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

A R T I C L E   I N F O

Article history:
Received 1 October 2012
Accepted 21 October 2014
Accepted by Madan Pillutla

Keywords:
Emotions
Emotional ambivalence
Perceived submissiveness
Integrative outcomes
Emotions in negotiation

A B S T R A C T

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.

© 2014 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Introduction

Emotional expressions represent important social information that shapes and guides observers’ judgments and behaviors (Barsade, 2002; Harel & 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, 2004; Van Kleef et al., 2004a).

* Corresponding author.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2014.10.005
0749-5978/© 2014 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
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, & Pommerenke, 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 (Reilley & 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, 2006).

Ambivalence is likely to be a very common emotional experience in negotiations. In most negotiations, negotiators must harbor both pro-self and pro-social motives pulls negotiators emotionally in multiple directions and is likely to inspire quite complex emotional reactions (Rothman & Wiesfeld, 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
that both sides can achieve their objectives (Walton & McKersie, 1965). Is expressed emotional ambivalence a liability in an integrative-potential negotiation?

Dual-concern theory (Pruit & Rubin, 1986) suggests that negotiator pro-social motivation – having positive regard for the outcomes obtained by a fellow negotiator – is necessary to harvest integrative potential in a negotiation, but it is not sufficient. Also critical to the integrativeness of agreements is negotiators’ resistance to yielding (see e.g., Druckman, 1994; Kelley, Bechman, & Fisher, 1967). Negotiators who have a high resistance to yielding are obstinate about making concessions; negotiators who have a low resistance to yielding are more willing to make concessions. Pro-social negotiators have been found to be less contentious, to engage in more problem solving, and to achieve higher joint outcomes, but only when they are assertive (e.g., resistance to yielding was high). When assertiveness is low, pro-social negotiators make more unilateral concessions – either accepting the other party’s demands or settling for split-the-difference compromises (De Dreu, Beersma, Stroebe, & Ewuwema, 2006; De Dreu et al., 2000). When assertiveness is high, pro-social negotiators face the dilemma of wanting good outcomes for the other party but not at their own expense. As a result, they concede slowly and engage in problem solving that promotes the discovery and development of integrative agreements (De Dreu et al., 2000).

Because assertive (non-yielding) behavior is critical for harvesting integrative potential in negotiation (De Dreu et al., 2000; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), and because expressed emotional ambivalence invites assertive behavior in observers (Rothman, 2011), expressing emotional ambivalence may not be so dangerous in non-zero-sum (integrative-potential) negotiations. Expressed emotional ambivalence may even be an advantage rather than a liability in negotiations where there is integrative potential. More specifically, if expressed emotional ambivalence leads to inferences of submissiveness, and inferred submissiveness in turn elicits dominance reactions from observers (Rothman, 2011), then inferred submissiveness may be the underlying mechanism fostering joint value creation when there is an opportunity to integrate parties’ interests.

Happiness and anger provide important contrasts for examining the effects of expressed ambivalence on joint value creation. Happiness and anger convey different information about agreeableness but the same information about dominance. Thus, contrasting expressed emotional ambivalence with happiness and anger allows for a comparison of expressed emotional ambivalence with expressions of an agreeable but dominant emotion (e.g., happiness) as well as a disagreeable but dominant emotion (e.g., anger) (Knutson, 1996; Van Kleef, 2004a, 2004b; Wiggins, Trapnell, & Phillips, 1988). Furthermore, some research has demonstrated that expressed happiness (especially by those with power) is beneficial for increasing joint gain (Anderson & Thompson, 2004), making happiness a particularly important comparison to ambivalence. Thus our primary hypotheses in the current research were:

**Hypothesis 1.** Value creation (joint gain) will be higher in negotiations in which emotional ambivalence is expressed than in negotiations in which anger or no emotion/neutrality is expressed.

**Hypothesis 2.** Negotiators who observe emotional ambivalence in their negotiation partner will be more likely to infer submissiveness than those who observe anger or no emotion/neutrality in their negotiation partner.

**Hypothesis 3.** The positive relationship between the observation of emotional ambivalence and joint value creation will be mediated by observers’ inferences of their negotiation partner’s submissiveness.

Connecting with prior research on zero-sum (distributive) negotiation, we also examined the influence of expressed emotional ambivalence on personal value claiming. If negotiations in which emotional ambivalence is expressed create more joint value, who claims that additional value? Based on findings from past research on the effects of expressed emotional ambivalence in zero-sum (distributive) negotiations (Rothman, 2011), negotiators who observe emotional ambivalence in their negotiation partner are expected to behave with more dominance, and to therefore have the advantage in value claiming:

**Hypothesis 4.** Negotiators observing the expression of emotional ambivalence will claim more personal value than those who observe happiness, anger, or neutrality.

The current paper describes three studies which together explore whether expressed ambivalence elicits greater integrative outcomes because expressed ambivalence signals submissiveness.

**Overview of experiments**

Study 1 evaluated whether in negotiations with integrative potential, observing a negotiation partner’s emotional ambivalence leads negotiators to agreements of greater joint value, relative to observing happiness, anger, or no emotion in a partner. Study 2 examined the mechanism: that expressed emotional ambivalence leads to an increased perceived ability to influence one’s negotiation partner because it suggests submissiveness. Study 3 demonstrated that perceived submissiveness mediates the effects of observed emotional ambivalence on integrative outcomes.

**Study 1**

**Method**

**Participants and design**

80 Undergraduate business students (33 females and 47 males) at a north-east university participated in the study for extra-credit. A recruitment e-mail noted that the study was about negotiating on-line; no mention was made that this was a study about emotions. Participants came to the lab for a 1-h on-line negotiation session. Individual participants were randomly paired to negotiate a shortened version of the New Recruit negotiation (adapted from Neale, 1985) with another participant in their session. The negotiation was shortened in order to ensure that the entire study could be completed in 1 h. Participants in the applicant role were assigned to one of four conditions: happy (n = 10), angry (n = 9), or ambivalent emotional display (n = 10), or no video (n = 11).2 Participants in the three emotion expression conditions (happy, angry, ambivalent) were led to believe they were negotiating via computer with an individual they saw in a video clip, and participants in the no video condition were told they were negotiating via computer with an unspecified student. In reality, all participants were negotiating via computer with another student (the recruiter) with whom they were paired (n = 40). Participants were assured that they were not being videotaped themselves. Participants playing the role of the recruiter did not receive an emotion expression manipulation, so only data from the job candidate roles were analyzed.

**Negotiation task**

Individuals participated in a two-party negotiation exercise involving a job candidate and a recruiter. Six issues were negotiated, and each negotiator was told how much each issue was worth

---

2 Participants in the no video condition were run separately from participants in the other conditions. Analyses suggest that the samples were similar, as there were no differences in age, F(1,38) = .301, p > .10, or gender distribution, χ² (1) = 3.14, p > .10.
to him/her and what his/her preferences were on each issue. For two issues, the parties’ preferences were in complete opposition to each other (e.g., the candidate wanted a higher salary and the recruiter wanted to pay a lower salary, and this issue was worth the same number of points to each of them). For four issues, negotiators had different low- and high-priority issues, providing the opportunity to integrate parties’ interests. For example, the candidate wanted a higher bonus and the recruiter wanted to pay a lower bonus, but the candidate cared more about this issue; that is, bonus was worth up to 4000 points for the candidate, but only 1600 points for the recruiter. In contrast, vacation time was worth 4000 points for the recruiter and only 1600 points for the candidate. Negotiators could maximize their joint gain by agreeing on the candidate’s preferred bonus and the recruiter’s preference for fewer vacation days. The maximum joint gain was 22,800.

Procedure

When participants arrived at the experiment, they were randomly paired to negotiate with another participant and individually seated in front of a computer. Participants read written instructions that they would be involved in a negotiation via instant messaging with another undergraduate business student from their school (who was currently in a different lab with a different experimenter). Emotions were not mentioned until the experiment was debriefed.

To instill the pro-social motivation required to harvest integrative potential (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), all participants read the following instructions (adapted from Carnevale & Probst, 1998):

Successful negotiators recommend that you should work for the good of both negotiators in order to come to a better agreement. You can do this by working together with your partner to make as many points for both sides in the negotiation as possible. Your goal in this negotiation is to reach an agreement with your partner on an employment contract that is both good for you, and also good for them. You would like to work together with your partner to come to an agreement that pleases both sides.

After reading these instructions, and ostensibly to allow participants to become familiar with their negotiation partner before beginning the negotiation, participants in the emotion-expression candidate role conditions were shown a video of two students in a prior negotiation. Participants were told that “the camera is directly on the floor below her, like she was poised for action. Her upper body was erect but slightly forward leaning and her feet were directly on the floor below her, like she was poised for action. In addition, she made eye contact with her partner. Any movements were energetic, active, and expansive (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Walbott & Scherer, 1986). In the angry emotional display video, the actor pulled her eyebrows together and down, she pressed her lips together and clenched her teeth (Duclos et al., 1989; Scherer & Ellgring, 2007b), she clenched her fists, squared her shoulders, and her forearms and elbows were on the table in front of her. Her upper body was erect but slightly forward leaning and her feet were directly on the floor below her, like she was poised for action. In addition, she made sporadic eye contact with her partner. Any movements were expansive, energetic, and active (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Darwin, 1872; Duclos et al., 1989; Ekman, 1993; Walbott, 1998).

The instructions the actor was given for the expression of emotional ambivalence was based on previous research which suggests that conflict and tension are interpreted as ambivalence. It was explained to the actor: that complex situations can elicit multiple opposing emotions (Fong & Tiedens, 2002; Larsen et al., 2001) and that the tension and conflict this state creates (Aaker, Drolet, & Griffin, 2008) are likely to be reflected in the face and the body (Fourie, 2003; Givens, 1978; Sincoff, 1990, 1992), so that the expression of ambivalence might appear somewhat like other emotions that are characterized by unpleasantness and tension (for instance, anxiety). Ambivalence should also show physical evidence of the individual being pulled in two different directions simultaneously (e.g., torn and conflicted).

In the ambivalent emotional display video, the actor in the videotape moved between inner brow raising and lowering. With regard to body movement, she used fidgeting of the hands in front of the body, tilting of the head back and forth, and shoulder shrugs. In addition, her gaze shifted among having eye contact with an instant-messaging for the participants and the negotiation started. Following the 30 min negotiation, participants completed a final questionnaire, were debriefed, and thanked.

Emotional expression manipulations

A female professional actor was trained to express happiness, anger, or ambivalence in short 1-min videos (used and validated in prior research, Rothman, 2011). Work by Ambady and Rosenthal (1992) has shown that very brief samples of nonverbal behavior – as short as half a minute – permit observers to form an impression of a person’s affective and interpersonal attitudes. The videotape used in this study featured two actors facing one another, only one of whom faced the camera. All participants viewed the same female professional actor perform the exact same scripted interaction, but the emotion expressed by the actor varied by video clip. In addition to the words she spoke being the same in each video clip, the sound was turned off, meaning the only difference between video clips were differences in nonverbal behavior, including facial expression, gestures, and posture.

Based on previous research suggesting that emotional expression is displayed through multiple modalities (De Paulo & Friedman, 1998; Scherer & Ellgring, 2007a, 2007b), the emotions were manipulated through both the face and body movement. This allowed for the expression of emotion in the videos to be more naturalistic, in comparison to more static photographs that are often used in emotions research. The actor in the video (from a top theater school) had been trained to feel the emotions she had to portray in the scenario (Gosselin, Kirouac, & Dore, 2005). Emotions portrayed in this way are closer to genuine emotions than portrayals of the emotion without feeling it.

In the happy emotional display video, the actor smiled often and relaxed her face (Gosselin et al., 2005), she gestured with her hands freely during speech, her head tilted slightly toward her interaction partner, and at times she nodded. Her body was positioned to be inclusive (rather than exclusive) of her partner. In addition, she made eye contact with her partner. Any movements were energetic, active, and expansive (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Walbott & Scherer, 1986). In the angry emotional display video, the actor pulled her eyebrows together and down, she pressed her lips together and clenched her teeth (Duclos et al., 1989; Scherer & Ellgring, 2007b), she clenched her fists, squared her shoulders, and her forearms and elbows were on the table in front of her. Her upper body was erect but slightly forward leaning and her feet were directly on the floor below her, like she was poised for action. In addition, she made sporadic eye contact with her partner. Any movements were expansive, energetic, and active (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Darwin, 1872; Duclos et al., 1989; Ekman, 1993; Walbott, 1998).

The instructions the actor was given for the expression of emotional ambivalence was based on previous research which suggests that conflict and tension are interpreted as ambivalence. It was explained to the actor: that complex situations can elicit multiple opposing emotions (Fong & Tiedens, 2002; Larsen et al., 2001) and that the tension and conflict this state creates (Aaker, Drolet, & Griffin, 2008) are likely to be reflected in the face and the body (Fourie, 2003; Givens, 1978; Sincoff, 1990, 1992), so that the expression of ambivalence might appear somewhat like other emotions that are characterized by unpleasantness and tension (for instance, anxiety). Ambivalence should also show physical evidence of the individual being pulled in two different directions simultaneously (e.g., torn and conflicted).
interaction partner, looking downward, and looking off into space. The distinguishing feature of this expressed ambivalence is that it reflects the internal conflict that the ambivalent person is experiencing (Aaker et al., 2008) by showing movement in one direction and then another direction (For further discussion of this point see Rothman, 2011).

Measures

Control variables

Existing studies have shown that various demographic factors influence negotiation process and outcome (e.g., Rubin & Brown, 1975; Thompson, 1990). In the present study we included negotiator age as a demographic factor. Considering that our theory builds on the dual concern theory which suggests that prosocial rather than prosely motives are a critical factor leading to increased value creation, we also controlled for the extent to which participants acted cooperatively in their negotiation. Specifically, Pruitt and Rubin (1986) note that integration requires both assertiveness and cooperation. In our studies, assertiveness was manipulated by emotional expression condition. We wanted all conditions to be equally cooperative, so we elicited pro-social motivation in all conditions. We then controlled for cooperativeness to account for any variance (noise) created by participants’ differential reactions to our pro-social prompt. We measured cooperativeness at the very end of the study before the demographic questions with one item (0 = not at all; 11 = all of the time): to what extent did you act cooperatively in your negotiation. Finally, because emotional expressions tend to evoke reciprocal and complementary emotions in others that help individuals respond to significant social events (Barry et al., 2004; Keltner & Haidt, 1999), we controlled for several emotions that may have been induced by watching one’s future negotiation partner express either happiness, anger, or ambivalence. To control for emotional reciprocity processes, we asked participants the extent to which they felt emotional ambivalence, happiness and anger in response to their negotiation partner (1-not at all, 7-extremely). Emotional ambivalence was measured with two items: conflicted and anxiety (x = .69); happiness was measured with one item: pleased; and anger was measured with one item: angry. To account for emotional complementarity processes, we asked participants the extent to which they felt worried and uncertain (1-not at all, 7-extremely). Worried is a likely reaction to observing anger, and was measured with two items: worry and distress (x = .86). Reduced uncertainty is a likely reaction to observed happiness and was measured with one item: uncertainty. We wanted to show that there is something uniquely important about observing emotional ambivalence that helps negotiators reach high joint gain. Controlling for these emotions helps us rule out various third-variable explanations.

Manipulation checks

The effectiveness of the emotion expression manipulations was assessed by asking participants to indicate the extent to which the person in the video was feeling each of the following emotions: happy, pleased, ambivalent, torn, conflicted, angry, irritated, and no emotion/neutral. The manipulation check for happy emotional display was measured with: happy and pleased (x = .98). The manipulation check for angry emotional display was measured with: angry and irritated (x = .94). The manipulation check for ambivalent emotional display was measured with: ambivalent, torn, and conflicted (x = .90). The manipulation check for the no-video condition was measured with one item: no emotion/neutral.

Total Value Creation was measured as the total points each dyad achieved together. Value Claimed was measured as the number of points received by each individual negotiator as a proportion of total value created by the dyad.

Results

ANOVA confirmed the effectiveness of all three manipulations of emotional expression. Candidate-role participants who observed a Happy partner rated the actor as significantly more happy (M = 6.05, SD = .550) than participants who observed an Angry partner (M = 1.22, SD = .507), t(36) = −11.21, p < .001, an Ambivalent partner (M = 2.75, SD = 1.16), t(36) = −7.87, p < .001, and relative to participants who did not view a video (M = 4.45, SD = 1.21), t(36) = −.490, p < .001. Candidate-role participants who observed an Angry partner rated the actor as significantly more angry (M = 6.39, SD = .333) than participants who observed a Happy partner (M = 1.35, SD = .784), t(36) = −11.04, p < .001, an Ambivalent partner (M = 2.40, SD = 1.26), t(36) = −8.74, p < .001, and relative to participants who did not view a video (M = 2.45, SD = 1.21), t(36) = −8.81, p < .001. Candidate-role participants who observed an Ambivalent partner rated the actor as significantly more ambivalent (M = 6.30, SD = .532) than participants who observed a Happy partner (M = 2.00, SD = 903), t(36) = −10.23, p < .001, an Angry partner (M = 3.00, SD = 1.01), t(36) = −7.65, p < .001, and relative to participants who did not view a video (M = 2.77, SD = 1.17), t(36) = −.859, p < .001. Finally, Candidate-role participants who did not observe a video before the negotiation expected their partner to be less emotional/more neutral (M = 3.82, SD = 2.14) than participants who observed a Happy partner (M = 2.44, SD = 1.74), t(35) = −1.89, p = .067, an Angry partner (M = 1.11, SD = .333), t(35) = −3.73, p < .001, and participants who observed an Ambivalent partner (M = 2.40, SD = 1.52), t(35) = −2.01, p = .05.

Total value creation

Hypothesis 1 proposed that negotiators will create more joint total value in negotiations in which emotional ambivalence is expressed than negotiations in which anger or no emotion is expressed. Controlling for age (ns), perceived cooperativeness of the negotiation (ns) and negotiator emotions (felt ambivalence p = .004 and felt uncertainty p = .017; all others ns) revealed a significant main effect of emotional expression condition on total dyadic value creation, F(3, 29) = 3.84, p = .020. Contrast analysis demonstrated that dyads in the Emotional Ambivalence condition created the highest total value (M = 20,340, SD = 1399) (out of a total 22,800), significantly more than dyads in the No Video condition (M = 12,873, SD = 10,229), p = .012, and significantly more than dyads in the Angry condition (M = 16,200, SD = 9242), p = .034, which were not different from each other. The total value created by dyads in the Happy condition (M = 20,100, SD = 1393), was significantly more than the No Video condition (p = .038), but not significantly different from any of the other conditions.3

Value claimed as proportion of total value created

Hypothesis 4 proposed that negotiators observing the expression of emotional ambivalence will claim more personal value than those observing happiness, anger, or neutrality.

3 There were a total of six impasses. Two were in the angry condition and four were in the no video condition. According to the instructions that participants received, they earned zero points if they reached an impasse. Importantly, when we assigned more than zero but less than the lowest outcome anyone achieved in the dataset, we find that our results remain unchanged. Specifically, the lowest individual value that any participant received was 5200 points. When we assigned individuals who impassed 5000 points in individual value, and then assigned dyads 10,000 points in total value, our results remain significant and unchanged.
Age of the negotiator, the perceived cooperativeness of the negotiation, and the same participant emotions as in our previous analysis were included as covariates, and none were significant (all ns). Results revealed no significant main effect of emotional expression condition on individual value claimed F(3,23) = .407, p = .749. Participants claimed just as much personal value in the Emotional Ambivalence condition (M = .489, SD = .063) as in the Happy condition (M = .477, SD = .104), p = .440, the Angry condition (M = .487, SD = .108), p = .500, and the No Video condition (M = .489, SD = .104), p = .957. The Happy, Angry and No Video conditions were not significantly different from one another.

Discussion

Study 1 found that negotiations in which emotional ambivalence was expressed achieved higher joint value than negotiations in which anger was expressed, and also higher joint value than negotiations in which no video was observed. These effects were driven by higher joint integrative value creation in negotiations in which emotional ambivalence was expressed. Controlling for felt emotions the findings remained, suggesting that there was something uniquely important about expressed ambivalence that facilitated integrative agreements. These findings advance our understanding of the interpersonal influence of complex emotional expressions – namely emotional ambivalence – in negotiations with integrative potential by highlighting that total value creation is greater when individuals observe a negotiation partner express emotional ambivalence. The lack of a significant difference between the ambivalent and happy conditions is not surprising considering prior research (e.g., Anderson & Thompson, 2004) demonstrating the benefits of happiness for joint gains. However, this is the first research to show that observing expressed emotional ambivalence in a negotiation partner made it more likely that dyads reached higher joint gain relative to observing anger or no emotion.

Negotiators observing the expression of emotional ambivalence were expected to claim more personal value than those observing happiness, anger, or neutrality. This hypothesis was not supported; observing expressed emotional ambivalence did not influence personal value claimed. We offer a tentative explanation for why this is the case in the discussion of Study 3.

Study 2

Building directly on prior research, we have suggested that because negotiators expressing ambivalence are perceived as submissive, they invite observers to be assertive and dominate the negotiation (Rothman, 2011), which the dual-concern model suggests is necessary for value creation. Study 2 directly tests whether individuals who express ambivalence are perceived as submissive and whether this leads observers to believe that they can influence their ambivalent counterpart.

Method

Participants and design

A total of 47 female students at an east-coast university participated in exchange for a payment of $10. Participants were recruited via e-mail from an electronic mailing list at the university. The advertisement noted that the study was about negotiating with others; no mention was made that this was a study about emotions until the experiment was debriefed. Individual participants were assigned randomly to one of the three conditions: happy (n = 16), angry (n = 15), ambivalent emotional display (n = 16).

Procedure

When participants arrived at the experiment, they were seated alone in a room in front of a laptop computer, and asked to read and sign a consent form. To enhance the participants’ perception that there was another participant in the study, the experimenter left the room and said, “I will be back in a moment, I am going to check on the other experimenter and participant and make sure they are ready to start.” The experimenter returned to the room after 1–2 min and proceeded with the experiment by placing the background information for the negotiation on the table, and handing the participants the first questionnaire. Participants were then told that they would be involved in a short negotiation with another participant, but first they would be involved in several negotiation planning activities.

Ostensibly to allow participants to become familiar with their negotiation partner before beginning the negotiation, participants were shown a video of two students negotiating over how to distribute work for a group project. The experimenter told all participants that “the camera is focused on one student, because she has actually agreed to return and negotiate a second time. This is the person you will negotiate with in this study.” As in Study 1, participants watched the 1 min video on the computer (the video included the emotional expression manipulation) of their “negotiation partner,” ostensibly to “develop an initial impression.” Emotional expression was manipulated with the same three video clips for happy, angry, and ambivalent conditions used in Study 1. Immediately after they watched the video, participants completed a questionnaire that contained the manipulation checks, and the measures of perceived submissiveness and perceived ability to influence.

### Table 1

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables, Study 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20.65 (.736)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>3.08 (1.89)</td>
<td>– .04</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>2.05 (1.50)</td>
<td>– .03</td>
<td>– .38</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambral</td>
<td>2.53 (1.69)</td>
<td>– .08</td>
<td>– .34</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried</td>
<td>2.65 (1.75)</td>
<td>– .05</td>
<td>– .39</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>4.05 (1.89)</td>
<td>– .26</td>
<td>– .26</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>7.60 (2.05)</td>
<td>– .06</td>
<td>– .25</td>
<td>– .09</td>
<td>– .09</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy Cond*</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>– .04</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>– .37</td>
<td>– .34</td>
<td>– .38</td>
<td>– .23</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger Cond*</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>– .15</td>
<td>– .50</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>– .01</td>
<td>– .31</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambiv Cond*</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>– .28</td>
<td>– .24</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>– .08</td>
<td>– .03</td>
<td>– .33</td>
<td>– .31</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value</td>
<td>17,295 (7446)</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>– .02</td>
<td>– .18</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>– .08</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>– .37</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 40. Correlations > .31 are significant at p < .05.
* Experimentally manipulated independent variable coded 1/0.
Next, participants read the negotiation instructions, modeled after those used in past research (e.g., De Dreu et al., 2006; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). All participants were told that they were to assume the role of Bartender A, who would negotiate with a colleague (Bartender B, who is the person they just saw in the video) about work schedules. The issues to be negotiated included (a) number of hours tending bar instead of waiting tables, (b) evenings worked, (c) how often each would clean up, (d) the distribution rules for tips. These issues were ranked first to fourth most important to Bartender A, respectively. Participants were told they could determine what agreement was best for them by referring to this information. Participants were encouraged to cooperate with their partner (rather than just earning the most for themselves): “Your goal, as Bartender A, is to reach an agreement with the person you saw in the video on all four issues.” Finally, participants were told that they would have 10 min to reach agreement on all four issues, and that past research using this negotiation task has shown that this is more than enough time to reach agreement for people with limited experience with negotiations.

Subjects then completed another (filler) task for approximately 10 min, and were given a final questionnaire, which included demographic questions. They were then informed that the experiment was over and that no real negotiation would take place. They were fully debriefed, thanked, and paid. The entire procedure was completed in approximately 40 min.

Measures

Manipulation check

The effectiveness of the emotion expression manipulations was assessed by asking participants to indicate the extent to which the person in the video was feeling each of the following emotions: happy, pleased, ambivalent, torn, conflicted, angry, and irritated. The manipulation check for happy emotional display was measured with: happy and pleased \((z = .95)\). The manipulation check for angry emotional display was measured with: angry and irritated \((z = .95)\). The manipulation check for ambivalent emotional display was measured with: ambivalent, torn, and conflicted \((z = .89)\).

Perceived submissiveness

Participants rated the extent to which they felt the person in the video could be described by several characteristics. Perception of submissiveness was measured with 5 items: ambitious (reverse-coded), tough (reverse-coded), aggressive (reverse-coded), dominant (reverse-coded), submissive \((z = .93)\).

Perceived ability to influence

Participants rated the extent to which they felt they would be able to influence the person in the video with 1 item: “When I negotiate with this person I will be able to influence him/her.”

Results

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables, Study 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Happy Cond(^a)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anger Cond(^b)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ambiv Cond(^c)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perceive submissiveness</td>
<td>3.22 (1.30)</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>– .70</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ability to influence</td>
<td>3.02 (1.01)</td>
<td>– .02</td>
<td>– .47</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(n = 47\). Correlations \(\geq .47\) are significant at \(p < .01\).
\(^a\) Experimentally manipulated independent variable coded 1/0.

Perceptual reactions

Perceived submissiveness

Participants’ perceptions of submissiveness differed significantly by condition: \(F(2,44) = 40.24, p < .001\). As predicted, the Ambivalent partner was judged as significantly more submissive \((M = 4.46, SD = .525)\) than the Happy partner \((M = 3.20, SD = .959), t(44) = 4.47, p < .001\), or the Ambivalent partner \((M = 1.91, SD = .828), t(44) = –8.99, p < .001\).

Perceived ability to influence

Participants’ perceptions of their ability to influence their partner differed significantly by condition: \(F(2,44) = 9.54, p < .001\). As predicted, participants perceived they were significantly more able to influence the Ambivalent partner \((M = 3.68, SD = .946)\) than the Happy partner \((M = 3.00, SD = .632), t(44) = –2.25, p < .029\), or the Ambivalent partner \((M = 2.33, SD = .976), t(44) = –4.37, p < .001\).

Mediation by perceived submissiveness

Separate regression analyses confirmed significant effects of observing a partner’s Emotional Ambivalence (relative to happiness and anger) on perceived ability to influence \((\beta = .479, p < .001)\) and on perceptions of submissiveness \((\beta = .692, p < .001)\). Further, perceived submissiveness significantly predicted perceived ability to influence \((\beta = .610, p < .001)\). To determine whether perceived submissiveness mediated the effect of observed Emotional Ambivalence on perceived ability to influence, we ran a bias corrected bootstrap model with 50,000 samples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) and found that as predicted, the effect of observed Emotional Ambivalence on perceived ability to influence was significantly mediated by perceived submissiveness (indirect effect 95% CI: .38, 1.32). Controlling for the effect of perceived submissiveness on perceived ability to influence \((\beta = .42, SE = .13, p = .022)\), the effect of observed Emotional Ambivalence on perceived ability to influence was non-significant \((\beta = .23, SE = .35, p = .514)\). These results support the hypothesized mediation.

Discussion

Study 2 replicates prior research (Rothman, 2011) demonstrating that observed emotional ambivalence leads to increased perceptions of submissiveness. Furthermore, the results of Study 2 suggest that such increased perceptions of submissiveness, in turn,
invite observers to perceive that they can assert their point of view
and influence their negotiation partner—a necessary prerequisite
for achieving high joint gain (De Dreu et al., 2006). The findings
of Study 2 confirm that observing Emotional Ambivalence, and
the inferences of submissiveness it produces, fosters assertiveness.
Study 3 further extends these findings by confirming that observing
Emotional Ambivalence helps negotiators increase joint gain
because ambivalence conveys submissiveness.

**Study 3**

Study 3 replicated and extended the findings of Study 1 and
Study 2 in several ways. First, to ensure that the results from Study
1 were not negotiation-dependent Study 3 used a different negoti-
ation scenario. Second, to provide more control over what partici-
pants thought about their negotiation partner, Study 3 included a
control condition with a video clip in which the actor displayed
no emotion at all (neutral). This condition kept constant across
conditions the fact that participants knew what their partner
looked like, and ensured that control condition participants
expected a neutral partner. Finally, to enhance the potential for
participants to create value, we added a compatible issue
(Thompson, 1995) to the negotiation.

**Method**

**Participants and design**

174 Undergraduate business students (95 females and 79
males) at two universities participated in the study for extra-
credit. A recruitment e-mail noted that the study was about nego-
tiating on-line; no mention was made that this was a study about
emotions until the experiment was debriefed. Participants came to
the lab for a 1-h on-line negotiation session. Individual participants
were randomly paired to negotiate a version of the New Car nego-
tiation (adapted from Nadler, Thompson, & Morris, 2008) with
another participant in their session. Participants were assigned to
either Buyer or Seller role, and to negotiate without seeing a video
clip (n = 87), or to negotiate after seeing one of four emotional
expression conditions: happy (n = 21), angry (n = 21), ambivalent
(n = 23) or neutral emotional display conditions (n = 22). Individu-
als in the emotional display conditions were led to believe they
were negotiating via computer with a person in a video clip. In
reality, they were negotiating via computer with the other student
with whom they were paired. Participants were assured that they
were not being videotaped themselves.

**Negotiation task**

Seven issues were negotiated, and each negotiator was given a
scoring system that detailed how much each issue was worth to
him or her and what his or her preferences were on each issue.
For two issues, the parties’ preferences were in complete opposi-
tion to each other (e.g., the buyer wanted a lower sales price and
the seller wanted a higher sales price, and this issue was worth
the same number of points to each of them) (distributive). For four
issues, negotiators had different low- and high-priority issues,
offering the opportunity to integrate parties’ interests (integrative).
For example, the buyer wanted a longer warranty and the seller
wanted a shorter warranty, but the buyer cared more about this
issue; that is, warranty was worth up to 4000 points for the buyer,
but only 1600 points for the seller. In contrast, financing was worth
4000 points for the seller and only 1600 points for the buyer.
Negotiators could maximize their joint gain by agreeing on the
candidate’s preferred warranty and the seller’s preference for more
financing. For one issue—delivery date—parties’ interests were the
same (compatible). The maximum joint gain was 26,400.

**Procedure**

When participants arrived at the experiment, they were
randomly paired to negotiate with another participant and individ-
ually seated in front of a computer. Participants read written
instructions that they would be involved in a negotiation via
instant messaging with another undergraduate business student
from their school (who was currently in a different lab with a dif-
ferent experimenter).

To instill the pro-social motivation required to harvest integra-
tive potential (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), all participants read the exact
same instructions as in Study 1 (adapted from Carnevale & Probst,
1998). After reading these instructions, participants in the emotion
display conditions then watched a 1 min video of their “negota-
tion partner,” ostensibly to “develop an initial impression.” Emo-
tional expression was manipulated with the same three video
clips for happy, angry, and ambivalent conditions used in Study
1. In the neutral video clip, the actor engaged in very few if any
of the nonverbal gestures used to express happiness, anger, or
ambivalence in the other video clips. After watching the video,
participants in the emotion display conditions completed a ques-
tionnaire that contained the emotional expression manipulation
checks and questions about participants’ thoughts and feelings
about their partner. Participants in the no emotion display
condition did not watch the video, and instead moved directly to
a questionnaire regarding their thoughts and feelings about their
negotiating partner.

Participants were then given 10 min to read their instructions,
confidential role materials, and payoff schedule, and to prepare
for the negotiation. After 10 min, the computer started the
negotiation for participants and they were able to begin communi-
cating via an instant messaging program. Following the 30 min
negotiation, participants completed a final questionnaire, were
debriefed, and thanked.

**Measures**

**Control variables**

We controlled for participant age, and the extent to which
participants acted cooperatively, felt happy, angry, worried and
distressed (α = .81), and uncertain just as in Study 1. We also
included empathy, considering its known effects on helping behav-
ior (Van Kleef et al., 2010), as well as fear and troubled (α = .71),
considering these are likely responses to expressions of anger
(Lelieveld, Van Dijk, Van Beest, & Van Kleef, 2012). We used the
term ambivalent instead of conflicted to tap directly into ambiva-
elle likely to have been felt in the ambivalent condition.

**Manipulation checks**

The effectiveness of the emotion expression manipulations was
assessed by asking participants to indicate the extent to which the
person in the video was feeling each of the following emotions:
happy, pleased, ambivalent, torn, conflicted, mixed feelings, angry,
irritated, no emotion, and no emotion. The manipulation check for
happy emotional display was measured with: happy and pleased
(α = .97). The manipulation check for angry emotional display
was measured with: angry and irritated (α = .94). The manipula-
tion check for ambivalent emotional display was measured with:
torn, conflicted, and mixed feelings (α = .94) and neutral
which was measured with no emotion and neutral (α = .92).

**Total Value Creation** was measured as the total points each
dyad achieved together. **Value Claimed** was measured as the
number of points received by each individual negotiator as a pro-
portion of total value created by dyad.
Perceptions of submissiveness

Participants rated the extent to which the person in the video could be described by several characteristics. Perceptions of submissiveness were measured with the following items: tough (reverse-coded), aggressive (reverse-coded), dominant (reverse-coded), forceful (reverse-coded), assertive (reverse-coded), is intimidating (reverse-coded), submissive, and weak (α = .93).

Results

Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, and the inter-scale correlation matrix. Role was not a significant predictor, and including role in the analyses as a covariate did not change the results.

Emotion expression manipulation checks

ANOVAs again confirmed the effectiveness of all three manipulations of emotional expression, as well as the new manipulation of neutrality. Participants who observed a Happy partner rated the actor as significantly more happy (M = 6.10, SD = .718) than participants who observed an Ambivalent partner (M = 2.63, SD = 1.02), t(83) = 12.63, p < .001, an Angry partner (M = 1.17, SD = .365), t(83) = 17.57, p < .001, or a Neutral partner (M = 2.50, SD = 1.24), t(83) = 12.96, p < .001. Participants who observed an Angry partner rated the actor as significantly more angry (M = 6.17, SD = .532) than participants who observed an Ambivalent partner (M = 2.57, SD = 1.47), t(83) = −10.74, p < .001, a Happy partner (M = 1.33, SD = .695), t(83) = −14.08, p < .001, or a Neutral partner (M = 2.50, SD = 1.37), t(83) = −18.82, p < .001. Participants who observed an Ambivalent partner rated the actor as significantly more ambivalent (M = 5.64, SD = 1.37) than participants who observed a Happy partner (M = 1.91, SD = .920), t(83) = −9.70, p < .001, an Angry partner (M = 3.29, SD = 1.48), t(83) = −6.11, p < .001, or a Neutral partner (M = 2.35, SD = 1.25), t(83) = −8.65, p < .001. Finally, participants who observed a neutral partner rated the actor as significantly more neutral (M = 5.07, SD = 1.89) than participants who observed a Happy partner (M = 1.57, SD = .912), t(83) = −8.81, p < .001, an Angry partner (M = 1.02, SD = .109), t(83) = −10.19, p < .001, or an Ambivalent partner (M = 2.91, SD = 1.49), t(83) = −5.56, p < .001.

Total value creation

Controlling for felt negotiator emotions (ns), age of the negotiator (ns), and perceived cooperativeness of the negotiation (p = .003), results revealed a significant main effect of emotion condition on joint total value creation, F(3,69) = 2.79, p = .047. Dyads in which Emotional Ambivalence was expressed created the highest total value (M = 23.628, SD = 1799) (out of a total 26,400), significantly more than dyads in which Anger (M = 20.810, SD = 6432), p = .007 and Neutrality (M = 22.509, SD = 2258), p = .049 were expressed, who were not different from one another. The total value created by dyads in which Happiness was expressed (M = 22.857, SD = 2163) was not significantly different from any other condition.4

Perceptual reactions

Perceived submissiveness

Hypothesis 2 proposed that ambivalent partners would be perceived as more submissive than happy, angry or neutral partners. Participants’ perceptions of submissiveness differed significantly by condition: F(3,83) = 39.83, p < .001. As predicted, the Ambivalent partner was judged as significantly more submissive (M = 5.88, SD = 1.1) than the Angry partner (M = 2.53, SD = .944), t(83) = −10.43, p < .001, the Happy partner (M = 5.05, SD = .794), t(83) = −2.68, p < .01, or the Neutral partner (M = 4.98, SD = 1.34), t(83) = −2.87, p < .005. The Happy (t(83) = 7.68, p < .001) and Neutral (t(83) = 7.53, p < .001) partners were judged as significantly more submissive than the Angry partner, and were not significantly different from one another.

Mediation by perceived submissiveness

Hypothesis 3 proposed that the relationship between observed emotional ambivalence and total value creation would be mediated by perceptions of submissiveness. Separate regression analyses confirmed significant effects of observing a partner’s Emotional Ambivalence (relative to happiness, anger, neutrality) on total value created (β = 2686, p = .016) and on perceptions of submissiveness (β = 2.13, p < .001). Further, perceived submissiveness significantly predicted total value (β = 817, p = .002). To determine whether perceived submissiveness mediated the effect of observed Emotional Ambivalence on total value created, we ran a bias corrected bootstrap model with 50,000 samples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

4 There were a total of three impasses. All three were in the Angry condition. In this study, we manipulated whether they would get zero points or 5000 points each in the event of an impasse. One of the impasses was in the condition that received zero individual points (and thus zero total dyadic points). The other two impasses were in the condition that received 5000 individual points (and thus 10,000 total dyadic points). Including this variable in our analysis revealed there was no effect of this impasse variable (β(1,68) = .008, p = .525 on dyadic value creation.

Table 3

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables, Study 3.

| Scale                      | M (SD) | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     | 7     | 8     | 9     | 10    | 11    | 12    | 13    | 14    | 15    |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Age                     | 21 (1.73) | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 2. Happy                   | 2.38 (1.57) | .12   | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 3. Angry                   | 2.18 (1.49) | .06   | − .21 | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 4. Ambivalent              | 2.47 (1.27) | .08   | − .02 | .45   | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 5. Worried                 | 2.24 (1.48) | .10   | − .15 | .55   | .60   | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 6. Uncertainty             | 3.82 (1.93) | .05   | − .10 | .34   | .55   | .48   | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 7. Afraid                  | 1.93 (1.20) | .11   | − .16 | .67   | .54   | .82   | .41   | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 8. Empathy                 | 2.11 (1.38) | .02   | .10   | .01   | .36   | .31   | .22   | .17   | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 9. Cooperative             | 7.43 (2.63) | − .22 | .03   | .09   | .11   | .07   | .18   | − .01 | .17   | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 10. Happy Cond             | −       | −     | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 11. Angry Cond             | −       | −     | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 12. Ambiv Cond             | −       | −     | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 13. Neut Cond              | −       | −     | −     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 14. Submissive             | 4.65 (1.63) | .00   | .17   | .00   | − .01 | − .14 | .02   | − .07 | .09   | .16   | .14   | .74   | .46   | .12   | −     |       |       |
| 15. Total value            | 22.383 (7055) | − .06 | .13   | .02   | .05   | .09   | .10   | .03   | .05   | .32   | .07   | − .24 | .14   | .02   | .36   | −     |       |       |

n = 87. Correlations > .21 are significant at p < .05.

* Experimentally manipulated independent variable coded 1/0.
Hayes, 2008) and found that as predicted, the effect of observed Emotional Ambivalence on total value created was significantly mediated by perceived submissiveness (indirect effect 95% CI: 11.89, 3595). Controlling for the effect of perceived submissiveness on total value created ($\beta = .660, SE = .296, p = .03$), the effect of observed Emotional Ambivalence on total value created was not significant ($\beta = .1277, SE = 1233, p = .31$). These results support the hypothesized mediation.

Value claimed

Controlling for age of the negotiator ($p = .001$), the perceived cooperativeness of the negotiation ($ns$), and the same participation emotions as in our previous analysis (feeling pleased, $p = .001$; all others $ns$) results revealed a significant main effect of emotional expression condition on individual value claimed as a proportion of value created ($F(3,68) = 3.52, p = .019$). Participants claimed less personal value as a proportion of value created in the Ambivalent condition ($M = .475, SD = .084$) than in the Happy condition ($M = .541, SD = .068$), $p = .002$ and the Neutral condition ($M = .516, SD = .091$) $p = .042$, but not significantly less than in the Angry condition ($M = .509, SD = .060$, $p = .311$). Participants claimed more personal value in the Happy condition than in the Angry condition ($p = .024$), but not more than in the Neutral condition ($p = .139$).

Discussion

The findings from Study 3 replicated those from Study 1 and Study 2, but also extended them in important ways. Negotiations in which emotional ambivalence was expressed achieved higher joint value than negotiations in which anger was expressed, and also higher joint value than negotiations in which neutrality was expressed. Again, the findings remained controlling for felt emotions, suggesting that there is something uniquely important about expressed ambivalence that facilitates integrative agreements. Study 3 also demonstrated that negotiators who observe emotional ambivalence in their negotiation partner were more likely to infer high submissiveness in their negotiation partner than negotiators who observe a happy, angry, or neutral negotiation partner, and that the positive relationship between the observation of emotional ambivalence and joint value creation was fully mediated by observers’ inferences of their negotiation partner’s submissiveness.

In prior research negotiators who observed emotional ambivalence claimed more value (Rothman, 2011). This finding was not replicated in the current research; observing expressed emotional ambivalence did not increase value claimed. One speculation for this inconsistency with Rothman’s (2011) findings is that the negotiation contexts differed. In Rothman’s (2011) research, the negotiation was competitive (negotiators were encouraged to earn as much for themselves as possible) and zero-sum (distributive). In the current research, the negotiation was cooperative (negotiators were encouraged to find an agreement good for both sides), and there was integrative potential. In Rothman’s (2011) competitive/distributive negotiation context, expressed ambivalence invited assertiveness to take more for the self. In contrast, in our cooperative/integrative negotiation contexts, expressed ambivalence may have invited not only assertiveness (as Rothman, 2011), but also a desire to help the other party. Indeed, past research suggests that in cooperative settings, emotional cues conveying neediness and vulnerability elicit compassion and helping (Batson, Fultz, & Schoenrade, 1987; Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997; Eisenberg et al., 1989; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2001; Van Kleef et al., 2008, 2010). In our research, the ambivalent negotiator may be perceived as struggling and the struggle may have cued pro-social compassion in addition to assertiveness.

General discussion

Because negotiators often must entertain both pro-self and pro-social concerns in order to be successful and avoid impasse, emotional ambivalence is likely to be a common emotional experience in negotiations. Yet surprisingly little research has focused on the effects of expressed emotional ambivalence in negotiations. The three studies described here demonstrate that expressed ambivalence fosters higher joint outcomes because expressed ambivalence signals submissiveness and thus invites assertive behavior.

These findings have important theoretical implications. The majority of past research on emotional ambivalence has focused on the experience of emotional ambivalence, the situations that bring it about, and its individual-level consequences, such as creativity (e.g., Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005; Fong, 2006). Only very recently has this research been extended to examine the interpersonal implications of the expression (rather than the experience) of emotional ambivalence (Rothman, 2011). Recently research has demonstrated that it is dangerous to express emotional ambivalence in zero-sum (distributive) negotiations, because emotional ambivalence invites observers to take charge and change advantage (Rothman, 2011). By contrast, the current paper demonstrates that when negotiations are more cooperative and offer the opportunity to integrate negotiators’ interests, expressing emotional ambivalence increases value creation. Thus, the present research extends past research to non-zero-sum (integrative-potential) negotiations, and finds that expressing emotional ambivalence is not dangerous, but rather beneficial in this context. Expressed emotional ambivalence signals submissiveness, which invites assertiveness – a necessary precondition for integration of negotiators’ interests (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986).

This paper further extends the broader research literature on the interpersonal effects of emotional expressions to more complex emotions. The literature on expressed emotions in negotiations to date has predominantly focused on single discrete emotions (e.g., happiness or anger). Until now, researchers had not yet explored the impact of expressed complex emotions – such as emotional ambivalence.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

The limitations of these studies suggest several areas for future research. Future field work could further flesh out our understanding of the interpersonal effects of expressed ambivalence by identifying different ways that emotional ambivalence is expressed both verbally and nonverbally in organizational settings, and whether observers respond differently (or not) to verbal vs. non-verbal cues of emotional conflict (and consequent submissiveness). Building on past research (e.g., Aaker et al., 2008; Fournie, 2003; Sincoff, 1990, 1992), we used an actor to display emotional ambivalence nonverbally, but future research could contrast such nonverbal expressions with verbal articulations of internal tension and conflict.

Of course, whether expressed verbally or non-verbally, there are likely individual differences in the ability of negotiators to recognize ambivalence (e.g., Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009), and emotion recognition accuracy has been found to be an important factor in effective negotiation (Elfenbein, Foo, White, Tan, & Aik, 2007). Since the effects of expressed emotional ambivalence appear to be premised on observers’ perceptions of the submissiveness of the expresser, future research could
fruitfully explore whether individual differences in ability to accu-
rate judgement of others’ emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) or empathic accuracy (Ickes, 1993) – may moderate the effects found in the current research. Future research could also examine whether individual differences in the propensity to experience tolerance for ambiguity (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994) may also moderate the effects found in the current research. Those individuals who are tolerant of ambiguity, and thus more comfortable with the conflicted feelings conveyed by an ambiva-
 lent negotiation partner, may respond differently to this expres-
 sion than those individuals who are intolerant of ambiguity. Field research could also examine whether the expression of emotional ambivalence at the group level could elicit value creation in group nego-
thiations (Peters, Rothman, & Northcraft, 2011), and further whether this effect is moderated by group members’ ability to rec-
ognize the diversity of emotions in their collective (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009).

Future research might also examine if our findings hold in differ-
ent negotiation environments. We found that pro-social negotiators created high joint value when they observed emotional ambivalence, because expressed ambivalence invited assertive-
ness. However, would these results hold if negotiators were given integrative opportunities but goals to compete (e.g., held pro-self motivations)? As noted by Pruitt and Rubin (1986), the integration of negotiators’ interests is premised on both assertiveness and pro-
social motivation. It seems plausible that pro-self negotiators observing emotional ambivalence might become overly assertive, thereby engaging in more contentious and less problem-solving
behavior, and thus lowering joint outcomes. Future research should examine whether pro-self motivation undermines the ben-
efits of expressed emotional ambivalence in negotiations with integrative potential. At a practical level, this suggests that when negotiators want to encourage value creation, they may want to emphasize the mixed-motive (pro-self and pro-social) nature of most negotiations perhaps by emphasizing the importance of future rela-
tions (Dal Bo, 2005) – and even own up to (display) their own ambivalence.

Conclusion

The consequences of emotional expressions in negotiations have experienced a recent surge of research interest. This research suggests that the emotions expressed by others are an important piece of social information and are critical in shaping and guiding negotiators’ judgments and behaviors. Our results make it clearer now that expressed emotional ambivalence is not only an invita-
ton to be dominated, as previous research has suggested (Rothman, 2011). In concert with negotiators’ pro-social motives, it may also provide a useful way to unlock a negotiation’s integra-
tive potential.

Clark, M. S., Fatalia, S. P., & Carver, V. H. (1996). Some thoughts and findings on self-