Abstract:
Conflict researchers have recently started to examine the multilevel nature of intrateam conflict. Yet, scant attention has been paid to the multilevel process through which such conflict is managed. To advance this research stream, our study investigates the individual-team interface in relationship conflict management. Specifically, we investigate how within-team variations of relationship conflict management approaches (i.e., relative collaborating, competing, and avoiding) interplay with team-level average relationship conflict management approaches (i.e., team average collaborating, competing, and avoiding) to jointly impact individual members’ experience with relationship conflict. Analyzing time-lagged data from 329 employees in 61 teams, we found that relative collaborating could effectively reduce a focal member’s relationship conflict, while relative competing exacerbated a focal member’s relationship conflict. Relationship conflict, in turn, led to lower in-role job performance and job satisfaction. In addition, the effects of relative collaborating, competing, and avoiding on relationship conflict were moderated by team average relationship conflict management approaches, which highlights the importance of considering compatibility between individual idiosyncratic conflict management approaches and team-level conflict management approaches.