

The ethical profile of global marketing negotiators

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As international trade and business opportunities grow globally, insight into trading partners' strategies is essential. One of the major strategies that impact trading partners' relationships is negotiation strategy employed by each partner. These strategies assume even greater importance when these strategies have ethical content. This study examines the effects of marketing executives' preferred ethical ideologies (relativism and idealism), opportunism and Machiavellianism on their perceived appropriateness of unethical negotiation tactics. Utilizing a sample of 995 marketing executives from six countries, cluster analysis and multivariate analysis of variance revealed two types of marketing negotiators: principled and corrupt negotiators. Corrupt negotiators tend to be more Machiavellian, more relativist, more opportunistic and less idealistic than their principled counterparts. Principled negotiators tend to perceive unethical negotiation tactics less favorably than their corrupt counterparts. Implications of these results for practitioners and directions for future research are discussed.

Introduction

Business ethics have become a topic of concern worldwide. For example, in the US, the names Enron, WorldCom, ImClone, Adelphia and Tyco have experienced corruption and chief executive officers, chief financial officers, board members, auditors and stock analysts have been implicated, charged and sentenced. In Russia, corruption and unethical behavior are rampant in both business and government, with bribes, extortion and even business related contract killings being the norm (Taylor & Kazakov 1997, Chivers 2004, Kranz & Bush 2004, Kvint 2005, Battling Corruption 2006). Similarly, the recent Egyptian revolution has uncovered major corruption and unethical conduct among government and private sector officials, and the trial and imprisonment of high profile public and private sector officials.

Under such global unethical climates, corporations entering the global economy face the challenge of understanding and managing the ethical mindsets of their international partners (Volkema 2004). This understanding is particularly important for its implications for enhancing those firms' chances for successful and long lasting relationships with their partners. Additionally, developing such an understanding is more pressing now than ever, given the reported wide gap in the literature on the perceptions of executives from different cultures of ethical concerns and the priority they place on ethical issues in their business environment (Zhuplev *et al.* 1998). The present study will assist in this endeavor by investigating the backbone of international business relations; namely, negotiation ethics. In defining negotiation ethics, the authors imply that personality, negotiator and resultant tactical strategies are inherently included in describing one's negotiation

tactics. While the negotiation literature is rich with numerous studies prescribing means for managing and resolving conflict in the negotiation process, very little attention has been devoted to the potentially unethical component of the negotiation process (Robinson *et al.* 2000). Similarly, executives' moral judgments and ethical perceptions within the negotiation context have been studied extensively in Western cultures, particularly in the US. However, limited research examining the impact of these factors on ethical behavior within the context of foreign cultures' ethical negotiation practices has been undertaken. The present study will aim at filling these gaps in the current negotiation ethics literature by investigating marketing executives' preferred ethical ideology (relativism vs. idealism), Machiavellianism and opportunism on their perceptions of unethical negotiation tactics. The present study also goes beyond the current research focus on one country and/or one culture to extending our knowledge and the external validity of these relationships from the perspective of executives from six countries (the US, Russia, Japan, Belgium, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia) and three cultures: Western, Eastern, and Middle Eastern cultures.

It should be noted that ethics position theory maintains that individuals' personal moral philosophies influence their judgments, actions and emotions in ethically intense situations (Forsyth *et al.* 2008). The theory, when describing these moral viewpoints, stresses two dimensions: idealism (concern for benign outcomes) and relativism (skepticism with regards to inviolate moral principles). These researchers found that an exceptionist ethic is more common in Western countries, subjectivism and situationism in Eastern countries and absolutism and situationism in Middle Eastern countries; and a nation's ethics position predicted that country's location on previously documented cultural dimensions, such as individualism and avoidance of uncertainty (Hofstede 1980).

As more and more firms operate globally, an understanding of the effects of cultural differences on ethical decision making becomes increasingly important for avoiding potential business pitfalls and for designing effective international marketing management programs (Lu *et al.* 1999). Hofstede's cultural dimensions place ethical decision making

within an overall theoretical framework. This study found individuals from a high power distance, uncertainty avoidant, Confucian, collectivist culture placed more value on company and fellow employee interests than did managers from a masculine, individualistic culture (i.e. the United States). There are significant differences in management and negotiation styles existing among managers from different countries (Albaum *et al.* 2010), inclusive of an individual's cultural values as an important determinant of his/her ethical decision process (Ferrell & Gresham 1985, Hunt & Vitell 2006). Hofstede (1980) suggested that societies differ along four cultural dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity/femininity. Numerous studies have found that people from different cultures exhibit different types of personal ethical mindsets and, thus, different perceptions of ethical issues (Lewicki & Robinson 1998, Volkema & Fleury 2002, Volkema 2004).

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- classify global negotiators based on their ethical ideologies, opportunism and Machiavellian tendencies;
- develop an ethical profile of each group;
- examine the extent to which the emerging segments/groups differ along their perceptions of unethical negotiation tactics.

The next section will review the relevant literature and develop the research hypotheses.

Literature review

Unethical negotiation tactics

Negotiation has been defined as 'a process of potentially opportunistic interaction by which two or more parties, with some apparent conflict, seek to do better through jointly decided action than they could otherwise' (Lax & Sebenius 1986: 11). Negotiation brings two or more parties together to try to accomplish mutually beneficial outcomes, while meeting individual goals that may be at odds with the other parties' goals. The negotiation process is potentially littered with ethical dilemmas. In a tactical process,

as two parties try to reach agreement, each wanting to maximize their results, the temptations to use unethical tactics are undeniable.

As Lewicki & Stark (1996) have noted, effective negotiators arguably cannot be fully candid about their preferences and positions. Thus, the context of negotiations provides a fertile ground for the exploration of ethical issues. Lewicki and his colleagues (Lewicki 1983, Lewicki & Stark 1996, Lewicki & Robinson 1998, Robinson *et al.* 2000) have identified five types of unethical negotiating tactics. The five types are (1) traditional competitive bargaining, (2) attacking opponent's network, (3) false promises, (4) misrepresentation, and (5) inappropriate information gathering. Traditional competitive bargaining is manifested in tactics such as making an opening demand that is far greater than what you really hope to settle for. Attacking the opponent's network is indicated by such activities as talking directly to the people whom your opponent reports to, or is accountable to, and telling them things that will undermine their confidence in your opponent as a negotiator. False promises relates to, for example, promising that good things will happen to your opponent if he/she gives you what you want, even if you know that you cannot (or would not) deliver these things when the other's cooperation is obtained. Misrepresentation may entail denying the validity of information which your opponent has that weakens your negotiating position, even though that information is true and valid. Finally, inappropriate information gathering includes such things as trying to recruit or hire one of your opponent's team members on the condition that the recruited team member brings confidential information with him/her.

In an extensive exploration of the structure and validity of the Self-reported Inappropriate Negotiation Strategies scale, or SINS, to measure endorsement of the earlier described unethical negotiation tactics, Robinson *et al.* (2000) had 762 MBA students rate each negotiation tactic on a seven-point Likert scale, indicating how appropriate they believed each tactic was to use in a negotiation (1 = not at all appropriate, 7 = very appropriate). Average mean ratings for each unethical negotiation tactic revealed that traditional competitive bargaining was seen as substantially more acceptable

(mean = 5.5) than the other four tactics (mean = 2.3), and was the only tactic that had an average score on the 'acceptable' end of the scale.

The impact of preferred ethical ideology on executives' perceptions of negotiation practices

Business ethics theories (e.g. Ferrell & Gresham 1985, Ferrell *et al.* 1989, Hunt & Vitell 1992) suggest that different individuals, when faced with ethical decisions, will apply guidelines or rules based on different moral philosophies. These moral philosophies can be categorized into two major types, deontological and teleological (Murphy & Laczniak 1981).

The deontological evaluation examines the inherent rightness or wrongness of an evoked set of alternatives that an individual views as possible courses of action by comparing them with a set of predetermined deontological norms or predetermined guidelines that represent personal values or rules of behavior. Teleological evaluation considers '(1) the perceived consequences of each alternative for various stakeholder groups, (2) the probability that each consequence will occur to each stakeholder group, (3) the desirability or undesirability of each consequence, and (4) the importance of each stakeholder group' (Hunt & Vitell 1986: 9). In both their original and revised ethics model, Hunt & Vitell (1986, 1992) depicted the ethical decision-making process as involving both deontological and teleological evaluations. This proposition has generally received support (Mayo & Marks 1990, Vitell & Hunt 1990).

The deontological/teleological paradigm is similar to Forsyth's (1980) two-dimensional personal moral philosophy concept – idealism/relativism. Idealism describes the degree to which individuals understand actions as right or wrong, and believe that a 'right' decision can be made in an ethically tenuous situation. This is essentially the deontological perspective that embodies concern for others' welfare when evaluating alternatives. Idealistic individuals believe that there is a morally correct alternative that will not harm others. Less idealistic individuals may make decisions irrespective of the impact on others.

Relativism, not an opposite, but a separate dimension, is the degree to which an individual rejects

universal moral norms in making ethical judgments. High relativists make decisions on a situational-specific basis. They evaluate the current situation and use this as the basis for making a judgment. In contrast, low relativists believe that standard rules can be applied across situations. Forsyth (1992) suggested that individuals' ethical ideologies should have an impact on how he/she would handle ethically challenging situations.

Business ethics scholars found that business executives' ethical judgments are mediated by the individual's ethical ideology (Vitell *et al.* 1993, Barnett *et al.* 1994, 1996, 1998, Tansey *et al.* 1994, Singhapakdi *et al.* 1995, Rao & Singhapakdi 1997, Wong 1998, Singhapakdi *et al.* 1999, Al-Khatib *et al.* 2007, 2011, Forsyth *et al.* 2008, Grzeskowiak and Al-Khatib 2009). Examining these constructs, Vitell *et al.* (1993), using a sample of American Marketing Association (AMA) members, found that more idealistic and less relativistic members showed higher levels of honesty and integrity than their less idealistic and more relativistic counterparts. A second study of AMA members found that those who exhibited a high level of idealism and low relativism tended to perceive ethics and social responsibilities as more important than their less idealistic and more relativistic counterparts (Singhapakdi *et al.* 1995).

Similarly, a study by McFerran *et al.* (2010) tested the relationship between three facets of personality – conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience – as well as moral identity, on individuals' ethical ideology. The results showed that moral personality and the centrality of moral identity to the self were associated with a more principled (versus expedient) ethical ideology in their sample. This adds to the argument that one's personality will be influential on one's ethical choices and ideology. Examining ethical ideology and judgments regarding appropriate negotiation tactics, Banas & Parks (2002) found that ethical ideology and acceptability of negotiation tactics were correlated. The authors hypothesize that subjects' ethical judgments as to the appropriateness of negotiation tactics will be mediated by their ethical orientation. Robertson *et al.* (2003) found that Americans and Russians did not differ significantly on idealism. Puffer & McCarthy (1995) suggested that Russian managers are more

situational in their ethical orientation than their American counterparts. Utilizing a sample of Arab marketing executives, Al-Khatib *et al.* (2007) found that idealistic Arab executives are less accepting of unethical negotiation tactics than their more relativistic counterparts. The same results were reached utilizing a Saudi Arabian sample (Al-Khatib *et al.* 2008) and Chinese sample (Al-Khatib *et al.* 2007).

To understand the influence of culture on ethical attitudes, a variety of countries must be compared simultaneously to avoid confounding of cultural dimensions (Franke & Nadler 2008). These researchers utilized data from the World Values Survey to develop a measure of ethical attitudes that shows partial measurement invariance across 44 countries. Regressing the resulting latent means on four cultural dimensions (Hofstede 2001) and per capita gross domestic product (PCGDP) revealed effects that are not suggested by examining the predictors in isolation, and explains more variance than analysis of the raw means. In a majority of the countries, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and PCGDP are found to have negative influences on national ethical attitudes (Franke & Nadler 2008).

The impact of Machiavellianism on executives' perceptions of negotiation practices

Personality constructs have been demonstrated to be useful for explaining and predicting attitudes, behaviors, performance and outcomes in organizational settings (Ones *et al.* 2007). Machiavellianism, a personality trait measured along a continuum, is often examined in relation to ethical decision making. A high Machiavellian individual believes it is appropriate to use any means to accomplish personal and organizational goals, including manipulation, persuasion, and deceit (Hunt & Chonko 1984). Numerous studies have investigated Machiavellianism (Gunnthorsdottir *et al.* 2002). Researchers have also applied this concept to the business arena (Chonko & Hunt 1985), many looking at the Machiavellianism level of current and future business executives (Chonko 1982, Hunt & Chonko 1984, Corzine *et al.* 1999). The research indicates that individuals scoring high on the Mach scale are likely to behave unethically. For example, Christie & Geis (1970) found that Machiavellian individuals lie more plausibly,

manipulate others more, are persuaded by others less and pay bribes more than non-Machiavellian individuals. Shapiro *et al.* (1995) found that Machiavellian individuals tend to engage in deceptive tactics to achieve personal objectives more often than non-Machiavellian individuals. Similarly, Beu *et al.* (2003) found a significant correlation between Machiavellianism and the intention to behave unethically. Examining the impact of personality factors, cognitive moral development and demographic factors on unethical intent, Machiavellianism was the strongest predictor of unethical intent. It has been found that high Machs are more likely than low Machs to behave unethically (Jones & Kavanagh 1996). In the negotiation context, few studies have examined the effect of Machiavellian tendencies on executives' perceptions of unethical negotiation tactics (Grzeskowiak & Al-Khatib 2009, Malshe *et al.* 2010). These studies have investigated the impact of Machiavellianism or its components (i.e. deceit, flattery, and cynicism) on marketing executives' perception of negotiation tactics. In summary, these studies reported that Machiavellian executives do not mind bending the rules to achieve their desired gains. In future research, the authors intend to study the impact of a negotiator's Machiavellianism level and the relationship to negotiation tactics.

The impact of opportunism on executives' perceptions of negotiation practices

As addressed earlier, negotiation is a process that is potentially opportunistic. The parties to the process often have conflicting goals and each wishes to maximize their results. In fact, managing opportunism and ensuring that the exchange partners deliver on agreed-on obligations are major challenges in conducting global business (Aulakh *et al.* 1996). Thus, an investigation of the impact of opportunism on exchange partners' perception of unethical negotiation practices should help executives to cultivate a constructive relationship with their negotiating partners. Additionally, despite the repeated call in the literature for the need to recognize the importance of minimizing opportunism between transacting parties (e.g. Wathne & Heide 2000, Cavusgil *et al.* 2004), very limited empirical evidence exists on the impact of opportunism on ethics in the negotiation context.

Opportunism has been interpreted as 'a lack of candor or honesty in transactions, to include self-interest seeking with guile' (Williamson 1975: 47). Beyond self-interest, the concept includes malicious behavior such as lying, cheating, deceit, and violations of agreements (Stump & Heide 1996). Opportunistic behavior might take the forms of withholding or distorting information and failing to fulfill promises for obligations. Whenever it is feasible and profitable, it is assumed that humans will act opportunistically (John 1984).

The concept of opportunism has been used in marketing literature to explain organizational structure and governance mechanisms (John 1984, Stump & Heide 1996, Brown *et al.* 2000, Cavusgil *et al.* 2004), while it is not a concept receiving wide attention in the negotiation or ethics literature. Because opportunistic behavior includes deceit and violations of agreements, it is reasonable to assume that opportunistic individuals will perceive questionable negotiation tactics as acceptable.

Hypotheses

Based on the earlier literature and empirical evidence, we propose the following hypotheses:

- H1:** Marketing negotiators' scoring high in idealism and low in relativism, opportunism, and Machiavellianism are more likely to perceive making false promises to their negotiating opponent as more unethical than those with the opposite scores along the same dimensions.
- H2:** Marketing negotiators' scoring high in idealism and low in relativism, opportunism, and Machiavellianism are more likely to perceive engaging in inappropriate information gathering about the negotiation opponent as more unethical than those with the opposite scores along the same dimensions.
- H3:** Marketing negotiators' scoring high in idealism and low in relativism, opportunism, and Machiavellianism are more likely to perceive engaging in attacking a negotiation opponent's network as more unethical than those with the opposite scores along the same dimensions.

H4: Marketing negotiators' scoring high in idealism and low in relativism, opportunism, and Machiavellianism are more likely to perceive misrepresentation of their position to their negotiation opponent as more unethical than those with the opposite scores along the same dimensions.

Methodology

Sampling

Much of the negotiation ethics research depends on student samples (Beekun *et al.* 2003, Volkema 1998, 2004). To overcome the limitations associated with student samples, researchers often use in-country contacts to identify specific participants (Teagarden *et al.* 1995). This study is no exception. We attempted to identify appropriate samples of 200 marketing executives, with budgetary and personnel responsibility in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Russia, Japan and Belgium. Those identified were prenotified of the purpose of the research and given basic procedural instructions. One week later, the survey instrument was hand delivered in the morning and picked up at the end of the same workday. This resulted in a total sample of 741 respondents from these countries. In the US, a random sample of 300 marketing executives was drawn from the membership list of the Institute of Supply Chain Management. Data were collected via a Web Surveyor software. Of the total

300 contacts receiving the survey, 254 replied with completed surveys. This resulted in an operational data set of 995 respondents and yielding a response rate of 76.50%. Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic profile of the sample.

The back-translation method was utilized to translate the survey from the source language (English) to the target language (Arabic, Russian, and Japanese).

Every attempt was made to have a broad distribution across the organizational and individual demographic categories of gender, education, and type of economic activity of participating organizations and their respective marketing executives. Additionally, all respondents have substantial supervisory responsibility with average years in business of approximately 15 years.

Measurement

In order to obtain reliable information from the respondents, established and validated scales were selected for data collection. The instrument consisted of four key sections. The first section contained basic demographic characteristics including age, educational level, occupation, gender, years in business, and years in current position.

In the second section, the survey contained an ethical ideology scale. The respondent's predominant ethical ideology or perspective was measured using the Ethics Position Questionnaire developed by Forsyth (1980). This consists of two scales, each

Table 1: Sample demographic profile

Variable	US n = 254	Saudi n = 198	Russia n = 138	Japan n = 102	Belgium n = 153	Egypt n = 150	Total n = 995
Highest level of education:							
High school or less	–	15.5%	0.7%	19.8%	30.8%	20.2%	18.7%
Some college	6.0%	47.3%	6.7%	58.2%	30.1%	23.4%	25.2%
College degree	42.9%	35.1%	92.6%	20.9%	33.6%	41.5%	40.5%
Graduate degree	51.2%	2.0%		1.1%	5.5%	2.1%	15.6%
Gender:							
Male	80.2%	97.9%	58.2%	49.5%	61.4%	61.3%	71.5%
Female	19.8%	2.0%	41.8%	50.5%	38.6%	38.7%	28.5%
Average age	49.82	38.61	39.44	38.18	40.2	43.39	43.03
Years in your current position	8.83	6.49	5.43	5.31	5.33	2.76	6.03
Years you have worked in business	26.29	14.26	8.92	9.98	10.29	14.93	15.87

Table 2: Study measurements and reliabilities

Construct	Source	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Machiavellianism	Christie & Geis (1970)	20	0.74
Relativism	Forsyth (1980)	10	0.79
Idealism	Forsyth (1980)	10	0.86
Opportunism	Dwyer & Oh (1987)	5	0.58
Information misrepresentation	Robinson <i>et al.</i> (2000)	4	0.80
False promises	Robinson <i>et al.</i> (2000)	3	0.83
Attacking opponents	Robinson <i>et al.</i> (2000)	3	0.80
Inappropriate information gathering	Robinson <i>et al.</i> (2000)	3	0.80

containing 10 items: one is designed to measure idealism, the acceptance of moral absolutes, and the second is designed to measure relativism, or the rejection of universal moral principles. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each item using a five-point Likert format, where a 5 indicated strong agreement with a statement. All questions were worded in a positive direction. Both constructs achieved acceptable levels of reliabilities (0.86 and 0.79, respectively).

Opportunism was measured in the third section of the survey using five items related to the individual's overstatement of difficulties, information falsification, exaggerated claims, neglected obligations and perfunctory role performance. Respondents were asked to indicate either agreement or disagreement using a five-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' (Dwyer & Oh 1987, 1989). Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.58.

Machiavellianism was measured using the MACH IV scale developed by Christie & Geis (1970). This scale contains 20 items with 10 items worded in a Machiavellian direction and 10 items worded in the opposite direction. Each respondent was asked to indicate either agreement or disagreement with each of the 20 items using a five-point Likert scale, where a 5 indicated strong agreement. The scale has been used in the US and several foreign countries, including Russia, the US, Japan, Hong Kong, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Kuwait with an acceptable Cronbach's alpha level. The current study's Cronbach's alpha for the Mach scale was 0.74.

The final section contained the SINS developed and validated by Robinson *et al.* (2000). This

16-item scale presents a five-factor model of unethical tactics in negotiation contexts as follows: (1) traditional competitive bargaining (three items), (2) attacking an opponent's network (three items), (3) misrepresentation of position to the opponent (four items), (4) misuse of information (three items), and (5) false promises (three items). These factors were evaluated on a seven-point scale that ranged from 'Not at all appropriate' = 1 to 'Very appropriate' = 7. The traditional competitive bargaining dimension was not used in the analysis as most negotiation researchers consider it an acceptable ethical negotiation tactic. All dimensions achieved acceptable levels of reliabilities as indicated by their alpha coefficients. Appendix 1 provides details of the constructs' measures. Table 2 shows the constructs measured in this study, the number of items for each construct and the reliability coefficient for each construct.

Data analysis, results, and discussion

Ethical profile of the global marketing negotiator

To achieve the first research objective (developing an ethical profile of the global marketing negotiator based on preferred ethical ideology, opportunism, and degree of Machiavellianism), a cluster analysis of the executive respondents was conducted based on their perceptions of four ethical variables: namely, Machiavellianism, idealism, relativism, and opportunism. The analysis revealed a two group solution which can be labeled based on these variables as 'corrupt negotiators' and 'principled negotiators'.

Table 3: Cluster centers

Constructs ^a	Cluster	Principled
	Corrupt negotiators n = 550	negotiators n = 445
Machiavellianism	3.1	2.5
Idealism	2.9	3.7
Relativism	3.1	2.6
Opportunism	3.5	2.3

^a Measured on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Table 3 shows the two groups as well as their mean scores along the four clustering variables. 55.3% of the sample was classified in group 1 (i.e. corrupt negotiators), while 44.7% was classified as group two (i.e. principled negotiator). Corrupt negotiators tend to be more Machiavellian, less idealistic, more relativistic and more opportunists than their principled counterparts.

To validate the resulting two cluster solution, a classification statistic of the discriminant analysis revealed that 78.0% of original grouped cases were correctly classified and 77.9% of cross-validated grouped cases were correctly classified. Given the large percentages of correctly classified cases into both groups, we consider our classification factors as appropriate for their use in further analysis. Table 4 provides a summary of these results.

Additionally, a discriminant analysis was conducted using the two ethical groups (corrupt and principled negotiators) as dependent variables and the four unethical negotiation tactics as predictor variables to determine whether the latter could be used to discriminate between the two groups. This was done to answer the research issue which was, 'to develop an ethical profile of both global marketing negotiators based on preferred ethical ideology, opportunism, and degree of Machiavellianism'.

A discriminant function was derived and the resulting function was significant at $p < 0.01$; Wilks' lambda = 0.629 and Chi-square = 460.096 (with $df = 4$). The unstandardized canonical discriminant function evaluated at group centroids was 0.691 for the corrupt/unethical negotiators and -0.854 for the principled/ethical negotiators.

Table 4: Classification results

	Cluster number of case	Cluster	Predicted group membership		Total
			1	2	
			Count	Count	
Original	Count	1	402	148	550
		2	71	374	445
	%	1	73.1	26.9	100.0
		2	16.0	84.0	100.0
Cross validated ^a	Count	1	401	149	550
		2	71	374	445
	%	1	72.9	27.1	100.0
		2	16.0	84.0	100.0

78.0% of original grouped cases correctly classified. 77.9% of cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified.

^a Cross-validation is done only for those cases in the analysis. In cross-validation, each case is classified by the functions derived from all cases other than that case.

Finally, to evaluate the third research objective of whether the two groups differ in their perceptions of unethical negotiation tactics, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted. As Table 5 indicates, significant differences were found between the two groups for each of the four unethical negotiation tactics. Specifically and as hypothesized, marketing negotiators who scored high in idealism and low in Machiavellianism, opportunism, and relativism (principled negotiators) tend to perceive making false promises (H1, mean scores are 1.79 vs. 3.41), misrepresentation of information to clients (H2, mean scores are 2.2 vs. 3.57), inappropriately gathering information about a negotiating opponent (H3, mean scores are 2.23 vs. 3.87) and attacking opponent's network (H4, mean scores are 1.80 vs. 3.21) less appropriate than their corrupt counterparts. These results provide full support to the hypothesized relationships.

Managerial implications, limitations and direction for future research

While every negotiator wishes for a principled negotiation partner, the nature of the negotiation process as well as the global market realities call for exercising caution and creating means to enhance honest

Table 5: MANOVA analysis of the groups' perceptions of negotiation tactics

Construct	Standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients ^a	Group means ^b (Std. dev.)	
		Corrupt/unethical negotiators	Principled/ethical negotiators
False promises (H1)	0.508	3.41 (1.334)	1.79 (0.915)
Information misrepresentation (H2)	0.308	3.57 (1.178)	2.20 (1.011)
Inappropriate information gathering (H3)	0.307	3.87 (1.505)	2.23 (1.381)
Attacking opponent's network (H4)	0.091	3.21 (1.323)	1.80 (1.026)

All mean differences are significant at $p < 0.05$.

^a The test of function (Wilks' lambda = 0.629 and Chi-square = 460.096 with df = 4) is significant at $p < 0.01$.

^b Measured on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = Not at all appropriate to 7 = Very appropriate.

dealing, cooperation and/or safeguarding mechanisms to prevent abuse by corrupt negotiating partners.

The present study attempted to segment global marketing negotiators based on their ethical orientation, degree of opportunism, and Machiavellian tendencies. Two types of marketing negotiators emerged: the principled and the corrupt negotiators. Principled negotiators are described as idealistic individuals who believe in universal rules of conduct, are less relativistic, less opportunistic, and non-Machiavellian compared with the corrupt negotiator.

The earlier results have several implications for executives doing business in a global base. While the present study's results showed that corrupt negotiators tend to view all the four unethical tactics as appropriate, some of these tactics are more easily managed than others. For example, the tactics of making false promises and misrepresentation of information are usually present at the negotiation table, directed at the principled negotiators, unpredictable, and require a spontaneous response by the negotiating partner. On the other hand, attacking opponent's network and inappropriate information gathering are usually engaged in prior to the negotiation episode and directed at the opponent team. They tend to be planned, prearranged and require time to achieve. To deal with the former tactics, negotiators need to form impressions of negotiation partners' strategies (Adler *et al.* 1987). This can be accomplished through reciprocity. There is evidence that negotiators use matching strategies (Pruitt 1981). Negotiators are more willing to cooperate if

they perceive that their partners are conducting themselves in the same manner. To enhance cooperation, ethical conduct, and honesty among negotiating partners, a negotiator can show cooperative tendencies to their negotiating partner. When negotiators are cooperative, their partners usually are also more cooperative and express greater satisfaction after negotiations. Thus using a cooperative problem-solving style in international negotiations has the merit to enhance negotiation success (Mintu-Wimsatt & Graham 2004). To deal with the covert tactics employed by an unethical negotiating partner, a negotiator needs to stress honesty, ethical code of conduct, and transparency among his/her team members. Based on our findings, it is expected that a specific culture development level and type of purchase/negotiation strategy will influence the tactical strategy of the negotiator or company representative. For example, there exists theoretical thinking of negotiation, linking culture to trust, strategies, and outcomes (Ready & Tessema 2009, Socol *et al.* 2010).

Firms operating in the global market should be aware of and be able to influence the ethical sensitivity of their negotiating partners by establishing a culture-sensitive, but strictly imposed, code of ethics that governs the firm's relationship with its business partners and curbs any tendencies for unethical behavior. Just as organizations have policies on employment practices, sexual harassment, nondiscrimination and other pertinent issues, having written policies on negotiations would be prudent. As the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1991)

suggests, individual perceived behavioral control can influence behavior directly. Perceived behavioral control refers to the degree to which an individual feels that performance or nonperformance of the behavior in question is under his or her volitional control. Individuals are not likely to form a strong intention to perform a behavior if they believe that they do not have any resources or opportunities to do so even if they hold positive attitudes toward the behavior. Individuals may have total control when there are no constraints of any type to adopting an unethical behavior. Therefore, instituting a culturally sensitive, clearly defined and well-communicated code of ethics may contribute to reducing incidents of unethical behavior by serving as a constraint on such undesirable behaviors.

If multinational firms impose explicit legal contracts on their trading partners to curb undesirable behaviors, the partners may perceive such action as a means of controlling them. This can raise the inclination to behave more opportunistically and unethically. Instead, reliance on trust-based exchange may result in the most effective and efficient negotiation process. Fan *et al.* (2012) found in their recent study that an Eastern collectivist culture and a Western individualist culture have difficulty maintaining sufficient levels of trust. Although economic calculus and capability assessment are the basic trust-building processes, mutual respect, friendship, and intent of the parties will also impact trust building. The study also found that the switch from one trust-building process to another will depend on specific circumstances necessary to insure the success of the business (Fan *et al.* 2012).

Therefore, the process of building trust needs to be understood and managed. Negotiators who focus on building personal trust that emulates healthy family and friend relationships will find that such an approach to personalization of trust will promote a more congenial and more productive atmosphere than formal, arm's-length contacts and contracts (Ayios 2003).

This study is not without its limitations. Given the sensitivity of the issues discussed in the survey, social desirability bias may have been a factor in responses to some of the questions (despite the fact that every attempt was made to protect against this influence). Some respondents may have simply provided the

socially desirable response in order to appear ethical. The likelihood of such a possibility has been expressed by other cross-cultural researchers in business ethics (Akaah & Riordan 1989, Al-Khatib *et al.* 1997). Given the existing impediments to sampling and data collection in the sampled countries, the sampling method used is nonprobabilistic, which calls for consideration of the results as exploratory.

There are many potential venues for future research. Future research should be conducted to determine the generalizability of the results of this study by investigating negotiation ethics in other countries, for example, with the recent political events in the Middle East and the anticorruption wave sweeping most of the Arab region, it would be very interesting to examine these issues in longitudinal basis to determine whether the new political and cultural atmospheres have contributed to any changes in the ethical stances of Arab negotiators. The longitudinal monitoring of global negotiators' ethical beliefs and judgments will clearly provide a more refined understanding of the degree to which ethical values are converging worldwide. Future research should also examine other potential and influential factors such as justice and religiosity. These factors may provide additional insight into the determinants of global negotiators' ethical judgments. For future research, it would be advantageous and insightful to study specifically marketers and the level of similarities of findings from this research and marketers in the Middle East. Another interesting venue of research is to examine variations in the perceptions of unethical negotiation tactics among the four ethics positions (i.e. exceptionist, situationist, subjectivist and absolutist) laid out by Forsyth (1980), utilizing a global sample of executives, as these positions are sensitive to cultural variations (Forsyth *et al.* 2008). Overall, it is hoped that the present study's findings have filled the gap in the negotiation ethics literature and added to our understanding of the ethical mindset of the global negotiator.

Appendix 1: Constructs measures

Negotiation Tactics Scale

Inappropriate information gathering:

1. Gain information about an opponent's negotiating position by paying your friends, associates and contacts to get this information for you.
2. Gain information about an opponent's negotiating position by cultivating his/her friendship through expensive gifts, entertaining or 'personal favors'.
3. Gain information about an opponent's negotiating position by trying to recruit or hire one of your opponent's teammates (on the condition that the teammate brings confidential information with him/her).
2. Threaten to make your opponent look weak or foolish in front of a boss or others to whom he/she is accountable, even if you know that you would not actually carry out the threat.
3. Talk directly to the people whom your opponent reports to, or is accountable to, and tell them things that will undermine their confidence in your opponent as a negotiator.

Information misrepresentation:

1. Intentionally misrepresent information to your opponent in order to strengthen your negotiating arguments or position.
2. Intentionally misrepresent the nature of negotiations to your constituency in order to protect delicate discussions that have occurred.
3. Deny the validity of information, which your opponent has, that weakens your negotiating position, even though that information is true and valid.
4. Intentionally misrepresent the progress of negotiations to your constituency in order to make your own position appear stronger.
1. Promise that good things will happen to your opponent if he/she gives you what you want, even if you know that you cannot (or would not) deliver these things when the other's cooperation is obtained.
2. In return for concessions from your opponent now, offer to make future concessions which you know you will not follow through on.
3. Guarantee that your constituency will uphold the settlement reached, although you know that they will likely violate the agreement later.

Competitive bargaining:

1. Make an opening demand that is far greater than what you really hope to settle for.
2. Convey a false impression that you are in absolutely no hurry to come to a negotiated agreement, thereby trying to put time pressure on your opponent to concede quickly.
3. Make an opening demand so high/low that it seriously undermines your opponent's confidence in his/her ability to negotiate a satisfactory settlement.
1. Never tell anyone the real reason you did something unless it is useful to do so.
2. The best way to handle people is to tell them what they want to hear.
3. One should take action only when sure it is morally right.
4. Most people are basically good and kind.
5. It is safest to assume that all people have a vicious streak and it will come out when given the chance.
6. Honesty is the best policy in all cases.
7. There is no excuse for lying to someone else.
8. Generally speaking, people would not work hard unless they are forced to do so.
9. All in all, it is better to be humble and honest than to be important and dishonest.
10. When you ask someone to do something for you, it is best to give the real reasons for wanting it rather than giving reasons which carry more weight.
11. People who get ahead in the world lead clean and moral lives.

Attacking opponent network:

1. Attempt to get your opponent fired from his/her position so that a new person will take his/her place.

Machiavellianism Scale

12. Anyone who completely trusts others is asking for big trouble.
13. The biggest difference between criminals and others is that the criminals are stupid enough to get caught.
14. Most people are brave.
15. It is wise to flatter important people.
16. It is possible to be good in all respects.
17. Barnum was wrong when he said that "there's a sucker born every minute."
18. It is hard to get ahead without cutting corners.
19. People suffering from incurable diseases should have the choice of being painlessly put to death.
20. Most people forget more easily the death of their father than the loss of their property.

Idealism Scale

1. A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.
2. Risks to another should never be tolerated.
3. The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.
4. One should never psychologically or physically harm another.
5. One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.
6. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.
7. Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.
8. The dignity and welfare of the people should be the most important concern in any society.
9. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.
10. Moral actions are those which closely match the ideals of the most 'perfect' action.

Relativism Scale

1. There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.
2. What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.

3. Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.
4. Different types of moralities cannot be compared as to 'rightness'.
5. What is ethical for everyone, can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.
6. Moral standards are simply personal rules and are not to be applied in making judgments of others.
7. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.
8. Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions stands in the way of better human relations and adjustment.
9. No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.
10. Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.

Opportunism Scale

1. There will be some things you will concede to your negotiating counterpart only if he/she insists on it.
2. At times you may have to overstate your difficulties in order to get concessions from your negotiation counterpart.
3. You may promise your negotiation counterpart to do something without actually doing it later.
4. Sometimes you may have to alter the facts slightly in order to get what you need from your negotiation counterpart.
5. Occasionally you will shirk certain negotiated agreements/obligations when you see profitable opportunities from doing so.

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