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Negotiation Strategies and Organizational Dynamics in Heritage Restoration Projects: A Brazilian Case

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a descriptive case study of negotiations in a heritage restoration project in Brazil. We analyzed contractual disputes between the parties, decisions made by managers under uncertainty, and the relationships between technical and organizational aspects. The study is a single-case study using documentary evidence, technical reports, and legal communications. The parties' negotiation profiles were competitive; the managers' decisions provided biased confirmation, and the Zone of Possible Agreement (ZOPA) was progressively reduced. The elements of trust, persuasion, and BATNA affected the negotiation outcomes. The main constraints for the management of heritage conservation projects are the legal constraints, which must be balanced with the structural safety of the buildings within the framework of public-private partnerships. The findings of this case study have implications for organizational strategies, negotiation practices, and the conservation of heritage. Due diligence, adaptive tactics, and mediation are crucial for establishing sustainable agreements.

KeyWords Negotiation; Descriptive Case Study; Heritage Restoration; Organizational Strategy; BATNA; ZOPA; Persuasion; Trust; Public-Private Partnerships; Brazil

INTRODUCTION

Negotiation processes in organizational projects are complex and influenced by several structural, behavioral, and contextual factors. In heritage restoration projects, technical, legal, and symbolic aspects of the cultural heritage to be restored must be reconciled. This paper reports on a case study of a cultural heritage restoration project in Brazil. Given the high risk of the negotiation process and its significant social implications, this case study is particularly well-suited for analyzing how negotiation strategies, cognitive biases, and organizational factors interact. Most of the literature on the topic focuses on the so-called "classical approaches" (Dias, 2020) such as distributive negotiation (e.g., Bazerman & Moore, 1994) and integrative negotiation (Fisher & Ury, 1981). These approaches are founded upon premises related to rational negotiation. For example, Fisher and Ury (1981) argue that negotiation is a joint search for mutually beneficial solutions. They also claim that this kind of negotiation involves concession searches by both parties. In turn, Lax and Sebenius (1986, 1999) argue that rational negotiation involves the use of various instruments to negotiate agreements. Moreover, they defend the thesis that negotiation can be learned and that parties can reach mutually beneficial agreements (Raiffa et al., 2002). In recent years, however, some research has also examined other factors that influence the negotiation process and counter-negotiation. In this sense, for example, the influence of various cognitive biases upon negotiation (Bazerman & Moore, 1994; Geiger, 2017; Zartman, 1988) as well as strategies for persuasive communication (Geiger, 2017; Zartman, 1988) have been studied. The contractor realized that severe technical problems had been affecting the project for some time. In addition to other problems, termite attack and structural damage to the masonry posed unforeseen risks to the contractor. However, the public client expected the contractor to comply with the contract terms as signed at the beginning of the project. Thus, the zone of possible agreement (ZOPA) between the contractor and the public client was progressively reduced throughout the negotiation process. Confirmation bias led both parties to adopt competitive negotiation profiles, which, in turn, led them to adopt rigid positions based on the facts as each interpreted them and influenced by their respective interests.

This article seeks to answer three main objectives of this research. The first objective was to study the negotiations between the contractor and the client. The second objective attempted to evaluate the influence of negotiation, technical knowledge, and management on the initiation or making of decisions that facilitate or impede. The third objective consisted of an analysis aimed at establishing the implications of the above-mentioned case study for the organization's strategy, negotiation in general, and the conservation of heritage. The studied case has academic relevance, as it aligns with the theoretical framework, supports the analysis of negotiation processes, and, at the same time, provides empirical evidence that complements. Similar to other fields of knowledge, the negotiation models that are largely disseminated and studied in the academic circles of Negotiation Studies have to be applied in real scenarios, in order to allow for an analysis, and discussion of the studied cases, taking into account the organizational and the contextual elements that have affected the parties under study, and the application of the negotiation models, in order to allow for a broader academic discussion, as already confirmed by other studies (Dias, 2020; Dias et al., 2021; Santos & Dias, 2024). **Finally**, we followed Dias' Four-Type Negotiation Matrix (2020), where multiple parties negotiate multiple issues, a Type **IV** negotiation, as illustrated in Figure 1:



Figure 1 The Four-Type Negotiation Matrix
Source: Dias, 2020. Reprinted with permission

From a theoretical standpoint, this article aims to reinforce the applicability of negotiation models to real-world scenarios and to outline how organizational dynamics and the context in which negotiations take place can affect the process and outcomes. From a practical standpoint, the lessons to be drawn from the analyzed case study include the necessity of thorough due diligence beforehand, flexible contracts, and the use of a mediator in the event of a negotiation deadlock.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The process of negotiation involves several elements analyzed by decision-making models, yet in negotiation these elements are more interdependent than in other decisions, such that elements at the core of the decision (i.e., choosing between alternatives) are combined with others that strongly affect the decision (i.e., cognitive biases, persuasion). Other important elements analyzed in the literature on negotiation are the contexts in which negotiation takes place (organizational, governmental, cross-cultural) and the core elements of the process as art and as science, the two main forms of negotiation (distributive and integrative), the rules for effective negotiation, and the element of trust to make negotiation agreements sustainable (Fisher & Ury, 1981; Lax & Sebenius, 1986; Raiffa et al., 2002; Shell, 2006). Negotiation between cooperation and competition is a major area of research. As Rubin and Brown (1975) and Schatzki and Coffey (1981) stated, the negotiator must pursue competitive goals while achieving cooperative outcomes. The analysis of negotiation models, as Geiger (2017) has stated, should include the issue-based tactics used by the parties in the process as well as the situational dynamics. On the other hand, in the context of managerial decisions, cognitive biases affect decision-making. The negotiator's decisions can be affected by confirmation bias, anchoring, and overconfidence, for example, distorting rational negotiation (Bazerman & Moore, 1994).

In the scope of the research conducted by Brazilian academics on negotiations in the construction sector, especially in the context of public-private partnerships, a large volume of studies has been published. In these studies, the main challenges faced by the parties involved in the negotiations are analyzed. These

challenges refer to the disputes that may occur regarding the scope of the work that is to be developed, the delays in the payments and the strategies that must be adopted in order to face the unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the development of the project (Dias, 2020; Dias et al., 2021; Dias & Panzarini, 2025; Gadelha & Dias, 2026; Martins et al., 2026). Furthermore, the studies analyze how the relational dynamics that occur during negotiations, the degree of trust established between the parties, and the technical expertise of the negotiators affect negotiation outcomes. In civil construction negotiations, trust is a crucial factor that influences the success of interactions between the parties (Dias & Panzarini, 2025; Santos & Dias, 2024). Several scholars have also contributed to the study of negotiation methods. Yin (2004) and Saunders et al. (2009) argue that, to study complex processes within organizations, the case study is the most appropriate methodology. As previously mentioned, in studies that use the case study method in the negotiation context, different sources of evidence are analyzed to deepen understanding of the phenomenon under study. Brazilian research on negotiation has also used the case study method, following a descriptive approach, to analyze negotiation practices across several sectors of the economy (Dias, 2020; Carvalho & Dias, 2025; Lago et al., 2025). These qualitative studies can capture the nuances of the processes and practices under study.

Finally, studies on negotiation have also analyzed how parties try to persuade the other party to achieve their objectives. Such studies have proposed several models to analyze how parties to a negotiation frame issues to achieve their objectives. Among these models, the PAS model (Problem, Agitation, Solution) is one of the most commonly used to analyze persuasion in negotiation (Dias, 2020c; Dias et al., 2021). In the construction industry, contractors use technical reports to highlight risks to the building and, therefore, to the client. These reports may raise safety concerns and, ultimately, offer solutions to the problems presented through contract amendments. Public institutions use legal frameworks and budgetary constraints to resist the contractor's proposed changes. In this sense, there is a conflict between the technical necessity of building the building and the administrative feasibility of making changes to it. Trust is another crucial aspect in the negotiation process. In several studies, it has been observed that negotiation is possible only on the basis of trust, and that successful negotiations generate trust among the parties involved (Dias & Lopes, 2021; Santos & Dias, 2024). This also applies to construction projects that restore heritage sites. In these cases, the involved parties must share information and effectively implement the agreement. In practice, however, this aspect is often negatively affected by delays, bureaucratic barriers, and differing interpretations of contractual clauses (Dias, 2020d; Navarro & Dias, 2024).

Although negotiation studies have advanced significantly and are now analyzed through the lens of new areas of inquiry, many gaps remain in the literature. One of these gaps is the study of negotiation in heritage restoration projects. These are sites where technical, cultural, and organizational issues are negotiated, making them complex to study. The studies on construction negotiations conducted by Brazilian researchers are extremely valuable. However, there is a lack of studies that analyze how cognitive biases and persuasion strategies are used in the negotiation of public-private partnerships for the preservation of cultural heritage. This is the focus of the present case study, which aims to examine a specific restoration project underway in Brazil and to relate the results to the existing literature on the subject, thus contributing to both the national and international literature on the topic.

In summary, a large body of literature has emerged on negotiation. Studies have used rational decision-making models to develop negotiation strategies while acknowledging the many biases and distortions that affect human decision-making. There are also studies that analyze the negotiation process with the other party, using persuasion to reach an agreement. In addition to these, relational aspects play a key role in the negotiation process, and trust is a determining factor in its success, especially when the individuals involved have a high level of technical expertise. There are studies in Brazil that focus on the negotiation process in construction projects and public-private partnerships, and that discuss specific cases. However, there are very few studies that focus on negotiation in construction projects for heritage buildings. Thus, the purpose of this study is to analyze a case study of a project to restore heritage buildings, with the aim of providing new insights and contributing to the body of knowledge on negotiation in general and to the specific challenges of the type of construction projects considered here.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to analyze a heritage restoration project executed in Brazil by studying the negotiation process between the contractor and a public cultural institution. To achieve the research objectives, the negotiation process is analyzed as having technical, organizational, and relational dimensions; therefore, a case study is the most appropriate design for such a complex phenomenon. A case study is especially suitable when the researcher is analyzing a phenomenon within a specific context, providing a very in-depth description through a holistic approach (Yin, 2004; Saunders et al., 2009). The study used a descriptive approach to provide a detailed account of how the negotiations actually took place. The case study included the contractual disputes that occurred, the project managers' decisions, and the management of technical aspects within the organization. The study was based on previous research on negotiations using case studies from different settings (Dias, 2020; Carvalho & Dias, 2025; Lago et al., 2025). The case was then analyzed within the theoretical frameworks previously developed by the researcher to produce context-specific, theoretically informed insights into the negotiation process under study.

The main sources of data for this study are documentary evidence provided by the contractor and the public cultural institution (contracts, official notifications, technical reports, and legal communications). These sources provide an in-depth description of the negotiation process under analysis and the parties' explicit and implicit strategies. The data were triangulated to enhance the validity of the results. This was achieved by cross-checking information in technical reports against contractual clauses and institutional responses (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2004). The analysis used to obtain the results was based on established theories and models of negotiation, as well as on the principles of persuasion. The results also accounted for variables related to trust and the different types of bias that affect the managerial decision-making process. The findings were obtained through a two-stage analysis. The first stage of the analysis consisted of a chronological reconstruction of the case study. The second stage consisted of a thematic coding of the strategies adopted by the parties involved in the negotiation and the results they achieved.

CASE DESCRIPTION

We outline the negotiation case of a heritage restoration project of a historical site (a railway station) of a Brazilian private contractor, hereinafter referred to as the Contractor, contracted by a public cultural institution, hereinafter referred to as the Cultural Institution, under a fixed-price contract amounting to approximately R\$ 2,300,000.00, to be completed within six months, by April, 2023. As previously mentioned, the Contractor began preliminary works in May, 2022, and the interventions to the roofing structures began in June, 2022. In July, 2022, fissures started to appear in one of the roofs under restoration. The Contractor contracted a structural engineer to prepare a technical report, which recommended the immediate replacement of the deteriorated elements due to risks to employees and the heritage. In August, 2022, the Contractor informed the Cultural Institution of the findings. There was no answer from the Cultural Institution. In September, 2022, the Contractor suspended the works because the Cultural Institution had not paid more than R\$ 1,000,000.00 of the amounts already contracted, plus other amounts corresponding to extras outside the contract, in accordance with the contractual clauses on the client's obligations and payment terms.

Due to non-payment of more than one million reais on several invoices, the contractor stopped the works in September 2022, claiming that the client had failed to fulfill its obligations and to meet the payment terms established in the contract. The works stoppage was maintained until February 2023, when the change of management at the Cultural Institution enabled the payment of the outstanding amount and the contractor's return to the interventions. The contractor agreed to return to the works but emphasized that the structural risks identified had not yet been resolved. In May 2023, the Cultural Institute published a Technical Note about the problems affecting the building. The Technical Note assessed the problems and stated that structures in danger of collapse needed to be isolated and reinforced. Immediately after the publication of this Technical Note, the Cultural Institute required the contractor to carry out an emergency intervention to secure the heritage. In its answer, the contractor stated that the interventions already carried out were within the scope of the contract signed in April 2022. He also pointed out that problems caused by termite infestation and longstanding water infiltration were not part of the initial agreement and that the contractor could therefore not be held responsible for them.

In July 2023, due to termite damage affecting part of the roofing structures, the contractor declared the end of the services in progress under *force majeure*. The Client challenged the contractor's version of the facts and requested that the contractor prepare a new budget to undertake the additional work required. On August 21, 2023, the Client notified the Contractor of the conditions required to proceed with the emergency reinforcement of the heritage structure, with potential legal implications for the Contractor if those conditions are not complied with. The Contractor replied the same day, stating that he would proceed to complete the outstanding works only after agreement of an amendment to the contract to include all items not covered by the initial scope of works. He further argued that even if the additional amount to be contracted corresponded to 47% of the initial contract value, this would still be below the 50% threshold established by law for contract amendments. The Contractor provided precedents to

support his stance. In late August, the client finally agreed to a temporary thirty-day stop-work order for the contractor. In September, the client required the contractor to return to work. Work was unsafe, but the contractor returned to work. The subsequent negotiations continued, and both parties finally agreed to reduce the scope of work that the contractor was undertaking. Additionally, a contract amendment was agreed, increasing the contract value by approximately 47% (just below the 50% limit of the initial contract value). The client then tendered for the excluded services.

A series of steps is followed to outline the case study, from an initial technical argument over contract terms through to a financial stalemate, safety issues, and, ultimately, an amicable solution to the issues surrounding the heritage restoration project. The study highlights the competitive nature of the two parties and how each was affected by several cognitive biases, not least confirmation bias, which influenced their negotiation. The study traces the steps of the negotiations and the Zone of Possible Agreement (ZOPA), which narrowed until an agreement was reached that satisfied both parties' aims regarding the contract for the heritage restoration project.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This negotiation case study describes how a contractor and a public cultural institution overcame the technical requirements, contractual stipulations, and organizational constraints of a heritage restoration project. Analyzing such negotiation results along established lines of research on the subject will help identify how to address problems that may arise during construction negotiations. The contractor and the public cultural institution had competitive negotiation profiles. The contractor was concerned with protecting his financial and technical interests and demanded amendments to the contract. The public cultural institution wanted to comply with the terms of the contract within the strictly defined budget, and in accordance with the applicable law. Thus, the primary characteristic of the distributive negotiation strategy (Fisher & Ury, 1981; Lax & Sebenius, 1986; Raiffa et al., 2002), i.e., competition over cooperation, was the dominant feature of the analyzed events. Few opportunities for alternative solutions that would satisfy both parties' interests arose due to the lack of integrative strategies between them. The typical forms of competitive behavior in negotiations (Rubin & Brown, 1975; Schatzki et al., 1981) were displayed by the parties in dispute, which ultimately led to an impasse in their efforts to resolve their problems.

The main events of the negotiations conducted by public cultural institutions and contractors provide many examples of how several biases distort managers' decisions. The study of these events shows how the public cultural institutions under study manifested confirmation bias by insisting on compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract, while the contractor manifested escalation of commitment by returning to work without any guarantee. These two decisions reveal how managers fail due to several biases that distort their rational analysis and decision-making (Bazerman & Moore, 1994; Geiger, 2017). The way these biases shape managers' decisions when negotiating with contractors is determined by the bureaucratic structures of public cultural institutions and the legal framework governing contractual relationships between the parties. The Zone of Possible Agreement (ZOPA) was progressively reduced by external factors, leaving the two parties with fewer options to address the problems at hand. The ZOPA

was initially proposed by Zartman (1988) in the framework of “dual track” negotiations (Raiffa et al., 2002). The contractor had initially proposed moderate amendments to the contract, which were acceptable to the public cultural institution. However, payment delays and safety concerns (caused by inadequate waste-disposal provisions) progressively increased the contractor’s minimum acceptable offer, while the institution’s maximum acceptable offer remained unchanged.

The contractor's model for the public cultural institution successfully conveyed the problems to be solved; however, the solutions proposed to address them were perceived as too restrictive and thus insufficiently integrative for the institution's needs. This result differs from other studies on negotiation, in which offering the addressee several alternatives to address a problem increases persuasion and even increases the parties’ ZOPA (Dias, 2020c; Dias et al., 2021). As already mentioned, trust is both a prerequisite for the negotiation and an outcome thereof. The contractor and the cultural institution did not trust each other due to payment delays and difficulties with the public institution's bureaucratic procedures. The way in which trust is built or not in the negotiations of construction projects for the restoration of heritage, in Brazil, is the object of several studies (Dias & Panzarini, 2025; Santos & Dias, 2024). In the events analyzed here, the lack of trust necessitated the use of legal instruments to address the issues that arose and the use of external means to conclude the contract and initiate the restoration of the heritage under analysis.

Concerning the BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) offered by the contractor and by the institution, the contractor was going to sue the client for the remaining contract payments, whereas the institution was going to rescind the contract, thus forcing the contractor to stop work and search for another contract to restore the heritage building. In summary, both parties tried to negotiate to avoid their worst alternative: the contractor did not want the contract canceled and the associated losses, whereas the institution did not want to spend more money searching for another contractor to restore the heritage building. As said before, the contractor and the institution behaved as predicted by negotiation behaviors presented by Raiffa et al. (2002) and by Dias (2020d), i.e., they behaved in a more rational way in order to reach an agreement and, consequently, they negotiated an amendment to the contract below the legal threshold for such amendments. In this amendment, the contract's scope was reduced. Based on the case study presented in this work of a negotiation process developed between a contractor and a public cultural institution with the objective of carrying out a restoration project on a heritage building, the following conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, negotiations between parties with competitive negotiation profiles, who practice distributive negotiation and are focused on gaining more than their counterparts, are more likely to reach an impasse. They lead to negative results for the parties involved and can have serious consequences. Secondly, common errors and mistakes managers are prone to when making decisions are more likely to occur in organizational and structural environments where decisions are made within the constraints of a bureaucratic, hierarchical structure. Thirdly, the ZOPA can reduce considerably as negotiations between the parties involved develop.

DISCUSSION

The study of this case adds to the body of knowledge about negotiation. On the one hand, the competitive negotiation profiles of the parties are in line with the so-called “classical views” of negotiation, that is, a distributive process in which the parties negotiate in order to maximize their individual gains (Fisher & Ury, 1981; Lax & Sebenius, 1986; Raiffa et al., 2002). On the other hand, in line with other studies on negotiation, this case study also illustrates the limits of such a competitive approach to negotiation, especially when technical imperatives and/or cultural preservation are at the center of the issues that are being negotiated by the parties (Bazerman & Moore, 1994; Geiger, 2017; Zartman, 1988).

Influences of cognitive biases in negotiations for the conservation of heritage buildings. The influence of such biases in conservation projects, however, is increased by the bureaucratization of public institutions and the legalistic nature of contracts for construction works. Thus, rather than isolated decisions, these biases often create cycles of decisions that can exacerbate conflict in construction projects. For example, the institution showed confirmation bias by relying on the original contract to define the terms and conditions of the works, while disregarding subsequent technical evidence indicating amendments to the contract. In turn, the contractor demonstrated escalation of commitment by restarting work each time it was suspended, without obtaining any guarantees regarding the terms and conditions of the resumption. Such behaviors are well documented in the literature on managerial decision-making under uncertainty, as they often lead to suboptimal decisions distorted by various biases that distort rational analysis (Bazerman & Moore, 1994; Rubin & Brown, 1975; Schatzki et al., 1981). Finally, as regards the other main strands of analysis, the analysis here also indicates how the ZOPA of the parties to a negotiation is successively reduced by a series of factors, whether internal or external to the parties. This has been analyzed by Geiger (2017) and Zartman (1988), among others, and is a core theme in negotiation research (Raiffa et al., 2002). This case study adds an important new perspective on how the ZOPA of the parties to a negotiation can be reduced, particularly in a heritage conservation project, with its related technical aspects and the various risks affecting the building and its users.

The ways in which the contractor attempted to persuade the Institution to accept his alternative proposals for the Zone of Preservation were also analyzed. It was noted that the contractor used the PAS model (Problem, Agitation, Solution) to highlight the risks of continuing with the original contract, but, in relation to the proposals for the Zone of Preservation, this did not lead to any integrative solutions. It is well known that, in order to persuade others in negotiations, presenting the other party with a number of possible solutions can increase the chances of reaching an agreement and can even increase the size of the other party's Zone of Possible Agreement (Geiger, 2017; Zartman, 1988; Raiffa et al., 2002). However, the contractor in this case presented the Institution with only one possible way to develop the Zone of Preservation, and, as such, the Institution viewed the proposals negatively. This case study therefore suggests that when negotiations are to take place between others and individuals who are experts in a number of technical fields, and where the issues being negotiated also have significant cultural dimensions, the use of a number of different strategies to try and persuade others in negotiations will be more effective than relying on a single strategy.

Trust played an important role throughout the analyzed processes. Both the contractor and the public manager had relied on legal tools due to the payment delays and the bureaucratic rigidity of the Cultural Institution under analysis. In other words, both had relied on contract terms to advance their interests. This study reinforces other Brazilian research on construction and on negotiation in public-private partnerships (Dias & Panzarini, 2025; Santos & Dias, 2024; Navarro & Dias, 2024). Trust was finally conquered through amendments to the initial contract and by calling new bids to continue the work of the railway station. Regarding the BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) employed by the parties in this conflict, it is observed that it affected their behavior. For the contractor, his alternative was to file a lawsuit to recover the outstanding amounts. On the part of the public cultural institution, its alternative to negotiation was to cancel the contract with the contractor. Thus, both parties opted for a compromise in order to avoid losses. It is therefore verified that the parties' behavior in this conflict is in line with negotiation models (Raiffa et al., 2002; Dias, 2020d; Dias et al., 2021). In comparison with the other cases studied in Brazil, the findings of this research do not differ from those obtained in other negotiation processes in the civil construction market and in the public-private partnership contracts context. However, the heritage restoration project studied here presents a specific context, in which the project objectives interact with the organizational strategies of public and private institutions, and the set of technical aspects related to the conservation of cultural heritage is an object of strategic interest for managers, professionals of the heritage sector, and researchers who negotiate in such contexts

IMPLICATIONS

The case study also has implications for the practice of heritage conservation. Conservation organizations must learn to negotiate more effectively with contractors when technical and cultural preservation imperatives intersect. This will require the heritage manager to adopt an adaptive negotiation strategy. Such a strategy must be developed by the manager of the heritage within the limits of the organization for which he works, taking into account the technical aspects of the project. Moreover, it is necessary to establish contracts that are flexible enough to permit renegotiation of the terms when unforeseen risks arise. Finally, the results of this study can also be useful to public organizations (such as the Cultural institutions used as examples in this study) involved in Heritage restoration projects, which are managed through a relational system and require the implementation of a construction project using technical means. The management of a Heritage restoration project therefore requires an organization-based system capable of generating and maintaining a trust-based relational system among the project's stakeholders. The public institution which manages a Heritage can be effective in preserving the cultural values of the items under its care only if, when managing the project to restore a Heritage, it takes into account the cultural significance of the items which are to be preserved and makes use of management practices which are adequate to generate and maintain a trust-based relational system, with special reference to the financial aspects of the project. From an academic perspective, this case study will be useful for analyzing issues related to BATNA, ZOPA, negotiation and persuasion strategies, and cognitive biases within the specific context of heritage restoration negotiations. The study of negotiation processes

in the construction field (Dias & Panzarini, 2025) and in public-private partnerships (Gadelha & Dias, 2026) has already been the subject of research by the authors of this paper. Thus, this case study will extend this research to other contexts of negotiation, i.e., those in which cultural heritage is at stake, and in which negotiation parties have to take into account not only the above-mentioned issues but also other issues, such as safety, symbolic values of the cultural heritage to be preserved, and other technical and cultural aspects. The findings from this case study are far-reaching and could apply to a number of subjects, including negotiation and organizational studies. Within B2B markets, effective negotiation is key to forming long-term relationships (Aylmer et al., 2026). There are many inherent biases within human decision-making, especially those of managers and how these affect their rationality (Bazerman & Moore, 1994). Negotiation in organizational change is studied in the area of corporate training (Carvalho & Dias, 2025). Stock exchanges are analyzed at the contractual level to highlight the impact of certain details on negotiation outcomes (Cunha & Dias, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This case study presents the negotiation for the restoration of heritage in Brazil, focusing on the interactions among the project's technical aspects, contractual aspects, and the strategies adopted by the actors involved. The study first describes the profiles of the actors involved and then explains how both parties behaved as if they were playing a competitive game, which restricted the search for possible integrative solutions to the problems under negotiation, leading to the recurrence of the same impasses that hindered the project's development. The study also examines how several cognitive biases, mainly confirmation bias and escalation of commitment, were increased by several external constraints, reducing the Zone of Possible Agreement. Moreover, the contractor relied on the PAS model of persuasion for the majority of the negotiations, yet his strategies proved insufficient. He worked with only one set of frames or alternatives. In fact, the contractor failed to explore other options that might have been acceptable to the institution's counterpart. As previously noted, trust between the two parties played an important role during the project, and, in the end, the erosion of the contractor's trust with the institution was remedied via external means, i.e., the contract amendment and subsequent re-bidding process. As with most negotiations between the two parties, both were loath to choose their worst-case scenario: litigation by the contractor and the project's failure by the institution. Consequently, they found a practical solution to the matter at hand.

This case study will not only add to the body of knowledge on negotiation, in general, but will also confirm and extend existing theories of negotiation. Specifically, this study confirms that in heritage restoration projects, negotiation is not only a matter of technical issues but also a relational and strategic one. Projects of heritage restoration are part of the organization's programs, and therefore negotiations are affected by the organization's restrictions. Also, heritage objects are cultural symbols that carry special value for communities; therefore, negotiations over them are subject to particular constraints and requirements. As such, the study of heritage restoration contributes to existing negotiation frameworks and, more generally, to the field of negotiation studies. It highlights specific issues encountered in projects involving

cultural symbols and technical expertise, and therefore requires an adaptive approach to negotiations. Therefore, the study contributes to a holistic analysis of negotiation processes in heritage restoration projects, going beyond technical issues, contractual conditions, and organizational strategies to examine adaptation strategies, trust, and collaboration. The study furthermore positions heritage restoration projects within established frameworks of negotiation and highlights the specific challenges they face, stemming from cultural symbolism and technical complexity. Last but not least, the study provides practitioners and policy makers with a set of guidelines for negotiations in such complex projects.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research on negotiation can be based on this case study. Viewed from a single perspective, for example, the study could be analyzed and elaborated further within the framework of the negotiation processes within heritage restoration projects in different cultures and in various institutions. The study could thus be used to further develop existing theories of negotiation and to apply them within new fields of research. An alternative avenue for future research could focus on the specific ways technical issues affect the negotiation process, i.e., the role of cognitive biases in decision-making under the influence of technology, in complex transactions, and in long-term contracts. Such a study would employ a qualitative approach, as yet unexplored, to analyze in detail the various cognitive biases that affect human judgment and decision-making. The research would then employ an experimental design and a multi-case approach to understand and analyze how negotiation parties address the various technical aspects of a transaction to reach an agreement. Future research should examine the factors that influence the establishment and maintenance of trust, and how to rebuild trust after its erosion in projects. Of particular interest would be research into trust-building strategies for long-term public-private projects, which are characterized by financial and bureaucratic delays. A longitudinal approach would be best suited to establish how trust levels evolve over time. Additional studies of persuasion in complex negotiations under technical and/or legal constraints would be welcome. Clearly, PAS, while a widely used starting point for understanding persuasion, has limitations in representing all possible ways to reach an agreement, as seen in this case study. The potential to increase the number of persuasion options available to a negotiator to expand the Zone of Possible Agreement (ZPA) is clearly a fruitful area for further research. Finally, it would also be interesting to complement single case studies with qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain deeper insight into the processes of negotiation within heritage restoration projects and, more generally, in other contexts. In this sense, practitioner surveys, negotiation scenarios in simulations, and cross-sectoral comparisons of negotiation processes would be valuable.

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