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The association of subordinates' perception of the manager's ambiguous behaviors with the likelihood of conflict occurrence: A Cross-Cultural study

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Abstract

The research aims to provide evidence to explain the contradictive findings in the literature on the organizational conflict phenomenon and the relationship between conflict and culture, by focusing on the relationship between ambiguous behaviors and conflict. To achieve this goal, in the context of low-status compensation theory, the relationship between incivility, humor as ambiguous behaviors, and the likelihood of manager-subordinate conflict occurrence was investigated. To test the culture's effect on this relationship, survey data were collected from 478 white-collar subordinates working in SMEs in Turkey and the UK. According to the results, the subordinate's perception of the manager's ambiguous behaviors affects the likelihood of relationship conflict and task conflict occurrence. In addition, the study reveals that culture is associated with the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence but not task conflict. The study contributes to the literature by providing evidence for the relationship between humor, incivility, conflict, and culture.

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Introduction

While conflict is often thought to be a dysfunctional phenomenon for organizations (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003), studies have shown that it can provide benefits for organizations (Parayitam & Dooley, 2009; Pelled et al., 1999; Jehn, 1995). According to some studies, conflict improves team performance (Pelled et al., 1999; Jehn, 1995), job satisfaction (Zhongjun et al., 2019), innovation, and decision-making (Parayitam & Dooley, 2009). In contrast, some other studies have shown that conflict has a negative effect on job satisfaction, turnover intentions, general well-being, organizational commitment, depression, stress, and physical well-being (De Dreu, 2007; Dijkstra et al., 2005; Kammerhoff et al., 2019). Thus, the findings obtained over the years have resulted in an ongoing debate about conflict and its organizational outcomes (Weingart et al., 2015; Kammerhoff et al., 2019). Consequently, recent studies are insufficient to comprehend the conflict phenomena and its relationship with organizational phenomena (Weingart et al., 2015; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2008).

One reason why the conflict is not sufficiently clear in the organizational literature may be the approach of researchers to the phenomenon in general. In the literature, conflict researchers often focus on how the types and processes of conflict affect organizational outcomes (Dijkstra et al., 2005; Kammerhoff et al., 2019; Parayitam & Dooley, 2009; Zhongjun et al., 2019). This approach focuses on understanding how individuals perceive task-related conflict and relationship problems and how the conflict affects organizational processes and outcomes (Jehn, 1995, 1997). All those studies have made significant contributions to the understanding of conflict. However, The findings of most studies based on this approach are contradictive (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003a; de Wit et al., 2012; O'Neill et al., 2013; Weingart et al., 2015). Therefore, understanding the cause of conflict-related contradictive findings will make an important contribution to improving the understanding of organizational conflict.

Weingart and colleagues (2015) suggested that the way the conflict is expressed may be affected by perceptions, which will affect the reactions, therefore conflict process and conflict outcomes would be affected consequently. Indeed, some researchers argue that the key to understanding conflict is to focus on directness and the oppositional intensity of the expressions, perceptions, and reactions of the parties (Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Tjosvold et al., 2006). Thus, understanding the contingencies that may affect the parties' expressions and perceptions of other parties' intentions may provide an alternate framework for understanding conflict phenemenon and revealing the reason of contradictive findings (Ren & Gray, 2009; Weingart et al., 2015).

In this context, focusing on the relationship between the likelihood of conflict occurrence and ambiguous behaviors which include indirect expressions and behaviours with ambiguous intention will make an important contribution to understanding the conflict phenomenon and providing insight to researchers (Weingart et al., 2015). One reason for that is the directness and ambiguity of expressions and intention of the actors (who exhibit ambiguous behavior), leaving more room for targets' (who are exposed to ambiguous behaviors) perceptions and interpretations than direct conflict expressions (Brett, 2000). Thus, this research focuses on investigating the effect of targets' ambiguous behaviors and perception of actors on conflict occurrence and factors that influence targets' interpretation and perception.

Humor is an intentional or unintentional behavior that, due to its ambiguous nature, cannot convey a message in direct, formal, or explicit ways, and is loaded with meaning by the target, largely depending on the target's perception and interpretation (Bitterly et al., 2017). Thus, the effect of the actor's humor on the relationship between the parties largely reflects the target's interpretation and perception of humor (Bitterly, 2022; Kahn, 1989; Romero & Pescosolido, 2008). As a phenomenon that

significantly shapes perception and behavior by reflecting social relations, power distributions, and changes in both, humor has both potentially functional and dysfunctional outcomes in organizations (Bitterly, 2022; Duncan et al., 1990). While negatively perceived humor (aggressive humor) is associated with stress and aggression (Bitterly et al., 2017; Mcgraw & Warren, 2010), positively perceived humor (affiliative humor) is associated with functional communication behaviors (Bitterly, 2022; Kahn, 1989). Thus, in the research, humor behavior in organizations was considered as ambiguous behavior and the effect of this behavior on the likelihood of conflict occurrence was investigated.

One factor that affects the perceptions of the parties in the relationship is the status of them in the organization. According to the Low-Status Compensation Theory (LSCT), low-status individuals are vigilant to the ambiguous behaviors of high-status individuals to maintain their psychological worth in their interactions with high-status individuals, and low-status individuals react violently to higher-status individuals' worth-threatening behaviors (Davis & Reyna, 2015; Henry, 2009). In addition, high-status individuals' pro-social behaviors support low-status individuals in coping with problems more successfully (Norrick & Spitz, 2008) and encourage them to communicate openly and freely (Romero & Pescosolido, 2008). If it is assumed that status is prestige, respect, and esteem that a party has in the eyes of others (Chen et al. 2012), honor culture members who are more rely on psychological worthiness and esteem provided by others will be more vigilant to the ambiguous behaviors of their managers (Davis & Reyna, 2015). Thus, in the study, the perceptions of subordinates about their managers were investigated.

Another factor that affects the individuals' perceptions is culture. Nevertheless, researchers have presented contradictory evidence and expressed different opinions (Moon and Sanchez-Rodrigues, 2021) about whether culture affects conflict (Hammer, 2005; Gunsoy et al., 2015; Ulu and Lalonde, 2007) or not (de Wit et al., 2012). Although culture influences how relationships and communication are understood and perceived by moderating and directing individuals' behavior towards one another through the values and norms it provides (Fu et al., 2007; Ulu & Lalonde, 2007), it is surprising that culture's relationship with conflict is not clarified yet. However, if it is supposed to assume that actors' ambiguous behaviors leave more room for interpretations of targets, and cultural norms affect individuals' perceptions of ambiguous behaviors, the cultural context shall influence how conflict is expressed and perceived. Indeed, Weingart et al. (2015) stated that ambiguous behavior perception is more influenced by culture than by direct expression perception because ambiguous behavior is highly dependent on the targets' perception and interpretation. Thus, it is plausible to expect that the effects of humor on conflict will differ in different cultures (Wasti & Erdaş, 2019).

According to Low-Status Compensations Theory (LSCT), individuals behave vigilantly against behaviors that affect their status, depending on their perceived status in society, and try to compensate for the difference in status by exhibiting pro-social or anti-social reactions according to their perception of support or threat to their self-worth (Brown, 2020; Kraus et al., 2011). When status is considered at the social level, in communities where status inequalities are high, individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and reactions regarding their social values are reflected in collectively shared cultural perception styles and behavioral patterns by affecting their values, beliefs, and norms (Henry, 2009). The honor and dignity cultural framework, which proposes that cultures differ in terms of how individuals perceive their worth resources (social or self), evaluation of the factors that affect their worth, and how they react to those factors, is a useful approach for investigating this possibility (Wasti & Erdaş, 2019). Henry (2009) states that individuals belonging to honor culture, where status inequalities are high, are more vigilant to the ambiguous messages of actors who affect their status, interpret ambiguous messages more easily, and respond more violently or benignly to these messages to protect or leverage their worth (Aslani et al., 2013; Erdaş, 2016; Henry, 2009; Wasti &

Erdaş, 2019). Instead of dignity culture members, the worth of individuals belonging to honor cultures is related to the respect shown by others and their assessment of what others think (Aslani et al., 2016; Ijzerman et al., 2007). In contrast, dignity culture members' worthiness is based on their self-evaluations rather than others' opinions (Uskul, & Cross, 2019; Wasti, & Erdaş, 2019). Thus, participants from Turkey, which reflects honor culture characteristics (Uskul et al., 2015), and the United Kingdom, which reflects dignity culture characteristics (Gunsoy et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2017) were selected to reveal the effect of culture.

The duality of positive behavior and negative behavior in a group may seem counter-intuitive, however, individuals' worry about being perceived negatively and being judged in the social group leads them to behave more positively towards the other party (Erdaş, 2016). This duality emerges especially clearly within honor culture members. Compared to dignity culture members, honor culture members are more vigilant toward the other party's negative and positive behaviors, and their reactions can be violent or benign. On the other hand, dignity culture members tend to be more insensitive to the other party's behavior and to be stable and limited in their reactions (Erdaş, 2016, Krys et al., 2017). Therefore, it can be expected that the reactions of the members of the two cultures to the negative behaviors accompanying positive behaviors will differ in this context and the culture will more clearly reveal the effect of ambiguous behaviors on conflict. Because even if the target perceives the actor's humorous behavior positively, this positive perception may shift when it is accompanied by rude behavior (Mcgraw & Warren, 2010). One reason for this might be that when targets perceive rude behavior, they may respond with anti-social behaviors to protect their identity (Meier & Gross, 2015) but it is plausible to expect the level of reactions towards other parties would differ depending on culture. Therefore, it will be possible to more clearly capture the relationship between ambiguous affiliative and rude behaviors and conflict in the cultural context. For this reason, the phenomenon of incivility, which is also known as ambiguous rude behavior, is a mildly negative appraisal of at target (Wasti & Erdaş, 2019; Weingart et al., 2015), was included in the research as a mediating variable in the relationship between affiliative humor and conflict.

Assuming that culture influences the perception of ambiguous behaviors between managers and subordinates (Hammer, 2005), researching the relationship between humor, incivility, and manager-subordinate conflict under the effect of culture will contribute to the literature in three ways (Tsai & Bendersky, 2016; Wasti & Erdaş, 2019; Weingart et al., 2015). The results obtained from the research, firstly, provide insight into the conditions in which culture influences conflict. Second, the results encourage researchers to investigate ambiguous phenomena that potentially affect the likelihood of conflict occurrence. Finally, the research contributes to theory by providing evidence for LSCT at individual and cultural levels.

This complex and multi-level study aims to investigate how subordinates' perceptions of their managers' incivility, affiliative humor, and aggressive humor behaviors affect the likelihood of task and relationship conflict occurrence, as well as the influence of culture in these relationships. To achieve this aim, LSCT, which provides a basis for explaining both the perceptions and reactions of individuals in their relationships at the individual and social level, was used. Data from the UK and Turkey were collected via a survey of white-collar SME subordinates operating in seven service industries, and the results were evaluated using two distinct models. The first model investigated the impact of culture in moderating the influence of aggressive and affiliative humor on relationship conflict and task conflict. In the second model, the mediating role of incivility on the relationship between affiliative humor and conflict types and the moderating role of culture was examined.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Low-Status Compensation Theory

Holding a low-status position is inherently threatening. Low-status employees are frequently exposed to various types of abuse and are at increased risk of suffering negative psychological and physiological health consequences (Cundiff & Smith, 2017). Thus, low-status individuals engage in various behaviors to increase their social status (Brown et al., 2020). LSCT proposes that social interpersonal relationships place many individuals in a lower social status and that individuals inherently want to see themselves as meaningful and valuable, and threats to this self-view must be effectively managed and controlled. When a low-status individual's self-worth is threatened, the individual is motivated to adopt compensatory strategies for self-protection to prevent or reduce the loss resulting from the threat (Henry, 2008; 2009). LSCT specifically emphasizes that “compensation” refers to actions or attempts taken to compensate for an individual's lack of status (Bäckman and Dixon, 1992), and emphasizes that for those who threaten the individual's sense of self-worth, violence will be one of the tools they use to regain control over their self-worth (Henry, 2009). However, low-status individuals may exhibit more prosocial behavior and act generosity or benignly to increase their status (Brown et al., 2020). Individuals can thus receive support from a high-status individual to increase their worth. As a result, it is reasonable to expect subordinates to be vigilant against their managers' ambiguous behaviors, and that their anti-social reactions to behaviors that threaten or support their worth will affect the likelihood of conflict occurrence. Thus, ambiguously intentional behaviors which are dependent on the target's positive or negative perception, can affect the likelihood of conflict occurrence by generating pro-social or anti-social reactions in the perceiver (Bitterly, 2022; Kahn, 1989; Romero & Pescosolido, 2008).

Humor

Humor is defined as an event or behavior in which at least one of two or more interacting individuals experiences amusement that at least one of the parties evaluates it funny (Bitterly et al., 2017). It is related to interpersonal communication and relationships, having social functions such as "alienating, fostering social stability, encouraging social change, promoting superiority, and testing limits" (Duncan et al., 1990; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). Unlike other types of communication, humor allows parties to implicitly send and receive signals (Kahn, 1989). Thus, humor is ambiguous because it requires the target to interpret the words spoken and nonverbal expressions that are not direct and open (Weingart et al., 2015). However, the target may perceive humor as relatively benign, benevolent, and/or positive, as well as possibly detrimental, injurious, and/or negative (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). Martin et al. (2003) defined positively and negatively perceived interpersonal humor types as affiliative humor and aggressive humor, respectively.

Affiliative humor is defined as the use of pleasantries and jokes to improve interpersonal relationships (Veselka et al., 2010). Affiliative humor is self-defeating, affirming, non-threatening, non-hostile, and well-intentioned (Lehmann-Willenbrock & Allen, 2014), and it facilitates relationships and reduces interpersonal tensions (Martin et al., 2003). Thus, affiliative humor acts as a social lubricant and tool for relationship maintenance in organizations (Kahn, 1989; Lehmann-Willenbrock & Allen, 2014). On the other hand, aggressive humor involves the use of sarcasm, teasing, ridicule, derision, disparagement, and put-downs to hurt or manipulate people (Veselka et al., 2010). It is positively related to hostility, anger, and (Martin et al., 2003). As a result, individuals face negative outcomes

such as repression, humiliation, degradation, and intentional or unintended distress due to aggressive humor (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006).

Conflict

Conflict is a dynamic process involving the perceptions of interacting parties who disagree or are incompatible (Jehn, 1995). It is related to views of incompatibilities or conflicts about interdependent individuals' or groups' perspectives, beliefs, values, interests, or reality (Dijkstra et al., 2005). Perceived substantive disagreements, their views of the parties interfering behavior toward one other, and emotional reactions based on their perceptions are all essential elements of a conflict process (Barki & Hartwick, 2004; Hammer, 2005). Conflict arises when individuals feel excluded, when interacting parties engage in behaviors such as hurting, hindering, controlling each other, competing for control, political maneuvering, aggression, and hostility; or when their behavior causes negative emotions in the other party such as fear, jealousy, anger, anxiety, and disappointment (Barki & Hartwick, 2004). A broad spectrum of situations, from a simple disagreement of opinion about the cause of an event or way of overcoming a task (Murray et al., 2019) to open war or aggressive behavior between the interacting individuals, are covered by the definition of conflict (Spector & Jex, 1998).

Conflict is often classified into two dimensions; Task conflict and relationship conflict (Jehn, 2008; Jehn, 1995; Priem & Price, 1991). Task conflict arises from differences and disagreements in the parties' perspectives and opinions about task distribution money or property, and the content and results of the task performed, whereas relationship conflict arises from personality differences or differences in norms, values, and attacks on personality which may cause negative emotions, as well as personal dissatisfactions of the parties (Barki & Hartwick, 2004; de Wit et al., 2012; Jehn, Mannix, 2001). While task conflict arises from differences in the opinions and viewpoints of the parties, about the work, relationship conflict arises from the parties' disapprobation or dissatisfaction (Jehn & Mannix, 2001).

Treating individuals with anything less than respect and dignity can lead to aggressive responses that may affect the likelihood of conflict occurrence (Pearson & Porath, 2005). On the other hand, non-aggressive, constructive behaviors that do not harm the other party, minimize the level of conflict or the likelihood of conflict occurrence (Gelfand et al., 2006). Thus, humor, which may be defined as a violation of interpersonal respect rules, relationship strengthening, ambiguous intention, and low intensity, has the potential to affect conflict both positively and negatively (Bitterly, 2022; Cooper et al., 2018; Cortina & Magley, 2009; Yam et al., 2018). Indeed, Eisenhardt et al. (1997) showed that affiliative humor is common in teams with low levels of relationship conflict, whereas it is lacking in teams with high levels of relationship conflict. As a result, the use of humor can have a significant impact on the diffusion or reduction of conflict in organizations (Duncan et al., 1990; Martin et al., 2003; Meier & Gross, 2015).

While affiliative humor promotes positive outcomes in organizations such as trust, commitment, stress reduction, and creativity, it also protects individuals from harmful situations, reduces stress and anxiety, and triggers positive emotions (Bitterly, 2022; Kahn, 1989; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006; Romero & Pescosolido 2008), reducing the likelihood and severity of stressful or awkward relationships, such as conflict (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012; Norrick & Spitz, 2008). Affiliative humor also improves communication between individuals and makes the targets more open to the actors' messages (Romero & Pescosolido, 2008). According to LSCT, given the high social anxiety of low-status individuals, subordinates may respond to a manager who acts positively towards them with more prosocial behavior to increase their status by getting closer to their manager, therefore they may expect more supportive behaviors from their managers that will increase their worth (Brown et

al., 2020). Thus, higher-status individuals affiliative humor usage support low-status individuals' worth (Norrick & Spitz, 2008) and a subordinate who is exposed to a manager's affiliative humor is more likely to tolerate negative events and situations (Cooper et al., 2018). As a result, it is reasonable to predict that the likelihood of conflict occurrence between managers and subordinates will decrease because of the subordinate's positive perception, which facilitates the positive emotions felt by the subordinate (Cooper et al., 2018; Kira et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2003; Norrick & Spitz, 2008). Based on the information provided, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1a.: Perceived affiliative humor is negatively related to perceived relationship conflict.

Humor is especially noticeable in problem-solving and task-oriented meetings (Consalvo, 1989). Affiliative humor can start a chain reaction of agreement between participants, making it easier to persuade and urge them to come up with new ideas (Lehmann-Willenbrock & Allen, 2014; Kauffeld & Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012). Positive use of humor raises favorable evaluations and diverts attention from negative information (Bitterly, 2022; Bitterly et al., 2017). During communication, affiliative humor reduces reactions to misunderstandings and softens the impact of criticism on the other party, reducing the severity of disagreements between individuals with opposing viewpoints and facilitating communication between parties to identify and configure their business roles (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Duncan et al., 1990; Mcgraw & Warren, 2010).

In organizations, affiliative humor can create a communication model that enables the development of a creative, entertaining, and problem-solving climate and provides solutions to disagreements (Consalvo, 1989; Decker & Rotondo, 2001). Thus, thanks to affiliative humor, by facilitating collaborative work between the managers and subordinates (Cooper, 2008), misunderstandings and disagreements are reduced between managers and subordinates (Blatt, 2009). In addition, according to LSCT, low status individuals tend to be more understanding and cooperative towards those who support their worth (Brown et al., 2020). In this way, humor can make it easier for a manager to define, teach, and clarify tasks, and can also reduce the level of task conflict by making bilateral exchange between manager and subordinate with less disagreement. Thus, it is plausible to consider that affiliative humor will reduce the level of task conflict between the manager and the subordinate. Therefore, the hypothesis below is proposed;

H1b.: Perceived affiliative humor is negatively related to perceived task conflict.

Aggressive humor has the potential to escalate relationship problems in organizations (Consalvo, 1989) and may lead to dissatisfaction at the workplace according to the perception of the target (Sobral & Islam, 2015). For instance, Yam et al. (2018) showed in their research that managers' aggressive humor behavior harmed subordinate commitment. Therefore, it can be said that aggressive humor is potentially hurtful due to its nature, which can be perceived as a hostile attack and triggers negative emotions (Lehmann-Willenbrock & Allen, 2014; Norrick & Spitz, 2008). Aggressive humor threatens the worth of subordinates reveals negative emotions by giving signals of disapproval, contempt, and humiliation, and encourages subordinates to display reactions to protect their self-esteem (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Yam et al., 2018).

According to LSCT low-status individuals become vigilant against how they are evaluated in their environment and against behaviors that threaten their worth (Brown et al., 2020). Thus, individuals with low social status exhibit more hostile reactions (Kraus et al., 2011) and aggression (Henry, 2009) in response to perceived anti-social behavior. Therefore, the aggressive humor of managers triggers the deviant behaviors of subordinates directed at themselves (Davis & Reyna, 2015; Yam et al., 2018).

Subordinates' negative emotions and stressors because of threats to their personality are associated with relationship conflict (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; de Wit et al., 2012; Jen, 2013). In addition, because of disagreements about a task, or intervention of the manager to prevent a subordinate from doing what he/she thinks should be done in a task or how a task should be done or negative emotions such as anger and frustration directed to manager because of a task are associated with task conflict (Barki & Hartwick, 2004). Thus, depending on the topic (task or personnel) the aggressive humor used by managers may be perceived as disapproval of tasks done by subordinates, or personalities and may be perceived as interference on task or personal issue and/or triggers negative emotions.

Managers develop a sense of self-worth based on the reactions and evaluations of their subordinates (Chen et al., 2023). Subordinates' challenge to the manager not only violates the manager's management principles, but also weakens the leader's position in the organization (Bendersky and Shah, 2012), thus causing the manager to lack a sense of control and respect and feel threatened by himself and his status (Davis and Stephan, 2011). According to LSCT, managers who feel threatened try to find compensatory strategies to manage the threat (Henry, 2008), and antisocial behavior towards subordinates can be considered the most effective behavior to deter subordinates (Chen et al., 2023). Indeed, previous research has shown that when managers face threats from low-status individuals, they are motivated to control the threat, either directly or indirectly (Henry, 2008), and that managers who feel a sense of threat are more likely to maintain their authority and status by attacking, punishing, or hindering subordinates. (Reh et al., 2018; Tarık et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2017). In this case, the subordinate's perception of aggressive humor and his reaction to his manager will cause escalation of conflict spirals between the parties.

In light of the above statements, it is plausible to expect that depending on the issue aggressive humor in which is related to will lead to an increase in the likelihood of task and relationship conflict occurrence (Decker & Rotondo, 2001). Thus, the hypothesis below has been formulated;

H2.: Perceived aggressive humor is positively related to ***(a)*** perceived relationship conflict and ***(b)*** perceived task conflict.

Culture and Interpersonel Relationships

Culture can have a significant impact on how people of different socioeconomic statuses perceive and respond to their environment (Davis & Reyna, 2015). Members of different groups who are exposed to varying levels of status inequalities in their environment may perceive and respond differently to behaviors that influence their worth since their status is reflected in their assumptions and values (Henry, 2008). According to Henry (2009), some societies have greater status inequalities than others in several categories such as social class, financial level, education, race, ethnicity, and age. These status inequalities threaten individuals' sense of social worth in their communities. This situation causes a threat to individuals' social worth, prompting the development of self-esteem defense mechanisms that become embedded in society (Davis & Reyna, 2015; Henry, 2009). According to Henry (2009), based on LSCT, relationships between individuals in different societies are a cultural expression of the strategies evolved by individuals to defend their self-worth from status inequalities. Indeed, researchers have demonstrated that some cultures emerge in harsh circumstances with weak institutions the status has been shared unequally, and people must be attentive to protecting their worth (Davis & Reyna, 2015; Henry, 2009; Lin et al., 2022). The cultural framework of dignity, honor, and face, which is used to categorize an individual's perception of the effects on his worth and his reactions based on these perceptions in interpersonal relationships, was thus employed to clarify the research arguments.

Based on the explanations made above, this research focuses on the perceptions of subordinates in different cultures in the relationship between managers and subordinates with different statuses, the dignity, honor, and face approach, which explains the effects of cultural differences on perceptions based on status inequalities, will provide an explanatory context for the research. One reason for this is that the values and standards supplied by individuals with different statuses may cause managers from different cultures to be perceived differently by their subordinates, as well as divergence in subordinate reactions to these diverse perceptions (Vogel et al., 2015; Weingart et al., 2015). Thus, by affecting the resource of self-worth of individuals, culture can impact the perceptions of subordinates and their reactions, so the likelihood of conflict occurrence by influencing subordinates' perceptions of their managers' behavior and shaping the norms and standards of behavior within a given society (Vogel et al., 2015). In this research, UK, which is classified in the dignity cultural class, and Turkey, which is classified in the honor cultural class, are discussed. For this reason, the face cultural class is in need of research by other researchers.

The honor-dignity cultural approach, which focuses on social order and an individual's source of self-worth, provides a useful context for explaining individuals' perceptions and reactions (Leung, & Cohen, 2011). Dignity is self-worth based on an individual's achievements in pursuing his/her goals and values rather than on others' esteem or evaluations of whether role obligations have been fulfilled. On the other hand, honor is self-worth based on an individual's reputation and also his/her assessment of what others think (Aslani et al., 2016; Ijzerman et al., 2007). If honor culture members do not perceive an attack on their worth or esteem, they try to gain a reputation by being respectful, friendly, hospitable, and polite toward others (Cohen et al. 1999; Maitner et al., 2022). In comparison with honor culture members, dignity culture members are insensitive to external threats and others' positive opinions about their selves (Cohen et al. 1999; Krys et al., 2017). In addition, individuals belonging to a dignity culture construct the self to be autonomous and independent, and a person's worthiness is based on internal evaluations rather than the opinions of other people (Uskul, & Cross, 2019; Wasti, & Erdaş, 2019).

Individuals from honor culture behavior can be explained by the values of doing the right thing and reciprocity rather than rationality based on benefit-cost analysis (Gunsoy, 2020). Because of these values, members of this culture act consciously or unconsciously with a desire to support their worth, gain trustworthiness, and show themselves as a person not to be messed up (Leung, & Cohen, 2011). If an individual does not respond aggressively to an attack on his/her honor, he/she believes that society regards them as weak and dishonorable (Uskul & Cross, 2019). These values lead members of an honor culture to be more vigilant toward the ambiguous behaviors of the individuals with whom they come into contact, to focus on ambiguous behaviors, and to make greater efforts to interpret them (Uskul, & Cross, 2020). On the other hand, members of dignity culture since their self is defined by reference to self-standards, individuals are relatively not vigilant with the other's behaviors about themselves, and they are more invulnerable to affronts (Erdaş, 2016). Indeed, Krys and colleagues (2017) showed that individuals belonging to the honor culture respond with aggression to behaviors that provoke them, whereas individuals belonging to the dignity culture give constructive reactions to provocations to reduce tension.

According to the LSCT, low-status individuals are vigilant to the behaviors of high-status individuals to maintain their psychological worth (Henry, 2008). Honor culture members are more vigilant against hostile social cues due to deep inequalities between statuses in their community (Kraus etal., 2011). If it is assumed that individuals belonging to the honor culture associate their worth with the opinions of others (Henry, 2009), it can be expected that subordinates belonging to the honor culture will be more vigilant against the ambiguous behavior of their managers and will make more effort to interpret their behaviors (Gunsoy, 2020; Henry, 2009; Kraus etal., 2011; Lin et al., 2022). On

the other hand, individuals belonging to the dignity culture will be less vigilant to the ambiguous behavior of their managers than members of the honor culture because their managers' opinions regarding their self-worth are less important to them.

Affiliative humor entertains others while facilitating relationships and reducing interpersonal tensions. Positive emotions and trust in the manager are generated by the manager's affiliative humor (Cooper et al., 2018; Kong et al.,2019). Thus, affiliative humor evokes subordinates' evaluative judgments of their managers' supportiveness and friendliness (Blau, 1964), providing a perception of managers' support for esteem needs (Cooper et al., 2018). Subordinates who are exposed to affiliative humor have stronger general tendencies toward sociability and benevolence toward their managers and perceive their managers' behaviors favorably and react positively and more respectfully (Cooper et al., 2018; Staw et al., 1994; Steckler & Tracy, 2014: 201).

Subordinates exposed to the pro-social behaviors of their managers are likely to react differently to these behaviors following their cultural norms (Lin et al., 2013; Vogel et al., 2015). According to LSCT, one reason for this could be that subordinates belonging to honor and dignity cultures differ in their perception of positive ambiguous behaviors of higher-status managers and their responses to them (Bock & Brown, 2021). When low-status individuals show that they accept and respect the status of higher-status individuals, it enables both parties to avoid conflict and enables them to continue their social interactions as normal (Steckler & Tracy, 2014: 202). However, in dignity cultures, individuals are constructed as relatively equal, with each having a stable and internal sense of worth. Honor cultures give greater emphasis to the need to establish and defend the virtue and honor or improve the esteem of oneself and one's group (Smith et al., 2017). Dignity culture could be related to independence where the self is separate from others and should be preserved at all costs from the influence of others (Güngör et al., 2017). For this reason, we can expect that British subordinates' vigilance towards pro-social behavior from their managers will be low and their responses will be similar to their ordinary behavior.

In contrast, while Turks are vigilant against threats to their psychological worth, they are also vigilant against the pro-social behavior of the other party because their behavior is based on the principle of reciprocity (Bock, & Brown, 2021; Henry, 2009). In addition, in response to the pro-social behavior of the other party, they tend to behave with great hospitality, politeness, and genuine concern for behaving in a virtuous and moral manner (Uskul, & Cross, 2019). In addition, Turks perceive people who are significant to them as a part of themselves and tend to establish closer relationships with them than with dignity culture members (Imamoğlu and Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 2007; Uskul et al., 2012). As a result, the likelihood of relationship and task conflict occurrence decreases more for Turks who receive positive signals from their managers for their personalities or tasks than for their UK counterparts.

H3.: Culture moderates ***(a)*** the effect of perceived affliative humor on relationship conflict and ***(b)*** the effect of perceived affliative humor on task conflict, such that the effect of perceived affliative humor on perceived relationship conflict and perceived task conflict is stronger for Turkish subordinates than for UK subordinates.

In honor culture, standing up to rude behavior signals the employee's strength, courage, and competence (Maitner et al., 2022; Tedeschi, 2001). Low status compensation strategies developed collectively by honor culture members who are exposed to status inequalities, subordinates belonging to this culture may attempt to retaliate against their managers to protect their lost reputation and honor, especially in the eyes of others (Bies & Tripp 1998; Henry, 2009). Thus, in honor cultures, people are more assertive and courageous in dealing with competition or conflicts even with their managers

(Erdaş, 2016; Lin et al., 2022). Thus it is plausible to expect that subordinates from an honor culture will be more vigilant to their managers' ambiguous behaviors and respond to perceived attacks on their personalities more violently and aggressively than individuals from a dignity culture, without conducting a cost-benefit analysis. As a result, Turks will be more vigilant of their managers' aggressive humor and will respond more aggressively than their British counterparts, thus the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence will be increased.

H4a.: Culture moderates the effect of perceived aggressive humor on perceived relationship conflict such that the effect of perceived aggressive humor on relationship conflict is stronger for subordinates from Turkish culture than for the subordinates from the UK culture.

Gunsoy et al. (2020) discovered that Turks have demonstrated that when they perceive a direct threat to their personality, they prioritize protecting themselves over completing a task and can exhibit excessive reactions that endanger their interests. In contrast, Gunsoy and colleagues (2020) discovered that when Turks perceive a threat to their competence or receive neutral feedback about their task, they discriminate against threats rather than reacting to all of them as anti-social. Indeed, Uskul and Cross (2019) found a significant difference in the aggression of these dignity and honor culture members who were given feedback that they were dishonest. However, when these two groups were given neutral feedback about their tasks that did not threaten their personalities, there was no difference in their reactions. Gunsoy et al. (2018) and Uskul et al. (2015), in their studies, provided evidence supporting these findings (As cited in Uskul, & Cross, 2019). According to this information, when Turkish subordinates perceive their managers' aggressive humor as an attack on their personalities, the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence between them is higher than that between British subordinates and their managers. It is plausible to expect that when a manager's aggressive humor about a task is interpreted as neutral feedback or competence-testing criticism, there is no significant difference in the likelihood of task conflict occurrence.

H4b.: There is no moderation effect of culture on the relationship between perceived aggressive humor and perceived task conflict.

Incivility

Incivility is defined as low-intensity interpersonal deviant behavior that breaches workplace reciprocative respect norms, such as ignoring, failing to give information, not saying what you genuinely mean, or mocking (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Weingart et al., 2015). Incivility differs from other negative interpersonal workplace behavioral concepts in its low intensity, ambiguous actor intention, and target's ambiguity about the actor's objective (Cortina, 2008; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Incivility is the most common form of rude behavior in organizations, with its low-intensity structure and being affected by individuals' dispositional characteristics such as culture (Pearson et al., 2001). Indeed, research has shown that in workplaces, 98% of subordinates are exposed to incivility behavior from their managers (Porath & Pearson 2013).

The distinction between potentially benign and violent uses of humor is one of degree, rather than a dichotomy. For example, affiliative humor may involve a person gently teasing or playfully mocking the target, so affiliative humor may contain aggressive elements. Thus, the level of humor affects how it is perceived, and humor dimensions have a close and complex relationship (Martin et al., 2003). However, considering the hostile usage of aggressive humor, in which the self is enhanced by denigrating, disparaging, excessively teasing, or ridiculing others (Zillman, 1983), the motivation for

incivility is ambiguous, even if the target is subjected to intentional incivility, the target may not understand why (e.g., the target may have been subjected to incivility due to the actor's unpleasant mood) (Weingart et al., 2015). The complex relationship and high correlation of aggressive humor with affiliative humor, as ambiguous deviant behaviors, and the fact that incivility is considered a separate phenomenon from humor due to its nature that does not have to include fun, have made it more appropriate to use incivility instead of aggressive humor in research. In addition, the fact that aggressive humor can be interpreted as hostile and aggressive rather than passive rude behavior caused incivility to be chosen for the mediating role in the relationship between affiliative humor and the likelihood of conflict occurrence.

While incivility may appear less harmful than violent behavior, studies indicate that it has a negative impact on target individuals (Gunsoy, 2020). When incivility is perceived as malicious, it generates unpleasant feelings such as anger, fear, sadness, and anti-social behavior (Mcgraw & Warren, 2010; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Furthermore, incivility implies that the target is not respected and accepted by the actor, and this behavior endangers the target's social position, psychological worth, and self-esteem, encouraging the target to engage in anti-social behavior (Gunsoy, 2020; Meier & Gross, 2015).

Perception of incivility threatens the individual's identity and self-esteem, resulting in a reciprocal "tit-for-tat" spiral (Andersson & Pearson 1999; Wu et al., 2014). When subordinates witness such behavior from their manager, which may be perceived as a threat to their psychological values, their response is more aggressive than their peers (Günsoy, 2020). In this case, the reciprocal anti-social behavior of the manager, who responds in a similar way to protect his or her status, increases the likelihood of conflict occurrence between the parties (Meier & Gross, 2015). Finally, incivility increases the likelihood of conflict occurrence in organizations by disturbing the relationship and cooperation between parties (Cortina, 2008; Gunsoy, 2020; Pearson & Porath, 2005).

H5.: Subordinates' perceptions of managers' incivility behaviors are positively related with ***(a)*** perceived relationship conflict and ***(b)*** perceived task conflict.

Affiliative humor may negatively affect the perception of incivility behavior, however, if a subordinate perceives incivility after an affiliative humor behavior, the negative effect of affiliative humor on the likelihood of conflict occurrence will disappear or decrease (Mcgraw & Warren, 2010). On the other hand, perceived mistreatment may be affected by the characteristics of a focal target (Pearson & Porath, 2004; Pearson et al., 2001).

LSCT tells us that low-status individuals engage in various behaviors to increase their status. Low-status individuals tend to show violence when they perceive explicit or ambiguous behavior from a high-status individual that will threaten their worth, whereas they tend to respond positively when they receive a sign that will support their worth. Henry (2009) states that in honor culture communities where status inequalities are high, these behavioral patterns manifest themselves in values and norms, and states that individuals belonging to these communities are vigilant against the behavior of the other party in their relationships. In this case, how do individuals belonging to honor culture behave when they are exposed to ambiguous behavior of high-status individuals that can be perceived positively and negatively? How does positively perceived behavior affect reactions to negatively perceived behavior? and do they differ from individuals from other cultures? questions await answers. The answers to these questions can provide insight into the differences in conflict involvement in different cultures for individuals who are exposed to behaviors that threaten and support their worth in their daily lives.

The duality of politeness and violence may seem counter-intuitive at first sight; however, it is the threat of violence that leads to politeness. In other words, politeness, hospitality, and violence go hand-in-hand in honor cultures because people of honor culture fear the respect of escalating violence if they offend others and politeness is a proper means of preventing long spirals of revenge (Cohen et al., 1999). Indeed, Cohen and his colleagues (1999) have provided supportive evidence with their study. One of their studies has provided a finding that honor culture members did not show anger to an annoying confederate at the beginning; after a certain threshold, they gave more violent reactions than dignity culture members. Thus the civility and politeness norms do not prevent honor culture members from engaging in violence when it is required.

Honor culture members are deeply committed to the values of loyalty and integrity, as well as the need to protect and maintain their reputation (Bock, & Brown, 2021). Because, interpersonal interactions honor culture making it normative to retaliate directly against insults and to repay personal favors in kind (Maitner et al., 2022). Thus Turks tend to avoid conflicts with the people they care about (Gunsoy et al., 2015). In particular, the effect of incivility, which can be interpreted as an indirect attack on personality, on the likelihood of conflict occurrence with someone emotionally close, decreases (Konuk, Ataman, 2023). On the other hand, members of the dignity culture, evaluate their situation rationally by looking at events (Gunsoy, 2020). Furthermore, members of the dignity culture are free to view each new event in their own right and are not required to adhere to the goals and obligations imposed by the social groups to which they belong (Schwartz, 1994). Individuals from a culture of dignity are more concerned with whether they meet their standards in their relationships and achieve their own goals than with their evaluation of relationships and the environment (Aslani et al., 2016). As a result, in individualistic dignity cultures such as the UK, relationships are less important for individuals, and previous behaviors and relationship levels of individuals with whom they are in a relationship do not affect their conflict with the person with whom they are in a relationship. Indeed, Gunsoy et al. (2015) demonstrated in their study that individuals from individualistic, dignity culture members avoid conflict less than Turks.

To summarize, managers' incivility toward Turkish subordinates does not completely eliminate the effect of affiliative humor, which reduces the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence. One reason for this could be that affiliative humor's signals of getting closer and positive reciprocity norms prevent the Turkish subordinate from having destructive reactions to incivility, which is an ambiguous behavior that may be interpreted and perceived as not an attack on the subordinate's psychological worth. On the other hand, incivility may completely eliminate the direct effect of affiliative humor on the likelihood of relationship conflict for the British, who evaluate the situation rationally and feel more free to react.

H6.: The perceived incivility behaviors of manageres mediates the negative relationship between perceived affliative humor and ***(a)*** perceived relationship conflict and ***(b)*** perceived task conflict, and ***(c)*** The mediating role of incivility between affiliative humor and relationship conflict is moderated by culture. Turkish subordinates increases the mediation effect level of incivility more than English subordinates. ***(d)*** The mediating role of incivility between affiliative humor and task conflict is not moderated by culture.

Methods

Research Setting and Sample

Although research has been focused on manager-subordinate conflict due to the difficulties of investigating both sides in one study (Liu, 2018), Obi et al. (2020) have been followed and the study has been applied only to subordinates.

Following Chua's (2013) method, a private digital consumer panel was used to contact 300 Turkish citizens and 300 UK citizens, white-collard subordinates from mid-size SMEs, and for-profit institutions using, the random selection method. The participants worked in organizations operating in seven different service industries. The industries are Banking and Finance (=76), Sales and Marketing (=82), Education (=90), Retail (=96), Public Services (=57), Health (=39); Tourism (=47). Fourteen participants from Turkey and nine participants from the UK were not included in the analysis due to missing answers. In addition, due to avoiding participants giving the same answer to all questions, including reverse questions the data of 48 participants from Turkey and 51 participants from the UK whose standard deviations value were below (*SD* < .1) were not included in the analysis (Final N_{UK}= 240, N_{Turkey} = 238).

Except for the working status condition, no quota was enforced throughout data collection. Because the research panel represents typical demographic distributions across the country, and the sample was chosen at random from among the panelists, the research findings can be said to be valid in this circumstance. The research results in this case can be projected to both countries because the research panels that are reached reflect representative demographic distributions of the country and the sample has been randomly selected among the panelists. Participants were asked to confirm their consent to participate in the study before answering the questionnaire, to comply with the research ethics regulations.

To demonstrate the statistical power of the sample size obtained in this study, using the 3.1.9.7 version of the G*Power software, the "Two tails, t-tests - Means: Difference between two independent means (two groups)" test was selected, and "Sensitivity power analysis" was applied for collected total data. For both data separetely "Two tails, t-tests - Means: Difference from constant" was applied. The error probability was set to "0.05," and a 95% power was targeted. These values were based on the recommendations of previous researchers' (Faul et al. 2009; Lakens, 2013; Moon, Sanchez-Rodrigues, 2021; Thompson, 2002). For 95% power, the effect size d = 0.3304315 (Total), 0.2138519 (Turk), 0.2129538 (UK) (d = 0.2277833 (Total), 0.1616362 (Turk), 0.1609575 (UK) for 80% power) was calculated using sample sizes of 238 (Turkish participants) and 240 (English participants). Furthermore, the non-centrality parameter is calculated as = 3.6121148 (Total), 3.2991462 (Turk), 3.2990668 (UK) and critical t = 1.9649602 (Total), 1.6513084 (Turk), 1.6512542 (UK). The results showed that the sample size attained by the research achieved an effect size d value of 80%-95% power (.23-.33) for both groups, (.161 - .214) for Turkey, and (.161-.213) for UK. Given that many researchers believe that 80% power is acceptable, the sample size of the study is adequate (Lakens, 2022; Moon, Sanchez-Rodrigues, 2021). The power-effect size d for a total of 478 participants in the two groups, the power level is .999763 at 0.5 effect size d level of 478 (Total), .9999278 of 238 (Turk), .9999315 of 240 (UK). This graph demonstrates that the sample size was adequate (Lakens, 2022).

To apply the survey to Turkey, selected scales originally developed in English were translated into Turkish by three independent specialists. Specialists are brilliant in both languages (Chidlow et al., 2014). After the translation process was completed, the back translation process was initiated, and two other specialists translated the scale back into English. The original scale and back translation were compared by two academics who were fluent in both languages. After the translation process, the pilot survey was administrated to 47 participants, and after ensuring the test of a pilot study, the survey was sent to the sample group.

In the next stage, due to the use of two models in the research, factor analyses were first applied to the data collected from Turkey and the UK separately. Then, the data collected from Turkey and

the UK were combined and factor analysis tests were applied to the obtained data together. Factor analysis revealed the underlying factor structure of the statements representing the variables of the scales were examined (Ayaz et al., 2019; Yaslioglu, 2017). The Cronbach's alpha value (α = .70) was considered acceptable (Mahwah, 1998).

Assessment of Common Method Bias

Data collected from two different cultures should be investigated to determine whether they are affected by Common Method Bias (CMB), as it is obtained through the self-reporting technique. The CMB analysis in this study was conducted in two stages. In the first phase, the percentage of the described variance of each factor was checked using the Harman single-factor test method (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). As a result of the analysis, single-factor variance from both cultures is below the 50% threshold (Turkey: 37.4%; UK: 34.5%) Thus, according to the Harman Single Factor Test analysis, the CMB threat is unlikely (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

In the second stage, The Unmeasured Latent Method (ULM) is applied (Podsakoff et. 2012). As Richardson et al. (2009) suggested, item loads were compared in samples with and without the addition of the Common Latent Factor (CLF) to the research model. The variance described by the method factor, regardless of the presence of CLF, was low and the differentiation of correlations did not exceed the threshold level. Thus, the variance between the items belongs to a single CLF. Two different findings from the two methodologies indicate that there was no CMB effect in the study.

Measures

Questionnaire items were arranged to measure the participants' evaluation of their formal first-degree managers. In the survey presented, the participants were asked to provide their answers by considering the managers they were directly affiliated with. Cronbach's alpha and KMO values of all scales are shown in Table 1. In addition, the McDonald's omega values presented by Hayes and Coutts (2020) as a strong alternative for reliability estimation are also presented in the same table. Participants in the survey were asked whether they agreed with the survey's questions. Six-point scales were preferred, with "strongly agree" on one end and "strongly disagree" on the opposite end. According to Cummins and Gullone (2000), six-point scales without a midpoint are preferred, particularly in studies where subjective opinions are obtained (Cummins & Gullone, 2000; 91). In addition, Peabody (1962; 66) states that this scaling method allows for the measurement of preference intensities at the two ends as well as the level of the participants' choices when selecting one end, thus increasing measurement precision.

Conflict. The conflict scale developed by Jehn et al. (2008) was adapted and used to measure manager-subordinate conflicts. Although research on conflict and its scale frequently focuses on teams, groups, or intergroup settings within organizations (e.g., Jehn, 1994, 1995; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn et al., 2008; Parayitam & Dooley, 2009; Vahtera et al., 2017), conflicts are found everywhere in organizations where at least two people interact (Dijkstra et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2011 (DeDreu, 2007). The original scale was modified by replacing the expressions for measuring intra-team conflict with those for measuring manager-subordinate conflict. Kiran et al.'s (2012) study was used in this adaptation process. " How different were you and your managers' viewpoints on decisions?" shows an example of the adaptation of the task conflict scale items. "How much fighting about personal issues was there with your manager?" is an example of the adaptation of the relationship conflict scale items.

Humor. The Humor scale developed by Martin et al. (2003) was adopted and used to measure subordinates' perceptions of their managers' aggressive and affiliative humor use. The two dimensions of the humor scale were adapted by replacing the items prepared for the participant's self-evaluation in the original scale with statements for the participant's evaluation of his/her manager in accordance with the focus of this research. For example, the item stated in the original scale as "I do not have to work very hard at making other people laugh—I seem to be a naturally humorous person", " My manager does not have to work very hard at making other people laugh. My manager seems to be a naturally humorous person".

Incivility. The Incivility scale developed by Cortina et al. (2001) was used to measure subordinates' perceptions of their managers' incivility. "My manager addressed me in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately" is an example for the incivility behavior scale items.

Demograpgical Statistics of participants from Turkey and the UK are used as control variables in the research; (Age_{UK} = 22-57 years, M_{UK} = 34.73 years, SD_{UK} = 8.31; $\text{Age}_{\text{Turkey}}$ = 21-52 years, M_{Turkey} = 32.08 years, SD_{Turkey} = 6.23; $\text{Age}_{\text{Combined}}$ = 21-57 years, $M_{Combined}$ = 33.38 years, $SD_{Combined}$ = 7.44). Of the participants, 212 worked in the management position and 131 were from the UK. 81 of the participants graduated from associate degree, 371 were under graduate degree (180 from the UK) and 15 were post-graduate degrees (15 from the UK), and 34 were associate degree graduates.

The absolute fit indices χ^2, df, RMSEA, SRMR, GFI, CMIN/df recommended by McDonald and Ho (2002) were measured to show the fit of the models. According to the fitness values suggested by researchers for absolute fit indices, the results obtained from the CFA and presented in Table 3 show the acceptability of the models (Byrne, 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Steiger, 2007).

Data Analysis Strategy

The analysis was conducted in two models. The technique used by Vogel and colleagues (2015) in their research was followedAt this point, data from both countries were combined, and the universality of the models were tested by examining the interactions of the combined data. For both models, culture was included as a categorical variable by coding a value of "1" for Turks and "2" for British.

In the first model, the moderating role of culture in the effect of aggressive and affiliative humor on relationship conflict and task conflict was explored. By using the moderation interaction method it is tried to prove whether the moderating variable can strengthen or weaken the direct influence of humor on conflict types.

In the second model, the mediating effect of incivility on the effect of affiliative humor on conflict types and the moderating role of culture in this interaction were investigated. The data from both countries were combined for the analysis of the model. Thus it is aimed to provide evidence for the differences between perception and/or reactions of subordinates from different cultures to the ambiguous behaviors of their managers. For the second model, by using the moderated mediation method it is tried to prove whether the culture strengthen or weakens the interaction of affiliative humor, incivility, and task and relationship conflict. Analysis and Results

SPSS software was used for Exploratory Factor Analysis and correlation analysis, AMOS software was used for model tests and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) tests, and regression analysis results were supported by bootstrap analysis results. For bootstrap analysis, the bias-corrected bootstrapping method was used by selecting the "Bias-Corrected Confidence Intervals" option in the AMOS software.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients between the variables in the first model. In the first model, H1, H2, H3, and H4 were analyzed, and in the second model, H5 and H6

have been analyzed. In addition, before testing the models, Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) were applied to models, and the VIF values were less than 2; therefore, the possibility of multicollinearity was eliminated in the study (Howell, 1994).

Table 4 reports the regression analysis results for H1a and H1b. The results show that the perceptions of the subordinates about the managers' affiliative humor negatively affect (a) relationship conflict and (b) task conflict (H1a, β =-.153, p=.000<.01; H1b, β =-.224, p=.000<.01). Therefore, as proposed the H1a and H1b hypotheses were supported.

Table 4 reports the regression analysis results of Hypothesis 2. The results of the analyses indicate that in case the Turkish and English subordinates perceive the humor behavior of managers as aggressive humor the perception effects the likelihood of (a) relationship conflict an (b) task conflict occurrence. Thus, the results supports the H2a and H2b (H2a, β = .486, p=.000<.01; H2b, β = .243, p=.000<.01).

Table 5 reports the regression analysis results of Hypothesis 3. The results obtained from the H3a analysis firstly confirm that the "Aggressive Humor X Culture" interaction term has a significant effect on relationship conflict (H3a, β =-.315, LLCI=-.656 – ULCI= -.004, p= .049 < .05, ΔR^2 = .330). The results of the moderator analysis showed that the Turkish subordinates' perception of their managers' aggressive humor behavior is affecting the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence stronger than the perceptions of the UK subordinates. The effect of "Aggressive Humor x Culture " the interaction term on Task Conflict, which was used to analyze the moderation role of culture in the effect of affiliative humor on Task Conflict, was not found to be significant (H3b, β =-.026, LLCI=-.433 – ULCI= .355; p= .882, ΔR^2 = .126). The results obtained show that culture does not have a moderating effect on the effect of aggressive humor on task conflict, as expected. To put it more clearly, the results showed that there was no significant difference in the effect of aggressive humor perceptions of Turkish and British subordinates on task conflict. In summary, H3b is supported.

Table 6 reports the regression analysis results of Hypothesis 4. The results of the H4a analysis firstly confirm that the "Affiliative Humor X Culture (AfH X C)" interaction term has a significant effect on relationship conflict (H4a, β = .457, LLCI= .019 – ULCI= .54, p= .019 <.05, ΔR^2=. 161). The results of the moderator analysis showed that the Turkish subordinates' perception of their managers' affiliative humor behavior negatively affected the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence stronger than the perceptions of the UK subordinates. As a result, hypothesis 4a of the study is supported.

The effect of "Affiliative Humor x Culture " the interaction term on Task Conflict, which was used to analyze the moderation role of culture in the effect of affiliative humor on Task Conflict, was not found to be significant (H4b, β = .053, LLCI =-.472 – ULCI= .609, ΔR^2=. 118). In summary, H4b was not supported.

In the second model analysis, the effect of managers' incivility behaviors which are perceived by subordinates on conflict types; whether the negative effect of managers' affiliative humor behaviors which is perceived by subordinates on the likelihood of conflict occurrence is hindered by subordinates' perception of managers' incivility behavior; It has been investigated whether this relationship differs in different cultures based on the UK and Turkish cultures.

Table 7 reports the regression analysis results of H5a and H5b. The results show that subordinates' perception of incivility behaviors of managers has a significant and positive effect on (a) relationship conflict and (b) task conflict (H5a, (β =.608; p=.000<.01, LLCI =.542 – ULCI =.658); H5b, (β =.342; p=.000<.01, LLCI =.27 – ULCI =.417)). Thus, hypotheses H5a and H5b were supported.

The results obtained for hypotheses H6a and H6b hypotheses are presented in Table 7. According to Hayes (2015), when the mediating variable is included in the model to test the mediating role of a variable, a decrease in the level of the direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable indicates partial mediation and the fact that the indirect effect becomes

completely insignificant indicates a full mediation relationship. In light of this information, according to the findings obtained from the analysis of the H6a hypothesis, it was observed that Turkish subordinates' perceptions of their managers' incivility partially mediated the relationship between the manager and subordinate of their perceptions of affiliative humor behavior and relationship conflict (H6a, β direct effect= -.606, p<.001 LLCI = -.793 – ULCI = -.406; β indirect effect=-.345, p<.001, LLCI = -.492 – ULCI = -.247). Therefore, according to the findings, the 6a hypothesis of the study is partially supported. Second, as a result of testing the 6b hypothesis, incivility mediated the relationship between affiliative humor and task conflict. While affiliative humor has an indirect effect on task conflict, but not a significant direct effect; (H6b, β direct effect = -.182, p>.1, LLCI = -.434 – ULCI=.091; β indirect effect=-.207, p<.01, LLCI = -.303 – ULCI = -.135). In this case, H6b is supported.

For the moderated mediation analysis, the results indicate that the moderating role of culture on the association between affiliative humor and relationship conflict through incivility is significant. In the paranthesis, direct effect of the interaction term (Affiliative Humor × Culture) on incivility was shown (β =.364, p <.1, 90% CI = [.064; .700]). Thus, the results support Hypothesis 6c for combined data. For the moderated mediation analysis, the results indicate that the moderating role of culture on the association between affiliative humor and task conflict through incivility is significant. In the parentheses, direct effect of the interaction term (Affiliative Humor × Culture) on incivility was shown (β =-.021, p> .1, 90% CI = [-.46; .416]). Thus, the result obtained does not support Hypothesis 6d for combined data.

Discussion

The study aimed to evaluate the impact of subordinates' perceptions of their managers' ambiguous behaviors on the likelihood of subordinate-manager conflict occurring under the moderation effect of culture. This research provides essential contributions to the conflict literature by revealing that culture moderates the relationship between ambiguous behavior (humor, incivility) perceptions and the likelihood of manager-subordinate relationship conflict. In addition, the findings provide insight to the researchers that ambiguous behaviors deserve more attention in conflict literature. One reason for that is ambiguous behaviors leave more space for the perception and interpretation of counterparts in a relationship. Thus, researching under which conditions perceptions and interpretations of individuals are affected may provide evidence to understand the conflict process. In addition, evidence suggests that LSCT provides an explanatory context in conflict research. Thus, the research provides evidence for both the conflict literature and the LSCT literature.

First, the research revealed that, as expected (H1, H2), while affiliative humor increases, the likelihood of conflict occurrence decreases, and while aggressive humor increases, the likelihood of conflict occurrence increases. These findings indicate that humor behavior, which is not direct and does not provide clear signals about the manager's intention toward the target triggers subordinates' reactions in both ways positively and negatively. As a result, the manager's use of humor can cause either an increase or decrease in the likelihood of conflict occurrence, depending on the subordinate's perception of the manager's intention. The negative effect of the manager's affiliative humor on the likelihood of conflict occurrence between him and his subordinate can be considered a good tool to eliminate the possible destructive effects of conflict. However, in order not to leave the perception of this ambiguous behavior to the employee, managers need to act carefully and clearly state their intentions. However, considering that employees' perceptions are affected by their characteristics, the manager should be selective regarding which subordinates such behaviors will be applied to.

The findings support H3a by showing that culture has a moderating role in the effect of affiliative humor on relationship conflict. The analysis revealed that subordinates' perceptions of managers'

affiliative humor in Turkey have a greater impact on the decrease in the likelihood of conflict occurrence than subordinates in the UK. This finding confirms the idea that Turkish subordinates value relationships more and approach business relationships more emotionally than British subordinates (Ulu & Lalonde, 2007). In addition, the study provides evidence that culture does not have a moderating role in the effect of affiliative humor on task conflict. Thus, it has revealed that subordinates' perceptions of the managers' affiliative humor usage have similar effects on task conflict in both cultures.

The H4a analysis revealed that Turkish subordinates' perceptions of aggressive humor predicted relationship conflict more strongly than the UK subordinates' perceptions. This finding is also compatible with the honor-dignity cultural approach and LSCT. Therefore, managers who are in relationships with subordinates, especially those who are members of Turkish culture, should be aware that the humor they make is carefully monitored and interpreted by the subordinate, and if interpreted negatively, it may cause conflict. Depending on the results of Hypothesis H4b analysis culture does not have a moderating role in the aggressive humor-task conflict relationship. Therefore, in both cultures, subordinates' perceptions of managers' aggressive humor have similar effects on task conflict. This result may provide insight that the effect of aggressive humor on conflict will cause similar results, especially for managers working with subordinates from various cultures internationally. Considering that aggressive humor can be interpreted as deviant and aggressive behavior, managers may need to avoid humor behavior that can be interpreted as aggressive.

The significant results obtained from H3 and H4 provided evidence that culture has a moderating effect on the relationship between humor and relationship conflict while providing evidence that culture has no effect on the relationship between humor and task conflict. This finding supports other researchers who found that task conflict is not affected by culture (Jen, 2013; Zhongjun et al., 2019). However, it should be taken into consideration that the results obtained focus on the relationship between the manager and the subordinate. Task conflict between a subordinate and a manager has different dynamics than between co-workers (Kasl, 1998). Thus, applying the research among co-workers may lead to different results, so researchers can contribute to the conflict literature by repeating the research at the intra-group or co-worker analysis level.

On the other hand, the findings indicate that the effect of ambiguous behaviors on relationship conflict varies across cultures. This result contradicts the finding of de Wit and colleagues (2012) in their meta-analysis that the findings regarding conflict and its outcomes can be generalized across cultures. In their meta-analysis study based on 116 empirical studies on intragroup conflict, de Wit and colleagues did not find the effects of cultural context on the interaction between organizational conflict and its outcomes. Although the meta-analysis study was at the intragroup analysis level, the findings obtained in this study which is applied to the analysis level of manager-subordinate, provide insights to other researchers (Gelfand et al., 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Tjosvold et al., 2006). Therefore, based on the results obtained, it can be said that investigating the ambiguous behaviors affecting the perception of managers and subordinates will make an important contribution to the understanding of conflict and its relationship with culture.

The results obtained from the analysis of Hypotheses 6a and 6b show that incivility has a full mediating role in the effect of managers' affiliative humor on task conflict. On the other hand, managers' affiliative humor has a partial mediating role of incivility in relationship conflict. This result shows us that the effect of affiliative humor on reducing the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence continues despite the manager's incivility behavior, while it eliminates the negative effect of affiliative humor on the likelihood of task conflict occurrence. LSCT tells us that individuals tend to exhibit anti-social behavior towards behaviors that threaten their worth, and pro-social behavior towards behaviors that support their worth. The results obtained support these findings. However,

employees who receive support from their managers may tend to ignore ambiguous behaviors that may threaten their worth, or their reactions to these behaviors may be softer rather than violent. When the conflict is task-related rather than personal, incivility behavior perception, affiliative humor plays a more effective role in the conflict relationship.

The results obtained from the analysis of Hypothesis 6c, as expected, provided evidence that Turks who are members of the honor culture may be more vigilant against behaviors that affect their self-worth than UK citizens who are members of the dignity culture. According to these results, the negative effect of affiliative humor perception of Turkish subordinates on the likelihood of relationship conflict occurrence increases through incivility. Thus, when Turks receive signals supporting their worth from their managers, the mediating role of incivility behavior between affiliative humor and relationship conflict is less compared to UK citizens. Furthermore, in this relationship, managers' incivility had a stronger mediation impact on subordinates from the UK than on subordinates from Turkey. While Turkish subordinates see the manager's affiliative humor as an opportunity to become closer to the manager, they are more tolerant of rude behavior because of values supplied by honor culture norms (Gusoy, 2020; Morris et al., 1998). Therefore, this result can be interpreted as Turkish subordinates responding to the affiliative humor of their managers, this behavior brings the subordinates closer to the manager, and therefore they ignore or tolerate incivility behavior. On the other hand, the behaviors of the UK participants can be interpreted as differently and clear for each behavior.

Theoretical Implications

Pearson and colleagues (2001) defined incivility as "acting rudely, or acting rudely without one's intention, as a reflection of a desire to undermine the organization, harm the target, or benefit oneself". However, the findings indicate that, in addition to this classification, managers may use incivility against subordinates as an implicit warning to achieve common goals. For example, a manager's incivility toward a subordinate who fails to complete a task benefits both parties because the subordinate's failure to complete the task has negative consequences for both. A manager's incivility caused by the subordinate's lack of task completion may cause shame; in this scenario, the subordinates' withdrawal reaction may not lead to conflict occurrence (Konuk et al., 2022; Maitner et al., 2022). Indeed, the fact that studies reveal that the mediation effect of incivility on the effect of affiliative humor on task conflict is lower than the effect on the affiliative humor-relationship conflict relation may reflect this circumstance.

Individuals evaluate events that affect their emotions, cognition, and behaviors (Bell-Dolan & Anderson, 1999). Attribution theory provides a framework for explaining the relationship between people's evaluations of the cause of a negative event and their feelings and behavior (Eberly et al., 2011). This context can help to understand and explain subordinates' attribution about the source of the managers' incivility behavior and reacts to these attributions. The study's findings strongly suggest that subordinates' attribution of managers' incivility intentions can result in a variety of outcomes. As noted by Cortina and Magley (2009), this proposition requires analyzing incivility from the target's perspective, and future research may contribute to filling this gap by considering incivility from the target's attributions to the cause of the manager's incivility behavior.

Researchers have investigated the conditions that lead to functional outcomes of conflict. The results revealed that when task conflict is accompanied by high-level relationship conflict, task conflict outcomes are dysfunctional (Choi & Cho, 2011; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; de Wit et al., 2012). A second line of research indicates that when relationship conflict is minimal, moderate task conflict is best for functional organizational outcomes (De Dreu, 2006; Jehn, 1995). These findings, in particular,

suggest that affiliative humor can be employed to control conflict levels to achieve functional objectives. Future studies can provide more evidence on this topic by considering culture.

Investigation of the factors affecting the perception of affiliative humor as aggressive humor in organizations can provide important contributions to both the literature and the preparation of in-house training and the training of managers with different cultures on affiliative humor. In addition, Yang and Mossholder (2004) state that interaction norms related to conflict are an important research area. Investigating the effect of defining affiliative humor in an organization as an interaction norm on conflict levels can also make an important contribution to the literature and practical applications.

The results from this study provide insight into the contingent nature of the low-status compensation strategies recommended by LSCT. Therefore, which of the compensation strategies low-status individuals will engage in may be a function of contingency factors. In this case, subsequent studies can investigate what behaviors individuals use to compensate for their low status and how the levels of these behaviors change, depending on their personal characteristics or the conditions they are in.

Managerial and Practical Implications

Incivility and aggressive humor may easily become more common in organizations because of the lack of sufficient attention by decision-makers regarding these two phenomena (Pearson & Porath, 2005). However, the findings obtained from this study indicate that these two phenomena may have similar negative or positive effects in different cultures and that more attention should be paid to organizations. In addition, the findings of the study provide insight into how culture can shape subordinates' perceptions and anti-social or pro-social affective responses. Therefore, these findings can help practitioners develop interventions to address communication problems or conflicts between subordinates from different backgrounds or subsidiaries of multinational companies located in different countries (Gunsoy, 2020). In the globalizing world, it is especially important for organizations that enter the international arena to take precautions for incivility and aggressive humor. To prevent organizations from being negatively affected by managerial incivility and aggressive humor, it is important to provide values that discourage those behaviors is important (Moon & Sanchez-Rodrigues, 2021).

Managing conflict requires a challenging effort to articulate competing viewpoints while also improving relationships. Direct, respectful open dialogue and warm interpersonal contact have been found to be useful for conflict management abilities, at least for task disagreements (Tjosvold & Sun, 2003). These findings suggest that affiliative humor can be used to facilitate an open-minded discussion of different viewpoints on the task. As a result, defining the framework of affliative humor clearly and educating both managers and subordinates to prevent affiliative humor from being misunderstood is vital for developing a culture regarding affiliative humor and may increase its effect in organizations.

Research provides evidence that ambiguous behaviors have the potential to be influenced by different levels of culture. Therefore, managers should avoid ambiguous behaviors that have the potential to be misunderstood, and behaviors that can be perceived as positive should be used with care, especially in the international arena. However, given the potential of positive behaviors to reduce negative organizational outcomes, training managers and subordinates on this issue is more critical.

Limitations

A subordinate's conflict with their managers was evaluated solely based on the self-report of limited numbers of subordinates from limited countries, reflecting the research sample group. These ratings provide information on how subordinates perceive conflicts and how they affect them but do not reflect managers' conflicting perceptions and all the cultures. Thus, researchers can investigate a larger variety and number of participants and cultures with further research.

While examining the effect of ambiguous behaviors on the likelihood of conflict occurrence, the research focused on specific conditions, and this limits the generalization of the results obtained. First of all, the research focused on the relationship between subordinate-managers, which is relatively less researched, rather than the intra-group analysis level, which organizational conflict research generally focuses on. Previous research shows that manager-subordinate relationships may have different dynamics than intra-group or inter-co-worker relationships, so this should be taken into account when considering the results obtained in this research. Researchers can test the validity of the results obtained with samples at different levels of analysis.

In the study, culture which was expected to affect the perception was researched as a moderator but many theoretically relevant moderators, such as personality, trust, and conflict management style were not investigated. Thus, future research would contribute to the literature by further investigation of theoretically relevant moderators of the likelihood of conflict occurrence.

The psychological mechanism underlying the moderating effects of culture is notcompletely considered. In addition, it is important to model and test other individual-level mechanisms because other possible explanations could drive the results (Tsui et al., 2007). In addition, although the moderator effect of culture was investigated in this study, culture was not addressed in all dimensions and the effect of dimensions has not been investigated. For this reason, it cannot be ensured that only honor-dignity approaches are effective in moderating the effect of culture.

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Appendix

Table 1. *Factor analysis results for the data from Turkey, UK and the combination of them*

Items	Turkey (N=238)			UK (N=240)			Combined (N= 478)		
	Item Loading	Cronbach α/ McDonalds Ω (ω)	KMO	Item Loading	Cronbach α/ McDonalds Ω (ω)	KMO	Item Loading	Cronbach α/ McDonalds Ω (ω)	KMO
Relationship Conflict									
I and my manager fought about non-work things.	.895			.87			.75		
Sometimes, we fought over personal matters.	.891			.818			.776		
How much fighting about personal issues was there with your manager?	.823	.880/.881	.785	.764	.843/.845	.786	.725	.863/.865	.793
I and my manager disagreed about non-work (social or personality things).	.601			.679			.728		
Task Conflict									
I and my manager fought about work matters.	.67			.56			.795		
I and my manager had task-related disagreements.	.732			.767			.802		
How much conflict of ideas was there with your manager?	.605			.679			.845		
How different were you and your manager's viewpoints on decisions?	.833	.896/.898	.888	.796	.883/.887	.875	.768	.890/.892	.89
How much did you and your manager have to work through disagreements about varying opinions?	.82			.856			.538		
I and my manager often disagreed about work things.	.723			.645			.787		
Affiliative Humor									
My manager usually doesn't laugh or joke around much with other people. *	.719			.733			.726		
My manager doesn't have to work very hard at making other people laugh. My manager seems to be a naturally humorous person.	.657			.626			.638		
My manager rarely makes other people laugh by telling funny stories about his/herself. *	.183			.139			.806		
My manager laughs and joke a lot with my closest friends.	.682	.850/.849	.831	.591	.837/.814	.834	.635	.843/.812	.846
My manager usually doesn't like to tell jokes or amuse people. *	.773			.788			.78		
My manager enjoys making people laugh.	.729			.71			.719		
My manager doesn't often joke around with my friends. *	.785			.783			.787		
My manager usually can't think of witty things to say when s/he is with other people. *	.728			.732			.734		

Aggressive Humor									
If someone makes a mistake, my manager will often tease them about it.	.789			.748			.769		
People are never offended or hurt by my manager's sense of humor. *	.5			.495			.496		
When telling jokes or saying funny things, my manager is usually not very concerned about how other people are taking it.	.716			.541			.64		
My manager does not like it when people use humor as a way of criticizing or putting someone down. *	.724			.74			.723		
Sometimes my manager thinks of something that is so funny that s/he can't stop his/herself from saying it, even if it is not appropriate for the situation.	.265	.816/.841	.754	.196	.796/.807	.729	.588	.778/.800	.766
My manager never participates in laughing at others even if all his/her friends are doing it. *	.086			.085			.562		
If my manager doesn't like someone, s/he often use humor or teasing to put them down.	.872			.876			.871		
Even if something is really funny to my manager, s/he will not laugh or joke about it if someone will be offended. *	.807			.792			.8		
Incivility in the Workplace									
Put you down or was condescending to you?	.9			.892			.901		
Paid little attention to your statement or showed little interest in your opinion?	.814			.863			.837		
Made demeaning or derogatory remarks about you?	.921			.916			.917		
Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately?	.9	.959/.960	.916	.876	.948/.948	.912	.888	.953/.954	.921
Ignored or excluded you from professional camaraderie?	.907			.884			.896		
Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you have responsibility?	.905			.843			.869		
Made unwanted attempts to draw you into a discussion of personal matters?	.921			.852			.888		

* refers to reverse item in the scale

Table 2. *Descriptive results and correlation coefficient matrix of the research variables*

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. RC	2.947	1.235	-									
2. TC	3.710	1.121	.627**	-								
3. InC	2.210	1.221	.608**	.419**	-							
4. AfH	3.860	.973	-.358**	-.321**	-.398**	-						
5. AgH	2.840	.962	.554**	.340**	.603**	-.423**	-					
6. Culture	1.490	.500	-.047	-.040	.008	.044	-.007	-				
7. Gen	1.297	.457	.053	.023	.133**	-.134**	.011	.120**	-			
8. Age	33.38	7.436	-.106*	-.097*	-.033	-.049	-.015	.162**	.355**	-		
9. Edu	1.858	.431	-.032	-.024	-.022	-.017	-.023	.133**	.116*	.048	-	
10. Exp	3.740	1.120	-.049	-.083	-.008	.054	-.028	.059	.180**	.433**	.006	-
11. Tenure	3.141	1.129	-.069	-.026	-.005	-.038	.001	.074	.283**	.525**	.065	.664**

Note: N = 487; *p<.05, **p <.01 level (two-tailed). SD = standard deviation.
Relationship Conflict (RC), Task Conflict (TC), Gender (Gen), Education (Edu), Incivility (InC), Affiliative Humor (AfH), Aggressive Humor (AgH), Experience (Exp). Model results showing standardized coefficients

Table 3. *Fit indices for the models*

		N	χ^2	df	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	CMIN/df
Model 1	Combined	478	280.741***	92	.066	.0779	.925	3.052
	Turkey	238	350.477***	137	.058	.0837	.921	2.558
	UK	240	172.899***	121	.045	.0880	.916	1.429
Model 2	Combined	478	280.363***	120	.077	.0735	.881	2.336
	Turkey	238	215.673***	140	.048	.0718	.904	1.541
	UK	240	203.054***	119	.056	.0820	.901	1.706

Note. *p<.05, **p <.01, ***p <.001 level (two-tailed).

Table 4. *The interaction between aggressive humor and conflict types (Relationship, Task)*

	DV*: Relationship Conflict				DV*: Task Conflict			
Variable	***Effect***	***SE***	***t***	***p***	***Effect***	***SE***	***t***	***p***
Age	-,130	,007	-3.180	.002**	-,115	.007	-2.500	.013*
Gen	,079	,111	1.912	.056	,035	.114	.759	.448
Edu	-,025	,109	-.645	.519	-,019	.111	-.438	.661
AgH	,486	,054	11.633	.000***	,243	.055	5.155	.000***
AfH	-,153	,054	-3.624	.000***	-,224	.055	-4.705	.000***
	R^2= .342; F= 47.868; P<.001				**R^2= .165; F= 18.283; P<.001**			

Note. *p < .05, **p <.01, ***p < .001, *DV: Dependent Variable. Relationship Conflict (RC), Task Conflict (TC), Gender (Gen), Education (Edu), Incivility (InC), Affiliative Humor (AfH), Aggressive Humor (AgH). Model results showing standardized coefficients. Results showing standardized coefficients.

Table 5. *The moderator role of culture on the effect of aggressive humor on conflict types*

DV*		***Effect***	**SE**	**T**	**P**	**LL**	**UL**	**R^2**
Relational Conflict	Age	-.127	.007	-3,102	.002	-.224	-.055	
	Gen	.085	.111	2,067	.039	.007	.163	
	Edu	-.023	.109	-.594	.553	-.096	.047	
	AgH	.704	.151	5,98	***	.458	.93	.348
	AfH	-.148	.053	-3,526	***	-.236	-.053	
	Culture (C)	.198	.29	1,684	.092	-.024	.397	
	AgH x C	-.315	.097	-1,97	.049	-.656	-.004	
Task Conflict	Age	-.113	.007	-2,453	.014	-.214	-.019	
	Gen	.036	.114	.782	.435	-.053	.131	
	Edu	-.018	.112	-.411	.681	-.106	.064	
	AgH	.261	.155	1,958	.048	.025	.533	.166
	AfH	-.222	.055	-4,691	***	-.323	-.125	
	Culture (C)	.008	.298	.06	.952	-.302	.315	
	AgH x C	-.026	.099	-.142	.887	-.433	.355	

Note: *p <.05, **p <.01, ***p <.001, Bootstrapped CI 95%, *DV: Dependent Variable. Relationship Conflict (RC), Task Conflict (TC), Gender (Gen), Education (Edu), Incivility (InC), Affiliative Humor (AfH), Aggressive Humor (AgH). Model results showing standardized coefficients.

Table 6. *The moderator role of culture on the interaction of affiliative humor and conflict types*

DV*		*Effect*	SE	T	P	LL	UL	R^2
Relational Conflict	Age	-.124	.007	-3.046	.002	-.218	-.053	
	Gen	.087	.11	2.118	.034	.011	.17	
	Edu	-.02	.109	-.522	.602	-.097	.047	
	AgH	.482	.053	11.648	***	.399	.558	.350
	AfH	-.414	.151	-3.471	***	-.634	-.143	
	Culture (C)	-.375	.383	-2.413	.016	-.703	-.019	
	AfH x C	.457	.096	2.352	.019	.054	.866	
Task Conflict	Age	-.113	.007	-2,446	.014	-.213	-.020	
	Gen	.037	.114	.789	.43	-.052	.132	
	Edu	-.017	.112	-.404	.686	-.106	.063	
	AgH	.242	.055	5,17	***	.146	.342	.166
	AfH	-.253	.156	-1,873	.061	-.568	.045	
	Culture (C)	-.051	.394	-.289	.773	-.476	.324	
	AfH x C	.053	.098	.240	.810	-.472	.609	

Note: **p* <.05, ***p* <.01, ****p* <.001, Bootstrapped CI 95%, *DV: Dependent Variable. Relationship Conflict (RC), Task Conflict (TC), Gender (Gen), Education (Edu), Incivility (InC), Affiliative Humor (AfH), Aggressive Humor (AgH). Model results showing standardized coefficients. Model results showing standardized coefficients.

Table 7. *The moderator role of culture on the interaction of affiliative humor and conflict types through incivility*

DV	Variables			Direct Effect					Indirect Effect			
				Estimate (β)	CI (90%)		S.E. (Std(γ))	C.R. (t)	Estimate (β)	CI (90%)		R^2
					Lower	Upper				Lower	Upper	
Relationship Conflict	Gen	→	RC	.008	-.055	.073	.107	.19				
	Age	→	RC	-.078†	-.148	-.018	.007	-1,956				
	Edu	→	RC	-.01	-.071	.042	.106	-.269				
	InC	→	RC	.608***	.542	.658	.037	16,557				.374
	AfH	→	RC	-.606**	-.793	-.406	.146	-3.102	-.345**	-.492	-.247	
	Culture (C)	→	RC	-.037†	-.095	.029	.092	-.996				
	AfH x C	→	RC	.364†	.064	.700	.092	1.942				
	AfH	→	InC	-.606***	-.793	-.406	.166	-4,576				
	Culture (C)	→	InC	-.253	-.551	.031	.425	-1,453				.164
	AfH x C	→	InC	.361†	.021	.726	.106	1,649				
Task Conflict	Gen	→	TC	-.013	-.084	.065	.11	-.289				
	Age	→	TC	-.088*	-.168	-.006	.007	-1,965				
	Edu	→	TC	-.011	-.084	.051	.108	-.255				
	InC	→	TC	.342***	.27	.417	.041	7,605				.211
	AfH	→	TC	-.182	-.434	.091	.152	-1,381	-.207**	-.303	-.135	
	Culture (C)	→	TC	.001	-.339	.301	.383	.006				
	AfH x C	→	TC	-.021	-.46	.416	.096	-.098				
	AfH	→	InC	-.606***	-.793	-.406	.166	-4,576				
	Culture (C)	→	InC	-.253	-.551	.031	.425	-1,453				.164
	AfH x C	→	InC	.361†	.021	.726	.106	1,649				

Note: †p<.1, *p<.05, **p<.01, *** p<.001, *DV: Dependent Variable. Relationship Conflict (RC), Task Conflict (TC), Gender (Gen), Education (Edu), Incivility (InC), Affiliative Humor (AfH), Aggressive Humor (AgH). Model results showing standardized coefficients.

Figure 1. *Research model 1.*

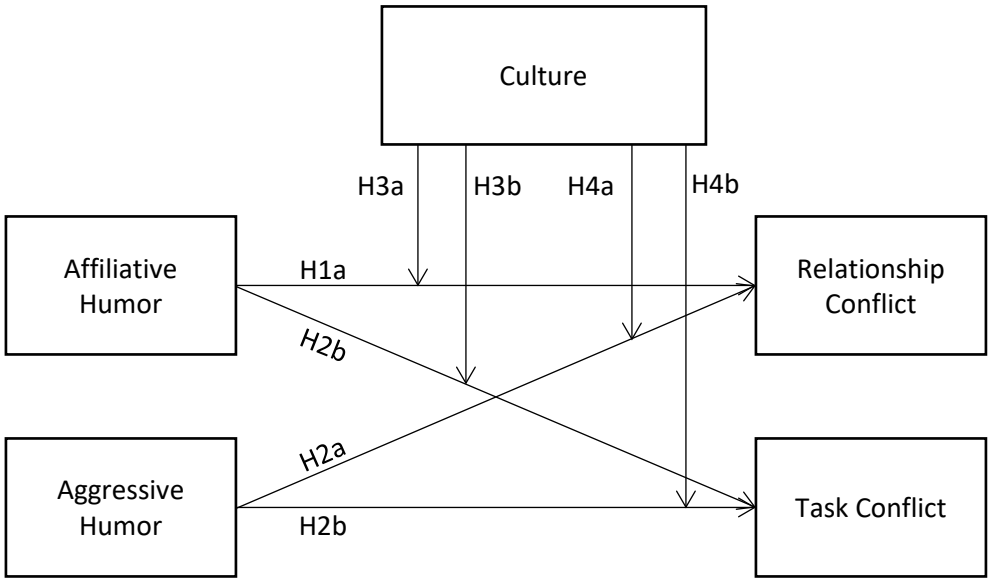
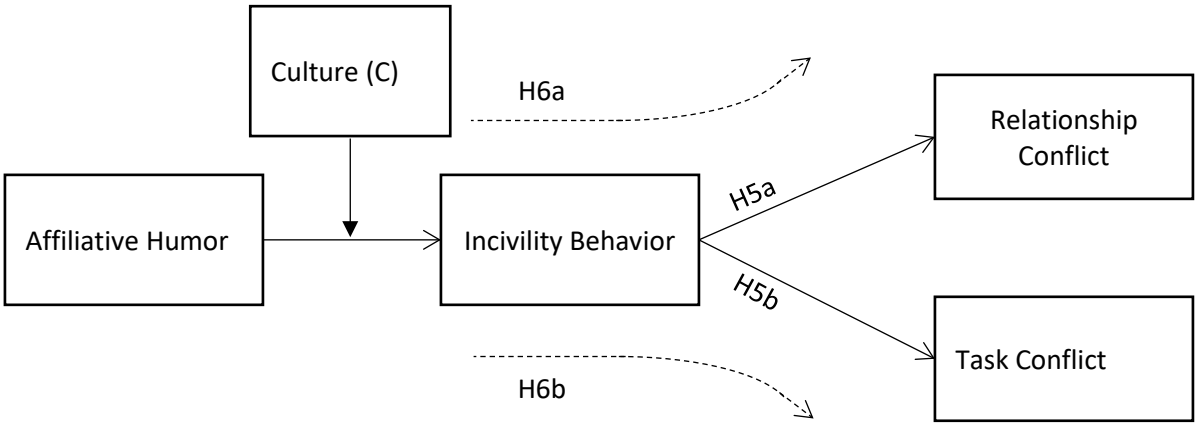


Figure 2. *Research model 2 (The model was analyzed for two data collected from two countries separately and the results were compared to each other, H6c is hypothesized for the differences between the two analysis results)*



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Negotiation and Conflict Management Research

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 (α = .778), the self (α = .640), the process (α = .832), and the relationship with their counterpart (α = .880).

Affect Measures

After negotiating, participants completed measures of positive (α = .898) and negative (α = .843) affect (PANAS: Watson et al., 1988) including the 2-item anger subscale (α = .749), and affective pleasantness (α = .786: Staw & Barsade, 1993) on five-point Likert scales (1 = very slightly or not at all; 5 = extremely). They also reported their state anxiety (α = .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 (α = .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.

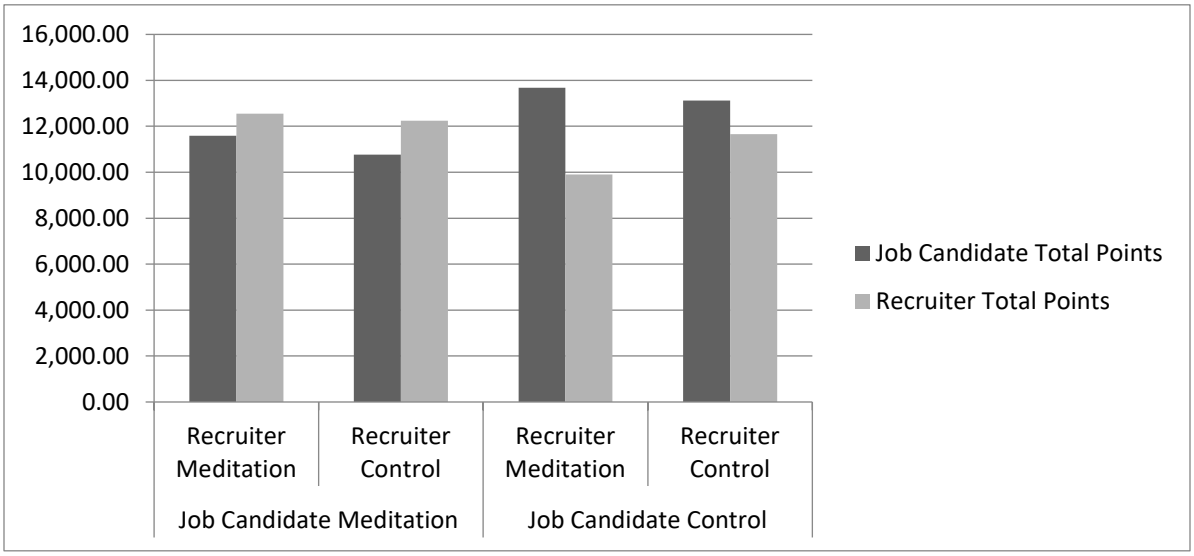
Objective Negotiation Outcomes

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, $F(3, 110) = 3.650$, $p = .015$, $\eta p2 = .091$. 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 that 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 $F(1, 106) = 3.065$, $p = .083$, $\eta_p2 = .028$ 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 ($F(1, 106) = 3.545$, $p = .062$, $\eta_p2 = .032$) and a significant three-way interaction on satisfaction with the relationship: $F(1, 106) = 5.976$, $p = .016$, $\eta_p2 = .053$). 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.

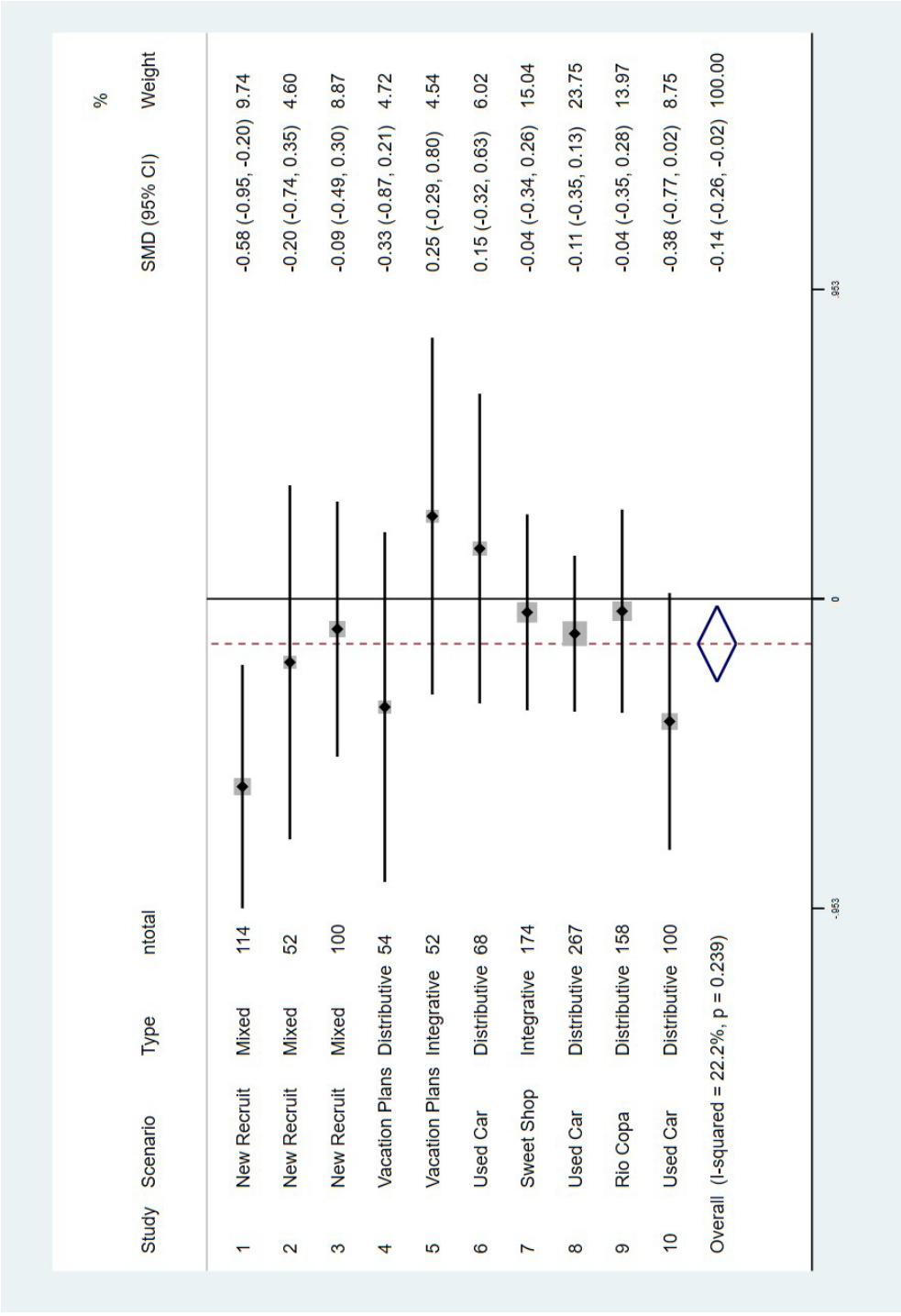
Meta-Analyses: Results

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

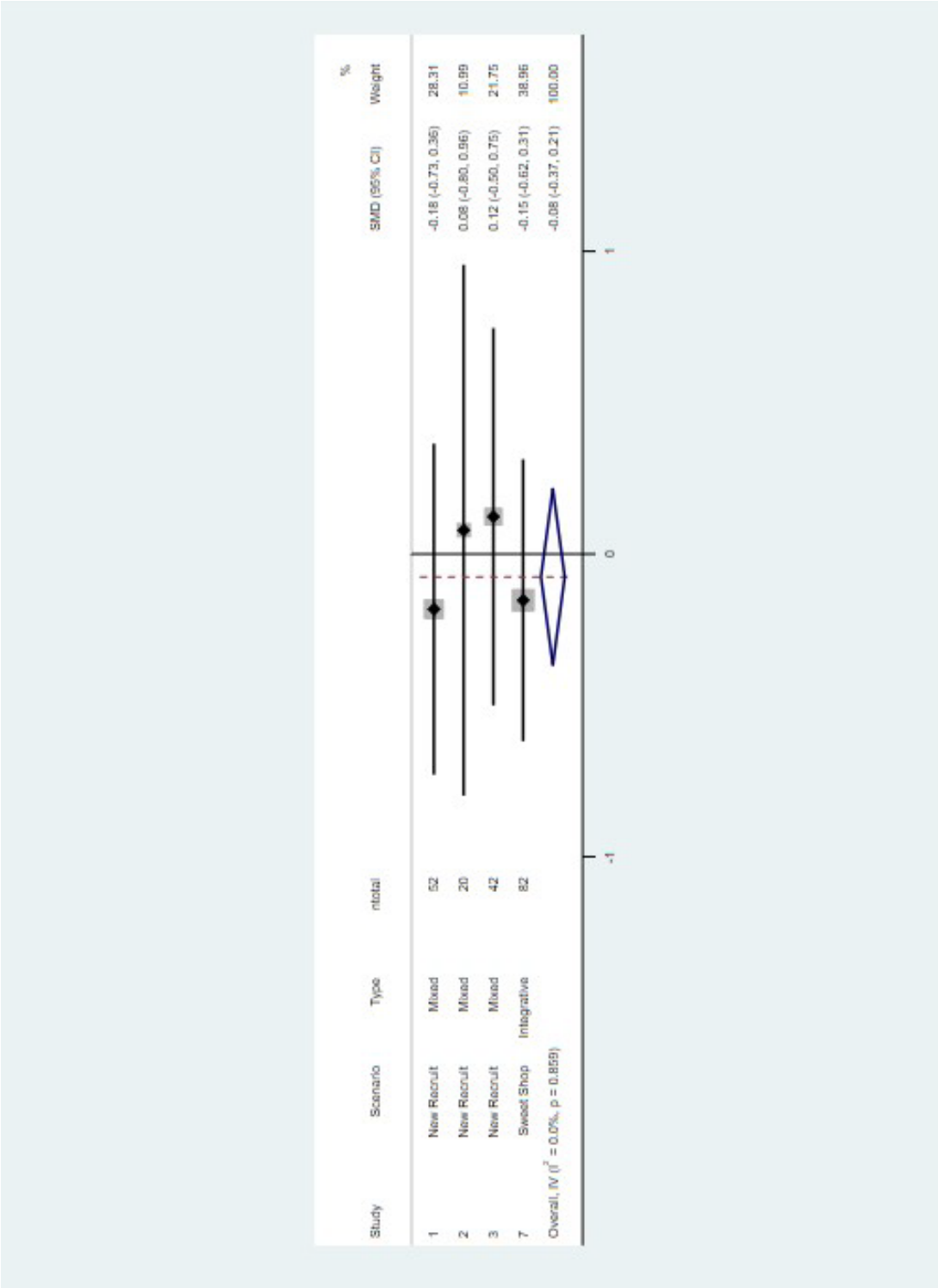
In sum, we did not find support for either of our hypotheses (**H1.** & **H2.**) that being in the meditation condition would improve objective negotiation performance. There was only one study in which a statistically significant effect of state mindfulness on value claiming emerged, Study 1, and the 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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Negotiation and Conflict Management Research

All Eyes on Me: The Impact of Individualism vs. Collectivism Orientations on Justice Perceptions and Mistreatment of Frontline Staff in Emergency Departments

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Abstract

Mistreatment of frontline staff is a widespread issue across all industries, but is particularly prevalent in Emergency Departments (EDs). This paper examines how the orientation toward individualism vs. collectivism of outsiders—namely, patients and their escorts—affects their perceptions of justice within EDs and subsequent mistreatment of frontline staff. We conducted two field studies in major hospitals to test our hypotheses. The first study validated our model, and revealed that mistreatment was particularly likely by outsiders oriented toward individualism. The second study replicated our findings and implemented an intervention that significantly enhanced justice perceptions among these outsiders, subsequently reducing their propensity to mistreat ED staff. Our results offer new insights into the dynamics of mistreatment within EDs, emphasizing the impact of outsider expectations on their perceptions of justice and subsequent behavior.

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Introduction

Workplace mistreatment is a significant and widespread issue that disproportionately affects frontline staff (Yuan et al., 2021). While mistreatment is present in all industries where employees interact with the public, healthcare staff account for roughly 75% of all workplace injuries caused by violent conflicts in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Emergency Departments (EDs) are particularly volatile environments where heightened emotions can lead to tense interactions. ED outsiders, such as patients and their escorts, often experience anxiety while waiting for treatment (Nairn et al., 2004), which can manifest as frustration and contribute to mistreatment directed at healthcare providers (Akerstrom, 1997; Reyt et al., 2022). In fact, research finds that outsiders are responsible for most of the violence in EDs (Ori et al., 2014; Taylor & Rew, 2011).

Mistreatment, which often begins with negative comments or disparaging gestures, holds the potential to spiral into more severe conflict and violent acts, such as physical assaults (Baron & Neuman, 1996). Importantly, any form of mistreatment, regardless of its intensity, poses significant risks to the mental health of staff (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010), with consequences including burnout, anxiety, and depression (Schonfeld et al., 2019). The cumulative effect of ongoing exposure to conflict and mistreatment can lead to increased absenteeism, elevated staff turnover, and diminished productivity (Nahrgang et al., 2011), which are estimated to cost the global economy between hundreds of billions and over a trillion dollars annually (Dhanani et al., 2021). Taken together, these factors underscore the importance of addressing all forms of conflict that can lead to mistreatment—not just the overtly violent ones—in healthcare settings.

Regrettably, healthcare institutions frequently address mistreatment only after it escalates into physical violence, relying on reactive measures such as security guards, duress buttons, de-escalation protocols, and staff self-defense training (Pich et al., 2011; Wiksow, 2003). This reactive approach has normalized abuse in the eyes of many medical professionals, leading them to perceive outsider mistreatment as an intrinsic aspect of their roles (Jones & Lyneham, 2001; Gates et al., 2006). Recently, organizational research has been advocating for a more *proactive* approach, stressing the need to understand the antecedents of mistreatment in order to preemptively counteract them (Hershcovis et al., 2020). Our paper falls within this context, exploring (1) the underlying contextual and psychological triggers that prompt outsiders to mistreat staff, and (2) actionable strategies enabling healthcare organizations to curtail such conflicts, fostering a culture of safety that safeguards employee well-being.

We take inspiration from the General Aggression Model (Anderson & Bushman, 2001) to argue that both situational and personal factors contribute to mistreatment. First, regarding the situation, ED resources are allocated based on triage, whereby medical staff determine the urgency of patients' treatment needs and the order in which they are seen (Robertson-Steel, 2006; Lauridsen, 2020). This process magnifies the significance of procedural justice in deciding who receives immediate care and who must wait (Zhu et al., 2022). Situations such as witnessing perceived preferential treatment can trigger feelings of injustice from outsiders, leading those who feel unfairly treated by the ED to

manifest their frustrations through mistreatment, targeting staff members seen as organizational representatives (Naumann & Bennett, 2000).

Further complicating matters are individual perceptions. Central to understanding perceptions of justice within EDs are individuals' expectations about the importance of their personal needs relative to collective needs. This dynamic can be examined through the lens of orientation toward individualism vs. collectivism (I/C orientation)—a cultural dimension widely applied to understand personal perceptions and responses in various situations (Hofstede, 1984; Triandis, 1995; Liu, 2011). For instance, people oriented toward individualism may perceive a long wait or the prioritization of others' needs over their own as a violation of what they consider to be legitimate expectations. Conversely, individuals oriented toward collectivism might react negatively to policies that they perceive as undermining group welfare, such as restrictions on escorts accompanying patients into treatment areas. Such violations of expectations can lead to perceived injustice and, consequently, contribute to mistreatment (Ramirez Martin et al., 2019).

To test our model, we conducted two field studies in major hospital EDs. In Study 1, we established that outsiders' I/C orientation influenced their justice perceptions in EDs, which in turn affected their intentions to mistreat staff. Further, we found that the effect was predominantly driven by outsiders oriented toward individualism, who showed significant sensitivity to violations of their personal needs. In Study 2, conducted in a different hospital, we replicated our initial findings and implemented an intervention which provided individualized attention to ED outsiders. Our intervention successfully enhanced perceptions of justice among outsiders oriented toward individualism regarding the triage process, thereby reducing their intentions to mistreat staff. Our research offers new insights into how I/C orientation can influence perceptions of justice and mistreatment, and proposes effective measures to mitigate such issues in ED settings.

Our research contributes to the literatures on workplace mistreatment, cultural values in organizational settings, organizational justice and conflict theory. First, we contribute to the literature on workplace mistreatment by addressing the antecedents of mistreatment and highlighting strategies for healthcare organizations to preemptively address abusive behaviors, potentially preventing escalation into severe aggression and violence. Second, we contribute to the literature on cultural values by challenging the assumption that all individuals react similarly to potential transgressions. We propose that an individual's I/C orientation is a crucial determinant in how they perceive and respond to mistreatment of frontline staff, refining previous insights about sensitivity to perceived transgressions. Third, we contribute to the justice literature by examining how perceived justice influences aggressive behaviors and mistreatment. Last, we contribute to the literature on conflict theory by highlighting that not all people perceive conflicts equally, rather, the conflict is perceived through the cultural lens of the parties involved. Therefore, by understanding their cultural orientations, one can predict how the conflict will develop, whether it will escalate into mistreatment, and how to ease the conflict by being sensitive to what is important to people from various cultural orientations.

Our findings suggest that an individual's I/C orientation significantly influences their perception of fairness, affecting their reactions to perceived transgressions and their subsequent mistreatment of those they see as responsible.

Theory and Hypotheses

Outsider Mistreatment of Employees

Workplace mistreatment refers to a range of harmful social behaviors that vary in severity (Hershcovis et al., 2020) and are studied under different labels, including incivility (Mao et al., 2019; Montgomery et al., 2004; Paulin, & Griffin, 2017; Walker et al., 2017), aggression (Bowler et al., 2011; Hershcovis et al., 2007; Lisak et al., 2021), deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2000), and violence (Efrat-Treister et al., 2019; Van Emmerik, et al., 2007). On the proximal end of the mistreatment continuum, incivility might involve disparaging comments and negative gestures (Walker et al., 2017; Pearson et al., 2000), while on the distal end, violence may involve physical assaults (Neuman & Baron, 1998).

Research on workplace mistreatment is largely focused on how coworkers mistreat each other (Hershcovis, 2011; Hershcovis et al., 2007). Although coworker dynamics can be a breeding ground for mistreatment, it is essential to note that a significant portion also arises from people who are not members of the organization (Karaeminogullar et al., 2018). Thus, following the distinction made by Grandey et al. (2004), we contrast *insider* mistreatment, which comes from organizational members, and *outsider* mistreatment, which is perpetrated by customers and visitors. Outsider mistreatment is typically directed toward frontline staff—employees who form the link between the organization and the public (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003). The term "outsider" reflects that mistreatment comes not only from customers or patients; it can also originate from other external sources, like visitors, family members, or others. For example, a restaurant host might experience noise complaints from a displeased neighbor, a security guard might endure aggressive behavior from an intoxicated visitor, and a nurse might face negative remarks from a patient's relative.

Frontline staff face a considerable amount of outsider mistreatment for various reasons, the main one being that their work involves interacting with many individuals daily (Emanuel et al., 2020). Furthermore, unlike insiders who might moderate their behavior due to the expectation of future interactions with colleagues, outsiders often lack such constraints (Grandey et al., 2007). The fact that no ongoing relationship is expected can diminish inhibitions, potentially leading to more frequent and intense confrontations (Kiesler et al., 1984). Finally, members of certain professions are required to frequently interact with individuals in pain, under the influence of illicit or abuse-prone substances, or experiencing mental health crises, increasing the risks of mistreatment (Blanchard & Curtis, 1999).

Outsider mistreatment is widespread across all service sectors, yet it is particularly acute in EDs. Research highlights that a majority of ED staff in North America consider outsider mistreatment an expected part of their job (Copeland & Henry, 2017; Stene et al., 2015; Hesketh et al., 2003). Similar issues were documented in Europe (e.g., Winstanley & Whittington, 2004; Vezyridis et al., 2015), Asia (e.g., Alyaemni & Alhudaithi, 2016; Sachdeva et al., 2019), Oceania (e.g., Lyneham, 2000; Pich et al., 2017), and Africa (e.g., Adeniyi & Puzi, 2021). These widespread reports from different continents underline the global scale of this issue, leading researchers to describe outsider mistreatment in EDs as an "epidemic" (Chapman & Styles, 2006; Gates, 2004; Quintal, 2002; Reddy et al., 2019).

EDs typically have protocols in place to repress mistreatment *after* it has escalated into aggression and violence, including hiring security personnel, installing duress buttons, and teaching staff de-escalation techniques and self-defense (Pich et al., 2011; Wiksow, 2003). However, addressing milder forms of mistreatment, such as cursing, yelling, or offensive language, can be challenging (Barling et al., 2009; Grandey et al., 2007; Efrat-Treister et al., 2020a; Reyt et al., 2022). These more subtle acts of mistreatment are more difficult to quantify and prove, and often slip through policy gaps (Scholz, 2024). As frontline workers are often required to remain composed under provocation,

this dynamic effectively allows such mistreatment to occur without significant consequences for the aggressor (Hochschild, 1983, Rafaeli, 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1990).

Yet mild forms of mistreatment are not harmless. Not only can they escalate into physical violence, they can also have severe psychological impacts on employees, such as depression, anxiety, and stress, as well as cognitive repercussions, such as reduced working memory capacity and impaired creative problem-solving (Miron-Spektor et al., 2011; Rafaeli et al., 2012; Zhou et al., 2019). In addition, the financial repercussions of outsider mistreatment can be crippling for organizations. The cumulative effect of ongoing exposure to mistreatment often results in increased absenteeism, elevated staff turnover, and diminished productivity, which together have been estimated to cost between $691.70 billion and $1.97 trillion globally every year (Dhanani et al., 2021). The debilitating consequences of mistreatment on employees, combined with the sheer magnitude of these costs, underscore the importance of addressing and curtailing such behaviors.

Organizational Justice and Outsider Mistreatment

To effectively address outsider mistreatment of frontline staff in EDs, it is essential to understand the core concepts influencing these settings. EDs face the challenge of having a fixed number of caregivers while dealing with variable demand that often exceeds their capacity (Van De Ruit & Wallis, 2020). Consequently, outsiders seeking care gather in waiting areas until called for treatment by clinicians. EDs worldwide struggle with overcrowded waiting areas, with research reviews on ED crowding calling the situation an "international crisis" (Hoot & Aronsky, 2008), a "global problem" (Carter et al., 2014), and a "major global healthcare issue" (Morley et al., 2018). Several factors have been identified as contributing to overcrowding in EDs, including poor access to primary care, ED nursing staff shortages, and an increase in the complexity and acuity of patient needs (Morley et al., 2018).

Unlike other organizations facing high demand relative to supply, EDs do not operate on a first-come, first-served basis. Instead of an *egalitarian* approach that gives everyone an equal opportunity to access care, EDs use a *utilitarian* approach that aims to maximize the common good (Greenacre & Fleshner, 2017). This is where the concept of triage comes into play. Originating from the French word "trier," meaning to sort, triage systems prioritize patients based on the severity of their health conditions (Yancey & O'Rourke, 2022). Upon arrival, patients are evaluated by a medical professional, typically a nurse, and categorized according to the urgency of their situation using various systems such as numbers, labels or colors (Yancey & O'Rourke, 2020). Highly urgent cases receive priority care, while lower-priority patients wait until resources become available. This method aims to ensure that those in greatest need receive care promptly, with the ultimate goal of maximizing collective well-being over individual convenience when resources are limited (Möller et al., 2010; Robertson-Steel, 2006; Bazyar et al., 2020).

The triage process is a crucial aspect of the patient experience in EDs, and often a major point of contention between staff and outsiders (Janerka et al., 2024). For example, in a study on patients' perception of an ED triage process, half the participants disagreed with the category they were assigned at triage and believed they deserved to be given higher priority (Toloo et al., 2016). For low-priority patients, the situation is even more challenging, as they frequently wait more than four hours to receive medical care (Al Nhdi et al., 2021; Paling et al., 2020). Low-priority patients often feel "powerless, insulted, and humiliated" when their care is delayed for reasons they do not fully understand (Dahlen et al., 2012). The result is that the ED visit, already stressful, becomes a highly negative experience, with patients left feeling undervalued and neglected (Shah et al., 2015).

In the chaotic and overcrowded environments of EDs, outsiders are acutely aware of the limited availability of resources (Lauridsen, 2020). Instead of fostering understanding and acceptance of treatment delays, this awareness often heightens their sensitivity to perceived disparities in care. Outsiders may feel particularly aggrieved when they perceive that the attention they receive deviates from what they consider "fair," "deserved," or "just" (Adeniji & Mash, 2016; Reblora et al., 2020; Möller et al., 2010). For instance, seeing another patient receive priority treatment without understanding the criteria underlying the decision can trigger feelings of injustice and suspicion about ED procedures. Consequently, outsiders' perception of procedural justice—concerning the fairness of the processes used to decide who receives resources (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1990)—becomes particularly central to their experience while waiting in an ED (Effrat-Treister et al., 2020b; Miles & Naumann, 2004)

Extensive research has documented the role of perceived justice in interpersonal mistreatment between organizational insiders. Employees' perceptions of injustice in the workplace are associated with negative reactions such as retaliation, aggression, sabotage, and other forms of counterproductive work behavior (e.g. Greenberg, 1990; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Aquino & Lamertz, 2004; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Some studies suggest that this relationship exists with outsiders as well. In various service settings, Clemmer and Schneider (1996) showed that outsiders' perceptions of justice crucially impacted their satisfaction and the likelihood of revisiting a service provider, whether in banks, doctor's offices, or restaurants. Additionally, research in healthcare settings has found that patients' perceptions of organizational justice are positively related to their satisfaction, trust in clinicians, and overall justice evaluations (Pérez-Arechaederra et al., 2014). Finally, a study by Efrat-Treister et al. (2020b) on emergency department waiting times demonstrates how perceived justice—or its absence—can provoke aggression.

Several theories support an association between perceived injustice and outsider mistreatment in EDs. First, the frustration–aggression hypothesis suggests that when individuals feel frustrated due to perceived injustices, their frustration can escalate into aggression (Berkowitz, 1989). This aggression is often directed towards those immediately available, such as frontline staff, regardless of their direct involvement in the injustice. Second, a perceived lack of justice can also lead outsiders to feel a loss of control, which may heighten their propensity to restore control through confrontational or aggressive behaviors (Tyler, 2006; Tyler & Blader, 2003). Finally, the concept of restorative justice suggests that individuals may engage in mistreatment as a means of seeking retribution and rebalancing the scales of justice in their favor (Wenzel et al., 2008). This approach is seen as a way to punish the perceived source of injustice and deter future unfair treatment. Together, these mechanisms suggest a clear pathway from outsiders' injustice perceptions to their mistreatment of frontline staff in EDs.

Therefore, we propose:

H1. Outsiders' perceptions of justice are negatively related to mistreatment of frontline staff.

I/C Orientation and Justice Perceptions

Perceptions of justice are complex and inherently subjective. Different outsiders may perceive the same situation as either fair or unfair, a fact which explains why the same situation may escalate into mistreatment among some individuals but not others. Research also suggests that the interplay between individuals and their environment significantly influences the likelihood and severity of mistreatment behavior (Hershcovis et al., 2020). This idea aligns with Anderson and Bushman's (2001) General Aggression Model, according to which aggression results from the interaction between personal characteristics and contextual factors.

While outsiders are not formal members of the organization, they engage in a transactional relationship with the organization during their visit. This relationship establishes expectations similar to those experienced by insiders regarding the fairness and quality of treatment they receive. In fact, a great deal of research has focused on understanding and managing outsider expectations regarding ED triage processes (e.g. Watt et al., 2005; Cooke et al., 2006; Shah et al., 2016; Alnaeem et al., 2024). When these expectations are not met, outsiders, much like employees, may perceive an injustice. The formation and nature of outsider expectations can vary significantly based on broader societal contexts and personality factors. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the factors among outsiders that can shape their expectations and, subsequently, their perception of justice in EDs.

In modern society, humans face a complex paradox: while we rely on large groups for collective survival and well-being, our individual access to resources is often determined on a personal basis. This inherent tension between group reliance and individual achievement underscores the diverse expectations people develop regarding how they should be treated. For example, individuals who prioritize their personal needs may expect EDs to treat them swiftly, considering this as a measure of fairness and respect. Conversely, those who prioritize the collective might expect the ED to focus on group needs, such as letting patient escorts come into treatment areas for moral support. Variations in expectations can lead to markedly different perceptions of the same situation: what one person views as just, and an efficient use of resources, another might perceive as an unjust violation of their expectations. Therefore, we propose that the extent to which outsiders prioritize personal versus collective needs, or their orientation toward individualism vs. collectivism (I/C orientation), significantly influences their perceptions of justice in ED operations.

According to Hofstede (1980), individualism and collectivism represent two ends of a cultural continuum influencing perceptions, societal expectations, and behavior. On the individualism side, Hofstede describes a cultural orientation that prioritizes personal rights over duties. People in individualistic societies are encouraged to express and assert themselves, and their social behavior is largely shaped by their personal goals and the direct benefits to themselves. Conversely, in collectivistic societies, priorities shift significantly toward the interests of the group rather than the individual. Relationships are characterized by a deep sense of interconnectedness, with identity often rooted in group affiliations and communal achievements. Loyalty to the group and conformity to societal norms are paramount, with personal sacrifices frequently seen as necessary for the greater good of the community. This cultural orientation emphasizes the importance of maintaining harmony and providing support within social networks, thus influencing how justice, responsibilities, and rewards are perceived and distributed among group members.

Since Hofstede's (1980) work, the constructs of individualism and collectivism have become prominent in management and other fields, although their conceptualization remains controversial and subject to debate. Some researchers view individualism and collectivism as opposite ends of a single continuum, while others consider them as two (or more) independent constructs (Taras et al., 2014; Wong et al., 2018; Fatehi et al., 2020). Moreover, how individuals conceptualize and apply these constructs seems to be highly context-dependent (Taras et al., 2014). For instance, an individual might prioritize collectivist values within family settings but adopt individualist behaviors in the workplace. In this paper, we specifically examine how individuals prioritize different needs while awaiting treatment in an ED. We propose that in this context, one cannot simultaneously prioritize personal needs and collective needs. Thus, despite the ongoing debates surrounding their conceptualization, we believe that in our study's context, it is appropriate to view individualism and collectivism as existing on a continuum.

People oriented more toward individualism and those oriented more toward collectivism may perceive justice based on different factors. For example, Tata (2005) shows that the perceived fairness

of grading procedures among students in the United States and China reflects cultural values of individualism and collectivism, respectively. In that research, American students valued having a voice in the grading process by being able to discuss and appeal grades. This is in keeping with their individualistic orientation, with personal rights and individual agency paramount. Conversely, Chinese students, coming from a more collectivistic culture, valued being treated with dignity and respect and appreciated clear explanations about grading procedures, indicating higher sensitivity to the communal aspects of justice.

I/C orientation is not just a macro-cultural phenomenon, but also operates within sub-groups and individuals, as demonstrated by Oyserman et al. (2002). They found considerable variability in individualism within the same cultural group, underscoring the complexity of predicting justice perceptions based solely on cultural background. Therefore, when examining the relationship between cultural values and perceived justice, it is crucial to consider not only overarching cultural norms but also the individual's personal alignment with these values.

In ED environments, where quick decision-making is essential, cultural and personal perspectives on justice influence how outsiders perceive and respond to the prioritization of care. Outsiders oriented toward individualism may expect immediate and personalized attention to their needs. They may be particularly sensitive to instances where they perceive their needs as not being addressed promptly enough, as when they witness others receiving attention ahead of them. Conversely, outsiders oriented toward collectivism may be more sensitive to situations that violate communal needs. For instance, if an ED policy forbids companions in treatment areas, outsiders oriented toward collectivism may perceive the policy as disregarding the familial or community support essential in times of crisis. In both cases, the result for the outsider is a sense of injustice, either in policy or practice.

In short, we expect an outsider's personal I/C orientation to interact with specific situational factors, and specifically the types of needs that they perceive as being violated. This in turn shapes their perceptions of justice and, consequently, their likelihood of mistreating frontline staff. Thus, we predict (see Figure 1):

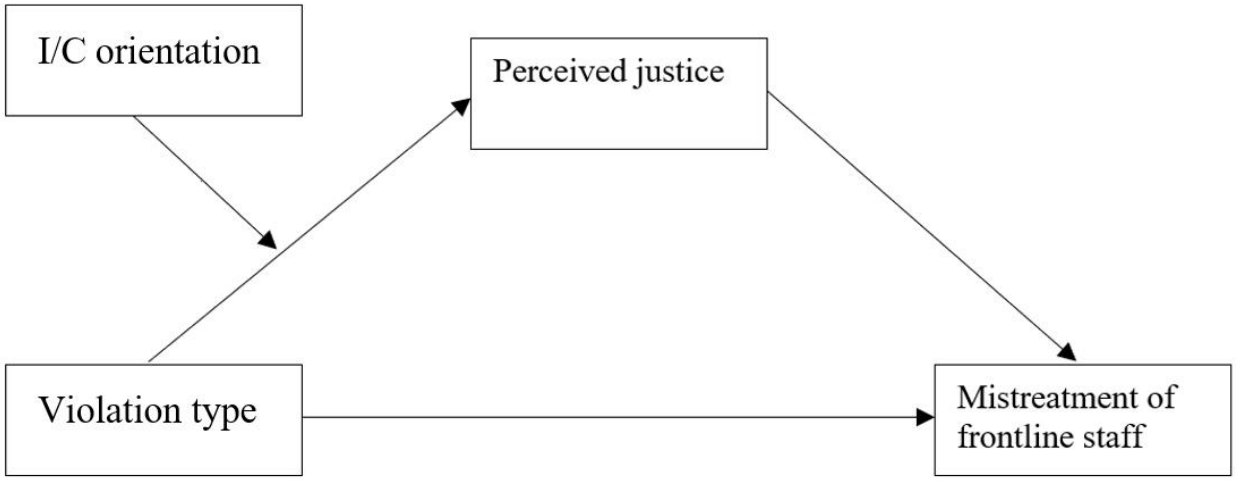
H2. Outsiders' I/C orientation moderates the relationship between violation type (violation of individual needs vs. group needs) and justice perceptions. Outsiders oriented toward individualism will perceive violations of their individual needs as less just, while outsiders oriented toward collectivism will perceive violations of the group's needs as less just.

H3. Outsiders' I/C orientation moderates the relationship between violation type (violation of individual vs. group needs) and mistreatment of frontline staff via perceived justice (moderated mediation).

Research Overview

We conducted two studies to examine our predictions. In both studies, all participants were escorts of patients approached in the ED waiting area while the patient was within the ED. This decision was made at the request of the EDs to ensure that our research did not obstruct the critical processes and care provided to the patients themselves. Our research assistants invited the escorts to complete a brief survey in exchange for a small, sugar-free snack. In both studies, we first asked participants to complete a measure eliciting their I/C orientation. Then, they were presented with a vignette describing an ED-related scenario that violated either individual or group needs, employing a between-subjects design. Subsequently, participants indicated how they perceived the justice of the scenario, reported their inclinations towards mistreatment, and provided demographic information.

Figure 1. *Research Model, Study 1*



Study 1 was conducted to test the interaction between participants' I/C orientation and the violation type to predict their justice perceptions and their inclination towards mistreatment. Study 2 replicated Study 1's procedures in a different hospital, and included an intervention to increase perceptions of justice and reduce mistreatment of staff among outsiders.

The research was approved by the following Helsinki committees: Carmel Medical Center Helsinki Committee, approval number: CMC-0073-13; Soroka Medical Center Helsinki Committee, approval number: 0126-16-SOR.

Study 1: Individualism/Collectivism Orientation, Perceived Justice, and Mistreatment of Frontline Staff

Methods

Sample & Procedure

Study 1 was conducted in the EDs of two large public hospitals: a city hospital (500 beds, average of 200 patients a day) and a suburban hospital (700 beds, average of 350 patients per day). The sample size for this study was determined using G*Power V.3.1.9.4. The calculation was based on a linear multiple regression with a fixed model and regression coefficients, aiming for 80% power and a 5% significance level (α), with an anticipated medium effect size (Cohen's d=.06). To account for potential non-responses, we increased the sample size by 10%. As a result, our target sample size was at least 141 participants. Ultimately, we gathered data from 151 individuals who met the Helsinki Committee's inclusion criteria, which are (1) participated voluntarily and (2) were aged 18 or older, were mentally stable, understood the survey, and provided informed consent (Hospital A: N= 97; average age = 47.32; 47.2% female; Hospital B: N=54, average age = 44.81; 44% female).

The study employed a between-subjects design, where participants were randomly assigned to read one of two different vignettes. Then, they were asked to complete a survey that assessed their perceptions of justice related to the scenario described in the vignette, their I/C orientation, and their inclinations toward mistreatment. To ensure inclusivity, the vignettes and surveys were translated into all languages spoken by the patient population, following the approach utilized by Cha et al. (2007). The surveys were administered by research assistants who were fluent speakers of the various

languages spoken in the ED, and were kept unaware of the study's hypotheses, aligning with the methodology employed by Hulin and Mayer (1986). Each survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete, and participants were subsequently thanked and given a sugar-free snack as a token of appreciation.

Violation Manipulation

We adapted vignettes from Efrat-Treister's 2014 study, which identified ED scenarios that can be perceived as violations and, at times, escalate into mistreatment. From this pool, we selected two specific violations of different expectations. The first portrayed a situation where staff cared for a recently arrived patient ahead of someone who had been waiting for a long time. This situation implies a prioritization of the group's need over individual needs, and we hypothesized that it would be judged as less just by participants oriented toward individualism. The second scenario involved ED staff forbidding a group of family members and friends from accompanying a patient into the ED treatment areas, thus appearing to violate group needs. We anticipated that this scenario would be judged as less just by people oriented toward collectivism. For the full text of the vignettes and the expectations they violate, see Table 1.

Table 1. *Vignettes Depicting Violation Types (Violation of Individual vs Communal Needs)*

Violation type	Expectation violated
1. ***Individual needs:*** The emergency room is very crowded. A staff member allows someone who came in after the patient to see the doctor first.	Self, personal goals
2. ***Collective needs:*** A patient arrives at the ED accompanied by several escorts, but hospital staff allow only one family member into the emergency room.	Community, in-group goals

Meaures

I/C Orientation was obtained using the individualism–collectivism subscale of Dorfman and Howell's (1988) measure. To calculate our I/C orientation variable, we reverse-coded the measure so that higher I/C scores represented an orientation toward individualism, and lower I/C scores represented an orientation toward collectivism. Sample items include "Group success is more important than individual success" and "Individuals may be expected to give up their goals in order to benefit group success." Cronbach's alpha was .77, and McDonald's omega was .78.

Perceived Justice was measured using a three-item scale based on Colquitt et al. (2001): "The ED is managed fairly"; "The procedures in the ED are fair"; "The procedures in the ED are medically correct." Participants responded using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree)* to 7 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha was .92; McDonald's omega was .89.

Mistreatment of Frontline Staff was assessed using six items developed by Efrat-Treister et al. (2020b). Items include: "What are the chances that the patient's son [in the vignette] will use an aggressive tone of voice toward a staff member / yell / curse / bang on a table / slam a door / interrupt a staff member." Participants responded using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very low*) to 7 (*very high*). Cronbach's alpha was .93; McDonald's omega was .90. This scale measures the likelihood of engaging in mistreatment, rather than actual mistreatment, since people who have already

engaged in mistreatment are removed from the ED and are not available to answer surveys. People who are about to mistreat staff can be surveyed, but are unlikely to truthfully report their desire to mistreat staff in the first person, because of social desirability concerns and fear of being removed from the ED. Therefore, asking in the third person has been found to be most useful to capture inclinations toward mistreatment. In a pretest, this measure was found to significantly predict actual violence of ED outsiders towards frontline staff (Efrat-Treister et al., 2019).

Control Variables. Several variables offered a theoretical basis to assume their influence on perceived justice and mistreatment (Carlson & Wu, 2012). These variables included gender, age (with younger people tending to engage in more mistreatment), hospital (as procedures might be perceived differently across hospitals), education, and ethnic group affiliation.

Results

Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations) for the Study 1 variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of Study 1 Variables*

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	.46	.50	-							
2. Age	46.93	17.36	-.02	-						
3. Hospital	.35	.48	-.03	-.09	-					
4. Education	13.58	3.23	-.05	.28**	-.12	-				
5. Ethnic group	.71	.46	.08	.06	-.19*	.11	-			
6. Violation type	.52	.50	.12	.06	.04	-.02	-.08	-		
7. Perceived justice	4.93	1.65	-.05	.12	.12	.09	-.07	.11	-	
8. I/C orientation	1.80	1.09	-.05	.01	-.03	.01	.10	.02	-.21*	-
9. Mistreatment	2.56	1.55	.02	-.28**	.09	-.15	-.12	-.18*	-.28**	-.12

Note. †p<.1; *p <.05; **p <.01; two-tailed. Violation type was coded as 1—violating individual needs; 2—violating group needs; Higher I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward individualism, and lower I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward collectivism.

We tested our research model with a latent moderated structural equation model (LMS). First, we ran a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to verify that the indicators indeed reflected the intended latent variables. We compared the fit of a three-factor (I/C orientation, perceived justice, and mistreatment) with all possible two-factor models and a one-factor model using two relative fit indices, the comparative fit index (CFI) and the Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), and an absolute measure of fit, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR; Hu & Bentler, 1999). We evaluated these fit indices using the traditional cutoff values of .90 for the CFI and TLI and less than .08 for the SRMR. As presented in Table 3, the three factors model reproduced the observed covariance matrix ($\chi^2_{(74)}$ = 148.41, p < .01; CFI = .94; TLI = .92; SRMR = .054), and all standardized factor loadings of the latent variables on their indicators were significant (p < .01). Analyses of the other possible two-factor and one-factor models show a substantial loss of fit relative to the three-factor model (e.g., CFI and TLI < .90 and SRMR > .08 in all these models). A comparison between the models' chi-squared scores confirmed the fit of the three-factor model as better than all other models (p < .01).

Table 3. *Fitness Indices for Measurement Model Analyses*

Factor and model	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	SRMR
Equal form models					
Model 1: Three factors (PJ+IC+MIS)	148.41**	74	.94	.92	.054
Model 2: Two factors (PJ+MIS)	454.91**	76	.68	.62	.140
Model 3: Two factors (IC+MIS)	318.90**	76	.80	.76	.139
Model 4: Two factors (IC+PJ)	307.70**	76	.81	.77	.137
Model 5: One factor	617.52**	77	.55	.46	.181

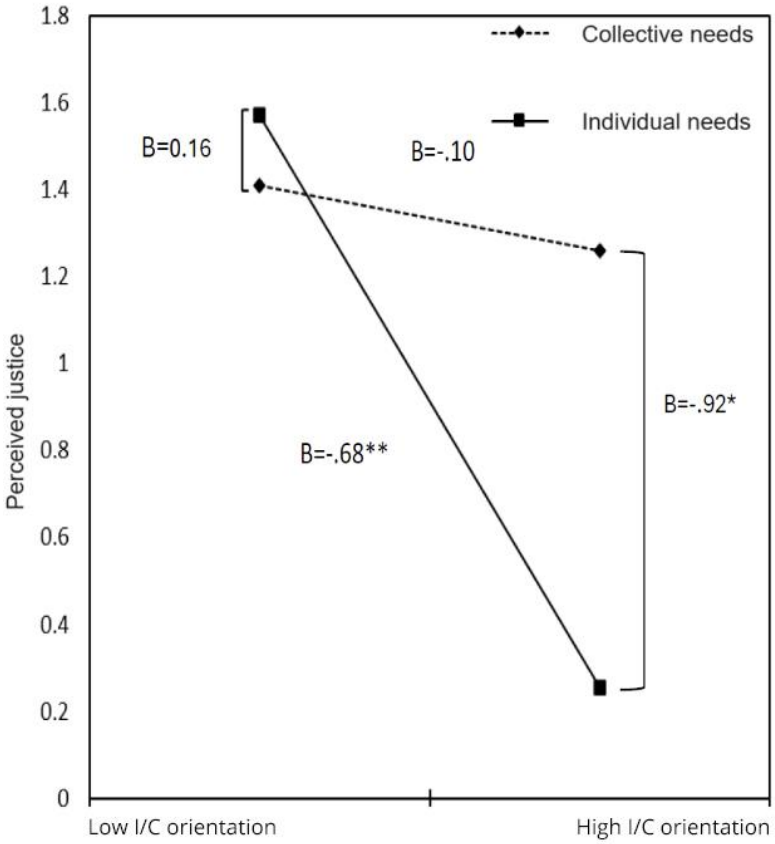
Note. * P < .05, ** P < .01. PJ = Perceived justice; IC = *Outsiders' I/C orientation*; MIS = Mistreatment. Comparisons of Model 1 and Models 2–5 revealed a better fit for Model 1 (p<.01).

Next, in the second step of the LMS, we tested relationships between the variables in the structural models. We used maximum likelihood estimation to assess the overall fit of each LMS model, following Klein and Moosbrugger (2000). To test Hypotheses 1 and 2, we first compared the linear null model (with violation type, perceived justice, mistreatment, and the control variables; $\chi^2_{(150)}$ = 248.76, p < .01; CFI = .92; TLI = .91; SRMR = .058; log likelihood= -3200.48) with a model that also included the two latent interactions of violation type and I/C orientation predicting both perceived justice and mistreatment. The comparison revealed a better fit of the data for the model with the interactions (-2 log-likelihood = 7.38; $\chi^2_{(2)}$ = 7.38, p < .05). A significant interaction was found between violation type and I/C orientation on perceived justice (B = -.59, p < .05). However, the interaction between violation type and I/C orientation on mistreatment was non-significant (B = -.60, n.s.). These results indicate that the moderation effect of I/C orientation on the relationship between violation type and mistreatment can be explained by the interaction of violation type and I/C orientation on perceived justice.

We found a negative relationship between perceived justice and mistreatment (B = -.26, p < .01), supporting Hypothesis 1. Simple slope analysis revealed a significant relationship between violation type and perceived justice for outsiders with higher I/C scores (i.e., oriented toward individualism; B= -0.92 p <.05), but not for outsiders with lower I/C scores (i.e., oriented toward collectivism; B=0.16, n.s.). Participants with higher I/C scores perceived the individual needs violation as less just than the group needs violation. Moreover, participants with lower I/C scores perceived the individual needs violation as more just than did participants oriented toward individualism (B= -.68, p<.01), while no similar relationship was found for the scenario describing a group needs violation (B= -.10, n.s.; see Figure 2). These results support Hypothesis 2.

To test Hypothesis 3, we first compared the null model (the relationship between violation type and mistreatment in the presence of the control variables: hospital, age, education, and socioeconomic status) with the model that includes the latent interaction between violation type and I/C orientation. The null model demonstrated reasonable fit ($\chi^2_{(93)}$ = 178.49, p < .01; CFI = .89; TLI = .88; SRMR = .061, log-likelihood= -2577.32). Nevertheless, the model with the latent interaction terms fit the data significantly better than the model without the latent interaction terms (-2 log-likelihood = 5.23; $\chi^2_{(1)}$ = 5.23, p < .01), and a significant interaction was revealed (B=-.75, p<.05).

Figure 2. *Interaction between Violation Type and I/C Orientation, Predicting Perceived Justice*

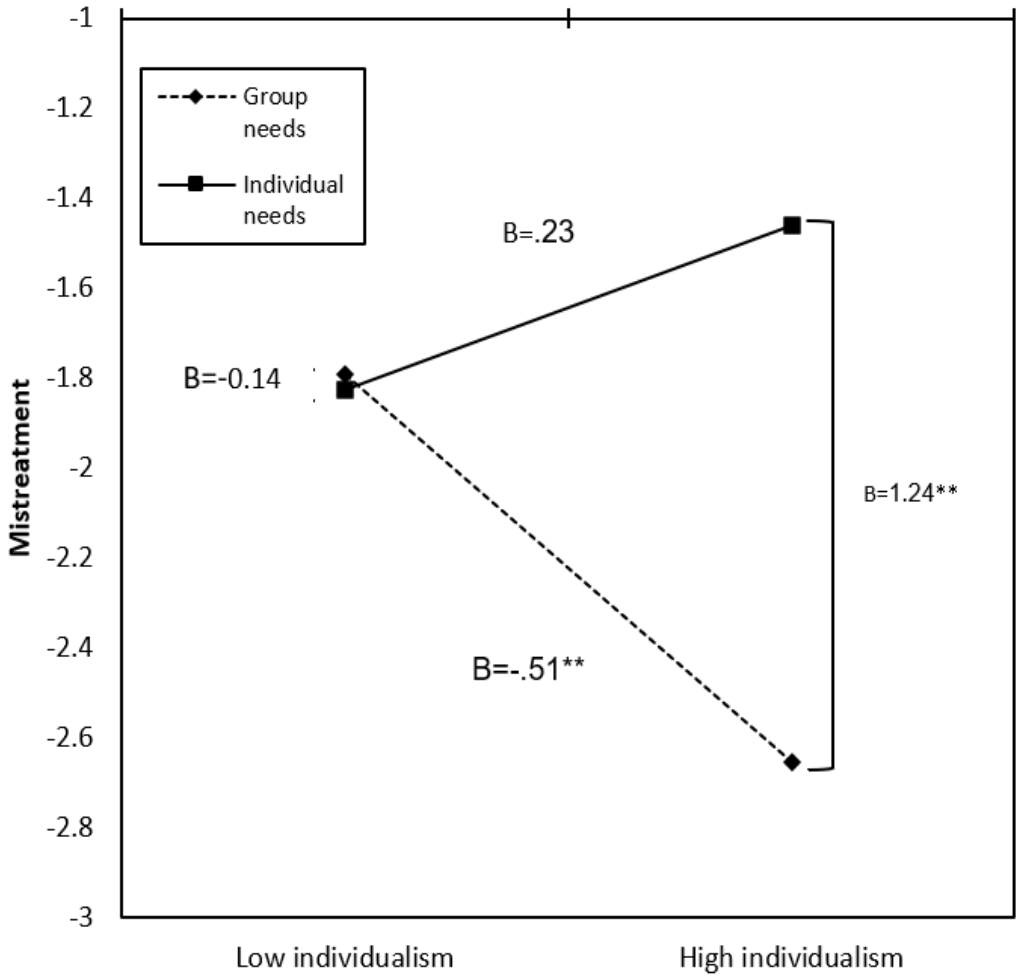


Note: ** p < .01. The procedural justice scale reflects the expected latent score (μ=0; σ=1); Higher I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward individualism, and lower I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward collectivism.

Next, we performed a simple slope analysis, which indicated that the relationship between violation type and mistreatment intentions was significant for outsiders with higher I/C scores (i.e., oriented toward individualism; B=1.24, p<.01) but not for those with lower I/C scores (i.e., oriented toward collectivism; B= -.14, n.s.). More precisely, participants with higher I/C scores reported higher mistreatment intentions when exposed to a scenario involving a violation of individual needs as opposed to when they were exposed to a scenario involving a violation of group needs. Moreover, individuals with lower I/C scores reported more mistreatment when exposed to the group-needs violation scenario than those oriented toward individualism (B=-.51, p<.01). The inverse relationship was not found following exposure to the individual-needs violation scenario (B=.23, n.s.). See Figure 3.

Finally, we conducted a conditional indirect effect analysis using the Mplus 8.4. bootstrap method (CI = 95%; boot = 5000). The results revealed that the negative indirect relationship between violation type and mistreatment is mediated by perceived justice, and that this indirect relationship exists only for outsiders with higher I/C orientation scores (i.e. oriented toward individualism; B = -.24; 95% CI [-.63, -.02]; boot = 5000), but not for outsiders with lower I/C orientation scores (i.e., oriented toward collectivism; B = .04; 95% CI [-.19, .29]; IMM =.15; 95% CI [.00,.45]). Altogether, these results support Hypothesis 3.

Figure 3. *Interaction between Violation Type and I/C Orientation, Predicting Mistreatment*



Note: * p < .05; ** p < .01; The mistreatment scale reflects the expected latent score (μ=0; σ=1); Higher I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward individualism, and lower I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward collectivism.

Study 1 Discussion

The results of Study 1 indicate that outsiders' I/C orientation significantly predicts their perceptions of justice and inclinations to engage in mistreatment. Outsiders with higher I/C orientation scores (i.e., those oriented toward individualism) perceived violations of individual needs as less just compared to violations of group needs, and consequently displayed a higher propensity towards mistreatment of hospital staff following such violations. In contrast, outsiders with lower I/C orientation scores (i.e., those oriented toward collectivism) did not differentiate between these violations, reporting a higher degree of perceived justice in both cases and exhibiting lower mistreatment intentions. Therefore, the findings of Study 1 suggest that agitation in ED waiting areas may be particularly likely among outsiders oriented toward individualism, as violations of their personal expectations may lead them to see ED operations as unjust.

Our findings parallel ED research which suggests that outsiders oriented toward individualism may be particularly prone to frustration in such environments. For example, Boudreaux et al. (2000)

found that the extent to which staff show care and concern for patients *as individuals* predicts both patient satisfaction and the likelihood of recommending the facility. Their study underscores that personalized attention remains critical even in settings where collective health outcomes are prioritized. Similarly, Attree (2001) found that outsiders believe high-quality care should be individualized, patient-centered, and marked by nurturing relationships. In contrast, impersonal and routine care often leads to dissatisfaction, emphasizing the importance of staff engagement and empathy. These findings highlight the challenges EDs face in balancing efficient medical triage with the need for personalized care, a balance that is crucial for satisfying outsiders oriented toward individualism.

The observations made in EDs about the value of personalized treatment resonate beyond the healthcare sector and are indicative of a broader shift in organizations. A large body of research emphasizes the profound impact of personalized service on customer satisfaction, and identifies key elements of personalization, such as recognizing a customer's uniqueness, using their name, and addressing their specific needs (Winsted, 1999; Mittal & Lassar, 1996). This is echoed by SERVQUAL, a model capturing customer expectations from providers, and their perceptions of service quality (Coulthard, 2004). According to the model, empathy, or the provision of individualized attention to customers, is one of the main pillars driving customer satisfaction. In the same vein, surveys indicate that customers prefer personalized interactions throughout their dealings with retailers, which includes multiple customized touchpoints, such as receiving compliments on unique aspects of their appearance or behavior (Lindecrantz, 2020).

Building on these findings, we expect that providing individualized attention to outsiders oriented toward individualism may reduce their sense of injustice by affirming their uniqueness, a core concern for this group. Such individual recognition might increase their justice perceptions vis-à-vis the triage process by showing them that their unique needs and status are acknowledged. In turn, this increase in perceived justice is likely to reduce the likelihood of outsiders engaging in mistreatment against staff. However, it is impractical for EDs to differentiate outsiders by their I/C orientation, as such traits are often undisclosed or unknown at the time of encounter. To address this challenge, we propose a universal intervention that emphasizes providing individualized attention to all outsiders, regardless of their cultural and personal values. The intervention involves staff making an active effort to gather information pertinent to the outsider's identity before providing personalized information. By acknowledging each patient's individual identity, we anticipate a reduction in mistreatment of frontline staff.

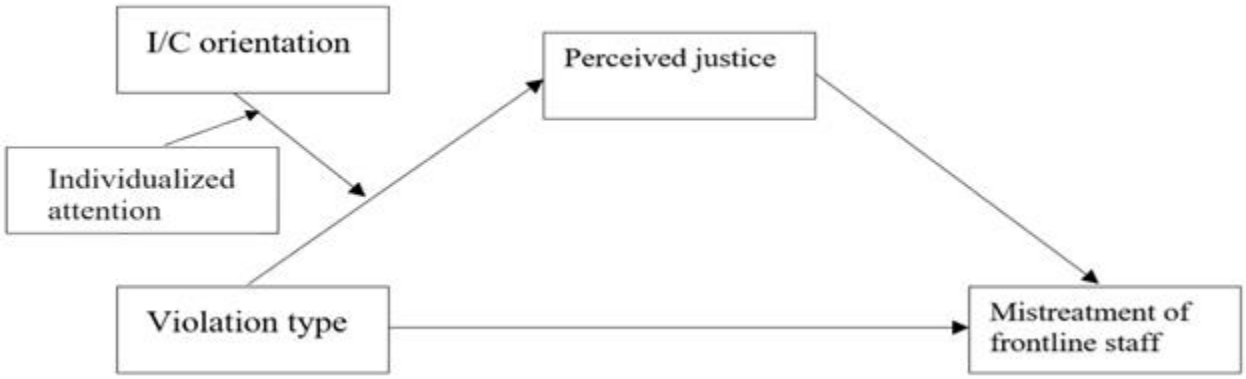
Thus, we predict (see Figure 4):

H4. Providing outsiders with individualized attention will buffer the relationship between violation type and perceived justice. This buffering effect will be stronger for outsiders oriented toward individualism (a three-way interaction).

Taken together, we suggest:

H5. Providing outsiders with individualized attention will increase their justice perceptions in the face of violations, and thus buffer the indirect interactive effect of violation type and I/C orientation on mistreatment via perceived justice (moderated mediation).

Figure 4. *Research Model, Study 2*



Study 2: Individualized Attention, Perceived Justice and Mistreatment

Methods

Study 2 was conducted within a large regional, publicly funded university hospital, which has a total of 1100 beds and serves approximately 400 patients daily in the ED. The primary objective of Study 2 was to expand upon the theoretical framework established in Study 1 and investigate whether mistreatment in EDs could be reduced by providing individualized attention to outsiders.

Sample and Procedure

The design of Study 2 was 2×2 (with/without individualized attention; violation of individual vs. group needs). The sample size for this study was determined using G*Power V.3.1.9.4. The calculation was based on a linear multiple regression with a fixed model and regression coefficients, aiming for 80% power and a 5% significance level (α), with an anticipated medium effect size (Cohen's d=.06). To account for potential non-responses, we increased the sample size by 20%. As a result, our target sample size was at least 153 participants. Ultimately, data was gathered from 224 participants with an average age of 38.75; 49% of whom were female. We controlled for the same variables as in Study 1: age, gender, education, ethnic group affiliation. All participants met the Helsinki Committee's inclusion criteria.

Individualized Attention Intervention

We designed an intervention to provide individualized attention to outsiders, aiming to alleviate feelings of injustice among those oriented towards individualism. The experiment spanned five months and took place in a hospital that caters to a diverse population. The intervention and control groups were assigned on different days. On all days, interactions were conducted by a research assistant wearing a name tag with the ED logo to be identified as a representative of the organization. All research assistants were fluent in the primary languages spoken by the patient population.

On control days, research assistants sat at the reception desk and handed out a sheet of paper with information about ED procedures to outsiders (see Appendix A). This information sheet was

provided in the main language of the country where the experiment was conducted, regardless of the cultural identity of the outsider. Outsiders were also handed a survey to fill out, and were then instructed to sit in the waiting area for treatment.

On intervention days, research assistants were instructed to provide a personalized experience to outsiders. After the reception staff directed outsiders to the waiting area, a research assistant approached them for a private conversation. The assistants first asked which language the outsider preferred and then used that language to inquire about their well-being and how the ED could assist them that day. They also provided an instruction sheet translated into the outsider's preferred language, and the survey to complete. After this interaction, the research assistants returned to sit at the reception desk.

Our intervention paralleled recommendations from research on personalization, which emphasize the importance of recognizing a customer's uniqueness, using their name, and addressing their specific needs (Winsted, 1999; Mittal & Lassar, 1996). We anticipated that providing an individualized experience by addressing outsiders in their preferred language and catering the interaction to their needs would reduce their feelings of injustice and decrease their inclination towards mistreatment.

Manipulation Check

To verify that our manipulation indeed provided a sense of individualized attention from the ED staff, we adapted a measure of patient–doctor relational communication, specifically the intimacy subscale (Gallagher et al., 2001). Each outsider was asked, "To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the last ED staff member you spoke to?" Sample items included: "Was interested in talking to me" and "Created a sense of closeness in the conversation." As predicted, outsiders who received individualized attention reported significantly higher perceived levels of intimate communication ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 1.53$) compared to those who did not receive individualized attention ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.50$); $T(130) = -2.06$, $p < .05$.

Measures

Study 2 used the same measures as Study 1. Internal consistency values were as follows: I/C orientation—Cronbach's alpha = .86, McDonald's omega = .86; perceived justice—Cronbach's alpha = .97, McDonald's omega = .93; mistreatment of frontline staff—Cronbach's alpha = .97, McDonald's omega = .94.

Results

Table 4 presents means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for the Study 2 variables.

Table 4. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of Study 2 Variables*

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	.53	.50	-							
2. Age	38.75	15.18	.05	-						
3. Education	13.65	3.57	.04	.32**	-					
4. Ethnic group	1.58	.62	-.02	-.04	-.14*	-				
5. Violation type	1.50	.50	-.20**	.05	.06	.00	-			
6. Perceived justice	5.18	1.78	.03	.12	.03	.17*	.22**	-		
7. I/C orientation	1.84	1.22	.04	-.12	-.01	-.04	-.10	-.16*	-	
8. Individualized attention	.59	.99	-.07	-.03	.01	.12	-.07	.08	-.12	-
9. Mistreatment	2.71	1.63	.02	-.08	-.02	-.19**	-.19**	-.18**	-.01	-.03

Note. †p<.1; *p <.05; **p <.01; two-tailed. Violation type was coded as 1—violating individual needs; 2—violating group needs; Higher I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward individualism, and lower I/C scores represent a greater orientation toward collectivism.

As we predicted, higher perceived justice was associated with lower degrees of mistreatment towards frontline staff (r = -.18; p < .01), supporting H1.

Hypotheses 2–5 were tested using a moderated-mediation three-way interaction model (Model 11; Hayes, 2018; boot=5000), controlling for age, gender, education level, and ethnic group. Outsiders' I/C orientation moderated the relationship between violation type (violation of individual needs vs. group needs) and perceived justice (B = *.63*; p < .05). Outsiders oriented toward individualism perceived violations of individual needs as less just, while outsiders oriented toward collectivism perceived violations of group needs as less just, thus supporting H2. In turn, perceived justice predicted mistreatment intentions, such that higher perceived justice predicted lower mistreatment (B=-.20; p < .01), thus supporting H3.

The three-way interaction between violation type, I/C orientation, and individualized attention significantly predicted perceived justice (B=-1.49; p < .01), indicating that providing outsiders with individualized attention buffered the relationship between violation type and perceived justice, supporting H4. The individualized attention manipulation interacted with I/C orientation and increased the perceived justice of both violations, supporting H5 (B=2.57, p<.01). The index of moderated mediation was .30 (.15); CI [.04;.64]. See Table 5.

Study 2 Discussion

In Study 2, we replicated the research design of Study 1 while introducing an additional condition in which certain participants received individualized attention aimed at increasing their justice perceptions towards ED processes. The results not only replicated those of Study 1 but also supported our subsequent hypotheses.

Our findings suggest that providing individualized attention to ED outsiders effectively neutralizes the impact of violations that infringe upon individual needs for those oriented toward individualism. This results in a consistently high level of perceived justice among all participants, regardless of their I/C orientation and the type of violation they were exposed to. When it comes to violations of group needs, we observed that participants oriented toward individualism perceived such violations as more just when individualized attention was provided.

Table 5. *Moderated Mediation Predicts Mistreatment, Study 2 (Hayes, 2018, Model 11).*

		Perceived justice b (SE)	Mistreatment b (SE)
Constant		4.53 (1.33)	5.36 (.75)
Perceived justice			-.20 (.07)**
Violation type		-.15 (.71)	-.33 (.25)
I/C orientation		-.24 (.50)*	
I/C orientation × Violation type		.63 (.29)*	
Individualized attention		-4.20 (1.68)*	
Violation type × Individualized attention		2.52 (1.01)*	
I/C orientation × Individualized attention		2.57 (.77)**	
Violation type × I/C orientation × Individualized attention		-1.49 (.46)**	
Gender		.12 (.16)	.08 (.24)
Age		.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Education		.00 (.04)	.01 (.03)
Ethnic group		.56 (.22)**	-.54 (.19)**
ΔR^2		.20 (2.64)***	.15 (2.25)**
		Conditional indirect effect	
I/C orientation	Individualized attention	b (boot SE)	% 95 CI
Low (.60)	No	-.05 (.14)	-.35 .25
	Yes	-.38 (.19)	-.79 -.06
Mean (1.9)	No	-.21 (.12)	-.46 -.03
	Yes	-.15 (.09)	-.37 -.01
High (3.0)	No	-.35 (.16)	-.69 -.07
	Yes	.04 (.12)	-.20 .28
Index of moderated mediation		**30 (.15)**	**.04 .64**

Note. *p <.05; **p <.01. Violation type was coded as 1—violating individual needs; 2—violating group needs; Higher I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward individualism, and lower I/C scores represented a greater orientation toward collectivism.

In the absence of individualized attention, outsiders oriented toward individualism tended to view violations of individual needs as less just compared to violations of group needs. Conversely, those oriented toward collectivism displayed consistent levels of perceived justice for both types of violations. This suggests a greater inclination toward conformity, greater acceptance, and fewer questions regarding the fairness of organizational procedures among outsiders oriented toward collectivism. However, when provided with individualized attention, this group perceived violations of group needs as even more just than when such attention was absent.

Our findings highlight the role of I/C orientation in shaping individuals' expectations, perceptions, and reactions to different situations.

General Discussion

In two studies, we explored how the I/C orientation of outsiders influences their perceptions of justice in emergency departments (EDs), subsequently impacting their interactions with frontline staff. The first study confirmed our theoretical model, indicating that individuals with an individualistic orientation were particularly prone to mistreat staff. These individuals demonstrated heightened sensitivity to perceived infringements of their personal needs, leading to increased likelihood of mistreatment. The second study not only replicated these results but also tested an intervention that provided individualized attention to these outsiders. This intervention significantly improved justice perceptions among individuals with an individualistic orientation, which in turn reduced their propensity to mistreat ED staff. Together, these studies provide novel insights into the dynamics of mistreatment in EDs, emphasizing the pivotal role of cultural orientation in shaping both perceptions of justice and behavioral responses, and suggesting that tailored interventions can effectively reduce mistreatment.

Theoretical Implications

Our research contributes to the literatures on workplace mistreatment, cultural values in organizational settings, organizational justice and conflict theory. First, we contribute to the literature on workplace mistreatment by addressing a gap identified by Hershcovis et al. (2020) regarding the need for a deeper understanding of mistreatment's antecedents. Our study highlights effective strategies that healthcare organizations can employ to preemptively address abusive behaviors, potentially preventing their escalation into more severe forms of aggression and violence. This builds on findings by Reyt et al. (2022), who demonstrated that reducing outsider frustration through improved management of waiting experiences can diminish the likelihood of staff mistreatment.

Additionally, our findings extend the discussion of mistreatment beyond overt physical violence to include subtler forms of abuse, such as verbal aggression and disparaging gestures, which can then also escalate into more severe acts like physical assaults (Baron & Neuman, 1996; Chris et al., 2022; Yuan et al., 2020). We emphasize that all forms of mistreatment, regardless of their severity, can negatively affect the mental and physical health of healthcare staff, potentially leading to increased absenteeism, high turnover rates, and reduced productivity (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010).

Second, our paper enriches the discourse on cultural values within diverse workplaces. As globalization increases cultural diversity within organizations (Gibson et al., 2014), the risk of misunderstandings that may lead to mistreatment also rises. Challenging the assumption that all individuals react similarly to potential transgressions, we propose that an individual's I/C orientation is a crucial determinant in how they perceive and respond to mistreatment of frontline staff. This assertion is supported by prior research suggesting that individuals oriented towards individualism are more sensitive to perceived transgressions (Brockner et al., 2000, 2001, 2005; Colquitt, 2004; Erdogan & Liden, 2006; Lam et al., 2002; Ramamoorthy & Flood, 2002), but we further refine this insight by suggesting that the alignment between an individual's degree of individualism and the type of violation encountered is critical.

Third, our study contributes to the justice literature by examining how perceived justice influences aggressive behaviors and mistreatment. Established research indicates that perceived injustice is a key predictor of such behaviors (Berry et al., 2007; Colquitt et al., 2001; Ferris et al., 2012), with individuals who perceive the treatment they receive as unfair being more likely to exhibit frustration and mistreat staff, who are often seen as representatives of the organization (Naumann & Bennett, 2000). Our findings suggest that an individual's I/C orientation significantly influences their

perception of fairness, affecting their reactions to perceived transgressions and subsequent tendency toward mistreating staff. The findings thus highlight the role of differentiated justice perceptions as antecedents in diverse workplace environments, responding to calls by Cropanzano et al. (2015) for a more nuanced integration of justice theory and cultural research.

Lastly, we contribute to the literature on conflict theory by emphasizing that conflicts are not perceived equally by everyone; rather, they are viewed through the cultural lens of the parties involved. Understanding these cultural orientations allows us to predict the trajectory of the conflict, assess whether it might escalate into mistreatment, and find ways to alleviate the conflict by being sensitive to the values and priorities of people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Practical Implications

Understanding the mechanisms that trigger mistreatment in healthcare settings enables the development of targeted interventions to reduce such behaviors. However, segregating outsiders based on personality traits, which are typically unknown, is not a feasible strategy for organizations. To address this challenge, we devised a universal intervention intended to assure all outsiders that their individual needs are being considered. Our intervention has a pronounced positive effect on outsiders oriented toward individualism and a marginal impact on those oriented toward collectivism, aligning with our objectives.

More broadly, our research highlights the need for healthcare organizations, particularly EDs, to adopt a holistic approach to handling mistreatment. This involves recognizing the varied psychological and situational triggers that can lead to such behavior, and implementing tailored strategies to address them.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our studies have several limitations. First, we measured the likelihood of mistreatment rather than actual mistreatment. However, this measure is based on previous research demonstrating a significant correlation between likelihood and actual violence (Efrat-Treister et al., 2019). While future research could supplement our findings with actual behavioral measures of aggression, it is important to note that such measures typically capture only severe aggressive behaviors, which are rare and often addressed too late, after the harm has occurred. We propose that reducing acts of mild mistreatment, which are frequently overlooked, is a valuable strategy for preventing escalation to more severe forms of mistreatment in service industries (Goussinsky, 2012). This proactive approach aligns with recent calls to consider the psychological characteristics of patients (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2017).

Second, our research compared only two scenarios. Future studies should examine a broader range of situations involving different levels of collectivism to enhance our understanding of cultural influences on mistreatment.

Third, we focused on how I/C orientation relates to perceptions of procedural justice. Future research should investigate the effects of other cultural values, such as power distance and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2001), as well as personal values like self-enhancement and self-transcendence (Schwartz, 2012), on perceived justice and mistreatment.

Last, we did not measure the influence of factors such as level of crowdedness, time of day, and wait duration on perceived justice and mistreatment. Future research should explore these variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research underscores the multifaceted nature of mistreatment of frontline staff, especially in high-stress environments like EDs. Outsider mistreatment, often dismissed as a minor or inevitable aspect of frontline work, can have profound consequences for healthcare staff. Our studies illuminate the complex interplay between outsiders' I/C orientations, their perceptions of justice, and their mistreatment of frontline staff. We demonstrate that I/C orientations significantly influence how individuals perceive and react to situations that violate personal or group needs in resource-constrained settings like EDs.

Our research goes beyond merely identifying the problem of outsider mistreatment. Rather, it offers a proactive approach to mitigating this issue through a theory-based intervention aimed at enhancing justice perceptions, particularly among individuals with high levels of individualism. This strategy represents a shift from traditional reactive responses to a more preventive and inclusive approach, recognizing the diverse value orientations and perceptions of outsiders. By addressing the root causes of mistreatment, our intervention aims to reduce the incidence of these behaviors, leading to a safer work environment for healthcare professionals.

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Appendix

Appendix A. Individualized Attention Provided in Study 2

Welcome to the Emergency Department. We are here to help you. On this page, we will explain to you the stages of visiting our department.

1. Please take a number to queue for the reception.
2. When your turn arrives, please give the receptionist your ID (driver's license, passport, or any photo ID).
3. If you don't have a photo ID, the following information must be provided:
    - ID number, first name, last name, parents' names, date of birth, address, and telephone number.
    - Referral from a doctor. If you do not have a doctor's referral, you will explain to the receptionist the reason for arriving at the ED. If you don't have a referral, you will have to pay $300 or sign a promissory note. If, after being checked at the ED, you are hospitalized, this payment debt will be canceled.
4. We will open a visitor's file for you at the reception. Please wait for your name to be announced. When your name is announced, please enter the nurse's room. The nurse will make an initial assessment of your problem. The assessment will include questions, taking vital signs, and providing first aid as needed. Then, the nurse will direct you to a doctor for triage.
5. You will continue your examination and treatment in one of the ED wards.
6. When you arrive at the appropriate ward, you may have to wait for one of the doctors, depending on the load at the ED. The doctors will examine you individually and decide on the necessary treatment and tests.
7. You will have to wait for the test results.
8. After waiting, doctors will update you on the results and decide on hospitalization in one of the hospital wards, or discharge for continuing treatment in community medicine, with recommendations for further treatment.

We wish you good health,

The Emergency Department staff.

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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION IACM FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Negotiation and Conflict Management Research

Negotiations in At-Risk Communities and Negotiating for Social Justice: A Review of *Transformative Negotiation*

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Abstract

This is a review of Sarah Federman's new book, Transformative Negotiation: Strategies for Everyday Change and Equitable Futures. The book fills a glaring gap in the negotiation literature by considering the perspective of those in at-risk communities. Pulling from her experience teaching negotiation to at-risk students in Baltimore, Federman addresses blind spots that are overlooked in traditional negotiation texts. This provides a more complete understanding of the diverse applications of negotiation principles. This review praises the book's insight into overlooked applications of negotiation principles and how they can be used to obtain social justice outcomes. This review also provides a critical analysis of the potential danger of inadvertently promoting harmful stereotypes when addressing issues of gender and race.

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This is a review of Sarah Federman's new book, *Transformative Negotiation: Strategies for Everyday Change and Equitable Futures*. The book fills a glaring gap in the negotiation literature by considering the perspective of those in at-risk communities. Pulling from her experience teaching negotiation to at-risk students in Baltimore, Federman addresses blind spots that are overlooked in traditional negotiation texts. This provides a more complete understanding of the diverse applications of negotiation principles. This review praises the book's insight into overlooked applications of negotiation principles and how they can be used to obtain social justice outcomes. This review also provides a critical analysis of the potential danger of inadvertently promoting harmful stereotypes when addressing issues of gender and race.

Federman writes in a highly effective manner, namely, by recounting interactions with her at-risk Baltimore students and drawing from their unique experiences with negotiating. Examples provided by Federman include reconnecting with a birth father, convincing a loved one to quit using heroin, women negotiating with partners to use condoms, getting an insurance company to replace a stolen car, and a security guard negotiating with a homeless man who demanded that he be shot. Federman also illuminates the disadvantages people in at-risk communities must overcome.

For example, Federman explains how negotiations are frequently about money, but people from at-risk communities are often not exposed to money-management skills. This puts them at a significant disadvantage in negotiations that require quick, off-the-cuff considerations of complex monetary tradeoffs. Hesitation, or a look of confusion may be interpreted negatively as a lack of confidence. Differences in social capital are also prominent, putting those who lack powerful connections at a significant disadvantage. This is particularly problematic in the United States, where there is a culture of individualism that discourages people from reaching out to those in at-risk communities to provide help.

Federman goes beyond the application of negotiation tactics and delves into how negotiations can be used to enact positive social change. For example, she poses questions such as: What good is gaining power through effective negotiation if we then use that power to oppress others in the community? And Federman provides numerous real-life examples, such as the negotiation for a hydroelectric dam project that considered the impact on the indigenous community that may be forcefully relocated.

Federman also encourages others to question the ultimate reasons for the negotiations they engage in to examine if they will truly benefit from a negotiated outcome. She explains how, just as we must separate the other side's stated position from their underlying interest in a negotiation, we should also be cognizant of separating our individual stated position from our underlying interest. Federman illustrates this by providing an example of someone negotiating for an expensive handbag, and how such a person should consider why they are trying to acquire such an item. Is it to be perceived as more successful? If so, what ultimate benefit comes from having others perceive them as being more successful? Would one gain more respect in the community by using the money to help fund an outreach program? Could the flaunting of an expensive handbag result in a potential risk to one's personal safety? Will the interests of the community be advanced by promoting the notion that the pursuit of conspicuous consumption is how to gain respect?

One potential critique of the book is that Federman at times appears to overstate her case. Instead of just applying standard negotiation principles to these unique negotiation settings—which she does very well—Federman at times implies that the standard negotiation principles are inapplicable and, therefore, an entirely new approach is needed. For example, she poses the question, "Might traditional negotiation advice, used in the wrong setting, set my students up for bad trouble?"

She later states, “Pretending that advice works for all readers can do an immense disservice, especially for the most vulnerable.”

I believe that this is a disservice to the universality of general negotiation principles. Yes, these principles must be customized to the setting, to the person one is negotiating with, and their personal negotiation style, but the principles remain. Indeed, throughout the book Federman does not invent novel principles of negotiation; rather, she applies the general principles to unique settings. Federman mentions the basic negotiating principles of distinguishing between stated interests and underlying positions, establishing a walkaway point, gaining information on the other side by asking questions, being quiet after making a request, best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA), the “win–win” approach, undergoing rejection therapy to become more comfortable making requests, appropriate physical gestures and dressing professionally, the importance of timing, and waiting to discuss money in an interview setting only after the offer is made.

I believe that the real value in this book comes from taking the unique application of these standard negotiation principles and applying them to unique negotiations that are encountered by people in at-risk communities. For example, living paycheck to paycheck likely has a negative effect on one’s BATNA. Conversely, the savings possessed by someone living in an affluent community are likely to provide stronger BATNAs, such as the ability to reject a suboptimal job offer while unemployed, ability to walk away from an automobile negotiation due to owning a second car, and ability to hold out for a higher price when selling an item due to savings. Similarly, it is easier for those with financial reserves to make the required investment of time. For example, such a person is more able to take on a long-term project with a big payout that will not come to fruition until the next month. And such a person is better situated to participate in an unpaid internship that will provide long-term benefits.

And there are further examples that could have been provided in the book. The ability to be quiet after asking for something in a negotiation might also be more difficult for those from at-risk communities, as childhood abandonment trauma makes it more difficult to deal with awkward silence. This can especially be true in email negotiations, where the silence can last days. The notion of seeking a “win–win” outcome may be interpreted differently to those in at-risk communities. When illegal firearms are present at a negotiation, a “win” might mean losing one’s wallet but walking away alive. Furthermore, the presence of an illegal firearm provides the potential for a “lose–lose–lose” outcome whereby the victim of violence loses, the community living in fear loses, and even the perpetrator of the violence loses his humanity.

Additional examples include the confidence to ask for things without the fear of rejection is also something those in at-risk communities are at a disadvantage for. Many of these people were raised to not question their teachers and authority figures out of a show of respect. Research indicates that Black students often do not learn how to effectively ask questions because in their schooling, teachers might disparage their way of speaking. Growing up in a violent environment may not foster the ability to ask questions because survival may be contingent upon being silent. For example, in a black-market transaction, asking questions could be perceived as a challenge to status or even raise suspicions about police involvement. In order to overcome the fear of rejection, it is necessary to overcome the shame and awkwardness that come from a bold request—a valuable skill for any negotiator. Unfortunately, at-risk communities have very different experiences with the effects of shame.

Furthermore, the skepticism that people in at-risk communities have regarding asking for things may be healthy. For example, in 1984 four Black men were shot for asking a man on a New York City subway for $5 (Reynolds, 2023). And finally, those in at-risk communities may find it harder to ask for things because of an ingrained notion that they are not deserving. Regardless of these

impediments, helping those in at-risk communities to overcome the fear of asking for things—in a safe context—is of paramount importance, as these are the communities that need the most support. Although not addressed in the book, it is important to note that not all requests receive equal treatment. For example, studies show that Black people are more likely to be viewed skeptically when they ask medical professionals for painkillers (Hopluch, 2016).

Federman discusses the topics of race and gender as they relate to negotiated outcomes. In general, these parts of the book warn women and minorities about the potential disadvantages they may experience when attempting to negotiate favorable outcomes. There is certainly evidence to suggest that women and minorities receive disproportionately inferior outcomes in their negotiations under various settings. However, it is unclear if communicating this to women and minorities results in a net benefit. I believe that doing so may serve to exacerbate the problem by unintentionally promoting the underlying harmful stereotypes. For example, Federman refers to people in power as "often a white person." And Federman references a study that found men negotiated twice as often as women and their initial offers were more bold than women's initial offers.

One should consider whether telling women and minorities that some of the people they will negotiate with are going to discriminate against them could have a dramatic psychological effect and result in these women and minorities performing worse in their negotiations. To illustrate, imagine being told before the beginning of a negotiation that the other side probably does not like you and therefore will not treat you fairly. This would likely result in a suboptimal negotiation presentation from you. Even if it is true that this person is biased against you, you would likely reach a better negotiated outcome from not being informed of this fact. There could be extreme situations in which we should inform people of bias in those they are negotiating with—such as someone who has a reputation for making sexual advances toward women. But telling large groups of people that they are starting out at a disadvantage may only result in a circular, self-fulfilling prophecy whereby the fear of potentially being discriminated against causes diminished performance, which causes worse negotiated outcomes, which further strengthens the evidence of discrimination, which causes even more fear. This cycle could help explain the previously mentioned finding that women are significantly less likely to engage in a negotiation compared to men. Studies also confirm the negative results of even subliminal reminders of stereotypes. For example, one study found that African Americans who were first asked priming questions about their race went on to perform worse on an exam than those who were not reminded about their race (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Additionally, promoting the notion that men are biased against women may lead to women avoiding male environments, which is detrimental to career advancement.

Another aspect not covered in the book is how it may also be harmful to engage in the practice of offering segregated advice based on the gender and race of the person receiving the advice. This was illustrated in an interview with noted Black economist Thomas Sowell. He was asked how a young African American can become successful in America today. Sowell simply responded, "The same way anybody else would. You equip yourself with skills that people are willing to pay for." The interviewer was no doubt expecting a race-based response to the question, but Sowell's universally applicable advice was likely the most beneficial. This elicits the question: Don't women and minorities deserve to receive the same best negotiation advice that white males receive? Offering segregated negotiation advice risks harming not only women, but also men. This is because much of the advice targeted to women are things that men struggle with as well, examples include confidence in making a bold first offer, dealing with awkward silence, and the willingness to walk away. Offering different negotiation advice to people based on their gender and race may perpetuate the harmful notion that there are inherent differences based on gender and race. This can not only harm the progress of women who deal with stereotypes of being inferior negotiators but also potentially harm men who

may face discrimination for not negotiating according to stereotypical expectations. Finally, perpetuating harmful stereotypes regarding gender differences in negotiations may result in employers being less likely to hire female applicants for positions that involve negotiation and conflict.

Federman's impetus for writing the book provides a powerful narrative that really helps build a strong connection to the reader. She recounts how she initially tried to teach her at-risk Baltimore students using the same textbook examples about negotiation that she learned in her graduate studies program. The resulting confusion from these students regarding how impractical these tactics would be if applied to their unique negotiation settings caused a paradigm shift whereby Federman was forced to consider how better to reach her audience. This strong desire to better engage a diverse student body is something that all good teachers should experience. Every teacher should consider whether the teaching methods and subject matter examples that are in the textbook and that they were taught is really the most efficient way to reach every student, or just students from a similar demographic background as the teacher. This is a critical point to ponder as humans naturally default to the ethnocentric fallacy that everyone perceives the world and has had similar experiences to themselves.

Federman states that the book is for a wide variety of audiences such as:

Anyone seeking social mobility toward a better life for themselves and loved ones.

Anyone struggling with discrimination or marginality.

Anyone operating in volatile or fragile environments.

Current and aspiring managers who want to attract, train, and retain diverse talent.

Instructors of negotiation

I believe that the book would also be a valuable tool to help teach those in privileged positions how to best use their power for good. This is particularly important as one study found, "the more powerful people are, the less attention they pay to the other side's needs" (Diamond, 2012, p. 46). While all of these categories of people would certainly gain insight from reading the book, it is not an instructional tutorial on negotiation strategies, as most other negotiation books. The majority of the content is targeted at instructors wanting to better reach students in a diverse classroom, rather than targeting a person from a disadvantaged community wanting to learn how to become a better negotiator. This target audience is a strength, not a weakness, as there is no shortage of books that focus on teaching negotiation principles. Therefore, this book fills a glaring gap in the negotiation pedagogy literature that will likely have a significant positive impact not only with at-risk students, but in everyone in the classroom—since everyone benefits from increased engagement with those with more diverse experiences. Additionally, society at large benefits when people in at-risk communities are empowered.

While this review provides some constructive criticism, the book is immensely valuable for its unique take on negotiation application. It helps provide a more robust understanding of the diversity likely present in any negotiation class. While many negotiation books emphasize the importance of differences when negotiating with people from other countries, few address the topic of negotiating with people from at-risk communities. The book also provides some intriguing, in-depth

case studies, such as one regarding an orchestra that serves Baltimore, where, due to a lack of funding, the musicians faced a 20% pay cut on top of already low pay.

The conversational tone of the book makes for an easy read, and the structure is helpful as well. Each chapter begins with a brief overview and questions to consider. These questions help the reader reflect on the bigger picture and act as an effective primer for the material to come. The organization of the chapters also helps improve the reading experience by creating a logical flow from one chapter to the next. Chapter 1 "Imagine" encourages the reader to first consider why you want to achieve the desired outcome in a negotiation. Chapter 2 "Ask" explores the effectiveness of simply asking for what you want. Chapter 3 "Give" discusses the cycle of reciprocity. Chapter 4 "Money" considers the importance of finances in negotiations. Chapter 5 "Digital" explores how rapid technological changes affect negotiated outcomes—for bad and for good. Chapter 6 "Power" looks at the various roles that power plays in a negotiation. Chapter 7 "Gender, Sex, and Race" covers the significance of these demographic factors. And finally, chapter 8 "Guns, Addiction, and an Orchestra" provides additional examples of the unique negotiation strategies encountered by at-risk communities.

The book is strongly recommended to anyone who teaches negotiation and is looking to provide a more robust and practical experience for all. And because the book frequently focuses on using negotiation tactics to advance positive social change in disadvantaged communities by negotiating on behalf of others, it would also be beneficial for instructors of topics such as leadership, sociology, urban studies, and community activism.

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