

Getting to Yes in China: Exploring Personality Effects in Chinese Negotiation Styles

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Abstract

Researchers believe that personality affects both the negotiation process and outcomes, but have yet to provide reliable evidence. Using a culturally balanced personality scale SAPPS, we explore the impact of personality on negotiation within a collectivist context—China. Hypothesized relationships based on a buyer/seller model are supported that assertive negotiators are more likely to behave competitively, which leads to better economic outcomes, and open-minded negotiators are more likely to use an integrative approach, which leads to higher satisfaction. This result, similar to those obtained in North America, suggests a universal model of negotiation might exist. Our study also indicates, however, that personality only accounts for a small portion of variance in negotiation behaviors. More research from other perspectives is needed for further exploration.

Key words: personality, negotiation behavior, collectivist, China, SAPPS

Over the decades of negotiation studies, researchers have been assuming that personality is relevant to the understanding of the process and outcomes of negotiation encounters. Unfortunately, empirical evidence for the role of personal characteristics in negotiation is often inconclusive, if not contradictory (Bazerman et al. 2000; Pruitt and Carnevale 1993). Many scholars even question whether personality affects negotiation at all (Bazerman et al. 2000; Lewicki et al. 1994).

In this paper we report one study designed to overcome some of the limitations that have plagued previous research on the relationship between personality and negotiation. Rather than focus on isolated personality traits, as has been the case in the majority negotiation studies in literature (Bazerman et al. 2000; Dittlof and Harris 1996; Rubin and Brown 1975), we draw upon a comprehensive model of personality structure and examine all the personality dimensions.

Moreover, we examine personality effects in negotiation within an international context, echoing to the call by Kremenyuk (2002a) that there is an urgent need to find similarities not only among negotiations but also among negotiation styles of people from different countries and from different ideological and cultural backgrounds. Speculation on cultural influences on negotiation dates back to the early 20th century, but the scientific study of this subject has a short history, with the last 20 years having seen an increase in the amount of research on cultural differences in negotiations due to the increased globalization in the world economy (Gelfand and Dyer 2000). The most apparent is the abundance of articles and books providing descriptions and prescriptive advice on how to negotiate in numerous

countries, such as China (Blackman 1997; Goh 1996; Pye 1992; Ma et al. 2002), Japan (Hawrysh and Zaichkowsky 1989; March, 1988; Lituchy 1997), Korea (Tung 1991), and Russia (Kremenjuk, 2002b; Schecter, 1998). These studies offer rich accounts of culture specific negotiation styles and specific intercultural clashes.

The Chinese case becomes more important with her entering WTO and opening the market to most western companies. Within last 15 years over 300,000 joint venture agreements have been signed (Faure 1999), a result of a huge number of international negotiations between the Chinese and Westerners. While there is no lack of anecdotal and descriptive evidence confirming the difficulties when Westerners negotiate with the Chinese, little research exists documenting the actual process of Chinese business negotiation (Adler et al. 1992; Ma et al. 2002). We believe that more reliable data on how the Chinese negotiate among themselves are needed before Westerners can begin to decipher their own patterns of interaction with the Chinese.

The single most influential author on Chinese business negotiation styles—Lucian Pye, Ford Professor Emeritus of Political Science at MIT, has advised “Know Chinese cultural differences, but be yourself”. While this is insightful advice, he doesn’t provide any theoretical framework for helping understand Chinese negotiation styles. This is true even in his new edition of *Chinese Negotiating Style* (1992). This book merely piles up examples from interviews with American businessmen, without bothering to give readers a structural perspective. To help understand the Chinese and their negotiation styles, our study takes the first step of exploring personality effects in Chinese negotiation styles, based on a buyer/seller negotiation model constructed in the west. With a clear understanding of intra-cultural negotiations, future studies of intercultural negotiations will be better conceived.

Conceptual Background and Hypotheses

The theoretical framework underlying the majority of research on negotiation is drawn from social exchange theory (Alexander et al. 1994). According to this theory, negotiation is one dynamic process characterized by information exchange, persuasion, and joint problem solving. Negotiation outcomes (e.g., profits, satisfaction) are generally determined by the complex interaction of three factors: (1) characteristics of negotiator, (2) process-related behaviors enacted by the negotiator in the course of negotiation, and (3) characteristics of situation (Campbell et al. 1988). It is widely assumed that negotiator’s characteristics and situational factors are affecting both process-related behaviors and negotiation outcomes (please refer to Figure 1 for the model).

In this model, personality inclines individual to certain way of behaving during negotiation, which in turn leads to certain types of negotiation behaviors and subsequent outcomes. Negotiation behaviors include both competitive and integrative behaviors. Negotiation outcomes consist of all aspects relevant to the agreement reached, such as price, quantity, and satisfaction with the negotiation. The impact of personality on negotiation outcomes is mediated by competitive or integrative behaviors. The relationship between personality and behaviors as well as behaviors and outcomes are then moderated by situational factors that include the alternatives each side has, the other party’s behaviors in the negotiation, and

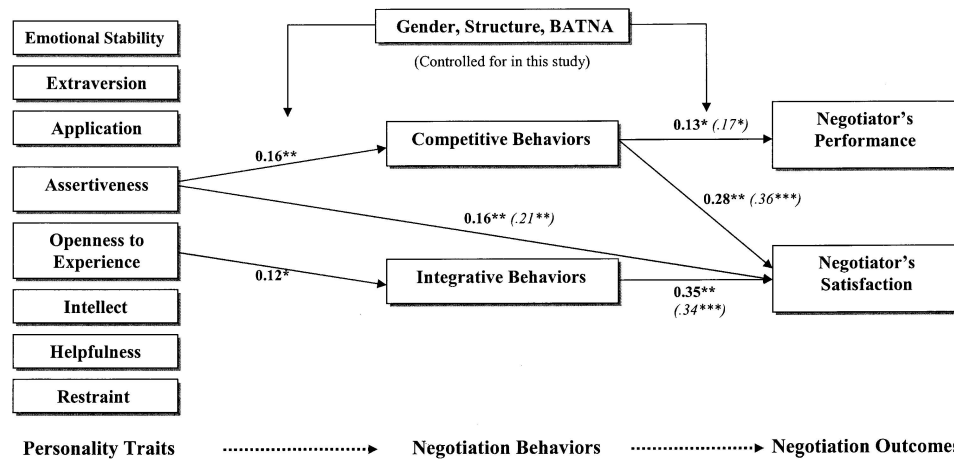


Figure 1. Analysis of regression: Main effects of personality traits and negotiation behaviors¹

(Only significant relationships are presented; values along the arrows are Standardized Beta; results for split sample are in brackets. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.)

constraints on the range of outcomes. In this study we focus on the influences of personality on the use of competitive and integrative negotiation behaviors, and the impact of these behaviors on negotiation outcomes (negotiated agreement and satisfaction).

Research on personality and negotiation

Contemporary organizational behavior research began during World War II with efforts to define the influence of personality on success in management situations. Such work in the area of negotiation began in the late 1950's and early 1960's. The overall legacy of research on personality and negotiation is one of inconsistency and confusion (Barry and Friedman 1998). Rubin and Brown (1975) reviewed 200 empirical studies of background, demographic, and personal characteristics that might contribute to difference in negotiation outcomes. The findings from these studies were widely disparate, inconclusive, and sometimes contradictory and few findings have proven replicable. For example, as summarized in Rubin and Brown's (1975) review, of more than 100 studies on the effect of gender on negotiation, approximately 30 studies reported no difference between men and women, 30 reported that female were better negotiators than men, and the remainders reported opposite findings. Similar contradictory findings exist for a number of other personality traits and measures (Ford 1983; Fry 1985; Pruitt and Syna 1985).

In spite of this controversy many researchers contend that there is no reason to deny the importance of personality in understanding how individuals approach negotiation (Barry and Friedman 1998; Lewicki et al. 1994; Sternber and Dobson 1984; Thompson 1990). Critics point out the equivocal research tradition in negotiation studies on personality effects,

including variations in experimental simulations and methods across studies, insufficiently rich and complex negotiation simulations, the poor assessment of personality traits, and more importantly, only isolated conveniently available personality variables being used in the majority of negotiation studies (Terhune 1970; Thompson 1990). Better studies are thus in great need with refined research design and robust personality measurement. In the study reported here we move beyond isolated individual trait to consider the broad structure of personality captured in a culturally revised personality model. In addition, we will examine 2 negotiation situations differing in the integrative potentials so that the true personality effects on negotiation can be discovered across situations.

SAPPS and five-factor model of personality

Both everyday experience and academic research suggest that personality plays an important role in the negotiation process and outcomes, however, no single personality trait or characteristic is found *consistently* linked to success in negotiation. Researchers have recognized the need for a comprehensive personality structure or at least the general outlines of the trait taxonomy (Eysenck and Eysenck 1984). Consensus has finally been reached that the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, often termed as “Big Five” (Goldberg 1990), can be used to describe the most salient aspects of personality after an impressive body of literature has accumulated in the last decade. Compelling evidence supports the robustness of the Five-Factor Model: across different theoretical frameworks (Goldberg 1981); using different instruments (Conley 1985; McCrae 1989; McCrae and Costa 1989); in different cultures (Noller, Law, and Comrey 1987); using ratings from different sources (Norman and Goldberg 1966; Watson 1989), and with a variety of samples.

SAPPS (Sino-American Person Perception Scale) is a newly developed scale derived from Five-Factor Model of personality in Chinese culture. Yik and Bond (1993) created this culturally balanced person perception scale by analyzing imported adjectives measuring the FFM and indigenous adjectives taken from the study of Yang and Bond (1990). In a joint analysis eight factors were exacted, labeled as Emotional Stability, Extraversion, Application, Openness to experience, Assertiveness, Restraint, Helpfulness, and Intellect. Factor analysis showed that the 8 variables give a clear five-factor solution: Emotional Stability, Extraversion, and Openness are equivalent to the three factors from FFM; SAPPS Helpfulness is loaded on an Agreeableness factor; the remaining SAPPS factors—Application, Restraint, Assertiveness, and Intellect – are loaded on a factor defined by Conscientiousness of FFM (Cheng et al. 1991). This result suggests that the same five factors can be found both in Chinese and in American samples, but some aspects of personality (notably Conscientiousness) may be emphasized more in Chinese culture than in American culture. As Faure (1999) has argued, emic measurement of etic constructs should be used before standardization and comparison can be made for cross-cultural studies. Using SAPPS rather than FFM of personality in the study of Chinese samples fits in with this theme and will be more able to capture the phenomenal world in China.

Previous research has investigated the impact of some personality traits on the negotiation process and negotiation outcomes. For example, Trust and Machiavellianism as

personality characteristics associated with the Agreeableness have been found to affect negotiations (Lowe, 1966; Wahlin 1967). No such research, however, has been done to examine personality effects in Chinese negotiation styles, not to mention the research conducted with a well-accepted, comprehensive measure of personality structure, although this line of research will be very helpful in comparing studies from different cultures and for meta-analysis on negotiation studies.

Negotiation behavior and negotiation outcomes

The primary component of negotiation processes is negotiation behavior (Alder and Graham 1989; Pruitt 1971; Rhinehart and Page 1992; Thompson 1990). Because of the large volume of research on negotiation behavior in many disciplines, it is necessary to restrict the scope of this study. In this study we will examine two different negotiation behaviors: competitive behavior and integrative behavior. Competitive behavior involves the use of zero-sum or combative tactics such as threats, promises, position, commitments, and persuasive agreements (Pruitt and Lewis 1975), characterized by maintaining high levels of aspiration and high limits for negotiation outcomes, and by using very inflexible tactics aimed at forcing concessions from the other party. Competitive negotiators always try to maximize their own outcome relative to their opponents' outcome when knowledge of the other person's payoffs is available (Messick and McClintock 1968).

Integrative behavior, which is cooperation and information-exchange oriented, focuses on problem-solving and mutually satisfactory solutions, wherein the needs and preferences of both parties are honestly discussed and eventually satisfied (Weingart, Thompson, Bazerman, and Carroll 1990). Different researchers have used different labels for this concept, such as problem-solving approach, integrative bargaining strategy, problem-solving orientation, but findings have been relatively consistent that integrative behaviors are positively related to negotiation outcomes (Alder and Graham 1989).

Different behaviors come with different outcomes. In this study we considered two key outcome variables: (1) negotiator's performance, and (2) negotiator's satisfaction. The inclusion of a dependent variable measuring negotiators' performance reflects the interest in the ultimate goal of negotiations and the interest in negotiator's effectiveness during negotiations. In effect, this variable measures involved parties' abilities to productively utilize time and other resources in reaching an agreement and their abilities to maximize the individual and/or joint gains depending on their understanding of the integrative potential of the negotiation situation.

Satisfaction, though closely related to performance, focuses on interpersonal relationship. It is the factor that assesses the possibility of a win-win solution and the possibility of future interaction. Satisfaction has been linked to functional behaviors in various settings (Churchill et al 1990) and has been considered as a critical outcome measure of exchange relationships (Ruekert and Churchill 1984, Thompson 1990). Satisfaction becomes even more important when emphasis has been increasingly placed on integrative solutions and long-term relationships in today's negotiations. As a result, negotiators' satisfaction has been used as a dependent variable in various studies of the negotiation process (Graham

1986; Campbell et al. 1988). Its inclusion as a primary outcome to negotiation behaviors seems warranted.

Characteristics of situation

A variety of factors related to negotiation situations have been studied. In the attempts to fully understand the situational determinants of effective negotiation, experimental researchers have studied the impact of the presence/absence of audience, the availability and the roles of third parties, the number of parties involved in the negotiation exchange, and others (see Rubin and Brown 1975; Wall and Blum 1991). Research findings suggest that situational factors are very important in determining what tactics negotiators choose to use and further what agreement negotiators are able to reach. Therefore, situational factors play important roles in explaining the negotiation behavior predetermined by negotiator's dispositions.

Of all the situational factors, power is a critical one. More power means more resources at negotiators' disposal and therefore more influences they can have over the others. The power in negotiation comes from the interdependence between two parties. Negotiation is mostly a voluntary relationship, and negotiators come together in an attempt to resolve their conflicts of interest, not because they are forced to, but because they choose to. Each side can make a variety of offers and demands, and each is free to leave this relationship at any time, or threatens to do so. In pushing for an agreement that is as personally advantageous as possible, negotiators must be very careful to protect the delicate fabric that binds them together; otherwise, they could drive the others away from the negotiation relationship and terminate the very process in which both choose to participate. The interdependency, often manifest as one party more dependant on the other, thus gives negotiators different power to influence the others, and consequently leads to different negotiation outcomes. In this study, power was operationalized as the attractiveness of the Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA) (Fisher and Ury 1981). BATNA reflects the extent to which negotiators want to reach an agreement with the opponents and the degree to which negotiators feel free to walk away from the negotiation table, believing that they can resort to their alternatives rather than rely on the agreement at discussion.

Personality effects on negotiation behaviors

Emotional stability

Emotional Stability is associated with such common traits as being stable, calm, even-tempered, unruffled at frustration (Yik and Bond 1993). An individual high in Emotional Stability tends to have a positive self-concept, more self-esteem and self-acceptance, and tends to have less anxiety about how he or she looks to others than a person low in Emotional Stability.

A few studies have related anxiety, self-concept, self-esteem, and self-acceptance to negotiation behaviors. Tedeschi and his colleagues (1969) found that subjects who were high in anxiety behaved more competitively in a Prisoner's Dilemma game than those who

were less anxious. Williams et al. (1969) reported that subjects who were concerned with the issues of self-concept made a greater number of competitive choices. The findings of Faucheux and Moscovici (1968) confirmed that competitive behaviors were more likely to emerge among individuals who were high in anxiety, and it was the low self-esteem individuals who were most anxious to compensate for their feelings of inadequacy by taking high rewards from others. The underlying logic is that individuals who feel negatively towards themselves tend to be more anxious concerning how they appear to others and will feel more of a need to prove themselves through domineering or exploitative tactics (Alexander et al. 1994). Contrary to those high in anxiety and low in self-esteem, people who are Emotionally Stable will exhibit less competitive behaviors and are more ready to find solutions acceptable to both sides.

Hypothesis 1a: Emotional Stability will be negatively related to negotiator's competitive behaviors.

Hypothesis 1b: Emotional Stability will be positively related to negotiator's integrative behaviors.

Openness to experience

Openness to experience has been defined as having an active imagination, being intellectually curious and attentive to inner feelings, having a preference for variety and willing to entertain new ideas (Costa and McCrae 1992; Hogan and Hogan 1992; Yik and Bond 1993). People high in Openness to experience are more creative, eager to change, and more open-minded. Therefore, they are more ready to empathize with the other party and take into account the concerns of both sides during negotiations, and are more likely to work for an integrative solution.

Hypothesis 2: Openness to experience will be positively related to negotiator's integrative behaviors.

Extraversion

Sociable and talkative are the highest loading variables on the Extraversion factor, and being gregarious, assertive, active and having a strong desire for power are frequently associated with Extraversion (Botwin and Buss, 1989; McCrae and Costa, 1985; Yik and Bond, 1993). Negotiators who are extraverted tend to speak out their own opinions and maintain their own stands firmly. They prefer to be highly active and assertive in the day-to-day interaction as well as in formal exchange process.

Researchers give less attention to the relationship between Extraversion and negotiation behaviors, except Barry and Friedman (1998) who found Extraversion was liability in distributive negotiations. Because revealing information about interests and sustained exploration of ideas facilitates integrative negotiations one could expect that Extraversion would be positively related to realizing more integrative potentials. In this study, the following hypothesis will be tested:

Hypothesis 3: Extraversion will be positively related to negotiator's integrative behaviors.

Helpfulness

Helpfulness is a broad dimension, and some of its component traits, such as trust and Machiavellianism, have been widely researched. Other traits associated with this dimension include being courteous, trusting, generous, unselfish, cooperative, forgiving, soft-hearted, and tolerant (Yik and Bond 1993). These traits themselves show that people high in Helpfulness will tend to make concession easily.

Research has provided supportive, though indirect, evidence for the relationship between Helpfulness and the negotiation process. For example, trust has been proved an important factor in negotiations. Studies showed that individuals high in pre-measured trust behaved more cooperatively than did those who were low in trust (Tedeschi et al. 1969). Shure and Meeker (1965) found that suspicious bargainers behaved less “generously” than trusting ones. Another trait associated with Helpfulness, Machiavellianism, describes the willingness and ability to use guile, deceit, and other opportunistic strategies in interpersonal relations in order to manipulate the others. Studies have also found negotiators high in Machiavellianism behave more competitively than do those who are low in Machiavellianism (Lowe 1966; Wahlin 1967).

Hypothesis 4: Helpfulness will be negatively related to negotiator's competitive behaviors.

Restraint

Common traits associated with Restraint include being thorough, cautious, genteel, and conscientious (Yik and Bond 1993). Restraint is the factor that distinguishes SAPPs from FFM, a cultural difference between the Chinese and Westerners. In the collectivist culture of China, people are not encouraged to speak out their thoughts and opinions. They have to learn the subtlety on how to express their feelings and needs implicitly so as not to be criticized as arrogant. We believe people high in Restraint are less likely to behave in a competitive way and are more likely to sacrifice their own interests for the harmony relationship in the face of conflicts.

Hypothesis 5: Restraint will be negatively related to negotiator's competitive behaviors.

Assertiveness

Assertive individuals are determined, independent, forceful, brave, decisive, and very individualistic (Yik and Bond 1993). People high in Assertiveness usually maintain high levels of aspiration and high limits for any conflicting relationships (Thomas and Kilmann 1974), and use very inflexible tactics to force concessions from the other party. This is a power-oriented behavioral style, in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one's own position. It is expected that assertive negotiators are more likely to behave competitively with a strong desire to win.

Hypothesis 6: Assertiveness will be positively related to negotiator's competitive behaviors.

Intellect

The highest loading variables on Intellect are intelligent, analytical, refined, and perceptive (Yik and Bond 1993). Since negotiation is in essence an information-processing task that combines information acquisition and analysis with decision making, it seems reasonable to assume that Intellect has potential relevance as a predictor of negotiation behaviors. Higher intellectual ability usually helps people better understand complex negotiation situations (Barry and Friedman, 1998). The more capable negotiators are of analyzing the issues involved, planning ahead, thinking about the possible strategies of an opponent, looking for alternatives, and contemplating counter-tactics, the more likely they are to set higher goals and to try challenging tasks. Therefore, high Intellect people will be more likely to be motivated to achieve higher goals, which will lead to competitive behaviors in negotiation process. It is suggested that:

Hypothesis 7: Intellect will be positively related to negotiator's competitive behaviors.

Application

Application is associated to being hard-working, diligent, practical, thrifty, showing promising, hard-working without drawing attention, and a person of deed (Yik and Bond 1993). Though it is widely assumed that preparation and analysis in advance of a negotiation encounter improves one's chances for success (Lewicki et al. 1994; Murnighan 1992), empirical research has found that there is no direct relationship between negotiation success and conscientiousness (Barry and Friedman 1998). Derived from the factor of Conscientiousness in Five Factor Model of personality (Yik and Bond 1993; McCrae et al. 1996), the following hypothesis for Application will be tested in this study:

Hypothesis 8: Application will not have direct relationship with either of the negotiation behaviors, integrative or competitive.

Effects of negotiation behaviors on negotiation outcomes

The relationship between negotiation behavior and negotiation outcomes depends on the negotiator-opponent interactions in the negotiation processes and on how one side's competitive demands and cooperative concessions will influence the other side's behaviors. Competitive negotiators are using zero-sum or combative tactics to achieve their high aspirations with forcefulness and decisiveness. As a result, they are expected to achieve higher individual negotiation outcomes, both in performance and in satisfaction (Adler et al. 1992).

Hypothesis 9a: Competitive Behaviors will be positively related to negotiator's performance.

Hypothesis 9b: Competitive behaviors will be positively related to negotiator's satisfaction.

Integrative behaviors involve reliance on a problem-solving approach, wherein the party is seeking to engender trust and mutual support. The focus is on working out an integrative

solution via open and accurate information exchange, mutual concessionative behaviors, and mutual respect for individual goals (Campbell et al. 1988). Within the Chinese collectivist culture, integrative behaviors are praised for respecting each other's interests and for the desire to maintain a harmony relationship between each other. Consequently, integrative behaviors are more likely to be reciprocated with accurate information necessary for an integrative agreement. With an expanded pie individual negotiators are expected to achieve optimized individual performance and satisfaction.

Hypothesis 10a: Integrative Behaviors will be positively related to negotiator's performance.

Hypothesis 10b: Integrative Behaviors will be positively related to negotiator's satisfaction.

Control variables

Three variables are controlled in this study: gender, negotiation structure, and situational power. Gender has been the most frequently researched personal characteristic in negotiation, but as a whole, research on this area continues to yield contradictory findings. Some claim little or no difference among male and female negotiators (Carnevale and Lawler 1986), while others contend that real difference exists between male and female (Neu et al. 1988). As such, we controlled for its effect to focus on the relationship between personality and the negotiation process. Because the potential for an integrative situation will affect negotiators' perception to the conflict involved and relevant strategies they will use during negotiations (Barry and Friedman 1998), the negotiation structure, i.e., to what extent the negotiation is a distributive (win-lose) or an integrative (win-win) negotiation, is also controlled.

Situational power, operationalized as BATNA, is controlled as well because its effects on negotiation behaviors, further to negotiation outcomes, might override the effects of personality. As this study focuses on the effects of personality on the negotiation process and outcomes, we control for the effects of situational power so that the real impact of personality variables can be found (Lewicki et al. 1994).

Methods

Participants

Two hundred Chinese students participated in 2 negotiation simulations in this study. These students were undergraduates major in business or related fields from the business school at a premier university in Beijing, China. Students were aged between 20 and 26 years old, and 70% of them were male. They were randomly paired off for the negotiation simulations, either as buyers or as sellers. Complete data were obtained from the 100 buyer-seller dyads in two simulations, which produced 400 usable responses.

Simulations

In negotiation studies, experimental simulations provide a standardized context within which the negotiation process can be observed and tested. They also provide an opportunity for systematic manipulation of negotiation situations in which effective negotiation strategies are likely to develop. Because personality is a generalized tendency for people to respond in a similar manner *across situations and times*, the appropriate way to study the impact of personality on negotiation is to collect data from many different negotiation situations and to investigate the effects of personality on the average negotiation outcomes across situations (Lewicki et al. 1994). Such a method allows measurements and other errors to cancel each other out across negotiation situations and increases the probability that true personality effects will be found. Accordingly, we used two diverse negotiation simulations in this study: Knight/Excalibur case and the Bestbook/Paige Turner case (Lewicki et al. 1994). We chose these two cases because both are commonly used class exercise in popular negotiation textbook and because they represent increasing level of complexity, as well as different integrative potentials. The Bestbook/Paige Turner case has 8 issues to negotiate, with some issues more important to one party and some issues more important to the other so that a trade-off can be made and an integrative solution is possible, a more complex structure than that of the Knight/Excalibur case. The Knight/Excalibur case has much simpler structure but its integrative potential is easier to perceive than that of the Bestbook case. The manipulation check showed that negotiators' average perceptions of the potential for integrative results were significantly different (5.11 vs. 4.42 on a 7 point Likert scale, $t = 5.821$, $p < .001$), wherein Knight/Excalibur case was perceived more integrative than the Bestbook case.

Before using these cases in China, we translated and adapted them to the Chinese context. Back translation was also conducted to assure the equivalence of the cases with respect to the original North American scenarios.

Procedures

As part of course requirements, student participants were told beforehand that they would be participating in 2 negotiation simulations in which they would play the roles they were randomly assigned to. They were instructed to be as creative as they wanted. They were also told that this study was only for academic purposes and that confidentiality was guaranteed. The subjects were then randomly paired-off into buyer-seller dyads and assigned to different rooms for negotiation.

Prior to the negotiation, each student was given the personality questionnaire (SAPPS) to complete. Then the confidential materials for their assigned roles in the Knight/Excalibur were given to each participant. They spent 30 minutes reading and preparing for this negotiation. Before starting the actual negotiations, they filled out a pre-negotiation questionnaire (see *Measures* section below). Student subjects then had 30 minutes to negotiate an agreement. A post-negotiation questionnaire was given to student to complete (see *Measures* section below). The same procedure was followed for the other simulation: participants read

their own confidential role-specific materials, filled out the pre-negotiation questionnaire, negotiated, and filled out the post-negotiation questionnaire after 30 minutes of negotiation. Roles (i.e., buyer or seller) were switched between the negotiation partners after they finished one simulation. Subjects were negotiating with the same partners during two simulations so as to remove the potential influence of interpersonal relationships. There was a 30-minute break between the simulations.

Measures

Personality traits

The Sino-America Person Perception Scale (SAPPS) was used to measure the personality traits. This scale was originally constructed in Chinese, so it was used directly for this study. The level of coefficient alpha assessing internal consistency for SAPPS was .74 in this study, with Cronbach alpha of .66, .56, .75, .57, .64, .69, .66 and .61 for Emotional stability, Openness to experience, Extroversion, Helpfulness, Restraint, Assertiveness, Intellect, and Application, respectively.

Negotiation behaviors

In the post-negotiation questionnaires, each participant indicated (a) how competitive they were in the negotiation and (2) how competitive their opponents were in the negotiations on a 7 point Likert scale, with 1 represents "not at all competitive" (i.e., sacrifice own interests to satisfy the other's interests) and 7 represents "very much competitive" (i.e., fight for one's own interests at the expense of the other's). To reduce common method errors, we used self-reported competitive behavior and other-reported competitive behavior to obtain a combined score for the competitive behavior, with a Cronbach alpha of 0.79. Negotiators also answered in the post-negotiation questionnaire the extent to which their behaviors were integrative or distributive (1 = very distributive, 7 = very integrative) in the negotiations.

Negotiator's performance and satisfaction

We used different payoff matrixes to calculate the final scores for buyers and sellers: some issues were more important and would win more points for buyers; other issues were more important for sellers and thus would win more points for sellers. Therefore, even though there was only one agreement for each negotiation pair, the final score was different for the buyer from that for the seller. To measure buyers and sellers' performance on a common scale, we calculated the economic distance from the final score (based on the final settlement) to negotiator's target score (based on the target settlement), with standardization used to reduce the influence of measure units. Similar calculation had been used for negotiation studies (Barry and Friedman 1998) and using this method we got around the potential ipsative problem of observations. For example, a seller's final score of 1.25 (standardized final agreement from post-negotiation questionnaire) with a target score of 1.05 (standardized goal from pre-negotiation questionnaire) was coded as 0.20 (1.25–1.05); a buyer's score of 1.25 with a goal of 1.35 was coded as 0.10 (1.35–1.25). This index was larger the further the final price was from the target price.

Negotiator's Satisfaction was measured with two items by asking negotiators: (1) how satisfied you were with the negotiation process and, (2) how satisfied you were with the negotiation outcome. Both items were on a 7 point Likert scale with 1 representing the most dissatisfied and 7 representing the most satisfied. The reliability alpha was 0.86.

Other variables

In the pre- and post-negotiation questionnaires, we also collected the data of negotiator's gender, role, and his/her perception of the integrative potential of the negotiation (on a 7 point Likert scale for integrative potential with 1 for very distributive and 7 for very integrative). Situational power was measured in post-negotiation questionnaire, with the most attractive BATNA as 7 and the least attractive BATNA as 1.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations among control variables, independent variables, and dependent variables. The correlations between two behavioral variables were positive ($r = 0.27$) and statistically significant ($p < .001$), yet sufficiently low to indicate that different constructs were assessed. Similarly, correlations between the measures of negotiation outcomes – performance and satisfaction were also positive ($r = 0.16$) and statistically significant ($p < .01$), which were consistent with assumptions regarding the dynamics of negotiation outcomes, yet they were sufficiently low to indicate that considerations of each dependant variable were warranted.

Hypotheses tests

We tested Hypotheses 1 through 10 by calculating partial correlation coefficients controlling for the effects of gender, structure, and BATNA. This analysis approach was necessitated by the potentially strong effects of situational factors on negotiation behavior and outcomes in current study, as have been discussed above. The results were reported in Tables 2 and 3.

Hypotheses 1 through 8 were about the relationships between personality traits and negotiation behaviors. Hypothesis 1a and Hypothesis 1b were not supported in this study, i.e., Emotional Stability was not found related to either negotiation behavior. This is so probably because of the collectivistic nature of Chinese culture, which is centered on self-constraint and group cohesion. The Chinese people often constrain their individual feelings so as not to let their personal emotions influence interpersonal interactions. Such emotional “indifference,” as it may appear, might end up with a non-significant relationship between Emotional Stability and negotiation behaviors.

Hypothesis 2, a positive relationship between Openness to experience and integrative behavior, was supported ($r = 0.12$, $p < .05$). This relationship suggests open-minded people are more likely to use problem-solving approach in negotiation to find solutions satisfactory to both sides. Similarly, the extraverted people was found to behave more integratively in negotiation, which supported Hypothesis 3 ($r = 0.11$, $p < .05$). Interesting enough,

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations^a

Variables	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Control variables																	
1. Gender	0.70	0.46	1.00														
2. Structure	1.50	0.50	0.00	1.00													
3. BATNA	3.40	1.33	-0.01	-0.06	1.00												
Personality traits																	
4. Openness to experience	19.07	3.71	0.11*	0.00	-0.05	1.00											
5. Emotional stability	17.92	4.04	0.09	0.00	-0.04	0.22***	1.00										
6. Extroversion	18.27	4.27	-0.05	0.00	-0.20***	0.38***	0.18***	1.00									
7. Application	19.35	3.91	0.02	0.00	-0.01	0.21***	0.19***	0.27***	1.00								
8. Intellect	20.41	4.26	0.00	0.00	-0.10*	0.24***	0.22***	0.32***	0.34***	1.00							
9. Helpfulness	16.39	2.73	0.13**	0.00	-0.03	0.06	0.18***	0.04	0.18***	0.08	1.00						
10. Restraint	18.21	3.81	0.04	0.00	-0.10*	0.02	0.20***	0.06	0.25***	0.25***	0.00	1.00					
11. Assertiveness	18.54	3.99	0.14***	0.00	-0.10*	0.47***	0.28***	0.27***	0.37***	0.46***	0.29***	0.16***	1.00				
Negotiation Behaviors																	
12. Integrative behavior	4.78	1.60	0.02	0.26***	-0.27***	0.15**	0.05	0.12*	0.09	0.08	0.09	0.06	0.14**	1.00			
13. Competitive behavior	5.15	0.94	0.03	0.04	-0.16**	0.14**	0.05	0.16**	0.10*	0.16**	0.03	0.10*	0.17***	0.27***	1.00		
Negotiation Outcomes																	
14. Performance	0.0025	1.11	0.08	0.01	-0.19***	0.12*	-0.03	0.13*	0.06	0.09	-0.03	0.09	0.07	0.16**	0.16**	1.00	
15. Satisfaction with negotiation	4.92	1.41	0.03	0.25***	-0.24***	0.10*	0.06	0.14**	0.09	0.15**	0.08	0.11*	0.19***	0.49***	0.39***	0.16**	1.00

^aVariables were coded as follows: gender, 0 = female, 1 = male; structure, 1 = Bestbook/Paige case, 2 = Knight/Excalibur case; BATNA, 1 = the least attractive BATNA, 7 = the most attractive BATNA.

* $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed).

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

*** $p < 0.001$ (2-tailed).

Table 2. Partial correlation coefficients for negotiation behaviors and personality traits^a

Hypothesis	Integrative behaviors (<i>n</i> = 340)	Competitive behaviors (<i>n</i> = 340)	Hypothesis confirmed or not
H1a and H1b: Emotional stability with negotiation behaviors	0.03	0.04	No
H2: Openness to experience with negotiation behaviors	0.12*	0.10	Yes
H3: Extraversion with Negotiation behaviors	0.11*	0.14*	Yes
H4: Helpfulness with Negotiation behaviors	0.08	0.04	No
H5: Restraint with Negotiation behaviors	0.02	0.08	No
H6: Assertiveness with Negotiation behaviors	0.12*	0.15**	Yes
H7: Intellect with Negotiation behaviors	0.06	0.15**	Yes
H8: Application with Negotiation behaviors	0.06	0.08	Yes

^aResults controlled for the effects of gender, structure, and BATNA.

**p* < 0.05 (2-tailed).

***p* < 0.01 (2-tailed).

Table 3. Partial correlation coefficients for negotiation outcomes and negotiation behaviors^a

Hypothesis	Negotiator's performance (<i>n</i> = 340)	Negotiator's satisfaction (<i>n</i> = 340)	Hypothesis confirmed or not
H9a: Competitive behaviors with performance	0.13* (0.17*)		Yes
H9b: Competitive behaviors with satisfaction		0.43*** (0.54***)	Yes
H10a: Integrative behaviors with performance	0.14** (0.16*)		Yes
H10b: Integrative behaviors with satisfaction		0.36*** (0.35***)	Yes

^aResults controlled for the effects of gender, structure, and power; results for split sample are in brackets, with *n* = 174.

**p* < 0.05 (2-tailed).

***p* < 0.01 (2-tailed).

****p* < 0.001 (2-tailed).

extroversion was also found to have significantly positive relationship with competitive behavior ($r = 0.14$, $p < .05$). This may indicate the adaptability of extroverted people to readily use both integrative approach by revealing information and exchanging ideas and competitive approach when they find, for example, their friendly gesture is not reciprocated, which is very irritating in Chinese culture.

Neither Helpfulness nor Restraint was found significant related to either negotiation behavior, which is against Hypothesis 4 and 5, but Helpfulness has a marginally significant relation with integrative behavior ($r = .08$, $p < 0.1$). It implies the helpful individuals might be more likely to reach an integrative agreement in negotiations with their tendency to trust and cooperate. Hypothesis 6 predicts that assertive people will use more competitive

approaches during the negotiation. The results supported this prediction. Results also supported Hypothesis 7 and 8. This confirms that analytical persons are more likely to behave competitively during the negotiation because of their high cognitive ability, but working-hard and preparation beforehand (Application) does not influence the performance during the negotiation, which is consistent with the findings by Barry and Friedman (1998).

Hypothesis 9a and 9b predict competitive behaviors will be related to negotiator's performance and satisfaction. These predictions were supported with different magnitude ($r_{9a} = .13, p < .05; r_{9b} = .43, p < .001$). Hypothesis 10a and 10b were also supported, suggesting positive relationships exist between integrative behavior and negotiator's performance and satisfaction ($r_{9a} = .14, p < .01; r_{9b} = .36, p < .01$) as well.

A Negotiation model

To further explore the relationships between personality traits and negotiation dynamics and to find a refined model to describe such a process, we then moved a step further to

Table 4. Regression results for negotiation behaviors over personality traits^a

Variables	Competitive behaviors		Integrative behaviors	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	5.23***	4.54***	3.80***	2.79***
Control variables				
Gender	0.03	0.01	-0.01	-0.02
Structure	0.05	0.05	0.27***	0.27***
BATNA	-0.15**	-0.14**	-0.28***	-0.27***
Personality traits				
Openness to experience		0.08		0.12*
Emotional stability		0.00		0.00
Extraversion		0.09		0.04
Application		0.05		0.08
Intellect		0.09		0.02
Helpfulness		0.02		0.04
Restraint		0.06		0.02
Assertiveness		0.16**		0.07
R^2	0.03	0.05	0.16	0.17
ΔR^2	0.03	0.02	0.16	0.01
F	3.623*	5.154***	23.39***	19.43***
N	380	380	379	379

^aStandardized coefficients are reported.

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

*** $p < 0.001$.

Table 5. Regression results for negotiation outcomes over negotiaton behaviors

Variables	Negotiator's performance		Negotiator's satisfaction		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	0.39	-0.44	4.03***	2.61***	0.60
Control variables					
Gender	0.08	0.07	0.03	0.02	0.01
Structure	0.00	-0.00	0.24***	0.13**	0.14***
BATNA	-0.18***	-0.16**	-0.23***	-0.12**	-0.10*
Negotiation behaviors					
Integrative behavior		-0.10		0.42***	0.35***
Competitive Behavior		0.13*		0.28***	
R^2	0.04	0.06	0.11	0.27	0.34
ΔR^2	0.04	0.02	0.11	0.16	0.07
F	5.06**	5.89*	16.92***	82.15***	40.27***
N	361	361	397	397	397
Constant	0.33	-0.70	4.27***	0.72	0.05
Control variables					
Gender	0.01	0.01	0.07	0.03	0.03
Structure	0.03	-0.02	0.26***	0.23**	0.18**
BATNA	-0.16*	-0.13	-0.18**	-0.12	-0.06
Negotiation behaviors					
Integrative behavior		0.13			0.34***
Competitive behavior		0.17*	0.46***	0.36***	
R^2	0.03	0.05	0.11	0.31	0.41
ΔR^2	0.03	0.02	0.11	0.20	0.10
F	1.55*	2.41*	7.99***	21.79***	26.47***
N	178	178	197	197	197

Standardized coefficients for the full sample (top part) and the split sample (bottom part).

analyze the data using stepwise regression analysis procedures from the statistical package SPSS. Results were reported in Tables 4 and 5, from which an illustrative model emerged as shown in Figure 1.

We presented the results about the effects of personality on negotiation behaviors in Table 4 and the effects of negotiation behaviors on negotiation outcomes in Table 5. For each analysis on these effects, the control variables were entered first, where the variance they accounted for differed. Then, independent variables were entered with the effects of gender, structure, and BATNA were controlled for.

As shown in Table 4, Assertiveness was the only predictor of competitive behavior, which accounted for 2 percent of the variance, and Openness to experience was the only predictor of integrative behavior that accounted for 1 percent of the variance. In Table 5, competitive behavior was a significant predictor of Performance ($p < .05$), while integrative behavior had only marginally significant relationship with Performance ($p = .08$). As far as Satisfaction was concerned, both competitive behavior and integrative behavior were significant predictors, which jointly accounted for 21 percent of the variance, but integrative behavior would lead to higher satisfaction than competitive behavior. We regressed negotiation

outcomes on personality traits. Results suggested Assertiveness was the only significant predictor of negotiation outcomes ($p < .01$). However, when the effects of negotiation behaviors were controlled for, none of the personality traits were significantly related to negotiation outcomes. Therefore, as others have found (Alexander et al. 1994), this research supported the view that negotiation behaviors mediate the effects of personality on the negotiation outcomes.

Examining the control variables revealed that BATNA moderated both the effects of personality on negotiation behaviors and the effects of negotiation behaviors on negotiation outcomes, but the structure of negotiation situation only had influence on the relationship between integrative behaviors and negotiator's satisfaction. These results supported the argument that situational factors play important roles in negotiations.

Considering that negotiators' performance may be affected by their opponents' during the negotiation, we split the sample by randomly choosing half of the sample (randomly pick one or the other from each negotiation pair) to re-do the analysis discussed above. The results were reported in Tables 3, 5, and Figure 1, with data for split sample in brackets. There is no surprise that with the split sample similar results were obtained for hypotheses testing and the same pattern was found for the negotiation model, which further supported the findings of this study.

Discussion and Conclusions

We began this study by noting that few researchers had used any well-accepted taxonomy of personality model in the studies of personality and negotiation, and even fewer had done so in a Chinese context. The primary purpose of this study was to explore the influence of personality on the negotiation process and outcomes, using a culturally balanced personality scale derived from the robust personality model—FFM. Evidence about the extent to which personality will affect negotiation behaviors and the extent to which negotiation behaviors will affect negotiation outcomes emerges from the results.

In this study, we first explored the relationships between personality traits and negotiation behaviors. Since situational factors may override the effects of personality, we controlled for the effects of three most researched factors—gender, negotiation structure, and BATNA, then examined the effects of personality across two simulations – differing in the extent of the integrative potential. We also explored the relationships between negotiation behaviors and negotiation outcomes. Finally, as some researchers argued personality might have direct effects on negotiation outcome, we examined the proposed mediating effects of negotiation behaviors on the relationships between personality and outcomes.

Two sets of findings emerge from the results. First, the most clear and important result of our study is the relative impact of two sets of personality traits: those that affect negotiators' approach to the social interaction that occurs during negotiations (Extraversion and Openness to experience), and those that affect negotiators' approach to the negotiation problem (Assertiveness and Intellect). Our findings indicate that the first set of factors are closely related to both integrative behaviors and competitive behaviors during negotiations. In contrast, the second set of factors affect competitive behaviors only. Moreover, the

negotiation model as pictured in Figure 1 suggests the competitive behavior is only predicted by negotiators' approach to the problem (Assertiveness), and the integrative behavior is only predicted by personality factor that influences social interaction (Openness to experiences). The relative emphasis on different personality factors for different behaviors during negotiation seems to indicate some personality factors are more important than others for the understanding of the influence of personal characteristics on the negotiation process and outcomes.

Second, we examined the negotiation model in a Chinese context. The theoretical framework is created in Western cultures, whose universal validity demands examination. This study shows that such a negotiation model is valid even in China, whose culture and traditions are so different from those of the West. More interestingly, the traits valued in the west are also found to be important and effective in negotiations in China. For example, Assertiveness is not seen as a socially desirable trait in a group-oriented collectivist country like China, but in this study we found it was important predictors of negotiation behaviors and further of the outcomes. Traits honored by the Chinese, such as Helpfulness and Restraint, had no effects on negotiation behaviors or outcomes at all, which could be interesting topics for future research, such as: Are personality traits valued in collectivistic cultures only good for maintaining a harmony relationship but not good for negotiations for individual interests?

This result also casts doubt over the rule "When in Rome, do as Romans do". The way the Chinese value most doesn't work well in negotiations, but assertive and open-minded people seem to perform better during the negotiation encounters. Caution must be exercised, however, in interpreting this result because of the existence of in-group/out-group stereotyping. For collectivist people, they treat out-group members much more differently from what they do to in-group members, which is not the case in an individualist culture (Brewer 1999; Triandis 1995). Espinoza and Garza (1985) also found that when competing with members of out-groups, collectivists were more competitive than individualists, even if being so hurt their in-groups. In this study, only negotiations among the Chinese themselves were examined, that is, only negotiations among in-group members were examined. So whether or not the results will hold in the negotiations between the Chinese and Westerners when the effects of in-group/out-group are more salient deserves further studies. Intercultural negotiations and comparisons will contribute much to this area.

Furthermore, it may appear paradoxical that competitive behavior and integrative behavior are found both related to satisfaction but only competitive behavior leads to a higher performance. This is different from that in the West, but can be well explained with the specialty of Chinese culture. As is well known, Chinese culture emphasizes interpersonal relationship and harmony. Negotiators with integrative behaviors believe that they have taken care of both sides' interests and therefore a good relationship has been established or will be established, which is more important than a one-shot deal, so they have a good reason to feel satisfied. In contrast, negotiators who have tried to maximize their own interests also have reasons to feel happy for their economic success, but such satisfaction may come at the expense of long-term benefits.

This research also suggests some topics for future studies. Situational factors have been believed to influence negotiation processes. Results of this study support this claim to the extent that BATNA was found negatively related to both negotiation behaviors and negotiation

outcomes, that is, individuals with more situational power will behave indifferently and feel less satisfied with the negotiation. This is against the assumption that people who have strong power tend to bargain more competitively and perform better during interpersonal conflicts. This result again may fit in with the cultural traditions of China. The Chinese have always struggled to protect the “faces” of both sides and maintain the decency by avoiding open confrontation, which often leads to unnecessary *avoiding* and *compromises* during the conflicting situations such as business negotiations. When the Chinese have more powers than their opponents do, they are more likely to wait and see how the opponents will act to show their superiority rather than actively involve in working for a better solution. This probably influences their performances. Therefore, similar factors might work in different ways in different contexts, which merits further study.

Another potential area of concern is the effect of personality traits on average outcomes across different situations. Examining average outcomes across different scenarios will allow measurement and other errors to cancel out each other and increase the probability that true personality effects will be found. Two scenarios were used in this study to explore the universal model of negotiation. However, future research needs to examine a larger number of different situations. If the effects of personality traits are found consistently across all situations, advocates of dispositional factors in negotiation research will be in a better position.

Like other studies (Bazerman et al. 2000), our findings also reveal an undeniable fact: despite the significant relationship between personality traits and negotiation behaviors, these personality factors do not account for much variance in negotiation behaviors (refer to Tables 4 and 5). Such small effects of personality on negotiation can be easily swamped by other factors, such as situational power. Therefore, even though personality traits are important factors that affect negotiation behaviors and outcomes, they simply offer limited potential for predicting negotiation outcomes. Other perspectives on negotiation are worth exploration, such as a cultural perspective (Pye 1992), which might be a very fruitful avenue for future research. An issue related here is the relatively low reliability of personality measures used in this study, a not uncommon feature for newly-developed scales, which might partially explain the small variance explained by personality variables. However, comparing to other reliable but separated individual traits which often lack reasoned relationships among themselves and thus can hardly fully capture the dispositional individual differences, we prefer to use this culturally balanced scale to measure the *complete* personality structure. This scale may not be perfect, but it is the best available scale that fits current study. Future research on personality and negotiation should take this aspect into account.

In summary, negotiations play an important role in nearly all the areas. Studying the issues of how personality affects the negotiation process and outcomes can provide important insights in selecting effective negotiators and providing a better training to them. Future research into negotiations must continue to investigate the primary question of how the negotiation processes proceed. This study investigates this process in a collectivist context—P. R. China, to help build the validity for a universal model in negotiation. It must be cautioned that our analyses were based on a sample of business students in simulated negotiation situations, which may limit the generalizability of the results. One could argue, however, that this sample produces enhanced personality effects since less experienced students are more likely driven by their personality factors during negotiations and less likely

affected by experiential knowledge and tactical skills. Future studies should explore this aspect and use more professional negotiators as research subjects for realistic replications.

To conclude, this study demonstrates that even within a collectivistic culture, personality traits play important roles in determining negotiation behaviors and outcomes. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate the effects of personality on negotiation in a Chinese context. Despite its limitations, this study reveals the possibility that there exists a universal model of negotiation. As Kremenjuk has argued (2002b), the centre of gravity in the process of negotiation is the negotiator. Negotiator's personal characteristics, including skills, knowledge, experience, intellectual capacity, and social ability, usually determine the outcomes of the negotiation. To increase the efficiency of negotiation means selecting the proper people, educating them and then expecting them to carry out what they are supposed to do. Researchers therefore should pay enough attention to the influence of personality traits and other personal characteristics in negotiation when attempting to decode the process of negotiation.

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