Examining the Intersection of Gender and Age on Backlash Effects in Negotiations

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Examining the Intersection of Gender and Age on
Backlash Effects in Negotiations

A Thesis
Presented in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
Amber S. Cotton

Department of Psychology
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Chicago, Illinois
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Biography

The author was born in Chicago, Illinois, April 27, 1991. She graduated from Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy in Chicago, in 2009 and received her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology, graduating magna cum laude from Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi in 2013.
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Abstract

Backlash effects are the social and economic sanctions for women, but not men, when exhibiting masculine and agentic traits such as assertiveness. This social disincentive has been suggested to account for women’s decreased likelihood to initiate negotiations relative to men. One question that extends from prior findings is how other demographic characteristics (i.e., age) might intersect with gender differences in the experience of backlash in negotiations. Using role congruity theory, research on backlash effects in negotiations and age stereotypes as additional theoretical underpinnings, the purpose of the current study was to investigate the extent to which an individual’s gender (male or female), age (younger or older), and level of assertiveness (assertive or non-assertive) influence the likelihood that they would experience both economic and social backlash. Specifically, this study aimed to examine the interplay between these three variables and predicted that older women who display assertive negotiation behaviors would experience the most backlash in negotiations as compared to younger assertive negotiators and less assertive negotiators because their assertive behaviors are perceived as the most incongruent with both gender role and age role beliefs. Data were collected from 417 participants via the use of Amazon Mechanical Turk (Mturk). Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight possible conditions based on three independent variables: gender of the hypothetical employee (male vs. female), the age of the employee (28 years old vs. 55 years old) and negotiation style of the employee (assertive vs. non-assertive), resulting in a 2 X 2 X 2 between-subjects design. Results showed that assertive male negotiators received more economic and social backlash than female negotiators. Overall, the results of this study, albeit non-significant findings do, however,
illustrate the need for more research on how intersecting social identities can influence both economic and social negotiation outcomes. Negotiations occur frequently and the outcomes of these interactions can have a substantial impact on an individual’s career prospects, salaries and development opportunities. It is important that researchers as well as practitioners pay attention to the unique nuances of how and why experiences of backlash in negotiations and its effect on individuals experiences in the workplace.
Introduction

Many challenges exist for women in the achievement of high-power leadership positions. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014), in 2012 women comprised 53% of the U.S. labor force and held 52% of managerial and professional positions. However, at senior levels of management, women disproportionately comprise only 15% of corporate officers, resulting in a significant gender gap in senior level leadership positions within corporations. Additionally, women’s median weekly earnings were $691 compared to $854 earned by men, ultimately leading to even greater wage disparities throughout their careers. Research in the area of workplace diversity has suggested that organizations with members who differ demographically (e.g., gender, ethnicity, national origin) may possess a number of positive individual and organizational advantages over organizations that are relatively homogenous, including enhanced problem solving, more strategic thinking and increased group performance (Roberge & van Dick, 2010). Taken together, this suggests that the leadership gap in organizations is a significant cause for concern, not only for women with leadership aspirations, but also for organizations with the desire to create strong leadership teams that are able to compete in today’s competitive, global economy.

Explanations for women’s underrepresentation in upper level management have traditionally focused on the idea of a “pipeline” problem. This explanation suggests that the lack of women in elite leadership roles is a result of an insufficient pool of women with the appropriate education and background to fill these positions. However, women are earning 56% of Bachelor’s degrees and 45% of advanced degrees including 42% of PhDs and 43% of professional degrees (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). These
statistics suggest that the pipeline explanation may be a partial contributor to this issue, however it may not sufficiently explain women’s disproportion representation in top leadership (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

One explanation for the gender in pay gap relates to the decreased likelihood for women to initiate negotiation. In a series of experiments, Bowles, Babcock and Lai (2007) found that gender differences in the propensity to initiate negotiations was at least partially influenced by the differing treatment men and women received when they attempted to negotiate. Specifically, women encountered more social resistance than men when they attempted to negotiate for higher compensation. This finding suggests that women’s reluctance to negotiate may be a rational response to the economic and social sanctions that women receive when displaying behaviors that are incongruent with the female gender stereotype. The social and economic sanctions that women experience are referred to as the *backlash effect* (Rudman & Glick, 1999). Women who display traditionally masculine behaviors can successfully be seen as competent in male dominated fields, however these women may also incur social sanctions for violating expectations of femininity (Amanatullah & Tinsley, 2013a). This incongruity leads women to be perceived as irrational, unlikeable, and unattractive (social backlash), which challenges the expectation of femininity (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman & Glick, 1999). Consequently, as a response to this backlash, women may alter their behavior to avoid being perceived as counter-stereotypical and incurring these social and economic penalties (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Amanatullah & Tinsley, 2013b).

From this research, a fundamental question arises as to how other demographic characteristics (i.e., age) might intersect with gender differences in the experience of
backlash in negotiations. The goal of the present research is to further explore this phenomenon and to bridge the gap in literature by examining the influence of age on the social and economic sanctions many women face in the workplace.

The following section will explore research on gender and age through an overarching role congruity perspective by first describing gender and age role expectations and then applying those expectations to the concept of backlash.

**Stereotypes**

A starting point for exploring the experiences of backlash individuals in the workplace may face begins with an examination of stereotypes. Previous literature on the backlash effect defines stereotypes as “cognitive structures that store our beliefs and expectations about the characteristics of members of social groups” (Cuddy & Fiske, 2002). Stereotypes act as heuristics or working models, which may be used in determining what to expect during social interactions, more specifically, expectancies about the behavior of members of a specific group (Fiske, 1998). These consensually held beliefs act as normative expectancies for group members’ attributes and behaviors. Stereotypes then describe the expectancies about an individual’s behavior based on his or her characteristics.

General stereotypes of older adults relate to several content domains, including physical characteristics, personality characteristics, social characteristics, and emotions. For example, older adults may be viewed as having a lower ability to learn (Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995), more resistance to change (Cuddy & Fiske, 2002; Kite & Johnson, 1988), less effective and more dependent (Avolio & Barrett, 1987), and less adaptable and less flexible than younger workers (Rosen & Jerdee, 1976; Weiss & Maurer, 2004).
Age stereotypes have also been shown to influence the outcome of employment related decisions. Waldman and Avolio (1986) conducted a meta-analysis to investigate the relationship between age and job performance from data collected from 40 samples. Samples were classified into three categories: supervisor ratings, peer ratings, and individual productivity. Specifically, their results showed slight differences related to the measure of job performance. For more subjective measures (e.g., supervisor and peer ratings), the authors found small declines in perceived job performance as age increased. Conversely, for job performance measured using productivity indices, performance was shown to increase with age. Similarly, a meta-analysis found that when participants were instructed to make simulated employment decisions, older workers were rated less favorably when raters were younger and when instructed to rate the performance of both older and younger workers simultaneously (Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995). Also, beliefs about a particular job influenced the extent to which participants exhibited bias against older adults. When a job is considered to be age neutral or more appropriate for younger individuals (e.g., secretary, computer programmer), bias against older adults is apparent. However, no bias is found when a job is considered to be more appropriate for older individuals (e.g., marketing director) (Finkelstein et al., 1995).

Rupp, Vodanovich, and Crede (2006) found that managers who measured high on ageism were more likely to recommend harsher consequences such as transfer, request for resignation, and demotion for older workers’ poor performance than for younger workers who exhibited the same level of performance. Additionally, older workers were less likely than younger workers to receive recommendations for employer-provided
assistance that would increase their ability to address and remedy their performance
deficiencies.

**Role Congruity Theory**

Many of the theoretical frameworks used in research on age bias in the workplace falls under the category of congruency models. Specifically, one commonly used congruency model is role congruity theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Generally, social roles are socially shared expectations that apply to individuals who occupy a certain social position or are members of a particular social category (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Additionally, social roles (e.g., man, woman, grandparent, employee, supervisor) can be further divided into descriptive and prescriptive norms. Descriptive norms are the expectations of what an individual in a particular social role actually does or does not do, whereas prescriptive norms are the expectations of how an individual ought to do or should ideally do (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Descriptive norms closely relate to the typical explanation of stereotypes, however prescriptive norms add an additional consideration that has not been included in the usual definition of stereotypes. Taken together, gender roles refer to the collection of both descriptive and prescriptive expectations associated with both women and men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Social role theory then suggests that an individual’s socialization in expectations of their role can influence how a member of a specific group will act. In other words, the perceptions that individuals develop about their own and others’ behavior is directly related to their role beliefs.

Social role theory provides the foundation for understanding gender role expectations. Given that social roles are the socially shared expectations that apply to
individuals who occupy a certain social position or are members of a particular social category, gender roles are culturally constructed beliefs about what attributes, norms, and values are common based on gender (Eagly, 1987). Individuals are believed to make inferences about the symmetry between an individual’s inner disposition and their behaviors as seen through the daily activities that men and women commonly perform in their typical social roles. In the same fashion, gender stereotypes are developed through observations of individuals in social roles that are viewed as typical of each gender, specifically of men as the “breadwinner” and women as the homemaker (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000).

A key aspect of social role theory pertains to the belief that the fundamental attributes associated with each gender can be illustrated through behavioral styles, differences of agency and communality (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Agentic characteristics primarily relate to an individual who exhibits a tendency towards assertiveness, control, and confidence. An agentic individual is generally described as aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, self-sufficient, self-confident, and prone to act as a leader. Additionally, agentic qualities are more strongly ascribed to men than they are to women. By contrast, communal characteristics, which are more strongly ascribed to women, describe an individual who is primarily concerned with the welfare of others. A communal person would be described as helpful, affectionate, kind, sympathetic, nurturing, and gentle (Eagly & Karau, 2002). These culturally ingrained expectations influence the reaction to individuals of both genders; specifically, social pressures lead individuals to favor gender role consistent behavior.
According to role congruity theory, when a person’s role and their attributes are aligned (or are congruent), they are more likely to be viewed as successfully occupying that role. However, when a person’s behavior is perceived as inconsistent with their social role, the person may be viewed as unsuccessfully fulfilling that role, potentially leading to prejudice. For example, if a woman acts in an agentic manner, she is violating her gender role, putting herself at risk for prejudicial judgment because of her incongruent behavior. Thus, individuals tend to react negatively to persons who do not fulfill their expectations (Rudman & Glick, 1999).

Prior research has not examined age from a role congruity perspective, however role congruity theory can be extended to examine behavioral perceptions related to age. The degree of congruity between an individual’s characteristics (i.e., age) and their behavioral expectations will influence how they are perceived. For example, Finkelstein et al. (1995) found that older workers are commonly believed to have less potential for development. Along similar lines, as a result of age stereotypes, older workers are less likely to receive developmental feedback (Rosen & Jerdee, 1977). More specifically, if an older worker seeks support for training opportunities (i.e., developmental opportunities), this behavior may be viewed as inconsistent with the belief that older workers have less development potential compared to younger workers. Subsequently, older workers may be viewed as unsuccessfully fulfilling their job expectations because of the perceived conflict between their age and job roles, ultimately leading to potential differences in the likelihood to grant support for training opportunities.

Congruency models such as role congruity theory suggest that alignment between an individual’s characteristics (e.g., age, gender) and the specific knowledge, skills,
abilities and other characteristics viewed as being necessary for the job may, in part, explain evaluation and decision making processes. Furthermore, when the behaviors or personality characteristics of a specific group (e.g., female workers, older workers) do not match the perceived requirements for a job, bias is more likely to occur.

**The Intersection of Gender and Age**

The intersection of beliefs as it relates to demographic variables may also occur, such that individuals may hold distinct beliefs about combinations of demographic group membership (e.g., gender and age) and these beliefs may interact when an individual hold more than one social identity. The intersection of both social identities can affect how male and female older workers are treated and evaluated, however the possibility of negative beliefs about older workers may especially be an issue for older female workers. Older female workers may be more heavily impacted by age bias than older male workers because they must deal with, a number of challenges that can be associated with being a woman in the workplace, but they must also deal with the negative stereotypes that are associated with being an older worker. These stereotypes include perceptions that older workers tend to be seen as less likely to seek new challenges, less flexible, having less need for variation in their work, and displaying less desire to learn new skills (Goldberg, 2007; Posthuma & Campion). Finkelstein et al. (1995) found younger workers view other younger workers as having more development potential, greater overall job qualifications, and being better suited for physically demanding positions than older workers.

O’Connell and Rotter (1979) asked participants to rate a typical male and female in three different age categories (25, 50, and 75 years old). The study set out to determine
characteristics associated with different age groups and to determine if these characteristics differed between males and females. An increased number of negative attributes were associated with age for both males and females; however, between middle and old age, age labels were more detrimental to men than women on perceptions of effectiveness. Kite, Deaux, and Miele (1991) also examined both age and gender stereotypes. Raters listed the characteristics of one of four categories: 35 year old women, 35 year old men, 65 year old women and 65 year old men. Age stereotypes were more pronounced than gender stereotypes and, compared to older raters, younger raters viewed older adults more negatively than younger adults. This study suggests that peoples’ perceptions of males and females may be related to age and, although stereotypes represent beliefs about a group of people, they do not provide information about how individuals in that group are actually being perceived.

Kogan (1979) explored gender and age bias; participants were instructed to guess the target’s age from one of 33 photographs of females and males of all age groups. In addition, after selecting the age of the target, participants were then asked to sort the pictures into five different age categories and choose the three females and three males they would like to become acquainted with. The authors found that there was an overlap in age estimations, especially between middle and old age. Specifically, women were perceived to grow older faster than men and male participants indicated that they would like to get to know younger females and older men. One implication of these findings that may translate to the work environment is that men are more age aware, which would lead to poorer performance ratings by men for older adults. Further, since women are perceived to age faster, this may lead to decreased performance ratings earlier in their
careers. Kogan’s study also recommended further research on how an employee’s age and gender affect how performance is viewed by organizations. Therefore given the limited research in this area, the proposed study aims to provide additional insight to this body of literature.

Zepelin, Sills, and Health (1987) asked participants to determine the best age for males and females to be (a) settled in a career, (b) hold a top level job, and (c) have the most responsibilities. Additionally, participants were also asked to indicate the age that a person was considered young, middle aged, and old. The authors found that male participants perceived women to age faster than men, however female participants saw no difference in the aging process between men and women.

Several studies also support the assertion that older male and female workers are viewed differently with respect to both training and promotion opportunities (Bassi & Van Buren, 1998; Duncan & Loretto, 2004). Specifically, Bassi and Van Buren (1998) found that men were more likely to receive opportunities for training than women. Duncan and Loretto (2004), in a survey of over 1000 employees in the United Kingdom found that negative beliefs related to trainability of older workers were more widely held for older women than older men. The authors further suggest that this difference may be due to the respondents’ belief that women’s performance began to decline at a younger age than for their male colleagues. Additionally, women over the age of 40 were more likely than men to have unequal access to promotions. It is also important to note that in the United States, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 prohibits employment discrimination against employees who are 40 years of age or older. Discrimination is prohibited in hiring, promotions, termination and layoffs. Findings of
these studies and previous reviews suggest that the literature and evidence in this area is mixed and that more research on the intersectionality of gender and age effects is warranted (Rhodes, 1983; Waldman & Avolio, 1986).

**Gender in Negotiations**

An individual may occupy multiple social roles at the same time; for example, people may also occupy the social roles of a student and job candidate, or employee and negotiator in addition to their gender role. Gender role expectations are one of the most salient roles that an individual occupies and are often automatically activated in social interactions. Additionally, certain situations may increase the salience of gender roles, such as the negotiation context. Previous research suggests that negotiators are expected to possess agentic qualities; however there have been some inconsistencies as to the role of gender in negotiations (Kray & Thompson, 2005; Stuhlmacher & Linnabery, 2013). Meta-analyses have shown that women are less competitive (Walters, Stuhlmacher, & Meyer, 1998) and negotiate less favorable outcomes than men (Mazei et al., 2015; Stuhlmacher & Walters, 1999). However, these meta-analyses also suggest that situational variables influence gender differences and what may moderate the effects.

Women are less likely than men to initiate a negotiation in the absence of strong norms dictating a requirement to negotiate or an option to ask (Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Bowles et al., 2007), suggesting that women may either implicitly or explicitly understand that their initiation could be seen as problematic. Also, research on the other side of the bargaining table finds that sellers often set higher prices if they think they will be facing women (Ayres & Siegelman, 1995), suggesting sellers anticipate women are less likely to initiate and pursue bargaining. Finally, in studies of ultimatum games, more
is demanded from women (Solnick, 2001), especially those who are physically attractive (Solnick & Schweitzer, 1999), suggesting people may believe that women are not entitled to the same resources or are more gullible than men. These prior results could be due to the fact that it is seen as socially acceptable for women, as relatively low-status actors compared to men, to receive fewer resources. Thus, the following sections will explore how gender roles influence negotiation outcomes.

The Backlash Effect

The risk of displaying agency has been an explanation for gender differences in salary negotiations. The constraints on women’s behavior may have serious effects on economic outcomes during salary negotiations. For example, in samples of professional graduate students, female MBAs routinely accepted lower salaries than male MBAs, even after controlling for other factors that may have influence salary negotiations (Bowles, Babcock & McGinn, 2005; Gerhart & Rynes, 1991). Similarly, in another study of professional students, only 7% of female graduates attempted to negotiate their initial salary offers, as compared to 57% of male graduates (Babcock & Laschever, 2003). An explanation for women’s unwillingness to negotiate for compensation is related to the differential treatment that male and female negotiators experience. For example, male evaluators were more inclined to work with “nice” women who accepted their compensation offers, compared to women who attempted to negotiate for more money. In contrast, negotiating for a higher salary had no effect on men’s willingness to work with male candidates. These findings suggest that women “do not ask” (e.g., for higher pay, more responsibility, or greater recognition) because they correctly fear negative reactions from others. It is important to note that as it related to age, no research to date has
examined the influence of stereotypical beliefs and the experience of backlash effects in negotiation, therefore creating a novel contribution to the gender and negotiation literature.

**Connecting Role Congruity, Backlash Effects, and Negotiation**

Extending this logic to the both gender and age bias, women whose behavior is inconsistent with both the female gender stereotype and the elderly stereotype may also be subject to backlash effects. Because of the stereotypes that may be attributed to how individuals’ view women, women are often considered to possess fewer of the characteristics necessary to succeed in positions of power within organizations (Heilman, 2001). In the same sense, older workers are often considered to have less potential for development, but greater levels of stability (Gordon & Arvey, 2004). These stereotypes suggest that older female workers have more to prove with fewer opportunities to do so. When an individual experiences the effects of two types of discrimination at the same time, this is referred to as the double jeopardy phenomenon (Itzin & Phillipson, 1995). More formally, the double jeopardy phenomenon suggests that older female workers face a double dose of discrimination because not only are they women; they are also older (Berdahl & Moore, 2006; Itzin & Phillipson, 1995). Furthermore, Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu (2002) explored stereotypes of 24 groups, including elderly adults. Participants rated each social group on a list of traits reflecting warmth (e.g., friendly, sincere, warm, good-natured) and competence (e.g., competent, capable, skillful, intelligent), finding that elderly people were rated as less competitive than 65% of the other groups and lower on status than 78% of the other groups. However, little to no research has examined how age may influence experiences of backlash specifically in a negotiation context. Taken
together, this may suggest that in addition to economic and social sanctions for women in general, older women may experience backlash at higher rates than younger women.

**Rationale**

The current investigation seeks to make several contributions to the social backlash and negotiation literature. First, this research brings together literature in the areas of gender differences, social backlash, and negotiation outcomes in the workplace by exploring the interaction between gender and age in the negotiation context. A number of studies have examined the role of backlash in the negotiation context, particularly as it relates to gender differences, however little to no empirical research has examined how age differences influence negotiation and social outcomes. Second, extending the logic of previous research examining gender differences in the experiences of backlash to the intersection of both gender and age, it is predicted that older women who display assertive negotiation behaviors will experience the most backlash in negotiations compared than younger assertive negotiators and less assertive negotiators because their assertive behaviors is perceived as the most incongruent with both gender role and age role beliefs. Additionally, previous research has also found that situational and contextual factors influence the outcomes of negotiation, highlighting the importance of examining different circumstances that may illustrate differences in negotiation outcomes. However, limited research exists that combines these streams of literature cohesively. Therefore, the current research will extend the backlash literature by examining how gender and age may influence the experience of social and economic backlash in negotiations.
Statement of Hypotheses

Hypothesis Ia. Women will receive more economic backlash compared to men in negotiations.
Hypothesis Ib. Women will receive more social backlash compared to men in negotiations.
Hypothesis IIa. Older negotiators will receive more economic backlash than younger negotiators.
Hypothesis IIb. Older negotiators will receive more social backlash than younger negotiators.
Hypothesis IIIa. Emphasizing assertive behaviors during negotiations will result in more economic backlash compared to negotiators using non-assertive behaviors.
Hypothesis IIIb. Emphasizing assertive behaviors during negotiations will result in more social backlash compared to negotiators using non-assertive behaviors.
Hypothesis IVa. Women will receive more economic backlash when negotiating assertively compared to men and non-assertive negotiators.
Hypothesis IVb. Women will receive more social backlash when negotiating assertively compared to men and non-assertive negotiators.
Hypothesis Va. The most economic backlash is expected when the negotiator is an older woman acting assertively, compared to men, non-assertive, and younger negotiators.
Hypothesis Vb. The most social backlash is expected when the negotiator is an older woman acting assertively, compared to men, non-assertive, and younger negotiators.

Method

Research participants
Data were collected from a total of 663 participants, however not all data were usable. Data from 121 participants were removed because participants stopped the study after answering only a few items, resulting in missing data. Additionally, 127 participants answered one of the three manipulation check questions incorrectly, failing the manipulation check. Thus, these participants were excluded from reported demographics and subsequent analysis, resulting in a total of 417 participants with viable data. Average amount of work experience was 15.16 years (SD = 10.80). Average number of hours worked per week was 37.6 (SD = 11.29). Mean participant age was 36.3 years (SD = 11.76). 47.7% (198) of participants reported having prior responsibility for making personnel decisions and/or changes. 48.3% of participants (201) reported having prior responsibility for making training decisions. Table 1 presents participant demographic information.

Participants for the current study were recruited online via the use of Amazon Mechanical Turk. Mechanical Turk (Mturk) is an online platform where requesters (e.g., researchers) can upload tasks to a marketplace and workers (e.g., participants) can accept and complete the tasks for monetary compensation. The use of Mechanical Turk allows for access to a more demographically diverse sample than the standard American college samples (Ipeirotis, 2010). Mturk has been used frequently in academic research, allowing researchers to collect large amounts of data extremely quickly and inexpensively (Behrend, Sharek, Meade, & Wiebe, 2011; Buhrmeister, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2011).

Table 1. Participant demographic data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td>Male</td>
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<td>Ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

*Note: Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding.*

Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight possible conditions based on three independent variables: gender of the employee (male vs. female), the age of the
employee (28 years old vs. 55 years old) and negotiation style of the employee (assertive vs. non-assertive), resulting in a 2 X 2 X 2 between-subjects design. Number of participants per cell ranged from 42 – 63 (See Table 3 for sample sizes).

**Procedure**

Participants accessed the survey remotely through Mechanical Turk. Participants in this study were restricted to US based adults over the age of 18. Participants were then directed to a consent form that describes the study’s purpose as examining the effects of workplace interactions. The methodology was adapted from several studies (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Amanatullah & Tinsley, 2013a; Amanatullah & Tinsley, 2013b). Participants then proceeded to the beginning of the survey, where they were asked to carefully review the documents. Following the instruction page, the participants proceeded to the next screen where they were instructed to read a vignette and view the photograph of the employee.

In the vignette, participants were instructed to imagine that they are a supervisor who has been asked to have a meeting with an employee to discuss the employee’s request for additional training opportunities. After viewing the photograph and reading the vignette, participants were randomly assigned to listen and read one of eight negotiation scenarios. Three actors were recruited to record the negotiation scripts, including two male actors to read for the role of the male employee and the direct supervisor and one female actor to read for the role of the female employee. Two male actors were selected to enhance the realism of the conversation to better represent dialogue between the employee and the supervisor. The direct supervisor remained constant (the same male actor) throughout all conditions. The scripts for the negotiation
were adapted from previously developed and pre-tested scripts created by Amanatullah and Morris (2010) (see Appendix A). The vignette and negotiation scripts varied based on the study’s manipulation of gender, age and negotiation style, which resulted in a 2 [gender: male, female] X 2 [age: 28 years old, 55 years old] X 2 [negotiation style: assertive, non-assertive] between-subjects design.

After the participants listened to the negotiation scenario, they were directed to a questionnaire in which economic and social backlash was assessed. A manipulation check was also included to assess how participants perceive the negotiation style of the employee as it relates to assertiveness (see Appendix B). Finally, after participants submitted their responses to the questionnaire, they were directed to a final demographic questionnaire. Completion time was between 15-20 minutes. Once participants completed the questionnaire, payment was authorized for 50 cents. Research by Barger, Behrend, Sharek, and Sinar (2011) found that payment of approximately 75 cents to be reasonable for a 30-minute survey, which suggests that payment of 50 cents in the proposed study is reasonable. After data was collected from Mturk, it was downloaded from Qualtrics for further analysis.

Measures

*Gender.* Gender was manipulated assigning the male employee (Michael) or the female employee (Mary) and with photographs of male and female employees.

*Age.* Age was manipulated as either 28 years old or 55 years old with photographs of the employee consistent with their age. The ages 28 and 55 were selected based on average labor force participation rates (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). The age 28 was selected because it is an age by which most adults have entered the workforce and
is within the prime working age group (i.e., 25-54 years old). The age 55 was selected because 55 is the age at which individuals may initially consider retirement (DeArmond et al., 2006) and is not within the prime working age group (i.e., 55 and older).

Photographs of the employees were included to enhance the manipulation of age in the study. The photographs that were used in the manipulation were obtained from The Center for Vital Longevity Face Database at the University of Michigan created by Meredith Minear and Denise Park. This database includes photographs of 575 adults that vary in terms of gender (male, female), age (18-93), ethnicity (Caucasian, African-American) and facial expression type (happy, sad, and neutral). Specifically, the database includes 218 photos of individuals between ages 18-29, 76 photos between ages 30-49, 123 between ages 50-69 and 158 70 years and older (Minear & Park, 2004). Coding for the gender, age, ethnicity and expression type are included in an Excel spreadsheet along with the database of photos. The stimuli in this database are available for free online and have been previously used in academic research (Dennis, Hayes, Prince, Madden, Huettel & Cabeza, 2008; Kool, McGuire, Rosen, & Botvinick, 2010).

A pilot test using convenience sampling was conducted to assess perceived age and attractiveness (see Appendix C). The purpose of the pilot test was to select photographs that would be perceived similarly across gender and age, reducing the likelihood that differences in perceptions of the photographs would confound the results of the study. It was decided that data from twenty-five participants will be collected to check the manipulation of age and perceived attractiveness of the selected photos. However, due to low response rates, data was collected from ten participants. In the first question, “How old do you think this person is?” participants responded by selecting one
of the multiple-choice options. In the second question, participants were asked to rate the person in the photograph, on a five-point scale (ranging from 1="extremely unattractive" to 7="extremely attractive") according to how attractive they perceive the person to be (see Appendix D). Based on the results of the pilot test, five photos were selected, including three photos of men (young employee, older employee, and supervisor) and two photos of women (younger employee, older employee). In order to enhance the realism of the manipulation, the selected photographs were presented as thumbnails in a chat program. It was decided that, in order to effectively present the photographs of the employee to enhance the manipulation, a chat program screenshot would be used to provide a visual cue of the employee to participants (see Appendix E).

**Negotiation Style.** Negotiator style was manipulated using previously developed and pre-tested scripts adapted from Amanatullah and Morris (2010). The negotiation styles were enacted so that the assertive negotiator would appear competitive, forceful and aggressive whereas the non-assertive negotiator would appear humble, thoughtful and sensitive to others’ feelings (see Appendix A).

**Social Backlash.** Social backlash was assessed using modified items from Amanatullah and Tinsley’s (2013b) six-item scale (see Appendix F). The language of one item was modified to enhance the realism, accuracy of responses as it relates to the context and remain gender neutral. Specifically, the following item, “If Mary [Mark] invited you out for drinks after work, how likely would you be to go with her [him]?” to “If this person invited you out for a fun activity after work, how likely would you be to go with this person? Other example items include “If you were the project manager on a work assignment, how likely would you be to ask the person to be part of the project
“Team?” and “How interested would you be in interacting socially with this person?” Item responses were collected using a 7-point scale with responses ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Extremely). Items were reverse coded such that higher scores indicated a greater likelihood of backlash against the target. Alpha of the scale was .96.

**Economic Backlash.** Economic backlash was assessed using a single-item as well as a qualitative question to provide additional context to participant responses (see Appendix G). A sample question is “How much money would you provide to Mary [Michael] to attend the conference? Enter an amount ($0 to $4,000)” in which participants were asked to indicate a dollar amount. Given the directionality of the social backlash measure, this item was sign reversed such that negative values indicated a greater likelihood of backlash against the target to allow for easier interpretation of results.

**Manipulation Check.** To assess the degree to which negotiation style was successfully manipulated, participants were asked to indicate, on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (a great deal) the extent to which they would characterize the target’s negotiation style as “competitive.” Two additional questions were also included to assess the manipulation of age and gender (see Appendix B).

**Demographics.** Participant background information (e.g., age, gender, and work experience, race/ethnicity) was collected using a demographic questionnaire (See Appendix H).

**Results**

Means, standard deviations, correlations, and scale reliability of study measures and continuous variables are displayed in Table 2 and Table 3. Items that required reverse
coding were recoded prior to analysis and an alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

**Manipulation Check**

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the assertiveness level of the target between assertive and non-assertive conditions. As expected, assertiveness scores were significantly higher in assertive conditions ($M = 6.25; SD = 1.02$) than in non-assertive conditions ($M = 5.52; SD = 1.46; t = 364.41; p = .001$).

**Hypothesis Testing**

To test Hypothesis 1a (Women will receive more economic backlash compared to men in negotiations), an independent samples t-test was conducted with gender as the independent variable and economic backlash as the dependent variable. A significant effect for gender was found, $t(415) = -2.49, p = .007$, such male negotiators ($M = -2102.64; SD = 662.15$) received more economic backlash than female negotiators ($M = -2261.90; SD = 634.76$). However, although the results were significant, it was opposite to the hypothesized direction, therefore Hypothesis 1a was not supported.

To test Hypothesis 1b (Women will receive more social backlash compared to men in negotiations), an independent samples t-test was conducted with gender as the independent variable and social backlash as the dependent variable. There was a significant effect for gender was found, $t(407) = -2.25, p = .13$, such male negotiators ($M = 4.41; SD = 1.58$) received more economic backlash than female negotiators ($M = 4.07; SD = 1.51$). Although the results were significant, they were opposite to the hypothesized direction, therefore Hypothesis 1b was not supported.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gender</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.498</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Assertiveness</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.501</td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Economic Backlash</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>-2174.82</td>
<td>653.94</td>
<td>.121*</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>-.134*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Social Backlash</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.111*</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>-.329**</td>
<td>.417**</td>
<td>(.96)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N varies from 409 to 417 due to missing values. Scale reliability as Cronbach’s alpha is presented in the diagonal. \( M = \) mean. \( SD = \) standard deviation. * = \( p < .05 \). ** = \( p < .001 \). Gender, 1 = female, 2 = male. Age, 1 = Older, 2 = Younger. Assertiveness, 1 = Assertive, 2 = Non-assertive. Economic backlash measured by an open-ended question: “How much money will you provide to Mary [Michael] to attend the conference? Enter a number ($0 to $4,000)?” Negative number indicate that this item was sign reversed such that negative values indicated a greater likelihood of backlash against the target. Social backlash was measured with 7-point scale 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Extremely).
Table 3. Variable Means and Standard Deviations by Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Economic Backlash</th>
<th>Social Backlash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Younger male / Assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Social Backlash&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-2033.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Younger male / Non-assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>-2221.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Younger female / Assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-2085.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Younger female / Non-assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>-2382.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Older male / Assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>-1990.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Older male / Non-assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>-2174.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Older female / Assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>-2291.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Older female / Non-assertive negotiator</td>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Backlash</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-2295.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Backlash</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. <sup>a</sup>Economic backlash measured by an open-ended question: “How much money will you provide to Mary [Michael] to attend the conference? Enter a number ($0 to $4,000)?” Negative number indicate that
this item was sign reversed such that negative values indicated a greater likelihood of backlash against the target. Social backlash measured with 7-point scale 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Extremely).

To test Hypothesis 2a (Older negotiators will receive more economic backlash than younger negotiators), an independent samples t-test was conducted with age as the independent variable and economic backlash as the dependent variable. There was no significant effect for age, $t(415) = -.035, p = .49$, such older negotiators ($M = -2176.01; SD = 683.69$) did not receive more economic backlash than younger negotiators ($M = -2173.74; SD = 627.13$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2a was not supported.

To test Hypothesis 2b (Older negotiators will receive more social backlash than younger negotiators), an independent samples t-test was conducted with age as the independent variable and social backlash as the dependent variable. There was no significant effect for age, $t(407) = -.537, p = .30$, such older negotiators ($M = 4.30; SD = 1.58$) did not receive more economic backlash than younger negotiators ($M = 4.22; SD = 1.53$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2b was not supported.

To test Hypothesis 3a (Emphasizing assertive behaviors during negotiations will result in more economic backlash compared to negotiators using non-assertive behaviors), an independent samples t-test was conducted with assertiveness as the independent variable and economic backlash as the dependent variable. There was a significant effect for assertiveness was found, $t(415) = 2.76, p = .003$, such assertive negotiators ($M = -2088.56; SD = 724.83$) received more economic backlash than non-assertive negotiators ($M = -2264.03; SD = 559.38$). Therefore, Hypothesis 3a was supported.

To test Hypothesis 3b (Emphasizing assertive behaviors during negotiations will result in more social backlash compared to negotiators using non-assertive behaviors), an
independent samples t-test was conducted with assertiveness as the independent variable and social backlash as the dependent variable. There was a significant effect for assertiveness was found, t(407) = 7.03, p = .001 such assertive negotiators (M = 4.77; SD = 1.52) received more economic backlash than non assertive negotiators (M = 3.74; SD = 1.42). Therefore, Hypothesis 3b was supported.

To test Hypothesis 4a (Women will receive more economic backlash when negotiating assertively compared to men and non-assertive negotiators), a 2 (Gender: male vs. female) X 2 (Assertiveness: assertive vs. non-assertive) between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with economic backlash as the dependent variable. The interaction effect between gender and assertiveness on economic backlash was not significant, F(1,413) = .024, p = .88, partial η² = .001. Therefore, Hypothesis 4a was not supported.

To test Hypothesis 4b (Women will receive more social backlash when negotiating assertively compared to men and non-assertive negotiators), a 2 (Gender: male vs. female) X 2 (Assertiveness: assertive vs. non-assertive) between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with social backlash as the dependent variable. The interaction effect between gender and assertiveness on social backlash was not significant, F(1,405) = .705, p = .40, partial η² = .002. Therefore, Hypothesis 4b was not supported.

To test Hypothesis 5a (The most economic backlash is expected when the negotiator is an older woman acting assertively, compared to men, non-assertive, and younger negotiators), a 2 (Gender: male vs. female) X 2 (Age: older vs. younger) X 2 (Assertiveness: assertive vs. non-assertive) between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with economic backlash as the dependent variable. The interaction effect between gender,
age, and assertiveness on economic backlash was not significant, \( F(1, 409) = 1.29, p = .26 \), partial \( \eta^2 = .003 \). Therefore, Hypothesis 5a was not supported.

To test Hypothesis 5b (The most social backlash is expected when the negotiator is an older woman acting assertively, compared to men, non-assertive, and younger negotiators), a 2 (Gender: male vs. female) X 2 (Age: older vs. younger) X 2 (Assertiveness: assertive vs. non-assertive) between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with social backlash as the dependent variable. The interaction effect between gender, age, and assertiveness on economic backlash was not significant, \( F(1,401) = .023, p > .88 \), partial \( \eta^2 = .001 \). Therefore, Hypothesis 5b was not supported.

**Exploratory Analyses**

Although the manipulation check was significant when comparing assertive and non-assertive conditions, further analyses were conducted to examine the interaction between gender, age, and rated levels of assertiveness (as compared to manipulated levels of aggressiveness). To test this interaction, a 2 (Gender: male vs. female) X 2 (Assertiveness: assertive vs. non-assertive) between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with assertiveness of the target as the dependent variable. There was a significant interaction, such that in assertive conditions, male negotiators (\( M = 6.29; SD = 1.04 \)) were viewed as being more aggressive than female negotiators (\( M = 6.19; SD = 1.00 \)). However, in non-assertive conditions, female negotiators (\( M = 5.77; SD = 1.25 \)) were viewed as being more aggressive than male negotiators (\( M = 5.31; SD = 1.59 \)).

As a follow-up, regression analyses predicting social backlash was conducted to assess the statistical significance of the interaction between gender, age and aggressiveness. The regression equation included gender, age, and aggressiveness as
main effect variables and gender*aggressiveness, and gender*age*aggressiveness as interaction variables. The regression model significantly predicted social backlash, $F(5, 408) = 11.33, p = .001$, adj. $R^2 = .11$. Gender and aggressiveness were statistically significant. Age was not statistically significant. There were no significant interaction effects. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Regression analysis of the effects of Gender, Age and Aggressiveness on Social Backlash  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$b$</th>
<th>$SE_B$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>11.09**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>2.89*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressiveness</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>2.64*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Aggressiveness</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender<em>Age</em>Aggressiveness</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 408. $R^2 = .11, p = .001$. $b =$ beta weight. $SE_B =$ standard error. * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .001$.*

To assess the statistical significance of the interaction between gender, age and aggressiveness, regression analyses predicting economic backlash was conducted. The regression equation included gender, age, and aggressiveness as main effect variables and gender*aggressiveness, and gender*age*aggressiveness as interaction variables. The regression model significantly predicted economic backlash, $F(5, 416) = 4.64, p = .001$, adj. $R^2 = .04$. Gender was statistically significant. Age and aggressiveness were not statistically significant. There were no significant interaction effects. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5.
Table 5. Regression analysis of the effects of Gender, Age and Aggressiveness on Economic Backlash

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$b$</th>
<th>$SE B$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2470.14</td>
<td>143.79</td>
<td>-17.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>178.65</td>
<td>63.313</td>
<td>2.82*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>12.77</td>
<td>63.08</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressiveness</td>
<td>83.75</td>
<td>87.22</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Aggressiveness</td>
<td>39.17</td>
<td>63.90</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender<em>Age</em>Aggressiveness</td>
<td>-20.44</td>
<td>28.10</td>
<td>-.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $N = 416$. $R^2 = .04$, $p = .001$. $b = \text{beta weight}$. $SE B = \text{standard error}$. * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .001$.

Discussion

Using role congruity theory, research on backlash effects in negotiations and age stereotypes as additional theoretical underpinnings, the purpose of the current study was to investigate the extent to which an individual’s gender (male or female), age (younger or older), and level of assertiveness (assertive or non-assertive) influence the likelihood that they would experience both economic and social backlash. Specifically, this study aimed to examine the interplay between these three variables and how the intersecting identities of being either a young, assertive negotiator compared to an older assertive negotiator could lead to differences in the amount of funding (e.g., economic backlash) and interest in interacting socially (e.g., social backlash) negotiators received based on the additional consideration of their gender.

Overall, the results of this study did not support the initial predictions. First, it was hypothesized that female negotiators would experience more economic and social
backlash than male negotiators (H1a and H1b). This hypothesis was not supported, however, surprisingly, the analyses did reveal a significant main effect such that male negotiators experienced more economic and social backlash than female negotiators. Findings demonstrate an interesting departure from meta-analytic evidence citing that on average, men received better economic outcomes as compared to women (Mazei et al., 2015). However, the results of this study highlight that research on gender differences is mixed and contextually bound. Another possible explanation for this finding is that if for aggressive conditions, male negotiators may have been viewed as more of a threat of harm than aggressive female negotiators. In several studies, negotiators who were confronted with an angry opponent developed a negative impression of the opponent (Van Kleef et al., 2004a) and were unwilling to interact with the opponent again (Kopelman, Rosette, & Thompson, 2006; Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004b). These findings, combined with the results of this study may suggest that engaging in aggressive negotiation behaviors may be more harmful for male negotiators if aggressive behavior is viewed as threatening to others. Future research should examine potential moderators to gain a better understanding of the impact of different situational factors.

It was also predicted that there would be a significant main effect for age such that older negotiators would experience more economic and social backlash than younger negotiators (H2a and H2b). One potential explanation for this finding is that although research examining age-related stereotypes of workers has found that evidence of that negative stereotypes may be associated with older workers (e.g., more resistant to change, less potential for development) these stereotypes may be more descriptive than prescriptive in nature (Posthuma & Campion, 2008).
However, findings did support the prediction that negotiators emphasizing assertive behaviors as compared to negotiators emphasizing non-assertive behaviors would experience more backlash (H3a and H3b). This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that engaging in highly assertive negotiations behaviors may have adverse effects on their counterpart’s perceptions of them. For example, negotiators who are assertive are often also viewed as highly ambitious and persistent. The heightened perseverance associated with high aspirations has the potential to sour the social interaction itself. Specifically, in a study conducted by Lai, Bowles, and Babcock (2013) negotiators who strived for high aspirations were also found to generate negative impressions on their negotiating counterparts (e.g., likeability or social backlash).

Lastly, it was hypothesized that there would be several interactive effects between a) gender and assertiveness (H4a and H4b) and b) gender, age and assertiveness (H5a and H5b) on experiences of backlash. These predictions were not supported. Although generally results did not support hypotheses, potential insights can be gleaned from non-significant findings to guide future research.

Additional exploratory analyses were conducted to examine the effectiveness of the manipulation. An ANOVA was conducted to examine the interaction between manipulation of gender and assertiveness (IVs) with perceived aggressiveness as the dependent variable. The results indicated that male negotiators were viewed as being more aggressive than female negotiators in assertive conditions, however, in non-assertive conditions; female negotiators were viewed as being more aggressive than male negotiators. To take a further look at perceived assertiveness, regression analyses were conducted to examine the main effects and interactions of gender, age, and rated levels of
assertiveness (as compared to manipulated assertiveness) with the dependent variables (economic and social backlash). For social backlash, gender and assertiveness were significant predictors, however age was not significant and there were no significant interactions. Similarly, for economic backlash, gender was significant, however age and assertiveness were insignificant and there were no significant interactions. Taken together, this suggests that the manipulation may have been interpreted differently than expected. However, it is important to note that the negotiation scripts used in the assertive and non-assertive conditions were the same across gender (only the name of the negotiator differed) and adapted from previous studies (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010). The manipulation results may have due to an “actor effect” such that the verbal tone and inflections may have varied enough to change impressions, despite the fact that the negotiation scripts were identical.

Other aspects of the negotiation scenario may have influenced the manipulation as well. For example, in the contextual information provided in the vignette before the negotiation begins, both the supervisor and the employee briefly agree on the mutual benefits of the employee attending the conference. This mutual agreement between the supervisor and the employee on the benefits of attending the conference may have been viewed as sufficient justification for the organization to send the employee to the conference, despite of their gender, age or level of assertiveness in the negotiation.

Furthermore, participants were able to input the exact value of the amount of funding they would provide the employee for their attendance at the conference. Across all conditions, the mean values for the amount of funding ranged from $1,990 to $2,382 and were within the range of the final counteroffer presented by the employee, $2,125.
This lack of variability as well as the qualitative data provided by the participants suggests that the employee’s attendance at the conference would not only benefit the employee’s learning and development but also the organization as the new skills and knowledge gained from attending the conference could potentially enhance the employee’s skills and contributions in their role.

**Limitations and Implications for Future Research**

This study was developed with the best of intentions, however, as with all research, it is not without its limitations. These limitations as well as directions for future research are discussed below.

First, although there are a number of advantages to the use of Mturk for research in the behavioral sciences (i.e., the ability to gather inexpensive, high quantities of data, heterogeneity of participants), one potential disadvantage is the quality of the data. In longer studies (e.g., 16+ minutes), that require participants to pay close attention to the study materials and instructions, Mturk participants did significantly worse than student samples (Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2012; Paolacci et al., 2010). Additionally, a significant portion of data (N = 246) had to be excluded because participants either did not fully complete the study or failed to correctly answer one or more of the manipulation check questions. Mturk participants also did significantly worse than student samples when participants were required to pay careful attention to aspects of the study in order to respond correctly to attention checks (Goodman et al., 2010). Therefore, it is possible that the data from participants who incorrectly responded to the manipulation check questions may have considerably influenced the results of the study but their removal from analyses subsequently reduced the ability to detect significance.
Second, due to the nature of the manipulation, the selection of stimuli materials was particularly limited. The initial photographs selected for pilot testing were chosen from a pre-existing database (Minear & Park, 2008). This database provided photographs of individuals of varying demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age) with neutral expressions. In the negotiation scenario, participants viewed the photograph of the employee as presented in a screenshot of an instant message between the employee and his or her supervisor. The photographed expressions may not be realistic of the typical expression that an individual would use as their thumbnail. Additionally, issues occurred while gathering pilot data given the limited population that was sampled (i.e., MBA course), response rates were extremely low and thus limited further analyses.

Third, the scales used to measure the dependent variables. Economic backlash was measured such that participant’s selected a value for the amount of funding that they would provide the target for their attendance at the conference, resulting in a single-item measure.

Lastly, the lack of previous research that examines the intersectionality of gender and age and its effect on perceptions of negotiation behavior presents a limitation in this study. However, this lack of research provides new and exciting areas for both conceptual and theoretical developments. Specifically, contextual and situational characteristics may be an important area to explore to help explicate current as well as future research. In a recent meta-analysis, authors found evidence for moderators of the effect of gender differences in negotiation, including aspects of person-based, situation-based, and task-based differences in economic outcomes (for review see Mazei et al., 2015).
As an extension of the present study, future research could include questions that assess the extent to which participants viewed the negotiation scenario as a distributive versus an integrative negotiation task. In the current study, these lines may have been muddled if, as presented, the negotiation scenario did not significantly cue the participants to the differences, causing it not to be clear enough who was to gain the most from attending the conference (e.g., solely the employee, solely the organization or both).

Additionally, because the employee was requesting funding to attend a conference and only briefly mentioned that the fees associated with their attendance (i.e., travel, hotel, food), future research could incorporate the inclusion of a negotiation table or list of the fees associated with the conferences and allow participants to select what amount they would allot to each item. As suggested above, effects may differ depending on the actual and perceived level of integrative potential generated from the negotiation task.

**Conclusion**

The current investigation predicted that older women who displayed assertive negotiation behaviors would experience the most backlash in negotiations compared than younger assertive negotiators and less assertive negotiators because their assertive behaviors is perceived as the most incongruent with both gender role and age role beliefs. The results of this study, albeit, non-significant findings do however, illustrate the need for more research on how intersecting social identities can influence both economic and social negotiation outcomes. Negotiations occur frequently and the outcomes of these interactions can have a substantial impact on an individual’s career prospects, salaries and development opportunities. It is important that researchers as well as practitioners
pay attention to the unique nuances of how and why experiences of backlash in negotiations and its effect on individuals experiences in the workplace.
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Appendix A. Negotiation Scripts

Mary [Michael] is a 28[55] year old, Information Technology (IT) Project Manager at your company, which is a medium-sized, private organization. As his [her] direct supervisor,

Mary [Michael] has requested a meeting with you to discuss his [her] attendance at an annual IT conference, hosted by the Society for Information Technology Specialists. In your meeting, Emily [John] has asked for funding to attend this year’s conference. As her supervisor, you will determine the amount of funding that Emily [John] will receive to attend this conference.

Here is how the beginning of the meeting proceeded:

Supervisor: Good morning Emily, thanks for stopping by. I saw your email about wanting to schedule a meeting with me. What brings you by my office today?

Mary/Michael: The WelTech conference will be held in a few months and I am excited about the opportunity to attend this year. After looking through the program booklet, I came across a number of training sessions in information technology that will be offered this year. However, the registration fees and hotel and travel costs for this year are quite expensive and I want to discuss the possibility of funding for my attendance at the conference.

Supervisor: The WelTech conference will provide great training opportunities in your area; let’s talk more about the funding opportunities through the company.

Mary/Michael: Great! I agree that attending this conference will be very beneficial and I am sure that we can come to an agreement today.
Supervisor: Okay, let’s get right to it. The company is prepared to offer you $1,300 towards your attendance at the conference.

Mary/Michael (Assertive): I cannot accept this, that amount it is insulting. I deserve to be funded far more than $1,300. That amount does not sufficiently reflect my qualifications. I propose $2000.

Mary/Michael: (Non-assertive): Thank you but I was hoping that the company would be willing to fund more than $1,300. I propose $2,000. I believe this amount is fair to both you and me.

Supervisor: No, that’s no good. How about $1500? That seems fair.

Mary/Michael (Assertive): I don’t think that’s fair at all. Frankly, I’m shocked that you would offer me so little. How about $1900? I am highly qualified and I should be rewarded accordingly.

Mary/Michael (Non-assertive): No, I appreciate your offer but unfortunately I just cannot accept it. How about $1900? This seems like a reasonable compromise.

Supervisor: Well, that’s not acceptable for us. We could do $1550.

Mary/Michael: I can’t agree to that. Your offer is unreasonable. There is no way you can possibly expect me to attend the conference for less than $1800.

Mary/Michael (Non-assertive): I think we are making progress, but unfortunately I still can’t accept it. I was hoping you might find $1800 reasonable.

Supervisor: That’s still too high for us. What about $1600?

Mary/Michael (Assertive): No. I am definitely worth more than this and should receive more funding. How about $1700? You should accept this amount because I would refuse to work for less.
Mary/Michael (Non-assertive): While I cannot accept that amount, I think we are nearing a satisfactory middle ground. How about $1700? I think we’ll both be happy with that amount.

This meeting continued until both you and Mary [Michael] came to an agreement. As her supervisor and given only what you know right now, how much would you provide for Mary [Michael] to attend this conference?
Appendix B. Manipulation Check

1) The negotiator asking for training was…….?  
   a. male.  
   b. female  
   c. did not say  

2) The negotiator asking for training was…….?  
   a. 28  
   b. 37  
   c. 55  

3) On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (a great deal), how aggressive was the negotiator asking for training?  

4) On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (a great deal), how aggressive was the supervisor in the negotiation?
Appendix C. Photographs for Pilot Testing
Appendix D. Questions for Pilot Study

1) How old do you think this person is?
   - 15-30 years old
   - 30-45 years old
   - 45-60 years old
   - 60-75 years old

2) On a scale from 1 (Extremely unattractive) to 7 (Extremely attractive), how attractive is this person?
Appendix E. Chat Program Stimuli

Mary Brunson
IT Project Manager

Monday, August 17, 2015

Good morning Mary. I saw your email about wanting to schedule a meeting with me. Looks like you are free now, can you swing by my office?

Yes, I can, will stop by your office in about 10 minutes.

Michael Brunson
IT Project Manager

Monday, August 17, 2015

Good morning Michael. I saw your email about wanting to schedule a meeting with me. Looks like you are free now, can you swing by my office?

Yes, I can, will stop by your office in about 10 minutes.
Appendix F. Social Backlash Measure

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements on a scale of 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Extremely).

Work-based backlash

1) How interested would you be in working with this person?

2) If you were the project manager, how likely would you be to ask this person to be part of the project team?

3) Is this the type of person you like to work with?

Personal backlash

4) How interested would you be in interacting socially with this person?

5) If this person invited you out for a fun activity after work, how likely would you be to go with her/him?

6) Is this the type of person you like to socialize with?
Appendix G. Economic Backlash Measure

1) How much money will you provide to Mary [Michael] to attend the conference?
   Please enter an amount ($0 to 4,000).

2) What factors influenced your decision to give this amount of money? Please type your respond in the section below.
Appendix H. Demographic Questionnaire

1. Are you currently employed? Yes No
   a. If yes, how many hours do you work per week on average? ______

2. How many years of total work experience do you have?

3. What is your gender? Male _____ Female ____

4. Have you ever been responsible for making a hiring decision? Yes/No

5. Have you ever been responsible for making training decisions? Yes/No

6. Have you ever been responsible for making personnel decisions and/or changes? Yes/No

7. What is your age (in years)? ______

8. Please select your race/ethnicity (choose one from the following groups).
   a. Caucasian
   b. Black or African-American
   c. Hispanic or Latino
   d. Asian/Pacific Islander
   e. Native American
   f. Other (please specify) ____________________________________