Conflict Resolution Quarterly

WILEY

RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

How We Think About People: Beliefs About Human Nature in the Explanation of Conflict Behavior

Adrian Landwehr[1] | Isabel T. Strubel[1] | Elisabeth Kals[1] | Jürgen Maes[2]

[1]Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Eichstätt, Germany | [2]University of the Armed Forces, Munich, Neubiberg, Germany

Correspondence: Adrian Landwehr (adr.landwehr@gmail.com)

Received: 4 November 2024 | **Revised:** 3 June 2025 | **Accepted:** 26 July 2025

Funding: This work was supported by German Federal Ministry of Defense.

Keywords: conflict resolution | helpful | human nature | self-serving | theory of planned behavior

ABSTRACT

For decades, researchers have dealt with how human nature influences behavior in conflicts. Today, it is recognized that subjective beliefs about human nature play a significant role in conflict situations. This was also acknowledged in studies using the theory of planned behavior to explain conflict behavior as the potential for integrating beliefs about human nature was highlighted there, too. In this longitudinal study, with a representative sample of the German population ($N = 906$), we applied the theory of planned behavior to social conflict contexts to explain cooperative conflict behavior. Specifically, we examined how beliefs that people are generally self-serving or helpful interact with attitudes and perceived behavioral control impacting conflict-related intentions and behavior. A path model supported the hypothesis that viewing humans as self-serving strengthens the effect of positive attitudes toward conflict on intentions to act cooperatively. This means that assumed self-interest may facilitate cooperative behavior in conflict, as individuals may perceive cooperation as an opportunity for mutual gain. Moreover, the belief that people are helpful enhances the influence of perceived behavioral control on intentions to cooperate, as individuals may assume their cooperation will be reciprocated. In sum, we successfully applied and supported the theory of planned behavior to the context of social conflicts and further demonstrated that beliefs about human nature provide a meaningful addition to understanding conflict intentions and behavior. Given the innovative nature of these findings, further research on the role of such beliefs in conflict behavior is warranted.

1 | Introduction

In social psychology and beyond, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) is a well-established model for explaining behavior across a wide range of contexts (Ajzen 2020). This theory has also been successfully applied in the field of conflict behavior and validated as an empirical model for behavioral explanation in this context (Alok et al. 2014; Dodoiu 2015). In studies based on the TPB, there is considerable empirical evidence (Alok et al. 2014) and theoretical reasoning (Cialdini et al. 1990) suggesting that subjective beliefs about people play a crucial role in explaining conflict behavior, though this link requires further empirical investigation. Such beliefs correspond to the beliefs about human nature approach, which involves subjective assumptions about how people are in general (Burkitt 2013; Fahrenberg 2006; Landwehr et al. 2024). They are relatively stable beliefs about inherent attributes of humans that can be held conscious as well as unconscious (Landwehr et al. 2024). It has been proven that such assumptions influence social interactions (Cuadra Martínez et al. 2018; McEntyre and Richards 2023) and there are theoretical arguments that they are relevant to conflict behavior in particular (Dweck and Ehrlinger 2006).

Two of the most discussed assumptions in the context of conflicts were humans being inherently self-serving and/or helpful: conflict behavior has often been argued to stem

from the assumption that people are self-serving (Miller and Ratner 1996), as opposing interests often lead to conflict due to normative convictions. However, there are various types of conflict; conflicts over competing interests are just one type (Törnblom and Kazemi 2012). This differentiation should be reflected in the subjective beliefs that underlie actions in conflicts: self-interest is only one of several widespread basic assumptions (Folger and Salvador 2008; Kals 1999). Another possible basic assumption is that people are inherently helpful. This idea has been extensively researched in the context of helping behavior (Rusch 2014) and reflects a long-standing debate within social psychology about the extent to which people are altruistic versus egoistic - a dichotomous discussion that has largely been resolved: the assumption of helpfulness does not necessarily contradict other beliefs, such as the notion that people are self-serving (Bshary et al. 2016). Behavior is not solely self-serving or altruistic; rather, multiple assumptions should be considered in a joint approach (Fehr and Gintis 2007).

Data confirm the simultaneous significance of such beliefs, both for one's own behavior (Oettingen et al. 2009) and for the behavior of others (Cuadra Martínez et al. 2018; McEntyre and Richards 2023). Initial research indicates that this also applies to actions in sustainability conflicts (Landwehr et al. 2024) and conflict resolution behavior in general (Dweck and Ehrlinger 2006). This supports the notion that the understanding of conflict resolution behavior could be enhanced by incorporating subjective beliefs about human nature, like the ones about humans being self-serving and helpful. Yet there is a research gap here, as there is no empirical evidence to date of the extent to which individual assumptions about people contribute to the explanation of conflict resolution behavior. Closing this research gap would enhance the empirical understanding of conflict behavior and contribute to the aforementioned literature on how the perception of human nature can be integrated into this explanation (Dweck and Ehrlinger 2006; Miller and Ratner 1996).

In order to provide this evidence, an investigation using the TPB appears reasonable, since there have been applications to conflict resolution behavior already incorporating variables that are comparable to subjective beliefs about people (Dodoiu 2015): two empirical explanatory models for conflict behavior were found that included variables suggesting the relevance of beliefs about humans. Alok et al. (2014) incorporated two variables that are both specific beliefs that exist as a function of experiences with a particular social environment, and Dodoiu (2015) argues for supplementing the TPB with more stable, situation-independent variables as further predictors for conflict resolution behavior. In order to build on this existing empirical research, a research model based on the TPB therefore appears to be appropriate. Furthermore, these two studies, which serve as the central basis for this paper, each examined specific conflict resolution styles, including cooperative conflict behavior. In order to tie in as clearly as possible with existing research, it makes sense to also consider conflict resolution behavior.

By empirically examining the influence of subjective beliefs about humans on conflict behavior, this study expands the existing literature on the role of human nature in conflict dynamics. Thus far, scholarly work in this area has predominantly centered on theoretical reflections concerning the ways in which seemingly objective conceptions of human nature inform and shape conflict dynamics. Empirical data, however, is missing. Regarding the wider field of social psychology, this study is a further step in the direction of establishing subjective beliefs about human nature in the explanation of individual behavior.

Consequently, in this study, we examine the role of beliefs about human nature in shaping conflict resolution behavior, using the TPB (Ajzen 1991) as the theoretical framework. First, we briefly review the relevant literature on the TPB and its application to conflict behavior. Second, we discuss why certain subjective beliefs could serve as a valuable extension of the theory within the context of social conflicts. Third, we describe the survey conducted and the methods employed. Fourth, we outline how beliefs that people are self-serving or helpful contribute to the explanation of cooperative conflict behavior within the TPB. Finally, we interpret and discuss the findings, focusing on theoretical and practical implications.

2 | Literature Review

2.1 | Theory of Planned Behavior Applied to Conflict Behavior

The TPB is a widely recognized model for explaining intentional behavior by examining predictors relevant across various domains (Ajzen 1991). Attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are seen as influences on individuals' intentions (Ajzen 2001). Attitudes are generalized evaluations of an entity based on experience, while subjective norm refers to the context-specific perception of what behavior is socially accepted and expected (Ajzen 1991). An individual's perception of how much influence their own actions have in a certain situation is referred to as perceived behavioral control (Ajzen 1991). An intention is the conscious purpose of showing a behavior. These variables serve as the primary predictors for planned behavior, while perceived behavioral control also has a direct influence on behavior (Ajzen 1991). These five variables are understood to be context-specific; for instance, attitudes toward climate change can affect intentions to buy low-emission products.

The TPB has been shown to be applicable across multiple contexts (Armitage and Conner 2001). While its applications are extensive, the following fields illustrate the broad scope and significance of the theory: pro-environmental behavior (Morren and Grinstein 2016), organic food (Scalco et al. 2017), and alcohol consumption (Cooke et al. 2016); entrepreneurial actions (Kautonen et al. 2015); physical activity among cancer survivors (Hirschey et al. 2020); and video game usage (Hamari and Keronen 2017). Thus, while the TPB has been applied widely in social psychology, its use in another core area of the field, namely explaining conflict behavior, remains relatively unexplored.

Despite this, initial results are promising and underscore the potential for empirical research on conflict behavior using the TPB. Alok et al. (2014) and Dodoiu (2015) demonstrated the TPB's applicability to the formation of conflict resolution styles. Both studies found that positive attitudes toward conflict predicted stronger intentions for specific conflict

resolution strategies. Dodoiu (2015) additionally observed that subjective conflict-related norms significantly impacted intentions for cooperative conflict resolution. Unlike Ajzen's (1991) original formulation, Alok et al. (2014) identified direct effects of different types of subjective norms on the conflict resolution styles obliging and dominating. Similarly, Dodoiu (2015) reported a strong relationship between subjective norms and cooperative conflict resolution. The third predictor of intentions and a direct predictor of behavior in the TPB is perceived behavioral control. Dodoiu (2015) found that intentions for cooperative conflict resolution and the according behavior were influenced by context-specific perceived behavioral control. Furthermore, looking at the TPB, the behavior is predicted by the associated intention (Ajzen 1991). As behavior in TPB studies is often measured using retrospective self-reports, Armitage and Conner (2001) examined whether these findings could reliably predict future behavior and successfully confirmed this relationship.

The conflict resolution styles examined by Alok et al. (2014) and Dodoiu (2015) using the TPB are grounded in the dual concern model (Pruitt and Carnevale 1993; Rahim and Bonoma 1979; Thomas and Kilmann 1974). This model categorizes five conflict resolution styles along two dimensions: consideration of one's own interests and the interests of others (Rubin et al. 1994). “Avoiding” disregards both sets of interests, “dominating” prioritizes only one's own interests, and “obliging” prioritizes only the interests of others. “Integrating” accounts for all parties' interests in pursuit of a win–win solution. In “compromising,” each party achieves part of what they want, though neither set of interests is fully met. Since compromising and integrating are often indistinct in survey measures (Sorenson et al. 1999), it can be useful to combine these categories into cooperative conflict behavior. So far, considering the studies by Alok et al. (2014) and Dodoiu (2015), obliging, dominating, and cooperative conflict behavior have been investigated using the TPB.

However, the research on these models suggests that an extension of the TPB could be beneficial, especially in the context of conflict behavior. Specifically, Dodoiu (2015) argues for supplementing the TPB with more stable, situation-independent variables as further predictors for conflict resolution behavior. Desivilya and Eizen (2005) endorse the relevance of relatively stable individual variables to the explanation of conflict behavior. Additionally, De Dreu and Vianen (2001) emphasize that conflict resolution style is strongly influenced by other people and, consequently, by one's subjective perceptions of them. Given that relatively stable, situation-independent variables and perceptions of others are relevant to conflict resolution behavior, subjective beliefs about human nature appear to be a reasonable complement for the explanation of cooperative conflict behavior.

Moreover, Cialdini et al. (1990) emphasized that besides subjective norms in terms of perceived social approval, the observations of what people actually do have an impact on behavior. Alok et al. (2014) incorporated a similar concept in their TPB-based model, which was used to explain intentions for conflict resolution but not behavior itself. They found support for structural assurance and domain-specific conflict efficacy influencing intentions for conflict resolution styles. These two variables are both specific beliefs that exist as a function of experiences with a particular social environment.

To sum up, the TPB has already been used several times as an established explanatory model for behavior, including the explanation of conflict resolution behavior (Alok et al. 2014; Dodoiu 2015). There are initial theoretical considerations and empirical indications (Alok et al. 2014) that subjective assumptions about the social environment, such as beliefs about human nature, can be an important addition to these models. Beyond the specific context of the TPB, there are further indications in the literature pointing to the relevance of beliefs about people for conflict resolution (Cialdini et al. 1990; Dweck and Ehrlinger 2006). This suggests that it makes sense to investigate subjective assumptions about human nature and their connection to conflicts as follows: In a TPB-based model for predicting conflict resolution behavior, beliefs about people can be a useful addition to behavioral prediction. Based on the existing studies (Alok et al. 2014; Dodoiu 2015), it can be assumed that these beliefs predict behavioral intentions in the model, although no statements can yet be made about possible interactions with the established predictors of the TPB and about which beliefs about humans are specifically relevant here.

Following clarification of the empirical framework model suitable for the investigation, the relationship between beliefs about human nature and conflicts will be addressed in more detail. Correspondingly, the concept of subjective beliefs about human nature and its connection to conflict behavior will be outlined in the following.

2.2 | Relevance of Beliefs About Human Nature in the Explanation of Behavior

Beyond the empirical explanation of conflict behavior based on the TPB, there seems to be a connection between assumptions about people and behavior in social conflicts. In the past, debates focused on which assumptions about people might be accurate and how they could explain conflicts (Miller and Ratner 1996; Montada 1984). Today, it is known that individuals' general views of people influence perception and behavior and are particularly relevant to conflict behavior (Cuadra Martínez et al. 2018; McEntyre and Richards 2023; Oettingen et al. 2009). Exemplarily, this could mean that someone assuming that people are asserting their own interests may not consider mutual help to resolve a conflict. If one believed that people are rather self-serving, they would tend to primarily stand up for their own interests.

Beliefs about human nature refer to individuals' assumptions about humans in general (Landwehr et al. 2024). By accounting for subjectivity, these beliefs encompass prior discussions about human nature, not by asserting specific characteristics as definitive but by incorporating the full range of previously discussed dimensions. They sidestep the debate on the “truth” about human nature, integrating various discussed dimensions without attempting to establish a single reality. Additionally, these discussions and existing psychological approaches reflect that beliefs about human nature are subjective judgments, given the diversity in views on human nature.

Beliefs about human nature relate to people in general and encompass a variety of human characteristics that are thought to be inherent. They are assumed to be relatively stable, existing both consciously and unconsciously, and influence individuals' thoughts, experiences, actions, and behaviors, especially in situations or domains where others are or could become relevant (Landwehr et al. 2024). Consequently, these beliefs hold potential relevance across various social situations or domains. This includes direct interactions, such as in social conflicts, but also extends to situations without direct contact, such as forming political attitudes when portrayed; social interactions in the sense of evaluations of these are relevant.

One early concept related to beliefs about people is the one of implicit theories, as introduced by Dweck and Leggett (1988). This model differentiates between "entity" and "incremental" theorists, referring to those who believe their abilities are fixed (entity) or changeable (incremental) (Dweck and Leggett 1988). Implicit theories are mainly discussed in motivational psychology, as they primarily affect what people believe they can achieve (Oettingen et al. 2009). But just like beliefs about human nature, they refer to all people and not just to oneself: There also is research on subjective theories about others. For instance, teachers' subjective theories about students and suitable educational methods have been shown to influence teachers' behavior, perceptions, and judgments of students in the classroom (Cuadra Martínez et al. 2018; McEntyre and Richards 2023). On top of that, Dweck and Ehrlinger (2006) outline how implicit theories influence conflict resolution behavior. Hence, such beliefs about people have been shown to influence behavior, while there is indication that they are also relevant to conflict behavior.

In the past, some specific assumptions about people have already been used to explain conflicts. However, the subjectivity of these assumptions has been neglected. Given the approaches described above, in which subjective assumptions were proven to influence behavior and specifically integrated into the explanation of conflict behavior within the framework of TPB, it appears reasonable to now examine the influence of beliefs about human nature in the context of conflict resolution. In the following paragraphs, we outline these existing approaches and how they can still be reconciled and used to explain conflict behavior when accounting for subjectivity.

2.3 | Beliefs About Humans to be Self-Serving and Helping in the Explanation of Social Conflicts

The specific assumption that humans are fundamentally self-serving has been applied to explain behavior across various contexts (Huang and Bargh 2014; Rost 2008), often serving to justify and thus reinforce self-serving behavior (Schwartz 1987). Self-serving behavior has particularly been posited as a core driver of social conflicts (Miller and Ratner 1996). Based on the assumption of self-interest as a human baseline, conflict explanations have tended to focus on clashing self-interests, often overlooking alternative explanations such as differing motives or situational factors. Therefore, this single assumption inaccurately represents human nature and insufficiently explains social conflict (Kals 1999; Törnblom and Kazemi 2012).

Accordingly, widening the scope toward motives beyond self-interest, some scholars argue that humans are naturally inclined toward helpfulness (Hoffman 1978; Rusch 2014; Warneken and Tomasello 2009). Within the context of social conflicts, some studies differentiate helping behaviors toward in-groups versus out-groups: during conflicts, helping behaviors are often enhanced within the in-group and reduced toward the out-group and substituted by self-serving behavior (Silva and Mace 2014). Other scholars argue that the compatibility of helpful and self-serving behaviors can vary by context (Bshary et al. 2016): there are situations in which self-serving behavior can also be helpful (Brown 1983; Hamilton 1971) and vice versa (Connor 1986). These arguments refer to scenarios where individuals' goals align: one person might support another to gain power, with the latter then advocating for the interests of the supporter. Beyond these specific arguments, psychology offers numerous well-established theories of human motivation, all of which acknowledge its multidimensionality and the joint relevance of motives in the explanation of behavior (Fehr and Gintis 2007; Heckhausen and Heckhausen 2018).

Yet, beliefs about people as self-serving and beliefs about people as helpful are already recognized in the literature as relevant to explaining conflict behavior (Miller and Ratner 1996; Silva and Mace 2014). Moreover, the points above underscore the importance of incorporating individual assumptions about people into explanations of behavior. Even within the relatively new application of the TPB to conflict behavior, there are indications supporting an extension of the model to include these beliefs. Nonetheless, empirical research can still be enriched by examining how subjective beliefs about people, particularly beliefs about people as self-serving and helpful, jointly contribute to explaining conflict behavior.

Building on this foundation, a closer examination of conflict resolution behavior through the lens of the TPB will provide a more nuanced understanding of these beliefs' influence. This study will first apply the TPB to cooperative conflict resolution behavior, then investigate how beliefs that humans are self-serving and helpful impact this behavior.

3 | Research Question and Hypotheses

Building on the literature and arguments considered above, the research question for this study is how the beliefs that humans are self-serving and helpful influence cooperative conflict behavior. The TPB with cooperative conflict behavior as criterion provides the foundation for the analyses: As proposed by Ajzen (1991) in his original theory, and by Alok et al. (2014) and Dodoiu (2015) in their applications to conflict resolution behavior, conflict-related attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are supposed to influence the intention for cooperative conflict resolution behavior. While attitudes have a mediated effect on cooperative conflict resolution behavior, the effects of subjective norms and behavioral control on the behavior are partly mediated by the intention (Alok et al. 2014; Dodoiu 2015). In line with Alok et al. (2014) and Dodoiu (2015), subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and intention have a direct effect on cooperative conflict resolution behavior each. Figure 1 provides an overview of the assumed model.

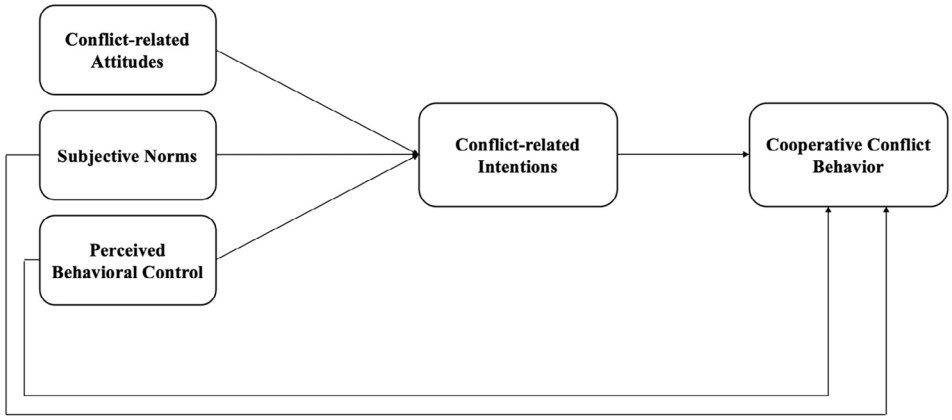

FIGURE 1 | Model of planned conflict resolution behavior.

Based on the theoretical considerations above, we assume that the subjective beliefs that people are self-serving and helpful contribute to the explanation of cooperative conflict behavior using the TPB. Still, the existing literature does not yet allow precise prediction of the effect mechanisms. This requires a targeted but explorative approach, which is explicated below. Following this, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1. *The belief that humans are inherently self-serving contributes to the explanation of cooperative conflict resolution behavior within the framework of the TPB.*

H2. *The belief that humans are inherently helpful contributes to the explanation of cooperative conflict resolution behavior within the framework of the TPB.*

4 | Methods

4.1 | Survey and Design

We used an online questionnaire to measure the variables of the TPB and beliefs about humans. Participants needed to fill out the survey, which took approximately 10 min at each administration, two times with 3 weeks in between to be included in the final sample. All items were answered on a scale from 1 ("*strongly disagree*") to 6 ("*strongly agree*") and were in the German language, which required adaptation for some of them.

Conflict-related attitudes: we chose Weh and Enaux (2008) as the base for three items covering positively worded attitudes.

Subjective norms: based on the work of Montada and Kals (2013), we selected three items considering their face validity.

Perceived behavioral control: we adapted three suitable items from the scale of Beierlein et al. (2012) to the context of conflicts.

Conflict-related intentions: we formulated three items based on the work of Fraij (2018).

Cooperative conflict behavior: we took four suitable items from the ROCI-II-D (Bilsky and Wülker 2000) that cover the behaviors of compromising and joint resolving.

Beliefs about human nature: based upon literature review and provided scales, the two facets were measured with one item each taken from Landwehr et al. (2024). The two items were taken from a short version of the scale, which is based on analyses with an exhaustive scale capturing beliefs about people.

In order to assess the reliability of the scales used, their internal consistency was calculated for both administrations as well as the test–retest reliability, being the intraclass correlation for the scales from the first and the second period. The values for Cronbach's alpha and intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC) are depicted in Table 1.

No internal consistency was calculated for the items used to assess beliefs, as each was measured with a single item representing one dimension each based upon Landwehr et al. (2024). This approach was chosen to meet the criterion of economy for a construct with comparatively high multifacetedness. Additionally, the selected items displayed in Table 1 demonstrate a high level of face validity. The intraclass correlation (ICC; Shrout and Fleiss 1979) was selected to calculate test–retest reliability (Aldridge et al. 2017). Following Shrout and Fleiss's (1979) guidelines, we employed the ICC(2,*k*) model for conflict variables and the ICC(2,1) model for beliefs, as the latter were single-item measures. While the coefficients for conflict variables exceeded the generally accepted threshold of 0.70, the values for beliefs were lower. However, many studies advocate for a more lenient interpretation of ICC scores (Cicchetti 1994; Ma et al. 2013): values below 0.40 are considered poor, 0.40–0.59 fair, 0.60–0.74 good, and 0.75 and above excellent. Based on this, we interpreted the ICCs for beliefs as fair. When evaluating these scores, it is important to note that beliefs were assessed last in the questionnaire, after participants had been prompted to reflect on conflicts from the past 3 weeks when answering conflict-related questions. Since these conflicts likely involved interactions with people exhibiting various behaviors, they may have influenced the beliefs captured immediately afterward, potentially introducing situation-dependent variance in the beliefs.

4.2 | Description of the Sample

For the survey, $N = 906$ participants completed the online questionnaire. At the time of the survey, all participants resided

TABLE 1 | Reliability of scales used with all items used.

Scale	Items (translated from German)	α_1	α_2	ICC
Conflict-related attitudes	I generally see conflicts as an opportunity.	0.85	0.86	0.84
	Positive things can develop from conflicts.			
	Conflicts offer the opportunity for personal development.			
Subjective norms	To resolve conflicts, it is important to look at the matter from different angles.	0.78	0.77	0.79
	To resolve conflicts, it is important to talk about what is perceived as fair.			
	To resolve conflicts, it is important to take the other person's perspective.			
Perceived behavioral control	I can rely on my skills in difficult conflict situations.	0.90	0.89	0.81
	I can manage most conflicts well on my own.			
	I can usually resolve even difficult and complex conflicts well.			
Conflict-related intentions	I am always prepared to question how I deal with conflicts.	0.80	0.80	0.77
	I am always prepared to think about how I could have acted better after a conflict situation.			
	I am always prepared to change the way I deal with conflicts.			
Cooperative conflict behavior	When problems arise, I try to find a solution with other people that meets everyone's expectations.	0.87	0.89	0.78
	Together with other people, I try to find decisions that are acceptable to everyone.			
	I am trying to find a compromise to get out of a dead end.			
	I generally suggest a middle way to get out of deadlocked situations.			
Beliefs about human nature	I think people are generally self-serving.			0.50
	I think people are generally helpful.			0.54

Note: α_1 is Cronbach's alpha of the scale from the first administration. α_2 is Cronbach's alpha of the scale from the second administration. ICC reflects the intraclass correlation of the scales from the first and second survey. In accordance with Shrout and Fleiss (1979), ICC(2,*k*) was chosen for the conflict variables and ICC (2,1) for the beliefs.

in Germany. The average age of participants was $M = 48.36$ ($SD = 13.73$) years, with a range from 18 to 69 years. Regarding gender, $n = 440$ participants identified as female, $n = 465$ as male, and $n = 1$ as diverse. Concerning education, $n = 194$ participants were categorized as having a low level of education ranging from no school diploma to a German Hauptschule diploma, $n = 311$ people indicated having an intermediate education level, and $n = 401$ respondents were classified as having a high level of education including high school graduates and anything higher.

To ensure the sample was representative of the German population, we predefined quotas for gender, age, and educational level. We met the preset quotas, including the targeted distribution of 21.4% for low, 34.3% for medium, and 44.3% for high education. Thereby, we were able to avoid distortions that could arise from a lack of representativeness in these areas. Recruitment was supported by a panel service provider. The test subjects for the survey were invited from a regularly screened and updated pool of 2.5 million members in accordance with the set quotas to participate in the study. In return, they received a small financial compensation of 2 € customary in the field. The panel service provider passed the audit for the ISO 20252:2019 standard, a certification for market, opinion, and social research ensuring a wide range of quality criteria. They also state that they strictly stick to data protection law and guidelines, including the DS-GVO. This includes obtaining informed consent from all respondents at the beginning of the survey. Prior to the study, an approval request (#157-23) was submitted to the ethics committee responsible, which was granted.

4.3 | Statistical Procedure

In the first step, linear regression analyses are conducted to test the TPB as described above (Ajzen 1991; Dodoiu 2015). In the second step, we investigate the connection of beliefs about humans to be self-serving and helpful to the explanation of cooperative conflict resolution behavior based on the TPB. For that purpose, we look at the impact of those beliefs and their interaction terms with the predictors on the conflict-related intentions. To check if they significantly contribute to the explanation of the criterion, we enter them in a second step in hierarchical regression analyses each, while the three predictors from the first regression are entered in the first step. For an additional predictor to be considered, there has to be a significant increase in the variance explained in the second step of the respective

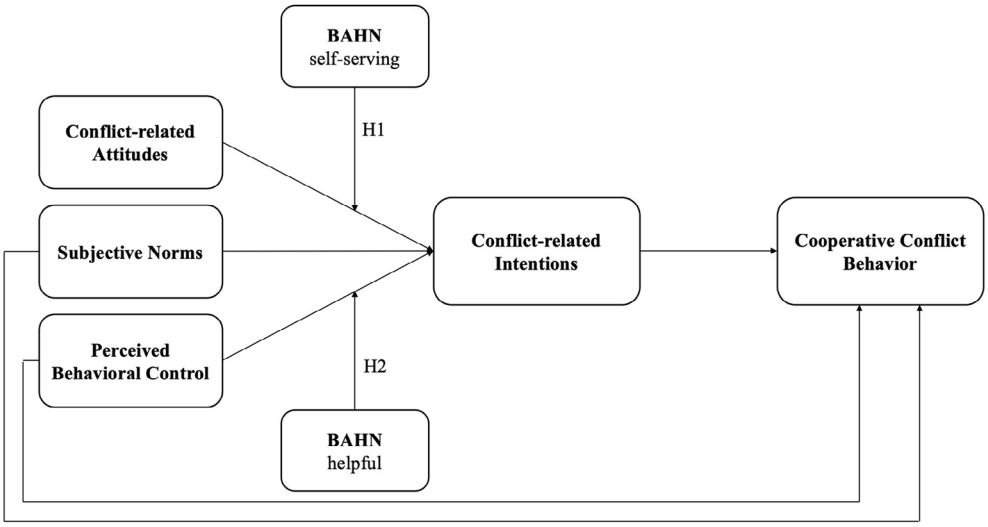

FIGURE 2 | Adapted model (post hoc) of planned conflict behavior including beliefs about human nature (BAHN) with hypotheses.

analysis. All interaction terms making a significant additional explanatory contribution in the prediction of the intentions are to be included in the main model. For a corresponding final test, we enter them together as predictors in a further hierarchical regression to additionally ensure that they jointly qualify for the prediction and to check whether the overall model can work.

5 | Results

First, the TPB as described above was confirmed through linear regression analyses. Second, two interaction terms made a highly significant ($p < 0.01$) additional explanatory contribution to the prediction of intentions in separate regressions. The additional predictors for the main model are the interaction terms between conflict-related attitudes and the belief that humans are self-serving, and between perceived behavioral control and the belief that humans are helpful. Third, both predictors jointly qualify for the prediction of conflict-related intentions, as they increase the explained variance in the criterion beyond the previously examined predictors.

With the final regression analyses confirming the proposed model, both hypotheses could be specified post hoc. Figure 2 provides an overview of the complete model with the adapted hypotheses.

H1 post hoc. *The positive influence of conflict-related attitudes on conflict-related intentions in the TPB explaining cooperative conflict resolution behavior is strengthened by the beliefs about humans to be self-serving.*

H2 post hoc. *The positive effect of perceived behavioral control on conflict-related intentions in the TPB explaining cooperative conflict resolution behavior is strengthened by the beliefs about humans to be helpful.*

To test both hypotheses, we calculated a path analysis using SEM. The model fit indices are CFI = 0.988, RMSEA = 0.063 with *PCLOSE* not being significant, and SRMR = 0.020. While the RMSEA value is acceptable (Browne and Cudeck 1993; Hoofs et al. 2018), the other values which can be judged as very good allow the interpretation of the combined characteristic values as a clear confirmation of the assumed model. Explained variance in the criterion variables is $R^2 = 0.46$ ($p < 0.01$) for conflict-related intentions and $R^2 = 0.30$ ($p < 0.01$) for cooperative conflict behavior. To provide an overview, the complete model with beta weights and variance explained in the dependent variables is illustrated in Figure 3.

As part of the overall model, we could confirm the two hypothesized moderations: conflict-related attitudes have a positive influence on conflict-related intentions, which is strengthened by the belief that people are self-serving ($\beta = 0.09$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, the influence of perceived behavioral control on intentions is positively moderated by the belief that people are helpful ($\beta = 0.06$, $p < 0.05$). The interaction effects on intentions for cooperative conflict behavior are visualized in Figures 4 and 5.

6 | Summary and Discussion

To sum up, there are various assumptions about human nature, and these subjective beliefs hold relevance across many contexts, including conflict behavior (Cialdini et al. 1990; Dweck and Ehrlinger 2006). Using the TPB, we aimed to explain cooperative conflict behavior and demonstrated how general beliefs about people contribute to behavioral explanations: believing that humans are self-serving strengthens the effect of attitude on intention, while assuming people are helpful enhances the impact of perceived behavioral control on intention. In the following, we will interpret the results, consider limitations, and discuss the implications we have derived.

Beginning with the interpretation of results related to beliefs about human nature, the belief that people are self-serving amplifies the positive influence of optimistic attitudes toward social conflicts on intentions for cooperative conflict behavior (Müller 2003; Müller et al. 2008). For individuals who perceive social conflicts as an opportunity and believe they can gain from them, the belief that people are self-serving reinforces their

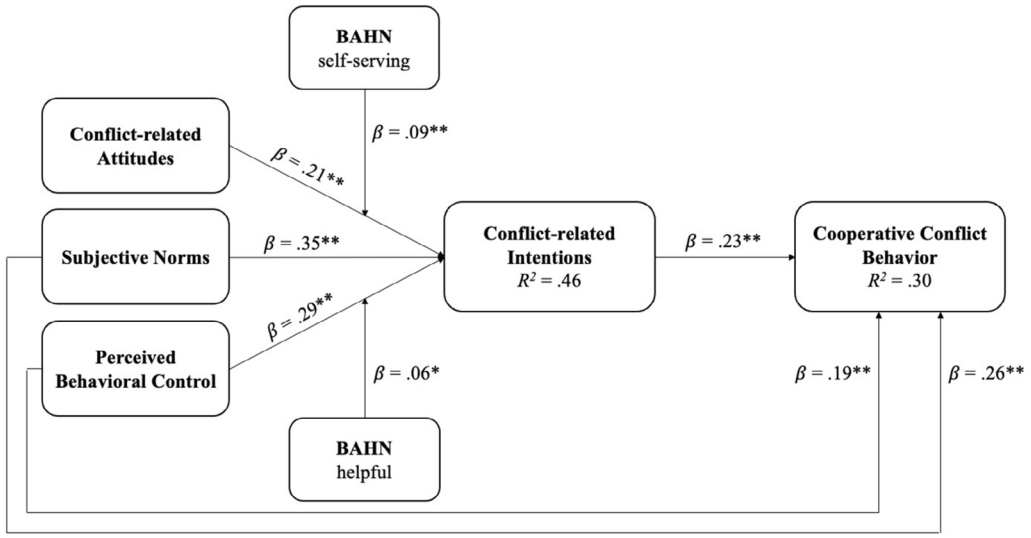

FIGURE 3 | Results of path analysis for the model of planned cooperative conflict behavior. *$0.01 < p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$ two-sided. [1]The beta weights for the moderations indicate the influence of the product of the moderator and predictor on the intermediate criterion.

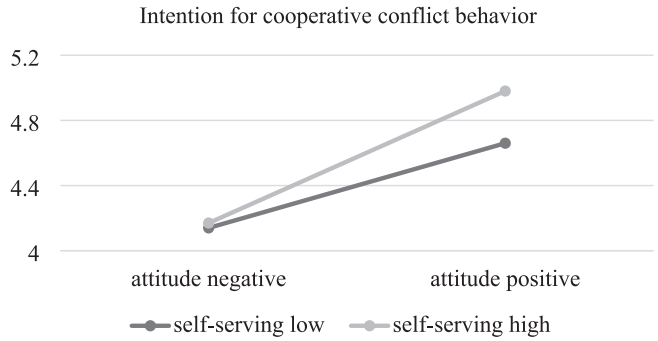

FIGURE 4 | Interaction effect of conflict-related attitudes with beliefs about humans to be self-serving on intention for cooperative conflict behavior.

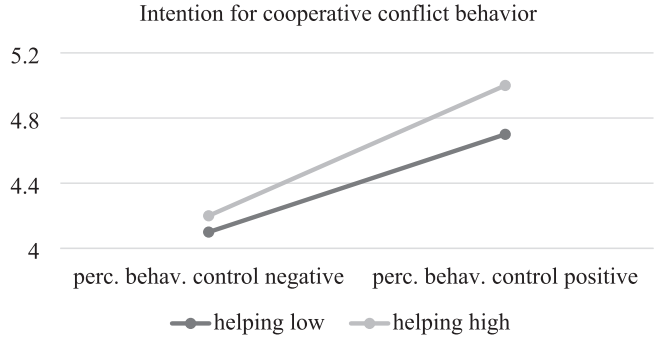

FIGURE 5 | Interaction effect of perceived behavioral control with beliefs about humans to be helpful on intention for cooperative conflict behavior.

intentions toward productive or cooperative conflict behavior. In cases where attitudes toward social conflicts are positive, self-serving conflict behavior may actually benefit all parties involved, as initially suggested in the *Homo oeconomicus* framework (Coase 1976). Thus, the expectation that people will act in a self-serving way may foster productive conflict resolution behavior under these specific conditions. Game theory as well provides a framework for understanding how self-serving behavior in conflicts can lead to cooperative outcomes (Axelrod and Hamilton 1981) supporting the gist of this finding.

We also found that believing humans are generally helpful amplifies the positive effect of perceived behavioral control on the intention for cooperative conflict behavior. Since perceiving one's own control strengthens behavioral intentions (Ajzen 1991), it seems plausible that assuming others are generally willing to help further reinforces this effect. Individuals who believe that others are supportive may expect that people will not hinder their control over their actions but will instead align with their intentions, thereby externally reinforcing their sense of control. This aligns with Ajzen and Madden's (1986) assertion that perceived behavioral control reflects the ease with which we believe we can act. Believing in others' helpfulness evidently supports this sense of ease, consequently enhancing the positive effect on people's intentions.

Originally, the TPB was developed to examine individual behavior. In our survey, we also asked for the behavior of individuals, but it was highly dependent on the social environment. While conflict resolution behavior can be planned individually in anticipation of foreseeable social conflicts, actual behavior within a conflict ultimately depends on the actions of others involved (Axelrod and Hamilton 1981; Thomas and Pondy 1977; Weisel and Zultan 2016). From this perspective, it seems reasonable to incorporate beliefs about others into the TPB in the context of social conflicts.

Revisiting prior debates on human nature, we argue that our study's findings provide further evidence for the significance of subjective beliefs about human nature in explaining behavior. This approach diverges from perspectives like *Homo oeconomicus* (Rost 2008; Thaler 2000), which positions humans as inherently self-serving and leads to normative implications (Ailon 2020). This model suggests that human behavior is primarily rational, aimed at maximizing utility, and thus entirely predictable (Krasser 1995). While this approach has gained

popularity, it faces significant criticism for inaccurately representing human nature and for being a deficient and misleading explanation for social conflict (Kals 1999; Törnblom and Kazemi 2012): First, it overlooks motives beyond self-interest. Psychology offers numerous well-established theories of human motivation, all of which acknowledge its multidimensionality (Fehr and Gintis 2007; Heckhausen and Heckhausen 2018). Second, positing a single motive as the basis for all human action can lead to tautological reasoning (Kals 1999). By prematurely excluding alternative explanations, allegedly objective views on human nature inhibit the discovery of new, scientifically and practically relevant insights. Third, the model has troubling social implications: it undervalues personal needs and socially beneficial actions, such as conflict handling and cooperation. Emphasizing self-interest legitimizes this motive, often at the expense of other explanations for behaviors that do not align with individual utility maximization (Folger and Salvador 2008; Kals 1999). Our findings support the critique of such deterministic concepts (Kals 1999). By focusing on subjective beliefs, diverse perspectives on human nature can be included. Additionally, this approach enables a more differentiated sight on assumed attributes like self-interest as it accounts for subjective manifestations of them. Taken together, the study presented offers support for the importance of subjective beliefs over allegedly objective notions of human nature. This study thus offers a further contribution to the debate about human nature and how it accounts for behavior: instead of establishing a new counter-position to previous theories, the aim is to incorporate diverse assumptions into the explanation of behavior.

6.1 | Limitations

It must be noted that the beta coefficients of the two relevant interaction effects found are rather small, like the variance explained by them. The hypotheses were confirmed since both interaction terms in the model turned out to be significant and the model as a whole showed a good fit. Given the modest effect sizes found, it is important to note that while the significance of these beliefs was statistically confirmed, their practical relevance appears to be less substantial than that of more context-specific variables.

Taking into account the kinds of interactions in which subjective assumptions about human behavior are particularly impactful, it appears likely that the effects observed in this study have been underestimated. There are distinctions in the relevance of beliefs about people for different individuals within our social environments: such beliefs are unique to each individual yet relevant to all people within someone's social sphere. However, most people do not hold the same views about everyone they encounter. This is likely because we base expectations on some kind of experiences (Bugg et al. 2015; Martin and Shilton 2016). Thus, we might expect these general assumptions about humans to play a smaller role when it comes to familiar interaction partners. Consequently, these beliefs are particularly significant in conflicts involving unfamiliar individuals and when interacting in large groups. There, we likely do not hold specific knowledge about some people, and the relevance of specific knowledge about single persons becomes lower with the group getting bigger. Respondents in our study, when reflecting on their own conflicts, may have predominantly considered conflicts with familiar partners, as these presumably occur more frequently in everyday life for most people.

Regarding external validity, it should be noted that this study surveyed self-reported past behavior. In a meta-analysis of the TPB, Armitage and Conner (2001) found that more variance can indeed be explained of self-reported past behavior than of actual future behavior. Still, the TPB allows us to predict approximately 20% of the variance in future behavior (Armitage and Conner 2001). Accordingly, when interpreting our results, it is essential to acknowledge this discrepancy in variance explanation between these two behavioral measures. Nevertheless, we collected behavior data at a later time than the intentions, so although we asked about self-reported past behavior, these findings may still provide insights into future behavior predictions.

Additionally, we must consider the findings of De Dreu et al. (1995), who identified a positive bias in self-assessments of conflict behavior, where individuals tend to rate their own behavior as more positive or cooperative than that of others. Given that our study relies on self-reported data, this bias is relevant. We attempted to mitigate it by keeping survey questions as specific as possible and focusing on conflicts within the past 3 weeks. However, this bias does not undermine comparability with other studies, as it likely influences most research to a similar extent. Furthermore, it is worth questioning whether other variables, such as positive attitudes or intentions toward conflicts, are also affected by this bias. If so, the relationships between variables would likely remain unaffected by the bias.

6.2 | Implications

In light of the finding that the belief that humans are self-serving enhances the influence of attitudes on intentions for cooperative conflict behavior, perceived self-interest, especially within social conflicts, should not be viewed solely as negative or destructive. When conflicts are seen as opportunities, the assumption of self-serving behavior can support win–win solutions that benefit all parties involved. Accordingly, we propose that examining self-interest in social conflict contexts should move beyond a narrow focus on potential conflicts of interest (Miller and Ratner 1996). Instead, we suggest openly considering these self-interests to understand the needs underlying self-serving actions and exploring how conflicting parties might address them collaboratively.

It is known that perspective-taking contributes to productive conflict resolution behavior (Garaigordobil 2012; Mukherjee and Upadhyay 2019). This study provides a further finding that indicates that the interests of others should be seen as beneficial and not necessarily as a hindrance in conflicts. This raises the question of how self-interests can best be mutually understood. The first step here is to conduct qualitative interviews to find out how people manage to understand the interests of others. The second step could then be a quantitative verification of the effectiveness of certain strategies.

The finding that the assumption that people are inclined to help (oneself), respectively, expected support strengthens the effect

of perceived behavioral control on intentions is plausible. Since this explanation appears conclusive regardless of the context of social conflicts, it is possible to include expected support together with perceived behavioral control in further studies of the TPB. The findings from this study point to an interaction effect. Another consideration to be investigated is whether expected support can contribute to the explanation of intention and behavior as part of or a supplement to perceived behavioral control. In this way, the findings of this study could further be used to expand the TPB in contexts in which the support of others is possibly beneficial toward intentions.

Moreover, subjective beliefs about humans can be purposefully addressed in social conflict resolution. Examining the assumptions underlying various actions can provide insight into a person's motives. A mediator or conflict coach might encourage parties in conflict to reflect on their core beliefs about people and consider how these might influence their actions. Additionally, understanding others' perspectives includes recognizing their beliefs. Finally, being aware of the influence of one's own beliefs allows individuals to reflect on and, if needed, adjust how these assumptions affect their behavior.

Specifically addressing the two beliefs examined here, perceptions of human self-interest can be approached in several ways. To start with, it is essential to acknowledge that everyone possesses a degree of self-interest. Further, we have to recognize that our assumptions about others' self-interest are inherently subjective, while perspective-taking enables us to become aware of both the existence and relevance of these interests. Still, engaging in explicit exchange and dialogue about interests, which is grounded in the first two steps and an openness to understanding them, is likely the most effective way to integrate self-interest into conflict resolution. Similarly, subjective assumptions about people's helpfulness can be examined in two ways. On one hand, this involves reflecting on how we perceive others' behavior as either supportive or obstructive. On the other hand, we should consider the potential impact of our own actions on others' efficacy. Once again, both reflections serve as a foundation for mutual exchange in conflict resolution.

7 | Conclusion

We found initial empirical evidence that beliefs about human nature influence actions in social conflicts. Specifically, we examined the impact of believing that humans are inherently self-serving and helpful on cooperative conflict resolution behavior. Accordingly, this study is an indication to incorporate beliefs about humans into the empirical explanation of conflict resolution behavior and presents an integrative approach to how the much-discussed nature of humans can be used to explain behavior. However, further research is necessary: a replication study, along with the use of additional methods such as qualitative interviews, would help to substantiate our findings. Additionally, the role of these beliefs in influencing other behaviors within social conflicts warrants deeper investigation. This would allow a fuller understanding of the impact of these beliefs. Also, such research could reinforce the notion that cooperative conflict behavior is not only rooted in traditional variables like self-efficacy but is also enhanced by a blend of beliefs about human nature—including the views that people can be both self-serving and helpful, benefiting both oneself and others.

Acknowledgments

Open Access funding enabled and organized by Projekt DEAL.

Ethics Statement

The responsible ethics committee granted our ethical approval request (#157-23) prior to the study.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

References

Ailon, G. 2020. "The Phenomenology of Homo Oeconomicus." *Sociological Theory* 38, no. 1: 36–50. https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275120904981.

Ajzen, I. 1991. "The Theory of Planned Behavior." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 50, no. 2: 179–211. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T.

Ajzen, I. 2001. "Nature and Operation of Attitudes." *Annual Review of Psychology* 52, no. 1: 27–58. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.27.

Ajzen, I. 2020. "The Theory of Planned Behavior: Frequently Asked Questions." *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies* 2, no. 4: 314–324. https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.195.

Ajzen, I., and T. J. Madden. 1986. "Prediction of Goal-Directed Behavior: Attitudes, Intentions, and Perceived Behavioral Control." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 22, no. 5: 453–474. https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031(86)90045-4.

Aldridge, V. K., T. M. Dovey, and A. Wade. 2017. "Assessing Test-Retest Reliability of Psychological Measures." *European Psychologist* 22, no. 4: 207–218. https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000298.

Alok, S., J. Raveertdran, and M. G. Prasuna. 2014. "Predicting the Conflict-Style Intention to Manage Relationship Conflict: An Exploratory Extension of Theory of Planned Behavior." *South Asian Journal of Management* 21, no. 1: 117–133.

Armitage, C. J., and M. Conner. 2001. "Efficacy of the Theory of Planned Behaviour: A Meta-Analytic Review." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 40, no. 4: 471–499. https://doi.org/10.1348/014466601164939.

Axelrod, R., and W. D. Hamilton. 1981. "The Evolution of Cooperation." *Science* 211, no. 4489: 1390–1396. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.7466396.

Beierlein, C., A. Kovaleva, C. J. Kemper, and B. Rammstedt. 2012. "ASKU—Allgemeine Selbstwirksamkeit Kurzskala." https://www.psycharchives.org/en/item/7c919fc-3879-4a60-b82f-22da32478285.

Bilsky, W., and A. Wülker. 2000. "Konfliktstile: Adapatation und Erprobung des Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROCI-II) [Conflict Styles: Adaptation and Empirical Test of the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (ROCI-II)]." Berichte aus dem Psychologischen Institut der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität Münster. http://www.psy.unimuenster.de/imperia/md/content/psychologie_institut_4/ae_bilsky/forschungsberichte_aefb_21neu.pdf.

Brown, J. L. 1983. "Cooperation—A Biologist's Dilemma." In *Advances in the Study of Behavior*, edited by J. S. Rosenblatt, 1–37. Academic Press.

Browne, M. W., and R. Cudeck. 1993. "Alternative Ways of Assessing Model Fit." In *Testing Structural Equation Models*, edited by K. A. Bollen and J. S. Long, 136–162. Sage.

Bshary, R., K. Zuberbühler, and C. P. Van Schaik. 2016. "Why Mutual Helping in Most Natural Systems Is Neither Conflict-Free nor Based on Maximal Conflict." *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, B: Biological Sciences* 371, no. 1687: 20150091. https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2015.0091.

Bugg, J. M., N. T. Diede, E. R. Cohen-Shikora, and D. Selmeczy. 2015. "Expectations and Experience: Dissociable Bases for Cognitive Control?" *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 41, no. 5: 1349–1373.

Burkitt, I. 2013. "Self and Others in the Field of Perception: The Role of Micro-Dialogue, Feeling, and Emotion in Perception." *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 33, no. 4: 267–279. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030255.

Cialdini, R. B., R. R. Reno, and C. A. Kallgren. 1990. "A Focus Theory of Normative Conduct: Recycling the Concept of Norms to Reduce Littering in Public Places." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 58, no. 6: 1015–1026. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.58.6.1015.

Cicchetti, D. V. 1994. "Guidelines, Criteria, and Rules of Thumb for Evaluating Normed and Standardized Assessment Instruments in Psychology." *Psychological Assessment* 6: 284–290.

Coase, R. H. 1976. "Adam Smith's View of Man." *Journal of Law and Economics* 19, no. 3: 529–546.

Connor, R. C. 1986. "Pseudo-Reciprocity—Investing in Mutualism." *Animal Behavior* 34: 1562–1566. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0003-3472(86)80225-1.

Cooke, R., M. Dahdah, P. Norman, and D. P. French. 2016. "How Well Does the Theory of Planned Behaviour Predict Alcohol Consumption? A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." *Health Psychology Review* 10, no. 2: 148–167.

Cuadra Martínez, D. J., J. Salgado Roa, F. Lería Dulčič, and N. Menares Ossandón. 2018. "Teorías Subjetivas en Docentes Sobre el Aprendizaje y Desarrollo Socioemocional: Un Estudio de Caso." *Revista Educación* 42, no. 2: 250–271.

De Dreu, C. K. W., A. Nauta, and E. van de Vliert. 1995. "Self-Serving Evaluations of Conflict Behavior and Escalation of the Dispute." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 25, no. 23: 2049–2066. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1995.tb02387.x.

De Dreu, C. K. W., and A. E. M. Vianen. 2001. "Managing Relationship Conflict and the Effectiveness of Organizational Teams." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 22, no. 3: 309–328.

Desivilya, H. S., and D. Eizen. 2005. "Conflict Management in Work Teams: The Role of Social Self-Efficacy and Group Identification." *International Journal of Conflict Management* 16, no. 2: 183–208. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb022928.

Dodoiu, G. 2015. "Intentions for Cooperative Conflict Resolution in Groups: An Application of the Theory of Planned Behavior." *Team Performance Management* 21, no. 5/6: 259–273. https://doi.org/10.1108/TPM-12-2014-0062.

Dweck, C. S., and J. Ehrlinger. 2006. "Implicit Theories and Conflict Resolution." In *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, edited by M. Deutsch, 317–330. Jossey-Bass.

Dweck, C. S., and E. L. Leggett. 1988. "A Social-Cognitive Approach to Personality and Motivation." *Psychological Review* 95: 256–273. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.95.2.256.

Fahrenberg, J. 2006. "Annahmen Über den Menschen. Eine Fragebogenstudie mit 800 Studierenden der Psychologie, Philosophie, Theologie und Naturwissenschaften." Forschungsberichte des Psychologischen Instituts der Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg im Breisgau. 164.

Fehr, E., and H. Gintis. 2007. "Human Motivation and Social Cooperation: Experimental and Analytical Foundations." *Annual Review of Sociology* 33, no. 1: 43–64.

Folger, R., and R. Salvador. 2008. "Is Management Theory Too "Self-Ish"?" *Journal of Management* 34, no. 6: 1127–1151. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308324321.

Fraij, A. 2018. "Skalendokumentation der Gießener Offensive Lehrerbildung und Reflexionsbereitschaft." Gießener Elektronische Bibliothek. https://jlupub.ub.uni-giessen.de/server/api/core/bitstreams/cc9f36d1-1387-4fd7-b1cb-660fd386e88d/content.

Garaigordobil, M. 2012. "Cooperative Conflict-Solving During Adolescence: Relationships With Cognitive-Behavioural and Predictor Variables." *Infancia y Aprendizaje* 35, no. 2: 151–165.

Hamari, J., and L. Keronen. 2017. "Why Do People Play Games? A Meta-Analysis." *International Journal of Information Management* 37, no. 3: 125–141.

Hamilton, W. D. 1971. "Geometry for the Selfish Herd." *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 31: 295–311. https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-5193(71)90189-5.

Heckhausen, J., and H. Heckhausen. 2018. *Motivation und Handeln*. Springer.

Hirschey, R., A. L. Bryant, C. Macek, et al. 2020. "Predicting Physical Activity Among Cancer Survivors: Meta-Analytic Path Modeling of Longitudinal Studies." *Health Psychology* 39, no. 4: 269–280.

Hoffman, M. L. 1978. "Psychological and Biological Perspectives on Altruism." *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 1: 323–339. https://doi.org/10.1177/016502547800100403.

Hoofs, H., R. van de Schoot, N. W. H. Jansen, and I. Kant. 2018. "Evaluating Model Fit in Bayesian Confirmatory Factor Analysis With Large Samples: Simulation Study Introducing the BRMSEA." *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 78, no. 4: 537–568. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164417709314.

Huang, J. Y., and J. A. Bargh. 2014. "The Selfish Goal: Autonomously Operating Motivational Structures as the Proximate Cause of Human Judgment and Behavior." *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 37, no. 2: 121–135. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X13000290.

Kals, E. 1999. "Der Mensch nur ein Zweckrationaler Entscheider?" *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie* 3: 267–293.

Kautonen, T., M. Van Gelderen, and M. Fink. 2015. "Robustness of the Theory of Planned Behavior in Predicting Entrepreneurial Intentions and Actions." *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 39, no. 3: 655–674.

Krasser, N. 1995. *Kritisch-Rationales Management: Gestaltungserfordernisse Fehlerarmer Entscheidungsprozesse*. Deutscher Universitäts-Verlag.

Landwehr, A., I. T. Strubel, J. Maes, and E. Kals. 2024. "Ist das Meine Verantwortung? Ein Plädoyer für die Beachtung von Menschenbildannahmen bei der Erklärung und Förderung nachhaltigen Handelns." *Konfliktdynamik* 13, no. 3: 180–189. https://doi.org/10.5771/2193-0147-2024-3-180.

Ma, X., T. L. Barnes, D. A. Freedman, B. A. Bell, N. Colabianchi, and A. D. Liese. 2013. "Test–Retest Reliability of a Questionnaire Measuring Perceptions of Neighborhood Food Environment." *Health & Place* 21: 65–69.

Martin, K., and K. Shilton. 2016. "Why Experience Matters to Privacy: How Context-Based Experience Moderates Consumer Privacy Expectations for Mobile Applications." *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 67, no. 8: 1871–1882.

McEntyre, K., and K. A. R. Richards. 2023. "Implementing Lessons Learned Through Occupational Socialization Theory to Influence Preservice Teachers' Subjective Theories." *Sport, Education and Society* 28, no. 2: 213–225.

Miller, D. T., and R. K. Ratner. 1996. "The Power of the Myth of Self-Interest." In *Current Societal Concerns About Justice*, edited by L. Montada and M. J. Lerner, 25–48. Plenum Press.

Montada, L. 1984. "Feindse–ligkeit—Friedfertigkeit." Berichte aus der Arbeitsgruppe Verantwortung, Gerechtigkeit, Moral. 26. https://doi.org/10.23668/psycharchives.8755.

Montada, L., and E. Kals. 2013. *Mediation: Psychologische Grundlagen und Perspektiven*. Beltz.

Morren, M., and A. Grinstein. 2016. "Explaining Environmental Behavior Across Borders: A Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 47: 91–106.

Mukherjee, K., and D. Upadhyay. 2019. "Effect of Mental Construals on Cooperative and Competitive Conflict Management Styles." *International Journal of Conflict Management* 30, no. 2: 202–226.

Müller, M. 2003. *Bedingungen der Konfliktlösung: Eine Gerechtigkeitspsychologische Untersuchung am Beispiel Eines Lokalen Umweltkonflikts*. Kovač.

Müller, M., E. Kals, and J. Maes. 2008. "Fairness, Self-Interest, and Cooperation in a Real-Life Conflict." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 38, no. 3: 684–704.

Oettingen, G., D. Mayer, A. Timur Sevincer, E. J. Stephens, H. J. Pak, and M. Hagenah. 2009. "Mental Contrasting and Goal Commitment: The Mediating Role of Energization." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 35, no. 5: 608–622.

Pruitt, D. G., and P. J. Carnevale. 1993. *Negotiation in Social Conflict*. Brooks/Cole.

Rahim, A., and T. V. Bonoma. 1979. "Managing Organizational Conflict: A Model Diagnosis and Intervention." *Psychological Reports* 44: 1323–1344. https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.1979.44.3c.1323.

Rost, N. 2008. "Der Homo Oeconomicus–Eine Fiktion der Standardökonomie." *Zeitschrift für Sozialökonomie* 45, no. 158–159: 50–58.

Rubin, J. Z., D. G. Pruitt, and S. H. Kim. 1994. *Social Conflict. Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*. 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill.

Rusch, H. 2014. "The Evolutionary Interplay of Intergroup Conflict and Altruism in Humans: A Review of Parochial Altruism Theory and Prospects for Its Extension." *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 281, no. 1794: 20141539. https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2014.1539.

Scalco, A., S. Noventa, R. Sartori, and A. Ceschi. 2017. "Predicting Organic Food Consumption: A Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Model Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior." *Appetite* 112: 235–248.

Schwartz, B. 1987. *The Battle for Human Nature: Science, Morality and Modern Life*. WW Norton & Company.

Shrout, P. E., and J. L. Fleiss. 1979. "Intraclass Correlation: Uses in Assessing Rater Reliability." *Psychological Bulletin* 86: 420–428.

Silva, A. S., and R. Mace. 2014. "Cooperation and Conflict: Field Experiments in Northern Ireland." *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 281, no. 1792: 20141435. https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2014.1435.

Sorenson, R. L., E. A. Morse, and G. T. Savage. 1999. "A Test of the Motivations Underlying Choice of Conflict Strategies in the Dual-Concern Model." *International Journal of Conflict Management* 10, no. 1: 25–44.

Thaler, R. H. 2000. "From *Homo economicus* to *Homo sapiens*." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14, no. 1: 133–141.

Thomas, K. W., and R. H. Kilmann. 1974. *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument*. Xicom.

Thomas, K. W., and L. R. Pondy. 1977. "Toward an "Intent" Model of Conflict Management Among Principal Parties." *Human Relations* 30: 1089–1102. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872677703001203.

Törnblom, K., and A. Kazemi. 2012. "Advances in Justice Conflict Conceptualization: A New Integrative Framework." In *Justice and Conflicts*, edited by E. Kals and J. Maes, 21–51. Springer.

Warneken, F., and M. Tomasello. 2009. "The Roots of Human Altruism." *British Journal of Psychology* 100: 455–471. https://doi.org/10.1348/000712608X379061.

Weh, S. M., and C. Enaux. 2008. *Konfliktmanagement: Konflikte Kompetent Erkennen und Lösen*. Haufe-Lexware.

Weisel, O., and R. Zultan. 2016. "Social Motives in Intergroup Conflict: Group Identity and Perceived Target of Threat." *European Economic Review* 90: 122–133. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2016.01.004.