Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Social Psychology and Humanity Studies
DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.32347

The Impact of Human-Oriented Conflict Resolution Mechanisms on Team Maturity in University Student Startup Teams: The Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Zhaoxun Cao[1*], Hexing Ke[1]

[1]*Faculty of Finance, Economics and Law, Jingdezhen Vocational University of Art, Jingdezhen, China*

**Corresponding Author. Email: caozhaoxun@163.com*

Abstract. The entrepreneurial groups of college students are faced with difficulties in solving people-centered conflicts (statements on the levels of values, emotions and cognitions), and do not take full advantage of the organizations support, which prevents the emergence of the team maturity. To solve this problem, the current study has performed systematic content analysis of 139 research texts (comprising of academic literature, policy documents as well as practical cases). The findings of the research made three major discoveries: firstly, the effects of people-based conflict resolution mechanisms on team maturity exhibit dimension-specific relationships: value mediation seniority privileges primarily goal consensus, emotional guidance privileges general efficiency, and cognitive synergy privileges risk resilience significantly. Secondly, apparent organizational backing does a significant positive moderating role. Being perceived as supported by the policy enhances the relationship between the mediation of value and goal consensus and the relationship between cognitive synergy and risk resilience. Perceived University-Enterprise support has the greatest moderating influence on the association between emotional guidance and collaboration efficiency and perceived social resource support principally supports the influence of cognitive synergy on risk resilience. Thirdly, there is a great deal of heterogeneity: The teams at the public universities have more policy support and cognitive synergy, whereas the teams at the private universities have more industrial collaboration to compensate lack of resources; technology-oriented teams benefit most of cognitive synergy, and service-oriented teams require priority emotional guidance. This paper conceptually explains the route in between people-focused conflict management and group maturity and offers a more practical and differentiated approaches to the stakeholders.

Keywords: People-centered conflict resolution, Team maturity, Perceived organizational support, College student entrepreneurial teams, Content analysis

© 2026 The Authors. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.32347

1. Introduction

Driven by the national innovation-driven development strategy, university student start-up teams have emerged as a vital force in enhancing the country's innovative capacity. Nonetheless, many of these teams grapple with a triad of challenges: persistent human-oriented conflicts, underutilised organisational support, and stagnant team maturity [1]. Unlike more apparent task or resource conflicts, deep-rooted human-oriented conflict—entailing value discrepancies, interpersonal frictions, and cognitive differences—often prove more detrimental, frequently acting as the underlying cause of team fragmentation or project failure [2]. Despite increasing support from governments and universities, a significant disconnect often exists between the provision of organisational resources and teams' ability to perceive and leverage them effectively [3].

The current studies have provided the basis of research of team conflicts though there are still gaps. To begin with, despite the fact that task conflicts and resource conflicts are the major concern of studies [4], research on people-centered conflicts and how they are resolved is incomplete. The value cultivation [5] or interpersonal mediation in female teams [6] was briefly mentioned in scattered literature but a reliable theoretical framework that would incorporate the theory of value mediation, emotional guidance, and cognitive synergy has not yet been provided and no empirical relationship between the three mechanisms and team performance had been reported. Secondly, concerning team maturity (which can be defined as a composite factor of goal consensus, collaboration efficiency, and risk resilience) [7], the majority of the antecedent research concentrated on the experiences and professionalism of projects [8], but it has failed to address the critical issue of conflict resolution processes. Last but not the least, the moderating effect of external environment (specifically, perceived organizational support [POS]) in the path of conflict resolution - maturity has been neglected. Though research has indicated that the governmental or industrial support may help in decreasing the development barriers [9], the way in which POS may control the level of efficiency in the mechanism in the interior has not been explained. To address these gaps, this research uses a systematic content analysis tool to examine 139 research texts (academic literature, policy documents, and case studies) in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

(1) In what ways are different dimensions of people-centered conflict resolution mechanisms (value mediation, emotional guidance, cognitive synergy) differentiated to influence the dimensions of team maturity (goal consensus, collaboration efficiency, risk resilience)?

(2) These relationships are moderated by perceived organizational support (policies, university-enterprise cooperation, social resources)? What then are the mechanisms, if so?

(3) Are the relationships of heterogeneity between institutions in the diversity of types of universities (public/private), team types (technology-oriented/service-oriented)?

The theoretical value of this study is that it has given a systematic explanation of the dimension specific trajectories between people-oriented conflict resolution and team maturity and presented a perceived organizational support as one of the moderating variables. On a pragmatic level, the findings of the research offer evidence-based practices of policy makers to support the system better, and of universities to introduce tailored training services, as well as of teams to improve their abilities to practice self-regulation.

2. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design and employs systematic content analysis. This methodological choice is made due to its advantages in extracting conceptual patterns and constructing theoretical frameworks from qualitative textual data.

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.32347

2.1. Data collection

This dataset consists of 139 carefully selected texts, aiming to comprehensively cover the interrelationships among the variables. The text sources include three channels: (1) 82 peer-reviewed academic papers from the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database; (2) 27 policy documents on innovation and entrepreneurship issued by the national and local governments; (3) 30 case reports of entrepreneurial teams from university incubators and competitions. Two researchers independently carried out a three-step sampling procedure - initial screening, secondary screening, and saturation testing. After coding 139 texts, theoretical saturation was achieved, and no new concepts or relationship categories emerged.

2.2. Data analysis

2.2.1. Three-level coding

Based on the principles of Strauss' grounded theory [10], the text was subjected to open, axial, and selective coding. This process began with the extraction of 89 initial concepts (such as "value consensus building", "cognition of policy subsidies"). Subsequently, these concepts were classified into three core constructs and their corresponding dimensions (see Table 1). Selective coding then integrated these constructs into 12 typical "mechanism-support-maturity" path frameworks.

2.2.2. Moderating effect analysis

To explore the moderating effect of perceived organizational support, this study divided 110 texts containing complete variable relationships into a high-perceived group (n=62) and a low-perceived group (n=48) based on the intensity of the described support. By comparing the frequency of the effective mechanism-maturity relationship between the two groups (for example, the effectiveness of the effective mechanism-maturity relationship in the high-support group was 82.3%, while in the low-support group it was 43.8%), the direction and intensity of the moderating effect were quantified.

2.2.3. Rigour and trustworthiness

To ensure the rigor of the analysis, the inter-rater reliability among coders (the Kappa coefficient for open coding = 0.87) and the test-retest reliability (an 89.2% consistency) were evaluated. The validity was established through content validity expert review (with scores of > 4.2/5 from three domain experts) and triangulation validation (78.5% consistency between academic text and case study text descriptions).

Table 1. Core constructs and dimensions from the three-level coding

Core Construct	Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3
Human-Oriented Conflict Resolution	Values Mediation	Emotional Guidance	Cognitive Synergy
Perceived Organisational Support	Policy Support	University-Industry Support	Social Resource Support
Team Maturity	Goal Consensus	Collaboration Efficiency	Risk Resilience

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.32347

3. Result

The systematic coding of 139 texts revealed significant patterns among the variables. The research results clearly indicated that the impact of person-oriented conflict resolution mechanisms on team maturity is both dimension-specific and significantly moderated by the perceived organizational support.

3.1. Main effects of conflict resolution mechanisms

An analysis of 89 texts that expound on the 'mechanism-maturity' relationship reveals that each mechanism has distinct and differentiated influence paths (see Table 2). Value mediation mainly enhances target consensus (92.5% of the relevant texts support this), emotional guidance is closely related to collaboration efficiency (91.4%), and cognitive collaboration mainly improves risk resilience (90.5%). The weaker correlations of other paths indicate that there are specific matching relationships between each mechanism and specific maturity outcomes.

Table 2. Main effects of human-oriented conflict resolution mechanisms on team maturity (N=89)

Mechanism	Primary Outcome	Supporting Texts	Exemplary Evidence
Values Mediation	Goal Consensus	92.5% (62/67)	Values workshops increased goal consensus scores by 38.6%
Emotional Guidance	Collaboration Efficiency	91.4% (53/58)	Emotional mediation reduced conflict frequency by 51.2%
Cognitive Synergy	Risk Resilience	90.5% (57/63)	Cognitive synergy lowered project failure rates by 28.3%

3.2. Moderating role of perceived organisational support

The inter-group comparison of 110 valid texts indicates that the perceived organizational support has a systematic positive moderating effect (see Table 3). The effectiveness of all conflict resolution mechanisms is significantly higher in the high support perception group than in the low support group. The university-industry support perception shows the strongest moderating effect, especially in amplifying the "emotional guidance → collaboration efficiency" path (the effectiveness of the high support group is 79.0%, and that of the low support group is 39.6%).

Table 3. Analysis of the moderating effects (High-perception group: n=62; Low-perception group: n=48)

Moderator Dimension	Core Pathway Moderated	Effectiveness (High-Group)	Effectiveness (Low-Group)
Policy Support	Values Mediation → Goal Consensus	82.3%	43.8%
	Cognitive Synergy → Risk Resilience	74.2%	37.5%
Uni-Industry Support	Emotional Guidance → Collab. Efficiency	79.0%	39.6%
	Cognitive Synergy → Risk Resilience	85.5%	45.8%
Social Resource Support	Cognitive Synergy → Risk Resilience	66.1%	35.4%

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.32347

3.3. Heterogeneity analysis

The heterogeneity analysis revealed significant boundary conditions (see Table 4). The public university teams benefited more from policy support and cognitive synergy effects, while the private university teams relied more on industrial collaboration. The maturity of the technology-oriented teams was centered on cognitive synergy, and the success of the service-oriented teams was based on emotional guidance. These findings provide precise empirical evidence for the formulation of differentiated strategies.

Table 4. Summary of heterogeneity analysis based on university and team type

Category	Type	Most Salient Pathway	Key Support Dimension
University Type	Public	Cognitive Synergy → Risk Resilience	Policy Support
	Private	Emotional Guidance → Collab. Efficiency	Uni-Industry Support
Team Type	Technology-Oriented	Cognitive Synergy → Risk Resilience	Uni-Industry Support
	Service-Oriented	Emotional Guidance → Collab. Efficiency	Social Resource Support

4. Discussion

4.1. Interpretation of key findings

The study shows that conflict resolution mechanisms are dimension-specifically correlated with the team maturity, meaning that team maturity cannot be improved in a universal manner. Certain steps have to be implemented: Value mediation facilitates the consensus of goals by creating a shared vision; Emotional guidance helps to work more efficiently due to the increase in interpersonal trust and communication levels; Cognitive synergy allows becoming more resilient before risks because diverse knowledge bases are integrated. This discovery disrupts the classical research paradigm in which conflict resolution is being perceived as one concept [11], offering a closer look at analysis of the theoretical understanding.

Considerable positive moderating effect of perceived organizational support proves the main concept of internal and external synergy. The appropriate functioning of the team is determined by the empowering power of the external resource environment. Institutional and financial assurances on value coordination and cognitive efforts are offered by policy support; practical practice and mentor mentors inject cognitive efforts into the team, streamlining emotional interaction and cognitive structures; Social resources increase the cognitive capacity of the team and its resilience to risk. This result has immediate responses to the scholarly debate on the influence of organizational support on the team operation mechanism [12], the most coherent way to reach the synergy is to increase the effectiveness of internal mechanisms.

4.2. Theoretical contributions

To begin with, this paper syntactically developed a human-centered three-dimensional model of conflict resolution based on a patchy array of insights and compensated other gaps in current literature on the topic of humanistic conflict research. Secondly, the researchers have identified the vitality of organizational perceived support as a regulation factor in the situation of transformation process of conflict-maturity, as they have effectively linked external environmental variables to the team internal processes, which to a large extent puts value on the situational theory in the study of

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.32347

entrepreneurship [13]. Thirdly, this study determined that there was much heterogeneity in diverse contexts, which helped in defining the boundary conditions of the proposed model, which contributed greatly to the explanatory power and generality of the model.

4.3. Practical implications

The support measures must be different depending on the nature of the institutions to the policy makers and university administrators. As to technology-focused teams, they require most of the resources that can facilitate cognitive collaboration (like industrial R&D collaboration), whereas service-oriented teams require more emotional guidance assistance (like communication training, customer connection). As an educator, conflict resolution education must be incorporated within the system of entrepreneurship curriculum and its materials must be adjusted as per certain mechanisms. On the one hand, the guidance plans must be different in the case of the public and private universities due to the features of their resources. To start-up teams in particular, the realization of mechanism alignment is vital to develop. The team must be proactive in the diagnosis of the primary conflict types, identify the applicable exterior resources, and create a "conflict log" in a bid to realize life-long learning and refinement.

5. Conclusion

This study, through a systematic analysis of 139 different texts, confirmed that the conflict resolution mechanism centered around people in college entrepreneurship teams has a dimension-specific impact on team maturity, and this relationship is positively regulated by the systematic organizational support perceived. The study found significant differences among different universities and team types, highlighting the necessity of adopting a contextual approach. Overall, these findings clearly illustrate the path from the conflict resolution centered around people to team maturity, providing a solid theoretical framework and empirical basis for supporting the development of entrepreneurial teams.

This study has several limitations. Firstly, reliance on public texts may lead to selection bias. Future research can use mixed methods (such as questionnaires and interviews) for cross-validation. Secondly, content analysis method has inherent static nature and requires longitudinal research to capture the dynamic evolution of variables. Future research can explore the impact of digital tools on conflict resolution or apply this framework to emerging team types (such as rural revitalization and cross-border e-commerce teams) to verify and expand its universality.

Acknowledgement

This work was supported by the Research Grant from the 2025 Jiangxi Provincial Private Funding Doctoral Research Special Project at Jingdezhen Vocational University of Art (Grant No. JVUASZZX202522).

References

[1] O'Neill, T., McLarnon, M., Hoffart, G., Woodley, H., & Allen, N. (2018). The Structure and Function of Team Conflict State Profiles. Journal of Management, 44, 811-836.
[2] Davaei, M., Gunkel, M., Veglio, V., & Taras, V. (2022). The influence of cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence on conflict occurrence and performance in global virtual teams. Journal of International Management.
[3] Kurtessis, J., Eisenberger, R., Ford, M., Buffardi, L., Stewart, K., & Adis, C. (2017). Perceived Organizational Support: A Meta-Analytic Evaluation of Organizational Support Theory. Journal of Management, 43, 1854-1884.

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.32347

[4] Caputo, A., Kargina, M., & Pellegrini, M. (2022). Conflict in virtual teams: a bibliometric analysis, systematic review, and research agenda. International Journal of Conflict Management.
[5] Coronado-Maldonado, I., & Benítez-Márquez, M. (2023). Emotional intelligence, leadership, and work teams: A hybrid literature review. Heliyon, 9.
[6] Rahim, M., & Katz, J. (2019). Forty years of conflict: the effects of gender and generation on conflict-management strategies. International Journal of Conflict Management.
[7] Hartwig, A., Clarke, S., Johnson, S., & Willis, S. (2020). Workplace team resilience: A systematic review and conceptual development. Organizational Psychology Review, 10, 169-200.
[8] Baviera, T., Baviera-Puig, A., & Escribá-Pérez, C. (2022). Assessing Team Member Effectiveness among higher education students using 180° perspective. The International Journal of Management Education.
[9] Murakami, Y. (2025). Impact of Diverse Support on Performance of Industry–Academia Collaborative Research Teams. European Conference on Knowledge Management.
[10] Kenny M. et al. Contrasting classic, straussian, and constructivist grounded theory: Methodological and philosophical conflicts [J]. Qualitative Report, 2015, 20(8): 1270-1289.
[11] Jehn, K., Greer, L., Levine, S., & Szulanski, G. (2008). The Effects of Conflict Types, Dimensions, and Emergent States on Group Outcomes. Group Decision and Negotiation, 17, 465-495.
[12] Kennedy, F., Loughry, M., Klammer, T., & Beyerlein, M. (2009). Effects of Organizational Support on Potency in Work Teams. Small Group Research, 40, 72-93.
[13] Ahsan, M., Adomako, S., & Mole, K. (2020). Perceived institutional support and small venture performance: The mediating role of entrepreneurial persistence. International Small Business Journal: Researching Entrepreneurship, 39, 18-39.