"Should I Negotiate?" A Model of Negotiation Initiation Considering Psychological Person-Environment Transactions

Julia A. M. Reif[1] [iD] and Felix C. Brodbeck[1]

1   Department of Psychology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitaet Muenchen, Munich, Germany

Abstract

We qualitatively investigated why employees initiated negotiations with their supervisors to elaborate a theoretical model of negotiation initiation in organizational contexts. Consistent with the model, employees initiated negotiations when they felt negative discrepancy and negative affect and when they believed the negotiation issue had a high valence, the benefits outweighed costs, and their probability of being able to successfully initiate and complete the negotiation was high. Employees did not initiate negotiations if they did not perceive negative discrepancies or negative affect, or if the activating effects of negative discrepancy and negative affect were buffered by negative instrumentality, no expectancy, or low valence. The qualitative results led the model to be systematically extended to a transactional model which includes social, contextual, and intraindividual influences on employees' decisions about whether to negotiate (or not), showing how the negotiation partner, negotiation situation, and negotiators' states and dispositions influence cognitive-motivational antecedents of negotiation initiation.

Organizations are offering employees increasing opportunities to individually negotiate the terms of their employment, including flexible working hours, career development opportunities, work tasks, and workload reduction (e.g., Liao et al., 2016; Rousseau et al., 2006). If employees want to take advantage of these opportunities, they have to initiate negotiations with their supervisors. Successful negotiations can create high-quality agreements providing social (increased harmony, reduced probability of future conflict), economic (economic prosperity), and self-related (increased feelings of self-efficacy) benefits (De Dreu et al., 2007; Rubin et al., 1994). Consequently, employees who do not initiate negotiations may miss out on important opportunities. On the other hand, unsuccessful negotiations can create poor agreements, conflict, and disharmony, leaving negotiation partners dissatisfied, frustrated, and annoyed (De Dreu et al., 2007). In such cases, it might have been better not to have initiated a negotiation. Thus, the decision on whether or not to initiate a negotiation seems to be complex and depend on various individual, social, and situational factors.

In their model of negotiation initiation, Reif and Brodbeck (2014) proposed a framework for how negotiation initiation proceeds, which involves perceived situational discrepancies, individual affective responses, and cognitive-motivational considerations regarding valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. Although empirical research has tested some of the model's assumptions (e.g., Reif & Brodbeck, 2017; Reif, Kugler, & Brodbeck, 2019; Reif, Kunz, et al., 2019), the full complexity of suggested interrelationships within the negotiation initiation process have not yet been investigated. Moreover, contextual influences and the formation of cognitive considerations in an organizational context have not yet been sufficiently considered.

In this study, we addressed these conceptual and empirical gaps by identifying situational discrepancies employees consider negotiating about with their supervisors; which intrapersonal, social, and situational variables are involved in the decision-making process and the formation of cognitive considerations; and how a complex "interplay" between the negotiator and his/her contextual surroundings leads employees to decide whether or not to initiate negotiations. We chose an organizational context as research setting in order to delve deeper into negotiation topics in organizations and to show how initiative negotiation behavior at work can be theoretically explained. We choose a qualitative research methodology to collect situations in which employees considered negotiating with their supervisors and to probe the reasons that influenced their decision. For coding the interviews, we drew on the variables suggested in Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model as theoretical framework but also allowed for new categories inductively emerging from our data. This approach enabled us to (a) inductively gain deeper insights into the intrapersonal, social, and situational dynamics involved in the decision of whether or not to negotiate, (b) locate newly identified model components within the model via semantically expressed relationships, and (c) qualitatively explore the model's applicability in an organizational context.

A Model of Negotiation Initiation

Negotiation initiation can be defined as a person's deliberate decision to begin a negotiation, regardless of whether or not the initiation is successful and the negotiation actually takes place (see Reif & Brodbeck, 2014). In their model of negotiation initiation, Reif and Brodbeck (2014) theoretically explained, why people decide (not) to negotiate. The model draws on two different modes of variables: *cybernetic mechanisms* (discrepancy and affect) and *cognitive considerations* (valence, instrumentality, expectancy): People experiencing *discrepancies* between their current state and a desired state feel unpleasant internal tensions accompanied by *negative affect* such as dissatisfaction or anger, which catalyze behavior and increase people's attempts to reduce the discrepancies (Carver & Scheier, 2019; Diefendorff & Chandler, 2010; Reif & Brodbeck, 2014). This assumption builds on Carver and Scheier's (2019) self-regulatory viewpoint on human behavior: The perception of a discrepancy leads to an "error signal" (Carver & Scheier, 2019, p. 9), which manifests in a subjective, affective response, which is either positive (in case of a positive discrepancy) or negative (in case of a negative discrepancy). The term "cybernetic" (which is also used in the context of mechanical, electronic, or living systems) in this context of human motivation describes a kind of homeostatic control system, which monitors and regulates current conditions against desired conditions in order to keep or reach a condition at an acceptable level (Carver & Scheier, 2019).

Reif and Brodbeck (2014) argued that before initiating actions to reduce discrepancy and negative affect, people evaluate the valence of the negotiation object, the instrumentality of negotiating in terms of costs and benefits, and their expectancy of being successful in the negotiation. *Valence* describes the desirableness, attractiveness, or importance of an object and is a key motivational force directing action towards this object (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). *Instrumentality* is defined as an outcome-outcome association, that is, the probability that a certain outcome or accomplishment leads to a second outcome (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). Expectancy describes the link between effort and performance, that is, the probability that one can perform a certain activity (Diefendorff & Chandler, 2010), and is a precondition for motivated behavior (Vroom, 1964). This moderated mediation model (affect as mediator; valence, instrumentality, and expectancy as moderators of the relationship between discrepancy/affect and initiation of negotiation) is shown in Figure 1 (solid lines).

Previous research has shown that the perception of a negative discrepancy increased feelings of dissatisfaction, which increased the tendency to initiate negotiations. Expectancy considerations moderated this mediation effect (Reif & Brodbeck, 2017). In the context of gender differences in negotiations, Reif, Kunz, et al. (2019) demonstrated that expectancy and instrumentality were positively related to negotiation initiation.
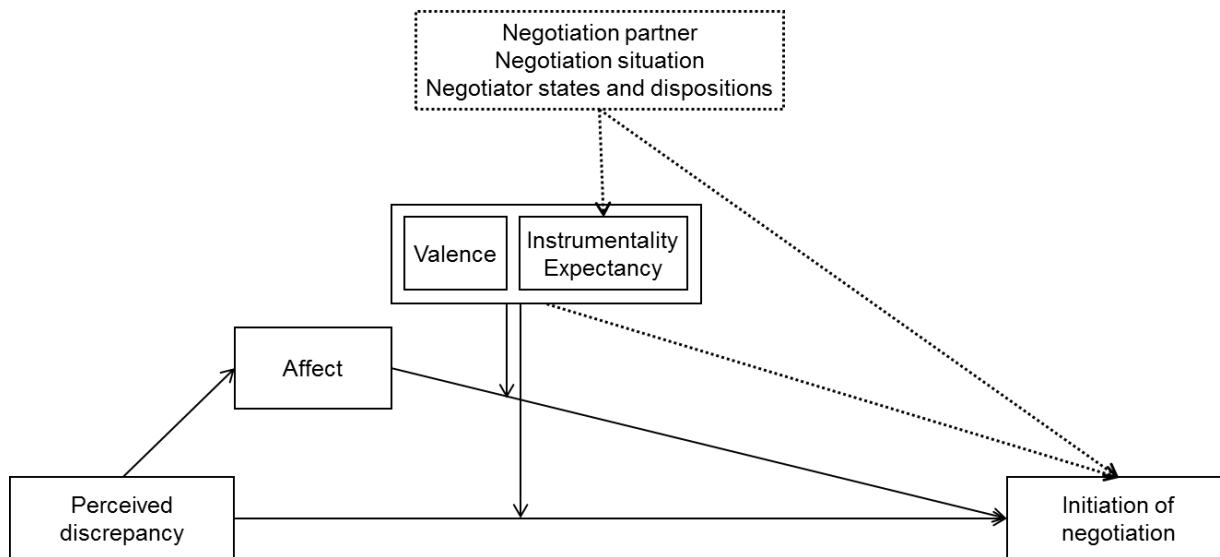
However, previous research has also identified antecedents of negotiation initiation that are not yet explicitly integrated into the model of negotiation initiation. For example, research on negotiation partners and power effects in negotiations has shown that negotiation partners influenced individuals' decision to negotiate (Bowles et al., 2007; Eriksson & Sandberg, 2012; Volkema, 2009) and that powerful people were more likely to initiate negotiations (Kapoutsis et al., 2017; Kapoutsis et al., 2013; Magee et al., 2007). Research on contextual influences has demonstrated that the recognition of negotiation opportunities was positively related to negotiation propensity (Babcock et al., 2006) and that the relationship between expectancy and initiation intentions was shaped by situational framings (Reif, Kugler, & Brodbeck, 2019). Thus, although the general framework of the model of negotiation initiation has been empirically supported, findings on relational and contextual antecedents of negotiation initiation – which, as will be described in the next section, have been identified in organizational contexts as well (e.g., role of negotiation partner and feelings of entitlement) – highlight the need to further extend the model to include transactions between the negotiator and his/her environment.

Initiative Behaviors in Organizational Contexts

Turning next to initiative behaviors at the workplace, such as speaking up, reporting errors, taking charge, or voice behavior, research has identified antecedents in line with assumptions of the model of negotiation initiation, such as cost-benefit considerations (i.e., instrumentality). However, research has also identified antecedents not included in the model, such as the negotiation partner or feelings of entitlement.

Figure 1
A Transactional Model of Negotiation Initiation

Note. Solid lines represent original model components and effects. Dotted lines represent new model components and effects. Evidence for the influence of cybernetic variables (discrepancy, affect) and their combination on the initiation of negotiation was identified in 20% of all 1015 coded statements. Evidence for the direct influence of cognitive considerations (valence, instrumentality, expectancy) on the initiation of negotiation was identified in 32% of all 1015 coded statements. Evidence for the interplay between cybernetic variables and cognitive elements when deciding whether or not to negotiate was identified in 10% of all 1015 coded statements. Evidence for the direct influence of contextual variables (negotiation partner, negotiation situation, negotiator states and dispositions) on the initiation of negotiation was identified in 13% of all 1015 coded statements. Evidence for the combined effects of contextual variables and cognitive considerations (instrumentality and expectancy) was identified in 24% of all 1015 coded statements. In 1% of statements, discrepancy, affect or valence were mentioned in combination with negotiation partner, negotiation situation or the negotiator.

Milliken et al. (2003) found that people associated "speaking up" at the workplace with negative outcomes, such as being labeled or viewed negatively, damaging relationships, retaliation or punishment, or having a negative impact on others. In this way, they investigated concepts similar to instrumentality considerations as formulated in the model of negotiation initiation. Zhao and Olivera (2006) showed that the costs of error reporting at the workplace included, for example, material costs (monetary penalties, suspension, or job loss), damage to one's personal image, and effort costs (time, cognitive, and physical effort).

Cost-benefit analyses were mentioned as an element of decision-making processes in the context of taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) and voice behavior (Withey & Cooper, 1989) in organizations.

Regarding voice behavior, Detert and Trevino (2010) discussed the role of the supervisor as negotiation partner in an employee's decision on whether or not to speak up. Employees were particularly likely to feel safe to speak up if they perceived their supervisors as accessible, interested, or open in communication (Edmondson, 1999, 2002), whereas they were afraid to speak up if their supervisors were abrasive, abusive (e.g., insulting, blaming), or ambiguous (e.g., secretive, nonresponsive) (Chen et al., 2015).

In the context of employees' negotiations for idiosyncratic deals, Bal (2018) showed that feelings of entitlement (as one element) influenced employees' decision to negotiate. Similarly, O'Shea and Bush (2002) and Barron (2003) found that the feeling of being worth more, belief that one is qualified enough to request more, or that one is entitled to a higher salary were reasons for initiating negotiations.

Thus, research on initiative behaviors at the workplace has identified similar concepts to those formulated in the model of negotiation initiation (e.g., instrumentality) but also additional concepts (negotiation partner, entitlement) that are not (yet) integrated into the model but would make it more applicable to the organizational setting: As Reif and Brodbeck (2014) argued, the organizational setting might be a fertile ground for validating and further refining the model of negotiation initiation.

Need For a Transactional Model of Negotiation Initiation

In sum, the model of negotiation initiation in its original form (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014) describes an individual's decision process for or against a negotiation from a merely intrapsychic point of view. The antecedents or formation of cognitive-motivational variables which are assumed to be moderator variables in the model are not yet clarified. Considering previous research on the influence of situation and relationship in negotiation situations (e.g., Brett & Thompson, 2016; Elfenbein, 2021), these cognitive variables should vary *intra*individually depending on the (relational) situation and vary *inter*individually depending on dispositions such as personality. The situational, relational, and dispositional influences that may explain this variance have not yet been specified in the model, but could contribute to a deeper understanding of intrapersonal processes (e.g., how a negotiator's considerations of costs and benefits are influenced by power structures or characteristics of negotiation partners) and interpersonal differences (e.g., how a negotiator's expectancy considerations are influenced by the negotiator's personality characteristics) in negotiation situations.

Applying the model to an organizational context offers the opportunity to consider contextual influences such as interpersonal dynamics and thus will allow further developing the model from an intrapsychic model to a transactional model. This extended, transactional model will provide insights into how individual cognitive considerations are formed by specific contextual influences and further clarify the role of dispositions in the initiation process of negotiation. According to a psychological understanding of person-environment transactions (Lazarus & Launier, 1978), these cognitive considerations should neither refer to either the context or the person as the sole determinants, but describe the result of a transactional, dynamic process in which context characteristics and person characteristics are weighed against each other to result in these cognitions. We therefore formulate our research questions:

Research Question 1. Applicability of Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model: Can employees' decisions whether or not to initiate negotiations with their supervisors in an organizational context be explained by Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model?

Research Question 2. Extension of Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model: Depending on Research Question1, how should Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model be extended to cover the relational and situational dynamics, as well as individual states and dispositions involved in employees' decisions whether or not to initiate negotiations with their supervisors in an organizational context?

Method

We conducted a qualitative study to explore what topics employees negotiated about with their supervisors and their reasons for (not) initiating negotiations. In doing so, we wanted to inductively gain deeper insights into the intrapersonal, social, and relational dynamics involved in the decision of whether or not to negotiate.

Sample and Sampling

We collected data from 63 employees (57.1% female, mean age = 34.3 years; 92.1% had a university degree; mean tenure = 8.7 years; all subjects were German). Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with 14 of them. The remaining 49 participants received the interview questions in the form of a questionnaire where they could fill in their open-ended answers (26 received a paper-pencil questionnaire, 23 received an online questionnaire). Using the principle of maximum variation (Miles et al., 2014), we collected a diverse sample in terms of occupations and jobs from different organizations. The maximum variation sampling strategy seemed most useful, as it allowed for heterogeneous sampling encompassing different types of cases, making it possible to capture the variety of this research field. Our sample thus included different industries (among others, 12.7% automotive, 9.5% social service, 7.9% healthcare, 6.4% insurance, 6.4% manufacturing, 6.4% education, 4.8% research, 4.8% service, 4.8% administration), jobs (among others, 25.4% human resources management, 12.7% consulting, 11.1% management, 7.9% education, 6.4% placement, 6.4% research), and educational backgrounds (34.0% economics, 11.3% social work, 11.3% healthcare, 7.6% labor market management, 7.6% pedagogy, 5.7% human resource management, 5.7% cultural science, 3.8% psychology, 3.8% engineering, 9.2% natural sciences, literature, music, philosophy, politics). In the face-to-face interviews, we also obtained information about participants' position: Thirty-six percent had leadership responsibility but answered our questions with regard to their direct supervisors.

We continued conducting face-to-face interviews until no new information was gained, that is, until no new categories emerged from the data. This point of saturation (Bowen, 2008) was reached after 14 interviews (which is in line with research showing that the full range of thematic discovery often occurs within the first twelve interviews, see Guest et al., 2006; and reasonable considering that we coded against a set of preexisting categories). We used open-ended questionnaires for the remaining interviews in order to collect additional evidence on the newly identified constructs, evidence on category patterns, and to balance the gender distribution in the sample. We recruited participants using personal contacts, the e-mail list of a local psychological network, and a master's degree program combining part-time on-the-job training and part-time education. Participation was voluntary and not rewarded monetarily.

Data Collection

The main questions in the interviews and the questionnaire were identical, except for one question which was asked in the interviews only (Table 1, Question 3). The face-to-face interviews were conducted by a student researcher. The interviews took about 60 to 100 minutes and were audio-recorded with the participants' permission. By employing a problem-centered interview style (cf. Witzel & Reiter, 2012), we were able to explore in depth the perspectives, motives, and goals of employees initiating or not initiating negotiations. The questionnaires were distributed by the first author of this study.

Interview Protocol

At the beginning of the face-to-face interviews, the interviewer presented the general content of the research project and collected demographic data. The interviewer assured that the participant's data would be treated confidentially. Two main concerns guided our data collection: First, we aimed to identify situations in which people initiated or did not initiate negotiations with their supervisors. Second, we wanted to explore the reasons and motives for (not) initiating negotiations (see Table 1).

Interview Technique

In accordance with the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954), we asked participants to remember a specific situation in which they had initiated a negotiation with their supervisor, to describe this situation in detail, and to remember as many facets as they could. When participants described a situation that fit our definition (an individual's decision to negotiate for advantages, change of circumstances, or any other reason, regardless of whether the initiation is successful and the process actually continues, Reif & Brodbeck, 2014), the interviewer then asked several follow-up questions to delve deeper into *motives* that moved participants towards initiating a negotiation; *processes* within the negotiation initiation phase itself; *facilitating factors* that (would have) helped participants initiate a negotiation in the given situation; and *inhibiting factors*, which (would have) prevented participants from initiating a negotiation. This procedure was also employed and described by Berg et al. (2010). The same series of questions was asked for situations in which participants decided not to initiate a negotiation.

Data Analysis

After transcribing the audio-recorded interviews and handwritten answers from the questionnaires, we started to analyze the data.

Identification of Negotiation Accounts

First, each interview transcript was systematically sifted through to identify accounts of (non-)initiation situations. An account was an employee's story about a (non-)initiation situation, including his or her description, explanation, and interpretation of the situation. Accounts were numbered and labeled either as an initiation situation or a non-initiation situation. To be designated an account, the situations described by the participants had to meet the following criteria: (a) the situation was explicitly labeled as a negotiation, not merely as a discussion or dialogue; (b) the interaction had to take place between the participant (as employee) and his or her supervisor; and (c) the (potential) negotiation had to be initiated by the participant (as employee). All in all, we identified 164 accounts of negotiation situations (110 initiation situations and 54 non-initiation situations), all of which met our criteria and were included in our analysis (which corresponds to an average of 2.6 situations per participant). Of the situations mentioned by men, 73.1% were initiation situations and of situations mentioned by women, 66.1% were initiation situations. The accounts comprised 1103 statements of which 1015 contained information that was coded.

Content Coding and Categorization

Second, we inductively clustered the negotiation situations by negotiation content and categorized the reasons for (not) initiating negotiations. For the latter, we combined deductive and inductive content coding. We derived our general categories from the model of negotiation initiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014)

and inductively looked for subcategories that emerged from the data. The deductive categories focused on triggering events, such as situational discrepancies, affective responses, and cognitive-motivational considerations. The coding was conducted by the first author of this study in iterative interaction with the second author. We engaged in several iterations of coding and recoding until we had a stable set of codes. A research assistant who was trained on the categorization system double-coded the data: Interrater reliability, calculated according to the percentage of agreement proposed by Miles et al. (2014), was good (.96).

Table 1
Summary of the Interview Protocol

---

1.   Situations in which a negotiation was initiated

Please recall a situation in which you asked your supervisor if you could talk to him or her. Please tell me more about this conversation. What was it about?

How did you decide to initiate a negotiation with your supervisor? What encouraged you to start a negotiation with your supervisor about this matter? Which arguments spoke against your decision to initiate a negotiation?

---

2.   Situations in which a negotiation was not initiated

Please recall a situation in which you considered asking your supervisor if you could talk to him or her but in the end you did not do so. Please tell me more about this situation. What was it about?

How did you decide not to initiate a negotiation with your supervisor? What kept you from initiating a negotiation with your supervisor? Which arguments would have been in favor of initiating this negotiation?

---

3.   Further (non-)initiation situations [only in face-to-face interviews]

In which further situations did you initiate a negotiation with your supervisor?

In which further situations did you not initiate a negotiation with your supervisor?

Note. The questions were asked verbally in the face-to-face interviews and in written form in the questionnaires.

Patterns of Categories

Third, we investigated patterns of categories to examine the interplay between situational discrepancies, affective responses, cognitive-motivational considerations, and further influencing factors identified with regard to the (non-)initiation of negotiation. To manage this shift from a descriptive to a more conceptual level, we examined and documented based on the transcripts, which categories were reported in combination or weighed against each other within one statement or argumentation structure (Schilling, 2006). In this way, we sought to empirically probe and extend the interplay between the elements posited in the model of negotiation initiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014) and newly identified elements.
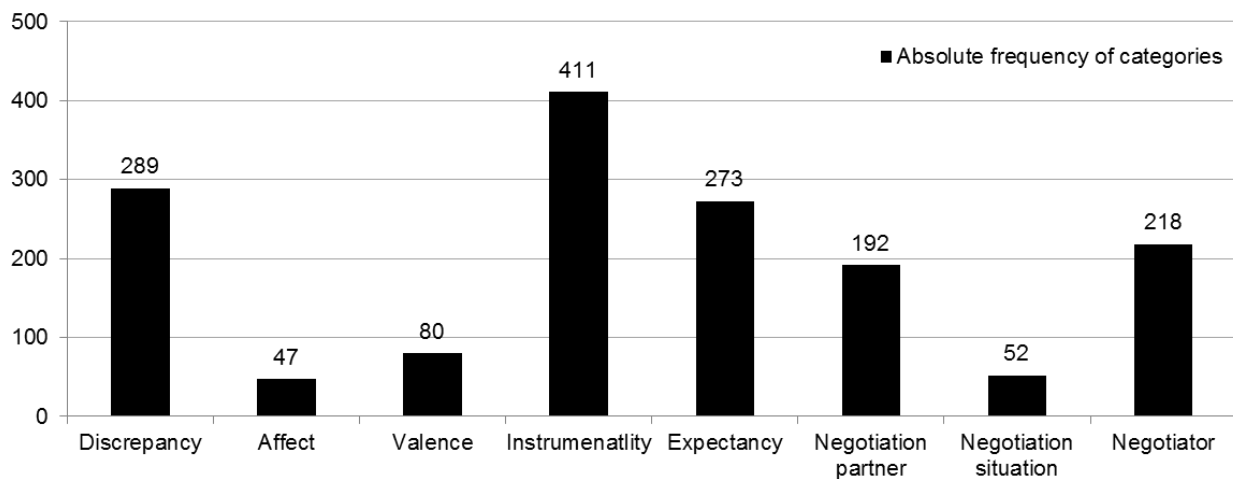
Results

Most employees were able to easily retrieve initiation and non-initiation situations, indicating that they all had experienced negotiation situations with their supervisors. In the following, we will first describe the applicability of Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model to our data and then describe an extension of their model according to our findings. The results are based on contents and patterns that appeared robustly throughout the data. Categories that turned out to be complex due to their thematic diversity (cf. the categories "discrepancy" and "instrumentality") and categories that showed ambiguous effects (cf. the category "negotiation partner"), are presented in more detail in tables. Quotes were translated in English by the authors.

Applicability of Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) Model of Negotiation Initiation

Reif and Brodbeck (2014) assumed that the effect of discrepancy on negotiation initiation is mediated by affect and that this mediation effect is moderated by cognitive considerations (valence, instrumentality, and expectancy). In the following, we first describe our results regarding cybernetic mechanisms (discrepancy, affect) and then regarding cognitive considerations (valence, instrumentality, and expectancy), in initiation situations and non-initiation situations. Figure 2 shows how often the categories were mentioned in our data (multiple mentions per statement were possible).

Figure 2
Absolute Frequency of Categories

Note. Multiple mentions per statement were possible

Cybernetic Mechanisms Affecting Negotiation Initiation: Discrepancy and Affect

One of the most basic reasons for initiating negotiations was the presence of a perceived negative discrepancy. Employees described the perception of a general negative discrepancy as feeling that something was wrong, that an obvious assumption had been violated, or that their input was greater than their output (#1, #2, #10, #11, #49). Discrepancies referred to compensation, personal and career development, working conditions, vacation, tasks, teamwork and leadership, and strategic issues (see Table 2). In many accounts of non-negotiation situations, "no discrepancy" was mentioned as the reason for not initiating a negotiation

which means that employees perceived an adequate input-output ratio. Employees described the perception of no discrepancy as being comfortable or feeling a high level of well-being (#2). For example, their salary was fair (#7, #14), tasks were interesting and provided opportunities for personal development (#14), conflicts with supervisors did not escalate (#1), the supervisor provided a lot of support (#7), and employees thought that processes and systems were transparent (#2).

Regarding affect, negative emotions that made employees initiate a negotiation or think about negotiating included dissatisfaction, injustice, anger, aggression, rage, frustration, or feelings of being hurt (e.g., #15, #39, #45). However, employees also mentioned negative emotions that inhibited them from negotiating, such as fear or a general negative emotionality (#3, #9, #53). Employees reported positive emotions that made them feel like there was no reason to negotiate: They felt satisfied, content, and treated fairly (#8, #10).

In the employees' descriptions there were also combined effects of discrepancy and affect driving or inhibiting negotiation initiation: Employees talked about negative emotional reactions caused by negative discrepancies. For example, they felt aggressive (#1) or hurt (#5) due to conflicts in the team; angry (#13) or frustrated (#8) if the supervisor did not adhere to an agreement; disappointed or dissatisfied (#9) with regard to their salary, working conditions (#45), or roles (#15); frustrated (#5) due to boring tasks; dissatisfied because they did not receive required information (#11); or treated unfairly if they did not receive opportunities for personal development (#2). Perceiving no discrepancy made employees feel satisfied or treated fairly. This was the case, for example, if their salary was adequate (#7, #10) or if processes or decision-making procedures were transparent and comprehensible (#2). Evidence for the influence of cybernetic variables and their combination on the initiation of negotiation was identified in 20% of all 1015 coded statements.

Cognitive Considerations Affecting Negotiation Initiation: Valence, Instrumentality and Expectancy

Regarding valence, employees were prone to initiate a negotiation if the negotiation issue was of high value to them. They attached great significance to the negotiation issue in terms of attractiveness, interestingness, or importance (e.g., #16, #33). Attributing low valance to the negotiation object (low importance or low relevance, no interest) inhibited employees from initiating a negotiation (e.g., #16).

Regarding instrumentality, employees weighed the potential benefits of a negotiation against its potential costs. Moreover, they weighed the potential benefits of avoiding a negotiation against its potential costs. These instrumentality considerations referred to economic outcomes, relational outcomes, and self-related outcomes. A positive instrumentality, that is, assuming positive consequences of negotiating, no costs of negotiating ("It couldn't get any worse", #38), and negative consequences of avoiding a negotiation, encouraged employees to initiate a negotiation, because they thought that negotiating would help them improve their situation (for details see Table 3a). A negative instrumentality, that is, assuming negative consequences of negotiating, no benefits of negotiating, or positive consequences of avoiding a negotiation, inhibited employees from initiating a negotiation and encouraged them to avoid a negotiation, because they thought that negotiating would worsen their situation regarding economic outcomes, relational outcomes, and self-related outcomes (Table 3b). Relational costs were overrepresented compared to economic and self-related risks (e.g., #8, #9, #12).

Regarding expectancy, a high perceived probability of success in initiating a negotiation or in negotiating, a feeling of certainty, and a feeling of self-efficacy facilitated negotiation initiation ("Well, I basically do things specifically regarding negotiations often when I know that it will lead to success; [...] when I have good prospects." #13). By contrast, if employees perceived no chance of success or no probability of achieving their goals, they were less prone to initiate a negotiation. Evidence for the direct influence of cognitive considerations on the initiation of negotiation was identified in 32% of all 1015 coded statements.

Interplay Between Cybernetic Mechanisms and Cognitive Considerations

Besides cybernetic mechanisms and cognitive considerations driving or inhibiting negotiation initiation, employees also mentioned buffering effects of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy when negative discrepancies (and negative affect) were present. For example, employees felt negative discrepancies combined with negative affect and thought about initiating a negotiation. However, due to anticipated negative consequences (e.g., relational costs, economic costs, self-related costs), low expectancy of being successful (uncertainty), or all in all low valence they finally decided against initiating a negotiation, even though the negative discrepancy was still present (e.g., #1, #2, #8). Evidence for the interplay between cybernetic variables and cognitive elements when deciding whether or not to negotiate was identified in 10% of all 1015 coded statements.

Extending Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) Model of Negotiation Initiation

Besides the categories proposed in Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model, we identified additional contextual categories affecting the initiation of negotiation. Evidence for the direct influence of these contextual variables on the initiation of negotiation was identified in 13% of all 1015 coded statements. In the following, we describe these newly identified categories and their role as antecedents of cognitive considerations.

The Negotiation Partner Affecting Negotiation Initiation

Employees described different aspects related to the negotiation partner that facilitated their decision to initiate a negotiation, including his/her willingness to negotiate or availability. Positive (e.g., agreeableness) as well as negative (e.g., incompetence) negotiation partner characteristics, high (e.g., mutual trust) and poor (e.g., tense relationship) relationship quality, and a negotiation partner's high (e.g., impact) and low (e.g., inexperienced) power and bargaining position drove employees' negotiation initiation (Table 4, left side).

Aspects related to the negotiation partner which inhibited employees' negotiation initiation included positive (e.g., smart) as well as negative (e.g., disagreeable) negotiation partner characteristics, high (e.g., harmony) and poor (e.g., poor relationship) relationship quality, and a negotiation partner's high (e.g., impact) and low (e.g., no authority) power and bargaining position (Table 4, right side). If employees perceived the negotiation partner to be unwilling to negotiate or knew that he/she was barely available, they also tended not to negotiate.

The Negotiation Situation Affecting Negotiation Initiation

If employees had the opportunity to talk to their supervisors in regularly scheduled meetings (e.g., weekly meetings, annual performance reviews), employees were likely to initiate negotiations in these meetings (e.g., #40, #53). Employees also used job interviews to initiate negotiations with their (future) employers. These situations provided a "natural" setting for negotiations. With regard to workload, employees reported initiating negotiations if their current work situation was rather relaxed and they did not face significant time pressure. Employees hesitated to initiate negotiations if the general economic situation was troubling or if the organization was in financial trouble, as they assumed that it was not appropriate to "ask for more" in such situations. Moreover, they refrained from negotiating if the situation was very hectic and stressful (e.g., #37).

Table 2
Examples of Negative Discrepancy

Negative discrepancy driving negotiation initiation: feeling that something is wrong, that an obvious assumption had been violated, or that one's input was greater than one's output

Contents of negative discrepancy	*Exemplary quotes*
Compensation • salary is too low in general • perceived lack of reward for extra effort • perceived lack of attractive incentives • lack of travel subsidies	*Reward for extra effort:* "I just organized a big conference for my company (…) about the status of the consumer goods industry and I'm wondering now if I should negotiate with my supervisor, who is responsible for it, if I can charge the company for this activity, like how much I would get paid for this, (…) and if I should get paid for it at all." (#8; also see #6, #13, #30, #47)
Personal and career development Feeling to not yet have sufficient knowledge to • accomplish one's tasks properly • qualify for a promotion • take on a job with more responsibilities	*Responsibilities:* "[I would like to develop further and] assume more responsibility, I would also like to do something different, I have already been in this field for ten years and now I'm reaching a point where I have to say a change would be good." (#14; also see #2, #7, #26, #50)
Working conditions • poor physical working environment • poor work-life balance (e.g., overtime) • misfitting working time arrangements • misfitting work location	*Office furniture:* "(…) the buildings are very beautiful, but we have dark offices and I think this is unhealthy, in my opinion this really affects our health. So I would negotiate there. (….) and there was that desk you could raise, but I did not have one, then I negotiated because of my back and my discs." (#4; also see #3, #5, #6, #9, #10, #28, #45)
Vacation • need for permission to take vacation • timing of vacation • duration of vacation • additional vacation	*Vacation timing:* "I had to struggle a little longer to get three weeks off for our honeymoon. (…) It was during peak season – my wedding was at the end of August – and at the end of September I wanted to [take] a trip (…) And (…) then I said to my supervisor: 'I still have so and so many vacation days and I want to remind you that I have to take them'." (#3; also see #46)
Tasks • high workload • too many different tasks • too many, too few or unclear responsibilities • boring tasks	*High workload:* "(…) I had many very difficult and complicated youth welfare cases. I did not see an end and was very stressed so I had a spontaneous talk with my supervisor who was very accommodating and gave me time to talk relatively quickly, and I told him that this is too much for me and I might not be able to do it (…)." (#1; also see #3, #4, #5, #6, #11, #12, #14, #41, #49)
Teamwork and leadership • inappropriate team composition • negative interaction styles in the team • supervisor's poor communication style • supervisor's lack of reliability • not receiving relevant information • not receiving enough career support • lack of participation in important decisions	*Personal conflict with the team leader:* "(…) then there was that morning, it was a Thursday as far as I remember (…) and then I received that rude email and then I read it and the problem was that I felt I had to justify myself. In fact, you had to justify yourself all the time. And then I opened that email and somehow I thought: 'I just can't do it anymore'. And then I thought: 'Okay, either I'm gonna call in sick – er – (…) or I am gonna change something' (…)." (#5; also see #1, #3, #7, #8, #13, #14, #51)
Strategic issues • strategic direction • change management processes	*Strategic issues:* "(…) let's say [my supervisor] is more a gut feeling guy…, often he just doesn't have time for [strategic issues] (…). [We need] a long-term strategy, ah, one that may be beyond our department's limits but, ah, you usually don't get far with him (…), let's say from my point of view he hasn't focused enough attention on it." (#13; also see #9, #27)

Table 3a
Positive Economic, Relational and Self-Related Instrumentality

---

Positive instrumentality driving negotiation initiation: benefits of negotiation initiation and costs of negotiation avoidance outweigh costs of negotiation initiation and benefits of negotiation avoidance; no costs of negotiation initiation; considerations refer to economic outcomes, relational outcomes and self-related outcomes.

Types of instrumentality	*Exemplary quotes*
Economic benefits of initiating a negotiation • reaching one's goals • changing one's circumstances • reducing one's discrepancies **Economic costs of avoiding a negotiation** • not changing the situation	"In the end I basically knew that you don't get anything in our organization if you don't ask, and if you do ask, you get a surprising amount, (…) you always have to fight for your rights." (#8; also see #11, #33, #42) "Well, if I don't ask for it, then nothing will change (…) in terms of my personal development opportunities" (#8)
Relational benefits of initiating a negotiation • regularizing one's relationship with the negotiation partner • making oneself heard; capturing attention • delineating new perspectives to the negotiation partner • making the negotiation partner aware of an issue • making the negotiation partner reflect • demonstrating one's negotiation ability and performance • impressing the negotiation partner with good arguments • pointing out (personal) limits to the negotiation partner **Relational costs of avoiding a negotiation** • making a fool of oneself • leaving an inconsistent impression • showing weaknesses of one's character	"[Through this negotiation I have satisfied my need] to send a signal, that I basically do not give up so easily, (…) that I can also stand up for my interests and that we can talk to each other on equal footing." (#8) "I just wanted to tell the supervisor: 'Hey, listen to me, I'm not your puppet'!" (#6, also see #10, #11, #41). "I think that avoiding this negotiation would have been a character weakness and I would expect others to also perceive it as such. So, not negotiating would only have exposed me to ridicule" (#8)
Self-related benefits of initiating a negotiation • gaining insights and clarity about one's own situation • having fun when negotiating • achieving satisfaction • positive feelings regarding oneself • challenging oneself; testing one's strengths • boosting one's ego; testing one's worth • self-affirmation; advancing **Self-related costs of avoiding a negotiation** • losing one's self-worth • not being taken seriously • personal breakdown due to an unchanged situation	"Well, [negotiating is] such a challenge. (…) I mean it's not like a competition between me and the boss, but it's like… solving a puzzle. Yes. So when you have to present a project, on the one hand I am doing it because of the project (…), but on the other hand I just want him to say 'yes'; (…) just as I want to solve a riddle or a crossword puzzle, I want him to say 'yes' (…). It's not about my supervisor, it's rather about myself." (#4, also see #1, #8, #10) "(…) then you have the feeling that you're not being taken seriously, that you have been treated like a little schoolboy (…). That really gives me food for thought…" (#2)

Table 3b

Negative Economic, Relational and Self-Related Instrumentality

---

Negative instrumentality inhibiting negotiation initiation: costs of negotiation initiation and benefits of negotiation avoidance outweigh benefits of negotiation initiation and costs of negotiation avoidance; no benefits of negotiation initiation; considerations refer to economic outcomes, relational outcomes and self-related outcomes.

Types of instrumentality	*Exemplary quotes*
Economic costs of initiating a negotiation • worsening one's situation • losing one's job and livelihood	"When negotiating, there is always the risk of … well … of losing everything – one's job, and thus one's livelihood." (#10) "[Negotiating] would have been a career ender" (#47)
Economic benefits of avoiding a negotiation • getting the desired job • not being fired	"I do not want to risk my job because of a negotiation" (#12)
Relational costs of initiating a negotiation • leaving a bad impression and conveying a wrong image (e.g., being weak, lazy, demotivated, untrustworthy, selfish, impudent, too ambitious, disagreeable, megalomaniac) • destroying one's (long-term) relationship with the negotiation partner • losing appreciation; losing face	"Well I fear that (…) I might look bad, (…) like someone who always wants to squeeze every last drop out of something; someone who never does anything without wanting something in return, like an unlikable guy" (#8; also see #1, #2, #7, #9, #10, #11, #12, #14, #24, #36, #46).
Relational benefits of avoiding a negotiation • keeping a solid relationship • not initiating or adding fuel to a severe long-term conflict • not having to criticize the negotiation partner • avoiding unnecessary discussions • "keep being Mister Nice Guy"	"Well, I think (…) I like to avoid such conversations. So, surely, this is a form of conflict avoidance for me…" (#12)
Self-related costs of initiating a negotiation • losing one's dignity, lowering one's self-esteem • having to admit that one is unable to cope with a situation • being exposed to one's own (negative) emotionality • inappropriate self-disclosure • wasting personal resources (time, energy)	"Initiating a negotiation conveys the message of a personal weakness" (#8) "In the beginning I thought of [initiating negotiations] as a kind of weakness, – in fact it's not a weakness, but a strength, if you try to change something –, but I thought, my God, now you're surrendering, you can't go on anymore" (#10; also see #2, #3, #5, #6, #7, #12, #32).
Self-related benefits of avoiding a negotiation • not getting annoyed • retaining one's independence • not having to disclose personal matters • not having to face one's weaknesses • saving personal resources	"I wanted to prove to myself that I could handle the situation without help." (#52) "I would avoid a negotiation to protect my own personality" (#17)

Negotiator States and Dispositions Affecting Negotiation Initiation

As reasons for initiating negotiations, employees discussed factors that were related to their specific circumstances. We will call these factors *negotiator states* due to their circumstantial nature. A good standing (due to previous performance or extraordinary commitment) within the organization made it easier for employees to initiate negotiations. Access to relevant information about the negotiation issue as well as social support by significant others also facilitated their decision to initiate a negotiation. These factors (standing within the organization, information, and social support) had a positive influence on their beliefs about entitlement (employees assumed it was legitimate to negotiate), the quality of their arguments, and their perceived bargaining position. Having the feeling that colleagues did not back them inhibited employees to initiate a negotiation. Moreover, not feeling entitled to negotiate, not being properly prepared, or being in a weak bargaining position negatively influenced employees' decision to negotiate (e.g., #42, # 48, #53).

As reasons for initiating negotiations, employees also discussed factors related to their general attitudes or personality characteristics. We will call these factors *negotiator dispositions* due to their rather stable and enduring nature. Employees with a positive attitude towards negotiating said that negotiating was normal behavior (#2), always worth a try (#5), and that they liked negotiating in general (#4). Regarding personality characteristics, employees mentioned to initiate negotiations due to their proactive, open-minded personality (#13). Some employees had a negative attitude towards negotiating and generally disliked negotiating or thought that negotiating was unpleasant (#7). Some employees also said that initiating a negotiation did not fit their personality (#6), was not their style, or that they were not "salesperson type". Not being very spontaneous, but rather procrastinating and introverted were also associated with a lower tendency to negotiate (#7, #11).

Interplay Between Context and Cognitive Considerations

When systematically investigating combinations of categories, we found influences of negotiator's states on negotiator's expectancy and instrumentality considerations: Employees closely related their expectancy (probability of success, feelings of certainty, and self-efficacy) to entitlement, the quality of their arguments, and their bargaining position which in turn were influenced by the negotiator's standing within the organization, social support received by colleagues or friends, and the amount of information available to the negotiator. Employees who thought that their perceived negative discrepancy was not objectively justified (lack of arguments) did not feel entitled to negotiate and felt that initiating a negotiation could impair how supervisors thought about them (relational costs). In contrast, good standing within the organization, for example due to constant high performance, decreased the anticipated negative consequences. The same held for employees who considered themselves to be in a powerful position. These employees thought that their economic risks from initiating a negotiation were limited.

We also identified influences of the negotiation situation on negotiator's expectancy and instrumentality considerations: Employees talked about having a low expectancy due to a general economic crisis (#9) or having no expectancy of success because negotiating would be inappropriate given the current situation (#9). Furthermore, employee feared making a bad impression by initiating a negotiation (relational costs) if the atmosphere was generally positive (#8).

Influences of the negotiation partner on negotiator's instrumentality and expectancy considerations expressed as follows: The negotiation partner's positive/negative characteristics, his/her high/low power or bargaining position, and a high/poor relationship quality had facilitating effects on the decision to negotiate in some cases and inhibiting effects in other cases. These divergent effects depended on the employee's subsequent cognitive considerations, that is, their interpretation of how the negotiation partner aspects

Table 4

Facilitating and Inhibiting Aspects Regarding the Negotiation Partner

Negotiation partner aspects	driving negotiation initiation: aspects related to the negotiation partner are in favor of initiating a negotiation		inhibiting negotiation initiation: aspects related to the negotiation partner are unfavorable for initiating a negotiation	
	Contents	*Exemplary quotes*	*Contents*	*Exemplary quotes*
Positive characteristics	• agreeable, cooperative • fair, objective	"I assumed that he would play fair" (#8)	• intelligent, smart, competent • tough appearance	"He was a crafty fox and a negotiation would have been unpleasant…" (#8)
Negative characteristics	• incompetent	"I did not think he was particularly competent." (#8)	• disagreeable, impulsive • low expertise	"She easily becomes rude or impolite." (#4)
High quality of relationship	• knowing each other well • mutual trust	"Knowing each other well makes [negotiating] way easier." (#12)	• good, stable relationship • harmony	"We had a very stable relationship, so I did not negotiate." (#1)
Poor quality of relationship	• lack of mutual respect • tense relationship	"I didn't respect her, so it was ok for me to disagree with her." (#8)	• poor, complicated relationship • not knowing each other well • lack of mutual trust	"I feared she wouldn't understand it because she does not know what exactly I do in my daily work." (#49)
High power and bargaining position	• decision-making power • impact • experience	"I really wanted to take the vacation and he had the authority to approve it." (#46)	• impact • authority	"The authority of my boss was a certain barrier, an inhibition threshold…" (#10)
Low power and bargaining position	• young, inexperienced • less powerful, weak position	"He was a weak counterpart" (#8) "I knew he had a problem and didn't know how to solve it." (#6)	• no decision-making power • no administrative responsibility • no authority	"My boss has not been the only decision maker" (#52). "He was new to the company" (#25)
(No) willingness to negotiate	• open, interested • responsive	"I knew he would lend me an ear; he knew our work, he knew the difficult cases." (#1)	• generally unwilling to negotiate • unwilling to negotiate specific topics • not open to criticism	"When he says 'no way'…short and to the point. That's a signal for me that he is completely unwilling." (#14)
(No) availability	• available • has time	"I also need to feel, yes, I'm not stealing his time." (#7)	• not available • too busy	"Well, he is in meetings with other departments a lot, he is rarely there anyway. And when he is there, he usually has something else to do." (#7)

influenced their instrumentality and expectancy in the respective negotiation situation (for details see Figure 3). Evidence for the combined effects of contextual variables and cognitive considerations (instrumentality and expectancy) was identified in 24% of all 1015 coded statements.

Discussion

We qualitatively examined why employees initiated negotiations with their supervisors in organizations. Using a combined deductive and inductive approach, we identified contents and processes that facilitated or inhibited negotiation initiation, while considering the complex transactions between the negotiator and his/her environment.

Applicability of Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) Model (Research Question 1)

In line with the model of negotiation initiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014), employees initiated negotiations when they perceived negative discrepancies (e.g., too low salary, poor working environment) and negative activating affect (e.g., dissatisfaction, anger). The combined effects of discrepancy and affect were weighed against cognitive considerations of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. Employees did not initiate negotiations if they perceived no discrepancies or no negative affect, or if the activating effects of negative discrepancy and negative affect were buffered by negative instrumentality, no expectancy, or low valence. In sum, the elements and relationships postulated in Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model showed up in negotiation initiations in organizational contexts.

However, we also identified statements in which people only referred to cognitive considerations, that is, they initiated (avoided) negotiations due to high (low) valence, positive (negative) instrumentality, or high (low) expectancy. This direct impact of cognitive considerations on negotiation initiation has not been considered in the model of negotiation initiation so far. We therefore suggest that cognitive considerations of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy can directly influence one's decision to negotiate and accordingly propose the following model extension:

Proposition 1: Considerations of a negotiation issue's valence directly influence one's decision to negotiate: High (low) valence increases (decreases) the tendency to initiate a negotiation.

Proposition 2: Considerations of a negotiation initiation's instrumentality directly influence one's decision to negotiate: A positive instrumentality (self-related, relational, and economic benefits or no costs of negotiating) increases the tendency to initiate a negotiation. A negative instrumentality (self-related, relational, and economic costs or no benefits of negotiating) decreases the tendency to initiate a negotiation.

Proposition 3: Considerations of expectancy directly influence one's decision to negotiate: High (low) expectancy increases (decreases) the tendency to initiate a negotiation.
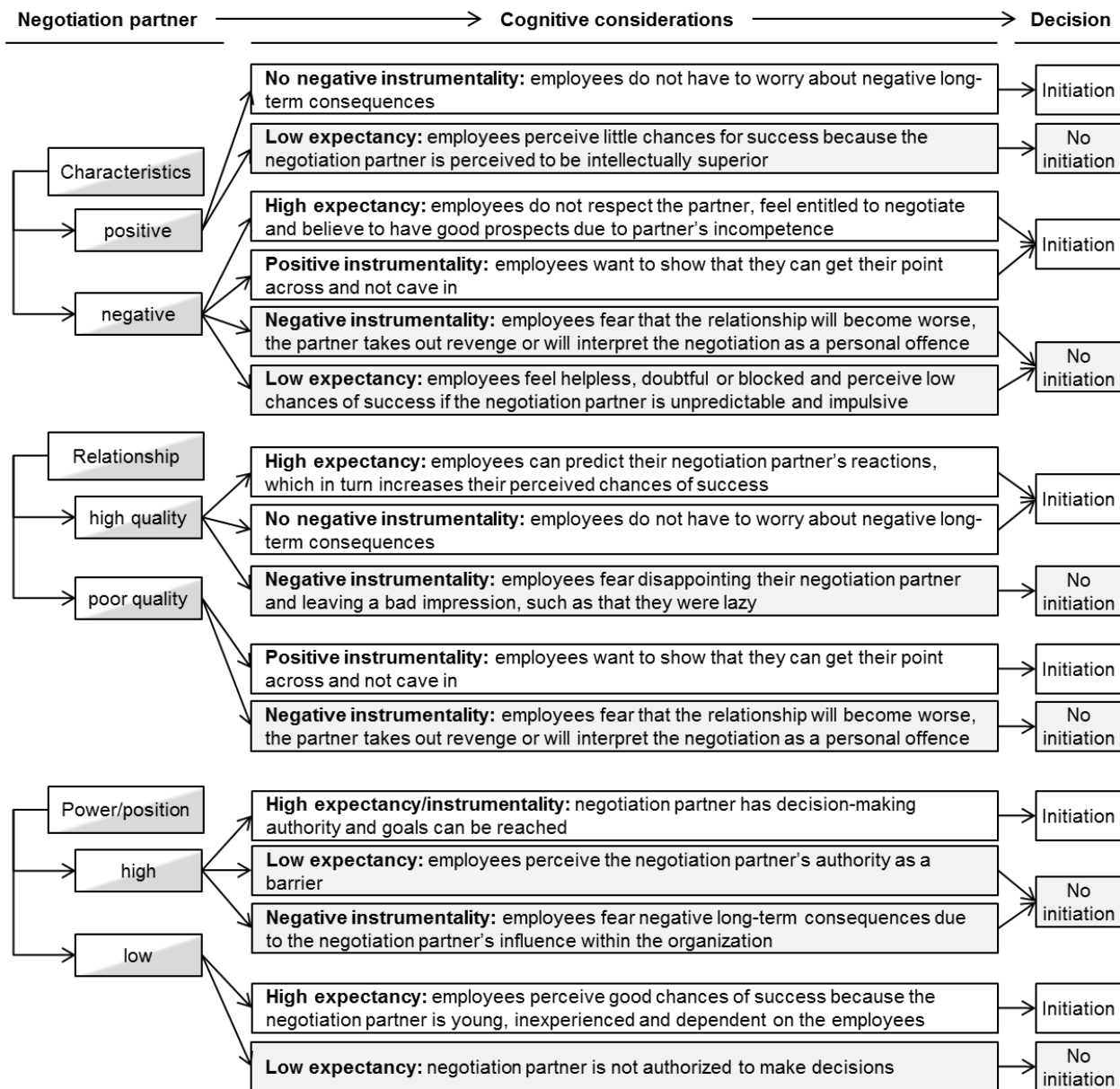
Further Extension of Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) Model (Research Question 2)

Besides cybernetic and cognitive-motivational elements suggested in the original version of Reif and Brodbeck's (2014) model, we identified further contextual influences on negotiation initiations. Aspects related to the negotiation situation and the negotiation partner, as well as the negotiator's states and dispositions were mentioned by employees as reasons for (not) initiating negotiations. We accordingly propose the following model extension:

Proposition 4: Facilitating (inhibiting) aspects of the negotiation partner increase (decrease) the tendency to initiate a negotiation.

Figure 3

Effects of Negotiation Partner Aspects on Cognitive Considerations and the Decision Whether or Not to Negotiate

Note. Grey boxes visualize aspects related to non-initiation. White boxes visualize aspects related to initiation.

> *Proposition 5*: Facilitating (inhibiting) aspects of the negotiation situation increase (decrease) the tendency to initiate a negotiation.
> *Proposition 6*: Facilitating (inhibiting) negotiator states and dispositions increase (decrease) the tendency to initiate a negotiation.

Moreover, the narrative data showed how facilitating (inhibiting) aspects of the negotiation partner, the negotiation situation, and the negotiator him- or herself positively (negatively) influenced expectancy and instrumentality considerations (Figure 3). We accordingly propose:

Proposition 7: Facilitating (inhibiting) aspects of the negotiation partner positively (negatively) influence a negotiator's cognitive considerations (expectancy, instrumentality).

Proposition 8: Facilitating (inhibiting) aspects of the negotiation situation positively (negatively) influence a negotiator's cognitive considerations (expectancy, instrumentality).

Proposition 9: Facilitating (inhibiting) negotiator states and dispositions positively (negatively) influence a negotiator's cognitive considerations (expectancy, instrumentality).

Integrating Propositions 4 – 9, we suggest that:

Proposition 10: The effects of the negotiation partner, negotiation situation, and a negotiator's states and dispositions on the negotiator's tendency to initiate a negotiation are mediated by the negotiator's cognitive considerations (expectancy, instrumentality).

This extended version of the model of negotiation initiation which now includes a transaction between a person's intrapsychic processes and his/her contextual surrounding is shown in Figure 1.

Theoretical Contribution

We qualitatively applied the model of negotiation initiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014) to an organizational context and demonstrated the existence of all model components and their interactions. Analyzing semantic relationships between categories, we qualitatively identified the direct, mediating, and moderating effects proposed in the model. We also found evidence for the three different types of instrumentality (economic, relational, self-related) regarding negotiation initiation suggested by Reif and Brodbeck (2014).

We extended the model of negotiation initiation (Reif & Brodbeck, 2014) to a transactional model of negotiation initiation by specifying existing variables, adding new variables, and proposing new relationships between variables. *A specification of different contents of discrepancy* broadens our understanding of negotiation issues in organizations and can be used by negotiation researchers when designing new negotiation scenarios or negotiation tasks. By differentiating between activating (dissatisfaction, injustice, anger, aggression, or rage) and deactivating (fear, general negative emotionality or disappointment) types of negative affect, we showed how behavioral activation and behavioral inhibition processes contribute to the decision whether (or not) to initiate a negotiation. The *new variables* 'negotiation partner', 'negotiation situation', and 'negotiator states and dispositions' enrich the model of negotiation initiation by including the (social) context of action as well as intraindividual influences, which are central to negotiation theory and research (Elfenbein, 2021; Gelfand et al., 2006; Reif, Kunz, et al., 2019). We furthermore *derived new relationships* between variables which we formulated in ten propositions: We suggest contextual factors as further direct antecedents of negotiation initiation and as antecedents of cognitive considerations, which makes cognitions (besides their role as moderators) to mediators, that are supposed to have also independent, direct effects on negotiation initiation. By stressing these person x situation contingencies and interpersonal dynamics, we transform the former model of negotiation initiation into a transactional model of negotiation initiation. This transactional model not only looks for determinants of negotiation initiation in the context and the person, but describes cognitive processes in which the contextual and personal characteristics result, mediating the decision behavior.

We also demonstrated that the cognitive-motivational element valence seems to play a unique role in the model of negotiation initiation (compared to instrumentality or expectancy): Neither the negotiation partner nor negotiation situation, negotiator states, or negotiator dispositions influenced employees' estimations of a negotiation issue's valence. Valence seems to be closely related to the nature of the negotiation issue itself and depend on employees' broader, general motives, needs, and values.

In the sense of a content theory of motivation, we presented negotiation content that drove employees' initiation of negotiations. However, we not only listed these content areas, but integrated them with a process perspective that explains negotiation initiation by combining situational and affective discrepancies with cognitive-motivational considerations. By establishing this tie, we went beyond existing taxonomies of negotiation topics in organizational contexts (such as in Babcock et al., 2006; Kolb & Kickul, 2006) and created a bridge to other conceptualizations of and approaches to initiative behavior at the workplace. The new model could thus contribute to a more integrative understanding of, for example, speaking up, reporting errors, taking charge, or voice behavior in organizations.

Practical Implications

From an employer's perspective, if supervisors listen to their employees' concerns and discrepancies, they can collect a great amount of information about potential problems, conflicts, or suggestions for improvements. In this way, supervisors are able to better adapt to their employees' individual needs and prevent future negative discrepancies. To promote negotiation initiation, supervisors could establish suitable communication channels or opportunities for conversation that make it easier for employees to strike up a conversation with them (also see Berg et al., 2010). Furthermore, supervisors could create workplaces where employees feel safe to engage in voice (Edmondson, 2003), demonstrate their openness to employees' speaking up, and convince them that they are interested in their concerns (Milliken et al., 2003). If employees do not have the possibility to speak up, they might react with cynicism and disengagement (Beer & Eisenstat, 2000; Morrison & Milliken, 2000), which can in turn have serious long-term consequences for employees' relationship with the organization (Milliken et al., 2003). Moreover, by not allowing employees to speak up or signaling that this behavior is inappropriate, organizations risk overlooking weaknesses, errors, or conflicts, and even losing employees.

From an employee's perspective, initiating a negotiation to bargain for personal advantages can have dramatic effects on an employee's outcomes, performance, and satisfaction (Babcock & Laschever, 2009; Kolb & Kickul, 2006). Initiating a negotiation can help one vent one's emotions, decrease dissatisfaction, and set boundaries in interpersonal relationships or with regard to one's workload and working hours. Not initiating negotiations regarding painful negative discrepancies may result in negative psychological and behavioral consequences. Being adequately prepared, having good arguments, or having access to information and knowledge on the negotiation issue may help employees increase the probability of positive outcomes and decrease the occurrence of negative consequences. Our differentiated discussion of discrepancy topics can provide an overview for employees of what other employees have negotiated about in their organizations.

Limitations and Future Research

Most participants in our sample had a university degree which might narrow our sample in terms of participants' socio-economic status. However, our sample was diverse regarding educational backgrounds, industries, and jobs. In accordance with the spreading-of-alternatives effect (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999), employees may have tried to talk up the alternative they had chosen (initiating a negotiation or not initiating a negotiation) by emphasizing this alternative's positive characteristics and devaluing the rejected alternative. However, we tried to overcome this bias by asking in-depth questions about facilitating and inhibiting factors in both initiation situations and non-initiation situations. Our data may also be influenced by social desirability bias, which may have caused employees to present themselves in a positively biased way. Consequently, they may have been more likely to report either initiation situations or non-initiation situations, depending on their understanding of what is appropriate behavior. We tried to

overcome this bias by asking all employees about initiation *and* non-initiation situations. Our results may also be biased regarding the negative consequences of (not) initiating negotiations on the relational level because we only interviewed employees. Thus, we did not investigate what supervisors think about employees who initiate negotiations. Future research should consider and integrate different perspectives on negotiation initiation. Considering the negotiation partner's point of view in future research could also contribute to a more balanced, reciprocal understanding of the role of negotiation partners and respective perspectives on each other's behaviors.

Future research should delve deeper into the different paths stated in the model and explore in which situations the respective paths are most influential regarding a person's decision whether or not to negotiate. Following on from this, future research should investigate whether different constellations of initiation motives have different effects on the further negotiation process and choice of negotiation strategies. A promising path for future research is also to quantitatively examine the propositions derived from our qualitative data. Although we gathered a substantial sample of initiation and non-initiation situations, quantitative research with a larger sample of participants is necessary to analyze moderation and mediation effects using appropriate statistical analyses. Future research should also examine concepts that may be related to negotiation initiation in organizations, such as proactivity, personal initiative, job crafting, taking charge, or voice and silence in order to differentiate and integrate these research streams. The extended, transactional version of the model of negotiation initiation could provide a framework for these endeavors.

Conclusion

In addition to the consideration of intrapersonal cybernetic and cognitive processes, the explanation of negotiation initiation and initiative behaviors in organizations requires an understanding of the transactions between the negotiator and his/her situational, relational, and intrapsychic contextual surrounding. The transactional model of negotiation initiation demonstrates these transactions by showing how individual expectancy and instrumentality considerations are shaped by the negotiation partner, the negotiation situation and the negotiator's states and dispositions.

References

Babcock, L., Gelfand, M., Small, D., & Stayn, H. (2006). Gender differences in the propensity to initiate negotiations. In D. de Cremer, M. Zeelenberg, & J. K. Murnighan (Eds.), *Social psychology and economics* (pp. 239–259). Erlbaum.

Babcock, L., & Laschever, S. (2009). *Ask for it: How women can use the power of negotiation to get what they really want*. Bantam Dell.

Bal, P. M. (2018). Why do employees negotiate idiosyncratic deals? An exploration of the process of i-deal negotiation. *New Zealand Journal of Employment Relations, 42*(1), 2–18. ISSN 1176-4716

Barron, L. A. (2003). Ask and you shall receive? Gender differences in negotiators' beliefs about requests for a higher salary. *Human Relations, 56*(6), 635–662. https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267030566001

Beer, M., & Eisenstat, R. (2000). The silent killers of strategy implementation and learning. *Sloan Management Review, 41*, 29–40. https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/the-silent-killers-of-strategy-implementation-and-learning/

Berg, J. M., Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2010). Perceiving and responding to challenges in job crafting at different ranks: When proactivity requires adaptivity. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 31*(2–3), 158–186. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.645

Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: A research note. *Qualitative Research, 8*(1), 137–152. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794107085301.

Bowles, H. R., Babcock, L., & Lai, L. (2007). Social incentives for gender differences in the propensity to initiate negotiations: Sometimes it does hurt to ask. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 103*, 84–103. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.09.001

Brett, J., & Thompson, L. (2016). Negotiation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 136*, 68–79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2016.06.003

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (2019). A self-regulatory viewpoint on human behavior. In R. M. Ryan (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of human motivation* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Chen, L., Zhang, L., & Zhao, N. (2015). Exploring the nonlinear relationship between challenge stressors and employee voice: The effects of leader-member exchange and organisation-based self-esteem. *Personality and Individual Differences, 83*, 24–30. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.03.043

De Dreu, K. W., Beersma, B., Steinel, W., & Van Kleef, G. A. (2007). The psychology of negotiation. In A. W. Kruglanski & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Social Psychology. Handbook of basic principles* (2nd ed., pp. 608–629). The Guilford Press.

Detert, J. R., & Trevino, L. K. (2010). Speaking up to higher-ups: How supervisors and skip-level leaders influence employee voice. *Organization Science, 21*(1), 249–270. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0405

Diefendorff, J. M., & Chandler, M. M. (2010). Motivating employees. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (pp. 65–135). American Psychological Association.

Edmondson, A. C. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behaviour in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*, 350–383. https://doi.org/10.2307/2666999

Edmondson, A. C. (2002). The local and variegated nature of learning in organizations: A group-level perspective. *Organization Science, 13*(2), 128–146. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.13.2.128.530

Edmondson, A. C. (2003). Speaking up in the operating room: How team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*, 1419–1452. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00386

Elfenbein, H. A. (2021). Individual differences in negotiation: A relational process model. *Organizational Psychology Review, 11*(1), 73–93. https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386620962551

Eriksson, K. H., & Sandberg, A. (2012). Gender differences in initiation of negotiation: Does the gender of the negotiation counterpart matter? *Negotiation Journal, 28*, 407–428. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.2012.00349.x

Flanagan, J. C. (1954). The critical incident technique. *Psychological Bulletin*, *51*(4), 327–358. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0061470

Gelfand, M. J., Major, V. S., Raver, J. L., Nishii, L. H., & O'Brien, K. (2006). Negotiating relationally: The dynamics of the relational self in negotiations. *Academy of Management Review, 31*(2), 427–451. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2006.20208689

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, *18*(1), 59–82. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903

Harmon-Jones, E., & Mills, J. (1999). *Cognitive dissonance: Progress on a pivotal theory in social psychology*. American Psychological Association.

Kapoutsis, I., Volkema, R., & Lampaki, A. (2017). Mind the first step: The intrapersonal effects of affect on the decision to initiate negotiations under bargaining power asymmetry. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8*, 1313. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01313

Kapoutsis, I., Volkema, R. J., & Nikolopoulos, A. G. (2013). Initiating negotiations: The role of Machiavellianism, risk propensity, and bargaining power. *Group Decision and Negotiation, 22*(6), 1081–1101. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10726-012-9306-6

Kolb, D. M., & Kickul, J. (2006). It pays to ask: Negotiating conditions for leadership success. Center for Gender in Organizations (CGO) – Linking gender and organizational effectiveness. *Briefing Note Number 23*, 1–8. http://www.leadershipforwomen.com.au/images/docs/It%20pays%20to%20ask%20Article.pdf

Lazarus, R. S., & Launier, R. (1978). Stress-related transactions between person and environment. In L. A. Pervin & M. Lewis (Eds.), *Perspectives in interactional psychology* (pp. 287–327). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-3997-7_12

Liao, C., Wayne, S. J., & Rousseau, D. M. (2016). Idiosyncratic deals in contemporary organizations: A qualitative and meta-analytical review. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 37*, S9–S29. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1959

Magee, J. C., Galinsky, A. D., & Gruenfeld, D. H. (2007). Power, propensity to negotiate, and moving first in competitive interactions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 33*(2), 200–212. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167206294413

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook and the coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.

Milliken, F. J., Morrison, E. W., & Hewlin, P. F. (2003). An exploratory study of employee silence: Issues that employees don't communicate upward and why. *Journal of Management Studies, 40*(6), 1453–1476. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00387

Morrison, E. W., & Milliken, E. J. (2000). Organizational silence: A barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(4), 706–725. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2000.3707697

Morrison, E. W., & Phelps, C. C. (1999). Taking charge at work: Extrarole efforts to initiate workplace change. *Academy of Management Journal, 42*, 403–419. https://doi.org/10.5465/257011

O'Shea, P. G., & Bush, D. F. (2002). Negotiation for starting salary: Antecedents and outcomes among recent college graduates. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 16*, 365–382. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1012868806617

Reif, J. A. M., & Brodbeck, F. C. (2014). Initiation of negotiation and its role in negotiation research: Foundations of a theoretical model. *Organizational Psychology Review, 4*, 363–381. https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386614547248

Reif, J. A. M., & Brodbeck, F. C. (2017). When do people initiate a negotiation? The role of discrepancy, satisfaction and ability beliefs. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research, 10*, 46–66. https://doi.org/10.1111/ncmr.12089

Reif, J. A. M., Kugler, K. G., & Brodbeck, F. C. (2019). Why are women less likely to negotiate? The influence of expectancy considerations and contextual framing on gender differences in the initiation of negotiation. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research, 13*(4), 287–303. https://doi.org/10.1111/ncmr.12169.

Reif, J. A. M., Kunz, F. A., Kugler, K. G., & Brodbeck, F. C. (2019). Negotiation contexts: How and why they shape women's and men's decision to negotiate. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research, 12*, 322–342. https://doi.org/10.1111/ncmr.12153

Rousseau, D. M., Ho, V. T., & Greenberg, J. (2006). I-deals: Idiosyncratic terms in employment relationships. *Academy of Management Review, 31*, 977-994. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2006.22527470

Rubin, J. Z., Pruitt, D. G., & Kim, S. H. (1994). *Social conflict; escalation, stalemate, and settlement*. McGraw-Hill.

Schilling, J. (2006). On the pragmatics of qualitative assessment: Designing the process for content analysis. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 22*(1), 28–37. https://doi.org/10.1027/1015-5759.22.1.28

Van Eerde, W., & Thierry, H. (1996). Vroom's expectancy models and work-related criteria: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81*(5), 575–586. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.81.5.575

Volkema, R. (2009). Why Dick and Jane don't ask: Getting past initiation barriers in negotiations. *Business Horizons, 52*, 595–604. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.07.005

Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and Motivation*. Wiley.

Withey, M. J., & Cooper, W. H. (1989). Predicting exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 34*, 521–539. https://doi.org/10.2307/2393565

Witzel, A., & Reiter, H. (2012). *The problem-centred interview: Principles and practice.* Sage Publications.

Zhao, B., & Olivera, F. (2006). Error reporting in organizations. *Academy of Management Review, 31*, 1012–1030. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2006.22528167

Author Bios

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.

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, stress management, and organizational acculturation.