotiate successfully with the Chinese. As has been shown in previous sections, this is true for most successful negotiations and business relationships, whereby organisational interdependence and organisational culture appear to be more significant variables than national culture.

On the basis of this, there appears to be some validity in Kennedy's (2008) point that negotiation is a universal process and the same *principles* apply regardless the context. A logical implication is that choosing suitable negotiation tactics or responses is a skill that can be learned. At the same time, some evidence suggests

that negotiation processes within different contexts may follow different *patterns*, whereby an understanding of this may be crucial to success.

In this respect, Kivela and Leung (2005) asserted that negotiators from a Chinese background tend to maintain a "professional" as well as a "private" face and that professional agreements and relationships are often formed through interaction on a private level. This means that, whilst the process of negotiation itself may not change and universally applicable behaviours and tactics are still observable, it is shifted from the professional into the private domain which may consequently change the behaviour and negotiation tactics employed. For example, whilst adversarial and competitive styles possibly dominate the professional domain, courteous and collaborative styles might dominate the private domain. As shown in previous sections, a similar pattern has also been found in relation to small- and medium-sized businesses.

Even Kennedy (2008 p. 11/21) acknowledged that not knowing how people in different destinations are likely to want to conduct their business "would be lax to say the least". However, as mentioned previously, the study of cultural traits and their influence within negotiation processes is liable to complexities, as it is difficult to separate the influence of culture from those of other variables. Likewise, processes of globalisation exposing individuals increasingly to an internationalised community may result in a dilution of culturally specific behaviour and an adoption of more standardised negotiation behaviour. It would therefore be interesting to observe if and how negotiation patterns vary depending on whether the respective partners share the same national culture or not.

Gender

As stated by Kennedy (2008), the common belief that women negotiate differently from men is a misconception. He pointed to studies which showed that different negotiation styles are found equally in men and women. No previous industry-relevant studies could be identified. However, a literature review by Walters, Stuhlmacher and Meyer (1998) found that women appeared slightly more cooperative in negotiations than men, but that small variations in situational conditions can either eliminate or reverse this difference.

Correspondingly, Kray, Galinsky and Thomson (2002) found within the context of a college-based experiment that the performance of individual negotiators depended on whether behaviour typically regarded as male (for example assertiveness) or female (for example good listening skills) was thought to be advantageous or disadvantageous in a particular situation. They proposed that any situational variable that formed performance expectations through the activation of stereotypes in an individual would create performance effects.

On the one hand, this implies that negotiation behaviour is reflective of an individual's self-awareness and ability to adjust behaviour according to circumstances. On the other hand, this also suggests that negotiators are likely to be influenced by behavioural expectations. In relation to gender, comparative studies between male/female-dominated industries or cultures and those that display high levels of emancipation could provide further insights.

Mood

Although no industry-specific evidence about the impact of mood on negotiation processes could be extracted, previous conclusions in relation to the display of

positive and negative behaviours suggest that its significance should not be dismissed.

Often irrational, mood can lead to the display of unintended behaviours and signals and thus provides a fruitful ground for misinterpreting the feelings and intentions of individual participants in relation to the negotiation. For example, negotiators who are sad for personal reasons may appear unintentionally cold or distant and thereby signal less interest in the other party than they actually have. The state of mind of individual negotiators may also lead to their reciprocation by negotiation partners. Previous work by Goleman (1998 p. 164) illustrated that "the transmission of mood is remarkably powerful" and that the emotional state of one individual has the potential to change the dynamics of an entire group.

Negotiation styles, personality and behaviour

Based on his position that the negotiation process is universal, Kennedy (2008) proposed that negotiation skills can be acquired through training and are transferable to different contexts. Like Downs' (2008), his contribution is highly relevant to the study of negotiation processes, as it provides an explanation of principles and patterns underlying constructive and destructive debates and recommends responses to different negotiation styles, tactics and behaviours.

Simons and Tripp (1999) differentiated between three types of negotiators. The first type is characterised as somebody who prefers to establish personal contacts with the other party before revealing information. The second type prefers a direct approach and steers away from disclosure and creative problems, whereby it is noted that the best response to this type would be a competitive approach. The third type is described as somebody who through thorough preparation has already decided upon what the outcome should be and would typically become impatient with further debate about the conditions of agreement. Similarly, Kennedy (2008) differentiated between red (competitive) and blue (cooperative) negotiation styles.

In addition, Simons and Tripp (1999) pointed to the predictive validity of negotiation styles in terms of the nature of future interactions with the other party. Whilst acknowledging that the characteristics of the negotiating parties determine which styles are mutually acceptable and conducive to successful agreements and sustainable relationships, they take the position that creative and consultative styles are generally more desirable and constructive than those that are based on calculation and withholding of information.

Taking into account the different industry scenarios introduced in this paper, it appears that the relative importance of "soft" and consultative approaches increases with the complexity of organisational interdependence. For example, the relationship between hotel operators and owners is often reduced to financial transactions. Whilst the hotel owners are most likely to be interested in financial gains, hotel operators are concerned with the more complex aspects of delivery. Under such conditions, directive negotiation styles and involvement of a third party may be more suitable than in scenarios where two parties feed into each other's value chains, and the success of the relationship depends not only on financial viability, but also on marketing and operational synergies as it is frequently the case between accommodation providers and tour operators (Sulkowski and Roper, 2005).

Evidence therefore appears to suggest that specific styles, tactics and behaviours may be more acceptable within certain contexts than others. For example, impersonal styles may be acceptable in negotiations involving large operators,

parties with limited organisational interdependence or within certain cultural contexts. They may be less acceptable amongst small- and medium-sized operators, parties with complex organisational interdependence or other cultural contexts.

However, on balance it seems that negotiation success is positively correlated with positive behaviours, such as respect, interest in the needs and characteristics of the other party, personal warmth, dialogue and joint problem-solving. There also appears to be a correlation between the display of such behaviours during the negotiation process and the long-term sustainability of the inter-organisational relationship resulting from the agreement. Correspondingly, it appears that unsuccessful negotiations and unsustainable agreements are associated with the display of negative behaviours such as disrespect, ignorance to the need and characteristics of the other party, coldness, argument and coercion.

Conclusion and Implications for Future Research

The subject of negotiation is vast and therefore difficult to tackle in its entirety. This paper contributes to the study of negotiation processes by having explored how contextual and behavioural factors are potentially interlinked. Thereby, it also presented some discussion on how behavioural variables may affect negotiation patterns and outcomes.

Previous research relevant to negotiation processes taking place within the context of the resort industry has pointed to a variety of factors that influence bargaining power, the choice of negotiation tactics and negotiation outcomes to a more or less significant degree. By drawing on existing literature, it is possible to devise a broad conceptualisation of these factors on the basis of whether they define the context and process of a negotiation ("hard" factors) or whether they are factors resting with the individuals who are involved in the negotiation and ability to influence the negotiation, deliberately or not, through displaying or responding to specific tactics and behaviours ("soft factors"). However, previous studies reflect a bias toward assessing contextual and process factors in relation to the often long-term outcomes of business negotiations, whereas the study of actual negotiation processes and the patterns and behaviours by which they are dominated has been given little attention.

Evidence considered in this paper suggests that both contextual and behavioural variables are of relative significance to the nature of negotiation processes and outcomes. Some evidence suggests a positive correlation between contextual factors, such as type, composition and size of stakeholders, the complexity of organisational interdependence and competitive dynamics, and behavioural patterns within negotiation processes. Existing evidence also suggests a positive correlation between specific tactics and behaviours displayed during the negotiation process and the long-term success and stability of the agreement. Moreover, there appears to be a correlation between stereotypical performance expectations based on, for instance, gender, national or professional culture, and the behaviours displayed by individuals during negotiations.

Future research could therefore focus on:

- The degree to which negotiation styles and their acceptance differs depending on context and players involved;
- The relative importance of trust, strength of relationship and joint problem-solving during the negotiation process in relation to the complexity of the organisational interdependence;

- The degree to which the display of specific negotiation styles, tactics and behaviours supports or undermines constructive negotiation and the long-term sustainability of the agreement;
- The degree to which specific behaviours can be associated with specific stages in the negotiation process and if this is relevant to the outcome; and
- The effect of stereotypical performance expectations

Based on the sources consulted for this paper, it appears that findings generated by previous research into the negotiation processes and inter-organisational relationships between relevant stakeholders are mainly reliant on case studies or studies on the tactics and behaviours displayed by homogenous stakeholder groups. The argument put forward in this paper is therefore limited by methodological differences underlying previous contributions in this field.

In future, comparative analyses of negotiation processes involving players with varying profit potential, inter-organisational dependence and degrees of inter-organisational relationships under varying industry conditions are needed to identify differences in the behavioural aspects by which these processes are dominated more clearly. One of the most powerful research methods would be the observation of negotiation processes taking place within different contexts, whereby meaningful studies on complex scenarios would have to be longitudinal to facilitate assessment of different stages within the negotiation process as well as an assessment of negotiation outcomes. Researchers are likely to be challenged by restrictions to access or limits to the timescale or scope of their studies and will therefore have to be creative in devising feasible as well as meaningful methodologies.

The purpose of this paper was to explore potential influences on negotiation patterns within a specific industry context. Hence, it had primarily drawn upon previous studies relevant to the resort industry. The intention was to seek a starting point for a series of more scientific and specific studies. At a more analytical level, analogous applications would inform the choice of suitable research methodologies and assist in evaluating the scope for a wider generalisation of future findings.

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