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Social Motive as a Moderator of the Concession Timing Effect and the Critical Role of Trust

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Abstract

The current study investigates how focal negotiators' social motive and their expectations about the negotiation partner's social motive interact to influence trust, satisfaction, and judgments in response to concessions from the other party. Prior research has demonstrated the "concession timing effect," whereby immediate, rather than gradual, concessions reduce negotiators' satisfaction with and evaluations of negotiation outcomes. Across two studies, we propose that this effect depends on negotiators' expectations about their partner's social motive, as these expectations shape the extent to which negotiators engage in counterfactual thinking about whether better outcomes could have been obtained. We find that the concession timing effect emerges when a negotiation partner is expected to have an individualistic motive, but is attenuated when the partner is expected to have a cooperative motive. In addition, trust mediates the effect of negotiators' expectations of the other party's social motive on the concession timing effect. Further, this moderated mediation effect occurs only when focal negotiators themselves have a cooperative social motive. These findings contribute to research on negotiation, trust, and counterfactual thinking by showing when and why concession timing shapes negotiators' reactions to outcomes.

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Negotiation as the social interaction between two or more parties with divergent interests for the purpose of reaching an agreement (Lewicki et al., 2010; Pruitt, 1981) is a pervasive feature of everyday social and organizational life, shaping outcomes in interactions with employers, coworkers, business partners, family members, and others across a wide range of contexts (Boothby et al., 2023; Yan et al., 2025). Concession-making is central to this process, as parties with divergent interests typically adjust their positions to reach agreement (Clopton, 1984; Escher et al., 2025; Esser & Komorita, 1975; Kwon & Weingart, 2004; Schurr & Ozanne, 1985).

Kwon and Weingart (2004) introduced *the concession timing effect*, conceptualizing concession patterns as the temporal structure of concession-making (e.g., immediate, gradual, or delayed) and demonstrating that negotiators' interpretations of, and satisfaction with, their counterpart's concessions systematically vary depending on this timing pattern. The core empirical finding of this effect is that immediate concessions tend to be devalued relative to gradual or delayed concessions, as they may signal self-serving intent (Kwon & Weingart, 2004; Mislin et al., 2015).

Although previous studies have consistently demonstrated the concession timing effect in bargaining situations (Galinsky et al., 2002; Srivastava & Oza, 2006), this line of research has focused primarily on negotiation contexts involving seemingly individualistic business partners who emphasize maximizing their own outcomes. As a result, the relational contexts within which concession timing unfolds remain underexamined. This limitation reflects a broader critique that

negotiation research has long adopted an arelational perspective that overlooks the relational embeddedness of negotiation (Barley, 1991; Boothby et al., 2023).

Yet in reality, organizational actors frequently engage in negotiations embedded in ongoing relationships, for example, between human resources managers and in-house legal teams or between pharmaceutical firms and allied hospitals, where parties share continuing relational ties. Such negotiations often operate under cooperative norms and long-term reciprocity rather than purely short-term self-interest (Boothby et al., 2023; Mislin et al., 2015). Within these relational contexts, negotiators attend more closely to their partners' intentions, trustworthiness, and relational history when interpreting negotiation behaviors (Mislin et al., 2015). Consequently, immediate concessions may be construed as signals of benevolent intent and concern for the counterpart's welfare rather than as indicators of opportunistic self-interest. These relational expectations regarding a partner's motives, in turn, may shape how negotiators interpret concession behavior and evaluate negotiation outcomes.

To address this deficiency, we examine how social motive, defined as "the relative importance people place on own versus joint outcomes in social interaction" (i.e., individualistic vs. cooperative social motive; Weingart et al., 2007, p. 994), affects the concession timing effect. The aim of this study is twofold. First, we investigate how a negotiator's expectation of the other party's motives (i.e., whether their partner is expected to be cooperative or individualistic) influences the concession timing effect and why. Second, based on literature on social motive (e.g., Kelley & Stahelski, 1970; Weingart et al., 2007), we introduce negotiators' own social motive as an important factor that can affect the relationship between a negotiator's social motive expectation and the concession timing effect.

Drawing on research on counterfactual thinking (Epstude & Roese, 2008; Roese, 1997), we propose that a negotiator's social motive expectation of the counterpart (hereafter referred to as *social motive expectation,* or SME) will moderate the relationship between concession timing and negotiation outcomes (i.e., negotiators' satisfaction and judgment). Specifically, we predict that whereas the concession timing effect will be present when a negotiation partner is expected to have an individualistic motive, the effect will be attenuated when a negotiation partner is expected to have a cooperative motive. In addition, we argue that trust toward a negotiation partner will mediate the moderating effect of a negotiator's SME on the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions. Finally, we investigate how a negotiator's social motive interacts with a negotiator's SME and how this interaction ultimately influences the concession timing effect.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

The Concession Timing Effect

In negotiation research, a concession refers to a behavioral adjustment in which one party modifies or reduces its prior demand, offer, or position to move the negotiation toward an agreement (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993). For example, a buyer initially offers $500 for a used computer, and the seller counteroffers $700. After the buyer reiterates the $500 offer, the seller may agree to the buyer's price or propose an intermediate price (e.g., $600). In either case, the seller has made a concession by revising their prior position to align more closely with the counterpart's demand. Concessions are essential to the negotiation process because they function as the primary mechanism through which parties narrow differences, signal flexibility, and

ultimately reach an agreement (Hamner, 1974; Klimoski & Breaugh, 1977; Yukl, 1974). Without concessionary movements from either side, negotiations are likely to reach an impasse, as each party has little incentive to move beyond its initial position.

The timing of the other party's concession significantly affects how a focal negotiator perceives the value of the object under consideration, the credibility of the other party, and the quality of the agreement (Galinsky et al., 2002; Kwon & Weingart, 2004; Srivastava & Oza, 2006). Prior research on the concession timing effect demonstrates that when the other party (e.g., the seller) immediately, rather than gradually, concedes to a focal negotiator's offer, the focal negotiator (e.g., the buyer) tends to feel less satisfied with the negotiated outcome (Kwon & Weingart, 2004).

A key psychological mechanism underlying this effect is counterfactual thinking (Kwon & Weingart, 2004). When an immediate concession is made, negotiators are more likely to mentally simulate better alternatives (e.g., "I could have asked for more"), which elicits feelings of regret. These counterfactual thoughts lead negotiators to infer that the object might be worth less than initially believed, thereby devaluing the negotiated outcome and reducing subjective satisfaction relative to situations in which concessions are made gradually.

One major limitation of this line of research is that the concession timing effect has been examined primarily in contexts where the negotiation partner is assumed to have an individualistic motive to maximize self-interest. This self-serving motive may lead negotiators to feel regret about the agreement and feel less satisfied with the negotiated outcomes. As noted above, however, individuals and organizations often negotiate with partners who are expected to have cooperative motives, such as long-term business partners or close collaborators. In such cases, when negotiators believe that their counterpart has a cooperative motive, would they still feel a sense of regret, thinking they could have asked for more, when the counterpart makes an immediate concession, thereby feeling less satisfied with the negotiation outcome? To fully understand the concession timing effect and its implications, it is therefore critical to investigate how expectations about a negotiation partner's social motive affect the relationship between concession timing and perceptions of negotiation outcomes.

Expectations of Others' Social Motives

According to the literature on social motive, negotiators with *cooperative motives* are expected to engage in problem-solving approaches, whereas those with *individualistic motives* are expected to rely more heavily on distributive tactics (De Dreu et al., 2000; Weingart et al., 2007). Previous research has primarily examined how a negotiator's own social motive affects the use of tactical behaviors and negotiation strategies, as well as the quality of joint agreements (Giebels et al., 2000; Beersma & De Dreu, 2002; see also De Dreu et al., 2000 for a meta-analytic review). Yet, little research has systematically investigated the role of a negotiator's *expectations* regarding the other party's social motive (i.e., a negotiator's SME).

In the current research, we argue that a negotiator's SME significantly shapes how negotiators cognitively evaluate a counterpart's concession behavior, particularly through counterfactual thinking. A negotiator's SME reflects the extent to which the counterpart is expected to be concerned solely with their own outcomes (i.e., an individualistic motive) or also with others' benefits (i.e., a cooperative motive).

Research on counterfactual thinking (Epstude & Roese, 2008; Roese, 1997) suggests that individuals evaluate actual outcomes by mentally simulating alternative possibilities, particularly when events violate expectations. These "what might have been" reflections serve as cognitive

reference points for subjective satisfaction and perceptions (Epstude & Roese, 2008). In negotiation contexts, counterfactual thinking is likely to arise when a counterpart's behavior deviates from expectations, such as when the timing of a concession contradicts prior beliefs about the counterpart's motive. Although concession-making itself is not unusual, an immediate concession, particularly in distributive negotiations, can be perceived as unexpected (Kwon & Weingart, 2004). Because distributive negotiations are typically understood as zero-sum contexts in which one party's gain comes at the other's expense (e.g., Lewicki et al., 2010), immediate concessions are especially likely to violate expectations and trigger counterfactual thoughts such as "I could have asked for more." Accordingly, we focus our theorizing on distributive negotiation contexts, where the timing of concessions is most likely to elicit counterfactual thinking.

Building on research on counterfactual thinking, we propose that negotiators' SME shapes how they cognitively process and evaluate the timing of concessions. When negotiators expect their counterpart to have individualistic motives, an immediate (vs. gradual) concession may appear inconsistent with their expectation that the partner will act strategically to maximize self-interest. This expectancy violation could trigger counterfactual thoughts such as, "If they gave in so easily, I could have asked for more." Such reflections lead negotiators to devalue the object of negotiation and feel less satisfied with the outcome, thereby reinforcing the concession timing effect (Galinsky et al., 2002; Kwon & Weingart, 2004). In other words, when a negotiator's SME is individualistic, immediate concessions reduce subjective satisfaction compared to gradual concessions.

In contrast, when negotiators expect their counterpart to have cooperative motives, an immediate concession aligns with their expectations that the partner genuinely seeks to promote mutual benefit. In this case, the concession is less likely to evoke counterfactual thoughts because the behavior appears consistent with goodwill and concern for mutual outcomes. Rather, negotiators are likely to interpret an immediate concession as an authentic signal of collaborative intent, leading to a reduced difference in perceived satisfaction between immediate and gradual concessions. Therefore,

H1. Negotiators' social motive expectation (SME) will moderate the effect of concession timing on subjective evaluations of the negotiated outcome. When the counterpart is expected to have an individualistic motive, immediate concessions will lead to lower outcome satisfaction and less favorable product quality evaluations than gradual concessions. When the counterpart is expected to have a cooperative motive, these differences between immediate and gradual concessions will be attenuated.

The Underlying Mechanism: Trust

If a negotiator's expectation concerning a partner's social motive moderates the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions, what is the psychological mechanism underlying the moderating effect? Studies on negotiation have consistently argued that trust is a central component of negotiations with counterparties as it can significantly affect negotiators' emotions, perceptions, and negotiation outcomes (e.g., Kong et al., 2014; Colquitt et al., 2007). Based on the literature on trust and negotiation, we argue that trust will mediate the impact of a negotiator's SME on the concession timing effect.

According to the trust literature, trust reflects a willingness to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations about another party (Rousseau et al., 1998). Mayer et al. (1995) conceptualize trust as comprising three key dimensions —benevolence, integrity, and competence— which together determine the extent to which one party is willing to rely on another.

Because competence pertains primarily to task capability rather than interpersonal intention, it is less relevant in the context of concession timing. Instead, benevolence and integrity are central to understanding how a negotiator's expectations about a counterpart's social motives shape trust depending on when the concession occurs (i.e., immediately vs. gradually). Benevolence reflects the perception that the counterpart genuinely cares about one's welfare, while integrity refers to whether the counterpart upholds principles of fairness, honesty, and consistency (Mayer et al., 1995). These two dimensions are particularly salient during negotiation exchanges, where behavioral cues, such as concession timing, may signal goodwill or opportunism. Thus, we argue that a negotiator's SME influences how such signals are interpreted: whether an immediate concession is viewed as a sincere gesture (indicating benevolence and integrity) or as a strategic move that undermines them.

We posit that a negotiator's SME will shape the degree to which they trust their counterpart depending on the timing of the concession. As described earlier, consider a simple price negotiation in which a buyer repeatedly offers $500 for a used computer and the seller initially counters with $700. If the seller then directly accepts the buyer's $500 offer rather than proposing an intermediate price (e.g., $600), this immediate concession may be interpreted in different ways depending on the buyer's social motive expectations.

When the buyer expects the seller to be individualistic, an immediate (vs. gradual) concession may elicit suspicion, prompting the buyer to monitor the seller's underlying intentions more closely and to engage in counterfactual thinking (e.g., "If they conceded so quickly, I could have asked for more"). Accordingly, the buyer is likely to interpret the seller's concession as self-serving, leading the buyer to question the seller's benevolence and integrity. Consequently, trust toward the seller is lower when the seller concedes immediately rather than gradually.

In contrast, when the buyer expects the seller to hold cooperative motives, a concession, whether immediate or gradual, aligns with the expectation that the seller seeks mutual benefit. Under this interpretation, concession behavior is less likely to trigger counterfactual thinking because it is perceived as consistent with goodwill and a genuine concern for the buyer's outcomes. As a result, the buyer is more likely to construe the concession as a benevolent and honest gesture rather than as a manipulative tactic. In such cases, the buyer would be likely to maintain relatively high levels of trust toward the seller regardless of concession timing. Thus,

H2. In a negotiation, expectations about the counterpart's social motives will moderate the relationship between concession timing and negotiators' trust. When negotiators expect the counterpart to have an individualistic motive, they will trust the counterpart less when the counterpart concedes immediately rather than gradually. In contrast, when the counterpart is expected to have a cooperative motive, the effect of concession timing on trust will be attenuated, resulting in minimal differences in perceived trust.

Furthermore, we posit that the moderated mediation effect occurs; that is, trust toward the other party will mediate the moderating effect of negotiators' SME on the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions. More specifically, when the negotiating partner is expected to have an individualistic motive, we predict that negotiators will trust their partner less when the partner concedes immediately, rather than gradually. Given that trust will significantly affect negotiators' perceptions and satisfaction regarding the outcomes (see Kong et al., 2014 for the meta-analytic results), negotiators will consequently perceive the negotiation outcomes in a less positive manner when their partner concedes immediately, which indicates the presence of the concession timing effect. However, we anticipate that when a negotiation partner is expected to

have a cooperative motive, negotiators will be more likely to trust their partner in a similar manner, regardless of whether the partner concedes immediately or gradually. Consequently, negotiators will perceive the negotiation outcomes in a similarly positive manner in both immediate and gradual concession situations, which indicates that the concession timing effect is diminished. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H3. Trust toward the counterpart will mediate the moderating effect of expectations about the counterpart's motives on the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions.

The Moderating Role of the Focal Negotiators' Social Motive

Finally, we propose that the moderated mediation effect described above may depend on negotiators' own social motives. This expectation aligns with prior research showing that social motives shape negotiation strategies, interpretations, and outcomes (De Dreu et al., 2000; Deutsch, 1973; Weingart et al., 2007). Cooperatively motivated negotiators tend to be concerned about fairness and others' benefits, whereas individualistically motivated negotiators tend to focus primarily on power and personal outcomes and are reluctant to sacrifice their own interests to benefit others (Beersma & De Dreu, 2002; see also De Dreu et al., 2000 for a meta-analytic review). Prior research further suggests that social motives shape how negotiators attend to and interpret others' behavior during negotiation. Specifically, individualistically motivated negotiators may be more likely to interpret others' behavior through a more cautious and questioning lens, whereas cooperatively motivated negotiators tend to consider a wider range of possible motives in others and to be more receptive to others' behaviors and informational cues (Weingart et al., 2007).

Consistent with this perspective, although individualistic negotiators are capable of recognizing externally provided information about a counterpart's cooperative orientation, they may nonetheless question whether such information reflects the counterpart's true underlying motive. Thus, when individualistic negotiators observe an immediate concession, which may superficially appear cooperative, they are likely to interpret it as a strategic move intended to maximize the counterpart's personal gain rather than as a signal of genuine benevolence or integrity. Consequently, regardless of the negotiator's SME, individualistic negotiators may trust their partner less when the partner concedes immediately rather than gradually. Accordingly, we expect that the moderated mediation effect will be diminished when the focal negotiator is individualistic.

In contrast, cooperatively motivated negotiators, who tend to be receptive to others' behaviors and informational cues, are more likely to incorporate cues about whether the other party is cooperative or individualistic into their assessments and adjust their negotiation strategies accordingly (Weingart et al., 2007). When a cooperative negotiator expects the partner to be cooperative, the negotiator is likely to interpret the partner's immediate concession as a benevolent and integrity-based act, one that genuinely seeks mutual benefit, rather than as behavior driven by hidden self-interested intentions or strategic manipulation. Under these conditions, cooperative negotiators are less likely to engage in heightened monitoring or suspicious attribution of the partner's motives and instead form more benign interpretations of the concession. As a result, cooperative negotiators are likely to trust a partner perceived as cooperative in a similar manner, regardless of whether the partner concedes immediately or gradually.

On the other hand, when cooperative negotiators expect the counterpart to be individualistic, they would be likely to monitor the partner's intentions more closely and engage in counterfactual

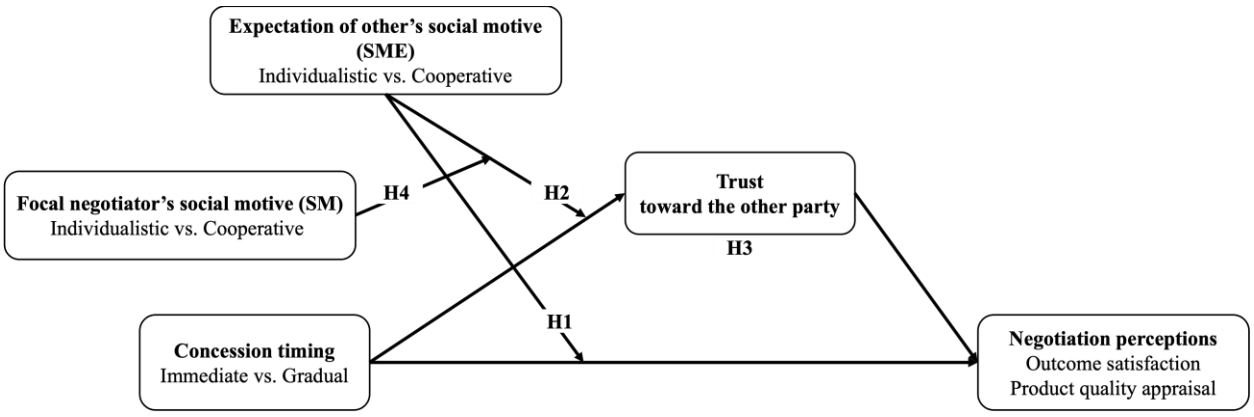
thinking. Under such cognitive processing, an immediate concession from an expectedly individualistic partner may be interpreted as serving the partner's self-interest, even if it appears cooperative. Accordingly, cooperative negotiators may perceive such immediate concessions as less benevolent and less sincere, leading to reduced trust compared to gradual concessions.

Taken together, we propose that trust toward the other party will mediate the moderating effect of a negotiator's SME on the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions especially when the focal negotiator is cooperative. In other words, the moderated mediation effect will be stronger when the focal negotiator is cooperative. Thus, we predict the following hypothesis:

H4. The moderated mediation effect will be diminished when the focal negotiators' social motive is individualistic, whereas the effect will remain when the focal negotiators' social motive is cooperative.

This series of proposals converges in the model depicted in Figure 1. Our theoretical perspective proposes that when the other party is expected to have a cooperative social motive, negotiators will trust their partner regardless of the timing of concession, which leads negotiators to evaluate negotiation outcomes in a similarly positive manner in both immediate and gradual concession situations. Therefore, the concession timing effect is attenuated. Conversely, when the other party is expected to have an individualistic social motive, negotiators will trust their partner less when the partner immediately concedes, which in turn leads negotiators to perceive negotiation outcomes less positively. Thus, the concession timing effect is present. Our theoretical model proposes that these moderated mediation effects occur only when focal negotiators are cooperative.

Figure 1 Theoretical Model



Overview of the Study

To test these hypotheses, we conducted two studies. In Study 1, we recruited participants in the United States to test Hypothesis 1. In Study 2, we recruited participants in Korea and tested Hypotheses 1–4, focusing on negotiators' trust toward the other party as an underlying mechanism. By conducting Study 2 with Korean participants, we sought to replicate the findings of Study 1 and examine whether the moderating role of SME generalizes across national contexts. We also examined whether the moderated mediation effect depends on negotiators' own social motives in Study 2.

Study 1

Method

Participants and Design

Fifty-eight US undergraduate students who were enrolled in introductory courses for management sciences (mean age = 20.12, SD = 1.08; 37 male, 21 female) participated in the experiment. Participants who consented to take part in the study received an extra course credit for their participation. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board Committee of a university in the northwestern United States. The experiment had a 2 (SME: cooperative vs. individualistic) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) between-subjects design.

Negotiation Task

Participants negotiated the price of a used car in buyer–seller dyads. All participants were assigned the role of buyer, while trained confederates played the role of seller. Four male confederates recruited from a university drama department were trained prior to data collection to enact consistent concession patterns depending on experimental condition (immediate vs. gradual).

Procedure

Upon arrival, participants were taken individually to an adjacent room to read the instructions privately. Both participants and confederates were provided with basic information about the negotiation object (e.g., condition of the car and Blue Book price).

Next, participants were informed that the study examined the effects of ultimatum bargaining on the other party and that they were required to make an opening offer of $9,500 and maintain this price throughout the negotiation. Participants were also asked to prepare brief justifications for why the car was worth $9,500.

Afterward, participants were given a few minutes to develop their negotiation strategy. At this stage, they were shown their counterpart's (ostensible) social motive response sheet indicating either cooperative or individualistic motives and were asked to use this information in planning their negotiation approach (details of this manipulation are provided in the manipulation section below). Confederates were instructed to complete their planning in a voice audible to the participant to reinforce the realism of the setting.

Then, participants were led individually to the main laboratory, introduced to their counterparts, and informed that the negotiations would be videotaped. They then engaged in the negotiation. Regardless of concession condition (i.e., immediate vs. gradual), sellers were instructed to eventually accept the buyer's offer of $9,500 to ensure that the final negotiated price was identical across conditions.

Finally, participants completed a post-experimental questionnaire assessing satisfaction with the negotiated outcome, evaluation of the product's quality, and their perception of the seller's concession timing (immediate vs. gradual) as a manipulation check. Participants were subsequently debriefed and asked not to discuss the study with other potential participants.

Manipulations

Concession timing. In the immediate concession condition, the seller (confederate) accepted the buyer's asking price as soon as the buyer proposed the reduced price. In the gradual concession condition, the seller made a concession every three minutes, for a total of three concessions. The seller was able to control his pace by looking at a clock placed next to the table. Since the buyer (the participant) was instructed to offer only $9,500 and not to concede throughout the negotiation, the agreed-upon price was the same in both conditions.

Social motive expectation. We manipulated participants' social motive expectations (SME) regarding their negotiation counterpart using decomposed games (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995; Messick & McClintock, 1968).

Before the negotiation, the experimenter presented participants with a questionnaire ostensibly completed by their counterpart, which displayed the counterpart's responses to a series of decomposed games. This decomposed-games material, including the instructions shown to participants and the full set of items, is presented in Appendix A. The experimenter explained the decomposed games to participants and explicitly informed them that, based on the observed response pattern, the counterpart could be characterized as having either a cooperative or an individualistic social motive.

Each decomposed game consisted of a choice among three payoff distributions for oneself and the negotiation partner. For example, participants were asked to imagine that the negotiation outcome could result in one of the following payoff combinations: A (500, 100), B (500, 500), or C (550, 300). In this example, option A reflects a competitive motive, option B reflects a cooperative motive, and option C reflects an individualistic motive.

In the cooperative SME condition, participants were shown a decomposed-games profile indicating that the counterpart predominantly selected cooperative options across the nine items (i.e., C–B–A–C–B–A–C–B–A). Following prior work on decomposed games, which interprets the selection of the same payoff option in six or more items as indicative of a particular social motive (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995; Messick & McClintock, 1968), we designed the cooperative motive profile such that Items 7 and 8 did not include the cooperative option. This design choice was intended to avoid presenting an overly uniform response pattern, which could have appeared artificial and raised suspicion among participants.

In the individualistic SME condition, participants were shown a profile indicating consistent selection of individualistic options (i.e., B–A–C–B–A–C–B–A–C). Both profiles were based on nine decomposed games, each including cooperative, individualistic, and competitive options, and were designed to systematically signal the counterpart's underlying social motive.

Dependent Measures of Negotiator Perceptions

Satisfaction with the negotiated outcome. Following Kwon and Weingart (2004), we used an outcome-focused satisfaction measure, as the negotiation issue and the concession in our studies concerned price only. Specifically, two items measured the buyer's satisfaction with the negotiated outcome ($\alpha = .65$): "How satisfied are you with your agreement?" (1 = very dissatisfied to 7 = very satisfied), and "Would you tell your friend that you got a good deal?" (1 = definitely would not to 7 = definitely would).

Evaluation of product quality. Following Kwon and Weingart (2004), we also assessed buyers' evaluation of product quality, as their findings suggest that the concession timing effect can extend

beyond outcome satisfaction to shape negotiators' perceptions of the negotiated object itself. Specifically, we measured product quality evaluations using two items (α = .60): "How often do you expect you will have problems with this car?" (1 = never to 7 always; reversed coding), and "What do you think of the quality of the car?" (1 = very low quality to 7 = very high quality).

Results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations.

Table 1 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations in Study 1

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3
1. Satisfaction with the negotiated outcome	6.28	1.06			
2. Evaluation of product quality	4.58	.83	.56***		
3. Concession timing (0: immediate, 1: gradual)	0.48	.50	.20	.22+	
4. Social motive expectation (0: cooperative, 1: individualistic)	0.48	.50	-.33*	-.22	.03

Note. $n = 58$, $^{+}p<.10$, $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$

Manipulation Checks

Concession timing. In the post-negotiation questionnaire, 93 percent and 79 percent of the participants in the immediate and gradual concession conditions responded correctly, respectively (χ^2 (2, N = 58) = 48.41, p = .001). The manipulation-check item included four response options (immediate concession, gradual concession, no concession until the very end of the negotiation, and no concession at all). Because no participant selected the final option, the chi-square test was effectively based on three observed response categories. These proportions were substantially higher than would be expected by chance alone, Cramer's V = .91, p = .001, indicating that participants clearly differentiated between the two concession-timing conditions.

Social motive expectations. Participants were asked to rate how cooperative they believed the other party to be (1 = cooperative to 5 = uncooperative). Participants who were told that the other party had a cooperative social motive perceived the other party as more cooperative (M = 1.47, SD = .68) than did participants who were told that the other party had an individualistic social motive (M = 2.00, SD = 1.09), $t(56) = 2.25$, p = .03, M diff = .53.

Although both means fall on the cooperative end of the scale, this pattern is likely influenced by the fact that, in all conditions, the seller ultimately accepted the buyer's offer, which may have led participants to evaluate the seller relatively favorably overall. Importantly, however, despite this generally positive evaluation, participants in the cooperative SME condition perceived the seller as significantly more cooperative than did participants in the individualistic SME condition. This difference in the predicted direction indicates that the SME manipulation exerted its intended effect.

Further analyses showed that neither concession timing nor the interaction between the SME manipulation and concession timing significantly affected perceived cooperativeness ratings. This pattern suggests that the SME manipulation operated independently of the concession-timing

manipulation.

Hypothesis Tests

Satisfaction with the negotiated outcome. To test Hypothesis 1, we conducted a 2 (a negotiator's SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) ANOVA, focusing on satisfaction with the negotiated outcome as an indicator of negotiation perceptions. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, there was a significant interaction between the SME and concession timing in the buyer's satisfaction with the negotiated outcome (i.e., a used car), $F(1, 54) = 11.72$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .18$. Participants who had individualistic SME were less satisfied with the negotiated outcome when their partner conceded immediately ($M = 5.29$, $SD = 1.25$) compared to when their partner conceded gradually ($M = 6.57$, $SD = .85$), $t(26) = 3.18$, $p = .004$. However, participants who had cooperative SME did not differ in their satisfaction levels depending on concession timing (immediate concession: $M = 6.78$, $SD = .45$; gradual concession: $M = 6.43$, $SD = .96$), $t(28) = 1.32$, *ns*.

Evaluation of product quality. To test Hypothesis 1, we also conducted a 2 (a negotiator's SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) ANOVA, focusing on the buyer's evaluation of product quality. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, there was a significant interaction between SME and concession timing in the buyer's evaluation of product quality, $F(1, 54) = 5.15$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .09$. Participants with individualistic SME negatively evaluated the used car's quality when their partners conceded immediately ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.08$) compared to when their partners conceded gradually ($M = 4.82$, $SD = .72$), $t(26) = 2.46$, $p = .02$. However, participants with cooperative SME did not differ in their product quality evaluation depending on concession timing (immediate concession: $M = 4.78$, $SD = .60$; gradual concession: $M = 4.71$, $SD = .61$), $t(28) = .30$, *ns*.

Discussion

The results supported our primary hypothesis relating to the SME's moderating effects on the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions. Participants who had individualistic SME were less satisfied with the negotiated outcome and evaluated the used car's quality more negatively when their partner conceded immediately, compared to when their partner conceded gradually. However, when participants had cooperative SME, there were no differences in the satisfaction level and evaluation of the product's quality, regardless of concession timing.

Study 2

To extend our understanding of contingencies that moderate the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions, we designed Study 2, pursuing two major goals. The first is to examine what drives the moderating effect of a negotiator's SME, focusing on trust. We hypothesized that trust toward the other party will mediate the moderating effect of expectations of the other party's motives on the relationship between concession timing and the outcome of the negotiation (H2 and H3).

The second goal of Study 2 is to test our theoretical model by investigating how negotiators' own social motives influence the moderated mediation effect. We hypothesized that this effect will be diminished when the focal negotiators' social motive is individualistic, whereas the effect will

remain when the focal negotiators' social motive is cooperative (H4). In testing our theoretical model, we measured negotiators' own social motives before they engaged in negotiations with their partner.

Method

Participants and Design

One hundred forty undergraduate students enrolled in Organizational Behavior courses in South Korea (mean age = 22.78, SD = 2.97; 64 men and 76 women) participated in the experiment. Participants who consented to take part in the study received $5 in exchange for their participation. The Institutional Review Board Committee at a university in South Korea approved the study. The experiment had a 2 (a negotiator's social motive: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) between-subjects design.

Negotiation Task

Pairs of negotiators negotiated the price of a used high-end bicycle. In this distributive negotiation with only one issue (i.e., price), all participants took the role of buyer and two trained confederates (one male and one female)[1] played the role of seller. As in Study 1, participants were informed that they were taking part in an ultimatum bargaining task and were instructed not to make concessions.

Unlike in Study 1, in which the target price was fixed, Study 2 allowed participants to select their own target price within a bounded range (KRW 550,000–600,000). Participants were instructed to make their first offer at the selected target price and to maintain that offer throughout the negotiation. The seller's initial posting price was set at KRW 670,000.

This design modification was introduced to enhance task naturalness and participant engagement. In a pilot study conducted prior to Study 2, we observed that some participants were hesitant to make a predetermined ultimatum offer. Allowing participants to select a target price within a bounded range ensured that the initial offer reflected their own judgment, thereby reducing task-related discomfort and promoting more naturalistic negotiation behavior. To preserve the generalizability of findings across Studies 1 and 2, we treated participants' self-selected target prices as a covariate in subsequent analyses.

Two trained confederates, who played the role of the seller, presented consistent concession patterns in accordance with the experimental condition (immediate or gradual). In all conditions, sellers ultimately accepted the buyer's asking price.

Procedure

The overall procedure was identical to Study 1. Upon arrival, participants (buyers) were taken individually to an adjacent room to complete the consent form and read the instructions privately.

[1] A male and a female confederate interacted with 54 and 86 participants, respectively. The initial analyses included the gender of the confederate, but significant gender effects were not observed. Accordingly, we dropped the confederate gender from the analyses.

They then completed a pre-negotiation questionnaire measuring their own social motive. At this stage, participants were informed that their confederate partner (seller) was also completing a pre-negotiation questionnaire to assess his or her social motive. After completing the questionnaire, participants received their partner's (ostensible) responses indicating his or her social motive. Participants were also informed that their own social motive responses would not be shared with the other party, in order to minimize strategic inference and second-guessing when developing their negotiation strategy.

Next, participants were instructed to review an information package about the used bicycle ostensibly created by the seller. This package contained detailed product-related information (e.g., brand, condition, purchase timing, usage history, and transaction context). It indicated that the bicycle had been purchased approximately one year earlier, had been rarely used, and was being sold because the seller had recently started a new job and relocated. On this basis, the seller suggested an initial asking price of KRW 670,000, providing a product-based informational rationale for the opening offer.

Participants (buyers) and confederates (sellers) then engaged in a face-to-face negotiation. During the negotiation, sellers did not introduce any new factual information beyond what was provided in the package in order to maintain a consistent narrative across experimental conditions. However, they referenced and reiterated this information in their persuasive appeals, thereby situating the negotiation within an informational and justificatory context rather than as a bare exchange of price offers, while enacting the concession-timing manipulation. Specifically, depending on condition, the seller made either an immediate or gradual concession.

After the negotiation, participants completed a post-experimental questionnaire and were debriefed. During the debriefing, they were asked not to disclose any details of the study to others to preserve the integrity of the experiment for future participants. Participants were then dismissed.

Manipulations

Agreed-upon price. To keep the agreed-upon price similar in both conditions, the participants (i.e., buyers) were instructed to begin and stick with the offer, ranging from KRW 550,000 to KRW 600,000 until that offer was accepted (at least 15 minutes).

Concession timing. In the immediate concession condition, the seller (confederate) accepted the buyer's asking price as soon as the buyer proposed the reduced price, as in Study 1. In the gradual concession condition, the seller made a concession every two-and-a-half minutes for a total of three concessions. The seller was able to control his or her pace by looking at a clock placed next to the table. Since the buyer (the participant) was instructed to offer a price ranging from KRW 550,000 to KRW 600,000 and not to concede in any way throughout the negotiations, the seller made concessions ranging from KRW 70,000 to KRW120,000 in total. To help the seller (the confederate) calculate the amount of the three concessions, the experimenter secretly provided the seller with the buyer's asking price before negotiations started.

Social motive expectation. As in Study 1, participants' social motive expectations (SME) regarding their negotiation counterpart were manipulated using decomposed games (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995; Messick & McClintock, 1968). After completing the social motive questionnaire described below, participants were presented with a questionnaire ostensibly completed by their partner (seller), which displayed the partner's responses to an identical set of decomposed games. These responses were used to signal the partner's underlying social motive. The detailed procedure and materials were identical to those used in Study 1.

Focal negotiators' own social motive. Prior to the negotiation, participants completed a social motive questionnaire based on decomposed games. Specifically, the questionnaire was based on the same set of decomposed games reported in the Appendix. Participants were presented with nine decomposed games in which they were asked to distribute resources between themselves and their negotiation partner. Participants who responded consistently to at least six of the nine items were classified according to their dominant social motive; those who did not meet this criterion were classified as "other" (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995; Messick & McClintock, 1968).

Whereas the original measure assumes a hypothetical other, in the present study participants were asked to make allocation decisions involving the actual negotiation partner they were about to face. Thus, this measure captures participants' social value orientation, the individual difference component of one's social motive.

Mediating Variable

Trust. Building on the trust framework outlined earlier, we measured trust in a manner consistent with Mayer et al.'s (1995) conceptualization of trustworthiness. Because our theoretical focus is on benevolence and integrity, the intention-related dimensions most relevant to interpreting concession timing, we excluded competence, which concerns task ability and is less central in our negotiation context. Although we draw conceptually on Mayer et al.'s distinction among the key dimensions, we adapted items from Cummings and Bromiley's (1996) Organizational Trust Inventory (OTI) because it offers validated behavioral indicators that align well with benevolence and integrity in negotiation settings.

Accordingly, three items assessed benevolence ("I believe that the seller told the truth during the negotiation"; "My partner provided me with accurate information about this product"; "My partner intends to profit by deceiving me. (R)"), and three items assessed integrity ("I believe that the seller negotiated with me honestly"; "I believe that the seller was straightforward with me"; "I believe that the seller did not mislead me"). All items were rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) scale ($\alpha = .83$).

Dependent Measures of Negotiator Perceptions

Satisfaction with the negotiated outcome. We used the same scales employed in Study 1 to measure participants' satisfaction with the negotiation outcome ($\alpha = .87$).

Evaluation of product quality. We measured participants' evaluation of product quality by using two items: "How do you evaluate the bicycle in terms of the quality?" (1 = very low quality to 7 = very high quality) and "It is of good quality considering its price." (1 = not at all to 7 = very much) ($\alpha = .73$).

Results

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations.

Table 2 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations in Study 2

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Satisfaction with the negotiated outcome	6.12	.90						
2. Evaluation of product quality	5.56	.90	.64***					
3. Concession timing (0: immediate, 1: gradual)	.50	.50	.15+	.15+				
4. Social motive expectation (0: cooperative, 1: individualistic)	.50	.50	-.13	-.16+	.00			
5. Trust	4.94	.96	.42***	.37***	.18*	-.11		
6. Focal negotiator's social motive	.66	.48	-.04	-.05	.03	-.12	.05	
7. Agreed-upon price (KRW)	583,067	14,480	-.22*	-.14+	.05	.06	-.11	-.02

Note. $n = 140$, $^{+}p<.10$, $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$

Manipulation Checks

Concession timing. In the pre-negotiation questionnaire, 98 percent and 94 percent of the participants in the immediate and gradual concession conditions responded correctly, respectively (χ^2 (2, N = 140) = 136.06, p = .001). As in Study 1, the manipulation-check item included four response options (immediate concession, gradual concession, no concession until the very end of the negotiation, and no concession at all). Because no participant selected the final option, the chi-square test was effectively based on three observed response categories. The percentages of correct responses were compared with the proportion expected from guessing (Cramer's $V = .99$, $p = .001$). This confirms that participants were able to clearly differentiate between the two concession-timing conditions prior to the negotiation task.

Social motive expectations. We conducted multiple checks to assess whether participants correctly understood and differentiated the seller's social motive. As a first manipulation check, participants were asked to indicate the orientation they expected their negotiation partner to adopt in the upcoming negotiation based on the decomposed-games profile they had reviewed. Specifically, participants were asked whether they expected the partner (1) to strive to ensure that both parties were satisfied or (2) to pursue only their own satisfaction, with selection of Option 1 indicating a cooperative orientation and selection of Option 2 indicating an individualistic orientation. The vast majority of participants responded correctly (96% in the cooperative SME condition and 89% in the individualistic SME condition), χ^2 (1, N = 140) = 99.97, p = .001, indicating that participants generally understood the payoff structure and the orientation implied by the seller's decomposed-games responses.

As a second check, participants reported the seller's social motive on a continuous scale (1 = individualistic, 7 = cooperative). Participants in the cooperative SME condition perceived the seller as significantly more cooperative (M = 5.51, SD = 1.23) than did participants in the individualistic SME condition (M = 2.16, SD = .93), $t(138) = 18.29$, p = .001, M diff = 3.36. This large difference indicates that the SME manipulation had a strong and robust effect on participants' perceptions of the seller's social orientation.

To further assess whether the SME manipulation functioned similarly across participants with different own social motives, we conducted additional analyses classifying participants by their focal social motive. A 2 (SME: cooperative vs. individualistic) × 2 (focal motive: cooperative vs.

individualistic) ANOVA on perceived cooperativeness revealed a strong main effect of SME, $F(1, 136) = 313.08$, $p < .001$. In contrast, neither the main effect of focal motive, $F(1, 136) = .03$, $p = .862$, nor the SME × focal motive interaction, $F(1, 136) = 2.30$, $p = .132$, was significant. This pattern suggests that participants' perceptions of the seller's social motive were driven primarily by the SME manipulation and were not contingent on their own social motive.

Simple comparisons within each focal-motive subgroup further supporte171d this conclusion. Among individualistic focal negotiators, participants in the cooperative SME condition perceived the seller as more cooperative ($M = 5.42$, $SD = 1.14$) than did those in the individualistic SME condition ($M = 2.26$, $SD = .91$), $t(90) = 14.44$, $p < .001$. A similar pattern emerged among cooperative focal negotiators (cooperative SME: $M = 5.75$, $SD = 1.41$; individualistic SME: $M = 2.00$, $SD = .94$), $t(46) = 11.06$, $p < .001$.

Taken together, these results indicate that participants, regardless of their own social motive, accurately interpreted and differentiated the seller's social motive in line with the SME manipulation, supporting the validity of the manipulation for subsequent hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Tests

***Satisfaction with the negotiated outcome*[2].** To test Hypothesis 1, we conducted a 2 (a negotiator's SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) ANCOVA, with focal negotiators' social motives and the agreed-upon price as covariates. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, there was a significant interaction between the SME and concession timing in the buyer's satisfaction with the negotiated outcome, $F(1, 134) = 5.72$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Specifically, participants who had individualistic SME were less satisfied with the negotiated outcome when their partner conceded immediately ($M = 5.70$, $SD = 1.19$) compared to when their partner conceded gradually ($M = 6.31$, $SD = .66$), $t(68) = 2.70$, $p = .01$. However, participants who had cooperative SME did not differ in their satisfaction levels depending on concession timing (immediate concession $M = 6.27$, $SD = .82$; gradual concession $M = 6.20$, $SD = .74$), $t(68) = .36$, *ns*.

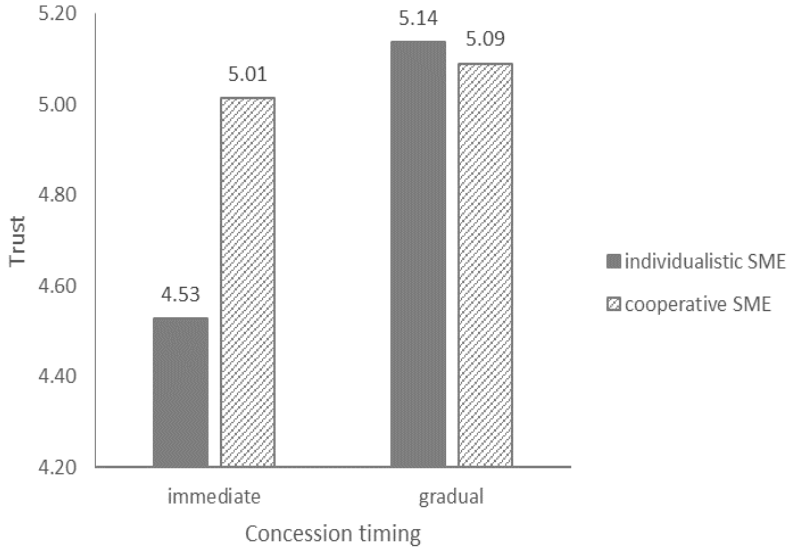
Evaluation of product quality. To test Hypothesis 1, we also conducted a 2 (a negotiator's SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) ANCOVA, with focal negotiators' social motives and the agreed-upon price as covariates. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, there was a significant interaction between SME and concession timing on the buyer's evaluation of product quality, $F(1, 134) = 8.69$, $p = .004$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Specifically, participants with individualistic SME negatively evaluated the bike's quality when their partners conceded immediately ($M = 5.07$, $SD = 1.09$) compared to when their partners conceded gradually ($M = 5.77$, $SD = .71$), $t(68) = 3.19$, $p = .002$. However, participants with a cooperative SME did not differ in their product quality evaluation depending on concession timing (immediate concession: $M = 5.79$, $SD = .86$; gradual concession: $M = 5.63$, $SD = .71$), $t(68) = .83$, *ns*.

Trust. To test hypothesis 2, we conducted a 2 (a negotiator's SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) ANCOVA. The interaction between SME and concession timing on the buyer's trust toward the seller approached significance, $F(1,$

[2] To identify whether we achieved the same results we had found in Study 1, even after controlling for the focal negotiators' social motives and the agreed-upon price, we included them as control variables in the ANCOVA analyses in Study 2.

134) = 3.30, p = .07, η^2 = .02. Specifically, participants with individualistic SME expressed a lower level of trust toward their partner when he or she conceded immediately (M = 4.53, SD = .97) compared to when the partner conceded gradually (M = 5.14, SD = .98), t(68) = 2.61, p = .01. However, participants with a cooperative SME did not differ in their trust level toward their partner depending on concession timing (immediate concession: M = 5.01, SD = .96; gradual concession: M = 5.09, SD = .83), t(68) = .35, *ns* (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 Interaction Effect of Concession Timing and SME on the Trust Level toward the Other Party in Study 2



Conditional indirect effect analyses. Hypothesis 3 proposed that trust toward the other party would mediate the moderating effect of the other party's motive expectations on the relationship between concession timing and negotiation judgments. In other words, trust would mediate the relationship between concession timing and negotiation judgments only when the other party was expected to have an individualistic social motive. Because Hypotheses 3 specified directional predictions regarding the conditional indirect effect through trust, we evaluated the corresponding conditional indirect effects and indices of moderated mediation using a one-tailed inferential criterion. Accordingly, we report 90% bootstrap confidence intervals for these analyses (Kimmel, 1957; Schoemann, Moore, & Yagiz, 2025). We tested this moderated-mediation hypothesis with the PROCESS macro specifying Model 8 (Hayes, 2013) with 5,000 bootstrap samples, including two dependent variables (i.e., satisfaction with the negotiated outcome and evaluation of product quality) that were separately incorporated into the model.

As expected, the conditional indirect effect on satisfaction with the negotiated outcome was significant when the focal negotiator had an individualistic SME (β = .22, SE = .11, 90% CI = [.065, .413]), but was not significant when the focal negotiator had a cooperative SME (β = .02, SE = .08, 90% CI = [–.097, .158]). Difference between conditional indirect effects was statistically significant (index = .20, SE = .13, 90% CI = [.005, .418]). Similarly, the conditional indirect effect on the evaluation of product quality was significant when the focal negotiator had an individualistic SME (β = .18, SE = .09, 90% CI = [.052, .340]), but was not significant when the

focal negotiator had a cooperative SME (β = .02, SE = .06, 90% CI = [-.080, .127]). Difference between conditional indirect effects was also significant (index = .16, SE = .11, 90% CI = [.006, .350]). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Focal negotiators' social motives. In Hypothesis 4, we expected that the moderated mediation effect would be maintained when the focal negotiator is cooperative, whereas the moderated mediation effect would be diminished when the focal negotiators' social motive is individualistic. Consistent with Hypothesis 3, because Hypothesis 4 specified directional predictions regarding the moderated mediation effect, we evaluated the corresponding conditional indirect effects and indices of moderated mediation using a one-tailed inferential criterion and therefore report 90% bootstrap confidence intervals. To test this theoretical model (i.e., conditional moderated mediation by focal negotiators' social motives; Hayes, 2018), we conducted the extended moderated mediation hypothesis with the PROCESS macro specifying Model 12 (Hayes, 2013) with 5,000 bootstrap samples, including two dependent variables (i.e., satisfaction with the negotiated outcome and evaluation of product quality) that were separately incorporated into the model. First, we tested a 2 (a negotiator's social motive: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (a negotiator's SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) design, focusing on satisfaction with the negotiated outcome[3].

As expected in Hypothesis 4, when the *focal* negotiator had a *cooperative motive*, the conditional indirect effect on satisfaction with the negotiated outcome was significant when the negotiator's SME was individualistic (β = .28, SE = .15, 90% CI = [.059, .533]), but was not significant when the negotiator's SME was cooperative (β = -.14, SE = .14, 90% CI = [–.381, .080]). Importantly, these moderated mediations were statistically different (index = .42, SE = .22, 90% CI [.094, .800]).

In contrast, when the *focal* negotiator had an *individualistic motive*, the conditional indirect effect on satisfaction with the negotiated outcome was significant when the negotiator's SME was individualistic (β = .18, SE = .13, 90% CI = [.010, .424]), but was not significant when the negotiator's SME was cooperative (β = .09, SE = .10, 90% CI = [-.046, .273]). However, the difference in these moderated mediations was not shown to be significant in the statistical test (index = .09, SE = .15, 90% CI = [-.129, .345]).

In addition, we tested the theoretical model focusing on the evaluation of product quality. As expected, our results demonstrated that when the *focal negotiator* had a *cooperative motive*, the conditional indirect effect on evaluation of product quality was significant when the negotiator's SME was individualistic (β = .23, SE = .13, 90% CI = [.044, .457]), but was not significant when the negotiator's SME was cooperative (β = -.11, SE = .12, 90% CI = [–.322, .064]). Importantly, these moderated mediations were shown to be statistically different in the statistical test (index = .35, SE = .19, 90% CI [.073, .674]).

In contrast, when the *focal negotiator* had an *individualistic motive*, the conditional indirect effect on evaluation of product quality was significant when the negotiator's SME was individualistic (β = .15, SE = .10, 90% CI = [.009, .341]), but was not significant when the

[3] In the full model, there was no significant three-way interaction (a negotiator's social motive, a negotiator's SME, and concession timing) on dependent variables such as satisfaction with the negotiated outcome (b = -.13, SE = .60, 95% CI = [-1.312, 1.055]) and evaluation of product quality (b = .32, SE = .61, 95% CI = [-.889, 1.510]). These results suggested that conditional indirect effects through trust were stronger than conditional direct effects when both were included in the model for testing simultaneously.

negotiator's SME was cooperative (β = .08, SE = .08, 90% CI = [-.039, .226]). However, the difference in these moderated mediations was not shown to be significant in the statistical test (index = .07, SE = .12, 95% CI = [-.116, .289]).

Taken together, these results support Hypothesis 4. As predicted, the moderated mediation effect remained when the focal negotiator's social motive was cooperative but was attenuated when the focal negotiator's social motive was individualistic. Specifically, when the *focal* negotiator had a *cooperative motive*, the conditional indirect effects on negotiation perceptions were significant when the negotiator's SME was individualistic but not when the negotiator's SME was cooperative. The differences between these conditional indirect effects were statistically significant. In contrast, when the *focal* negotiator had an *individualistic motive*, although the pattern of conditional indirect effects was similar, the differences between these conditional indirect effects were not statistically significant. Thus, the moderated mediation effect remained under a cooperative motive but was attenuated under an individualistic motive, consistent with Hypothesis 4.

Post-hoc analysis. We conducted an additional post-hoc analysis to better understand how the interaction between a negotiator's SME and concession timing affects trust when the focal negotiator had cooperative and individualistic motive, respectively. To accomplish this, we conducted a 2 (a negotiator's SME: individualistic vs. cooperative) × 2 (concession timing: immediate vs. gradual) ANCOVA (agreed-upon price as a covariate), focusing on a situation in which the focal negotiator had a cooperative motive (n = 48) and individualistic motive (n = 92). When the focal negotiator had a cooperative motive, there was a significant interaction between the SME and concession timing on the level of trust ($F(1, 43) = 4.95$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .103$) but not when the negotiator had an individualistic motive ($F(1, 87) = .43$, $p = .51$, $\eta^2 = .005$) (see Figures 3A and 3B).

Figure 3A Focal Negotiators' Social Motive: Cooperative Motive

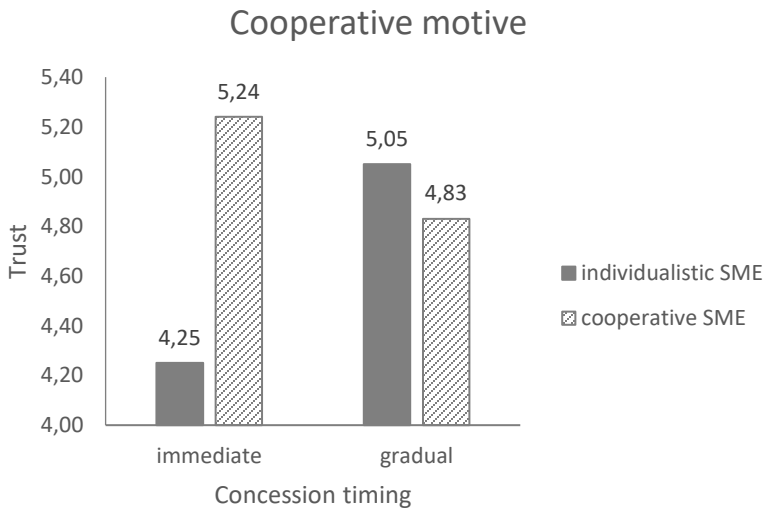
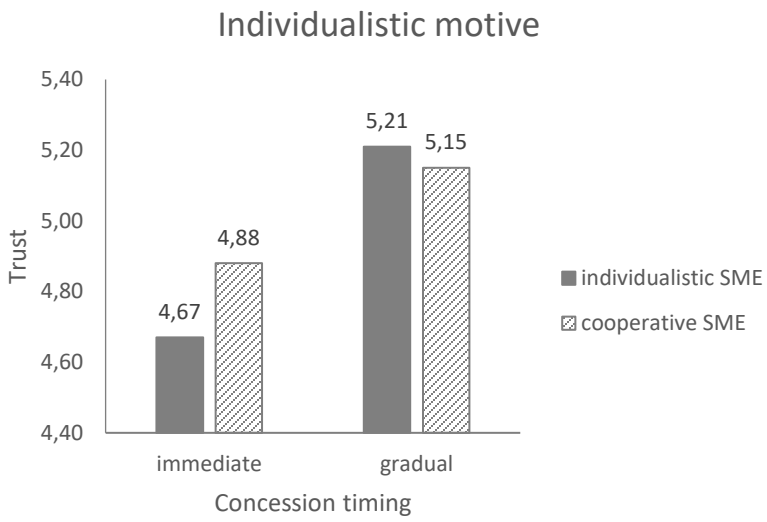


Figure 3B Focal Negotiators' Social Motive: Individualistic Motive



General Discussion

In the current study, we extend prior research on the concession timing effect, which has shown that immediate concessions can reduce negotiators' satisfaction and perceived performance compared to delayed or gradual concessions (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2002; Kwon & Weingart, 2004; Srivastava & Oza, 2006), by examining an important boundary condition of this effect: a negotiator's social motive expectations (SME).

Across two studies, we provide consistent evidence that a negotiator's expectation regarding the other party's social motive fundamentally shapes how concession timing is interpreted and, consequently, when the concession timing effect emerges. Study 1 reveals that whereas the concession timing effect reliably occurs when a negotiation partner (i.e., a seller) is believed to have an individualistic social motive, the effect disappears when the seller is believed to have a cooperative social motive. Study 2 further demonstrates that trust mediates the moderating role of SME in the concession timing effect. Specifically, when negotiators expect the other party to be individualistically motivated, they trust an immediately conceding partner less than a gradually conceding partner, whereas no such difference emerges when the partner is expected to be cooperatively motivated.

Moderated mediation analyses further indicate that trust underlies how SME shapes the relationship between concession timing and negotiation perceptions. In other words, it is through trust that expectations of a cooperative partner attenuate the concession timing effect: buyers remain satisfied with the negotiation outcome and highly value the quality of the object regardless of when the seller concedes, because they trust a cooperative counterpart. This moderated mediation effect emerges only when the focal negotiator's own social motive is cooperative rather than individualistic.

Theoretical Implications

The current findings make several important contributions. First, the current research extends our understanding of how negotiators respond to their partner's concession-making behavior during negotiations by incorporating a negotiator's expectation of the other party's social motive (a negotiator's SME). Although studies on social value orientation have examined the effects of focal negotiators' social motive on negotiation processes and outcomes (De Dreu et al., 2000), little research has investigated how focal negotiators' *expectation* of their partner's social motive (SME) affects their perceptions of negotiation outcomes. Furthermore, previous research on the concession timing effect has generally focused on the context of negotiating with a business partner, who is expected to be an individualistic person focused on his or her own interests and benefit (Galinsky et al., 2002; Kwon & Weingart, 2004; Srivastava & Oza, 2006).

We move one step closer to building a more comprehensive model for the concession timing effect by introducing a negotiator's SME (i.e., whether the negotiator perceives his or her partner to be individualistic vs. cooperative) as an important but neglected factor for fully understanding the concession timing effect. We argue that the concession timing effect may not be absolute, depending on a negotiator's SME. Specifically, our work suggests that whereas the concession timing effect is present when a negotiation partner is expected to have an individualistic motive, this effect disappears when a negotiation partner is expected to have a cooperative motive.

Second, we extend existing research on trust by suggesting that the negotiator's SME can significantly affect individuals' trust toward the other party, even when the other party demonstrates the same behaviors during negotiations. Researchers in the trust literature have long been interested in identifying factors that influence trust between individuals during interactions (Atkinson & Butcher, 2003; Weber et al., 2004). We suggest that when the other party is expected to have an individualistic motive, an immediate concession may be interpreted as self-serving behavior; as a result, negotiators may be less likely to trust their partner when the other party concedes immediately rather than gradually. Conversely, when the other party is expected to have a cooperative motive, the party's concession, regardless of whether it is immediate or gradual, may be interpreted as cooperative behavior; thus, negotiators may be likely to trust their partner regardless of the timing of concession. Therefore, expectations about a counterpart's social motive critically shape how concession timing is interpreted, with important implications for trust formation in negotiation.

Third, we extend the literature on negotiation and trust by further examining the interaction between SME and the focal negotiators' social motives. Our findings suggest that when the negotiation partner is expected to have a cooperative motive *and* the focal negotiator has a cooperative motive during a negotiation, in which the partner makes an immediate concession, the focal negotiator would be likely to trust that partner, rather than suspect that the partner's intention in making the immediate concession is to benefit her/himself. In sum, our findings contribute particularly to the literature on trust by suggesting that a cooperative social motive from both sides during a negotiation can engender or enhance trust between the negotiating parties by developing a communal relationship, especially when one party makes an immediate concession.

Finally, we contribute to the literature on social motives and trust in negotiation by clarifying how individualistic and cooperative motives differentially shape the interpretation of others' behavioral and informational cues. Prior work suggests that individualistically motivated negotiators tend to approach such cues with greater caution and monitoring, whereas cooperatively motivated negotiators are more receptive to these cues (Weingart et al., 2007). Extending this

perspective, our findings in Study 2 show that although individualistically motivated negotiators accurately recognized information indicating that a counterpart was cooperative, this recognition did not translate into greater trust in response to immediate concessions. In contrast, cooperatively motivated negotiators responded to the same immediate concession with increased trust. These results suggest that the critical difference lies not in the ability to perceive cooperative intent, but in how such cues are interpreted when evaluating a counterpart's behavior. By empirically distinguishing perceptual recognition from downstream interpretive and trust-related processes, our study refines the existing literature on social motives and trust and helps explain why identical behavioral cues can produce divergent trust outcomes depending on negotiators' underlying social motives.

Practical Implications

Our study has practical implications for a wide range of organizational settings in which negotiation plays a central role. Specifically, our findings suggest that negotiators should take into account the existing relational context with their counterparties. For example, if a human resources department manager is engaged in salary negotiations with a newly hired seasoned candidate who appears to be individualistic, making gradual concessions may prove beneficial, because it may help the new employee feel more satisfied with the outcome and ultimately help both parties establish a strong relationship.

In contrast, if a human resources department manager is engaged in negotiations with an in-house experienced employee who appears to be cooperative, the concession timing effect may not exist. Rather, our findings imply that in this close relationship context, an immediate concession may lead the long-tenured employee, with whom an established relationship already exists, to be satisfied with the negotiation outcomes and to build a trust relationship when both negotiators and their partners share cooperative motives. Finally, our findings suggest that when such a close relationship exists, it is not optimal to employ a concession timing strategy to satisfy one's negotiation partner.

In terms of developing trust, when the partner appears to be cooperative, it is important to assure the partner that the focal negotiator has a cooperative motive before making an immediate concession. If the negotiator is perceived to be individualistic by the cooperative partner, he or she may not appreciate the negotiator's immediate concession and may interpret it as self-serving behavior. As a result, the partner will not trust the focal negotiator and may view the negotiated outcomes in a negative light.

Limitations and Future Research

The current research is subject to several limitations that suggest directions for future research. First, across the two studies, we used relatively simple tasks, including a single issue (i.e., price of a product), to test our hypotheses. It is not clear whether the findings can be generalized to more difficult and complex distributive negotiation tasks. It is possible that differences in a negotiator's social motives may have a stronger effect in more complex tasks.

In addition, the present research relied on a relatively modest sample size in Study 1, which likely contributed to the lower-than-ideal reliabilities of some of the measures. Unlike typical scenario-based designs, our experimental setting required participants to engage in live, interactive negotiations with a trained confederate in a setting designed to closely reflect real-world

negotiation situations. This substantially increased the time commitment and logistical complexity of data collection, which constrained the feasible sample size, particularly in Study 1, and may have reduced the stability of the reliability estimates. Future research may benefit from employing larger samples or alternative designs that better balance realism in negotiation settings with measurement stability.

Moreover, to further enrich the understanding of subjective negotiation outcomes, future research may benefit from incorporating broader satisfaction measures, such as the Subjective Value Inventory (Curhan et al., 2006), that capture relational and process-based dimensions beyond economic evaluations. In the present research, because the negotiation centered explicitly on price, we assessed outcome-based satisfaction that directly reflected the economic terms of the agreement. Nonetheless, using more multidimensional measures in future work would allow researchers to examine whether concession timing also shapes negotiators' perceptions of process quality, interpersonal dynamics, or subjective value more broadly, and whether these effects vary depending on negotiators' perceptions of their counterpart's social motives.

Furthermore, our examination was based on the assumption that there would be no hierarchical difference between the negotiators. However, the effects of SME on concession timing effect might change when there is a power difference between the negotiators. For instance, if a leader who is expected to be cooperative (i.e., a cooperative SME) makes an immediate concession to an employee who suggested an initial offer, the employee would be more likely to trust his/her leader and evaluate the negotiation outcomes more positively, compared to a situation in which the person suggested the same offer to other cooperative colleagues who have similar power to the person. In other words, it is possible that the effects of SME on the concession timing effect are stronger in a negotiation in which there is a power difference between the negotiators. It would be worthwhile to examine the effects of SME on the concession timing effect in a negotiation context in which there is a power difference between the negotiators to gain a better understanding of how negotiators trust their partners and perceive negotiation outcomes in complex dynamics that could happen in real negotiation situations.

Finally, the two studies were conducted in different cultural contexts, with Study 1 using a U.S. sample and Study 2 using a Korean sample. Although the overall pattern of results was consistent across studies, we did not explicitly examine cultural differences. As such, it remains an open question whether and how cultural factors may shape negotiators' responses to concession timing. Future research could address this issue more directly by systematically comparing samples across cultural contexts.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Decomposed Game Material for SME Manipulation

In this experiment, you will be participating in a negotiation of a used car.
First, we are interested in determining your orientation toward the other party.
Imagine that you are to choose one of three distributions of outcomes between yourself and negotiation partner. You will be asked to make nine independent decisions.

For example:	A	B	C
Your gain	500	500	550
Partner's gain	100	500	300

If you check A, you'll get 500, and your partner will get 100
If you check B, you'll get 500, and your partner will get 500
If you check C, you'll get 550, and your partner will get 300

Imagine that the numbers are important to you (for example, they represent money). Indicate your true preference, not what you think you should choose. Circle only one alternative per question.

		A	B	C
(1)	You	480	540	480
	Partner	80	280	480
(2)	You	560	500	500
	Partner	300	500	100
(3)	You	520	520	580
	Partner	520	120	320
(4)	You	500	560	490
	Partner	100	300	490
(5)	You	560	500	490
	Partner	300	500	90
(6)	You	500	500	570
	Partner	500	100	300
(7)	You	510	560	510
	Partner	510	300	110
(8)	You	550	500	500
	Partner	300	100	500
(9)	You	480	490	540
	Partner	480	100	300