

## A Review of Emotion's Impact in Negotiation Research

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### Abstract

**Negotiation is the interpersonal interaction between the two parties with the same resource interests and demands. In the process of negotiation, the personal emotions of negotiators play an important role in the development of the negotiation. This paper analyzes the influence of emotion on negotiation by dividing it into internal effect and external effect according to the source of emotion.**

### Keywords

**Emotion; Negotiation; Intrapersonal Effect; Interpersonal Effect.**

### 1. Introduction

The emotions in the negotiation did not start to be studied until the 1980s. Early research mostly started from the cognitive theory of emotions, thinking that emotions come from the subject's evaluation of things, and once generated, the individual's behavior will change accordingly. In general psychology, emotion is a person's attitude towards objective things and the corresponding behavioral response, and it is a kind of mental activity mediated by the individual's wishes and needs. When the objective thing or situation matches the subject's needs and desires, it can arouse positive and affirmative emotions and emotions. When the objective things or situations do not match the needs and desires of the subject, negative and negative emotions and emotions will occur. It can be seen that emotions are closely related to the environment in which the individual is located. In negotiation, emotions always occur and develop with the practical activities of the negotiator, and are experienced by the negotiator from time to time and affect the negotiation activities. Negotiators have both the true expression of natural feelings and the performance of hypocritical emotions in the negotiation. This phenomenon will have a certain impact on the negotiation, whether it is out of sincerity or the need for skills. A shrewd negotiator not only has a firm will and a high degree of reason, but also knows how to use the power of emotion to influence the negotiation process and create a negotiation atmosphere. The success of the negotiation depends not only on the mutual benefits of both parties, but also on the emotional consistency and harmony of the two parties.

Emotion is the inherent feature of negotiation and social conflict: conflict and negotiation often bring strong emotions, which in turn will strongly affect the development of negotiation behavior and conflict. Although in the field of economics, negotiation is defined as an absolutely rational behavior and negotiators try their best to eliminate the influence of emotion, with the deepening of research in the field of psychology and organizational behavior, more and more people have realized that emotion plays a crucial role in regulating social interaction. Emotion can convey multiple social information, such as individual's social intention and expectation, which has important social functions and consequences.

Consistent with this concept, it has been suggested that, in the context of negotiations, emotions may indicate the expectations that negotiators place on the different issues they face. This information is of great value because an accurate understanding of the preferences and priorities of the other party is a necessary prerequisite for the integrated bargaining behavior to achieve a better agreement. In thinking about the informational value of emotions in negotiations, it is important to consider the difference between the intrapersonal and interpersonal effects of emotions.

## 2. The Intrapersonal Effects of Emotion

Many early studies have explained the influence of negotiators' emotional state on their own judgment and behavior, that is, intrapersonal effect. A series of studies have shown that positive emotions prompt negotiators to adopt more cooperative behaviors, while negative emotions will lead to the opposite result. Therefore, most people try to maintain positive emotions in negotiations in order to obtain more favorable negotiation results. Negotiators in a positive emotional state will have higher thinking agility and cognitive accuracy, which will benefit the information processing process and creative thinking activities, so that negotiators will have more outstanding innovative performance in problem solving. Therefore, we hypothesize that negotiators with a pleasant mood will exhibit more problem-solving behaviors, while negotiators with an angry mood will exhibit more oppressive behaviors.

Many studies have confirmed the role of positive emotions in negotiations, but there are also studies showing that negative emotions also play a significant role in negotiation. When the negotiator performs his negative emotion such as raises his voice, loses his temper, looks grim and other negative emotions, his counterpart may make concessions in order to avoid the impasse of the negotiation. There are two theories to explain this concession. The first is the self-regulation theory, which says that people will regulate their own emotions to prolong the experience of positive emotion, but in response to the stimuli of negative emotion, they detract from it, so that they give in to an opponent who displays negative emotions. Another theory explains the usefulness of negative emotions by suggesting that negotiators may make concessions in order to escape the unpleasant situation as soon as possible. The above studies suggest that negative emotions can sometimes be used as a negotiating strategy to help negotiators reach a better negotiation agreement.

In addition, many studies have suggested that negotiators should hide all of their emotional experience during negotiation. Researchers believe that negotiators who show their emotions in negotiations will expose their own weaknesses and put themselves at an adverse situation. But in face-to-face negotiations, the lack of emotional experience may hinder the negotiation parties from building trust and intimacy.

These studies from different perspectives are helpful to deepen our understanding of the impact of emotion on negotiation, but they obviously ignore the fact that negotiation is an interactive behavior of both sides. Therefore, we should not only pay attention to the intrapersonal emotion of individuals, but also pay attention to the interpersonal influence of emotion.

## 3. The Interpersonal Effects of Emotion

The interpersonal effect of emotion in negotiations refers to the influence of one negotiator's emotion on another negotiator's behavior. Parkinson (1996) proposed that emotion should be viewed as a social phenomenon rather than a personal phenomenon. In fact, inspired by the early work of Darwin (1872), researchers have identified many of the important social functions of emotion. On the interpersonal level, emotions convey multiple information about personal feelings, social intentions to others. In addition, emotional expressions may evoke similar or complementary responses in others. In the similar response mode, people will make similar emotional reactions with the negotiating opponents, that is, the negotiator who shows positive emotion will give positive emotional feedback to their negotiating opponents, and the negotiator who shows negative emotion will also receive negative emotional feedback. In the complementary response mode, the negotiating opponent will give the complementary emotional response to the emotional information conveyed by the negotiator. For example, when the negotiator makes the dominant behavior, his opponent will make the compromise behavior to ensure the smooth reaching of the negotiation agreement. If it is based on the response model, the relationship between the two sides of the negotiation will be more tense and even lead to the impasse of the negotiation. Finally, emotions have positive or negative reinforcement effects on other individual's behaviors. For example, positive emotions may encourage others to continue with their actions, while negative emotions may act as a call for behavioral adjustment.

In social communication and interaction, the interpersonal effect of emotion can be seen everywhere. The effect works only if each emotion conveys a specific social message. Van Kleef et al. (2004a) classified four types of basic emotions according to the different social information they carry. The first type is the emotion that conveys the message of friendship and cooperation, represented by happiness and pleasure, which generally exists when the individual goal is consistent with the current situation. The social information carried by the second type of emotion is mainly attack and dissatisfaction, and its representative emotion is anger. When the individual goal is inconsistent with the current situation, such emotion will probably emerge. The third type of emotion mainly conveys the signal of "need for help and support", which is typically represented by the sad emotion. It generally appears when the individual's expectation is not consistent with the reality. The fourth type of emotion carries the social message of "seeking relief". The most representative emotions are guilt and regret, which generally occur when individuals feel that their behavior deviates from social norms. Studies have shown that anger can signal a tough stance to a negotiating partner and lead to more compromise. The same effect holds true for positive emotions. When negotiator A expresses positive emotions such as happiness and joy, it conveys the message that he is satisfied with the current situation. Based on this, negotiator B does not need to make additional concessions to please him. According to Van Kleef, negotiators perceive the bottom line of the negotiation based on the information conveyed by the opponent's emotional state. If the opponent shows negative emotions such as anger, it can presume that his bottom line is very high and the negotiator will make certain compromises to avoid the impasse of the negotiation. If the opponent is conveying positive emotions such as joy, then the baseline is assumed to be low and the negotiator does not need to make additional concessions. Based on this perspective, the emotion of one party in the negotiation can influence the outcome of the negotiation by influencing the opponent's perception of the negotiation situation and his behavior choice. Moreover, people in a higher status were less affected by the anger of others than people in a lower status. Generally speaking, the interpersonal effect of anger is determined by people's information processing tendency and the legitimacy of anger expression.

In addition, some scholars have studied the influence of emotion on the negotiation process and result from the perspective of emotion as a negotiation strategy. These studies are based on two premises: one is that negotiators can control and manipulate their own behavior and emotional performance; Secondly, the mood of the negotiators can be effectively conveyed to the opponent. Many studies have found that emotion can be used as a negotiation strategy. Some studies have proved the positive effect of positive emotions. Negotiators in a positive emotional state are more willing to cooperate and can win more concessions from the other side in distributive negotiations. But research has also shown that expressing anger in negotiations is an effective way to get concessions from the other party.

#### **4. The Emotions as Social Information Model**

Van Kleef (2009) proposed the EASI model to explain the interpersonal influence of emotion in social and organizational life. One of the core foundations of the EASI model is the idea that emotion can provide social information. The model holds that emotional expression conveys information about a person's thoughts, feelings, and intentions. In this way, emotions can influence the behavior of others by informing them one's desires and possible future courses of action. Emotion also tends to swap other people's complementary emotions, which in turn may influence their behavior. Finally, emotion can act as a motivator to the behavior of others. Although the relationship between emotion and information is also reflected in other emotional models of conflict and negotiation, such as the emotional information model, the emotional priming model, and the emotional penetration model, the EASI model is significantly different in many aspects. First, compared with other models, the EASI model is a model of interpersonal rather than personal effects. That is to say, the purpose of the EASI model is to predict how one person's emotional expression will affect the behavior of others. Therefore, unlike other models, EASI model can explain how negotiators are affected by the emotions of the other side. Secondly, the EASI model mainly focuses on discrete rather than continuous

emotional states. Each discrete emotion conveys specific information, and the interpretation of such information may depend on the situation. Finally, the EASI model distinguishes two pathways through which emotions exert interpersonal influence: the affective reactions path and the strategic information path. Affective response path refers to that the emotion of others will cause the individual's own emotional response and affect its behavior. For example, positive emotions are more conducive to the formation of positive impressions, interpersonal goodwill and constructive interpersonal relationships than negative emotions. The strategic information path means that each discrete emotion conveys unique information, and observers will process and make attributions based on this information, and then make inferences and decide their behavior strategies. For example, in a negotiation, an opponent's anger may indicate that he has ambitious goals that are difficult to meet, which means that the negotiator needs to make better proposals such as making concessions to facilitate an agreement.

EASI model is of great theoretical significance in the field of conflict and negotiation. First, it helps to organize existing scientific knowledge about the interpersonal effects of emotions in the fields of negotiation. According to the core assumption that emotions provide social information, the effect of any emotional expression can be understood and predicted through its specific meaning. Moreover, by distinguishing two distinct paths of emotional influence and identifying two types of moderators of the relative importance of each path, it helps to explain some seemingly contradictory findings. For example, why does the same expression of anger in a negotiation sometimes bring about a favorable impact and sometimes a negative one. To explain this phenomenon, it is necessary to take into account social relationship factors such as the appropriateness of anger expression and the target of angry emotions as well.

## 5. Summary

In short, emotional behavior runs through the whole negotiation activity, and the influence of emotion on negotiation is mainly divided into positive influence and negative influence. Positive emotions will not only make the negotiation activities appears harmonious, more conducive to a win-win goal. What's more, it is beneficial to maintain good relationships of cooperation in the future. On the other hand, negative emotions may not only lead to a deadlock in the negotiation, but also lead to a negative direction in the negotiation result., it will also have a negative impression on the other side, which is not conducive to the maintenance of long-term cooperation. Therefore, having a good ability to control emotions is an essential quality for an excellent negotiator.

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