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When Women Ask, Does Curiosity Help?

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Abstract: This research examines the potential social benefits of displaying curiosity during a negotiation. Past research has found women who ask directly in distributive agentic settings can suffer negative social consequences and obtain worse objective outcomes compared to men. In three experiments (N = 600) using different negotiation contexts, we found men and women who approach negotiations with curiosity reap the same economic benefits of asking directly but without incurring a social cost. We also found that perceived warmth partially accounts for the positive effects of curiosity (vs. asking directly) on negotiators' social outcomes. Finally, our results reveal women feel more comfortable conveying curiosity compared to using a direct approach in their negotiations. We discuss the implications of these findings in enhancing negotiation effectiveness for both women and men.

Keywords: negotiation; curiosity; gender differences

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1. Introduction

The gender pay gap has not changed substantially in the past 20 years (Aragão 2023), even as the women's labor participation rate in the U.S. has increased (England et al. 2020). This pay gap may, in part, be attributable to differences in how women negotiate and the perceptions they face when they do so (Biasi and Sarsons 2022; Card et al. 2016; Säve-Söderbergh 2019). While women sometimes negotiate more than men (Kray et al. 2023) and excel at self-advocating in their careers (Reif et al. 2019) and negotiating exceptions to typical work practices (Bowles et al. 2019), women are less likely than men to acquire what they ask for in salary negotiations (Artz et al. 2018).

Salary negotiations are competitive situations associated with 'masculine' traits, such as being tough, agentic, and assertive (Bear 2011; Boothby et al. 2023). When women self-advocate in these settings, they are seen as violating social norms that women should be kind and communal, and they can experience backlash; people report a lower willingness to work with women who negotiate for higher pay compared to those who do not (Bowles et al. 2007), and women are less likely to acquire what they ask for compared to their male counterparts (Artz et al. 2018). When displays of dominance contradict the established gender status hierarchy, women incur a social cost and they are seen as less likable (Rudman 1998; Powers and Zuroff 1988). These negative consequences can lead women to experience more anxiety and uncertainty when negotiating compared to their male counterparts (Small et al. 2007); negotiating may not get women what they want and can harm interpersonal relations (Artz et al. 2018; Bowles et al. 2007).

To combat this inequity, numerous U.S. states have enacted salary transparency laws that require employers to list their salary ranges (National Women's Law Center 2022). Some companies have banned salary negotiations altogether (Feintzeig and Silverman 2015),

and several U.S. cities now offer free negotiation workshops that teach strategies to help women negotiate successfully (Dickler 2019; Paquette 2015). Researchers have also tried to help by identifying specific negotiation tactics that can help women diminish backlash by demonstrating concern for organizational relationships, using a relational account, and framing the negotiation in an other-oriented way (Bowles and Babcock 2013; Amanatullah and Morris 2010). In our current research, we add to these efforts by investigating a tactic that may help women (and potentially men) negotiate successfully *and* enhance relational perceptions: curiosity.

Curiosity is a fundamental human motive that has long been present in practical guides to negotiations, yet it has largely been neglected in negotiation research (some notable exceptions examine aspects of curiosity, including question asking (Huang et al. 2017), follow-up questions (Yeomans et al. 2019), and conversational receptiveness (Yeomans et al. 2020)). With curiosity—an interest in understanding the other party's motives and objectives—people employ elements of principled negotiation by 'separating the people from the problem' and 'focusing on interests not positions', as described in the bestselling negotiation book *Getting to Yes* (Fisher et al. 2011). As negotiators display curiosity, they gather more information that can increase the probability of integrative agreements (Pinkley et al. 1995). We posit that curiosity simultaneously serves a less recognized purpose in negotiations by acting to enhance social perceptions.

Curiosity in the workplace contributes to performance, satisfaction, and social relations; curious workers seek more information and new experiences that can improve work performance (Reio and Callahan 2004; Harrison and Dossinger 2017). Curious workers feel more satisfied at work (Kashdan et al. 2020a), and curiosity can strengthen social relationships (von Stumm and Ackerman 2013; von Stumm et al. 2011). While curiosity is a multifaceted phenomenon, our research focuses on the curiosity dimension most closely associated with social capital, *social curiosity*. Social curiosity refers to the tendency to engage with, explore, and be interested in other people's ideas, emotions, behaviors, and experiences (Kashdan et al. 2020a). When people display social curiosity in the workplace by showing interest in their colleague's ideas, even if different from their own, and without necessarily seeking to judge them, it makes positive impressions and strengthens relationships.

We propose that showing social curiosity during negotiations will help mitigate the negative impact of negotiating on social perceptions. While curiosity's instrumental value in negotiations is acknowledged, its potential role in mitigating social costs, especially for women, has not been studied. Since women have been shown to incur significant social costs in contexts such as salary negotiations, we explore how displaying curiosity could potentially influence these social outcomes. While helping a negotiator gather information, displays of curiosity also convey comfort with ambiguity and flexibility to the counterpart's needs, which can positively contribute to interpersonal perceptions (Kashdan and Roberts 2004). We draw on theories of curiosity (Kashdan et al. 2018) and social role theory (Eagly 1987) to frame and investigate how displays of curiosity can improve social perceptions when negotiators ask for more.

2. Social Roles, Negotiation, and Curiosity

2.1. Social Roles

Societies reward and reinforce behavior differently for men and women. According to social role theory, these differences arise from the societal division of labor, which in turn creates expectations that women and men should possess characteristics in line with their "sextypical" work roles (Eagly 1987; Bowles and Babcock 2013; Amanatullah and Morris 2010; Amanatullah and Tinsley 2013; Bowles et al. 2007). For example, women have historically held more caretaking roles than men, fostering the expectation that women should be communal, caring, and relational (Eagly and Wood 2012).

Individuals observe and internalize gender roles through socialization by interacting with people. Gender roles are learned through correspondence bias, a process by which people form beliefs based on behaviors they observe. Since men have historically been more

likely to hold leadership roles compared to women, this has influenced people to associate qualities such as leadership, assertiveness, and strength with men (Eagly 1987). This process of socialization categorizes appropriate and inappropriate behaviors by gender, explaining why self-promoting women, for example, are evaluated as less likable or warm than women who are more reserved or follow traditional role expectations (Powers and Zuroff 1988; Fiske et al. 2007) and experience more backlash than men who self-promote (Rudman 1998; Rudman and Glick 1999). Stereotypes about negotiating often align with stereotypes about masculinity (Bear 2011; Boothby et al. 2023), making it important for women to strategically display behaviors to minimize backlash for perceived role incongruence.

2.2. Gender Differences in Negotiations

Research examining gender differences in negotiations has identified disparities in both bargaining initiation (Kugler et al. 2018) and performance (Mazei et al. 2015). However, these differences vary depending on the context and cues of the negotiation, suggesting gender disparities are not inherent in these settings but rather sensitive to specific characteristics of the negotiation (e.g., the degree of ambiguity or topic being negotiated; Hernandez-Arenaz and Iriberri 2019). A backlash against women is more pronounced in ambiguous settings where it is not clear whether negotiation is appropriate (Mazei et al. 2015; Bowles et al. 2005), when women desire power (vs. status) (Mishra and Kray 2022) and it persists, even when women who negotiate are empowered by strong alternative offers (Dannals et al. 2021). Anticipating this backlash, researchers have shown women moderate their behavior to match the prescribed social norms, behaving more "softly" in negotiations to avoid negative perceptions (Amanatullah and Morris 2010; Hernandez-Arenaz and Iriberri 2019). The consequences accumulate over time and impact not only the gender pay gap but also access to benefits, retirement savings, and career advancement (Bowles et al. 2007; Babcock et al. 2006; Bowles and Babcock 2013).

2.3. Negotiating with Curiosity

Displaying curiosity during negotiations is a tried-and-true tactic that helps negotiators gather information, test assumptions, and create value (Fisher et al. 2011). Less understood is the impact that displayed curiosity has on counterpart perceptions during a negotiation. Curiosity is an emotional-motivational dimension involving "a feeling of wanting to investigate, become involved, or extend or expand the self by incorporating new information and having new experiences with the person or object that has stimulated the interest" (Izard 1977; cf. Fredrickson 1998, p. 216). Displayed curiosity is associated with question asking (Peters 1978) and positive emotions (Ainley 1998; Kashdan and Roberts 2004), but it is distinct in its unique ability to motivate approach behavior (e.g., asking) in unfamiliar and challenging situations (Kashdan 2002, 2004). When individuals display curiosity, they convey a comfort with ambiguity and flexibility to the counterpart's needs that enhance perceptions of the relationship through increased feelings of closeness and attraction, even after controlling for the effects of general positive affect (Kashdan and Roberts 2004).

Curiosity in the workplace is a broad overarching construct with four distinct facets as follows: (1) *Joyous Exploration*, an intrinsic desire to enjoy explorations; (2) *Deprivation Sensitivity*, an imperative to resolve information gaps; (3) *Stress Tolerance*, the perceived ability to cope with uncertainty and ambiguity; and (4) *Openness to People's Ideas*, a desire to understand the ideas, thoughts, and potential of other people (Kashdan et al. 2020a).[1] Given our interest in understanding how displayed curiosity affects interactions (i.e., negotiations) in the workplace, we focus on the social facet of workplace curiosity, *Openness to People's Ideas*. This form of curiosity involves taking an interest in others' perspectives without necessarily seeking to judge, and it has been shown to enhance social bonds and interpersonal connections (Kashdan et al. 2020a; von Stumm and Ackerman 2013; von Stumm et al. 2011).

While prior work finds that women incur a social cost when they promote themselves in the workplace (Bowles et al. 2007; Rudman 1998), we propose that displaying social curiosity during a negotiation (i.e., *Openness to People's Ideas*) will restore social perceptions. While people universally appreciate being valued and understood (Baumeister and Leary 1995), less universal is the tendency for people to show interest in understanding other people's ideas and thoughts. Demonstrating social curiosity through *Openness to People's Ideas* in social interactions shows a desire to learn about others, understand their perspectives, and gain insights into their interests, even if they are not aligned with one's own interests or objectives. Thus, we expect displayed social curiosity to restore the perceptions of the negotiator and the relationship.

We propose that the positive impact of social curiosity on social perceptions occurs through restored perceptions of warmth. Warmth conveys positive intentions toward others (Fiske et al. 2002), while people who violate traditional role expectations, such as women who negotiate at work by asking a customer for a higher price or asking for a raise, are seen as less warm and are less liked (Fiske et al. 2002); demonstrating social curiosity (Openness to People's Ideas) shows interest in the target and conveys positive intentions (Condon and Crano 1988). These positive intentions (warmth) promote positive interpersonal relationships (Renner 2006; Kashdan et al. 2020a). By enhancing perceptions of warmth in the negotiator, we predict social curiosity to enable negotiators to achieve the strategic benefits of asking without the social costs.

Hypothesis 1. *Asking with curiosity during the negotiation (a) moderates the negative social consequences women experience when asking directly (compared to men), and (b) leads to more positive social outcomes (compared to asking directly) (c) without sacrificing the value claimed. This effect is (d) mediated by perceptions of warmth.*

We are also interested in identifying whether women feel comfortable using strategic displays of curiosity since the literature suggests men have more negotiation options available to them without incurring backlash. Anticipated backlash, whether justified or not, can deter women from participating in negotiation and increase anxiety before negotiating (Reif et al. 2019). By seeking to understand the other party and what is important to them, displays of curiosity may be seen as a prosocial negotiation strategy, congruent with gender norms of acting in a warm, communal, and other-oriented way compared to asking directly (Fiske et al. 2002; Amanatullah and Morris 2010; Bowles et al. 2007; Eagly 1987; Rudman and Glick 2001). Thus, we expect women would feel less anxious and more comfortable engaging in a negotiation when cued to approach their negotiation with displays of curiosity.

Hypothesis 2. *(a) Women are less comfortable asking directly (compared to men). (b) Asking with curiosity increases the level of comfort women experience when negotiating (compared to asking directly).*

3. Current Studies

The objective of our research is to identify whether displayed curiosity can serve as an effective negotiation tactic for women by reducing the social cost of negotiating. We begin with an effort to replicate the prior research finding that asking in negotiation leads to higher objective gains than not asking and that it comes at a social cost for women (vs. men) negotiating for a better price (Study 1) and higher salary (Study 2). Study 1 examines whether a sales representative who conveys curiosity is perceived more positively than one who asks directly for a good price without expressing curiosity. Study 2 positioned the focal negotiator to benefit personally from the negotiation rather than benefitting in a way that aligns with their organization's interests. In Study 3, we explore the level of comfort women (and men) experience when approaching negotiations with curiosity compared to

a direct approach. This focus arises from the observation in the existing literature that men have more negotiation tactics at their disposal without incurring backlash.

4. Study 1

4.1. Materials and Method

4.1.1. Participants and Design

We recruited 240 participants through Prolific Academic (AsPredicted #142475). We pre-determined the study's sample size to guarantee at least 80% power for detecting meaningful differences with an effect size of 0.35. This aligns with Cohen's (2013) benchmark for medium practical significance, ensuring our study was sensitive enough to detect meaningful differences without inflating the sample size requirements or resources.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions: (Gender of target negotiator: Male vs. Female) × (Negotiation approach: Ask Directly vs. Ask with Curiosity). On average, the participants were 42.92 years old (ranging from 19 to 77 years, *SD* = 14.73), and 116 (48.3%) identified as women, 115 (47.9%) as men, 3 as transgender, and 8 as nonbinary. One hundred eighty-three (76.3%) participants identified as White, 3 as South Asian (1.3%), 18 as Black/African American (7.5%), 14 as Latino/Hispanic (5.8%), 13 as East Asian (5.4%), and 8 identified as "Other" (3.3%).

4.1.2. Procedure

Participants imagined themselves in the role of a buyer in a negotiation scenario modified from the Coffee Contract negotiation (Simons and Tripp 1998). They were given background information about the scenario, their role, and the objectives of the negotiation. Their sales representative counterpart stood to benefit personally through a bonus payment by claiming more value with prices above the minimum in this distributive negotiation.

Participants read a transcript of this hypothetical negotiation between themselves and the salesperson, where responses by the salesperson were highlighted and assigned either the name "Emma" or "Mike" as our gender conditions, and then completed post-questionnaires (see Appendix A for the study details). Our transcripts were taken from actual negotiations conducted in prior research, where participants employed either a direct or curious negotiation approach (Mislin et al. 2023).

Participants assigned to the Ask with Curiosity condition read a scenario in which Emma or Mike engaged in the negotiation by focusing on understanding the other party's (i.e., the participant's) interests and needs. The Ask with Curiosity responses from Emma or Mike included: *(1) "Hi! I'm curious. . .what are you looking for in a coffee supplier?" (2) "Great to hear. Can you tell me more about the fair trade practices you're looking for?" and (3) "That sounds very reasonable. I understand that you value sustainable practices and we can definitely deliver that. We pay our coffee growers a fair living wage."* (See Appendix A for the full transcript).

Participants assigned to the Ask Directly condition read a scenario in which the salesperson Emma or Mike engaged in the negotiation in a straightforward and individually focused manner, concerned solely with the price and not understanding the other party's (i.e., the participant's) needs or interests. The Ask Directly responses from Emma or Mike included the following: *(1) "Hey. . .We offer great coffee," (2) "I can offer 7.60/lb," and (3) "Let me offer you a price of 7.40/lb. We have sustainable practices and we don't change our prices during the contract"*.

4.1.3. Measures

Manipulation check. We asked participants to identify the gender of their counterparts ("a man named Mike" or "a woman named Emma") in the transcript. Three participants answered the question inaccurately. In addition, we asked participants which negotiation style they thought best describes the salesperson's approach to negotiation (direct or curious). Thirty-nine participants answered this question inconsistently with the negotiation approach condition to which they were assigned. We omitted these participants

from our analysis consistent with our pre-registration, thus, the final sample includes 198 participants.

Social outcome. We measured the social outcome using both willingness to work and relationship perceptions. We measured participants' *willingness to work* with their counterparts using three items (Bowles et al. 2007) (1 = *not at all* to 7 = *extremely*). The items are as follows: (1) "How beneficial is this negotiated agreement for you, the food and beverage director of the Elliot Hotel?", (2) "How much do you think you will enjoy working with the Truman Coffee sales rep?", and (3) "How likely is it that you will stand to gain by having a working relationship with this Truman Coffee sales rep?" (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.88).

Participants' *relationship* perceptions were measured using five items (Bowles and Babcock 2013) (1 = *disagree completely* to 7 = *agree completely*). These items are as follows: (1) "The sales rep cares about relationships", (2) "The sales rep seems like a people person", (3) "The sales rep puts people first", (4) "Having good relationships with customers is important to this sales rep", and (5) "This sales rep *does not* seem to care about maintaining good relationships with customers" (reverse-coded) (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.94).

Negotiation outcome. We measured the negotiation outcome with the participants' willingness to agree to deal terms using three items (Bowles et al. 2007) (1 = *not at all* to 7 = *extremely*). The items are as follows: (1) "I would definitely grant this request", (2) "I would definitely agree to these deal terms", and (3) "I would walk away from this deal" (reverse-coded) (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.95).

Warmth. We measured participants' perceptions of warmth using four items. (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very much*) (Wojciszke 1994). These items are warm, kind, helpful, and friendly (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.95).

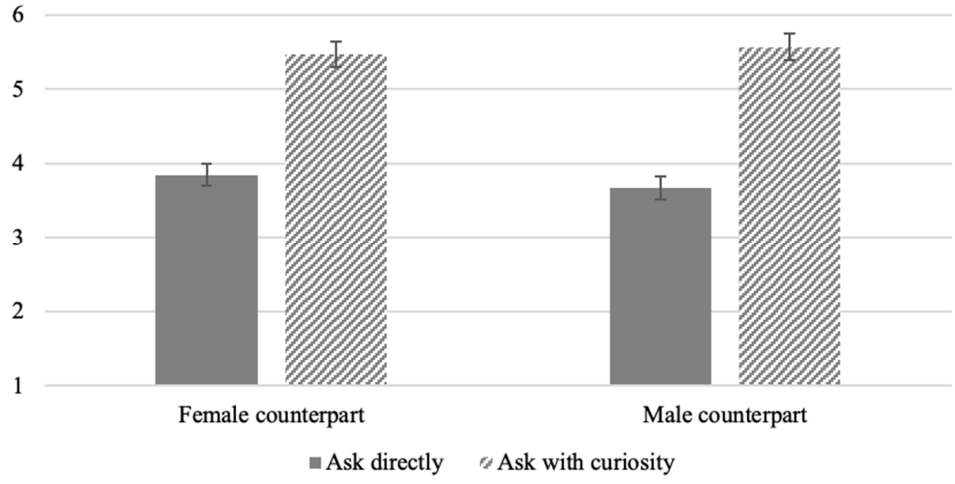
4.2. Results

Hypotheses testing. We tested whether asking directly for a good price led to more positive social and negotiation outcomes for men than for women. We compared women's and men's social and negotiation outcomes in the Ask Directly condition using *t*-tests. We did not replicate the gender's main effect found in prior research for asking directly (see Figure 1a–c for condition means).[2] The results of the *t*-tests revealed there were no significant differences in the Ask Directly condition between men and women in their social outcomes in terms of willingness to work ($p = 0.772$) and relationship perceptions ($p = 0.836$) or the negotiation outcome ($p = 0.508$). Since we find women incur no greater social cost of asking than men, we do not find support for Hypothesis 1a. Our analyses below examine the effects of displayed curiosity for social and negotiation outcomes of both men and women.

We found significant effects of the negotiation approach on social and negotiation outcomes. The effect of the negotiation approach on a willingness to work was significant ($F(1, 198) = 114.09$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.37$). Specifically, asking with curiosity ($M = 5.52$, $SD = 0.88$) significantly increased the participant's willingness to work with a counterpart (social outcome) compared to asking directly ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.31$, $t(193.05) = 11.22$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.53$).

The effect of the negotiation approach on relationship perceptions was also significant ($F(1, 198) = 244.76$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.56$). Participants had more positive relationship perceptions (social outcome) with a counterpart who used a curious approach ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 0.80$) than a counterpart who used a direct approach ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 1.23$, $t(191.01) = 14.62$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 2.24$).

Finally, the negotiation approach had a significant effect on willingness to agree to deal terms ($F(1, 196) = 108.54$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.36$). Asking with curiosity ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.64$) significantly increased the participant's willingness to agree to deal terms (negotiation outcome) compared to asking directly ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.12$, $t(181.66) = 9.85$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.49$). These findings provide support for Hypotheses 1b and 1c.



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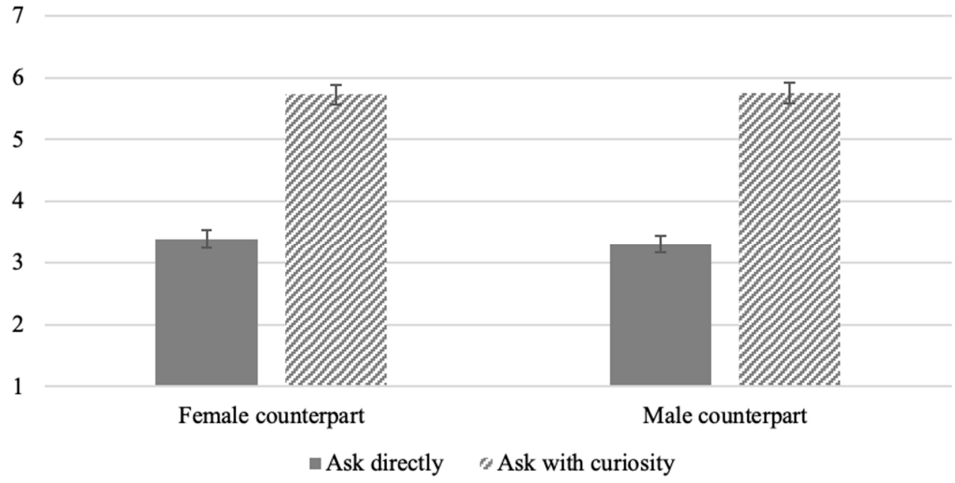

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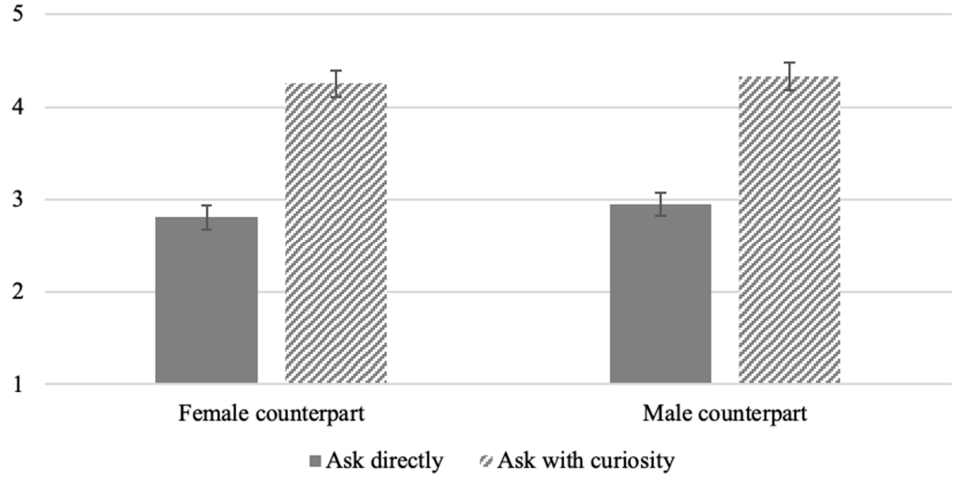


(**c**)

Figure 1. (**a**) Effects of the experimental conditions on willingness to work (social outcome). (**b**) Effects of the experimental conditions on relationship perceptions (social outcome). (**c**) Effects of the experimental conditions on willingness to agree to deal terms (negotiation outcome). Note: Error bars represent ± S.E.M.

Mediation analyses. The effect of the negotiation approach on perceived warmth was significant ($F(1, 198) = 199.60$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.51$). We found that asking with curiosity ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.56$) significantly increased perceptions of warmth compared to asking directly ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.92$, $t(187.20) = 15.01$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 2.03$). We performed 5000-sample bootstrapping using Model 4 of Hayes's (2013) PROCESS macro to test whether warmth perceptions mediate the relationship between the negotiation approach and social or negotiation outcomes. Warmth perceptions mediated the effects of the negotiation approach on willingness to work (social outcome) ($B = 1.25$, $SE = 0.16$, 95% CI [0.95, 1.56]), relationship perceptions (social outcome) ($B = 1.61$, $SE = 0.14$, 95% CI [1.35, 1.89]) and the negotiation outcome ($B = 0.77$, $SE = 0.14$, 95% CI [0.49, 1.04]). These results provide support for Hypothesis 1d.

4.3. Discussion

In this study, we found that asking with curiosity (vs. asking directly) enhances negotiators' social and negotiation outcomes through improved warmth perceptions. We did not replicate the prior research findings that men are perceived more positively and receive better negotiation outcomes when they ask directly compared to women. Strategic displays of curiosity as a negotiation strategy enhanced social perceptions of both men and women.

Prior research has tested these arguments in contexts where women ask for their own benefit (e.g., salary negotiation) rather than the benefit of others (e.g., for their company) (Bowles and Babcock 2013; Amanatullah and Morris 2010). While our study context featured a salesperson negotiating on behalf of their company, they also stood to gain personally through a bonus payment associated with the price secured. This change in context could potentially explain why our results were not replicated, considering that previous studies have indicated that women do not always face negative consequences when negotiating on behalf of others (Bowles and Babcock 2013; Amanatullah and Morris 2010). In Study 2, we revised the context so the focal negotiator stood to gain as an individual in the negotiation and was not negotiating on behalf of their company. We also included a 'no ask' comparison condition to examine whether asking with curiosity can produce social perceptions at the same level as not asking.

5. Study 2

5.1. Materials and Method

5.1.1. Participants and Design

We recruited 300 participants (303 participated) through Prolific Academic (AsPredicted #144101), randomly assigned to one of six experimental conditions: (Gender of target negotiator: Male vs. Female) × (Negotiation approach: No Ask vs. Ask Directly vs. Ask with Curiosity). The participants averaged 42.36 years ($SD = 14.45$), and 151 (49.8%) identified as women, 142 (46.9%) as men, 3 as transgender, and 7 as nonbinary. Two hundred twenty participants identified as White/Caucasian (72.60%), 7 as South Asian (2.3%), 28 as Black/African American (9.2%), 19 as Latino/Hispanic (6.3%), 18 as East Asian (5.9%), and 11 identified as "Other" (3.6%). We calculated our study's sample size in advance to ensure it had an 80% chance of detecting important differences with an effect size of 0.35, meeting Cohen's (2013) criteria for medium practical significance while keeping the resource requirements reasonable.

5.1.2. Procedure

Participants imagined themselves in the role of a supervisor conducting a performance review with an employee (adapted from Bowles et al. 2007). The participants were randomly assigned to read one of six interview transcripts (2 [Gender of employee: Male, Female] × 3 [Employee's negotiation approach: No Ask, Direct Ask, Curious Ask]). They then answered questions about their perceptions of the employee and indicated the level of salary increase they would allocate to this employee.

All participants were instructed to imagine themselves in the role of a supervisor conducting a performance review with their employee, either Emma or Mike, who had been a valuable team member. Participants were told that they were content with their employee's performance but had not planned for a salary increase. They read a transcript of a performance review between this employee and themselves, where responses by the employee were highlighted and assigned either the name "Emma" or "Mike" as our gender conditions (see Appendix B for study details). In the performance review, they praised their employee and set goals for the coming year. Following this, the employee expressed gratitude for the feedback and willingness to take on additional responsibilities. Then, in the No Ask condition, the employee stated they had no further questions, while in the Direct Ask condition, they straightforwardly requested a salary increase. In the Curious Ask condition, the employee expressed curiosity about the link between performance evaluations and salary increases.

5.1.3. Measures

Manipulation check. As in Study 1, we asked participants to identify the gender of their counterpart ("a man named Mike" or "a woman named Emma") in the transcript. We also asked participants which negotiation style they thought best describes the employee's approach (direct or curious). Fifty-nine participants answered this question inconsistently with the negotiation approach condition (direct or curious) to which they were assigned. We omitted these participants from our analysis consistent with our pre-registration, thus, the final sample includes 244 participants.

Social outcome. We used the same measures used in Study 1: willingness to work (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.93) and relationship perceptions (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.89).

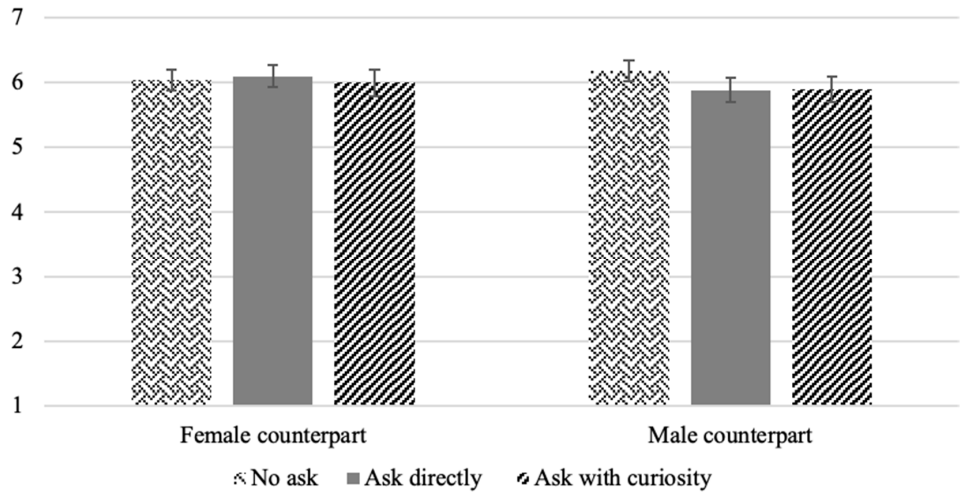
Negotiation outcome. We asked about the percentage increase in salary that the participants would grant to the employee.

Warmth. We used the same measure used in Study 1 (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.91).

5.2. Results

Hypotheses testing. In our second attempt to replicate prior research findings, we tested whether directly asking had a backlash effect on women by resulting in worse social perceptions and negotiation outcomes compared to men. Specifically, we compared women's and men's social and negotiation outcomes in the Ask Directly condition using *t*-tests. The results of the *t*-tests revealed that directly asking did not affect women differently than men in terms of social perceptions (willingness to work (p = 0.851), relationship perceptions (p = 0.726), or negotiation outcomes (percentage salary increase (p = 0.966)). Thus, once again, the gender effect found in prior research for directly asking was not replicated (see Figure 2a–c for condition means), and thus, we do not find support for Hypothesis 1a.[3]

We examined whether the negotiation approach affects social and negotiation outcomes. First, we examined whether the negotiation approach predicted willingness to work using a one-way ANOVA, entering the negotiation approach as the independent variable and willingness to work as the dependent variable. We found that the negotiation approach does not have a significant effect on willingness to work (p = 0.613). A pairwise comparison of the condition means indicated that there were no significant differences between the No Ask, Direct Ask, and Curious Ask condition participants in their willingness to work with the negotiation counterpart ($0.358 < p_s < 0.806$).



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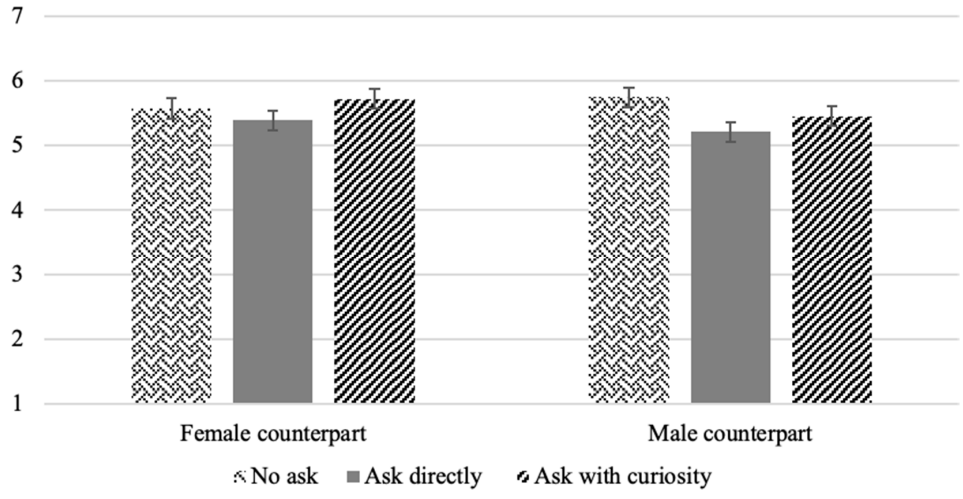

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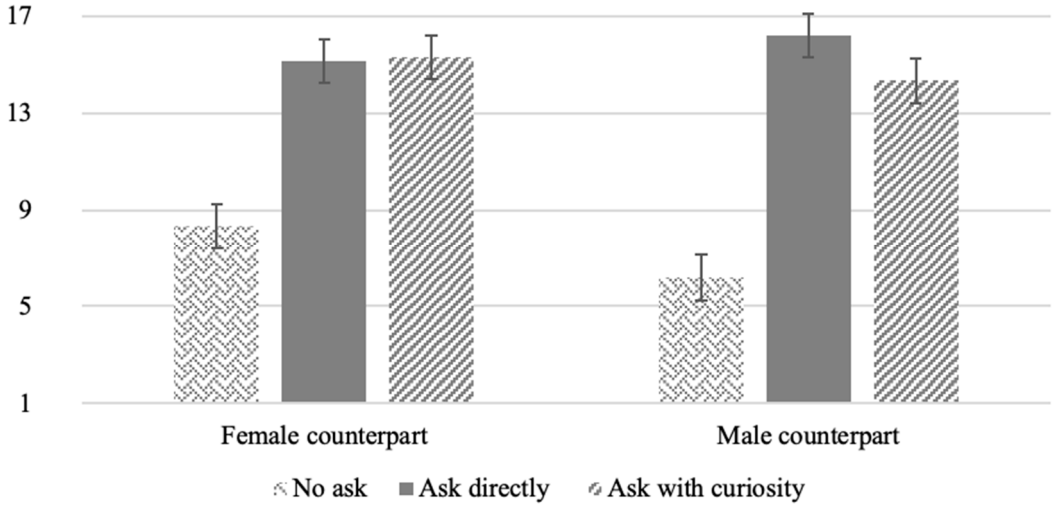

(c)

Figure 2. (**a**) Effects of the experimental conditions on willingness to work (social outcome). (**b**) Effects of the experimental conditions on relationship perceptions (social outcome). (**c**) Effects of the experimental conditions on the negotiation outcome (% raise). Note: Error bars represent ± S.E.M.

Second, the negotiation approach had a near significant effect on relationship perceptions in the predicted direction ($F(2, 244) = 2.58$, $p = 0.078$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.02$). Pairwise comparisons indicated participants in the No Ask condition ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.03$) perceived their relationship with the counterpart significantly more positively than those in the Direct Ask condition (($M = 5.30$, $SD = 1.10$), $t(179) = 2.22$, $p = 0.028$, $d = 0.33$). There were no differences between the participants in the No Ask and Curious conditions in their relationship perceptions ($p = 0.632$). Participants in the Direct Ask and Curious conditions also did not differ in their relationship perceptions ($p = 0.130$). This finding suggests that while asking directly (vs. not asking) has a social cost that lowers positive perceptions of the relationship, we did not observe this social cost when the employee asked with curiosity since the relationship perceptions were the same as when not asking. While we cannot conclude that asking with curiosity (vs. directly) produces strictly better social outcomes, we did find that negotiators who ask with curiosity do not incur the social cost (vs. no ask) that participants incur when asking directly (vs. no ask) (Hypothesis 1b).

Third, the negotiation approach had a significant effect on the percentage raise granted ($F(2, 238) = 33.33$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.21$). Specifically, participants in the No Ask condition ($M = 8.57\%$, $SD = 5.20$) granted a significantly lower raise to the counterpart than those in the Ask Directly (($M = 14.82\%$, $SD = 6.93$, $t(148.94) = -6.67$, $p < 0.001$, $d = -1.03$) and Ask Curiously (($M = 16.07\%$, $SD = 7.01$), $t(106.79) = -7.26$, $p < 0.001$, $d = -1.25$) conditions. There were no significant differences between the Direct and Curious Ask conditions in the amount of raise granted ($p = 0.235$). This supports our prediction that asking with curiosity does not reduce the value claimed compared to asking directly (Hypothesis 1c).

Taken together, these results support our prediction that curiously asking results in a better negotiation outcome than not asking, and this successful negotiation outcome does not come at the cost of lower relationship perceptions that negotiators incur when asking directly.

Mediation analyses. The effect of the negotiation approach on perceived warmth was significant ($F(2, 244) = 7.12$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.06$). The pairwise comparisons indicated that focal negotiators in the curious condition were seen as significantly warmer ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.74$) than those in the Direct Ask condition (($M = 3.67$, SD = 0.80), $t(143) = 3.11$, $p = 0.002$, $d = 0.52$). Similarly, focal negotiators in the No Ask condition ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.83$) were seen as warmer than those in the Direct Ask condition (($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.80$), $t(179) = 3.37$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.50$). There were no differences between the participants in the No Ask and Curious Ask conditions in their warmth perceptions ($p = 0.975$). We did not, however, find that warmth mediated the relationship between the negotiation approach and willingness to work (95% CI [−0.14, 0.08]), relationship perceptions (95% CI [−0.15, 0.08]), and the negotiation outcome (95% CI [−0.31, 0.10]) (5000-sample bootstrapping using Model 4 of Hayes's (2013) PROCESS macro). Thus, Hypothesis 1d was not supported.

5.3. Discussion

In this study, we shifted the negotiation context to one where the focal negotiator benefits directly from the negotiation outcome. We did not replicate the previous research findings that men and women differ in their social and negotiation outcomes when asking directly. We did find asking, whether with curiosity or directly, improved the negotiation outcomes for men and women. The pairwise comparisons indicated that asking with curiosity helped to maintain positive relationship perceptions, while directly asking lowered perceptions of the relationship compared to not asking. This shows using curiosity as a negotiation strategy has the potential to mitigate the negative relational implications of asking directly, without sacrificing the economic outcomes that come with asking. Given the overall effect of our experimental conditions on relationship perceptions is marginally significant ($p = 0.078$), future research is needed to more clearly disentangle the effects of asking (whether curiously or directly) and not asking on relationship perceptions. In addition, focal negotiators who asked with curiosity were perceived more warmly compared to those who asked directly.

This study provides additional support for the potential benefits of strategic displays of curiosity in negotiations. In our second attempt to replicate the prior research showing backlash effects for women who ask directly, we altered the context of this study to involve a workplace negotiation where the focal negotiator stood to gain personally from the negotiation outcome. We did not find that women were perceived differently than men when they asked directly; asking directly negatively affected perceptions of the relationship for both men and women compared to not asking. Also, by holding constant the performance of the focal negotiator featured in the performance review, we may have interfered with our ability to capture differences in our second social outcome measure, willingness to work. In hindsight, the lack of observed differences may have resulted from the counterpart's existing status as an employee in the organization and their previously demonstrated high-performance levels. This could have influenced participants' perceptions, potentially leading to uniformly high willingness to work ratings across all experimental conditions, which may indicate a ceiling effect. Overall, our findings suggest conveying curiosity does not hinder and can sometimes help mitigate the detrimental effects of asking on relationship perceptions.

Despite not replicating the prior research finding women incur a greater social cost for asking than men, we acknowledge a body of literature supporting this gender backlash effect (e.g., Bowles et al. 2007; Mazei et al. 2015), as well as work finding that women are sometimes reluctant or anxious negotiators because they anticipate backlash when negotiating for themselves (Babcock et al. 2006). Our findings suggest displays of curiosity can help both men and women and certainly do not hurt women's social and negotiation outcomes. In Study 3, we investigated whether women are more likely to negotiate salary and are more comfortable when they are encouraged to ask while displaying curiosity as compared to asking directly.

6. Study 3

6.1. Materials and Method

Participants and Design. One hundred fifty-nine participants from Prolific Academic participated in a pre-registered experiment for monetary compensation (AsPredicted #158690). The sample size for our study was determined beforehand, aiming to achieve an 80% likelihood of detecting significant differences with an effect size of 0.35, in line with Cohen's (2013) standards for medium practical significance, all while maintaining reasonable resource constraints. The participants were a balanced sample (male/female) of university students residing in the U.S., assigned to one of the two conditions as follows: (2 [Negotiation approach: Ask with Curiosity vs. Ask Directly]). Participants were, on average, 28.42 years old (with a range from 18 to 60 years, SD = 9.25). A total of 83 participants identified as White/Caucasian (52%), 30 as Black/African American (19%), 17 as East Asian (11%), 16 as Latino/Hispanic (10%), 6 as South Asian (4%), and 7 participants identified as "Other" (4%).

Procedures. Participants imagined that they were offered a summer internship with a reputable company in their field and that they were going to meet with the prospective supervisor to discuss the job, including their responsibilities and company expectations. They were told there had been no mention of pay and that it was not clear whether this company paid for internship hours. Even if they do, it was unclear what the appropriate range would be. Participants received tips should they choose to negotiate their salary.

Those in the Ask with Curiosity condition read the following instructions:

> *Research shows that* ***approaching a negotiation like this with curiosity can be a rewarding and effective strategy****. Sure, think about what you want, but then when you go into the meeting,* ***just be curious****. Ask some questions so you can better understand your employer's perspective and interests. (e.g., Would you be open to talking with me about my compensation?) Then once you're ready to ask for what you want, you will be more likely to get what you are asking for.*

Those in the Ask Directly condition read the following instructions:

*Research shows that **being direct can be a rewarding and effective strategy**. Sure, think about what you want, but when you go into the meeting, **negotiate directly with your supervisor**. Ask directly for what you consider good pay and tell your expectations to your employer (e.g., I would like to be paid a reasonable wage for internship hours). The more you convey your expectations of good pay, the more likely it is that you will get better pay for your internship.*

Then, participants answered questions related to the scenario they were presented. See Appendix C for more information.

6.2. Measures

Manipulation check. We asked the participants to indicate the negotiation strategy that was recommended for their internship negotiation (be direct, be curious, or I do not recall). One participant did not remember their negotiation instructions accurately and thus was omitted from the analysis consistent with our pre-registration, leaving 158 participants in the final sample.

Comfort with negotiating. We measured how anxious, relaxed, nervous, comfortable, and embarrassed participants would feel using the suggested negotiation strategy (adapted from Bowles et al. 2007) (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*) (*Cronbach's alpha* = 0.90).[4]

6.3. Results

We conducted a two-way ANOVA, entering the negotiation approach (curious, direct) and gender (female, male)[5] as the independent variables and comfort with negotiating as the dependent variable. We found a significant effect of the negotiation approach on comfort with negotiating such that participants felt more comfortable using a curious approach than a direct approach ($F(1,156) = 12.83$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.08$). There was also a significant effect of gender on comfort with negotiating—women felt less comfortable negotiating compared to men ($F(1,156) = 11.65$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.07$). The interaction effect of the negotiation approach and gender on comfort with negotiating was near significant ($p = 0.065$). Examining the pairwise comparisons, we found that women ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 1.04$) felt less comfortable using a direct approach compared to men (($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.48$), $t(78) = 3.67$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.82$), providing support for Hypothesis 2a. Women felt more comfortable using a curious approach ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 12.74$) than a direct approach (($M = 2.74$, $SD = 1.04$), $t(76) = 4.25$, $p < 0.001$, d = 964), supporting Hypothesis 2b. Men had similar comfort levels using a direct or curious approach ($p = 0.267$) (See Figure 3).

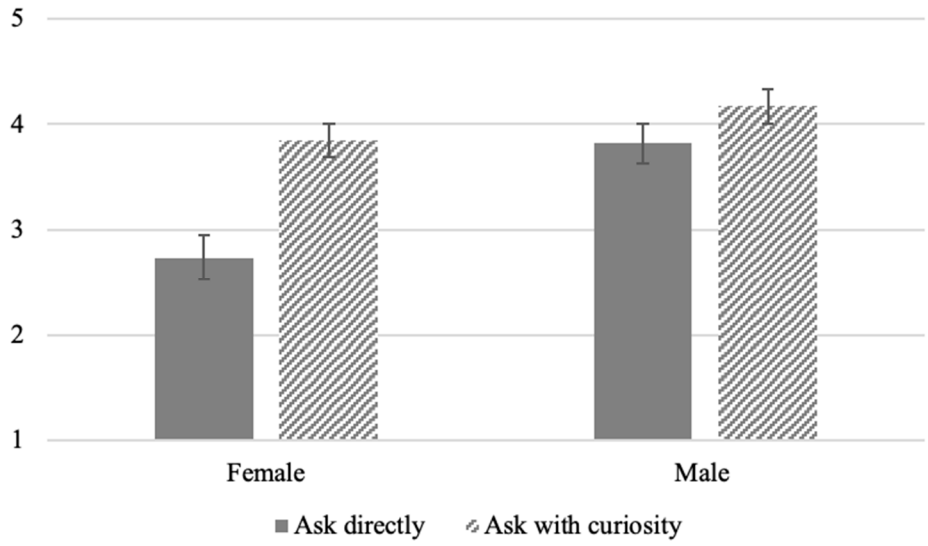

Figure 3. Effects of the experimental conditions on comfort with negotiating. Note: Error bars represent ± S.E.M.

6.4. Discussion

We found that when participants were told they were going to negotiate their salary, women were less comfortable asking directly compared to men. Asking with curiosity (versus asking directly) increased the level of comfort women experienced when negotiating. These findings align with research from Small et al. (2007), finding women were more likely to initiate and were less intimidated by negotiations framed as opportunities for asking rather than negotiating. These findings underline the importance of promoting negotiation strategies that mitigate the anxiety women feel about advocating for higher pay (Babcock et al. 2006) and align with the idea that women anticipate a backlash in negotiation settings. We anticipate that the advantages of entering negotiations with curiosity will be limited to scenarios where women typically feel uneasy about negotiating. In contexts where women are already at ease initiating negotiations, this approach may not significantly alter perceptions (Bear 2011; Bear and Babcock 2012).

7. General Discussion

Our studies provide a promising avenue for future research on the benefits of curiosity for women to manage and maintain social perceptions in negotiations. While gathering new information through curiosity helps negotiators uncover integrative potential (Fisher et al. 2011; Pinkley et al. 1995), our studies find that demonstrating social curiosity can also help negotiators enhance social outcomes by protecting perceptions of their relationship. Curiosity was equally beneficial for male and female negotiators, and women were more comfortable promoting their interests with curiosity compared to asking directly in an agentic negotiation for wages.

7.1. Implications and Contributions

When women self-advocate in competitive situations such as salary negotiations, they can be perceived as violating social norms that women should be kind and communal, experiencing backlash that leaves them less likely to acquire what they ask for compared to their male counterparts (Bowles et al. 2007; Artz et al. 2018; Amanatullah and Morris 2010; Eagly 1987; Rudman and Glick 2001). While our findings indicate that displaying curiosity is an effective strategy for both men and women, it is particularly noteworthy that this approach does not incur social costs for women. This aspect is significant, considering women generally have fewer negotiation options at their disposal without facing backlash. Asking with curiosity mitigates the negative social consequences of directly asking while maintaining the value claimed (Study 1 and Study 2). Thus, interest and attention conveyed through curiosity convey positive intentions (warmth) and promote positive relationships without damaging the negotiation outcome.

Prior research found women are reluctant to ask for what they want because they anticipate backlash (Bowles et al. 2007; Amanatullah and Morris 2010). In Study 3, we tested whether encouraging women and men to follow a curious (vs. direct) approach increased comfort in initiating a negotiation. We did find women feel more comfortable asking with curiosity than asking directly in a negotiation. We also found that men feel equally comfortable employing both a direct and a curious approach in their negotiations. This suggests an opportunity to train women on the benefits of displaying curiosity in their negotiations so they might mitigate the social consequences of asking and enhance their overall negotiation outcomes.

We did not replicate the prior research finding that women experience more backlash for negotiating than men in negotiations even though we employed similar settings as in previous studies (e.g., self-beneficial compensation negotiation). This is consistent with the number of counter-stereotypical or non-significant effects (40 of 123 effect sizes) identified in Mazei and colleagues' meta-analysis of 51 studies (2015). Other recent research also did not replicate past findings that women who ask experience more backlash than men in negotiations (Hightower 2019). It is possible that societal norms have changed over time, and the shift toward a greater representation of women at work has reduced the

backlash associated with asking for women. This finding may also reflect a shift in the times and perceptions captured by recent negotiation research, finding women are initiating negotiations more (Kugler et al. 2018) and sometimes even more often than men (Kray et al. 2023). It is also plausible that backlash has diminished, or as our studies suggest, directly asking can sometimes carry a social cost for both men and women. Our findings suggest it is not only *asking* that matters for social and negotiation outcomes but *how* they ask.

7.2. Limitations and Future Directions

Our studies, consistent with previous research, used a scenario-based methodology in assessing whether negotiators are perceived differently when they ask directly compared to asking with curiosity. Gender norms may be reinforced more strongly in interactive negotiations and lead negotiators to make stronger inferences about their counterparts. Thus, we might expect a gender difference to emerge in such a setting and possibly a stronger positive effect of curiosity in mitigating a backlash in interactive negotiations. Relatedly, participants in our first two studies were asked to imagine themselves in the role of buyer and employer, respectively. Participants' own negotiation behaviors may differ from those described in the transcripts had these been actual interactions. Since our focus is on participants' evaluations of a negotiator, we used a scenario methodology to control for the nature of interactions, but future studies may benefit from expanding beyond scenario methodology and testing the effectiveness of curiosity (vs. direct ask) in actual interactions.

While we find that displayed curiosity promotes positive relationship perceptions by increasing perceived warmth (Study 1), an avenue for future research would be to understand whether curiosity reduces the social cost of asking beyond enhancing warmth perceptions. Social curiosity refers to the tendency to engage with, explore, and be interested in other people's ideas, emotions, behaviors, and experiences (Kashdan et al. 2020a). When people display social curiosity by showing interest in their counterpart's interests and ideas, even if different from their own, it could convey a sense of competence or confidence that may not be apparent when simply negotiating with warmth (i.e., showing positive intentions toward the other), and this might enhance the legitimacy of their request. Future research should examine additional mechanisms to develop our understanding of how displayed curiosity impacts perceptions of the negotiator.

Study 3 examined how women and men feel about using strategic displays of curiosity in salary negotiations. This work could be expanded to examine other historically underrepresented groups. Future research might also explore whether women feel more comfortable using the curiosity strategy because they expect to be seen as less violating of feminine norms. It would also be interesting to test whether increased comfort using this strategy lessens in contexts where women are already more comfortable and likely to initiate negotiations (e.g., Bear 2011).

Curiosity may not have universally positive effects on negotiations. While our research focused on the social curiosity facet of workplace curiosity, *Openness to People's Ideas*, there are three other facets of curiosity present in the workplace (Kashdan et al. 2020a). These other facets have not been shown to directly impact social perceptions, but they may have indirect effects through performance. For example, workers who demonstrate a greater ability to cope with uncertainty and ambiguity (*Stress Tolerance*) may be easier to work with, or workers with a greater need to resolve information gaps (*Deprivation Sensitivity*) may perform better at work. These facets of curiosity may affect everyday negotiations at work. Other research has identified a dark side of social curiosity, 'covert social curiosity', representing a hidden or explicit interest in other people's words and actions (Kashdan et al. 2020b). Future research might explore when curiosity can go awry and might impede the negotiation process by adversely impacting social perceptions.

Our results are constrained by the predominantly White sample in our studies, and future research should examine a more diverse sample of participants in this context. Researchers have found that differences in negotiation and agentic behaviors are shaped by both gender and race, underlying the importance of intersectional analyses (Toosi et al.

2019; Leigh and Desai 2023; Livingston et al. 2012). Gender norms may vary in different racial groups (Crenshaw 1989), making it important to expand this exploration to include a more diverse sample. While our sample is limited in its equal representation of racial groups, future research should examine whether curiosity might help reduce the social cost of asking for negotiators who violate role expectations based on race and whether race impacts how displays of curiosity are perceived by observers.

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Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: All data files and code are available from the Open Science Framework (OSF) database (https://osf.io/7zbdf/?view_only=b8814cb6ea3d422e814f1de4a23968ae accessed on 1 February 2024).

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A. Study 1

Background Information (given to all participants):

Imagine you are the Food & Beverage Director for the Elliot Hotel in Ithaca, NY. You stepped into this position six months ago under a mandate to increase the cost-effectiveness of the hotel's purchasing practices.

The hotel has been in search of a new coffee supplier after the current vendor raised prices in the middle of the contract. You recently set up a meeting with the East Coast Vice President of Sales for Truman Coffee after conducting a blind taste test of multiple coffee brands. Truman Coffee far surpassed other brands, with tasters preferring Truman Coffee over your current vendor by a margin of 3 to 1.

Truman Coffee also follows a "fair trade" policy which is appealing to the stakeholders of the hotel. However, Truman Coffee's bid asks a much higher price than your current vendor. You are aware Truman Coffee is a superior product, but cost-cutting is a priority for the Hotel and a responsibility of your position.

You set up a meeting with the VP of Sales to negotiate the price of the contract. You have never met the VP of Sales for Truman Coffee, but colleagues have told you that Truman salespeople earn a commission for every cent above their minimum acceptable price, resulting in a personal bonus payment directly impacting their salary. You have heard that $7.25 is their minimum acceptable price.

While your boss has authorized you to pay as much as $7.40 per pound, and you would like to get as close to $7.25 as possible knowing the salesperson will negotiate for a higher price in order to receive an additional commission payment.

ASK WITH CURIOSITY (Ask Manipulation):
Assigned to negotiate with Emma or Mike (Gender Manipulation)
You will be reading the transcript of a negotiation which took place between

- **You**, Food & Beverage Director of the Elliott Hotel, and
- **Emma** or **Mike**, East Coast Vice President of Sales for Truman Coffee

Emma or **Mike**: Hi! I'm curious. . .what are you looking for in a coffee supplier?

You: I am looking for fair trade practices and good coffee

Emma or **Mike**: Great to hear. Can you tell me more about the fair trade practices you're looking for?

You: We hope to buy from a company that pays their employees fairly, gets their product in ethical practices and follows the terms of the contract.

Emma or **Mike**: That sounds very reasonable. I understand that you value sustainable practices and we can definitely deliver that. We pay our coffee growers a fair living wage.

You: That is great to hear. We are very hopeful to work with you. I understand your bid price is $7.94. Are you willing to negotiate that price?

Emma or **Mike**: You said that price also matters to you. I can give you a fair price but that will also reflect the fair wages we pay our workers. We can come down a bit

You: Great. I have a friend who works with the Colonial Williamsburg and from my understanding, they pay $6.95 per pound. Now, I know they have been a buyer for a longer time, so are you willing to start selling to us for $7.00?

Emma or **Mike**: Love that you're bringing up one of our favorite customers. They are local though, so we don't have to pay them shipping prices. We can offer you 7.60.

You: I understand the local delivery difference, but I believe we can offer your company more publicity in the hotel. Our hotel is visited by a wider range of people than Williamsburg, so we can generate more potential clients for you. Because we would be generating you more publicity, can you do $7.30?

Emma or **Mike**: We do love publicity (and students!) We could offer you 7.50 I'm curious. Is there anything that is important to you that I should know?

You: That's great to hear. Our hotel's close proximity to the Cornell campus and serving their students and faculty is another important value for us. The most we would be willing to buy for is $7.40. How does that sound?

Emma or **Mike**: I can do that for you

ASK DIRECTLY (Ask Manipulation):
Assigned to negotiate with Emma or Mike (Gender Manipulation)
You will be reading the transcript of a negotiation which took place between

- **You**, Food & Beverage Director of the Elliott Hotel, and
- **Emma** or **Mike**, East Coast Vice President of Sales for Truman Coffee

Emma or Mike: Hey

You: Hello!

Emma or **Mike**: We offer great coffee

You: So I see that you have offered 7.94 as your original bid price. . .let's discuss through this!

Emma or **Mike**: I can offer 7.60/lb

You: My current provider is $6.00 so that's still a little too high for me

Emma or **Mike**: let me offer you a price of 7.40/lb

we have sustainable practices and we don't change our prices during the contract

You: I know from a friend that you are providing Colonial Williamsburg at $6.95

Can we get a little bit closer to that?

Emma or **Mike**: they buy more. 100,000

7.40 is my best price

You: How about $7.20 to meet in the middle

Emma or **Mike**: Lets make a deal at 7.40

Our coffee is really premium

You: I understand but at $1.40 over my current provider seems a little steep.

$7.30?

Emma or **Mike**: we have sustainable practices and guaranteed fixed rate

7.40 is my best price

You: That is also important to me.

Are you sure that is the lowest you can go?

Not even $7.35?

Emma or **Mike**: yes. 7.40 is my best price. our coffee is premium and sustainable

Appendix B. Study 2

Background Information (given to all participants who were assigned Emma or Mike):

Imagine that you are a supervisor and will engage in a performance review conversation with one of your employees, (Emma or Mike). (Emma or Mike) joined your team a few years ago. (She's/He's) been instrumental to delivering on the team's key projects and quickly become an important part of the team. You are pleased with (her/his) performance and will deliver (her/his) annual performance feedback soon. While you can discuss (her/his) salary and give (her/him) a salary increase this year, you haven't planned to offer it.

(Emma or Mike) comes into your office to discuss the performance feedback. During this session, you review (her/his) excellent progress on key tasks and (her/his) contributions to the team. You also set some goals for next year that involve taking on additional responsibilities on the company's new initiatives.

After your review, [Mike/Emma] responds:

(Negotiation transcripts begin; participants were assigned 1 of 6 transcripts for each condition as follows: Ask Manipulation [No Ask, Direct, Curious] × Gender Manipulation [Emma or Mike])

After your review, (Emma or Mike) responds:

No Ask	Curious Ask	Direct Ask
Mike/Emma: *Thanks for taking the time to give me performance feedback. The feedback you provided is very clear to me. I am flexible, I could take on additional responsibilities next year to develop my skillset.*	***Mike/Emma:*** *Thanks for taking the time to give me performance feedback. The feedback you provided is very clear to me. I am flexible, I could take on additional responsibilities next year to develop my skillset.*	***Mike/Emma:*** *Thanks for taking the time to give me performance feedback. The feedback you provided is very clear to me. I am flexible, I could take on additional responsibilities next year to develop my skillset.*
Then, you tell him/her that you could end the session if s/he has no questions, to which Mike/Emma responds:	Then, you tell him/her that you could end the session if s/he has no questions, to which Mike/Emma responds:	Then, you tell him/her that you could end the session if s/he has no questions, to which Mike/Emma responds:
Mike/Emma: *I don't have any additional questions.* [the meeting ends]	***Mike/Emma:*** *I am also interested in discussing my salary. . . Would you be open to talking with me about a salary increase? I am interested in understanding how performance evaluations are linked to salary increases.*	***Mike/Emma:*** What was not clear, however, was whether I will be receiving a salary increase. Given my performance, I think I deserve a salary increase.

No Ask	Curious Ask	Direct Ask
	You don't immediately respond to Mike/Emma's request and Mike/Emma continues: ***Mike/Emma:*** *I feel good about the work I have done and am glad to hear you have been pleased with my performance.* *I understand we may have different perspectives and I want to hear yours. I think I should be paid at the top of the salary range for my position given my high performance and the fact that I will be taking on additional responsibilities. I am curious to hear whether you agree or have a different perspective.* You explain your thinking and then ask Mike/Emma to continue discussing his/her expectations with you. S/He responds: ***Mike/Emma:*** *I understand your constraints related to salary increases, as well as your expectations. I am thinking of something in the 25–30% of salary range.* *Salary increases may not be standard in my position, but given my excellent performance and additional responsibilities, I'd like to hear your thoughts on whether that would make me eligible to receive one.*	You don't immediately respond to Mike/Emma's request and Mike/Emma continues: ***Mike/Emma:*** *I feel good about the work I have done and am glad to hear you have been pleased with my performance.* *I think I should be paid at the top of the salary range for my position given my high performance and the fact that I will be taking additional responsibilities. This is really important to me; I think I deserve it.* You explain your thinking and then ask Mike/Emma to continue discussing his/her expectations with you. S/He responds: ***Mike/Emma:*** *I am thinking of something in the 25–30% of the salary range. Not doubling my salary or anything. Salary increases may not be standard in my position, but listen, I promise you I'll earn it.*

After the participants finished reading the transcript, all participants were asked to answer the following questions about the negotiation:

You have the authority to give (Emma or Mike) a significant salary increase, but you also have to consider your tight operating budget.

1. Would you give (Emma or Mike) a salary increase?

   ○ I would grant a **salary increase**.

   ○ No, I would **NOT** give a salary increase.

2. How much of a salary increase would you grant (Emma or Mike)?

Appendix C. Study 3

Background information given to all participants:

Imagine you have been offered a summer internship with a reputable company in your field. Given your interests, qualifications, and skills, this company is a great fit for you. You think that this experience will help you broaden and improve your skill set, likely making you more marketable when you graduate. You are also excited as you see yourself contributing to the company's operations and helping the people you work with in their day-to-day operations.

You received a call from your prospective supervisor confirming your offer. The supervisor wants to meet with you to discuss the job, including your responsibilities and company expectations.

There has been no mention of pay and it's not clear whether this company pays for internship hours. If they do, you have no idea what an appropriate range would be.

You will have a meeting with your supervisor soon and you are considering taking this opportunity to negotiate an hourly pay.

Ask with Curiosity Manipulation:

Negotiation Tip—Be Curious

Should you choose to negotiate your pay with your prospective supervisor, here are some tips for you:

*Research shows that **approaching a negotiation like this with curiosity can be a rewarding and effective strategy**. Sure, think about what you want, but then when you go into the meeting, **just be curious**. Ask some questions so you can better understand your employer's perspective and interests. (e.g., Would you be open to talking with me about my compensation?) Then once you're ready to ask for what you want, you will be more likely to get what you are asking for.*

Ask Directly Manipulation:

Negotiation Tip—Be Direct

Should you choose to negotiate your pay with your prospective supervisor, here are some tips for you:

*Research shows that **being direct can be a rewarding and effective strategy**. Sure, think about what you want, but when you go into the meeting, **negotiate directly with your supervisor**. Ask directly for what you consider good pay and tell your expectations to your employer (e.g., I would like to be paid a reasonable wage for internship hours). The more you convey your expectations of good pay, the more likely it is that you will get better pay for your internship.*

After participants finished reading the negotiation tip subject to their assigned condition, all participants were asked to answer the following questions about the negotiation:

*How likely are you to **negotiate your pay** with your prospective supervisor in your meeting? (1 = very unlikely; 5 = very likely)*

*Do you think negotiating for pay would **negatively affect your relationship** with your supervisor? (1 = very unlikely; 5 = very likely)*

After answering the previous questions, all participants read the following instructions:

*Imagine you **will** be negotiating your pay during this meeting.*

You've decided to negotiate for a good hourly wage because negotiation is crucial to get what we want. Negotiating affects the pay we receive and the positions we get into, ultimately influencing how successful we will be in our lives. It is essential that you negotiate for your pay today.

All participants then proceeded to answer questions about their feelings using the strategy and what rate they would request:

*How **anxious** would you feel using the suggested negotiation strategy of [**being curious or being direct**]? (1 = not at all, 7 = very)*
*How **relaxed** would you feel using the suggested negotiation strategy of [**being curious or being direct**]?*
*How **nervous** would you feel using the suggested negotiation strategy of [**being curious or being direct**]?*
*How **comfortable** would you feel using the suggested negotiation strategy of [**being curious or being direct**]?*
*How **embarrassed** would you feel using the suggested negotiation strategy of [**being curious or being direct**]?*

Finally, participants answered an attention check question and were asked to comment on their negotiation experiences:

Attention check measure:
What was the negotiation strategy that was recommended for your internship negotiation?

1. *Be Direct*
2. *Be Curious*
3. *I do not recall*

Notes

[1] The specific items for the measure of social curiosity in the workplace, Openness to People's Ideas, are, (1) It is important to listen to ideas from people who think differently, (2) I value colleagues with different ideas, (3) I like to hear ideas from colleagues even if they are different from my current line of thinking, and (4) Even when I am confident in my approach to a problem, I like to hear other people's opinions.

[2] Within the curiosity condition, we conducted *t*-tests comparing men and women's social and negotiation outcomes. We find that asking with curiosity did not affect women differently than men in terms of willingness to work ($p = 0.596$), relationship perceptions ($p = 0.907$) or negotiation outcome ($p = 0.543$). Additionally, we conducted three separate two-way ANOVAs entering gender and negotiation approach as the independent variables, and willingness to work, relationship perceptions, and negotiation outcome as the dependent variables, respectively. The interactive effects of gender and negotiation approach on willingness to work ($p = 0.401$), relationship perceptions ($p = 0.725$), or negotiation outcome ($p = 0.839$) were not significant (see Figure 1a–c).

[3] Within the curiosity condition, we conducted *t*-tests comparing men and women's social and negotiation outcomes. We find that asking with curiosity did not affect women differently than men in terms of willingness to work ($p = 0.738$), relationship perceptions ($p = 0.515$) or negotiation outcome in terms of percentage salary increase ($p = 0.900$). Additionally, we conducted three separate two-way ANOVAs entering gender and negotiation approach as the independent variables, and willingness to work, relationship perceptions, and negotiation outcome as the dependent variables, respectively. The interactive effects of gender and negotiation approach on willingness to work ($p = 0.543$), relationship perceptions ($p = 0.366$), or negotiation outcome in terms of percentage salary increase ($p = 0.472$) were not significant (see Figure 2a–c).

[4] We also measured participants' concern that negotiating would negatively impact the relationship based on Bowles and Babcock (2013). Neither negotiation approach ($p = 0.973$) nor gender ($p = 0.818$) predicted participants' concern that negotiating would have a negative impact on the relationship. Finally, we measured how likely participants were to negotiate their pay with their prospective supervisor (1 = *very unlikely*; 5 = *very likely*). There was no significant effect of negotiation approach on negotiation initiation ($p = 0.872$). Gender had a marginally significant effect such that woman were less likely to initiate a negotiation compared to men, $F(1, 156) = 3.69$, $p = 0.056$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.02$. There was no significant interaction effect of gender and negotiation approach on negotiation initiation.

[5] In our sample, 77 participants identified as woman (49%), 78 as man (49%), 1 as transgender woman, 1 as transgender man, and 1 as non-binary. We created a gender variable, coding participants who identified as woman and transgender woman as 1, and those who identified as man and transgender man as 0. We excluded from analysis the participant who identified as non-binary.

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