

Attitudes Toward Ethically Questionable Negotiation Tactics: A Two-Country Study

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Abstract Current research has identified five discrete US negotiation tactics, a traditional one considered to be ethical, and four considered to be ethically questionable. Scholars have independently used culture to explain how the endorsement of these five negotiation tactics varies across nations. They have also independently used interpersonal trust and ethics propensity to explain antecedents of the endorsement of those five negotiation tactics. This research combines all those variables into one model that investigates the influence of horizontal and vertical individualism–collectivism, ethical idealism, and trust propensity on employees' attitudes toward ethically questionable negotiation tactics in Israel and Kyrgyzstan. A survey questionnaire was translated from English to Hebrew and Kyrgyz, and 615 responses were collected

from employees in various industries in the two countries. We empirically confirmed three types of questionable negotiation tactics discovered in previous one-nation studies, namely, pretending, deceiving, and lying. Vertical individualism was found to be positively, and horizontal collectivism was found to be negatively, related to pretending, deceiving, and lying. Ethical idealism was found to be negatively related to the endorsement of the lying tactics, while trust propensity was negatively related to the pretending tactics. Compared with Israel, employees' endorsement of ethically questionable negotiation tactics was significantly higher in Kyrgyzstan. Contribution to theory and practice is discussed.

Keywords Negotiation tactics · Horizontal and vertical individualism–collectivism · Ethical idealism · Trust propensity · Israel · Kyrgyzstan

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Introduction

As business efforts toward higher levels of international cooperation and integration gain momentum, the various dimensions of unethical negotiation tactics have attracted considerable attention from academics and practitioners alike. In a quest for predictors of individuals' attitudes toward unethical negotiation, studies have proposed factors such as culture (Triandis et al. 2001; Volkema 2004), personal or demographic characteristics (Kronzon and Darley 1999; Lewicki and Robinson 1998; Ma 2005; Volkema 2004), personality (Ma 2005), emotional intelligence (Foo et al. 2004), and problem-solving approaches (Mintu-Wimsatt et al. 2005).

In the past decade, a number of studies have tested various nationalities' attitudes toward ethically

questionable negotiation tactics using measures that have been developed in, and are tuned to, the US culture (Triandis et al. 2001; Volkema 1998, 2004; Volkema and Fleury 2002; Zarkada-Fraser and Fraser 2001). Yet, there have been studies that emphasize the need for more international evidence, encouraging research on the negotiation tactics of non-US and non-Western European samples (Gelfand et al. 2001; Ma 2007). Other researchers advocate for the development of research tools that would be appropriate for the study of ethically questionable negotiation tactics in diverse cultures (Erkus and Banai 2011; Stefanidis et al. 2013).

In this context, the current research focuses on culture, trust and ethics, as probable explanatory theories for the endorsement of the use of ethically questionable tactics in negotiation. Since most research has applied US originated measures of ethically questionable negotiation tactics, we have to resort to the same measures of which properties have been tested and validated. Yet, rather than use them globally as discreet constructs, we only use their various items to empirically create new constructs. Erkus and Banai (2011) and Stefanidis et al. (2013) have employed a similar strategy in their research in Turkey and Peru, respectively. Yet, their efforts were limited to one country at a time. We advance this logic and refine the empirical construct of ethical negotiation strategy and the antecedents of employees' tendency to endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics, by testing the model in two countries, namely, Israel and Kyrgyzstan. Specifically, we empirically test the influence of horizontal and vertical individualism–collectivism, ethical idealism, and propensity to trust on employees' endorsement of ethically questionable negotiation tactics.

Our motivation to empirically investigate employee attitudes toward ethically questionable negotiation tactics by sampling Israeli and Kyrgyz cultures was fueled by three reasons. First, countries in the Middle East and Central Asia regions have been in the epicenter of divergent political, economic and social shifts that inevitably reflect onto business ethics. Second, the two countries have only sparsely been researched with regard to their negotiation ethics; especially in the case of Kyrgyzstan, business ethics research has been very limited. Third, imbued within distinctively diverse historical backgrounds and religious traditions, Israeli and Kyrgyz businesspeople negotiation attitudes may display discrepancies, the study of which can provide finer insights regarding comparative research on negotiation tactics.

In the next sections, we review the existing literature in the studied fields. We further present the methodology of our research, the findings and the conclusions. Implications for theory and practice, and recommendations for future research are offered.

Ethically Questionable Negotiation Tactics

In Volkema's (1998) cross-cultural study in Mexico and the United States, participants rated 17 marginally ethical negotiation tactics. Interestingly, in both countries, respondents were found to be more likely to use the 17 tactics than they perceived them to be appropriate (Volkema 1998). Regardless of the short-term transient benefits (Curhan et al. 2006), in the long-run, the adoption of ethically questionable negotiation tactics can cause a negative climate and cultivate distrust between parties (Tenbrunsel 1998), undermine future negotiations and imperil established business relationships (Reitz et al. 1998), harm corporate image and public relations (Cramton and Dees 1993), trigger financial loss or jeopardize future business agreements (Schroth 2008). Negotiators who detect their counterparts to employ unethical tactics feel less enthusiastic about the success of future negotiations with the same parties (Boles et al. 2000).

According to Lewicki and Robinson (1998) and Robinson et al. (2000), marginally ethical negotiation tactics are classified into five groups: traditional competitive bargaining, attacking opponent's network, false promises, misrepresentation, and inappropriate information gathering. Although traditional competitive bargaining is considered rather acceptable, the other four tactics have been deemed as ethically ambiguous (Al-Khatib et al. 2005). For example, endearing one to the other party, pretending to be angry or happy, and making high opening demands may be perceived by some negotiators to be acceptable. In the original research (Lewicki and Robinson 1998; Robinson et al. 2000) these tactics have been referred to as "traditional competitive bargaining." In current research (Erkus and Banai 2011; Stefanidis et al. 2013) these tactics were named "pretending." Yet, misrepresenting facts, paying members of other groups or faking friendship for information, can be considered "deceiving" and "lying" tactics that are mostly not acceptable by negotiators.

In view of these assessments, in this research we examine unethical negotiation tactics on the basis of the classification of three groups of tactics, namely, "pretending," "deceiving," and "lying" (Erkus and Banai 2011). These three groups of tactics, that seem to escalate in their severity from more to less socially acceptable, could serve better in cross-cultural negotiation studies, given that more specific and discrete tactics, such as the "inappropriate information gathering," are culturally bound and prone to yield biases in international settings outside that of the US (Stefanidis et al. 2013).

Since previous research efforts (Erkus and Banai 2011; Stefanidis et al. 2013) were limited to studying one country, the inclusion of two countries, namely Israel and Kyrgyzstan, as yet another control variable, should prove to be

significant in generalizing the constructs of pretending, deceiving and lying cross-culturally. Yet, any potential differences in the findings in these two countries could also serve as a byproduct for future propositions about nations' cultural differences, thereby refining theory of culture. In the next section we describe the independent variables of our study, starting with culture, and more precisely, vertical and horizontal individualism and collectivism.

Horizontal and Vertical Individualism–Collectivism

Studies have explored the relationship between Hofstede's (1980) individualism–collectivism and House et al.'s (2004) in-group collectivism dimensions of culture, and the endorsement of ethically questionable negotiation tactics. Other studies have explored the relationship between Triandis' (Probst et al. 1999; Triandis 1995; Triandis et al. 2001) vertical and horizontal individualism–collectivism dimensions of culture and conflict management styles (Komarraju et al. 2008). Yet, the relationship between vertical and horizontal individualism–collectivism and the endorsement of questionable negotiation tactics has been under-researched. In this study we make an effort to refine theory of culture by using vertical and horizontal individualism–collectivism as the explanatory variable of the endorsement of questionable negotiation tactics in Israel and Kyrgyzstan.

Existing literature suggests that measuring “horizontal individualism” (HI), “vertical individualism” (VI), “horizontal collectivism” (HC), and “vertical collectivism” (VC) at the individual level can be particularly informative (Probst et al. 1999; Triandis 1995; Triandis et al. 2001). In negotiations, although the endorsement of negotiation tactics varies between collectivists and individualists, there has been no consensus regarding the relationship between individualism–collectivism and ethical behavior (Elahee et al. 2002; Rivers and Lyle 2007; Triandis et al. 2001; Volkema 1998, 2004). In line with research work that examines horizontal and vertical aspects of culture (Kauschal and Kwantes 2006; Komarraju et al. 2008), the present research investigates the relationship between employees' horizontal and vertical cultural dispositions and their attitudes toward ethically questionable negotiation tactics in Israel and Kyrgyzstan.

Individualism and Collectivism in Israel and Kyrgyzstan

Literature search has revealed divergent information about culture in Israel and in Kyrgyzstan. While Israel was included in both Hofstede's (1980) and House et al.'s (GLOBE, et al. 2004) international research programs, the

same could not be said for Kyrgyzstan. In the absence of information about Kyrgyzstan, in order to discuss the Kyrgyz cultural context we resorted to proxies in both studies: Pakistan in the Hofstede's study and Kazakhstan in the GLOBE study. While Kyrgyz people would defy these comparisons, these two nations are the closest to the Kyrgyz culture, in terms of religion and language. Cultures emulate each other when they are based on a similar religion (Huntington 1993; Torbion 1982) or on a similar language (Hofstede 1980; Torbion 1982). Pakistanis are mostly Sunni Muslims. Kazakhs are predominantly Sunni Muslims and they generally speak a Turkic language, similarly to the Kyrgyz people (Central Intelligence Agency 2013). Also, despite certain variations, Ardichvili and Kuchinke (2002) have shown that Kyrgyz culture dimensions are highly inter-correlated with those of the Kazakh culture.

In Hofstede's (1980) study, Pakistan scored 14 (out of 100) on Individualism–Collectivism, while Israel scored 54. On Power Distance, Pakistan scored 55 while Israel scored 13; on Uncertainty Avoidance, the scores were 70 and 81, and on Masculinity–Femininity, 50 and 47, respectively. In the GLOBE (House et al. 2004) study, Israel differed from Kazakhstan on the dimensions of power distance (4.73—on a scale of 5—and 5.31, respectively), and on all aspects of masculinity, namely assertiveness (4.23 and 4.46), gender equality (3.19 and 3.84) and performance orientation (4.08 and 3.57). There was also a significant difference on future orientation (3.85 and 3.57, respectively), a dimension on which there were no scores for the two countries on Hofstede's samples.

Hofstede (1980) held that it is difficult to determine whether Israeli culture is individualist or collectivist. In the literature, Israeli culture has been classified as individualistic and achievement-oriented, and one that emphasizes autonomy (Izraeli 1994). Yet, Galin and Avraham (2009) identified differences between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs: Jews displayed lower levels of vertical collectivism and they emphasized more direct communication than Arabs did. Variations in the life and values of Jewish and Muslim workers have also been reported by Sharabi (2009). Furthermore, in their study among university students, Tifferet and Herstein (2010) found that native Hebrew speakers were significantly less individualistic than native Arabic, Amharic, or Russian speakers.

Sanghera et al. (2011) studied the dynamics of the Kyrgyz household culture and referred that, in the post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, family and friendship networks constitute a significant source of economic and emotional support in exchange for moral commitments and expectations. Ismail and Ford (2008) found that Kyrgyz leaders sometimes use their age to their advantage within a culture in which power sources may derive from seniority.

Kuchinke and Ardichvili (2002) measured Kyrgyz culture and discovered its partial alignment with the Kazakh and Russian cultures. Comparing six countries, the authors referred that Kyrgyzstanis were more individualistic than the Germans, but less individualistic than the Americans, and that, surprisingly, in terms of power distance they ranked considerably lower than both the Germans and the Americans. Also, Kyrgyzstanis displayed individualism levels similar to those of the Russians and the Kazakhs (Ardichvili and Kuchinke 2002). However, immediately after Kyrgyzstan gained its independence from the Soviet Union, students of Hofstede's culture dimensions found Russians to score low to average on individualism, average to high on power distance, low on masculinity, and high on uncertainty avoidance (Bollinger 1994; Elenkov 1997; Naumov 1996). In general, these results were later confirmed by other researchers (Girlando and Eduljee 2010). In their comparison among college students, Latova and Latov (2009) employed the "Value Survey Module 1994" instrument and they found several similarities among the Kyrgyz, the Kazakh and the Russian cultures. Taking Turkey as a proxy, the authors observed that Kyrgyz students displayed significantly higher levels of power distance, lower levels of individualism and masculinity, and noticeably higher levels of uncertainty avoidance.

To sum up, our review indicates that should there have been scores for Kyrgyzstan on cultural dimensions, it would have tended to score higher than Israel on collectivism and on power distance, and lower on time orientation. We conclude that, *in general*, Israelis tend to score higher on horizontal variables while Kyrgyzstanis tend to score higher on vertical variables. Yet, prior research findings support the notion that different degrees of individualism and collectivism can co-exist within the same cultures, especially within non-homogeneous ones (Earley and Gibson 1998; Erkus and Banai 2011; Gahan and Abeysekera 2009; Green et al. 2005; Oyserman et al. 2002; Singelis et al. 1995; Stefanidis et al. 2013; Triandis and Suh 2002; Wagner III and Moch 1986).

Potential differences between the scores of Israelis and Kyrgyzstanis on the dimensions of vertical and horizontal individualism–collectivism could serve to refine theory of cross-cultural research. As this is not the purpose of our study and as we do not possess valid data to take this step, we carefully adopt the null assumption that there are no differences between the people's scores in the two nations and we rather formulate a set of hypotheses about the relations between the four cultural dimension, namely, horizontal and vertical individualism–collectivism and the tendency to endorse questionable negotiation tactics, in a sample composed of Israelis and Kyrgyz negotiators.

Horizontal individualists do not emphasize hierarchical differentiation, while they value independence and

uniqueness (Triandis and Gelfand 1998). In horizontally individualist cultures, the levels of corruption are low (Triandis et al. 2001), because horizontal individualists do not endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics (Volkema 2004). In general, individuals who score high on horizontal individualism tend not to endorse deceiving behavior (Triandis et al. 2001).

Hypothesis 1 Israeli and Kyrgyz employees who score high on horizontal individualism will tend to endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics less than those who score low on horizontal individualism.

Vertical individualists value diversity and status, they try to differentiate from their counterparts (Triandis and Gelfand 1998), they are competitive, and they desire to be "the best" in order to climb the hierarchy (Triandis and Suh 2002). Vertical individualists frequently opt for competitive and dominating conflict management styles, they display deceptive behavior and they tend to employ unethical negotiation tactics (Kaushal and Kwantes 2006; Komarraju et al. 2008). Turkish and Peruvian vertically individualist employees have been reported to endorse more ethically questionable negotiation tactics (Erkus and Banai 2011; Stefanidis et al. 2013). We offer the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2 Israeli and Kyrgyz employees who score high on vertical individualism will tend to endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics more than those who score low on vertical individualism.

Horizontal collectivists emphasize empathy, sociability, and cooperation (Triandis et al. 2001), and they prefer to socially comply with the other members of their groups (Triandis and Gelfand 1998). In conflict situations, they choose cooperative, accommodating, and compromising conflict management styles (Komarraju et al. 2008). Horizontal collectivists tend to score low on the endorsement of ethically questionable negotiation tactics (Erkus and Banai 2011; Stefanidis et al. 2013). Therefore, we offer the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 Israeli and Kyrgyz employees who score high on horizontal collectivism will tend to endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics less than those who score low on horizontal collectivism.

Vertical collectivists tend to be submissive to authority and to accept that, within the hierarchy, some group members are more important than others (Triandis and Gelfand 1998; Triandis and Suh 2002). Respect toward business structure may lead lower rank employees to comply with unethical actions (Robertson et al. 2008). Vertical collectivists prefer avoiding and competitive conflict management styles (Kaushal and Kwantes 2006;

Komarraju et al. 2008), and they display high levels of deception (Triandis et al. 2001). In Peru and Turkey, vertically collectivist employees were found to endorse more ethically questionable negotiation tactics (Erkus and Banai 2011; Stefanidis et al. 2013). Thus, we offer the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4 Israeli and Kyrgyz employees who score high on vertical collectivism will tend to endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics more than those who score low on vertical collectivism.

Ethical Idealism

Ethical idealism has been identified as a determinant factor of individual ethical decisions (Rawwas et al. 1995). Forsyth et al. (2008) wrote: “Ethics position theory (EPT) maintains that individuals’ personal moral philosophies influence their judgments, actions, and emotions in ethically intense situations. When describing these moral viewpoints, the theory stresses two dimensions: idealism (concern for benign outcomes) and relativism (skepticism with regards to inviolate moral principles)” (p. 813). In their study among 29 countries, the authors concluded that exceptionist ethics are more common in Western countries, subjectivism and situationism in Eastern countries, and absolutism and situationism in Middle Eastern countries.

Israeli managers have been reported to rate themselves as highly ethical and clearly more ethical than their American peers (Izraeli 1988). A later study by Sims and Genez (2004) compared Israeli, Turkish, US, Western Australian, and South African attitudes toward business ethics and found that ethics comprised a moderately strong component of Israeli business environment, a finding not very significantly different from that in their Turkish sample. Schwartz (2012) investigated the state of business ethics in Israel, interviewing 22 senior Israeli corporate executives. When compared with the U.S. or Europe, most of the respondents stated that Israeli firms and their agents were not as ethical in business as their American and European counterparts.

In Grimes’ (2004) international survey of college students, the author observed that in most transition economies, including Kyrgyzstan, students’ standards of honesty were significantly lower than those of American students. Particularly in Kyrgyzstan, the self-reported incidence and detection of academic cheating were high, but Kyrgyz students rated cheating as rather ethically wrong and moderately acceptable. Cokgezen (2004) refers that nowadays unethical and corrupt practices in Kyrgyzstan prevail more than during the Soviet era. He primarily employs specific political and cultural factors to explain the fact

that, in Kyrgyzstan, corruption is pervasive and higher than in many transition economies.

Ethical behaviors may vary depending on individuals and situations (Sobral and Islam 2013; Tsalikis and LaTour 1995). High levels of idealism have been associated with ethical decision-making (Robertson et al. 2008; Vitell et al. 1993). According to Banas and Parks (2002), high-idealists tend not to accept unethical behaviors. Also, Al-Khatib et al. (2005) and Perry and Nixon (2005) indicate that individuals who value highly idealistic ethics practice less unethical behaviors. In negotiation, Aquino (1998) and Al-Khatib et al. (2008) showed that highly idealistic ethical standards can be a strong predictor of employees’ perceptions about unethical negotiation tactics, such as deceiving and lying. In general, employees who score high on ethical idealism do not endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics (Erkus and Banai 2011). Therefore, employees’ ethical idealism levels may influence attitudes toward ethically questionable negotiation tactics.

Hypothesis 5 Israeli and Kyrgyz employees who score high on ethical idealism will tend to endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics less than those who score low on ethical idealism.

Trust Propensity

Trust is a key variable in business negotiation ethics (Bazerman and Neale 1992; Butler 1999; Ross and LaCroix 1996). According to Rotter (1967), trust refers to the generalized expectancy that the word, promise, oral or written statement of an individual or group can be relied on. The need to base relationships on trust is a basic human aspiration.

Aryee et al. (2002) found that trust in the organization is related to work attitudes and job satisfaction. Mishal and Morag (2000), who addressed the issue of negotiating agreements in the Arab–Israeli peace process, wrote: “Contracts and trust are ends of a continuum on which negotiations... are based” (p. 523). In Israel, Tzafrir (2005) recognizes that trust represents a significant variable that influences managerial decisions and organizational productivity.

In negotiation, interpersonal trust has been found to increase cooperation and expedite information-sharing (Butler 1995), to encourage problem-solving behaviors (Mintu-Wimsatt et al. 2005) and to increase earnings (Olekals et al. 2007). Negotiators who detect unethical behaviors tend to have lower levels of trust toward their negotiating counterparts (Boles et al. 2000), and they choose more competitive negotiating behaviors (Kimmel et al. 1980). High perceived levels of trust tend to decrease deception in negotiation and to promote fair trade

(Olekalns and Smith 2009). In intra- and cross-cultural negotiations, business peoples' high levels of trust have been associated with the likelihood of disapproving ethically questionable negotiation tactics (Elahee et al. 2002; Elahee and Brooks 2004).

Van Dyne et al. (2000) showed that individuals' propensity to trust others, or their levels of general trust, positively affects organizational citizenship. Rotter (1971) concluded that individuals with high trust propensity tend to display significant dispositional tendency to behave in an honest and moral manner. Colquitt et al. (2007) emphasized the positive effects that trust propensity has on good organizational citizenship and the negative effects it has on making threats against others. Rotter (1980) pointed out that individuals who score higher on trust propensity are less likely to lie and cheat. General trust was corroborated as a predictor of pretending tactics in Goelzner et al.'s (2011) research. Lastly, Sobral and Islam (2013) discovered that higher level of interpersonal trust is associated with less acceptability of ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics. Hence, the following hypothesis is offered.

Hypothesis 6 Israeli and Kyrgyz employees who score high on trust propensity will tend to endorse ethically questionable negotiation tactics less than those who score low on trust propensity.

Research Methodology

Data Collection and Analysis

Based on the review of the existing literature, we compiled the research constructs into a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was translated from English to Hebrew and Kyrgyz, and back-translated to English, with the assistance of three bilingual reviewers. The validity of the constructs was confirmed by inviting ten Israeli and ten Kyrgyz employees to participate in the pilot test of the questionnaire. Having addressed the comments of the respondents, certain translated questionnaire items were revised.

In Israel, the participants were employees and management executives from various manufacturing, services and trade companies of both the private and the public sectors in different areas of the country. One thousand questionnaires were randomly distributed to employees who testified that they negotiated inter-organizationally. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaires and return them directly to the authors. The achieved sample included 322 usable responses, establishing a response rate of 32.2 %. In Kyrgyzstan, we randomly approached employees of the wholesale and retail industries in the capital city, Bishkek.

Five hundred individuals who negotiated inter-organizationally (with suppliers, customers, etc.) were asked to participate. We collected 293 usable responses, corresponding to a response rate of 58.6 %. Therefore, our aggregate sample response rate was 41 %.

Respondents were diversified in terms of their socio-economic status, their educational background, and their professional hierarchical ranking. In our Israeli sample, the mean age was 36 years. 56.8 % of the participants were males, 40.7 % held an undergraduate university degree, and 28.3 % a graduate degree. 97.8 % stated that Hebrew was the primary language that they spoke at home. On a scale of 1–10, where 1 is the lowest organizational rank and 10 is the highest, the respondents' average rank was 6.33. In our Kyrgyz sample, the mean age was 31.2 years. Among the respondents, 36.9 % were males and 58 % had completed their undergraduate university studies. Their average organizational hierarchical rank was 5.79. Seventy-two percent of the participating Kyrgyzstanis indicated Kyrgyz as their primary language, while 28 % answered that Russian was the spoken language at their homes.

The collected data were analyzed in a series of stages. Following the screening of the data, we conducted factor analyses in order to evaluate the employed measures (Johnson and Wichern 2007). We then calculated the mean values and standard deviations of the studied variables. Analyses of variance, correlations and hierarchical regression were used to test the research hypotheses (Hair et al. 1998).

Reliability and Validity

We undertook several procedures in order to ensure the reliability and validity of our research. In addition to pre-testing the consistency of the pilot questionnaire, we assessed the internal reliability of all used scales employing Cronbach's Index (Churchill 1979). All Cronbach alpha coefficient renders were acceptable (Nunnally 1967) and in line with those reported in prior studies (Erkus and Banai 2011; Forsyth 1980; Mayer and Davis 1999; Singelis et al. 1995; Stefanidis et al. 2013).

We evaluated the magnitude of the common method bias employing the post hoc diagnostic Harman single factor test (Podsakoff and Organ 1986). We did not observe any unusual variations in the collected responses: no single factor emerged, nor did a single factor account for the majority of the covariance in the measured variables. We further implemented a number of procedural remedies for common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003). In particular, all respondents were informed that their answers were anonymous, that there were no right or wrong answers, and that they should complete the questionnaire as honestly as

possible. Also, we psychologically separated the measurement of the predictor and criterion variables by interjecting into the questionnaire two managerial attitudes constructs. This way we gave participants the impression that the measurement of the predictor variables was not connected with the measurement of the dependent variables. Overall, we considered common method variance limited and the validity of our measures robust.

Finally, to control for the development of response patterns, we reversed a number of anchor scales in different parts of the questionnaire. Our confidence in the validity of the collected responses was later reinforced by the finding that our results were in line with those of previously published literature.

Measures

In this research, the dependent variables were the three sets of ethically questionable negotiation tactics, while the independent variables included horizontal and vertical individualism–collectivism, ethical idealism and trust propensity. The control variables included gender, age, rank, education, and country. The variables' measures are described below.

Ethically Questionable Negotiation Tactics

To measure questionable negotiation tactics we employed 17 questions from Lewicki et al.'s (2006) classification of negotiation tactics and Fulmer et al.'s (2009) emotion management tactics. We invited participants to recall a negotiating situation very important to them and their business, and to rate negotiation tactics indicating the degree to which they thought each tactic was ethically appropriate. A seven-point Likert-type scale was used to indicate responses that ranged from 1 = not at all appropriate to 7 = very appropriate. Sample items from the used scale included: "In return for concessions from the other party now, offer to make future concessions that you know you will not follow through on" and "Make an opening demand that is far greater than what you really hope to settle for."

To validate the structure of the construct, we conducted factor analysis on the 17 items that referred to the ethically questionable negotiation tactics (Johnson and Wichern 2007). The three-factor solution that provided the best fit explained 51.61 % of the overall variance. The first factor, named "Pretending," included four items and explained 16.59 % of the variance; the second factor, named "Deceiving," included four items and explained 15.44 % of the variance; and the third factor, named "Lying," included five items and explained 19.58 % of the variance. The internal degree of reliability of the construct was

confirmed with the use of the Cronbach's Alpha test. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the three components were .77, .66, and .65, respectively. The factors structure and items are presented in Table 1.

Horizontal and Vertical Individualism–Collectivism

We measured participants' individualism and collectivism orientations employing Singelis et al.'s (1995) 32-item construct. Participants were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the provided statements on a nine-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 9 = strongly agree). Sample items from the used scale included: "If a co-worker gets a prize, I would feel proud" and "When another person does better than I do, I get tense and aroused."

In line with the literature on individualism–collectivism (Triandis and Gelfand 1998), we performed factor analysis on the 32 items (Johnson and Wichern 2007). The extraction of the factors (Chiou 2001) rendered a four-factor solution that accounted for 53.30 % of the total variance. Horizontal individualism included five items and explained 12.98 % of the variance; vertical individualism included four items and explained 11.67 % of the variance; horizontal collectivism included five items and explained 14.50 % of the variance; and vertical collectivism included five items and explained 14.15 % of the variance. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the four components were .71, .73, .74, and .74, respectively. Table 2 presents the factors structure and items.

Ethical Idealism

A six-item construct adopted from the "Ethics Position Questionnaire" (Forsyth 1980) was employed to measure ethical idealism. The degree of idealism of the respondents was assessed on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Sample items from the scale included: "The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained" and "One should not perform an action, which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual." The performed factor analysis rendered a single factor, named "Ethical Idealism," which included all six items and explained 55.24 % of the total variance. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of the construct was .84.

Trust Propensity

Respondents' tendency to trust others was measured employing the 8-item "Propensity to trust" scale found in Mayer and Davis (1999), and originally derived from

Table 1 Factor analysis matrix of the negotiation tactics variables

	Component		
	Lying	Pretending	Deceiving
Promise that good things will happen to the other party if s/he gives you what you want, even if you know that you cannot (or will not) deliver these things when the other's cooperation is obtained	.83		
In return for concessions from the other party now, offer to make future concessions that you know you will not follow through on	.73		
Intentionally misrepresent information to the other party in order to support your negotiating arguments or positions	.62		
Strategically express anger toward the other party in a situation where you are not really angry	.60		
Pretend to be disgusted at the other party's comments	.60		
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		.75	
Make an opening demand that is far greater than what you really hope to settle for		.70	
Make an opening demand so high/low that it seriously undermines the other party's confidence in his/her ability to negotiate a satisfactory settlement		.63	
Get the other party to think that you like him/her personally despite the fact that you do not really		.54	
Gain information about the other party's negotiation position by cultivating his friendship through expensive gifts, entertaining, or personal favors			.72
Act as if the decision of the other party is one of agreement even though they have not expressed agreement yet			.70
Overwhelm the other party with so much information that they have trouble determining which factors are important and which are merely distractions			.58
Use a tight unnecessary deadline to get a quick agreement from the other party			.57
Eigenvalue	4.22	1.47	1.02
Percent of variance	19.58	16.59	15.44

$n = 615$. Extraction method: principal component analysis. Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization

Rotter's (1967) work. Participants self-reported agreement or disagreement with regard to their levels of general trust toward other individuals. Levels of general trust ranged between 1 = strongly disagree (minimal levels of trust) and 5 = strongly agree (maximal levels of trust). Sample items from the scale included: "Most experts tell the truth about the limits of their knowledge" and "Most repair people will not overcharge people who are ignorant of their specialty." The factor analysis yielded a one-factor solution which included six items and explained 49.96 % of the total variance. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of the construct was .80.

Control Variables

Participants reported several demographic characteristics, such as their industry of employment and their spoken language at home. Four of these variables served as control variables in our study: gender, age, hierarchical rank and education. We measured age and education in years, and hierarchical rank within the organization on a ten-point scale.

Last, we used country (Israel and Kyrgyzstan) as a control variable to identify potential differences between

the responses of the study's participants in these two countries.

Results

Table 3 reports aggregate means, standard deviations and Pearson correlations for the study's variables. "Pretending" tactics received the highest score (Mean = 4.33, SD = 1.17), "Deceiving" tactics followed (Mean = 3.67, SD = 1.26), while "Lying" tactics received the lowest score (Mean = 2.89, SD = 1.25).

The correlation analysis revealed several relationships between the independent variables and the ethically questionable negotiation tactics. Hypotheses 1–6 were tested using three-step hierarchical regression analyses. In the first step, the control variables gender, age, rank and education were entered, while the independent variables were included in the second step of the analyses. In the third step, we entered the country variable. We reviewed the correlation coefficients between the independent variables (Hair et al. 1998), and we assessed the risk of multicollinearity employing the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) diagnostics.

Table 2 Factor analysis matrix of the individualism–collectivism variables

	Component			
	Vertical collectivism	Horizontal collectivism	Horizontal individualism	Vertical individualism
Before taking a major trip, I consult with most members of my family and many friends	.75			
I would do what would please my family, even if I detested that activity	.72			
We should keep our aging parents with us at home	.68			
I would sacrifice an activity that I enjoy very much if my family did not approve of it	.65			
Children should be taught to place duty before pleasure	.54			
If a co-worker gets a prize, I would feel proud		.80		
The well-being of my co-workers is important to me		.70		
It is important to maintain harmony within my group		.68		
If a relative were in financial difficulty, I would help within my means		.60		
I feel good when I cooperate with others		.58		
I am a unique individual			.74	
I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways			.70	
When I succeed, it is usually because of my abilities			.63	
What happens to me is my own doing			.62	
I prefer to be direct and forthright when in discussion with people			.57	
Competition is the law of nature				.79
When another person does better than I do, I get tense and aroused				.72
Without competition, it is not possible to have a good society				.68
It annoys me when other people perform better than I do				.66
Eigenvalue	3.92	2.76	1.95	1.50
Percent of variance	14.50	14.15	12.98	11.67

$n = 615$. Extraction method: principal component analysis. Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization

The VIF values were low ($VIF < 2.16$) for high levels of tolerance (Tolerance $> .46$). The results of the hierarchical regression analyses for the “Pretending,” “Deceiving,” and “Lying” negotiation tactics are presented in Table 4.

The first step of the regression analysis on the “Pretending” tactics provided a statistically significant model ($F = 17.29$, $p \leq .001$). Age and rank explained 10.0 % of the total variance of the endorsement of “Pretending” negotiation tactics. The deriving model from the second step of the hierarchical regression was also statistically significant ($F = 11.77$, $p \leq .001$). Employees’ age, VI, HC, VC, and ethical idealism significantly explained 15.0 % of the total variance. The third step of the regression analysis provided a statistically significant model ($F = 11.05$, $p \leq .001$). Employees’ age, hierarchical rank, VI, HC, VC, ethical idealism, trust propensity and country significantly explained 15.0 % of the total variance. The coefficients of the VI ($\beta = .16$, $p \leq .001$), VC ($\beta = .08$, $p \leq .10$) and country ($\beta = .10$, $p \leq .10$) variables were positive,

while the coefficients of the age ($\beta = -.19$, $p \leq .001$), hierarchical rank ($\beta = -.08$, $p \leq .10$), HC ($\beta = -.08$, $p \leq .10$), ethical idealism ($\beta = -.08$, $p \leq .10$) and trust propensity ($\beta = -.09$, $p \leq .05$) variables were negative. These findings suggest that vertical individualists and vertical collectivists tend to endorse pretending negotiation tactics more. Older employees, high-rank employees, horizontal collectivists, those who score high on ethical idealism and on trust propensity tend to endorse pretending negotiation tactics less. Also, Kyrgyz employees tend to accept the pretending negotiation tactics more than their Israeli peers.

With regard to the “Deceiving” tactics, the first step of the regression analysis was significant ($F = 20.02$, $p \leq .001$). Age and education explained 11.0 % of the total variance. The second step of the regression also provided a statistically significant model ($F = 20.93$, $p \leq .001$), with the independent and control variables explaining 25.0 % of the total variance. The third step hierarchical regression model was also statistically significant ($F = 22.48$,

Table 3 Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis matrix between negotiation tactics, individual attitudes, and demographic variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Pretending	4.33	1.17	1.00													
2. Deceiving	3.67	1.26	.48**	1.00												
3. Lying	2.89	1.25	.39**	.52**	1.00											
4. Horizontal Individualism	6.94	1.26	.12**	.16**	.17**	1.00										
5. Vertical Individualism	6.06	1.87	.25**	.30**	.21**	.33**	1.00									
6. Horizontal collectivism	7.27	1.31	-.16**	-.21**	-.29**	.15**	-.08	1.00								
7. Vertical collectivism	6.26	1.75	.10*	.22**	.21**	.32**	.16**	.21**	1.00							
8. Ethical idealism	3.87	.79	-.13**	-.06	-.14**	.16**	.00	.26**	.21**	1.00						
9. Trust propensity	2.83	.74	.01	.25**	.34**	.22**	.11**	.07	.36**	.22**	1.00					
10. Gender ^a	.53	.50	.03	.04	.06	.06	.13**	-.02	.12**	.19**	.10*	1.00				
11. Age	33.73	11.86	-.31**	-.31**	-.25**	-.15**	-.23**	.18**	.00	.13**	-.07	-.13**	1.00			
12. Rank ^b	6.07	2.72	-.24**	-.22**	-.17**	.03	-.17**	.16**	.03	.14**	-.08	-.12**	.59**	1.00		
13. Education	15.00	2.23	-.10**	-.22**	-.26**	-.10*	-.07	.06	-.12**	-.02	-.18**	-.07	.30**	.27**	1.00	
14. Country ^c	.48	.50	.18**	.42**	.53**	.28**	.17**	-.18**	.52**	.11**	.53**	.20**	-.20**	-.10**	-.29**	1.00

n = 615

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed); ** correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

^a 0 = male, 1 = female

^b 1 = the lowest rank, 10 = the highest rank

^c 0 = Israel, 1 = Kyrgyzstan

Table 4 Hierarchical regression analyses on questionable negotiation tactics in Israel and Kyrgyzstan

Variable	Pretending					
	First step		Second step		Third step	
	β	t	β	t	β	t
Gender ^a	-.01	-.35	-.02	-.61	-.03	-.85
Age	-.26***	-5.44	-.20***	-4.16	-.19***	-3.91
Rank ^b	-.08 ^y	-1.74	-.08	-1.59	-.08 ^y	-1.74
Education	-.00	-.09	.00	.01	.01	.34
Horizontal individualism			.05	1.10	.04	.90
Vertical individualism			.16***	3.82	.16***	3.86
Horizontal collectivism			-.11**	-2.70	-.08 ^y	-1.87
Vertical collectivism			.12**	2.86	.08 ^y	1.71
Ethical idealism			-.08 ^y	-1.91	-.08 ^y	-1.88
Trust propensity			-.06	-1.37	-.09*	-2.02
Country ^c					.10 ^y	1.85
R^2		.10***		.16***		.17***
Adj. R^2		.10***		.15***		.15***
ΔR^2				.06***		.01 ^y
F statistic		17.29***		11.77***		11.05***
Variable	Deceiving					
	First step		Second step		Third step	
	β	t	β	t	β	t
Gender ^a	-.01	-.19	-.05	-1.40	-.08*	-2.11
Age	-.25***	-5.25	-.19***	-4.19	-.16***	-3.62
Rank ^b	-.04	-.78	-.01	.32	-.03	-.76
Education	-.13***	-3.32	-.09*	-2.31	-.05	-1.35
Horizontal individualism			.00	.04	-.02	-.53
Vertical individualism			.19***	4.89	.19***	5.08
Horizontal collectivism			-.19***	-4.92	-.11**	-2.80
Vertical collectivism			.18***	4.55	.08 ^y	1.72
Ethical idealism			-.05	-1.24	-.04	-1.17
Trust propensity			.16***	4.10	.06	1.52
Country ^c					.27***	5.34
R^2		.12***		.26***		.29***
Adj. R^2		.11***		.25***		.28***

Table 4 continued

Variable	Deceiving					
	First step		Second step		Third step	
	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>
ΔR^2		–	.14***			.03*
<i>F</i> statistic		20.02***	20.93***			22.48***
Variable	Lying					
	First step		Second step		Third step	
	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>
Gender ^a	.02	.56	.00	.13	–.03	–.91
Age	–.18***	–3.64	–.10*	–2.19	–.06	–1.34
Rank ^b	–.01	–.18	.03	.58	–.00	–.05
Education	–.20***	–4.94	–.14***	–3.85	–.09*	–2.52
Horizontal individualism			.07 ^ψ	1.71	.04	.95
Vertical individualism			.08*	2.16	.08*	2.40
Horizontal collectivism			–.29***	–7.87	–.18***	–4.88
Vertical collectivism			.15***	4.02	.00	.14
Ethical idealism			–.17***	–4.53	–.16***	–4.61
Trust propensity			.29***	7.80	.16***	4.03
Country ^c					.37***	7.97
<i>R</i> ²		.10***		.32***		.39***
Adj. <i>R</i> ²		.09***		.31***		.38***
ΔR^2		–		.22***		.07***
<i>F</i> statistic		16.50***		28.69***		34.55***

n = 615; standardized regression coefficients are reported

^ψ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$

^a 0 = Male, 1 = female

^b 1 = The lowest rank, 10 = the highest rank

^c 0 = Israel, 1 = Kyrgyzstan

$p \leq .001$). The independent and control variables explained 28.0 % of the total variance. The coefficients of the VI ($\beta = .19, p \leq .001$), VC ($\beta = .08, p \leq .10$) and country ($\beta = .27, p \leq .001$) variables were positive, while the coefficients of the HC ($\beta = -.11, p \leq .01$), gender ($\beta = -.08, p \leq .05$), and age ($\beta = -.16, p \leq .001$) variables were negative. Female, older and horizontal collectivist employees tend to endorse deceiving negotiation tactics less, while vertical individualists and vertical collectivists tend to endorse deceiving negotiation tactics more. Kyrgyz employees accept deceiving negotiation tactics more than Israeli employees.

The first step of the regression analysis on the “Lying” tactics provided a statistically significant model ($F = 16.50, p \leq .001$). Age and education explained 9.0 % of the total variance. The second step regression model was statistically significant ($F = 28.69, p \leq .001$), with the independent and control variables explaining 31.0 % of the total variance. The third step of the regression analysis provided a statistically significant model ($F = 34.55, p \leq .001$). The education, VI, HC, ethical idealism, trust propensity, and country variables explained 38.0 % of the total variance. The coefficients of the VI ($\beta = .08, p \leq .05$), trust propensity ($\beta = .16, p \leq .001$), and country ($\beta = .37, p \leq .001$) variables were positive, while the coefficients of the HC ($\beta = -.18, p \leq .001$), ethical idealism ($\beta = -.16, p \leq .001$), and education ($\beta = -.09, p \leq .05$) variables were negative. These findings suggest that vertical individualists and those who score high on trust propensity tend to endorse lying negotiation tactics more. Horizontally collectivists, ethically idealists and more educated employees tend to accept lying negotiation tactics less. Kyrgyz employees endorse lying negotiation tactics more than their Israeli peers.

Based on these findings, the anticipated inverse relationship between HI and ethically questionable negotiation tactics (hypothesis 1) was not corroborated. We confirmed strong support for the second hypothesis: VI explained all three ethically questionable tactics. Hypothesis 3 which referred to the relationship between HC and negotiation tactics was also corroborated. The observed relationships pattern for VC and questionable negotiation tactics variables offers modest support for hypothesis 4. The hypothesized relationship between ethical idealism and tactics (hypothesis 5) was strongly supported for the most extreme lying negotiation tactics. Lastly, hypothesis 6, which held that trust propensity can explain negotiation tactics was modestly supported.

Discussion

This research has contributed to the refinements of four grand theories, namely, negotiation, ethics, trust, and

culture. First, the study confirmed previous studies’ (Erkus and Banai 2011; Stefanidis et al. 2013) ranking of negotiation tactics based on an escalating degree of severity, namely, “Pretending,” “Deceiving,” and “Lying.” Moreover, as previous studies measured the three constructs in one country this study has validated the use of these constructs in cross-cultural research. The five US discrete questionable tactics offered by Lewicki and Robinson (1998) could not be aggregated and therefore could not be used to create a scale to measure the severity of the respondents’ questionable ethics severity. The empirical classification of those tactics into “Pretending,” “Deceiving,” and “Lying” provides researchers with a possibility to aggregate the results of the various items and use them on a scale. This tool has the potential to better explain theory of ethically questionable negotiation tactics by comparing attitudes cross-culturally.

Overall, the deceiving and lying tactics are less acceptable by the participating respondents. “Deceiving” tactics, such as time pressure, have been reported to be considered rather ethically questionable in other cultures (Elahee et al. 2002; Volkema 2004), while “Lying” tactics, such as false promises, are regarded as the most ethically questionable (Al-Khatib et al. 2005; Volkema 2004).

Second, while previous studies have used Hofstede’s (1980) and House et al.’s (2004) individualism–collectivism dimensions of culture as antecedents of conflict management styles, in this study we have found vertical individualism and horizontal collectivism to best explain the tendency to endorse questionable negotiation tactics. In our sample, the propensity for the endorsement of pretending, deceiving and lying questionable negotiation tactics was higher for those employees who scored high on vertical individualism. Vertical individualists are competitive, they care about the maximization of their earnings (Triandis and Suh 2002) and they are likely to favor more unethical negotiation tactics (Robinson et al. 2000; Komarraju et al. 2008). Vertical individualists were found to endorse more deceiving negotiation tactics, a pattern previously observed in the study of Turkish negotiation tactics (Erkus and Banai 2011). Strong support for these outcomes has also been offered by the work of Triandis et al. (2001) and Stefanidis et al. (2013).

Horizontal collectivism explained better the endorsement of the more severe tactics of deceiving and lying. Horizontal collectivists regard cooperation as an essential component of negotiation (Triandis et al. 2001), and they prioritize cooperative and ethical negotiation (Erkus and Banai 2011; Komarraju et al. 2008). In line with the literature, in this study we found that higher levels of horizontal collectivism are inversely associated with the endorsement of questionable negotiation tactics. Moreover, horizontal individualism and vertical collectivism were not

found to be good predictors of the endorsement of questionable negotiation tactics for the Israeli and Kyrgyz participants.

Third, our results strongly corroborated the expected influence of ethical idealism levels on the endorsement of the severe lying questionable tactics. Those employees who scored high on ethical idealism tended to endorse less lying negotiation tactics. Ethically idealistic individuals have been previously reported to opt for significantly less unethical practices (Al-Khatib et al. 2005; Banas and Parks 2002; Erkus and Banai 2011; Perry and Nixon 2005).

Fourth, and interestingly, we did not identify a consistent relationship between trust propensity and the endorsement of questionable tactics. The anticipated inverse relationship (Elahee et al. 2002; Elahee and Brooks 2004) was only validated for the pretending negotiation tactics. Moreover, general trust was positively associated with the lying tactics. An explanation that could be offered is that there is no a priori trust in business negotiations. Negotiators walk into the negotiation episode with a zero-sum game attitude (Lax and Sebenius 1986; Walton and McKersie 1965) and therefore they do not display trust toward others. Thus, the respondents' stand was to adopt the old Mediterranean attitude, which is best expressed in the Hebrew saying "respect and suspect" (*kabdehu ve'hashdeu*) while assuming the opening negotiation positioning, and leave further judgment and consequent trust for a later stage in the negotiation. Longitudinal or laboratory studies would have the potential to confirm this explanation.

Fifth, a significant finding, albeit a by-product of our research, has been the influence of the respondents' age and education on the acceptance of tactics. Rising age and years of education are associated with the endorsement of more ethically questionable negotiation tactics. Several explanations have been offered in the literature with respect to the influence of negotiators' demographic characteristics on the adoption of unethical negotiation behaviors (Eweje and Brundon 2010; Kronzon and Darley 1999; Lewicki and Robinson 1998; McDonald and Kan 1997; Weeks et al. 1999; Volkema 2004).

Last, regarding our control variable country, we observed that Kyrgyzstanis endorsed the "Pretending," "Deceiving," and "Lying" negotiation tactics more than the Israelis. These findings appear to follow prior sporadic observations about negotiation practices in the two countries (Cokgezen 2004; Cormier 2007; Desivilya and Eizen 2005; Drory and Ritov 1997; Kolpakov 2001). Further, these differences may carry some important implications for theory of culture, and hence, we suggest this topic for further research. A study about the relationship between culture, trust, and ethics that would look into cross-cultural differences among a number of countries has the potential to refine these three theories and validate them cross-culturally.

Implications, Limitations, and Future Research

The ethical conduct in business settings has been an essential topic of interest for scholars and practitioners. The present study significantly contributes to the global negotiation ethics literature. First, the conceptualization of ethically questionable negotiation tactics into "Pretending," "Deceiving," and "Lying," along with the employment of negotiators' cultural and other individual attributes as predictors of those tactics, can serve as a model for the study of unethical negotiations allowing for cross-cultural comparisons.

Second, business ethics and negotiation have been very sporadically and unsystematically studied in the Middle Eastern and Central Asian regions. Thus, our research framework and results provide a noteworthy vehicle for further exploration of the dynamics of ethical negotiations in other cultures that share analogous social, cultural, economic and political similarities with those of Israel and Kyrgyzstan. Third, our work extends the questionable negotiation tactics research in Israel, and it pioneers the discussion about unethical negotiations in Kyrgyzstan. Thus, international business executives who negotiate with Israeli and Kyrgyz employees could benefit from our results taking into consideration the several dimensions outlined in our study. In particular, negotiators in these two countries should be vigilant toward their counterparts' vertical individualism, horizontal collectivism and ethical idealism levels as potential predictors of the adoption of unethical tactics. Further, the role of negotiators' age and education as predictors of the propensity to use questionable tactics should not be neglected.

Despite the theoretical and practical contributions of our work, this research is not without limitations. First, we did not investigate respondents' actual negotiation behavior. Instead, we explored employees' perceptions about preferred negotiation tactics, their attitudes toward ethical behavior, and their levels of general trust. Consequently, the reported results may deviate from real-life behavior in the Israeli and Kyrgyz business contexts. As a means for attenuating this issue, future scholars could collect real-life data employing observation as a complementary method.

Second, our samples of employees in Kyrgyzstan and Israel present a number of specificities. For instance, the Kyrgyz sample included employees from the wholesale and retail industries employed in Bishkek, the country's capital region. Thus, the reported results do not uniformly describe the social and cultural aspects of the Israeli and Kyrgyz business contexts, but they rather explain the antecedents of the ethical negotiation propensities of the participants. The generalization of the research outcomes could be further strengthened if the testing of the proposed variable relationships was extended to other, equally or more heterogeneous, samples.

Last, even though data collection in Middle East and Central Asia bears several challenges, many of which we faced and addressed in our research, the confirmation and validation of our findings rests with testing their applicability in other regional cultures. Previous scholars have identified several similarities or differences of other cultures in the region with those of Israel and Kyrgyzstan (Ardichvili and Kuchinke 2002; Cokgezen 2004; Forsyth et al. 2008). In conclusion, our research corroborated the significance of the horizontal and vertical aspects of individualism and collectivism, as well as the importance of ethical idealism, age and education in Israeli and Kyrgyz negotiators' attitudes toward unethical tactics. The validation of the direction and intensity of the discovered relationships in a larger number of cultures would potentially yield a further refined theory about ethically questionable negotiation tactics.

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