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There is more to Negotiation than Reaching an Agreement: Substantive, Relational, and other Objectives of the Negotiators

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Abstract

Many experiments show that a significant proportion of participants reaches inefficient agreements but are unwilling to improve these agreements when given an opportunity to do so. One possible explanation is that the negotiators have other objectives, in addition to those which are used in efficiency assessment. We conducted experiments in which participants were asked explicitly about their objectives and the objectives' significance. This paper presents a preliminary study and outlines an exploratory follow-up experiment. The preliminary results show that experiment participants use objectives both related and unrelated to the negotiations. Different objectives are found to influence the negotiators' expectations and the negotiation process and outcomes. The participants' consideration of the importance of their objectives is used to propose five distinct profiles. A research model to study negotiators' objectives and profiles, and their consequences is proposed.

Keywords: e-negotiations, online negotiation experiments, negotiators' objectives, efficient agreements, relationship management.

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1. Introduction

Seeking an agreement is considered the purpose of negotiations. According to social exchange theory, the explicit search for an agreement distinguishes the two key exchange mechanisms: negotiation and reciprocity (Blau 1994; Cook and Rice 2006; Molm 2010). In reciprocated exchanges the focus is to maintain and enhance relationship between the parties. Any problem they face is only one step in the process of building trust, reputation, and affect. While the negotiators part their way after they reach an agreement or breakdown, for the reciprocators there is no such conclusion. "Once the process is in motion, each consequence can create a self-reinforcing cycle" (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005, p. 876). The termination is when one side defects violating the reciprocity rule.

If the sole purpose of negotiations is to achieve an agreement, then we expect the negotiators to try to reach the best possible agreement. However, on one hand, in real-life negotiations the achievement of an efficient agreement may be difficult because of not clearly formulated preferences, lack of information, or strategic misrepresentation. On the other hand negotiators' unwillingness to reach an efficient agreement or to improve it may be due to a number of reasons, including psychological traits, biases, and cognitive limitations (Neale and Bazerman 1991; Thompson, Nadler et al. 2006; Stanovich 2010), as well as sociological and cultural aspects (Hofstede 1989; Gelfand, Higgins et al. 2002; Welsh 2003).

These influences should not, however, have significant impact in low-stakes negotiation experiments conducted in labs or online. However, many experiments show that a significant percentage of participants reach inefficient agreements and, more importantly, are unwilling to improve these agreements when given an opportunity to do so (e.g., Alemi, Fos et al. 1990; Weingart, Hyder et al. 1996; Korhonen, Phillips et al. 1998; Kersten and Mallory 1999).

We may categorize these factors into two groups: (1) fears and limitations which make people "blind" to the opportunities they have and are afraid to move ahead, and (2) situational and social constraints which make people forgo gains or accept losses by following certain principles and customs.

The above limitations and constraints may cause that an agreement is inefficient. There may, however, be other reasons why people accept an agreement which, from the negotiation-analytic perspective, is inefficient, even though it need not be, if we expand the perspective.

Decision attributes are characteristic of the entity which is the subject of negotiations; these are discussed and agreed by the parties. These agreed values are also known as the substantive outcomes of a successful negotiation (Thompson 1990).

Negotiation literature recognizes also relational outcomes which are the attribute values describing relationship between the negotiators. Relational outcomes include commonality, trust, attraction, empathy, and dependency (Greenhalgh and Chapman 1995; Curhan, Elfenbein et al. 2006). They are the subjective results of the parties' communication process which may change the pre-existing relationship or create a relationship when the parties are not interdependent prior to the negotiation (Gelfand, Major et al. 2006).

Negotiation context is another factor that may influence negotiators' behavior. The same person may bargain differently over an old lamp when she wants to buy it from a hawker or from a small shopkeeper.

Negotiation literature recognizes that the subject of the negotiation (described by decision

attributes), the relationship between the parties, and the context in which the process is immersed (including stakeholders) affect the process and its outcomes. These influences may take the form of constraints and limitations and/or they may be directly incorporated into the negotiators objectives. In the former case the negotiators seek the best solution within the limits imposed on the process and the set of alternatives. In the latter case they augment their objectives prior to entering the process and seek solutions that satisfy these objectives to the highest possible extent. In the latter case, negotiators may differ in terms of the objectives selected and their perceived significance. These differences could explain the situation when some negotiators are satisfied with an inferior agreement while others try to improve it. If such differences exist, then their configurations may depend on socio-psychological traits which would help us establish a stronger link between the negotiator, negotiation process and its various outcomes.

In the next section we briefly discuss an experiment in which we attempted to determine if negotiators use one or more objectives. The results of this experiment were used to revise the questionnaire and conduct the second experiment discussed in Section 3. The results and a tentative model that these results suggest are given in Section 4.

2. Preliminary study

Results of experiments which we have conducted in the past, discussions with their participants, and reviews of other studies (Teich, Korhonen et al. 1997; Kersten, Köszegi et al. 2003; Vetschera, Kersten et al. 2006; Weber, Kersten et al. 2006) led us to reconsider the assumption that participants accept and play the role described in the case and use only the objective(s) specified in it. Some participants were more interested in interacting with their counterparts than in achieving substantive outcomes. Other participants wanted to do as little as possible but enough to obtain course credits allocated to the experiment. We found that in most cases the participants were sufficiently motivated to take the negotiation seriously but their objectives seemed to differ. This was despite the negotiation experiments being—Teich, Korhonen et al. (2000) suggest—contextually relevant to the participants and the context being rich and heterogeneous (it included the negotiation case and the course assignment in which this case was used). Motivation literature, also suggests that the individual predispositions influence individuals' motivation which may cause that some aspects of the context are seen more important than others.

Following methodological suggestions made in literature (e.g., Gneezy and Rustichini 2000; Teich, Korhonen et al. 2000) we considered increasing or changing incentives, e.g., by associating the negotiation substantive results with monetary incentives combined with giving a fee for participation. Imposing monetary incentives is, however, problematic. Some behavioral economists assume that such incentives improve performance (Cameron and Pierce 1994; Gneezy and Rustichini 2000) others concur with psychologists who claim that monetary incentives hinder it (Frey and Jegen 2001). Recently, several experimental studies showed that monetary incentive has at best negligible impact on students' performance (Angrist, Lang et al. 2009; Leuven, Oosterbeek et al. 2010; Fryer Jr 2011).

Introduction of monetary rewards in negotiations is problematic because any measure of performance is either inadequate or may be attained with negative implications to the process and/or outcomes. For example, rewarding for joint gain may lead to participants' full disclosure and joint search for the best solution. Because the stakes in experiments are low (a

disclosure would not undermine participants' future) the participants may do it solely because they are driven by the reward with no regard to the cooperative activities. For the above reasons we decided against using monetary incentives. Therefore, we do not consider objectives to be associated with monetary gain.

In the preliminary study, we decided to add to the post-negotiation questionnaire several questions about the importance of the experiment participants' objectives. Literature review and internal discussions led us to the formulation of seven questions shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Seven objectives and their single-word descriptions (items)

| <i>Please tell us how each of the following objectives was important for you in this negotiation:</i> | Item name |
|---|------------|
| Achieving as high a <u>rating</u> for the agreement as possible. | Rating |
| Applying and testing my negotiation <u>skills</u> . | Skills |
| Establishing a friendly <u>atmosphere</u> with my counterpart. | Atmosphere |
| <u>Learning</u> about myself as a negotiator. | Learning |
| Learning a new <u>system</u> and using its functions. | System |
| Acquiring knowledge which is required for the <u>assignment</u> . | Assignment |
| Learning how to negotiate <u>online</u> . | Online |

Rating corresponds to the value (utility) of the alternative; it is the only substantive objective in the list. Skills, learning, system, assignment and online are objectives associated with learning, albeit they serve different purposes. The single relational objective is "atmosphere".

2.1 Experiment and data collection

To study the negotiation process and outcomes we used an online e-negotiations system, Inspire (<http://interneg.concordia.ca/inspire>). The system allows the negotiator for the specification of their own preferences, assessment of offers, communication through free-text messages, and graphical display of the negotiation's progress.

The negotiators can set up their preferences by specifying a numerical value for each issue and its options. The system uses these values to calculate rating of each contract package. The package rating represents a substantive value of the contract to the negotiators. During the negotiations, the system automatically calculates the rating of each offer from both sides based on the negotiator's own preferences, which can be used to assess the offers and construct counter offers.

A business case was used to provide the negotiation context and task. The case (called Yowl-Pop) involves contract negotiations between an agent representing an artist and the manager of an entertainment company. The contract comprises four fixed issues: (1) number of new songs, (2) royalties for CDs, (3) number of promotional concerts, and (4) contract signing bonus. Each issue has three to five options to choose from. Every contract package to be negotiated is a particular combination of one option from each issue. As the parties are not allowed to propose new issues or options, the agreement can only be one out of 240 possible

contract packages (alternatives).

All participants were provided with general information about the contract and the confidential information about the interests of the artist or the entertainment company respectively. The negotiators then set up their preferences according to the given information.

During the negotiation, the participants could exchange offers with their counterparts by constructing or selecting contract packages. They could also attach messages with offers or send messages only for argumentation or communication. The parties needed to agree on a complete package (i.e. values of four issues) in order to reach an agreement.

The negotiators were given three weeks; however, they could finish earlier or, if needed, request a deadline extension. They were also informed about the availability of competitors on both sides so that they could terminate the negotiation and open a new one.

2.2 Participants and their objectives

The preliminary study involved students from six universities: two in Austria, and one each in Canada, Poland, the U.S.A. and Taiwan. Data analysis is based on 330 complete responses obtained from 358 participants who negotiated during the same period. Small proportion (i.e., 5%) of participants were younger than 20, most of them were between 20 and 25 years old (i.e., 66.4%), 20.5% were between 26 and 30 years old, while 8.1% were 30 years and older. The number of female and male participants was almost equal (i.e., respectively 49.8% vs. 50.2%). Over 95% participants had not used any decision/negotiation support systems before and more than 91% never participated in negotiation experiments. Majority were students of business and management (52.9%), 29.8% were students of information technologies and the remaining 17.3% were students from other programs.

Table 2. Objectives and their importance (per cent)

| Objectives | Not important | Neutral | Slightly important | Important | Very important |
|------------|---------------|---------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Rating | 4.2 | 3.6 | 21.2 | 46.7 | 24.2 |
| Skills | 3.6 | 9.7 | 22.7 | 39.1 | 24.8 |
| Atmosphere | 8.5 | 12.1 | 27.3 | 37.6 | 14.5 |
| Learning | 4.5 | 10.3 | 22.4 | 38.5 | 24.2 |
| System | 10.3 | 14.2 | 27 | 37 | 11.5 |
| Assignment | 8.2 | 13.9 | 23 | 42.1 | 12.7 |
| Online | 6.4 | 12.7 | 21.8 | 39.4 | 19.7 |

From Table 2 it follows that 70.9% of the participants considered *rating* as important or very important, *skills* – 63.9%, *learning* – 62.7%, *online* – 59.9%, *assignment* – 54.8%, *atmosphere* – 52.1%, and *system* – 48.5.

We also found that the participants considered different objectives as important. For example, 11.2% of participants stated that all seven and 17.3% stated that six objectives were important or very important.

If participants were to focus solely on the case and negotiate to achieve the best agreement for the party they represent, then the sole important objective should be *rating*. Clearly this was not the case because only 3% of the participants considered *rating* as the most important or very important objective.

Considering the participants' demographics, we found that: (1) more female students than male students considered *atmosphere*, *learning*, *system* and *assignment* to be important; (2) novice negotiators considered *learning*, *system* and *assignment* to be more important than the experienced negotiators; and (3) graduate students considered practicing *skills* to be more important than undergraduate students.

2.3 Implications of participants' objectives

Results shown in Table 2 are insufficient to claim that the seven items are indeed objectives used by the participants. The participants could make decisions (propose offers and counteroffers, and decide on concessions) following one rather than many objectives but their answers could suggest that they used many objectives. In the preliminary study this cannot be rejected, however we found strong association between different objectives and several variables which describe negotiation preparation, process and results. We estimated these associations using regression. The results are shown in Table 3.

The analysis involves three types of variables that can be influenced by objectives: (1) expectations defined here by an alternative a negotiator aspires to agree upon (converted to aspiration rating value), the worst possible but still acceptable alternative (converted to reservation rating value), and the expected friendliness of the negotiation; (2) process defined by the rating of the first offer made by a negotiator, number of offers made, number of offers with and without accompanying messages, number of negotiation days, and the total length of messages (measured in words); and (3) outcome measured by the agreement rating.

For each regression, the F-test was significant at the 0.01 level. The adjusted R² values show that the seven objectives accounted for:

- Over 70% of variability in the negotiators' expectation;
- Over 60% of variability in the negotiation process (except 50% in the message length); and
- 84% in the agreement rating.

The results shown in Table 3 indicate that *rating* strongly affected the participants' expectation of the negotiation minimum acceptable and expected as well as the process friendliness. Negotiation *skills* are strongly associated with aspiration levels and the expectation regarding negotiation friendliness, while *learning* – with reservation levels and friendliness. *Atmosphere* is associated with expectations but less strongly than *rating*. In addition, the results indicate that *system* is associated with friendliness. Interestingly, participants who focused on acquiring knowledge for the assignment were not concerned with any of the expectations.

Table 3. Regression of seven objectives on negotiation expectation, process and outcomes

| | Rating | Skills | Atmosphere | Learning | System | Assignment | Online | R ² |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|------------|----------|--------|------------|--------|----------------|
| <i>Expectations</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Aspiration rating | 0.44** | 0.17** | 0.11** | 0.09 | 0.07 | 0.04 | 0.08 | 0.82 |
| Reservation rating | 0.51** | 0.04 | 0.09* | 0.16** | 0.06 | 0.00 | 0.07 | 0.73 |
| Friendliness | 0.40** | 0.17** | 0.15** | 0.17** | 0.08* | 0.00 | 0.04 | 0.83 |
| <i>Process</i> | | | | | | | | |
| First offer rating | 0.40** | 0.17** | 0.12** | 0.13** | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.05 | 0.84 |
| No. of offers | 0.40** | 0.08 | 0.04 | 0.14 | -0.01 | 0.06 | 0.16* | 0.64 |
| No. of messages w/o ofrs. | 0.35** | 0.15* | 0.03 | 0.15* | -0.04 | 0.04 | 0.17* | 0.62 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Negotiation days | 0.41** | 0.24** | 0.01 | 0.09 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.00 | 0.68 |
| Message length | 0.28** | 0.24** | 0.13* | 0.27** | -0.13 | 0.07 | -0.11 | 0.51 |
| <i>Outcomes</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Agreement rating | 0.45** | 0.17** | 0.12** | 0.12* | 0.07 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.84 |

* T-test is significant at the 0.05 level;

** T-test is significant at the 0.01 level; values are standardized coefficients; R² values are adjusted

Furthermore, the results given in Table 3 also show that individual objectives have different impact on the process. Focus on *rating* influenced the participants' first/last offer, the number of offers/messages and the length of negotiations, showing that negotiators who were motivated by an expectation to reach a high rating agreement negotiated more seriously and put more effort. The objective *skills* is related to the opening offers and negotiation length; however, it did not affect the number of offers but messages and particularly the message length. This indicates that those negotiators were applying or trying to apply their skills in making offer and in communicating with the counterparts with more arguments.

The relational objective *atmosphere* was found to affect the first offer and message length, indicating that the opening offers may have been an instrument to define the negotiation atmosphere and that the atmosphere was strengthened via more communication. *Learning* was only related to the opening offer, the number of messages and their length, whereas *online* only was related only to the number of offers/messages. This indicates that the negotiators with *learning* or *online* objectives put less effort on reaching an agreement. Again, *assignment* did not appear to affect the negotiators' activities.

Regarding the outcome, the agreement rating was associated with *rating*, *skills*, *atmosphere* and *learning* but not with other objectives. *rating* was shown to have a strong influence as it may lead the negotiators to achieve a higher rating of agreement. For some participants, the outcome may have been influenced by the assessment of their negotiation skills; for others, it may have been influenced by the counterparts' feeling.

3. Exploratory study

The results of this preliminary study suggest that negotiators have objectives either directly related to the role they are asked to play or not relevant to the role but rather to their profession (students, learners), interests and broader contexts. The results also showed that relationship (atmosphere) may be relevant to negotiators even if it is not discussed in the case.

The list of items in which we enquired about the participants' objectives is insufficient to categorize them into three types (substantive, relational and learning). The factor analysis indicates that substantial changes in the research instrument are needed. Therefore, the second experiment discussed in this section is also of exploratory nature. We modified the questionnaire and introduced it before the negotiations. The purpose was to study the effect of the objectives on the negotiation process and its outcomes.

3.1 Negotiators' objectives – revisited

In the preliminary study, we found that the proposed objectives were significantly correlated with each other. We were thus looking for common factors that could be explained by those items. An exploratory factor analysis showed a pattern of four-factor model: Factor 1 loaded on *rating*, Factor 2 on *learning*, *system*, *assignment* and *online*, Factor 3 on *atmosphere*, and Factor

4 on *skills* and *learning*. The model was not fitting very well to the data as *learning* was cross loading on both learning and practice and the loading of *skills* was not high. Nonetheless, it indicates that negotiators may have four types of objectives:

1. Substantive outcome which focuses on the achievement of outcomes included in the terms of contract and aggregated into the agreement rating (utility);
2. Relational outcome which aims at establishing a good atmosphere and thus focuses on the development of good relationship with the counterpart;
3. Learning-oriented outcomes which are related to the process and its implications for acquiring knowledge and new skills but much less for the specifics of the negotiations; and
4. Practice which focusses on training and skills improvement.

Taking into account these findings, we revised the items and added a few more. Table 4 shows the final list of items and their classification.

Table 4. Revised objectives and their classifications

| Classification | Objective | Item name |
|----------------|--|--------------|
| Substantive | Achieving as high a <u>rating</u> for the agreement as possible. | Rating |
| | Trying to achieve the best possible <u>agreement</u> . | Agreement |
| | Obtaining the best results for the <u>company</u> that I represent. | Company |
| Relational | Establishing a friendly <u>atmosphere</u> with my negotiation partner. | Atmosphere |
| | Building a good <u>relationship</u> with my negotiation partner. | Relationship |
| | Achieving results that are <u>good for both</u> my negotiation partner and me. | Joint value |
| | Making the process as <u>pleasant</u> as possible. | Pleasant |
| Learning | Learning a new <u>system</u> and using its functions. | System |
| | Acquiring <u>knowledge</u> which is necessary for course work. | Knowledge |
| | Learning how to negotiate <u>on-line</u> . | Online |
| | Obtaining <u>information</u> which is useful for my assignment. | Information |
| Practice | Applying my <u>ability</u> as a negotiator. | Ability |
| | Preparing for <u>real-life</u> negotiations. | Real-life |

3.2 Participants and their objectives

There were 224 students participating in the second experiment from Austria, Poland, Switzerland, the U.S.A. and Ukraine. Data analysis was based on 174 complete responses to the pre-negotiation questionnaire. The participants' demographics were similar to the first experiment.

We tested the correlations among these objectives and the results showed that several objectives were highly correlated. We then performed an un-weighted least squares factor analysis with oblimin rotation. Table 5 shows the sorted item loadings and the explained variance.

The two items, *ability* and *real-life*, which are associated with Practice (Table 4) loaded poorly and they were excluded. Therefore, items related to practices for real-life negotiations and applying negotiation skills were excluded.

In effect, three factors were identified corresponding to three types of objectives: relational outcomes, substantive outcomes and learning experience. The total variance explained is 61.2% indicating an adequate factor structure for self-reported scales, and all, except one, factor

loadings are above 0.50 which is acceptable in exploratory studies. Moreover, most cross-loadings are below 0.10 and the highest cross-loading is 0.22.

Table 5. Exploratory factor analysis (pre- negotiation)

| Type | Item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Substantive | Agreement | 0.87 | 0.05 | -0.06 |
| | Company | 0.70 | -0.04 | 0.22 |
| | Rating | 0.51 | 0.05 | -0.05 |
| Relational | Atmosphere | 0.05 | 0.81 | -0.07 |
| | Relationship | 0.00 | 0.78 | 0.04 |
| | Pleasant | -0.06 | 0.66 | 0.02 |
| | Good-for-both | 0.10 | 0.49 | 0.07 |
| Learning | Course-work | -0.07 | -0.04 | 0.80 |
| | System | 0.03 | 0.08 | 0.59 |
| | Online | 0.16 | -0.06 | 0.53 |
| | Assignment | -0.08 | 0.13 | 0.53 |
| Eigenvalues | | 1.56 | 3.71 | 1.46 |
| Explained variance | | 14.21 | 33.75 | 13.31 |

Note: Items are sorted by factor loadings.

3.3 Objectives' impact

The identified three types of objectives of negotiators may affect their perceptions and behavior in a negotiation and thus the outcomes. As mentioned above, we analyzed the effects of the three classifications of objectives from the participants' responses before the experiment, which allows us to consider the objectives as predictors of the negotiation process and outcomes. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Regression of objective classifications on negotiation process and outcomes (pre-negotiation)

| | Substantive | Relational | Learning | R ² |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------|----------------|
| <i>Expectations</i> | | | | |
| Aspiration rating | 0.53** | 0.09 | 0.34* | 0.92 |
| Reservation rating | 0.40* | 0.08 | 0.43* | 0.81 |
| Friendliness | 0.35* | 0.29* | 0.35* | 0.95 |
| <i>Process</i> | | | | |
| First offer rating | 0.56** | 0.17 | 0.25* | 0.95 |
| No. of messages | 0.92* | 0.16 | -0.55 | 0.28 |
| No. of messages w/o ofrs. | 0.65** | 0.08 | 0.15 | 0.76 |
| Negotiation days | 0.67* | 0.38 | -0.24 | 0.64 |
| Message length | 0.80* | 0.32 | -0.39 | 0.53 |
| <i>Outcomes</i> | | | | |
| Agreement rating | 0.55** | 0.06 | 0.35* | 0.90 |

Similar to the findings from the preliminary study, we found that the substantive objectives strongly affected the negotiators' expectations, behavior and substantive outcomes. The relational objectives partially determined the participants' expectations of friendliness of the negotiation but not of substantive issues (e.g. aspirations and reservations). These objectives did not significantly influence the process and its substantive outcome (agreement rating). The learning objectives affected the negotiators' expectations but not as strongly as the substantive objectives. They also affected the rating of the first offer and the agreement, but not the number of offers/messages, message length and negotiation length. This shows that the negotiators who focused on learning were caring about the outcome but not as seriously as the ones who wanted to achieve substantive outcomes.

3.4 Objective-based profiles

Using the items listed in Table 5, we recoded the factor values to four values for each factor: unimportant (value 0), neutral (value 1), somewhat important (value 2), and important (value 3). Using these scales we used K-means cluster analysis and obtained four clusters. Because we identified 2 outliers, we used 172 data points. Each of the three factors was found significant at the level lower than 0.001. The four clusters, given in Table 7 can be used to classify the participants into groups. Each group differs regarding the members' consideration of the three types of objectives and their importance ([0; 0.750 is unimportant; [0.75; 1.5) – neutral; [1.5; 2.25) – somewhat important and [2.25; 3] – important).

Table 7. Participants' profiles based on objectives' importance.

| Type | Cluster 1 | Cluster 2 | Cluster 3 | Cluster 4 | Cluster 5 |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Substantive | 0.56 | 2.35 | 2.2 | 2.48 | 0.5 |
| Relational | 0.53 | 2 | 0.26 | 2.23 | 1.88 |
| Learning | 0.56 | 0.61 | 1.51 | 2.59 | 1.79 |
| Focused on: | <i>Nothing</i> | <i>Negotiation</i> | <i>Agreement</i> | <i>Everything</i> | <i>Overall process</i> |
| # (%) of participants | 36 (21%) | 23 (13%) | 35 (20%) | 44 (26%) | 34 (20%) |

The five profiles have different importance levels, shown in Table 7, of each of the three types of objectives. Based on these importance levels we distinguish the following five profiles:

1. Focused on nothing: the participants considered none of the three types of objectives important;
2. Focused on negotiation: the participants considered both substantive and relational outcomes important, and they did not consider study-related objectives important;
3. Focused on agreement: this group was highly motivated to achieve substantive outcomes, while relationship with their counterpart was not important;
4. Focused on everything: this group represents participants who were interested in all types of objectives;
5. Focused on the overall process: this focus comprises both the negotiation process (excluding the agreement) that leads in relational outcomes and the learning process which results in enhancing knowledge and improving skills

The number of participants in each cluster indicates that: (1) 21% of participants were not interested in any of the objectives types and the remaining 79% were interested in at least two

types; (2) 25% of participants were interested in each type; (3) 59% of participants were interested in substantive objectives; and (4) 59% were interested moderately to strongly in relational objectives. These results show that the experiment’s participants differ in terms of their view of the importance of objectives. Note that over 66% participants in the “nothing” group, were interested in practice; they considered objective *ability* and *real-life* (Table 4) as important or very important.

These results suggest that it is a norm rather than an exception that the negotiators use other objectives in addition to substantive. What is more, for 26% of them (i.e., 57 out of 172) substantive outcomes are unimportant.

4. Discussion

The exploratory study allows us to suggest relationships among factors discussed above; they are shown in Figure 1.

The results given in Table 7 indicate that participants may be grouped according to the importance they attach to the objectives. The results given in Table 6 indicate that there may be direct relationship between the objectives used in negotiations (and their importance) and the participants’ expectations, their activities during the process and the outcomes. Further experiments will be conducted to determine these relationships at both factor and item levels.

Based on the preliminary study we conducted an exploratory analysis which gives us strong indication regarding reasons for accepting inefficient agreements and unwillingness to improve if given an opportunity. Agreement efficiency is computed based on the utility (rating) that it yields for both sides. In addition to the utility objective, the negotiators also use other objectives. These additional objectives describe the relationship between the negotiators and the context in which the negotiation take place. Negotiators, who are striving to achieve these other objectives, may have to accept achieving a lower utility value than otherwise would be possible.

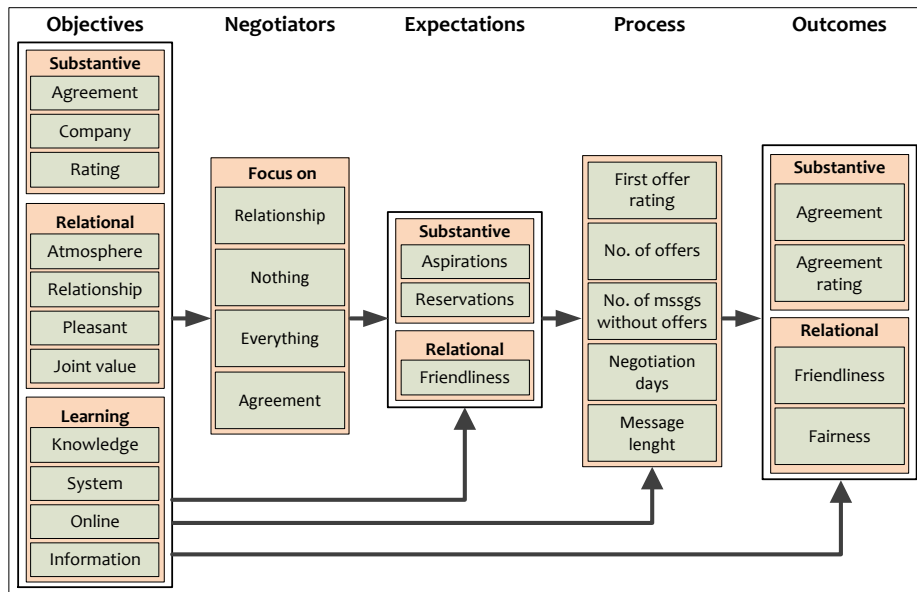


Fig. 1. Negotiators’ objectives, profiles and their consequences.

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