

On Whether to Meditate Before a Negotiation: Mindfulness Slightly Impairs Value Claiming in Negotiation

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Abstract

What little prior empirical research that investigated the effects of mindfulness meditation on negotiation performance was conducted in Singapore and the UK and finds benefits. This research reports a mini meta-analysis of ten studies ($N > 1100$) we conducted in the US on the effect of a brief mindfulness meditation induction on negotiation outcomes and finds a small detriment in terms of value claimed. We had initially hypothesized that mindfulness meditation would help individuals obtain better objective outcomes by claiming more value for themselves due to reduced emotional interference and enhanced flexibility of thought. However, the first study we ran found a moderately strong result in the opposite direction – participants who had just meditated obtained worse objective outcomes by claiming less value than participants in the control condition who had not meditated. In terms of subjective negotiation outcomes, participants in the mindfulness condition reported marginally less satisfaction with the instrumental outcome compared to participants in the control condition. Then we ran nine more experiments and never obtained a significant effect of mindfulness on objective outcomes again. The meta-analysis of the total effect on value claiming across these ten studies was significant ($p = .020$), negative, and very small (aggregated $d = -0.138$, 95% confidence interval $[-.256, -.021]$). We also ran a second meta-analysis on value creation on the appropriate subset of participants and did not find a significant total effect in either direction ($p = .609$, aggregated $d = -.076$, 95% confidence interval $[-.367, .215]$). We discuss implications for theory and practice.

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Introduction

Mindfulness meditation is a means of cultivating present moment awareness, which consists of focusing on experience in the present moment and clearing one's mind of other thoughts. This is often accomplished by focusing attention on the physical sensations of breathing (Hanh, 1999; Kabat-Zinn et al., 1992). By focusing attention on the present moment, mindfulness meditation tends to draw individuals' attention away from the past and future, and in so doing, alters affective states. State mindfulness facilitates both pleasant affective states (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Hafenbrack et al., 2020) and positive judgments (Kiken & Shook, 2011) and also reduces both negative affect (Arch & Craske, 2006; Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014) and negativity bias (Kiken & Shook, 2011). In addition, mindfulness meditation has been explicitly used as an emotion regulation tool (Arch & Craske, 2006; Mrazek et al., 2013). The physio-emotional state cultivated during 8-15 minutes of mindfulness meditation has been found to carry over to subsequent tasks (Arch & Craske, 2006; Kiken & Shook, 2011; Mrazek et al., 2012). In general, research on mindfulness in organizations predicts or shows almost exclusively benefits (e.g. Glomb et al., 2011; Good et al., 2016; Hülsheger et al., 2013; Karelaia & Reb, 2015; Kudesia, 2019; Sutcliffe et al., 2016; cf. Dane, 2011; Gebauer et al., 2018).

The literature on induced state mindfulness began by investigating carryover effects of meditation on intrapersonal processes such as viewing distressing pictures (Arch & Craske, 2006), mind-wandering (Mrazek et al., 2012), negativity bias (Kiken & Shook, 2011), implicit age and gender biases (Lueke & Gibson, 2015), and sunk-cost decision making (Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014). However, organizational life is often interpersonal (Edmondson, 1999; Hosmer, 1995; Jehn, 1995), an important component of which involves both formal and informal negotiations (Thompson et al., 2010). As such, recent research has also examined the effects of induced state mindfulness on interpersonal processes such as aggression and retaliation to injustice (Liang et al., 2018; Long & Christian, 2015), helping behaviors (Hafenbrack et al., 2020; 2022; Sawyer et al., 2022), and negotiation (Reb & Narayanan, 2014; Masters-Waage et al., 2021). Relatedly, the influence of generalized affect and specific emotions on negotiation and bargaining is a well-established domain within the negotiation literature (for a review, see Van Kleef & Sinaceur, 2013). Thus, we predicted that mindfulness meditation, through its influence on affective and interpersonal processes, would influence negotiation outcomes.

To our knowledge, there are two published empirical articles on the effects of induced state mindfulness on negotiation performance.¹ Reb & Narayanan (2014) found that mindfulness increased value claiming, and Masters-Waage and colleagues (2021) found that state mindfulness increased collaborative dealmaking. However, those two articles, except for one study with participants in the UK conducted on the Prolific online platform, present studies entirely conducted in Singapore. Singapore is a Southeast Asian country, where the instructions to engage in focused breathing meditation may have a different meaning than in other parts of the world. Southeast Asia is a place where meditation has a rich history, which could account for the effects of mindfulness meditation there, such as if it were to activate religious schemas (McIntosh, 1995; Pichon et al., 2007) and make people more collaborative or charitable, which might not generalize everywhere else. Additionally, the research on displaying anger, the most widely researched emotion in the negotiation literature (Van Kleef & Sinaceur, 2013), has been conducted mainly in the US and the Netherlands (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004) and has failed to replicate in Asian cultures (Adam, Shirako, & Maddux, 2010) that have a higher emphasis on maintaining social harmony (Gelfand et al., 2011; Kinias et al., 2014; Stamkou et al., 2019). This may suggest that an emotion regulation practice such as mindfulness would be more helpful for negotiators in Asia than in the West. As the UK is lower in emotional expressiveness than the US (Trompenaars, 1996), lower in comfort with direct disagreement than the US (Lewis, 2018; Meyer, 2014), and generally less direct than the US in their communication style (Economist, 2004; Meyer, 2014), anger displays in negotiation could elicit more backlash in the UK than in the US as well.

Potentially underestimating these cultural factors, at the outset of this project we expected that mindfulness meditation would improve a negotiator's outcomes in terms of creating more value on integrative logrolling items as well as claiming more value for themselves on distributive items, and we sought to investigate the mechanisms for why it would do so, which we expected would be mainly affective in nature.

Our prediction of mindfulness improving negotiation performance was based on cognitive flexibility theory (Isen, 1987; 2008; Isen & Means, 1983), which posits that positive affect improves problem solving and decision-making by enabling individuals to adaptively engage in the style of thinking needed for the task at hand (Isen, 2008). This has been found to aid decision-making (Staw & Barsade, 1993), information processing (Bodenhausen et al., 2001), memory recall (Isen et al., 1978), and creativity (Amabile et al., 2005). In the negotiation domain, induced affective pleasantness has been found to increase joint gains in integrative negotiations (Carnevale & Isen, 1986). Induced positive affect has also been linked to improved expectations and outcomes in intragroup and intergroup negotiations (Barsade, 2002; Forgas, 1998).

Performance in face-to-face negotiations can be facilitated by positive, collaborative problem-solving tactics (rather than contentious tactics: Pruitt, 1981), trust (Anderson & Thompson, 2004), and prosocial motives (De Dreu et al., 2000). For these reasons, the cognitive flexibility perspective as it relates to these processes in negotiation (Isen, 2008; Isen & Levin, 1972) suggests that state mindfulness, if it makes people's affective states more positive/pleasant and less negative, could improve negotiation performance for individuals who meditate immediately beforehand. We expected this to be particularly true for negotiations that contain integrative issues in which conciliatory behavior and creative problem-solving are especially critical to one's personal outcome.

¹ There is one more article that examined habitual meditators versus non-meditators in Spain and found that meditators performed better than non-meditators in negotiation (Pérez-Yus, et al., 2020), but that was a different conceptualization of mindfulness than we used in our studies.

Also, beyond purely integrative negotiations, the creativity that results from positive affect could also help people to claim more value by generating more ideas to legitimize or justify their demands (Falcão, 2012; Fisher et al., 2011).

In light of this, because we expected that state mindfulness would increase state positive affect and affective pleasantness and decrease state negative affect, anger, and anxiety, and that these affective processes would influence negotiation performance, we hypothesized:

H1. *Being in the meditation vs. control condition would lead to increased value creation.*

H2. *Being in the meditation vs. control condition would lead to increased value claiming.*

Overview of the Present Research

The present research consists of ten laboratory experiments, all conducted at the Wharton Behavioral Lab at the University of Pennsylvania. We report the methods and results of the first experiment (Study 1) in depth. It examined whether there was an effect of mindfulness meditation on value creation and value claiming in a hiring negotiation scenario. We then conducted a meta-analysis of all the studies we ran (i.e., the first experiment along with nine others) investigating the effect of mindfulness meditation on objective value-claiming performance in negotiation. We also conducted a second meta-analysis of the relevant subset of the studies that had integrative items to examine whether there was also an effect of mindfulness meditation on value creation.

For exploratory purposes, we also measured subjective satisfaction with elements of the negotiation in Study 1. We did not have a unidirectional hypothesis with regards to subjective outcomes. Subjective satisfaction could have been tightly linked to objective outcomes, as it had been in some previous studies (e.g., Brown & Curhan, 2013), although mindfulness could also act as a buffer to lessen the impact of disappointment or deprivation on one's experience (Brown, Kasser, et al., 2009; Niemiec et al., 2010) in negotiation and subsequent evaluations. Thus, Study 1 was also a test of whether state mindfulness would help or harm individual subjective outcomes (i.e., satisfaction) in a multi-issue negotiation.

To enable focus on our hypothesis tests rather than on potential gender dynamics (e.g., Kray et al., 2001), in all ten experiments participants negotiated in same-sex dyads across all experimental conditions. As we collected the data for this project between 2013-2015, we did not pre-register hypotheses nor conduct a priori power analyses. We generally aimed for two days of data collection per study, but at times curtailed it after one day to make design changes and collected a third or fourth day for Studies 7 and 9 to increase statistical power. We report all conditions and exclusions, did not exclude any outliers, and did not winsorize or otherwise alter any variables. The mindfulness and mind-wandering induction recordings are available at https://osf.io/4hjns/?view_only=c1083c1ca3904f10af83824535a3f2ef. Although this research was driven by theoretically-derived hypotheses, data are a valuable and scarce resource (Hollenbeck & Wright, 2017) and many scientific discoveries begin as happy accidents. Thus, we included additional exploratory measures in each of our studies which can be found in the datasets. The data and syntax for all studies can be found at https://osf.io/95wjs/?view_only=d0c6a48d5b314d659f75de93cef53b73.

Study 1: Methods

This was the first study that we ran for this project. The goal of this study was to test the influence of state mindfulness on objective outcomes (value claiming and value creation) and subjective satisfaction in a face-to-face, dyadic multi-issue negotiation. We chose a negotiation scenario that contained integrative issues because we expected that mindfulness could help people create more value and then claim more of it for themselves.

Participants

One hundred and eighteen undergraduate students were recruited and paid through the participant pool at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton Behavioral Lab in Philadelphia. Two participants' partner's condition was unavailable due to a coding error, and they were removed from analyses, and two participants' data were missing due to a technical error. The remaining one hundred and fourteen participants (58 men and 56 women: mean age = 19.49, $SD = 1.13$, age range = 18-23) were included in the value claiming analyses. For the purposes of the value creation meta-analysis, the 52 participants (28 men and 24 women: mean age = 19.26, $SD = 1.01$) who were in a dyad in which both or neither participant meditated, and neither participant reported the same role as their partner, were included in analyses.

Procedure

Participants were greeted by an experimenter who was blind to experimental conditions and led to a semi-private cubicle. The configuration of survey links on computers in the laboratory was such that up to 8 same-gender dyads could negotiate simultaneously: 4 male dyads and 4 female dyads. The dyads corresponded to a 2 (Role: recruiter vs. job candidate) X 2 (Own Condition: Mindfulness vs. Mind-wandering Control) X 2 (Partner Condition: Mindfulness vs. Mind-wandering Control) between-participants design such that, depending on where a dyad was seated, neither participant meditated, only the recruiter meditated, only the job candidate meditated, or both participants meditated. We chose to design the study with only same-gender dyads to aid in interpretation of the results. When participants sat down, they completed an online consent form, put on a provided headset, and listened to the 15-minute recorded mindfulness or mind-wandering induction. Immediately after listening to the recorded inductions, participants read the negotiation materials and engaged in a dyadic, face-to-face negotiation (New Recruit: Neale, 1997) which simulated a hiring situation between a recruiter and a job candidate. Participants were randomly assigned to the role of job candidate or recruiter within dyads, then negotiated face-to-face for up to 12 minutes until they reached an agreement. After the negotiation, participants completed the manipulation check and state affect measures.

Mindfulness versus Mind-wandering Experimental Manipulation.

Both 15-minute recorded inductions were made for Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade (2014) by a professional mindfulness meditation instructor. The mindfulness meditation induction led participants through a focused-breathing meditation exercise that instructed them to bring their awareness to the physical sensations of breath entering and leaving their body and repeatedly reminded them to focus on their experience of breath. The content of the mind-wandering induction (control condition) repeatedly instructed participants to think of whatever came to mind. This type of

induction has been used as a control condition in prior state mindfulness experiments (Arch & Craske, 2006; Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014; Kiken & Shook, 2011; Long & Christian, 2015; Lyddy et al., 2022) because it replicates a waking baseline mental state (Mason et al., 2007).

Objective Negotiation Outcomes – Value Claiming and Value Creation

Participants were asked to negotiate using the New Recruit negotiation scenario (Neale, 1997), which included eight different items that specified the terms (e.g., salary, moving expenses covered, location, etc.) of a hiring contract and corresponded to different point outcomes that participants were instructed to personally seek to maximize. All items had 5 possible responses. Three of the items (salary, starting date, and job assignment) were distributive in nature, such that one party's gain in points translated to an identical loss in points for their counterpart. Four of the items (bonus, vacation time, moving expenses, insurance coverage) were integrative in nature, such that each role valued the outcomes of two items more than the other two items, which were in turn more valued by their counterpart. This enables the 'logrolling' form of value creation, the process by which the total points can increase if participants trade off concessions on the issues that they value less in return for points on the issues they value more. The last item (location) was compatible, such that both roles had identical preferences.

Participants were informed that they did not have any alternatives to reaching a negotiated agreement with their current counterpart. To increase the chances that the variation was observed in the details of participants' agreements rather than in whether they reached an agreement or not, the point values were shifted from the original scenario such that all were non-negative for each participant. In this scenario, the maximum number of points any participant could earn was 21,600 whereas the minimum number was 0. The most valuable issue for both sides, hence a distributive issue, was salary and its options ranged from 0 to 6000. The total points summed across all eight issues for each participant was the dependent variable of value claimed. We also tested the average of the four integrative issues separately on the individual level and on the dyad level to look for evidence of value creation, as well as looked at the compatible item on the dyad level for evidence of value creation.

Subjective Negotiation Outcomes

In addition to objective negotiation outcomes, participants also completed the 16-item Subjective Value Inventory (SVI: Curhan et al., 2006) scale of subjective negotiation outcomes, on a 7-point Likert scale (For most items: 1=Not at all, 7=A great deal; several others were tailored to the specific question, e.g.: 1= It made me feel less competent, 7= It made me feel more competent). The SVI consists of four subscales that gauge how satisfied participants are with the negotiation as it related to the instrumental outcome ($\alpha = .778$), the self ($\alpha = .640$), the process ($\alpha = .832$), and the relationship with their counterpart ($\alpha = .880$).

Affect Measures

After negotiating, participants completed measures of positive ($\alpha = .898$) and negative ($\alpha = .843$) affect (PANAS: Watson et al., 1988) including the 2-item anger subscale ($\alpha = .749$), and affective pleasantness ($\alpha = .786$: Staw & Barsade, 1993) on five-point Likert scales (1 = very slightly or not at all; 5 = extremely). They also reported their state anxiety ($\alpha = .906$: Spielberger et al., 1970), on a four-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all, 4 = Very much so). Participants were asked to think back to the

recording they listened to earlier in the survey and to report the extent to which they were feeling the emotions in these scales “at the end of the audio recording that you listened to.” We chose to use retrospective measures due to our desire not to dilute the impact of the manipulation before the negotiation dependent variables.

Manipulation Check

Participants completed a 3-item scale (Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014) retrospectively measuring how much they focused on their breathing, focused on the physical sensations of breathing, and were in touch with their body ($\alpha = .826$) on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Very slightly or not at all, 5=Extremely) at the end of the recording. Responses were averaged.

Study 1: Results

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations between variables appear in Table 1.

Manipulation Check

Participants in the mindfulness condition reported a greater focus on their breathing and body ($M = 2.57, SD = 0.89$) than did participants in the control condition ($M = 2.04, SD = 0.78$), $t(112) = 4.035$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.63$. Therefore, state mindfulness was successfully induced.

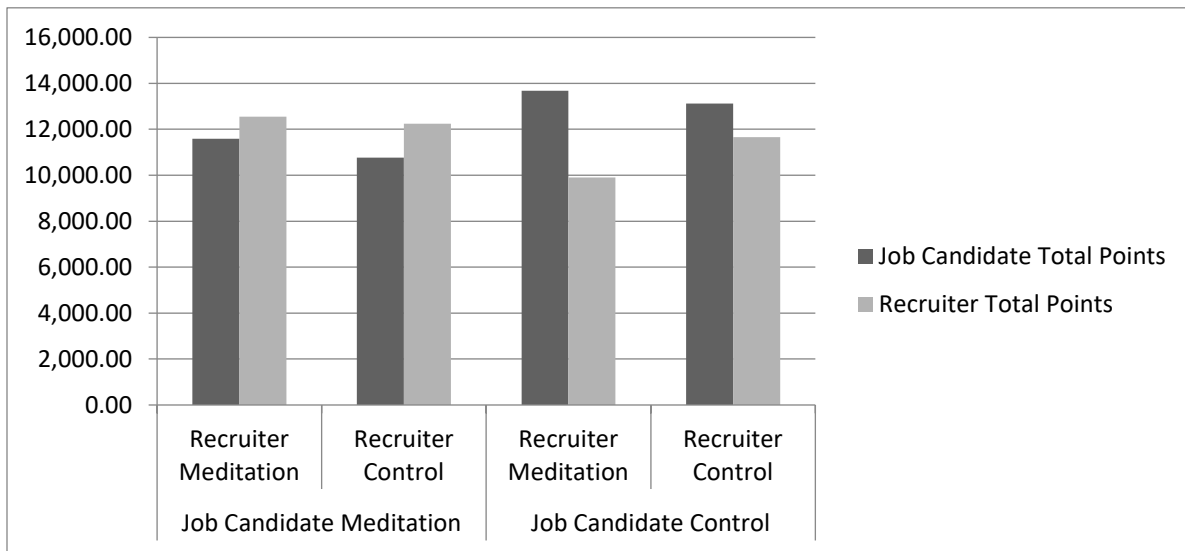
Objective Negotiation Outcomes

All dyads reached an agreement.

Value Claiming

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) examined total value points claimed across all eight items as a function of own condition, partner condition, and role. We found a significant main effect of the participants' own condition on total points, $F(1, 106) = 9.307$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .081$. Participants in the mindfulness condition ($M = 11156.90, SD = 2833.58$) earned significantly fewer points than did participants in the mind-wandering (control) condition ($M = 12694.64, SD = 2464.54$), $t(112) = 3.087$, $p = .003$, $d = .58$. We also found a significant main effect of partner condition on points, $F(1, 106) = 5.547$, $p = .018$, $\eta_p^2 = .051$. Participants whose counterpart was in the mindfulness condition ($M = 12556.90, SD = 2566.25$) earned more points than did participants whose counterpart was in the mind-wandering (control) condition ($M = 11244.64, SD = 2811.21$), $t(112) = 2.605$, $p = .010$, $d = .49$. We did not find a significant effect of role on points, $F(1, 106) = 2.090$, $p = .151$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$. Participants in the job candidate role ($M = 12307.14, SD = 3,189.92$) earned similar points to participants in the recruiter role ($M = 11531.04, SD = 2225.39$). None of the two-way interactions were significant ($ps > .10$), nor was the three-way interaction ($p = .357$). See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Objective Negotiation Outcome as a Function of Experimental Condition in Study 1.



Value Creation

In terms of value creation as indicated by the integrative items with logrolling potential, there was no evidence that participants in the mindfulness condition created more value than participants in the control condition. For example, in an ANOVA with the type of dyad as the only predictor (both control, candidate only meditated, recruiter only meditated, both meditated) there was no significant effect of dyad type on individuals’ points outcome on the points of all eight issues added together, $F(3, 110) = 0.447, p = .720, \eta_p^2 = .012$, nor on the points of only the four integrative issues averaged together, $F(3, 110) = 0.513, p = .671, \eta_p^2 = .014$. The two best dyads to look at to address this question are the dyads in which both participants meditated or neither of the participants meditated. Again, there was no difference between these two groups on individuals’ points outcome on the points of all eight issues added together, $t(52) = .406, p = .686, d = .11$, nor on the points of only the four integrative issues averaged together, $t(52) = .010, p = .992, d = .00$. There was, however, strong evidence in dyads in which only one participant meditated that the participants who didn’t meditate ($M = 1535.00, SD = 351.14$) used the items with integrative potential to instead claim value for themselves from the participants who meditated ($M = 1132.78, SD = 489.42$): $t(58) = 3.657, p = .001, d = .944$.

In terms of value creation (or the avoidance of value destruction) as indicated by the compatible “location” item, the results did not clearly support the idea that participants meditating would create more value. In an ANOVA with the type of dyad as the only predictor (both control, candidate only meditated, recruiter only meditated, both meditated) there was a significant effect of dyad type on individuals’ location points outcome, $F(3, 110) = 3.650, p = .015, \eta_p^2 = .091$. The dyad in which only the candidate meditated ($M = 932.14, SD = 339.99$) ended up with the least points on this item, significantly less than the dyad in which neither participant meditated ($M = 1107.69, SD = 220.77$; $t(52) = 2.231, p = .030, d = .61$) and significantly less than the dyad in which both participants meditated ($M = 1135.71, SD = 125.36$; $t(54) = 2.973, p = .004, d = .79$). The dyads in which both or neither participants meditated were not differentiated from each other on this item: $t(52) = 0.579, p = .565, d = .16$. The dyad in which only the recruiter meditated fell in the middle of the others on this item ($M = 1078.13, SD = 262.41$),

was marginally higher than the dyad in which only the candidate meditated ($t(58) = 1.874, p = .066, d = .49$), and was not differentiated from either of the other two dyads ($ps > .29$).

Robustness Check: Actor Partner Interdependence Model

At the suggestion of an anonymous reviewer, we also conducted dyadic data analysis on the composite total points value claiming variable from this study based on the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (Kashy & Kenny, 2000; West, Popp, & Kenny, 2008) with the dyad type set to distinguishable and own condition, partner condition, role, and the interaction terms of own condition by role and partner condition by role included as predictors. Two additional participants were removed from analysis because both members of the dyad reported the same role and the model would not run with them included. The overall significance pattern remained unchanged – there were significant effects of own condition ($F(1, 87.591) = 9.781, p = .002$) and partner condition ($F(1, 87.381) = 5.528, p = .021$) and there were no significant effects of role ($F(1, 53.002) = 1.406, p = .241$), own condition X role interaction ($F(1, 82.424) = 1.913, p = .170$), nor partner condition by role interaction ($F(1, 82.264) = .808, p = .371$).

Subjective Negotiation Outcomes

Four additional ANOVAs assessed the influence of own condition, partner condition, and role on negotiation satisfaction as it related to the SVI subscales on instrumental outcome, the self, the negotiation process, and the relationship with one's counterpart. There was a marginally significant effect of one's own mindfulness condition on satisfaction with the instrumental outcome $F(1, 106) = 3.065, p = .083, \eta_p^2 = .028$ and none of the other predictors or interactions were significant ($ps > .32$). Participants in the mindfulness condition ($M = 4.57, SD = .98$) reported marginally less satisfaction with the instrumental outcome compared to participants in the mind-wandering (control) condition ($M = 4.92, SD = 1.01$), $t(112) = 1.891, p = .061, d = .35$. There were no significant main effects or interactions on satisfaction with the self ($ps > .16$). We found no significant main effects or two-way interactions ($p > .014$) in tests on the other two subscales – satisfaction with the negotiation process or relationship with one's counterpart, however there was a marginally significant three-way interaction on satisfaction with process ($F(1, 106) = 3.545, p = .062, \eta_p^2 = .032$) and a significant three-way interaction on satisfaction with the relationship: $F(1, 106) = 5.976, p = .016, \eta_p^2 = .053$. These two three-way interactions reflected the same general directional pattern, but the latter was more pronounced, particularly among participants with the job recruiter role.

Affect Measures

State-level positive and negative affect, affective pleasantness, anger, and anxiety were all not significantly correlated with either the independent variable of experimental condition or the dependent variable of objective negotiation outcomes. With each hypothesized mediator entered into separate bootstrapping mediation tests (Preacher & Hayes, 2008), all 95% confidence intervals included zero.

Study 1: Discussion

These results did not support our predictions (**H1.** & **H2.**), based on cognitive flexibility theory, that state mindfulness would help objective negotiation performance. Participants who meditated

neither created nor claimed more value, and surprisingly claimed less value, than participants who were in the control condition. However, the lack of mediation results precludes a full understanding of why this might be the case. This study also found that state mindfulness significantly influenced subjective negotiation outcomes by reducing satisfaction with the instrumental outcome, which suggests that state mindfulness did not dilute the extent to which people are bothered by their comparative underperformance in negotiation. This rules out the explanation that mindfulness impaired performance because mindfulness made people happier with deprivation (Brown, Kasser, et al., 2009) and reduced the desire to perform well. It is also not particularly surprising because, again, the participants who meditated got worse outcomes, so it makes sense that they were less happy with them.

One limitation of this study is a lack of empirical support for our predictions of affective mediation, or even differences across conditions on affective states (failing to replicate previous research: e.g., Arch & Craske, 2006; Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014; Liang et al., 2018; Long & Christian, 2015). This may be due to the use of retrospective affect measures, as the experience of negotiating may have clouded participants' memory of exactly which emotions they had been feeling during the recording. Future research may benefit from the use of short affect measures administered between the manipulation and the negotiation, or measures of other possible mediators. Additionally, the undergraduate student participants are likely to have been a job candidate before, such as by interviewing for summer internships, but are unlikely to have served as a corporate recruiter. Thus, the two roles may differ in psychological realism among this sample.

Participants also may have had preconceived notions about hiring negotiations that caused them to interpret the negotiation scenario as a competitive rather than a cooperative endeavor. This could have been why participants sought their own individual gain at the expense of joint gain, essentially turning even the logrolling issues into a distributive fight. This would have potentially increased the usefulness of or reliance on negative affective displays and displays of toughness (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006) than in a more clearly variable-pie scenario. It is possible that despite the brief retrospective anger measure not revealing the reason for meditation reducing value claiming, anger displays were still a factor in the surprising results. In retrospect, it would have been preferable for us to have included a longer anger measure.

Intrigued by how inaccurate our initial predictions were, and to try negotiation scenarios that did not share all of the aforementioned characteristics, we ran nine more studies on the effect of a state mindfulness meditation induction on objective negotiation performance.

Meta-Analyses of Studies 1-10

This section summarizes the negotiation lab studies we conducted in the order they were conducted. We curtailed several lab studies after one day of data collection because the preliminary results suggested there were issues in our materials that needed to be resolved, such as an extremely strong effect of the participants' scenario roles, which left less variance to be explained by mindfulness, yet we include all data collected in the meta-analysis reported below.

The words "full model" encompasses a design with four different types of dyads: one dyad in which neither participant meditated, one dyad in which both participants meditated, one dyad in which role A but not B meditated, and one dyad in which role B but not A meditated. In order to meta-analyze the effect of mindfulness on value creation, we also meta-analyzed the total points data from the dyads in which both or neither participant meditated from the four studies that both had the full model and used scenarios with integrative potential (Studies 1, 2, 3, and 7).

Meta-Analyses: Methods

Study 2

There were 52 participants (22 men and 30 women; mean age = 19.86, $SD = 1.18$) in value claiming analyses. Twenty of those participants (8 men and 12 women; mean age = 20.32, $SD = 1.25$) were also in the value creation analyses. The full model was run with state measures of anxiety, positive and negative affect, and pleasantness positioned between the induction and the negotiation. Participants negotiated using the New Recruit (Neale, 1997) mixed motive scenario (3 distributive items, 4 logrolling integrative items, 1 compatible item).

Study 3

There were 100 participants (44 men and 56 women; mean age = 19.50, $SD = 1.25$) in value claiming analyses. Forty-two of those participants (22 men and 20 women; mean age = 19.64, $SD = 1.405$) were also in the value creation analyses. The full model was run with state measures of anxiety, positive and negative affect, and pleasantness embedded in the middle of the recorded inductions. Participants negotiated using the New Recruit (Neale, 1997) mixed motive scenario (3 distributive items, 4 logrolling integrative items, 1 compatible item).

Study 4

There were 54 participants (26 men and 28 women; mean age = 20.10, $SD = 1.68$) in the value claiming analyses. The full model was run. Participants negotiated using the Vacation Plans scenario (Thompson & DeHarpport, 2000) adapted to be distributive (4 distributive items).

Study 5

There were 52 participants (24 men and 28 women; mean age = 19.73, $SD = 1.34$) in the value claiming analyses. Participants negotiated using the logrolling integrative Vacation Plans scenario (4 logrolling integrative items: Thompson & DeHarpport, 2000).

Study 6

There were 68 participants (22 men and 46 women; mean age = 20.34, $SD = 1.62$) in the value claiming analyses. Only opposite condition dyads were run, not the full model. Participants negotiated using the Used Car (Rothbard & Barsade, unpublished case) single-item distributive scenario, which was rewritten with clearer instructions for participants not to accept less than their reservation price and an enlarged positive bargaining zone of \$2000.

Study 7

There were 174 participants (78 men and 96 women; mean age = 23.83, $SD = 8.85$) in the value claiming analyses, including more non-student community members than previous studies. Eighty-two of those participants (34 men and 48 women; mean age = 21.75, $SD = 5.97$) were also in the value creation analyses. Participants negotiated using the Sweet Shops scenario (Semnani-Azad & Aslani, 2016) which had 4 logrolling integrative items.

Study 8

One person's data was lost due to a technical error. There were 267 participants (108 men, 158 women, and one who did not report gender; mean age = 22.97, $SD = 8.83$) in the value claiming analyses. The full model was run. Participants negotiated using the Used Car (Rothbard & Barsade unpublished case) single-item distributive negotiation.

Study 9

There were 158 participants (56 men and 102 women; mean age = 19.90, $SD = 1.41$) in the analyses. The full model was run. Participants negotiated using the Rio Copa scenario (Bontempo, 1994) which was modified to include only 2 distributive items.

Study 10

There were 100 participants (42 men, 56 women, and two who did not report gender; mean age = 22.09, $SD = 2.71$) in the value claiming analyses. The full model was run. There were changes in how this study was run relative to the others. First, participants negotiated using the Used Car (Rothbard & Barsade, unpublished case) single-item distributive scenario, which was rewritten to reduce previously observed effects of negotiator role, see Appendix A.² Second, this study was also the only study which had performance-based pay – in addition to each participant's \$10 show-up fee, there was \$10 of bonus money per dyad which was paid out as a function of how the positive bargaining zone was split in the negotiation. Lastly, the mindfulness and mind-wandering control inductions were positioned *directly* before the negotiation (after participants read their scenario role) to maximize the possibility of a carryover effect. The only impasse occurred in a dyad in which both participants were in the control condition.

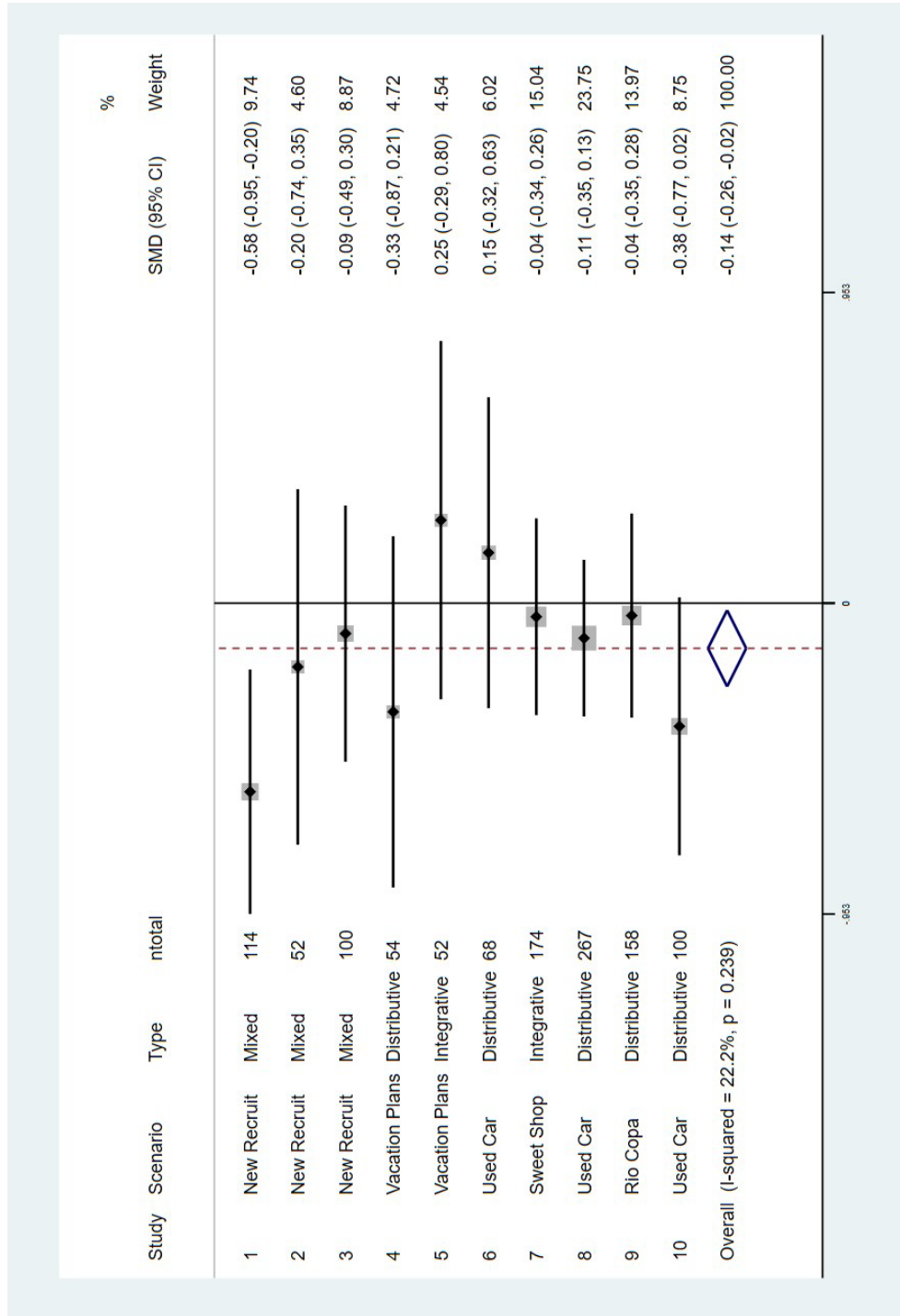
Meta-Analyses: Results

Value Claiming

In meta-analyses using the METAN command in STATA (Harris et al., 2008), there was a very small significant negative total effect of state mindfulness on value claiming, standardized mean difference (SMD) = 0: $z = 2.32$, $p = 0.020$. See Table 2 and Figure 2. As an estimate of the true effect, the aggregate d (SMD) was = -0.138, 95% confidence interval [-.256, -.021]. This is a very small effect in the sense that it is even smaller than the $d = .2$ threshold for it to be considered "small" (Cohen, 1992). However, this effect size could be similar to that of moral licensing effects, which have been predicted to have a Cohen's d between .08 and .21 (Ebersole et al., 2015; Mullen & Monin, 2016).

² Specifically, in the prior version the seller needed desperately to sell the Jeep to avoid a large bank debt, whereas in this version there was no bank debt and the seller wanted to sell the Jeep to finance a study abroad semester to Switzerland. Another benefit of this change is that, in contrast to the prevention-related motivation to avoid the bank debt, both roles subsequently had approach motivations related to taking a trip – the buyer's being to the mountains with her/his friends in the Jeep.

Figure 2. Meta-analysis of the effect of mindfulness meditation on value claiming across all studies conducted.



Value Creation

There was no significant total effect of being in a condition in which both versus neither person meditated on value creation, (SMD) = 0: $z = 0.511$, $p = 0.609$, aggregate d (SMD) = -0.076, 95% confidence interval [-.367, .215]. See Figure 3.

Meta-Analyses: Discussion

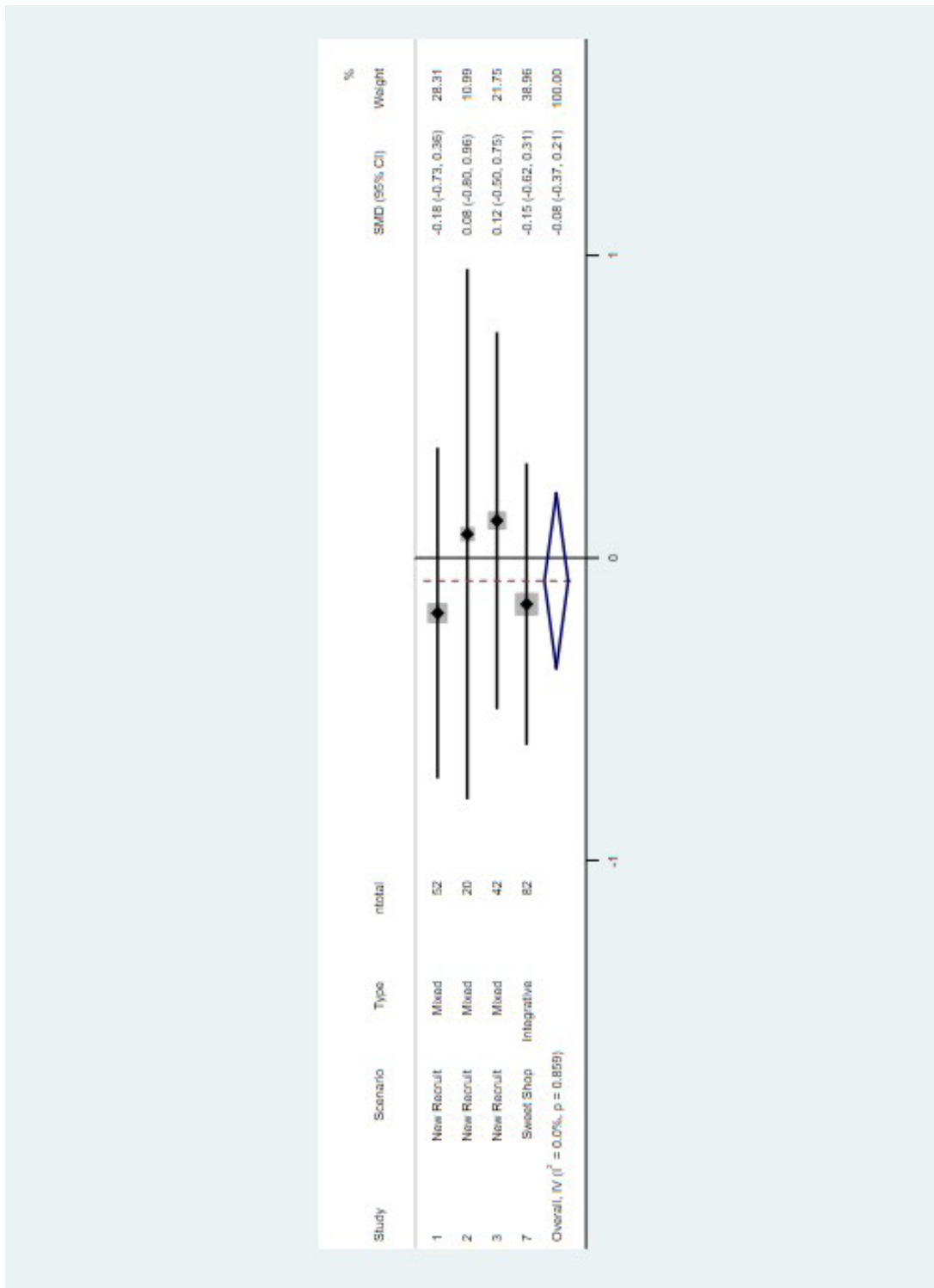
In sum, we did not find support for either of our hypotheses (**H1.** & **H2.**) that being in the meditation condition would improve objective negotiation performance. There was only one study in which a statistically significant effect of state mindfulness on value claiming emerged, Study 1, and the directionality of the effect in that study was such that state mindfulness harmed negotiation performance, which went in the opposite direction of our hypothesis (**H1.**). Out of the ten studies, the directionality of the mean differences on value claiming between the mindfulness and control condition were such that mindful participants performed (usually nonsignificantly) worse than control participants in eight studies; conversely, mindful participants performed (nonsignificantly) better than control participants in the two other studies. While there are only two studies with scenarios that contain only integrative items, the nonsignificant trends were on average weaker in these two scenarios than in the other studies, and the trends in these two integrative studies were split in directionality. Regardless of directionality, all value claiming trends except for the effect in Study 1, were not statistically significant and the total effect is very small.

In terms of value creation, we had far fewer participants to include because it was only appropriate to include participants who were in a dyad in which either both or neither participant meditated and were in a study in which the scenario had some integrative items. Nonetheless, there was no significant total effect in either direction, which failed to replicate Masters-Waage and colleagues' (2021) finding that mindfulness can increase value creation. On value creation, the directionality of the four studies was split with two showing trends in the positive direction and two showing trends in the negative direction.

Might the true effect of state mindfulness be negative or in our hypothesized positive direction? There are potentially noteworthy boundaries for generalizability of the weak negative effect reflected by the meta-analysis due to details of the data-collections. First, all except Study 10 had low stakes negotiations in which participants had no financial incentive to perform well and they cultivated mindfulness before they read the description of their scenario in the negotiation instead of directly before the negotiation, so these are necessary conditions for these conclusions. Second, if state mindfulness mostly influences gender-relevant experiences in negotiation (Weger et al., 2012), our same-sex dyads may have precluded detection of these benefits for individuals experiencing performance decrements due to stereotype threat.

Third, all studies were conducted at a behavioral laboratory at a well-resourced private university with at least three professional research assistants present at any time. At this lab, participants generally work diligently. Other state mindfulness studies conducted there have found evidence consistent with hypotheses. We also used induction recordings and negotiation exercises that were validated in prior research and continued to refine the exercises throughout the data collection process. Although these considerations give us confidence in our results and the likelihood that a true effect for the population from which participants were drawn lies within the 95% confidence interval of our meta-analyses, the samples are unambiguously western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD: Henrich et al., 2010), and the normal caveats regarding generalizability to non-WEIRD context apply.

Figure 3. Meta-analysis of the effect of mindfulness meditation on value creation in dyads in which both or neither participant meditated in Studies 1, 2, 3, and 7.



When any given study fails to find support for any given hypothesis, it could be due to the hypothesis being untrue (the null hypothesis is true) or because the study was a poor test of a true hypothesis (Type II error). For example, as previously mentioned, in Studies 2 and 3 there were approximately 40 affect items either in the middle of the recorded induction or between the recorded induction and the negotiation exercise. Answering these items may have taken participants out of a state of mindfulness. Even if they did not, participants still read their negotiation instructions thereafter, before they began the negotiation. Moreover, Study 10 was arguably the best designed study because it had performance-based pay, a rewritten negotiation scenario that eliminated a role effect, and inductions positioned immediately before the negotiation (instead of before participants read their scenario role). These may have been reasons for why Study 10 came closer than all but Study 1 to finding an effect of state mindfulness on negotiation performance ($t(98) = 1.888, p = .062$), with that marginal effect being again in the negative direction.

General Discussion

First and foremost, we contribute to the literature on the effects of mindfulness meditation on negotiation, which does not present a clear picture. Prior theoretical accounts have predicted that it could help negotiation (Kopelman et al., 2012) or harm it under some conditions (Hafenbrack, 2017). As noted, mindfulness improves value claiming among student participants in Singapore (Reb & Narayanan, 2014) and has also led to more collaborative negotiation behaviors in Singapore and the UK (Masters-Waage et al., 2021). However, our studies, conducted in the US, stand out from the others in the literature on mindfulness in negotiation because we document a minor cost on value claiming rather than a benefit of mindfulness. Taking together our results and theirs, it seems that there are differences in the effect of mindfulness on negotiation across national cultures.

Our best guess for why this is has to do with what anger expressions mean in different cultures. In line with affect-as-information theory (Clore, Schwarz, & Conway, 1994; Schwarz & Clore, 1983), a great deal of prior research has found negative moods and anger can be functional in negotiation (Barry & Oliver, 1996; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004), and negotiators tend to use their counterpart's affective displays as information to determine that person's limit and adjust demands accordingly (Van Kleef et al., 2004). Because state mindfulness has been reliably found to reduce state negative affect (Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014; Hafenbrack et al., 2022; Liang et al., 2018; Long & Christian, 2015), state mindfulness may have reduced the experience and expression of functional anger or negative affect and our study design, such as the late timing of our affect measures or our use of the 2-item anger subscale (irritated, hostile) of the PANAS instead of a more rigorous measure of anger, simply failed to capture the mediational role anger played.

It is important to note that the vast majority of the research on how anger expressions help negotiators claim value was conducted in the US and the Netherlands (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004), but that effect has failed to replicate in Asian cultures (Adam et al., 2010). Asian cultures also have a higher emphasis on maintaining social harmony (Kinias et al., 2014) relative to signaling one's own sense of power or uniqueness (Stamkou et al., 2019). Reactions to leaders' disruptive behaviors are also moderated by cultural tightness and collectivism, both of which are higher in Singapore and the UK relative to the Netherlands and the US (Stamkou et al., 2019; Gelfand et al., 2011). This may suggest that an emotion regulation practice such as mindfulness would be more helpful for negotiators in Asia than in the US and the Netherlands.

The perhaps less straightforward question than why the US would differ from Asia on the effects of anger in negotiation is why would the US differ from the UK? When we compare the US and the UK following Meyer's cultural dimensions (Meyer, 2014), we notice as many would expect that

their anglophone cultures are similar in many aspects. As one examines each of Meyer's 7 dimensions, the US and UK are constantly at arm's length from one another. However, a pattern emerges as we look at the two countries in all dimensions, and that is that the US is, with one exception, always to the "left" (i.e., more direct or disruptive in style) of the UK. For example, the US is lower context than the UK when communicating, more egalitarian when leading, more task-based (as opposed to relationship-based) when trusting, and more confrontational when disagreeing.

Both Meyer's dimensions and Gelfand and colleagues' theory (Gelfand et al., 2011; Stamkou et al., 2019) indicate that US negotiators may have a higher level of comfort disclosing emotions in negotiations, particularly negative ones, than UK negotiators (see also, Trompenaars, 1996). For example, US negotiators are lower context than UK negotiators, which means they are more used to being specific when communicating what they are thinking and feeling (see also, Economist, 2004), even if it turns out to be an expression of a negative emotion such as anger. As Americans are more egalitarian and less hierarchical, they are less power-inhibited to share negative information or emotions. As US negotiators are less reliant on the strength of a relationship to build trust, they are likely to be more comfortable displaying negative emotions. Finally, US negotiators are more confrontational (see also, Lewis, 2018) and thus more comfortable expressing anger when disagreeing. Altogether, Meyer's cultural comparisons suggest that US negotiators would suffer significantly less social backlash during a negotiation with another US negotiator if they were to display negative emotions. Conversely, compared to US negotiators, UK negotiators negotiating among their fellow UK nationals would be much more constrained to do the same and, if one were to display stronger negative emotions, it would be more likely perceived as a deviant behavior deserving of punishment or correction (Stamkou et al., 2019) that would then negatively impact the negotiation performance of the UK negotiator portraying the negative emotion.

In sum, displaying anger in a negotiation could be seen as a normal indicator that a person cares about the outcome (Wolf et al., 2016) or are near their limit (Van Kleef et al., 2004) in the US but an offensive signal or social faux pas in Singapore or the UK (Brett, 2000). Future research can further identify which of these cultural dimensions account for the divergence in effects. Future research can also test other possibilities such as if mindfulness magnified underlying differences (Brown et al., 2007; Poulin et al., 2021) in individualism-collectivism (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) or trust (Gunia et al., 2011).

Beyond the possible role of anger, a second possible interpretation of our results is that our observed effect may have been due to increased prosocial behavior. We in some sense replicate and extend the literature on mindfulness and prosocial behavior. There are dozens of studies which have found that state mindfulness leads people to behave in a more prosocial or generous manner towards others (Condon et al., 2013; Donald et al., 2019 for a meta-analysis) because it facilitates empathy and perspective-taking (Berry et al., 2018; Hafenbrack et al., 2020). Our findings suggest that even in a situation like a negotiation exercise where the whole point is ostensibly to get more value for yourself, and even though mindfulness probably improves task focus and preparation (Hafenbrack & Vohs, 2018; Mrazek et al., 2012; 2013), mindfulness continues to lead people to give more of the value away. Making a concession in a negotiation is largely a prosocial behavior, after all.

Thirdly, the effect may have been due to reduced motivation to engage in the negotiation task. Mindfulness reduces motivation to do meaningless, unpleasant tasks (Hafenbrack & Vohs, 2018), which participants may have interpreted the negotiation to be. Mindfulness also relates to greater satisfaction with what one has and less of a desire to obtain more, a concept termed "financial desire discrepancy" (Brown, Kasser, et al., 2009), although, as noted, our results vis-à-vis satisfaction with the instrumental outcome bring this interpretation into question. Future research can explore which of these interpretations are most warranted, such as by examining the effect of mindfulness in a high-stakes incentive-compatible negotiation.

It would be premature to unequivocally instruct negotiators to avoid meditation when in an angry state, even in countries like the US, in light of evidence that expressing anger can harm the relationship with one's counterpart and reduce joint gain (Allred et al., 1997; Li et al., 2007), frequently leads to impasses (Yip & Schweinsberg, 2017), and is even unlikely to help one claim value in the negotiation at hand when one's counterpart has desirable alternatives (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006). This is particularly true when one's counterpart comes from an Eastern cultural context (Adam et al., 2010). We suggest that participants use meditation as a way to prepare themselves for negotiations in high context, collectivistic, tighter cultural contexts including East and Southeast Asia in which there are display rules that people remain calm and avoid strong negative emotions.

One additional factor is that participants in our lab experiments may have had low levels of arousal, and by reducing their arousal levels even further via meditation (Hafenbrack & Vohs, 2018), their negotiation performance could have been harmed in a way that it would not be in many real, higher-stakes negotiations. Future research could try to increase the arousal levels of participants by using cases which have more of a conflictual tone, such as there being existing resentments and having both parties already hate each other (e.g., Prime GEO: Falcão, Gouveia, & Grover, 2017), or with a zone of possible agreements (ZOPA) that is very small (e.g., Texoil), to see if there is a threshold of arousal beyond which meditation is useful even in the US. We suggest that businesspeople meditate when they are feeling such strong emotions that they may lose control or look unstable, but not when they are already at a moderate level of arousal, in which case further reducing their arousal could disengage them.

In retrospect, we realize there was a bit of a disconnect between how broadly we thought about value creation versus how narrowly it was operationalized in our studies. In the Study 1 case, New Recruit, as well as in others we used, the only form of value creation that was possible was logrolling – trading off value on some (the integrative) items that the other side valued more and asking in return for them to make concessions on other items that the focal participant valued more. There are other forms of value creation, such as coming to the insight that one person only needs the peel of an orange and the other person only needs the fruit (100% win-win: Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011, similar to the Kukui Nuts (Kopelman & Berkel, 2020) or Oxipouco (Falcão, 2017) cases), or bringing to the table totally new issues to create value in a negotiation that would have otherwise been only about price on a single issue (Falcão, 2012) which requires creativity for more opportunities to log-roll. However, the design of our studies preclude us from testing these other, sometimes more powerful forms of value creation. We encourage researchers to examine the effects of mindfulness on other forms of value creation in negotiation settings.

The current studies include only one form of mindfulness meditation, focused breathing, as the manipulation to operationalize state mindfulness. We chose this operationalization for several reasons. Most importantly, it is the most common in the literature (Arch & Craske, 2006; Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014; Kiken & Shook, 2011; Mrazek et al., 2012) and it can be done nearly anytime and anywhere as an on-the-spot intervention (Hafenbrack, 2017), such as when individuals notice they are overly stressed, are experiencing excessive negative affect, or need to make a big decision. Metaphorically, this way of applying meditation when people notice they are highly stressed is akin to “popping an aspirin when [they] have a headache” (Hafenbrack & Berinato, 2019, p. 33). It is also the first type of meditation that is taught in most mindfulness programs such as Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990) and that is repeatedly used as a centering practice before moving into other types of meditations.

Nonetheless, there are many other ways to cue state mindfulness including walking meditation, savoring food while eating (Tan, 2012), focusing on the physical sensations of many other tasks, or observing one's own thoughts or emotions as they arise (Papies et al., 2015). One could also

seek to minimize other factors that can reduce naturally occurring mindfulness, such as proximity to one's smartphone (Reina & Kudesia, 2020) or not getting enough sleep (Poh et al., 2012). Future research may benefit from investigating the effects of other forms of meditation such as loving kindness meditation, or activities such as yoga, which cultivate mindfulness (Fredrickson et al., 2008; Hafenbrack et al., 2020).

One thing to keep in mind is that performing well in a negotiation is often a function of how well a person prepared for that negotiation (Falcão, 2012; Malhotra, 2016). Our studies were conservative tests in this regard, in that participants were randomly assigned to either meditate or do something else that was also unrelated to the negotiation at hand (let their mind wander). In the real world outside the laboratory, especially when there is time pressure, there would be an opportunity cost related to taking the time to meditate if it meant reducing the time spent preparing for the substance and process of the negotiation. Thus, the present research could understate the negative effect of mindfulness meditation on negotiation under time pressure. Meditation also can have a financial cost (Hales et al., 2012).

We encourage researchers and employees to think critically about the mechanisms of mindfulness – especially increased present moment focus, reduced arousal, reduced focus on the past and future, and reduced negative emotions – to better predict and investigate the situations and cultural contexts in which mindfulness both potentially helps and harms performance and other outcomes (Van Dam et al., 2017). People can ask themselves: Is this a situation where my negative emotions are telling me something important or are they pushing me to do something that would be perceived as disruptive in this context? This type of balanced inquiry into the positive and negative effects of mindfulness is critical in order to understand when mindfulness should and should not be used as an on-the-spot intervention (Hafenbrack, 2017).

Conclusion

In ten studies in the US, we found evidence for a very small negative effect of induced state mindfulness on one's own value claimed, and no effect on value created, in negotiation. What we take away from this is that there is probably not a very strong effect of mindfulness on negotiation performance in either direction in this cultural context, and if there is an effect it is probably negative in the domain of value creation. This is still important to know, in light of contrary prior evidence that mindfulness meditation had aided both value claiming and value creation in other cultures. If Americans wonder whether they should meditate before a negotiation with other individuals from cultures characterized by a high level of comfort with anger or negative emotional displays in negotiations (e.g., Americans or Dutch), our suggestion is that they often should not, as it is unlikely to help performance, and may harm performance.

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Sigal G. Barsade, a beloved mother, wife, mentor, and a great friend to many, passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, on February 7, 2022, after a hard, year-long battle with Glioblastoma. She was 56 years old. She was the Joseph Frank Bernstein Professor of Management at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, where she had worked since 2003. She was a leading expert on emotions in the workplace, known for her work on emotional contagion, affective diversity in top management teams, and the benefits of an organizational culture of companionate love. Her obituaries can be found at the following links: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/13/business/sigal-barsade-dead.html> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/wharton-professor-promoted-love-in-the-workplace-11645028432>

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Horacio Falcão (horacio.falcao@insead.edu) is a Professor of Management Practice in the Decision Sciences Department at INSEAD, specializing in Negotiation and Conflict Management. He directs the INSEAD executive education Negotiation Dynamics program, and co-created INSEAD's Online Certificate in Negotiation and Advanced Certificate in Negotiation. Horacio also co-founded the INSEAD Negotiation and Conflict Management Collaborative, an initiative to expand evidence-based negotiation and conflict management knowledge creation and distribution worldwide. Horacio is the founder of the Value Negotiation system, a strategic and cross-cultural negotiation approach to maximize rewards at minimum risk and has co-founded three companies: i) Value Negotiation, a negotiation advisory services firm, ii) VN Tech, a negotiation-support SaaS startup, and iii) Qinct, an EdTech startup that creates AI agents for realistic, human-like role-playing. Horacio published the core of his negotiation system in the book "Value Negotiation: How to Finally Get the Win-Win Right" and has won several case-writing and teaching awards.