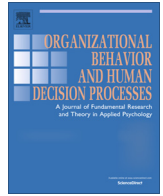




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Unlocking integrative potential: Expressed emotional ambivalence and negotiation outcomes

Naomi B. Rothman^{a,*}, Gregory B. Northcraft^b^a College of Business and Economics, Lehigh University, PA, United States^b College of Business and Economics, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL, United States

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how one negotiator's expressed emotional ambivalence can foster integrative outcomes. Study 1 demonstrated that observing a negotiation partner's emotional ambivalence leads negotiators to come up with more integrative agreements. Study 2 examined a proposed mechanism: Expressed ambivalence leads to an increased perceived ability to influence the ambivalent negotiator because it suggests submissiveness. Study 3 demonstrated that perceived submissiveness mediates the effects of observed emotional ambivalence on integrative agreements. Implications of these findings for negotiation and emotions research, and directions for future research, are discussed.

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Introduction

Emotional expressions represent important social information that shapes and guides observers' judgments and behaviors (Barsade, 2002; Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008; Kopelman, Rosette, & Thompson, 2006; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004a, 2004b). For instance, emotional expressions have received an increasing amount of research attention recently because of their impact on negotiation outcomes (e.g., Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004a).

This growing literature on the impact of emotional expressions in negotiation has largely focused on zero-sum (distributive) bargaining settings, where one party can gain only at the other's expense (see Pietroni, Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Pagliaro, 2008 for a similar argument). Relatively less is known about the effect of emotional expressions in non-zero-sum (integrative) bargaining settings, where the opportunity for value creation exists. What research there is on emotions and integrative outcomes (see Anderson & Thompson, 2004; Butt, Choi, & Jaeger, 2005) has primarily examined the *intrapersonal* effects of emotions and affect (Barry, Fulmer, & van Kleef, 2004) – the influence of a negotiator's emotions on his or her *own* cognitions and behavior (Morris & Keltner, 2000) – and has not so much examined the impact of observing a *partner's* emotional expressions. Finally, no work has examined the effect of observing complex – and even conflicting – emotional expressions on value creation, even though emotional experiences and expressions in negotiation are often more complex

than the singular affective states (e.g., happiness or anger) that have been primarily studied in research to date (Scherer & Tannenbaum, 1986; Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2010). Thus, the interpersonal effects of complex emotional expressions in integrative negotiations are not yet well understood.

We explore whether expressions of emotional ambivalence – the expression of tension and conflict in the face and the body (e.g., being pulled in two different directions simultaneously) that results from the co-occurrence of positive and negative feelings about an object (Rothman, 2011) – can potentially be of great consequence in negotiations with integrative potential, especially when negotiators have goals to cooperate and work together. We suggest that, in cooperative negotiations, because expressed emotional ambivalence conveys submissiveness and invites assertive behavior in observers (Rothman, 2011), expressed emotional ambivalence will lead to the discovery and development of integrative agreements (De Dreu, Weingert, & Kwon, 2000).

The current paper therefore builds on and extends the extant work on emotion and negotiation (e.g., Anderson & Thompson, 2004¹; Van

¹ Anderson and Thompson (2004) examined the effect of trait positive affect on integrative outcomes in negotiations. However, it is not clear whether trait positive affect by high power negotiators increases integrative agreements because of the powerful negotiators' experience or expression of trait positive affect. These authors acknowledge that although they obtained some supportive evidence for an interpersonal mechanism; that mutual trust partially mediated the effect of trait positive affect on integrative agreements, that there seems to be other mechanisms also responsible for the effect. For instance, they also posit (but did not test) the intrapersonal mechanisms in which enhanced creativity and innovative thinking (Carnevale & Isen, 1986), or more pro-social and cooperative orientation toward others (Forgas, 1998) mediate the effect of trait positive affect on integrative agreements.

* Corresponding author.

Kleef et al., 2010) by extending prior research: (1) to cooperative non-zero-sum (integrative) bargaining settings; (2) to the interpersonal effects of observed emotional expression in those settings; and (3) to a more complex emotional expression – emotional ambivalence.

Emotions in negotiations

Past work on emotions in negotiation (e.g., Barry et al., 2004), consistently has found that the *experience* of positive emotions is beneficial to negotiators, and that the experience of negative emotions is not (Allred, Mallozzi, Matsui, & Raia, 1997; Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Forgas, 1998; Pillutla & Murnighan, 1996). The experience of positive-affective states leads a negotiator to more prosocial and cooperative orientations (e.g., Baron, 1990; Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Forgas, 1998), as well as creativity and innovative thinking (e.g., Ashby, Isen, & Turken, 1999; Carnevale & Isen, 1986), thus stimulating the integration of negotiators' interests (Allred et al., 1997; Anderson & Thompson, 2004; Baron, 1990; Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Forgas, 1998; Kramer, Newton, & Pommerkenke, 1993; Moore, Kurtzberg, Thompson, & Morris, 1999). By contrast, the experience of negative emotion, such as opponent-directed anger, reduces regard for opponent's interests, reduces accuracy about opponents' interests, and thus lowers joint gains (Allred et al., 1997).

More recent work on emotions in negotiation has focused on the interpersonal effects of emotional expressions, in particular the interpersonal effects of negotiators *observing* fellow negotiators' expressions of happiness or anger (e.g., Adler, Rosen, & Silverstein, 1998; Barry et al., 2004; Barsade, 2002; Kopelman et al., 2006; Morris & Keltner, 2000; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Thompson, Nadler, & Kim, 1999; Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b). This growing body of work suggests that emotional expressions *provide information* to observers which influence those observers' behavioral reactions (Frijda & Mesquita, 1994; Keltner & Gross, 1999; Keltner & Haidt, 1999; Oatley & Jenkins, 1992; Van Kleef, 2009). Emotional expressions can be expressed through facial expressions (Ekman & Keltner, 1997; Keltner, Ekman, Gonzaga, & Beer, 2003), tone of voice (Scherer, Johnstone, & Klasmeyer, 2003), posture (Riskind, 1984), gaze (Adams & Kleck, 2003), touch (Hertenstein, Keltner, App, Bulleit, & Jaskolka, 2006) and verbal expressions (Reilly & Seibert, 2003). However, emotional expressions not only communicate to observers how an individual feels at the moment (Ekman, 1993), they also provide information about the individual's character (Clark, Pataki, & Carver, 1996; Gallois, 1993; Karasawa, 2001; Knutson, 1996; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Tiedens, 2001; Tiedens, Ellsworth, & Mesquita, 2000) and intentions (Fridlund, 1992; McArthur & Baron, 1983). Thus, observers draw inferences based on an individual's emotional expressions which, in turn, "serve as incentives or deterrents for ... behavior" (Barry et al., 2004: 84).

Empirical research in the context of negotiations confirms that emotional expressions provide information about interaction partners that regulates social interaction. In zero-sum (distributive) bargaining settings, where parties have divergent interests and incompatible goals, negotiators expressing anger are perceived to be tougher (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006) and more demanding (Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b). Consequently, negotiators make lower demands and offer large concessions to angry partners, acting less dominant to avoid costly impasse (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004a; although, see Kopelman et al., 2006). By contrast, in bargaining settings where the opportunity for value creation exists, negotiators who experience and express positive emotions – generate more mutual trust. Consequently, dyads are better able to reach integrative outcomes, presumably because negotiators are more comfortable with sharing their interests and priorities (Anderson & Thompson, 2004).

In summary, in primarily zero-sum (distributive) bargaining settings, negotiators will do better if they can limit the aspirations of their fellow negotiator; expressions of anger can be quite beneficial in this regard, but expressions of happiness tend to be detrimental. However, in primarily non-zero-sum (integrative) bargaining settings, negotiators will do better if they can increase trust and thus trigger communication of interests and priorities, as well as the discovery of compatible and tradable issues, both of which allow negotiators more opportunities to enlarge the resource pie; the experience and expression of positive affect is quite beneficial in this regard, but the experience and expression of negative affect tends to be detrimental. As Barry and colleagues state, "anger appears to be more conducive to claiming value in distributive negotiation, whereas happiness appears to be more beneficial in integrative negotiation" (Barry et al., 2004, p. 85).

Emotional ambivalence in negotiations

The expression of emotional ambivalence is the expression of tension and conflict which results from the simultaneous experience of two conflicting emotional states (Rothman, 2011). This definition builds on prior research which has predominantly studied ambivalence as the simultaneous experience of positive and negative emotions and the feelings of tension and conflict which result (e.g., Fong, 2006; Larsen, McGraw, & Cacioppo, 2001; Larsen, McGraw, Mellers, & Cacioppo, 2004; Pratt & Doucet, 2000).

Ambivalence is likely to be a very common emotional experience in negotiations. In most negotiations, negotiators must harbor both pro-self concerns (e.g., to earn more for self) and pro-social concerns (e.g., to help the other party do well – at least well enough to reach agreement and avoid impasse) (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). As a result, in order to avoid impasse negotiators typically cannot act in a purely pro-self manner. Instead, the simultaneous experience of both pro-self and pro-social motives pulls negotiators emotionally in multiple directions and is likely to inspire quite complex emotional reactions (Rothman & Wiesenfeld, 2007). Negotiations, therefore, should provide fertile ground for emotional ambivalence. So far, this reality – that negotiators are likely to experience and express conflicting emotions at the same time – has been far less emphasized than research on more singular emotions (e.g., happiness, anger). As a result, our understanding of the role that emotional expressions play in negotiations is not yet complete.

The little research done to date on the impact of emotional ambivalence has shown ambivalence to be a liability for the expresser when negotiations are zero-sum (distributive). Negotiators infer that partners expressing emotional ambivalence are deliberating – struggling with the pros and cons of different options. In turn, the appearance of being deliberative conveys submissiveness (Magee, 2009; Rothman, 2011). Submissiveness, in turn, invites observers to dominate the interaction by making higher demands and/or taking control of the negotiation (Rothman, 2011). In one study, observers took more money from an ambivalent negotiating partner in an ultimatum bargaining game; in another study, observers intended to dominate a future decision with an ambivalent partner (Rothman, 2011). These findings are consistent with other research suggesting that negotiators concede less to fellow negotiators they perceive as soft or submissive than to fellow negotiators they perceive as tough or dominant (e.g., Bacharach & Lawler, 1980; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006).

Prior research therefore suggests that it is dangerous to express emotional ambivalence, because ambivalence invites observers to take charge and take advantage. However, this past research has focused on zero-sum (distributive) negotiations where one party can gain only at the other's expense. This work therefore leaves unaddressed the impact of expressed emotional ambivalence when negotiators have the opportunity to integrate parties' interests so

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