

European Journal of Conflict Management (EJCM)



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Crossref

Article History

Submitted 16.03.2024 Revised Version Received 21.04.2024 Accepted 26.05.2024

Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the role of emotional intelligence in negotiation effectiveness during international trade conflicts in Burundi.

Materials and Methods: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: Negotiators with high EI are adept at reading the emotional undercurrents and cultural nuances that often characterize international trade conflicts. This skill enables them to build trust, foster cooperation, and create a positive negotiation climate, which is essential for resolving disputes amicably. High EI negotiators can effectively manage their own emotions, preventing negative feelings such as frustration or anger from escalating conflicts. They are also skilled at empathizing with their counterparts, which helps in understanding their underlying interests and motivations. This empathetic approach allows for more creative and mutually beneficial solutions, as negotiators are better

equipped to identify common ground and compromise. Moreover, emotionally intelligent negotiators are better at communication, both in expressing their own positions clearly and in listening actively to their counterparts. This reduces misunderstandings and builds rapport, facilitating smoother negotiations. They can also anticipate and manage potential emotional reactions from their counterparts, enabling them to defuse tension and maintain a constructive dialogue.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Emotional intelligence theory, dual concern theory and intercultural communication theory may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the role of emotional intelligence in negotiation effectiveness during international trade conflicts in Burundi. Practical recommendations include integrating EI assessments and development programs into negotiation training curricula for professionals and organizations involved in international trade. From a policy perspective, governments, international organizations, and trade institutions can play a crucial role in promoting the importance of EI in negotiation effectiveness.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Negotiation, International Trade Conflicts*

INTRODUCTION

In the complex landscape of international trade conflicts, the role of emotional intelligence (EI) emerges as a critical factor in negotiation effectiveness. Negotiation effectiveness in developed economies such as the USA and Japan can be characterized by several factors including the agreement reached, the duration of negotiation, and the quality of the agreement. In the USA, negotiations tend to be more direct and outcome-focused, often resulting in quicker resolutions. For instance, studies have shown that American business negotiations typically last an average of three months, with a high rate of agreements reached due to clear communication and defined objectives (Liu, 2018). Conversely, in Japan, the negotiation process is generally longer, averaging six months, as it involves building relationships and consensus among all parties involved. However, the quality of agreements in Japan is often higher due to the thorough deliberation process, ensuring mutual satisfaction and long-term cooperation (Liu, 2018).

Negotiation effectiveness in developed economies such as the UK and Germany is influenced by their structured and formalized approaches. In the UK, negotiations are typically concise and focused on achieving practical outcomes, often concluding within three to six months (White & Bateman, 2019). British negotiators value clarity and precision, which contributes to high-quality agreements that are clear, enforceable, and designed to mitigate risks. Similarly, in Germany, the negotiation process is methodical and systematic, usually lasting around six months due to the detailed analysis and thorough preparation involved (Schweitzer & Groeger, 2018). German agreements are known for their precision and robustness, reflecting the emphasis on due diligence and long-term viability.

Both the UK and Germany place a high emphasis on legal and regulatory compliance, which enhances the quality of their agreements (White & Bateman, 2019; Schweitzer & Groeger, 2018). In the UK, the negotiation process often involves legal advisors to ensure that agreements are legally sound and comply with all relevant regulations. In Germany, the thorough documentation and structured approach to negotiations result in agreements that are not only comprehensive but also resilient, capable of adapting to future changes in the business environment. This systematic approach in both countries leads to a high success rate in reaching agreements that are sustainable and beneficial for all parties involved.

In developing economies like India and Brazil, negotiation effectiveness varies significantly due to different cultural and economic contexts. Indian negotiations are often lengthy, averaging around six to nine months, largely because of the hierarchical nature of decision-making and the emphasis on building trust and relationships (Singh & Kumar, 2019). Despite the longer duration, the agreements reached are typically comprehensive and sustainable, reflecting the importance of long-term business relationships. In Brazil, negotiations also take a substantial amount of time, usually around six months, influenced by the importance of personal relationships and informal networks (Carvalho, 2020). The quality of agreements in Brazil tends to be high, focusing on flexible terms that can adapt to changing circumstances, reflecting the dynamic business environment (Carvalho, 2020).

In developing economies such as China and Mexico, negotiation effectiveness varies significantly due to differing cultural and economic contexts. In China, negotiations can be lengthy, often extending over six months, due to the emphasis on building trust and relationships, known as "guanxi" (Zhang, 2020). The quality of agreements in China is typically high, as the process

involves detailed discussions and mutual adjustments to ensure both parties' interests are well-aligned. In Mexico, negotiations usually take around four to six months and are characterized by a balance of formal and informal interactions (Gonzalez & Perez, 2019). Mexican agreements often incorporate flexible terms to adapt to the country's dynamic economic conditions, ensuring resilience and mutual benefit.

Chinese negotiators focus heavily on relationship-building and face-to-face interactions, which are crucial for long-term partnerships (Zhang, 2020). This approach often leads to agreements that are thorough and considerate of potential future collaborations. In Mexico, the negotiation process is influenced by cultural nuances that prioritize personal relationships and trust, resulting in agreements that are practical and adaptable (Gonzalez & Perez, 2019). The flexibility embedded in Mexican agreements allows businesses to navigate economic fluctuations effectively, ensuring sustained partnerships and successful outcomes.

Moreover, in India, the effectiveness of negotiations is significantly enhanced by a deep understanding of the local market dynamics and a strong emphasis on relationship management (Singh & Kumar, 2019). This often leads to agreements that are not only beneficial but also resilient, capable of withstanding economic fluctuations and regulatory changes. In Brazil, personal relationships and trust play a critical role in negotiations, with a strong preference for face-to-face interactions to establish rapport and credibility (Carvalho, 2020). This approach results in agreements that are not only mutually beneficial but also built on a foundation of trust and mutual respect, which are crucial for long-term partnerships and successful business operations in the region (Carvalho, 2020).

South African negotiators prioritize thoroughness and legal compliance, resulting in agreements that are detailed and enforceable (Naidoo, 2020). This approach helps ensure that agreements are robust and capable of supporting long-term business success. In Ghana, the negotiation process benefits from a flexible approach that accommodates local customs and business practices (Mensah & Adjasi, 2021). This flexibility results in agreements that are not only practical but also tailored to the unique needs and conditions of the Ghanaian market, promoting sustainable and mutually beneficial business relationships.

In Kenya, the average duration of negotiations is slightly shorter, approximately eight months, driven by an increasing emphasis on efficiency and streamlined decision-making processes (Mwangi, 2019). The quality of agreements in Kenya is improving, reflecting a growing focus on transparency, accountability, and sustainable business practices. Kenyan negotiators are increasingly prioritizing clear and enforceable terms to foster trust and ensure compliance, which enhances the overall effectiveness of the agreements (Mwangi, 2019). These improvements are indicative of a broader trend in sub-Saharan Africa towards more effective and efficient negotiation processes that support economic growth and development.

In sub-Saharan economies such as South Africa and Ghana, negotiation effectiveness is influenced by factors like political stability, economic conditions, and cultural practices. In South Africa, negotiations typically last between six to eight months, driven by the need for comprehensive stakeholder engagement and alignment with regulatory frameworks (Naidoo, 2020). The quality of agreements in South Africa is generally high, reflecting a focus on sustainability and compliance with local regulations. In Ghana, the average duration of negotiations is around six months, characterized by a combination of formal and informal processes (Mensah & Adjasi, 2021).

Ghanaian agreements often emphasize adaptability and resilience, ensuring that they can withstand economic and political changes.

In sub-Saharan economies like Nigeria and Kenya, negotiation effectiveness is influenced by factors such as political stability, economic conditions, and cultural practices. In Nigeria, negotiations are generally protracted, lasting up to a year, due to bureaucratic processes and the need for extensive consultations among stakeholders (Obi, 2018). Despite the long duration, the agreements reached are often robust and consider various contingencies, ensuring resilience in a volatile market. In Kenya, the average duration of negotiations is slightly shorter, around eight months, driven by a growing emphasis on efficiency and streamlined decision-making processes (Mwangi, 2019). The quality of agreements in Kenya is improving, with an increasing focus on transparency and accountability to foster sustainable business practices (Mwangi, 2019).

Emotional intelligence (EI), typically measured through standardized assessments like the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) or the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), significantly impacts negotiation effectiveness. Four levels of EI can be delineated: low, moderate, high, and exceptional. Individuals with low EI often struggle to manage their emotions and understand others' emotions, leading to longer negotiation durations and poorer quality agreements due to frequent misunderstandings and conflicts (Goleman, 2018). Conversely, those with moderate EI can maintain basic emotional control and empathy, facilitating more constructive interactions and increasing the likelihood of reaching an agreement, albeit with some challenges (Brackett & Rivers, 2020). High EI individuals excel in recognizing and regulating emotions, which enhances their ability to build rapport, shorten negotiation durations, and achieve high-quality agreements that are mutually beneficial (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2019).

Exceptional EI individuals possess an advanced ability to navigate complex emotional landscapes, fostering deep trust and understanding during negotiations. This level of EI is linked to the most effective negotiation outcomes, including swift agreement reach and superior agreement quality due to their adeptness at anticipating and addressing the emotional needs and concerns of all parties involved (Brackett & Cipriano, 2020). These individuals can manage and resolve conflicts efficiently, creating a collaborative negotiation environment that promotes long-term partnerships. Therefore, enhancing EI through targeted training and development can be a strategic approach to improving negotiation effectiveness across various contexts (Mayer, 2019).

Problem Statement

Despite the increasing globalization and the critical importance of effective negotiations in resolving international trade conflicts, there is limited understanding of how emotional intelligence (EI) influences negotiation outcomes in these contexts. Traditional negotiation strategies often overlook the role of emotional dynamics, which can significantly impact the duration, quality, and success of negotiations. Recent research indicates that higher levels of EI can lead to better negotiation outcomes by enhancing interpersonal communication, reducing conflict, and fostering mutual understanding (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2019). However, empirical studies specifically examining the impact of EI on negotiation effectiveness during international trade conflicts remain sparse. This gap in the literature underscores the need for a comprehensive investigation into how EI can be leveraged to improve negotiation strategies and outcomes in the increasingly complex landscape of international trade (Brackett & Cipriano, 2020).

Theoretical Framework

Emotional Intelligence Theory

Emotional Intelligence Theory posits that individuals possess the ability to recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions and those of others. This capability significantly influences personal and professional interactions. Daniel Goleman popularized the concept of emotional intelligence in the 1990s, building on earlier work by researchers like Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer. This theory directly underpins the research topic by providing a framework to examine how emotional competencies can enhance negotiation strategies and outcomes in international trade conflicts. By applying EI principles, negotiators can improve communication, empathy, and conflict resolution skills, which are crucial for effective international negotiations (Goleman, 2018).

Dual Concern Theory

Dual Concern Theory suggests that negotiation behavior is influenced by a concern for both one's own outcomes and the outcomes of the other party. It identifies four main negotiation strategies: competition, collaboration, compromise, and avoidance. Dean Pruitt and Peter J. Carnevale developed the theory in the 1980s. This theory is pertinent to the research as it highlights the importance of balancing self-interest with empathy for the counterpart's interests. Emotional intelligence can enhance the ability to adopt collaborative and compromising strategies, leading to more effective resolutions in international trade disputes (Pruitt & Carnevale, 2018).

Intercultural Communication Theory

Intercultural Communication Theory explores how people from different cultural backgrounds communicate and understand each other, emphasizing the role of cultural context in shaping communication styles and effectiveness. Edward T. Hall introduced the concept of intercultural communication in the mid-20th century, which has since evolved with contributions from various scholars. This theory is relevant as international trade conflicts often involve parties from diverse cultural backgrounds. Emotional intelligence aids in navigating cultural differences by enhancing awareness and adaptation to varied emotional expressions and communication styles, thus improving negotiation effectiveness (Gudykunst, 2019).

Empirical Review

Smith and Johnson (2019) aimed to investigate how EI influences conflict resolution strategies specifically in cross-cultural negotiations. Employing a mixed-method approach that combined surveys and in-depth interviews with international trade negotiators, the study revealed that higher EI levels significantly improved negotiation outcomes by fostering empathy, effective communication, and a better understanding of cultural nuances. This finding underscores the importance of EI in navigating complex cross-cultural negotiations, where emotional awareness and management are crucial for successful outcomes. Based on their findings, Smith and Johnson recommended incorporating EI training in negotiation programs to enhance negotiators' intercultural competence, thus facilitating smoother and more effective resolution of international trade conflicts.

Lee (2020), who conducted a quantitative study involving 150 multinational corporate negotiators to explore the correlation between EI and negotiation success. Utilizing standardized EI assessments and negotiation simulations, Lee found a strong positive relationship between high EI

and successful negotiation outcomes. The study revealed that negotiators with higher EI demonstrated better emotional control, empathy, and conflict management skills, leading to more favorable agreements. Lee's research highlights the potential of EI development as a strategic tool for negotiators, especially in the context of international trade conflicts where emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in managing diverse perspectives and interests effectively.

Garcia (2018) contributed to this body of knowledge through a case study methodology aimed at examining specific instances of trade conflicts resolved through high-EI negotiators. By analyzing real-world cases, Garcia's study provided valuable insights into how emotional intelligence impacts negotiation effectiveness in international trade disputes. The findings revealed that negotiators with higher EI levels were able to achieve quicker and more satisfactory resolutions, emphasizing the importance of emotional awareness and regulation in navigating complex trade negotiations. Garcia's study suggested that policymakers and organizations consider EI as a critical factor in diplomatic appointments and negotiation roles to enhance conflict resolution and achieve more favorable outcomes in international trade conflicts.

Anderson (2021) used an experimental design to test the impact of EI on negotiation strategies in simulated trade conflicts. Through controlled experiments, Anderson demonstrated that negotiators with high EI were more likely to adopt collaborative strategies, leading to mutually beneficial agreements. The study's findings highlighted the positive influence of emotional intelligence on negotiation effectiveness, particularly in resolving conflicts and reaching consensus in international trade contexts. Anderson recommended integrating EI assessments into hiring processes for negotiation roles to ensure that organizations have individuals with the necessary emotional competencies to navigate and succeed in international trade negotiations.

Brown and Davis (2022) offered valuable contributions through their longitudinal study on the role of EI in trade negotiations involving emerging markets. By examining negotiation dynamics over time, the study found that high-EI negotiators were better equipped to manage stress, uncertainty, and interpersonal conflicts during negotiations, resulting in more stable trade agreements. Brown and Davis recommended that businesses invest in EI development programs to cultivate emotional competencies among negotiators, particularly in the context of emerging markets where negotiation challenges can be more pronounced.

Kim (2019) conducted a cross-sectional survey of international trade professionals to explore how EI impacts the handling of cultural differences during negotiations. The study revealed that high EI among negotiators contributed to mitigating misunderstandings and facilitating smoother negotiations across diverse cultural contexts. Kim's research underscores the importance of incorporating EI components into cross-cultural training programs to enhance negotiation effectiveness in international trade settings.

Martinez (2023) provided valuable insights into the role of EI in complex trade negotiations through a qualitative approach. By interviewing senior negotiators involved in intricate trade disputes, Martinez highlighted that negotiators with higher EI levels were better equipped to navigate emotional undercurrents, manage conflicts, and reach more durable agreements. Martinez recommended the inclusion of EI training and development in negotiation curricula to prepare negotiators for the emotional complexities inherent in international trade negotiations. These studies collectively emphasize the significance of emotional intelligence in enhancing negotiation

effectiveness and offer practical recommendations for incorporating EI into negotiation strategies and training programs.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Gap: While the studies by Smith and Johnson (2019), Garcia (2018), Anderson (2021), Kim (2019) and Martinez (2023) have extensively explored the positive impact of EI on negotiation outcomes, there is a conceptual gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which EI contributes to negotiation success. These studies primarily focus on the correlation between EI and favorable negotiation outcomes but do not delve deeply into the underlying processes or specific EI competencies that are most crucial for effective negotiation in international trade conflicts. Future research could address this gap by conducting in-depth analyses of the specific EI skills (e.g., empathy, emotional regulation, social awareness) that are most influential in different stages of negotiation processes, especially within the context of cross-cultural dynamics.

Contextual Gap: While the studies cover a range of contexts including cross-cultural negotiations, multinational corporate settings, emerging markets, and handling of cultural differences, there is a contextual gap regarding the applicability of EI strategies across different types of international trade conflicts Brown and Davis (2022). The existing research provides valuable insights into general principles of EI's impact on negotiation effectiveness, but there is a need for more context-specific studies that examine how EI strategies vary in effectiveness across diverse trade conflict scenarios such as tariff negotiations, intellectual property disputes, or supply chain conflicts. Understanding the nuanced application of EI skills in specific trade conflict contexts can enhance the development of targeted EI interventions for negotiators.

Geographical Gap: The studies primarily focus on international trade negotiations from the perspective of developed economies or global corporations, with limited representation from developing economies or specific geographical regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa. There is a geographical gap in exploring how EI influences negotiation effectiveness in trade conflicts within the context of developing economies or regions with distinct cultural, political, and economic dynamics Lee (2020). Future research could address this gap by conducting comparative studies that investigate the role of EI in negotiation outcomes across a diverse range of geographical contexts, considering factors such as cultural values, institutional frameworks, and power dynamics unique to each region.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in negotiation effectiveness during international trade conflicts is paramount. The studies reviewed highlight the significant impact of EI on various aspects of negotiation, including conflict resolution strategies, empathy, effective

communication, and understanding cultural nuances. Higher EI levels among negotiators have consistently shown to lead to more favorable negotiation outcomes, quicker resolutions, and better management of stress and uncertainty, particularly in complex cross-cultural settings and emerging markets. Incorporating EI training and development programs into negotiation curricula is recommended to enhance negotiators' intercultural competence and emotional competencies, ultimately facilitating smoother and more effective resolution of international trade conflicts.

However, there are research gaps that warrant further investigation. These include a need for a deeper conceptual understanding of the specific EI competencies that contribute most significantly to negotiation success, more context-specific studies to explore the nuanced application of EI strategies across diverse trade conflict scenarios, and a geographical expansion of research to encompass developing economies and specific regions with distinct cultural and economic dynamics. Addressing these gaps will not only advance our theoretical understanding of EI's role in negotiation but also contribute to the development of targeted EI interventions and strategies for negotiators, thereby optimizing negotiation effectiveness during international trade conflicts.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

To further enhance theoretical understanding, future research should focus on elucidating the specific EI competencies that significantly contribute to negotiation success. This involves conducting in-depth analyses to identify key EI skills such as empathy, emotional regulation, social awareness, and adaptability that are most impactful in various stages of negotiation processes, especially within the context of cross-cultural dynamics. Additionally, exploring the interactive effects of EI with other individual and contextual factors (e.g., cultural values, power dynamics) on negotiation outcomes can enrich theoretical frameworks.

Practice

Practical recommendations include integrating EI assessments and development programs into negotiation training curricula for professionals and organizations involved in international trade. This entails designing targeted EI interventions that enhance negotiators' intercultural competence, emotional resilience, conflict management skills, and collaborative strategies. Providing negotiators with tools and strategies to navigate emotional complexities, understand diverse perspectives, and build trust can lead to more effective and mutually beneficial negotiation outcomes.

Policy

From a policy perspective, governments, international organizations, and trade institutions can play a crucial role in promoting the importance of EI in negotiation effectiveness. This can be achieved through initiatives such as endorsing EI training programs for diplomatic and trade negotiators, incorporating EI components into negotiation guidelines and best practices, and incentivizing organizations to prioritize EI development for their negotiation teams. Policy support for EI initiatives can contribute to more informed and skilled negotiators, ultimately enhancing the resolution of international trade conflicts and promoting sustainable trade agreements.

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