Research Digest

This is the fourth installment of *Negotiation Journal's* new section of research digests. Our purpose in publishing the digests is to disseminate some of the most recent research findings in our field. We have attempted to communicate technical research in a manner that would reach the diverse readership of *Negotiation Journal*. We hope that we have accomplished this goal and that you find the information useful — both in terms of keeping up with the latest findings and consulting articles of particular interest. We look forward to receiving feedback from our readers about the value of this section as well as ideas on how the digests can be improved. We also welcome suggestions for articles (from any peer-reviewed journal) on negotiation and related topics to be summarized in future issues. Feel free to drop us a line at the *Journal* from time to time.

Daniel Druckman and Nancy J. Waters

Real-Time, Real Competitive

With the rise and spread of the Internet, increasing numbers of geographically dispersed individuals can cooperate and interact at low cost and with virtually no time delay. Internet-based negotiations have become standard operating procedure for many businesses and individuals in this new economy. While most scholars accept that there are differences between online versus face-to-face negotiations, there are two discrete forms of online negotiation utilized today. One is a synchronous form, or real-time chat-type conversation, and the other is asynchronous, or e-mail conducted interactions that occur over several hours, days, or weeks.

To understand the impact of real-time synchronous negotiating versus asynchronous negotiating on outcomes, Eva-Maria Pesendorfer and Sabine Koeszegi conducted one hundred online negotiations simulations with fifty negotiations of each "type" (synchronous versus asynchronous) using participants from Europe and the Far East who did not know each other. The negotiations were all based on a simple buyer–seller relationship where each had a reasonable alternative to reaching an agreement, but were not given a strategy or goal other than for the buyer to receive a low price. By evaluating the transcriptions of the negotiations, the researchers found a few marked differences between the two forms of online negotiation.

Not surprisingly, communications were textually shorter in synchronous communications than in asynchronous negotiations. Surprisingly,

however, synchronous negotiations produced more positive *and* negative affective statements as well as fewer thanking and apology type statements; in essence, negotiating online in real-time produced more uninhibited behavior. In line with this behavioral finding is the other finding by the researchers: negotiators in synchronous communications were more offensive and more competitive in their communications. While they were also more empathetic in their language, their aggressive behavior is considered tactical and true to the increased competitive nature of these synchronous negotiations. Finally, negotiators in this mode felt less satisfied with their results and experienced negotiations that they perceived were significantly less friendly.

Real-time online negotiations enable participants access to an environment encompassing perhaps the worst of all worlds. Negotiators not only have the anonymous freedom to act with little regard for their counterparts, but they also feel empowered to react in the most competitive fashion. Asynchronous negotiators have more time to reflect, cool down, and control their emotions.

Just Trust Me

A short story by John Updike begins with the admonition that the two scariest words in the English language are "trust me." Trust is accepted as a critical component of negotiations, particularly those involving important public policy issues and coalitions. Scholars have focused on two distinct factors in building trust in political actions requiring consensus building among varying factions: institutional rational choice and social psychology. While both traditions view trust as a precursor to consensus building, institutional rational choice explains how trust arises based on institutional rules and evidence of the other party's trustworthiness, where social psychology explains the development of distrust as a result of differing values or lack of faith in the decision-making process.

In an attempt to identify specific precursors of interpersonal trust, William D. Leach and Paul A. Sabatier utilized explanatory variables from both institutional rational choice and social psychology in their study of

seventy-six randomly sampled watershed stakeholder partnerships from California and Washington. By understanding the agreements and the process the parties took to achieve agreements, the researchers found the presence of several elements increased trust.

Interestingly, trust was found to increase in institutional rational trust predictors, that is, when the participants perceive the process as fair and legitimate, when there are clear rules for how decisions will be made, and when the participants expect to be working together for an extended period of time. Similarly, as social psychology predicts, trust was increased when the stakeholders believed in the legitimacy and fairness of the consensus process. The researchers conclude that while both traditions offer good elements to enhance or develop trust in collaborative negotiations, the social psychologists may have found slightly more reasons for parties to trust each other.

Dear Mediator . . . Should You Manipulate or Facilitate?

Mediators, of all people, often disagree on what constitutes best practice. A recent study compared the effectiveness of three different approaches in international crises: facilitation, formulation, and manipulation.

Facilitative mediation emphasizes continued dialogue and open information sharing between disputants in search of a mutually acceptable outcome. Formulation involves the mediator actively proposing a new solution or advocating one from an existing array of alternatives. This form of mediation allows coordination between the bargaining parties by structuring the negotiations and refocusing the issues at hand to avoid any impasse. Manipulation uses carrots and sticks to direct the negotiation and leverage the position the mediator favors. A combination of these three approaches is often used concurrently as they all serve to enhance the likelihood of reaching an agreement.

Kyle C. Beardsley, David M. Quinn, Bidisha Biswas, and Jonathan Wilkenfeld have tested their hypotheses regarding the various forms of mediation using the International Crisis Behavior data set. Their overall results showed unsurprisingly that mediated crises gave rise to more formal agreements, greater reduction in postcrisis tensions, and a greater probability of crisis abatement than did unmediated crises.

Manipulation was found to be the most effective approach in reaching an agreement and avoiding an imminent crisis, followed by formulation and then facilitation. Manipulative mediation allows for a greater push to maximize the possible array of options on the bargaining table, thus increasing the likelihood of agreement. But facilitation was more effective in reducing tensions than either formulation or manipulation because external pressures to reach an agreement induced by the latter approaches are not as helpful for revealing each party's situational constraints.

A combination of manipulation and facilitation may work best. Manipulation serves to abate immediate crises, while facilitative methods are more likely to generate long-term goodwill. The most effective form of crisis management may be to use strong carrots and sticks to increase incentives for agreement and prevent the breakdown of negotiations, and to use facilitation in order to ensure sufficient transparency of information and coordination to identify an agreement concordant with the interests and situation of each party. Formulation on the other hand, while effective at inducing formal agreements, may have less of an impact due to the surprising finding that tensions are not reduced with this method.

The results highlight the importance of facilitation in maintaining lasting peace and demonstrates the importance of passive third-party involvement. Part of the mediator's role should be to create an opportunity for the disputants to meet and share information, without active enforcement or intervention. Mediators should allow the involved parties to initiate the proposal of solutions to ensure their long-term commitment to an agreement.

Bringing "God" to and from the Negotiation Table

"Rational" or secular-based approaches to problem solving and negotiation do not usually include ways in which a faith-based mind-set can be incorporated. Faith-based negotiators, while not abandoning rationality, view their negotiation approaches as divine in origin, but their more secular colleagues consider this logic "irrational."

To bridge this divide, Melvin Shakun suggests bringing "God" to the negotiation table. His core axiom is that all individuals have an inherent ultimate purpose to experience spirituality: connectedness with One (God, all there is), a default state that always returns with inner stillness, letting problems go. Shakun suggests that bringing spirituality to negotiations

promotes agreements that in turn produce (renew) spirituality lost in the conflict leading to the negotiation table, thus bringing "God" from the negotiation table.

Following the author's Evolutionary Systems Design (ESD) framework, each negotiator can construct a hierarchy of his own values rationally related to one another and to the same shared highest value — connectedness with One — at the top of all negotiators' hierarchies. In so doing, faith-based negotiators frequently cite values rationally consistent with God's word or scriptures. In the resulting hierarchies, which negotiators are free to communicate, discuss, and modify, some values (particularly high-level ones) are shared by both faith-based and secular negotiators, and some are not.

In his discussion, Shakun extends rationality, which is normally associated with cognition, to spiritual rationality, which a negotiator can validate subjectively by cognition, affection, and conation, holistically and spiritually. Validation tests are presented in the article. With spiritual rationality, a negotiator, whether faith-based or secular, validates a negotiation problem solution both rationally and spiritually. If the solution is not valid, the negotiator continues the negotiation. A validated spiritually rational solution produces spirituality — connectedness with One.

Faith-based or secular, each negotiator can achieve internal consistency of rationality and spirituality. Conflict between negotiators can still exist. However, their common adoption of spiritual rationality and the ESD framework — providing a common methodology that highlights connectedness and high-level values shared by individuals — can facilitate negotiation problem evolution leading to an agreed-upon solution that is spiritually rational for individuals.

Experience with applications supports the ESD/spiritual rationality framework as leading to more and improved agreements (see references in the source article). While some related controlled experiments are supportive of this framework, direct experimental verification is needed.