



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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Dan-mallam Yakubu Abigail, Dr Dulzalani Bin Eden, Siti Fateha Binti Dolhadi

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i1/8424> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i1/8424

Received: 10 November 2020, **Revised:** 13 December 2020, **Accepted:** 12 January 2021

Published Online: 28 January 2021

In-Text Citation: (Abigail et al., 2021)

To Cite this Article: Abigail, D-M., Y., Eden, D. B., & Dolhadi, S. F. B. (2021). A Review of Anger Expression and its Influence on The Process and Outcome of Negotiation . *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(1), 700–708.

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Vol. 11, No. 1, 2021, Pg. 700 - 708

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www.hrmars.com

ISSN: 2222-6990

A Review of Anger Expression and its Influence on The Process and Outcome of Negotiation

Dan-mallam Yakubu Abigail, Dr Dulzalani Bin Eden, Siti
Fateha Binti Dolhadi

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Faculty of Social Science and Humanities
Department of Industrial Relations and Labour Studies Programme

Email: abigailyakubu711@yahoo.com, edzul@unimas.my, dsfateha@unimas.my

Abstract

Labour dispute is inevitable between employees and employers, but it must be resolved. Negotiation is one of the common methods of resolving labour dispute between disputing parties. However, the success and failure of negotiation depends much on disputant's emotional expression on the negotiation table. Under normal circumstances, negotiators express their anger on the bargaining table when they are not satisfied with their opponent's offers/demands.

Furthermore, disputants also express their anger on the bargaining table when the other negotiators continue pressing home their demands, neglecting the interests of their counterparts. Parties whose demands has not been treated with respect and dignity by the other parties might display anger as a strategical movement to pave ways for an amicably satisfactory resolution between both parties. This paper, review benefits and ramifications of anger expression on the process and outcome of negotiation. this paper also discussed when and how negotiators should express their anger on the bargaining table.

Keyword: Negotiation, Negotiators Behaviours, Anger expression, Benefits of Anger Expression and its Complications.

Introduction

Negotiation is considered as a pattern of exchanging important information which facilitates mutual agreement over disputed interests of the disputing parties (Olughor, 2014; Côté, Hideg, & Van Kleef, 2013; Sinacer, Adam, Van Kleen & Galinsky, 2013; Van Dijk, Van Kleef, Steinel, & Van Beest, 2008). An effective negotiating parties maybe mesmerized by the signals such as non-verbal expression and information sharing which they receive from their counterparts, which would be determining their respond (Weiss, et al, 2013; Willner, 2013; Spielberger & Reheiser, 2009).

Evidence shows that during the negotiation process, negotiators may strive for a positive negotiation outcome that serves their personal interests rather than collective interests. This type of inconsiderate attitude from the other party's may compel their counterparts

to showcase their anger as an alternative of expressing their grievances and concern over their neglected interests on the bargaining table (Van Kleef, 2009).

Anger is a human beings' important emotions. It is not just an expression of negative emotion like aggression and hostility, but a natural phenomenon which manifest differently in different individuals in the same circumstances. Anger may range from a transient irritation to a full outrage. If one can present her/his anger in a positive way, it could be considered as a healthy function, and vice versa (Hunsaker, 2018).

In the negotiation setting however, anger expression may have a serious ramification on the outcome of negotiation as both parties indulge in confrontation due to clash of interests leading to missed collective agreement (Adam, Shirako & Maddux, 2010; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006).

Past studies perceived anger expression on the bargaining table as a negative emotion. This is because of its negative influence capable of jeopardising the the outcome of negotiation as well as disputant's future relationship (Van Kleef and De Dreu, 2010; Adler, Rosen & Silverstein, 1998). Whereas other studies reported that anger expression on the negotiation table has a lot of advantages. Based on these studies, anger expression gives more strength to negotiators to overcome the toughness and aggression from their counterparts thereby, paving a way to mutual success (Allred, 1999, Allred, Mallozzi, Matsui, & Raia, 1997; Barry, 1999). The benefits and influence of anger has been discussed under the under the following sub-headings

Benefits and the Influence of Anger in the Negotiation

A considerable number of studies (e.g, Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Tomlinson, Dineen, & Lewicki, 2004; Van Kleef et al. 2004a, 2004b) reported that anger expression is significant on the bargaining table, especially when the negotiating parties tries severally to push the other negotiators towards achieving collective agreement. The purpose of anger in this situation is not to initiate dispute, but to facilitate strong collaboration for win-win agreement between the disputants.

Some studies (e.g, Sinaceur and Tediens, 2006) reported that negative expression such as anger may produce a satisfactory outcome for the expresser. This is because their counterparts may conclude that the expressers of anger have reached their limits and they are not willing to make further concessions. This assumption may motivate the counterparts to make concession to meet the expresser's demand (Wilson et al, 2016; Dikenmann, 2012; Spielberger & Reheiser, 2009). However, the expresser may only succeed in achieving their desirable goals, only if they directed their anger on their counterpart's low offers rather than taking it personal with their partners.

A series of experiments by Van Klee, De Dreu and Manstead (2004) reported that negotiators lower their demands more rapidly after receiving expressions of anger from their counterparts, than they did after neutral or happy expressions. Several empirical studies reported that negotiators who exhibit positive emotion on the bargaining table, are more likely to find mutual solutions on the negotiation table, which is known as integrative bargaining (Yip & Schweinsberg, 2017; Wilson et al, 2016).

Additionally, anger is important on the bargaining table to compel the other negotiators make a greater concession, especially when the anger expresser's demands are reasonable and justifiably. The purpose of anger is to install the spirit of compassion in the hearts other party to treat those demands with respect (Van Kleef 2009; Van Kleef, 2006; Allred et al, 1997; Pillutla & Murnighan, 1996). In addition, Adam and Brett (2015)

affirmed that counterparts of anger expressers have a habit to make concessions on issues being negotiated with both cooperative and competitive motive.

Evidence shows that when negotiators felt disrespectful and mistreatment by their counterparts on the bargaining table, it will culminate to retaliation. This retaliation includes organizational spill-over such as industrial strike action and lockout which often undermine organizational accomplishments (Nelissen et al, 2011; Ray et al, 2008; Van Dijk et al, 2008 Mauss et al, 2007). In addition, negotiators who are not treated fairly by their counterparts on the bargaining table, may engage in stealing organizational properties as a means of retaliation (Baron & Neuman, 1996; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Barclay et al., 2005; Bies & Tripp, 1996; Charles, Paul, & Phillip, 1872).

According to organizational justice literature, negotiators who seek for revenge due to ill treatment they receive from their counterparts on the bargaining table, often spread destructive news about their organization. Similarly, Côté, Hideg and Van Kleef, (2013); Sinacer et al, (2013); and Van Dijk et al, (2008) further maintain that negotiators may also respond to their counterpart's unfair treatment by reducing their organizational task, hence resulting in organization under-development (Ferguson et al, 2008; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Greenberg; 1993).

In essence, past studies reported that retaliation often comes with devastating side effects (Barclay, Skarlicki, & Pugh, 2005; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Tepper et al., 2009; Allred et al, 1997). These consequences include the risk of losing one's job in an attempt to seek for retribution from the other negotiators. Secondly, the risk of counter-retaliation from the other negotiators which attract fresh disputes between both parties. Lastly, the risk of damaging personal reputation leading to unhealthy relationship between the disputants in future.

The Risk of Anger Expression on the Negotiation Process and Outcome.

Empirical investigation shows that anger expression has several implications on both the process and outcome of negotiation. It hinders goal achievements while turning the negotiation into a fireball, thus, influencing both the process and outcome of negotiation (Van Kleef and Côté (2007 Van Kleef, De Dreu & Mnastead, 2004). The reason is that, when negotiators express negative emotion on the negotiation table, it often leads to confrontation. This is because the recipients of such emotion may react in an inappropriate way and as a result, both parties may not be able to reach settlement point.

Several existing literatures (e.g, Lu Wang, Northcraft, & Van Kleef, 2012; Frantz, & Bennisson, 2005; Tiedens, 2001; Lewicki, & Stevenson, 1998; Allred et al, 1997) reported that expression of negative emotion such as anger may result in poorer negotiation outcomes. According to empirical evidence, negotiators who employ anger expression on the negotiation table may succeed for the first time, but they may not succeed when they display similar behaviour on the bargaining table. This is because of reciprocal negative emotional reactions they may receive from the counterpart (Dehghani, Carnevale & Gratch, 2014; Heerding, Van Kleef, Homan & Fisher, 2013).

So, anger expression may not be a suitable strategy to adopt on the negotiation table since it is capable of damaging the negotiation outcome and the disputant's future relationship.

Theoretical and Contextual Contribution of this Research

The significant of this paper relies of its contributions to the existing body of literature. These contributions are as follows;

This paper contributes tremendously by providing an in-depth understanding on the influence of negative emotional expression on the bargaining table. It also contributes to the literature by enlighten negotiators on when and how they should express their anger on the negotiation table. This review paper has also contributed to the existing literature by providing an awareness, that not all emotions are harmful to negotiation, a timely and average expression of anger is beneficial in the case where the other parties remain firm in making expensive demands.

Apart from empirical contributions, this paper has reviewed two bodies of theories which includes Emotions as Social Information (EASI) and attribution theory. This study has contributed theoretically by creating an awareness on why negotiators usually express negative emotions and how positive or negative emotions can help or hurt negotiation success. Using anger can either serve as unifying mechanism of gaining advantage in negotiation or drawbacks which endanger the success of collective achievements between the negotiating parties

Conclusion

Negotiation is commonly considered as one of the methods of resolving a dispute between the disputing parties. But disputant's negative emotion often manifest especially when the other party places a very strong emphasis on achieving their desirable goals demands without consideration to the interest of the other negotiators. The main target of negotiators who often employs anger as a strategical movement is to biased the outcome of the negotiation in their favor thereby, leaving their counterparts with almost nothing on the negotiation table. This type of habit represents a classical example of unethical bargaining behavior which usually come with high cost. These costs include facilitating fresh dispute between the negotiators hence, resulting in detrimental effect on both the outcome of the negotiation as well as the disputants ongoing relationships.

Although, not all emotions are detrimental to negotiation. Positive emotions might help to facilitate more favorable negotiation outcome, and feelings like anxiety or nervousness can be channeled to achieve collective success between both parties. This is because of the fact that negotiators who appears happy and calm on the bargaining table often consider their interests and the interests of their counterparts. By doing so, both parties can sincerely look for a constructive win-win solution to their interests in dispute. This is contrary to negotiators who display their anger on the bargaining table to stand firm and make higher demands and smaller concessions to maximize their own benefit. Thus, it can be said that the failure and the success of every negotiation depends much on the negotiator's emotional states on the bargaining table.

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