negotiation and conflict management research

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When Do People Initiate a Negotiation? The Role of Discrepancy, Satisfaction, and Ability Beliefs

Julia A. M. Reif and Felix C. Brodbeck

Economic and Organisational Psychology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitaet Muenchen, Munich, Germany

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Correspondence
Julia A. M. Reif, Economic and Organisational Psychology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitaet Muenchen, Leopoldstraße 13, 80802 Munich, Germany; e-mail: julia.reif@psy.lmu.de.

Abstract

Negotiation research increasingly pays attention to the beginning of negotiations. Building on a theory of the initiation of negotiation we investigated when and why people consider initiating negotiations. Results from one field study and two scenario experiments show that a negative discrepancy between an actual state and a desired state increased the intention to initiate a negotiation and promoted real initiation behavior. This effect was mediated by the subjective perception of this discrepancy and feelings of dissatisfaction. Expectancy considerations in the form of ability to initiate negotiations and implicit beliefs about negotiation ability moderated this serial mediation effect: high initiation ability and incremental negotiation beliefs facilitated the decision to negotiate whereas low initiation ability and entity negotiation beliefs inhibited negotiation initiations. In the present work, we offer a first empirical test of the theory of initiation of negotiation.

Negotiations in real-world settings are always embedded in a broader context of interactions, relationships, and situational circumstances in which potential negotiators first have to decide on whether to negotiate or not. Numerous scientific studies on negotiations examine negotiation processes, strategies, and results. For example, in experimental studies, subjects are placed into a given negotiation context, and thereby factors that are potentially antecedent to a state of affairs where a negotiation may come about (or not) are omitted. Thus, the fact that a negotiation cannot start until it has been initiated is neglected.

However, whether or not individuals enter a negotiation and come to the table can have substantial effects not only on economic and social outcomes of single individuals but also on larger conflict resolution processes. Conflict researchers have already been discussing this phenomenon for quite some time: Rubin (1989) and Zartman (2002) argued that ascertaining whether the situation or the conflict is ripe for negotiation helps to prepare a negotiation properly and start negotiating at the right moment.

A growing body of psychological research is devoted to the question of when and why people do (or do not) initiate negotiations and underlines the importance of knowing what makes people initiate a negotiation (or not) for a deeper understanding of the whole negotiation process, including its beginning. In order to foster our understanding of the initiation of negotiation and to stimulate theory-driven research on the topic, Reif and Brodbeck (2014) formulated a theory on the initiation of negotiation.

Some elements of the ideas described in this article were presented at the 23rd Annual Conference of the International Association for Conflict Management, Boston, USA. The research further draws on a dissertation completed by Julia A. M. Reif at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitaet Muenchen. We thank Barbara Mehner for her assistance in data collection for Study 1.

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This study aimed to test basic assumptions of the theory, including the moderating influence of expectancy considerations in the form of ability beliefs.

The Initiation of Negotiation

Initiation of negotiation is "one starting point of the negotiation process (regardless of whether the initiation is successful and the process actually continues). And, an individual's decision to negotiate for advantages, change of circumstances, or any other reason, and consequently taking the first step toward negotiation, marks the beginning of the negotiation process" (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014, p. 364).

Previous research has identified a number of factors that affect people's decision to initiate a negotiation, such as gender (e.g., Babcock, Gelfand, Small, & Stayn, 2006; Small, Gelfand, Babcock, & Gettman, 2007; for a meta-analysis, see Kugler, Kaschner, Reif, & Brodbeck, 2014), affect (e.g., Kapoutsis, Volkema, & Nikolopoulos, 2014; Kong, Tuncel, & Parks, 2011), social incentives (Bowles, Babcock, & Lai, 2007), power and the legitimacy of power (Lammers, Galinsky, Gordijn, & Otten, 2008; Magee, Galinsky, & Gruenfeld, 2007), ability (Volkema, Kapoutsis, & Nikolopoulos, 2013), and attachment orientation (Bear & Segel-Karpas, 2015). In the field of compensation research, the attractiveness of the initial offer, the number and attractiveness of the alternatives offered, and prior work experience of applicants (Gerhart & Rynes, 1991; O'Shea & Bush, 2002) were shown to affect the initiation of negotiation. Furthermore, the influence of personality variables (e.g., Volkema & Fleck, 2012), risk aversion (Marks & Harold, 2011), subjective norms, attitudes toward bargaining (Lee, 2000), and cultural differences (Lee, 2000; Volkema & Fleck, 2012) on the tendency to bargain have been studied. Understanding what makes people initiate a negotiation or prevents them from negotiating is essential because negotiations can have substantial effects on individual outcomes, for example, an employee's lifetime wealth (Babcock & Laschever, 2003).

In light of these consequences of initiating or avoiding negotiations, a deeper understanding of the motives that make people take the first step toward a negotiation needs to be developed. However, the rather isolated examination of contextual factors and individual characteristics with regard to the initiation of negotiation in different research traditions makes it difficult to find a genuine answer to the question of when and why people do or do not start negotiating. In order to account for the interdisciplinary awareness of the phenomenon of "initiation of negotiation," a general theoretical model of the initiation of negotiation was developed (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014), which provides a cognitive-motivational explanation of negotiation initiations. Existing negotiation theory and research focusing primarily on behaviors, attributions, and emotions once the negotiation process has started can be enhanced by integrating initiation theory in three different ways: First, initiation theory offers an explanation for the emergence of negotiations and thus helps to predict whether parties come to the table or not; second, initiation theory may help to explain the course of negotiation processes (initial offers, choice of tactics) by offering insights into initiation motives and values; third, initiation theory may provide insights into the emergence of renegotiations in case that prior initiation motives could not be satisfied during the negotiation process.

A Theoretical Model of the Initiation of Negotiation

The theoretical model of the initiation of negotiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014) describes the emergence of initiative behaviors in a negotiation context by delineating personal and situational factors and is based on Kowalski's (1996) theory of complaining and Vroom's (1964) expectancy x valence theory. The model of the initiation of negotiation provides a parsimonious theoretical rationale for initiating behaviors because it picks up well-established and tested motivational theories and adapts them to the negotiation context. The central idea is that the initiation of negotiation depends on situational discrepancies, affective responses, and cognitive-motivational considerations. Precondition is an evaluative process in

the form of a comparison of current events or behaviors with an individual's standard for those events or behaviors. This process of comparison can result in detecting a discrepancy between one's standard and the actual situation, which leads to an affective response, such as dissatisfaction, anger, or the perception of injustice. The affective orientation toward the desired goal (valence), one's beliefs that initiating a negotiation is a useful tool to reach one's goals (instrumentality) as well as one's estimation of the likelihood of being able to initiate and negotiate successfully (expectancy) are integrated into the model as cognitive-motivational considerations, which moderate the effect of discrepancy and affective response on the decision to start negotiating (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014). The model also suggests that an initiation of negotiation can occur in the absence of discrepancy or without feelings of negative affect (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014). In this case, high instrumentality, high expectancy, or high valence considerations are the crucial factors and can foster the decision to negotiate. Instrumentality considerations can refer to economic outcomes, relational outcomes, and self-related outcomes. Economic instrumentality, which also accounts for research showing that a focus on gain versus loss influences the willingness to negotiate (Shalvi et al., 2013), refers to potential material outcomes of a negotiation. Relational instrumentality (for related work on relational accounts within negotiation situations see Mislin, Boumgarden, Jang, & Bottom, 2015) and self-related instrumentality describe considerations regarding the maintenance of relationships or the impact of negotiating on oneself. For example, related work by Shalvi, Handgraaf, and De Dreu (2011) showed that people avoid situations that undermine one's feelings of self-worth.

In this study, we focus on the core mediation path of the model as well as on the moderating role of expectancy considerations (see Figure 1). The mediation path states that objective discrepancies are perceived, and the perception of the discrepancy influences the decision to negotiate via the experience of a negative affective state. As originally suggested by Scheier and Carver (1988) in the context of behavioral self-regulation and adapted to initiative behaviors by Kowalski (1996), people monitor their present states as they perceive them and compare these perceptions against their personal standard or reference values. Hence, we want to test this theoretical assumption and argue that an objective situational discrepancy leads to the subjective perception of this discrepancy (Hypothesis 1).

Negative discrepancies increase arousal and energize behavior (Diefendorff & Chandler, 2010). People attempt to reduce the discrepancy by making a behavioral adjustment along a certain direction, with a certain intensity, and persistence of behavior (Diefendorff & Chandler, 2010). Building on the function of discrepancy reduction as a key motivational mechanism (Diefendorff & Chandler, 2010) and testing the theoretical assumption that discrepancy arouses behavioral adjustments, we suggest that a negative

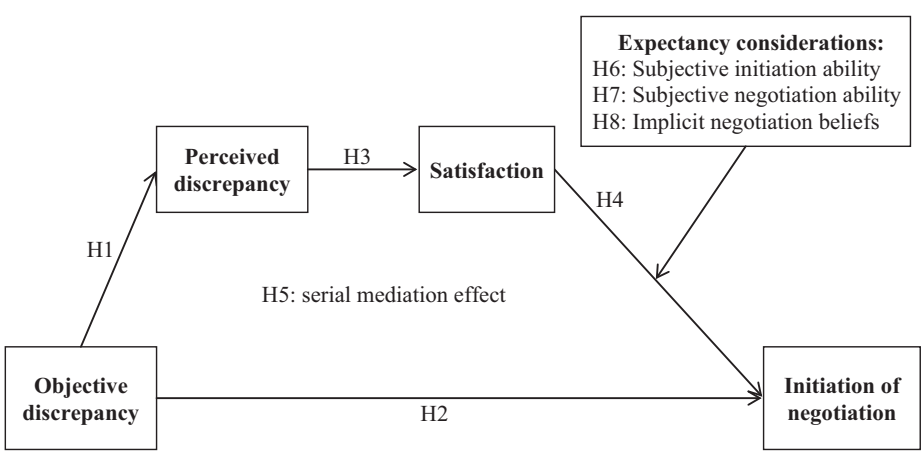

Figure 1. Conceptual model: Serial mediation effect of objective discrepancy via perceived discrepancy and satisfaction on the initiation of negotiation, moderated by expectancy considerations.

discrepancy between a current state and the individual's standard for this state increases the intention to initiate a negotiation (Hypothesis 2).

Emotional reactions are also incorporated into the theory of the initiation of negotiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014): Positive affect is experienced if the current state exceeds the individual's standard (e.g., Kowalski, 1996; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1987). Dissatisfaction and negative affect result if a negative discrepancy between actual events and the individual's standard is perceived. As a consequence, the individual's motivation to reduce the discrepancy increases (Kowalski, 1996; Scheier & Carver, 1988). Thus, we want to test the assumption that the perception of discrepancy translates into an affective reaction and propose that the perception of a negative discrepancy between a current state and the individual standard for this state increases dissatisfaction (Hypothesis 3).

With regard to the motivation of human action, affective processes play a fundamental role (e.g., Custers & Aarts, 2005; Diefendorff & Chandler, 2010). The experience of negative affect can have a direct impact on discrepancy-reducing behaviors (Duval & Wicklund, 1972; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1987). Anger, for example, has been described as an emotion with approach-related tendencies (Carver & Harmon-Jones, 2009). Emotions also play a pivotal role in negotiations in general (Barry, Fulmer, & Van Kleef, 2004), and Barry and Oliver (1996) stated that affect influences the decision to negotiate. Thus, we test the assumption that affect energizes behavior and argue that there should be a direct effect of dissatisfaction on the initiation of negotiation with higher levels of dissatisfaction increasing the tendency to initiate a negotiation (Hypothesis 4).

Taking into account the assumptions underlying the theory of complaining (Kowalski, 1996), the adoption of this theory to the context of negotiations as proposed in the theory of the initiation of negotiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014), and summing up the aforementioned effects, we propose an indirect effect of discrepancy on the initiation of negotiation and hypothesize that the effect of a situational, objective discrepancy on the intention to initiate a negotiation is serially mediated by the subjective perception of this discrepancy and the subsequent experience of dissatisfaction (Hypothesis 5).

Ability and Implicit Beliefs About Ability

Reif and Brodbeck (2014) proposed that cognitions shape the activating effect of emotions on the initiation of negotiations: Motivated, initiative behavior is also influenced by the attractiveness of what one can get (valence), the likelihood of getting it (expectancy), and the anticipated consequences (instrumentality) of the initiative behavior (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014). These anticipated consequences can refer to economic outcomes (e.g., higher salary), relational outcomes (e.g., maintain a positive relationship), or self-related outcomes (e.g., positive self-image, reducing dissatisfaction). In this study, we focus on the role of expectancy considerations and their moderating role in the initiation-of-negotiation process.

Expectancy can be described as one's subjective probability of being able to perform a specific behavior, in this case, being able to initiate a negotiation and being able to successfully negotiate. Outcome expectations are an important conditional factor when thinking about initiating or avoiding an action: Oettingen and Gollwitzer (2001) proposed that people engage in goal-directed actions only when outcome expectations are high and avoid discrepancy-reducing behaviors when expectancy is low. As expectancy is often associated with perceived ability (Locke & Latham, 1990, 2002), behavioral control (Custers & Aarts, 2005), or confidence about future success (McMahan, 1973), we propose that expectancy in the forms of one's subjectively experienced ability to initiate a negotiation (Hypothesis 6) and one's subjectively experienced ability to negotiate successfully (Hypothesis 7) moderate the effect of dissatisfaction on the initiation of negotiation with higher values of ability strengthening the effect and lower values of ability weakening the effect. This hypothesis is in line with Vroom (1964) who stated that people will not be motivated to pursue a task if they are not confident that they can perform it (see also Diefendorff & Chandler, 2010) and tests the theoretical assumption that discrepancy-reducing behaviors depend on outcome expectations.

However, we argue that not only subjectively experienced ability to initiate and negotiate moderates the activating effect of dissatisfaction but also assumptions about the malleability of negotiation ability. Motivating "the next generation of negotiator cognition research" (Kray & Haselhuhn, 2008, p. 227), Kray and Haselhuhn (2007) introduced the cognitive concept of implicit negotiation beliefs to negotiation research. We investigate how implicit negotiation beliefs influence the way individuals respond to negative affect resulting from perceived negative discrepancy.

Implicit negotiation beliefs represent a negotiator's implicit beliefs regarding the development of negotiation skills. These implicit negotiation beliefs are assumed to affect negotiators' behaviors at the negotiation table because implicit theories (which are the basis of implicit beliefs) have a powerful impact on the cognitions, feelings, and behaviors of individuals (Dweck, 1996; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). There are two kinds of implicit theories held by individuals (as "lay theorists"), which influence responses to challenging situations: an entity theory and an incremental theory. Entity theorists think that negotiation ability is fixed. They persist in the face of challenges as long as they expect to achieve their goal of appearing competent, but they respond helplessly in the face of seemingly intractable obstacles (Elliott & Dweck, 1988). By contrast, incremental theorists think that negotiation ability is malleable. They tend to persist in the face of challenges even when the perceived chances for success are small. Implicit negotiation beliefs have effects on negotiation performance: Incremental theorists outperform entity theorists on different performance measures in negotiations (Kray & Haselhuhn, 2007).

In challenging situations, such as when facing a potential negotiation, incremental implicit negotiation beliefs can provide confidence and efficacy (Dweck & Elliott, 1983; Kray & Haselhuhn, 2008). Incremental theorists respond with greater self-efficacy and active coping behavior to challenging situations (Davis, Burnette, Allison, & Stone, 2011), whereas entity theorists (accepting ability as a given entity) may feel a lack of personal control (Bandura, 1991), which in turn leads to personal anxiety (Thompson, 1981) and diminished outcome expectancies (Bandura, 1978). Thus, implicit negotiation beliefs are not only related conceptually to negotiation ability but also to the expectancy of being successful when negotiating. Since, first, expectancy is suggested to have a moderating effect on the decision to initiate negotiations (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014), and second, initiating negotiations is characterized by a certain amount of uncertainty and risk because the process and the results of the initiation of negotiation are rather unpredictable, we hypothesize that incremental theorists who are willing to expend effort in the face of challenges (i.e., the initiation of negotiation) will react to negative affect particularly strongly (as compared to entity theorists) and intend to vent their emotions by initiating a negotiation (Hypothesis 8). With this hypothesis, we extend the existing theory of the initiation of negotiation and test the assumption that the translation of affect into behavioral tendencies depends not only on negotiation ability but also on ability-related beliefs.

Overview of Studies

We conducted a series of three studies to test the hypotheses outlined above. In Study 1, we experimentally manipulated discrepancy and tested the assumptions of the proposed model, focusing on expectancy in the form of subjectively experienced negotiation ability as moderating variable. In Study 2, we again manipulated discrepancy experimentally and examined the role of implicit negotiation beliefs, that is, cognitions about the malleability of negotiation ability, as moderating variable (controlling for the effect of subjective negotiation ability). Thus, we extend the expectancy concept from solely capturing ability considerations to a broader concept that also involves beliefs about the malleability of ability. Finally, in Study 3, we tested the effect of satisfaction on the initiation of negotiation, measured as real retrospective behavior, moderated by initiation ability, and thus, the basic assumptions of the theory of the initiation of negotiation in a real negotiation setting.

Study 1

Method

Design and Participants

In Study 1, an experimental scenario design with three experimental conditions was chosen. The sample consisted of 153 (51% female, M_{age} = 24.69 years, age range: 18–54 years) students (81.7%) or former students (18.3%) of a large German university. Student participants had different educational backgrounds. The majority was German (94% German, 6% others).

Procedure

In an online scenario experiment, participants were asked to imagine a situation in which they formally applied as student temp in an organization. In the first step of the experiment, they were asked to specify their salary expectations. Participants could choose from four categories of salary: €7.50, €10.00, €12.50, or €15.00 per hour. The categories were determined by the authors. The two categories in the middle were oriented toward what are usual, average payments for student temps in Germany. The remaining categories were chosen to be clearly above and clearly below the average values. In the second step, discrepancy was experimentally induced. Following the manipulation of discrepancy, participants were asked whether they perceived a discrepancy, how satisfied they were with the offer, and whether they would like to initiate a negotiation concerning the salary offer by the organization. At the end of the experiment, data concerning the subjective negotiation ability as well as demographic data were collected. Participants received extra credit for the participation in the study. Moreover, participants could win two €25 amazon gift cards.

Manipulation and Measurement

In order to manipulate *objective discrepancy*, participants (after having specified their salary expectations) were randomly assigned to one of three levels of salary offers, either "more" (1 = *more*) than they had expected (positive discrepancy, *n* = *54*, 53.7% female), "equal" (0 = *equal*) to what they had expected (no discrepancy, *n* = *47*, 46.8% female), or "less" (−1 = *less*) than what they had expected (negative discrepancy, *n* = *52*, 51.9% female). Regardless of the total amount of salary expectation, participants in the salary offer condition "more" were offered €2.50 more than they had expected, whereas in the condition "less" they were offered €2.50 less than they had expected. In the condition "equal," they were offered exactly the expected amount of salary. Thus, participants either received a surplus (positive discrepancy), a balance (no discrepancy), or a deficit (negative discrepancy).

Perceived discrepancy was measured with three items: "I think the salary is fair," "The salary is adequate," and "The salary comes up to my expectations" (1 = *very strongly disagree* and 7 = *very strongly agree*, M = 4.78, SD = 1.76, Cronbach's α = .950).

Satisfaction with the salary offer was measured by the following three items: "I am happy about the salary offered to me," "I like the salary offered to me," and "I am satisfied with the salary offered to me." The items were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *very strongly disagree* and 7 = *very strongly agree*, M = 4.92, SD = 2.04, Cronbach's α = .982).

We measured *subjective negotiation ability* using a composite of three items (Cronbach's α = .920): "When I negotiate I am used to being successful," "Most of the time I can assert my position in negotiations," and "I am a very good negotiator" (1 = *very strongly disagree* and 7 = *very strongly agree,* M = 4.80, SD = 1.05).

The *intention to initiate a negotiation* was the central dependent variable and was measured via the item: "Would you initiate a negotiation with regard to the salary offer?" The item was scaled from 1 = *not by any means* to 7 = *by all means*.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 provides descriptive information about the variables.

There was no significant correlation between prior salary expectations and initiation of negotiation ($r = .091$, $p = .261$), and males and females did not differ significantly with respect to salary expectations ($\chi^2(3, N = 153) = 6.40$, $p = .094$). The participants in the three experimental conditions "more," "equal," and "less" did not differ regarding their salary expectations ($\chi^2(6, N = 153) = 2.50$, $p = .869$).

On average, the mean intention to initiate a negotiation was 3.63 ($SD = 2.09$). There was a significant gender difference with regard to the intention to initiate a negotiation ($F(1, N = 151) = 16.05$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .096$), with men having significantly higher initiation intentions ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 2.07$) than women ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.93$) and no correlation between age and intention to initiate a negotiation ($r = -.029$, $p = .719$).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Study 1 ($N = 153$)	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Objective discrepancy	0.013	0.835	–						
2. Perceived discrepancy	4.78	1.76	0.596**	0.950					
3. Satisfaction	4.92	2.04	0.810**	0.833**	0.982				
4. Subjective negotiation ability	4.80	1.05	−0.035	0.034	0.019	0.920			
5. Intention to initiate negotiation	3.63	2.09	−0.362**	−0.377**	−0.445**	0.211**	–		
6. Gender (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*)	1.51	0.502	0.015	0.120	0.130	−0.113	−0.310**	–	
7. Salary expectations	2.82	0.727	0.015	0.053	0.018	0.250**	0.091	−0.149	–

Study 2 ($N = 313$)	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Objective discrepancy	−0.040	0.813	–							
2. Perceived discrepancy	−0.030	0.778	0.854**	–						
3. Satisfaction	5.09	1.70	0.598**	0.638**	–					
4. Implicit negotiation beliefs	4.82	1.08	0.028	−0.020	0.025	0.843				
5. Intention to initiate negotiation	0.260	0.439	−0.185**	−0.251**	−0.304**	0.076	–			
6. Subjective negotiation ability	4.40	1.15	0.052	0.013	0.060	0.072	0.052	0.887		
7. Gender (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*)	1.58	0.494	−0.129*	−0.103	−0.070	−0.002	−0.044	−0.173**	–	
8. Salary expectations	2.15	0.938	0.071	−0.020	0.148**	0.013	−0.011	0.158**	−0.227**	–

Study 3 ($N = 1300$)	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4
1. Satisfaction	2.47	1.69	–			
2. Subjective initiation ability	4.23	1.50	0.002	–		
3. Initiation of negotiation	0.581	0.494	−0.124**	0.202**	–	
4. Gender (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*)	1.61	0.488	−0.094**	−0.168**	−0.087**	–

Note: Numbers in the diagonal show Cronbach's alpha; **$p < .01$. *$p < .05$, two-tailed.

Test of the Proposed Model

We conducted a path analysis using the software AMOS (Arbuckle, 2014) and the method of regression imputation to replace missing data. To calculate the interaction term to test for the moderation effect, the mediator variable satisfaction and the moderator variable subjective negotiation ability were centered at their means and multiplied. Gender (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*) and salary expectations were added as control variables in the model. The model showed a good fit ($\chi^2(16) = 19.65$, $p = .237$, $\chi^2/df = 1.23$, SRMR = 0.053, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.039). Modeling only the direct effect of objective discrepancy on the intention to initiate a negotiation (controlling for gender and salary expectations) showed a significant negative effect ($\beta = -.360$, $p < .001$), indicating that positive discrepancy (-1 = negative discrepancy, 0 = no discrepancy, 1 = positive discrepancy) leads to less initiation intentions (0 = no initiation, 1 = initiation), which supports Hypothesis 2 and builds the basis for the proposed mediation effect. In the full model, there was a significant positive path from objective discrepancy to perceived discrepancy, supporting Hypothesis 1 and indicating that objective discrepancy directly translated into the perception of this discrepancy ($\beta = .596$, $p < .001$). There was also a significant positive path from perceived discrepancy to satisfaction ($\beta = .543$, $p < .001$), which means that positive discrepancy evokes high levels of satisfaction and negative discrepancy evokes low levels of satisfaction. This finding supports Hypothesis 3. The path between satisfaction and initiation intentions was significant and negative ($\beta = -.346$, $p = .048$), implying that higher levels of satisfaction are associated with lower levels of initiation intentions (support for Hypothesis 4). The direct path from objective discrepancy to initiation intentions with all mediators and moderators included was not significant ($\beta = -.074$, $p = .537$), hinting at a mediation effect. We assessed the indirect effect of objective discrepancy on intentions to initiate a negotiation via perceived discrepancy and satisfaction using the bootstrapping method in AMOS with 2000 bootstrap samples. Mediation is indicated when the 95% confidence interval (CI) of the indirect effect does not include zero. The indirect effect ($\beta = -.291$, 95% CI [-0.461; -0.105]) was significant, supporting the mediation effect and Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 7 predicts that the effect of satisfaction on intentions to initiate a negotiation is moderated by subjective negotiation ability. Results showed a marginally significant interaction term (satisfaction × subjective negotiation ability; $\beta = -0.119$, $p = .090$). However, this marginal significance was accompanied by a meaningful effect size (partial $\eta^2 = .019$, small effect, calculated and interpreted according to Cohen, 1988). Therefore, we do not reject Hypothesis 7 and offer an interpretation of the effect, but want to emphasize the need to further test the effect with higher statistical power. For individuals with low subjective negotiation ability ($M - 1$ *SD*), dissatisfaction did not translate into intentions to initiate a negotiation ($\beta = -.367$, $p = .093$), but for individuals with high subjective negotiation ability ($M + 1$ *SD*), there was a significant effect with lower levels of satisfaction leading to higher levels of initiation intentions ($\beta = -.705$, $p < .001$). The results of the model test are shown in Figure 2, and the moderation effect is illustrated in Figure 3.

Study 2

Method

Design and Participants

In Study 2, an experimental scenario design with three experimental conditions was chosen. The sample consisted of 313 (58.3% female, $M_{age} = 24.01$ years, age range: 19–54 years) students of a large German university. Participants had different educational backgrounds, and most of them were German (90.0%).

Procedure

The online scenario experiment was similar to the scenario used in Study 1, but was held in a laboratory setting and participants were asked to imagine a situation in which they formally applied for an

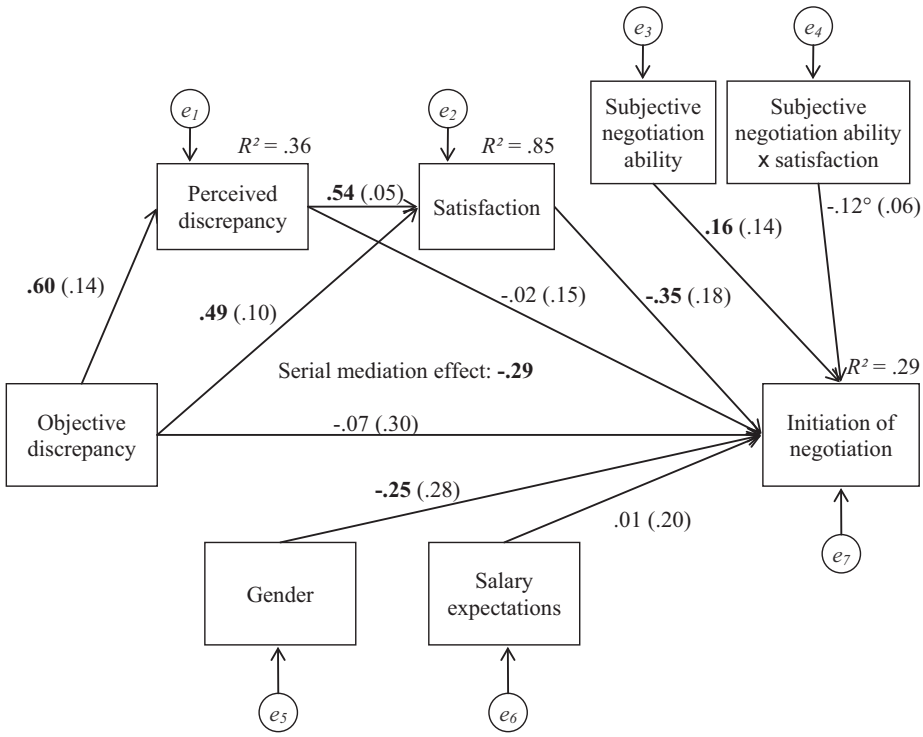

Figure 2. Statistical model of Study 1: Serial mediation effect of objective discrepancy via perceived discrepancy and satisfaction on the initiation of negotiation, moderated by subjective negotiation ability. Numbers are standardized coefficients and their standard errors (in parentheses). Bold numbers are significant at $p < .05$. ° The interaction term is significant at $p < .10$. $\chi^2(16) = 19.65$; $p = .237$; $\chi^2/df = 1.23$; standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) = 0.053; comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.99; root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.039. Gender and salary expectations are included as control variables. Error correlations (e3–e4; e3–e6) were allowed.

internship in an organization. In the first step of the experiment, they were asked to specify their salary expectations. Participants could choose from four categories of salary: €400, €600, €800, or €1000 per month. The categories were determined by the authors. The two categories in the middle were oriented toward what are usual, average payments for internships in Germany. The remaining categories were chosen to be clearly above and clearly below the average values. The following procedure was identical to Study 1. At the end of the experiment, data concerning subjective negotiation ability and implicit negotiation beliefs, as well as demographic data, were collected. The scenario experiment was the second study in a series of two studies. The first study was not related to the second study. Participants received extra credit and a bar of chocolate for the participation in both studies. Moreover, participants could win two €50 amazon gift cards and an Ipod nano.

Manipulation and Measurement

In order to manipulate *objective discrepancy* in this study, participants (after having specified their salary expectations) were randomly assigned to one of three levels of salary offers, either "more" (1 = *more*) than they had expected (positive discrepancy, $n = 97$, 50.0% female), "equal" (0 = *equal*) to what they had expected (no discrepancy, $n = 106$, 58.3% female), or "less" (−1 = *less*) than what they had expected (negative discrepancy, $n = 110$, 65.7% female). Regardless of the total amount of salary expectation, participants in the salary offer condition "more" were offered €200 more than they had expected, whereas in

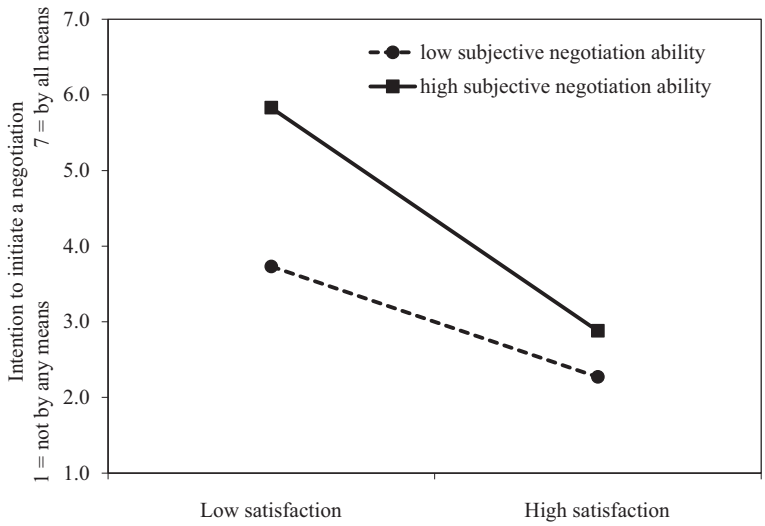

Figure 3. Moderation effect (marginal significance of the interaction term: $p = .090$) of subjective negotiation ability on the relationship between satisfaction and intentions to initiate a negotiation (Study 1). Note: low subjective negotiation ability: values < mean of subjective negotiation ability minus 1 *SD*; high subjective negotiation ability: values > mean subjective negotiation ability plus 1 *SD*; low satisfaction: values < mean of satisfaction; high satisfaction: values > mean of satisfaction.

the condition "less," they were offered €200 less than they had expected. In the condition "equal," they were offered exactly the expected amount.

In order to check the translation of objective discrepancy into a *subjective perception of discrepancy*, participants choose one of the following statements after the manipulation: "The salary offered is less than I had expected" (−1 = *less*), "The salary offered fits my expectations" (0 = *equal*), or "The salary offered is more than I had expected" (1 = *more*).

Satisfaction with the salary offer as mediator variable was measured by the following item: "How satisfied are you with the salary offer?" The item was rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all satisfied* and 7 = *completely satisfied*, $M = 5.09$, $SD = 1.70$).

To measure participants' *implicit negotiation beliefs*, we used the Implicit Negotiation Belief Scale developed by Kray and Haselhuhn (2007). A sample item is "Good negotiators are born that way". Since our subjects were German-speaking, we translated the scale into German. In order to provide content validity, the scale was back-translated and contents were adjusted accordingly. The items were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *very strongly disagree* and 7 = *very strongly agree*). We calculated an implicit negotiation belief score ($\alpha = .843$) for each participant with higher scores representing a stronger belief in the malleability of negotiation aptitude. This procedure was also suggested by Kray and Haselhuhn (2007).

The *intention to initiate a negotiation* was the central dependent variable and was measured via the item: "Would you initiate a negotiation with regard to the salary offer?" The item was scaled dichotomously (0 = *no*; 1 = *yes*).

Previous research has shown that perceived ability interacted with implicit negotiation beliefs in the prediction of negotiation performance (Kray & Haselhuhn, 2007). Therefore, we included *subjective negotiation ability* as a control variable and measured it using a composite of the three items ($\alpha = .887$) that were also used in Study 1. We did not include it as a second moderating variable because we wanted to focus on the unique moderating effect of implicit negotiation beliefs in this study. The items were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *very strongly disagree* and 7 = *very strongly agree*).

Results and Discussion

Table 1 provides descriptive information about the variables. There were no differences in prior salary expectations between initiators and noninitiators ($\chi^2(3, N = 313) = 4.41$, $p = .220$), but males and females differed significantly with respect to salary expectations ($\chi^2(3, N = 302) = 19.57$, $p < .001$), with males having higher salary expectations than women. The participants in the three experimental conditions "more," "equal," and "less" did not differ regarding their salary expectations ($\chi^2(6, N = 313) = 4.57$, $p = .600$). On average, 25.9% of all participants stated that they would initiate a negotiation regarding their salary offer. There were no gender differences with regard to the intention to initiate a negotiation ($\chi^2(1, N = 302) = .592$, $p = .442$) and there was no correlation between age and intention to initiate a negotiation ($r = .083$, $p = .149$).

Test of the Proposed Model

Analyses were conducted as described in Study 1. We added gender (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*), salary expectations, and subjective negotiation ability as control variables in the model. The model showed a good fit ($\chi^2(21) = 26.08$, $p = .203$, $\chi^2/df = 1.24$, SRMR = 0.047, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.028). Modeling only the direct effect of objective discrepancy on the intention to initiate a negotiation (controlling for gender and subjective negotiation ability) showed a significant negative effect ($\beta = -.194$, $p < .001$), indicating that positive discrepancy (−1 = negative discrepancy, 0 = no discrepancy, 1 = positive discrepancy) leads to less initiation intentions (0 = no initiation, 1 = initiation), which supports Hypothesis 2 and forms the basis for the proposed mediation effect. In the full model, there was a significant positive path from objective discrepancy to perceived discrepancy, supporting Hypothesis 1 and indicating that objective discrepancy directly translated into the perception of this discrepancy ($\beta = .855$, $p < .001$). There was also a significant positive path from perceived discrepancy to satisfaction ($\beta = .475$, $p < .001$), which means that positive discrepancy arouses high levels of satisfaction and negative discrepancy arouses low levels of satisfaction. This finding supports Hypothesis 3. The path between satisfaction and initiation intentions was significant and negative ($\beta = -.251$, $p < .001$). That is, higher levels of satisfaction are associated with lower levels of initiation intentions (support for Hypothesis 4). The direct path from objective discrepancy to initiation intentions with all mediators and moderators included was not significant ($\beta = .156$, $p = .128$), hinting at a mediation effect. A test of the indirect effect using the bootstrapping method in AMOS with 2000 bootstrap samples showed that the indirect effect ($\beta = -.342$, 95% CI [−0.510; −0.165]) was significant, supporting the mediation effect and Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 8 predicted that the effect of satisfaction on intentions to initiate a negotiation was moderated by implicit negotiation beliefs. Results showing a significant interaction term (satisfaction x implicit negotiation beliefs; $\beta = -.171$, $p = .001$) supported this prediction. For individuals holding entity beliefs ($M - 1$ *SD*), dissatisfaction did not translate into intentions to initiate a negotiation ($\beta = .054$, $p = .675$), but for individuals with incremental beliefs ($M + 1$ *SD*), there was a significant negative effect with lower levels of satisfaction leading to higher levels of initiation intentions ($\beta = -.572$, $p < .001$). In other words, incremental theorists with low levels of satisfaction had higher intentions to initiate a negotiation than incremental theorists with high levels of satisfaction but for entity theorists, the level of satisfaction did not influence the intention to initiate a negotiation. The results of the model test are shown in Figure 4, and the moderation effect is illustrated in Figure 5.

Study 3

Method

Design and Participants

Study 3 was the first part of a larger questionnaire on the initiation of negotiation. In the second part of the questionnaire, qualitative data on negotiation situations in general were collected. We used an online

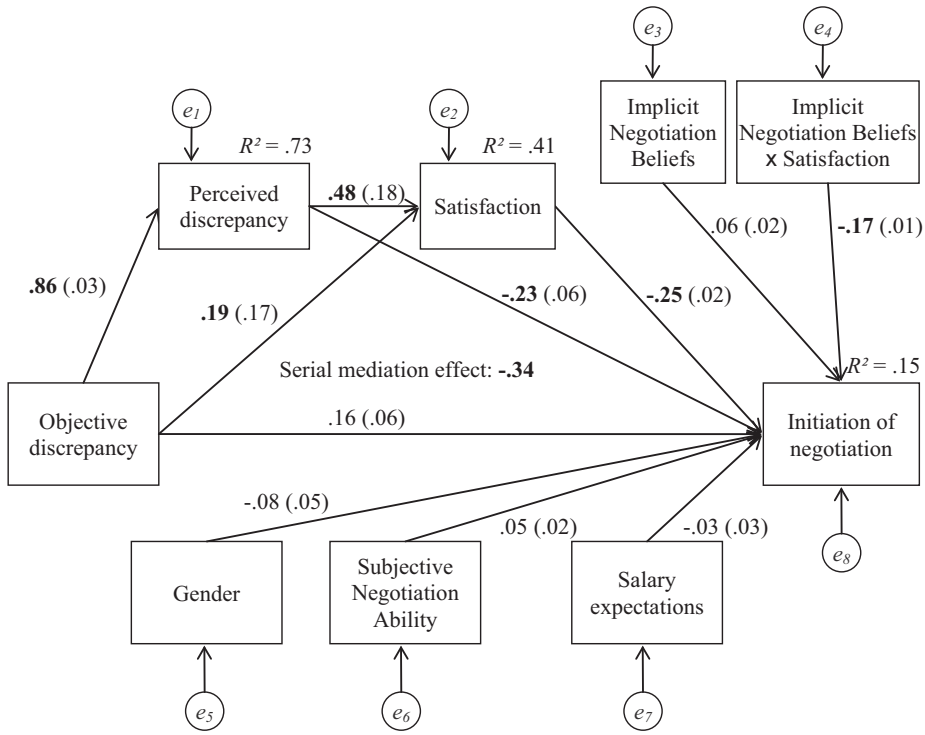

Figure 4. Statistical model of Study 2: Serial mediation effect of objective discrepancy via perceived discrepancy and satisfaction on the initiation of negotiation, moderated by implicit negotiation beliefs. Numbers are standardized coefficients and their standard errors (in parentheses). Bold numbers are significant at $p < .05$. $\chi^2(21) = 26.08$; $p = .203$; $\chi^2/df = 1.24$; standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) = 0.047; comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.99; root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.028. Gender, subjective negotiation ability, and salary expectations are included as control variables. Error correlations (e5–e6; e5–e7; e1–e7; e2–e6) were allowed.

questionnaire to asses real past initiation behavior regarding the negotiation of grades at university. The sample consisted of 1306 (60.1% female, M_{age} = 23.97 years, age range: 18–51 years) students of a large German university. Participants had different educational backgrounds. The majority was German (90.9%) and the remaining subjects were mostly from south and east Europe.

Procedure

First, we gave a short introduction to the context of the study:

"Most students are familiar with the situation of having received a grade for an oral or written exam, a presentation, or a paper which they do not agree with and consequently considered talking to the lecturer about this grade. In the following, you will find questions about your behavior concerning the evaluation or grading in seminars, lectures or similar courses." Then, we asked the participants whether they had at least once negotiated about a grade with an instructor because they disagreed with that grade. In detail, we asked: "How often have you already initiated a negotiation concerning a grade (e.g., for a presentation, term paper, written or oral examination) with your lecturer?" Students could choose from the following categories: 1 (never); 2 (almost never); 3 (rarely); 4 (sometimes); 5 (often); 6 (most of the time); 7 (always). We provided a simplifying definition of negotiation that was adequate to the context of the study: a discussion with the goal of improving one's results. Having answered this question, we filtered participants into two groups: "noninitiators"

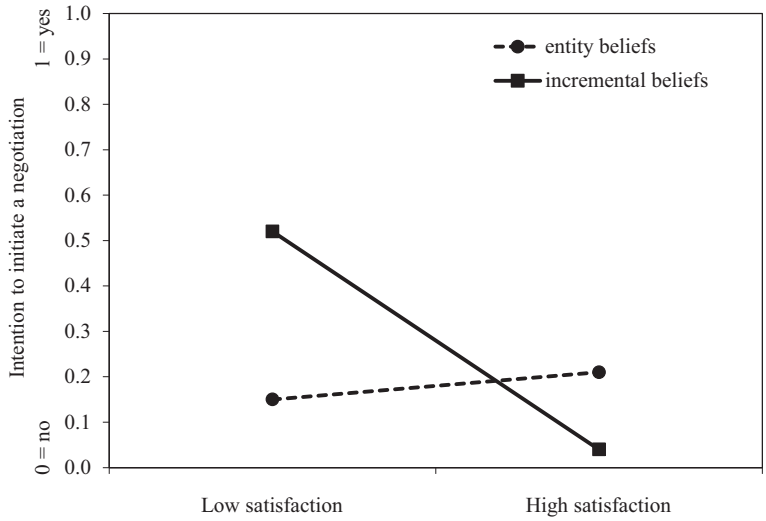

Figure 5. Moderation effect of implicit negotiation beliefs on the relationship between satisfaction and intentions to initiate a negotiation (Study 2). Note: Entity beliefs: values < mean of implicit negotiation beliefs minus 1 *SD*; incremental beliefs: values > mean of implicit negotiation beliefs plus 1 *SD*; low satisfaction: values < mean of satisfaction; high satisfaction: values > mean of satisfaction.

(students who had indicated they never had initiated a negotiation concerning their grades) and "initiators" (students who had chosen categories 2–7).

Initiators were then instructed the following: "Now, please consider a specific case where you were graded and decided to negotiate the grade with your lecturer. Please reconsider that case now. The following questions refer to this specific case, where you decided to negotiate your grade with the lecturer." Noninitiators were instructed the following: "Now, please consider a specific case where you were graded and (deliberately) decided not to negotiate the grade with your lecturer. Please reconsider that case now. The following questions refer to this specific case, where you (deliberately) decided not to negotiate your grade with the lecturer." Then, initiators were asked further questions (satisfaction, subjective initiation ability) on this specific negotiation event and noninitiators were asked further questions (satisfaction, subjective initiation ability) on the specific event, when they had thought about but deliberately decided not to negotiate. At the end of the questionnaire, demographic data were collected. As an incentive to participate, three students could win €100.

Measurement

Satisfaction with the grade was measured with one item (also see Witt & Nye, 1992, for the use of single item measures in the context of satisfaction): "I was satisfied with my grade" (1 = *completely disagree*; 7 = *completely agree*).

Participants' estimation of their *subjective ability to initiate negotiations* was measured with two items: "I could initiate a negotiation any time if I wanted to" and "I have problems initiating negotiations (reverse)" (1 = *completely disagree*; 7 = *completely agree*). The intercorrelation between the items was $r = .458$ ($p < .001$).

To assess *initiation of negotiation*, participants who recalled a specific negotiation event (initiators) were assigned the value 1 and participants who recalled a specific nonnegotiation event, that is, an event when they had thought about but deliberately decided not to negotiate (noninitiators), were assigned the value 0.

Results and Discussion

Due to throughout missing values, six participants had to be excluded from our analyses. The following calculations are based on the remaining sample of 1300 participants. Table 1 provides descriptive information about the variables in Study 3.

All in all, 42% of the participants had never negotiated about a grade and 58% had at least once negotiated about a grade. More men than women reported to have negotiated about a grade (63.4% of men vs. 54.6% of women). This effect was statistically significant ($\chi^2(1, N = 1299) = 9.77$, $p = .002$).

Test of the Moderation Model

We used the software PROCESS (Hayes, 2012) to calculate the proposed moderation effect of subjective initiation ability on the direct effect between satisfaction and initiation of negotiation. The moderator variable and the independent variable were centered at their means. We added gender (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*) as a control variable. The results show significant effects in the expected direction for satisfaction ($\beta = -.162$, $p < .001$), perceived initiation ability ($\beta = .271$, $p < .001$), and the interaction between satisfaction and perceived initiation ability ($\beta = -.045$, $p = .046$), supporting Hypotheses 4 and 6. The control variable gender was also a significant predictor of initiation of negotiation ($\beta = -.286$, $p = .019$). The negative relationship between satisfaction and initiation of negotiation became stronger with higher values of perceived initiation ability. For people with low perceived initiation ability (-1.5 *SD*), the relationship between satisfaction and initiation of negotiation was weak and just missed statistical significance ($\beta = -.095$, $p = .053$). For people with high perceived initiation ability, the relationship between satisfaction and initiation of negotiation was significant ($\beta = -.229$, $p < .001$). The moderation effect is shown in Figure 6.

General Discussion

In a series of three studies, we investigated when and why people consider initiating negotiations based on a theory of the initiation of negotiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014) and showed that a negative discrepancy increased the intention to initiate a negotiation and promoted real initiation behavior. This effect

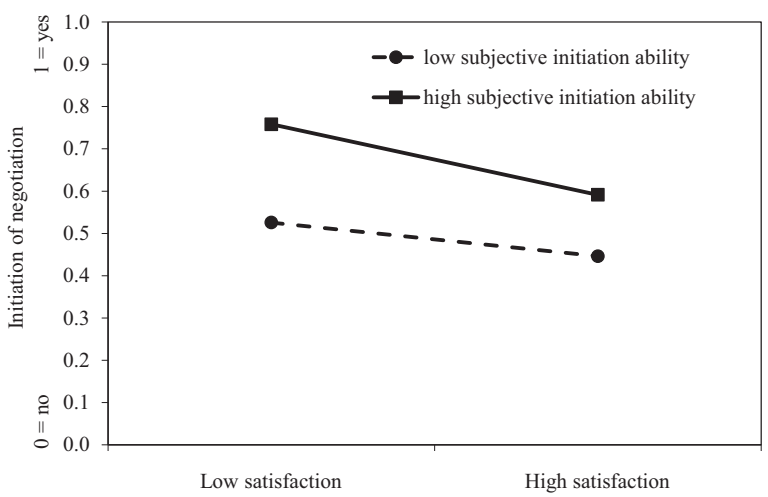

Figure 6. Moderation effect of subjective initiation ability on the relationship between satisfaction and initiation of negotiation (Study 3). Note: Plot was created based on data generated by PROCESS (Hayes, 2012).

was mediated by the subjective perception of this discrepancy and resulting feelings of dissatisfaction. In line with the theory of the initiation of negotiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014), negative discrepancy in the situation translates into subjectively perceived discrepancy and leads to dissatisfaction, which, in turn, increases the intention to initiate a negotiation. Expectancy considerations in the form of subjective ability to initiate negotiations (and, albeit with a small effect, subjective negotiation ability), as well as implicit beliefs about negotiation ability, moderate this serial mediation effect: High initiation ability and incremental negotiation beliefs seem to be facilitators when deciding whether to negotiate or not, whereas low initiation ability and entity negotiation beliefs inhibit negotiation initiations. In the present work, we offer a first empirical test of the theory of initiation of negotiation and show that expectancy considerations not only include perceptions of one's ability to initiate and negotiate but also beliefs about the malleability of negotiation ability.

Theoretical Implications

The work presented here contributes to the field of negotiation research by offering empirical data for a cognitive-motivational approach to the question of when and why people initiate negotiations or do not. Existing research has argued that differences in the likelihood to initiate negotiations are due to gender differences, individual differences in attitudes and personality, or power effects. Our work contributes to previous research on initiation of negotiation by offering a deeper examination of general and basic motivational mechanisms, integrating features of the objective situation, people's subjective perception of these features, and emotional reactions. We have shown that if one's expectations are not compatible with what one is offered in a specific situation, negative discrepancy is perceived, which produces feelings of dissatisfaction that increase the tendency to initiate a negotiation. This mechanism may also be helpful to explain results of Gerhart and Rynes (1991), who studied initiating behaviors of graduates in starting salary negotiations. They found that the propensity to negotiate was a function of structural variables, such as the number of alternative offers and the attractiveness of the first offer. Alternative offers may provide a comparison level or anchor to judge the attractiveness of the actual offer and hence serve as main source for the formation of discrepancies. We suggest that future research could further examine the impact of discrepancy strength on initiation of negotiation because in our research, the size of discrepancy only varied to a certain amount. Large negative discrepancies followed by extremely negative emotional reactions could also undermine people's intention to negotiate.

We also contribute to prior research by integrating research on discrepancy as a basic motivational mechanism with cognitive research on negotiation ability and implicit theories. We showed that whether dissatisfaction increases initiation intentions depends on individuals' subjective ability to initiate negotiation and implicit negotiation beliefs. Incremental theorists as well as people feeling able to initiate negotiations intended to initiate negotiations in the presence of dissatisfaction, whereas entity theorists and people feeling unable to initiate negotiation did not. Thus, implicit negotiation beliefs and feelings of negotiation ability are not only important at the negotiation table (Kray & Haselhuhn, 2007), but also play an important role on the way to the table.

When deciding whether to negotiate or not, the weighing of possible consequences and the possibility of failure are important factors (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014). Failure, however, has different implications for entity theorists and incremental theorists by activating different patterns of interpretations. For entity theorists, failure indicates a permanent lack of abilities, whereas for incremental theorists, failure may signify that their abilities merely need to be improved (Molden & Dweck, 2006). Thus, initiating a negotiation may be interpreted as a learning opportunity for people who think that the ability to negotiate is malleable. In the face of failure, entity theorists, however, may draw back from initiating a negotiation, because failure would be interpreted in a way that indicates low ability.

Future research should address the consequences of initiating negotiation. Acting in response to discrepancies can help to vent emotions and achieve intrapsychic or interpersonal goals (Kowalski, 1996).

While people with high initiation ability and incremental beliefs might use an initiation of negotiation as an outlet for their dissatisfaction or as a means to achieve goals, people with low initiation ability and entity beliefs have to cope with their dissatisfaction in other ways—or stay dissatisfied. Future research should investigate how noninitiators handle their dissatisfaction in potential negotiation situations.

To further elaborate the model tested in this study, future research should examine potential moderators of the path between objective discrepancy and perceived discrepancy, that is, factors that determine whether individuals subjectively perceive an objectively present discrepancy. According to Kowalski (1996), a potential moderator could be individuals' extent of self-monitoring with high self-monitoring individuals detecting more objective discrepancies than low self-monitoring individuals. A further moderator of this relationship may be gender. Gender is linked to the recognition of opportunities in the negotiation context (men reported recognizing more negotiation opportunities; Babcock et al., 2006), and thus, the link between objective discrepancy and perceived discrepancy (understood as the interpretation of a specific situation as negotiable) should be stronger for men than for women. Regarding the role of gender within the model of the initiation of negotiation, future research could also investigate how gender influences the translation of discrepancy into an affective response.

The concept "recognition of opportunities" was introduced by Babcock et al. (2006, p. 247) and originally has the character of a dispositional variable (e.g., "Most things are negotiable"; "I often see chances to improve my circumstances"). Future research could also probe how recognition of opportunities as dispositional variable influences the decision to negotiate in the presence of negative discrepancies and negative affect. We suggest that recognition of opportunities could be another moderator of the final path from satisfaction to initiation of negotiation with high levels of opportunity recognition strengthening the effect and low levels of opportunity recognition attenuating it.

In line with Reif and Brodbeck (2014), we suggest that negotiations might also be initiated in the absence of discrepancy, simply by assigning high instrumentality to the initiation of negotiation, by assigning high valence to the issue at stake, or by feeling high expectancy regarding the initiation of negotiation. These cognitive moderators should be investigated in future studies to show that motivation to negotiate is not necessarily always need-driven (reducing perceived discrepancies), but can also be ego-driven (e.g., negotiating for the sake of negotiating).

We also suggest that the model of the initiation of negotiation could be broadened to not only explain the occurrence of negotiation initiation, but also to include alternative reactions such as rejecting an offer without negotiating, or accepting an offer without negotiating. For example, the perception of no discrepancy, accompanied by feelings of satisfaction, and at the same time inhibiting cognitive considerations (low instrumentality of a negotiation, low expectancy of being successful when initiating a negotiation), should promote the acceptance of an offer without negotiating it. However, perceiving a negative discrepancy, negative affect but inhibiting cognitive considerations (low instrumentality of a negotiation, low expectancy of being successful when initiating a negotiation) should lead to the rejection of an offer without initiating a negotiation. Future research should design experimental studies to systematically test the behavioral implications (agreement, initiation, rejection) of combinations of inhibiting and facilitating factors within the model of the initiation of negotiation.

Having shown that the intention to negotiate may be triggered by different qualities of antecedent factors, we offer new directions for studying motivation and emotion in negotiation. The effect of motives and emotions at the negotiation table has been investigated extensively (Barry et al., 2004; De Dreu, 2004). However, the emergence of motives and emotions within the negotiation process has not yet been explicitly questioned. Our research suggests that motives and emotions may be brought to the table as a consequence of perceived situational discrepancies and cognitive-motivational considerations prior to the initiation of negotiation. In line with Barry and Oliver (1996), these motives and emotions should not only influence the decision to negotiate, but also the amount of the initial offer, the choice of negotiation tactics and concessions made during the negotiation process, and consequently, negotiation outcomes such as economic, relational, and self-related costs and benefits, as well as perceptual outcomes

such as satisfaction and the desire for future interaction (see also Barry & Oliver, 1996). These considerations offer multiple starting points for the integration of the initiation of negotiation into classical negotiation models.

Practical Implications

Incremental negotiation beliefs may be advantageous regarding the initiation of negotiations. Incremental theorists might ascribe a certain learning potential to negotiation situations, and thus, the possibility of failing an initiation may lose its sting. The initiation of negotiation itself—regardless of being successful or not—could be interpreted as an opportunity to increase one's negotiation abilities and experience in negotiation situations. Initiating negotiations and negotiating can have substantial effects on one's own outcomes (Babcock & Laschever, 2003). With regard to the simple, brief experimental manipulation of implicit negotiation beliefs conducted by Kray and Haselhuhn (2007), scholars should address the development of trainings that foster a reflection of implicit negotiation beliefs and shape people's implicit negotiation beliefs in a way that negotiations are interpreted as opportunities to learn. In this way, comfort and confidence in negotiation situations (Elfenbein, Curhan, Eisenkraft, Shirako, & Baccaro, 2008) could be fostered.

Considering the effect of discrepancy on the initiation of negotiation, it may also be important in an organizational setting that employers take it seriously when employees want to initiate negotiations. The impetus to negotiate often results from a situational discrepancy paired with some kind of negative affect, such as dissatisfaction, injustice, frustration, or anger (Reif & Brodbeck, 2011). In order to prevent employees from seeking alternatives to vent their emotions and reconstitute justice and satisfaction, such as leaving the organization or acting counterproductively, employers are advised to listen to their concerns, worries, and desires. Thus, a focus of organizational development practices should be laid on establishing an elevated sensitivity of employers for employee's initiation motives.

Limitations and Future Research

There are some limitations that should be addressed by future research. The technique used in Studies 1 and 2 was an online scenario experiment. Although the examination of effects in an experimental setting using standardized materials allows us to control environmental variation, the generalizability of the findings to the world "outside," that is, to real work organizations, is limited (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001; Mook, 1983). However, Anderson, Lindsay, and Bushman (1999) showed that "the psychological laboratory has generally produced psychological truths, rather than trivialities" (Anderson et al., 1999, p. 3) and that effect sizes are generally comparable for laboratory and field research designs across a broad range of psychological domains (Anderson et al., 1999). Note, in this context, that we also followed recommendations for scenario design and created the scenarios based on theory and realistic contexts (see Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Moreover, we used real initiation behavior as dependent variable in Study 3 and investigated the initiation of negotiation in two different contexts: salary negotiations and negotiations about grades. However, future research should investigate the initiation of negotiation based on additional behavioral data in different negotiation contexts.

Another methodological concern that should be addressed is the specific ordering of measurements in the experimental studies which could have driven our findings. However, the construction of both experiments and questionnaires was based on the same theoretical considerations, and moreover, the effects could also be reproduced in a field setting assessing real (retrospective) initiation behavior.

Although including a range of different ability measures (subjective negotiation ability in Study 1, implicit negotiation beliefs in Study 2, and subjective initiation ability in Study 3) allows us to diagnose which facet of the "negotiation ability construct" influences the decision to negotiate, future research

should replicate the moderating roles of each single ability concept and, moreover, investigate more deeply the interaction between the three concepts.

Conclusion

This study offers first empirical evidence for a theory of the initiation of negotiation: A negative discrepancy between a current state and a desired state increases the intention to initiate a negotiation. This effect is mediated by the subjective perception of this discrepancy and by dissatisfaction. Besides these motivational factors, cognitive variables have an impact on the intention to start negotiating: Expectancy considerations in the forms of subjectively experienced ability to initiate a negotiation and beliefs about the malleability of negotiation ability moderate the effect of dissatisfaction on initiation intention. High initiation ability and incremental negotiation beliefs that involve a mastery goal orientation regarding negotiations foster intentions to initiate a negotiation. By contrast, low initiation ability and entity beliefs which involve the assumption that negotiation ability is fixed and cannot be changed prevent the initiation of negotiation. The theory of the initiation of negotiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014) offers a sound approach to the initiation of negotiation. An integration of the initiation of negotiation into negotiation theory will help to predict the emergence of negotiations, the courses and processes of negotiations once they have been initiated, and the occurrence of renegotiations in case that original initiation motives could not be satisfied.

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Julia A. M. Reif is postdoctoral scientific staff member and lecturer of Economic and Organisational Psychology at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitaet Muenchen, Munich. Her research interests include the initiation of negotiation, team processes, relationship regulation in economic decision-making, and organizational acculturation.

Felix C. Brodbeck is Chair of Economic and Organisational Psychology at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitaet Muenchen, Munich. His research interests include leadership and teamwork in organizations, economic decision-making, and cross-cultural psychology.