

## **Models for intercultural collaboration and negotiation**

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Full Text

Several books related to intercultural collaboration and negotiation exist. However, this one, published in Springer's "Advances in Group Decision and Negotiation" series, provides a theoretical approach. It is well balanced and presents many different points of view on the subject.

The book begins with a chapter that formally defines culture as a set of agents. The authors specifically state: "Culture is a slippery and ubiquitous concept." They back up their statement with a discussion of the historical evolution of culture and culture's basic traits: knowledge, behavior, norms, rules, and beliefs. Their pairwise comparison approach to the definition of culture is innovative and creative, since a pair is the irreducible set capable of expressing even the most complex relationships in a population of any size. After all, every human interaction comes down to a certain number of pairs.

Another chapter, "Toward a Contextualized Cultural Framework," moves beyond the traditional value-based approach to culture. It extends our current view of culture by identifying the conditions under which values, attitudes, and beliefs shape behavior differently across cultures.

The book includes three chapters with "conflict" in the title: "Negotiating Cultural Conflicts Over Sacred Values," "Studying Trajectories of Conflict Escalation," and "Modeling Dynamics of Multicultural Integration and Conflict." Besides the first of these, there are two other chapters related to negotiation: "A Game-Theoretic Approach to Modeling Cross-Cultural Negotiation" and "Inter-Cultural Opponent Behavior Modeling in a [Partially Observable Markov Decision Process, POMDP] Based Automated Negotiating Agent."

It is a bit disappointing that the word "Internet" neither appears in the index nor in any chapter title. However, the book content is fully applicable to the Internet. Another reasonable explanation is that the Internet has not developed a proper organizational culture that is especially viable in cases of child pornography and other kinds of computer contaminants. In fact, the theoretical research presented in this book could accelerate the cultural development of the Internet.