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RESEARCH ARTICLE

When expressions of fake emotions elicit negative reactions: The role of observers' dialectical thinking

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Summary

Fake displays of emotions are common in social and organizational settings. It is therefore important to understand their consequences. To reconcile mixed previous findings, we develop a model in which the consequences of expressing fake emotions depend on the observers' level of dialectical thinking, a cognitive style characterized by acceptance of inconsistencies. We propose that observers lower, but not higher, on dialectical thinking may infer that interaction partners who fake emotions are untrustworthy and, in turn, react negatively. We found support for our model in 2 studies. In a field fundraising experiment (Study 1), fundraisers who displayed fake (vs. genuine) happiness received smaller monetary donations and elicited lower intentions to volunteer from donors lower, but not higher, on dialectical thinking. In a laboratory negotiation experiment (Study 2), negotiators who displayed fake anger (vs. genuine anger or no emotion) were trusted less and received higher demands from counterparts lower, but not higher, on dialectical thinking. Trust mediated the moderating effect of dialecticism on the relation between fake anger (vs. genuine anger and no emotion) and demands. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of the findings.

KEYWORDS

anger, dialectical thinking, fake emotions, fundraising, happiness, negotiation, trust

1 | INTRODUCTION

Organization members often express emotions that differ from those that they really feel. In today's service-based economy, emotional displays are often considered part of job performance (Grandey, 2000; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). However, employees do not always feel the emotions that their organizations require them to display. Thus, employees often act to display emotions that they do not feel (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). Employees may also strategically display emotions that they do not feel to achieve desired goals such as better outcomes in negotiations (Barry, 1999; Kopelman, Rosette, & Thompson, 2006) or more effort from employees (Fitness, 2000). Given the prevalence of such fake displays of emotions in organizational settings, it is important to understand their consequences.

Past studies have yielded mixed results regarding the effects of showing fake displays of emotions in the workplace. Some studies have shown that expressing fake emotions has negative consequences (e.g., Goodwin, Groth, & Frenkel, 2011; Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005), but other studies did not find negative consequences (e.g., Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005; Groth, Hennig-Thurau,

& Walsh, 2009). One of the reasons why these findings are mixed may be that past research did not explicitly take into consideration the characteristics of the individuals who observe and respond to the displays. The mixed results could potentially be reconciled by taking into account such characteristics.

Here we draw on the literatures on the social effects of emotions (Keltner & Haidt, 1999; Van Kleef, 2016) and dialectical thinking, a cognitive style associated with acceptance of inconsistencies in one's environment (Peng & Nisbett, 1999; Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, & Peng, 2010) to develop and test a model of how observers' dialectical thinking moderates the effects of showing fake emotions on observers' reactions.¹ Given the inconsistency between external expressions and internal feelings that is inherent to fake displays of emotions, we propose that the effects of showing fake emotions depend on observers' dialecticism. More specifically, we propose that individuals respond more negatively to others' fake emotional displays to the degree that they themselves score lower (rather than higher) on dialectical

¹In this paper, we label the individual who observes emotional displays in others as *observer*, and the individual who displays emotions as *expresser*.

thinking. We further suggest that undermined perceptions of trust underlie the negative reactions of lower dialectical thinkers to fake displays of emotions.

We test our propositions in two studies. In Study 1—a field experiment—we examined whether lower dialectical thinkers react negatively to fake (vs. genuine) displays of happiness in a fundraising context, in which expressions of happiness are common. In Study 2—a laboratory experiment—we expanded on Study 1 findings by testing whether trust mediates the negative reactions of lower dialectical thinkers to fake anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral emotional display) in a negotiation context, in which expressions of anger are more common.

This research contributes to the literatures on the social effects of emotions and dialectical thinking. For example, our studies show that observers have negative reactions to fake displays of emotions, but only if they are lower on dialectical thinking. As such, our findings indicate that emotional inauthenticity does not universally lead to negative reactions from observers. Our work also shows that dialectical thinking has important implications for inferences about others, thus complementing the typical focus in research on dialectical thinking on inferences about the self.

2 | PAST RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTS OF EXPRESSING FAKE EMOTIONS

Some past research, and particularly research in the area of emotional labor, has examined how individuals interpret and respond to fake displays of emotions by organization members. This literature suggests that employees use two broad strategies for emotion regulation to display organizationally required emotions: deep acting and surface acting (Côté, 2005; Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). Deep acting changes both the internal experience and the public display of emotion and hence produces a genuine display of emotion. By contrast, surface acting changes the public display but not the internal experience of emotion and hence produces a fake display of emotion (Côté, 2005; Grandey, 2000). Research shows that people can reliably identify inauthentic emotional expressions (e.g., Côté, Hideg, & Van Kleef, 2013; Frank, Ekman, & Friesen, 1993; Grandey et al., 2005), with even 19-month-old infants being able to detect inauthentic emotions in others (Walle & Campos, 2014).

Several past studies found that fake displays of emotions produced via surface acting elicit negative reactions from observers. For example, past research found that surface-acted (i.e., fake) emotions were related to low ratings of affective delivery in a sample of university administrative assistants (Grandey, 2003) and a sample of call center employees (Goodwin et al., 2011). In an experiment utilizing videotapes depicting a hotel check-in and a field study of real customer-server interactions in restaurants, fake displays of happiness produced via surface acting were related to low perceived friendliness and satisfaction with customer service (Grandey et al., 2005). Similarly, another experiment found that surface-acted happiness was related to lower customer-employee rapport, relative to deep-acted happiness (Hennig-Thurau, Groth, Paul, & Gremler, 2006). This research in organizational contexts is consistent with findings from laboratory

studies showing that displays of fake happiness are related to less liking (Frank et al., 1993), lower perceptions of job suitability (Krumhuber, Manstead, Cosker, Marshall, & Rosin, 2009), and reduced trustworthiness and cooperation (Krumhuber et al., 2007). Similarly, a negotiation experiment found that surface-acted (vs. deep-acted) anger undermined trust and increased demands (Côté et al., 2013). These findings suggest that fake displays of emotions can lead to negative reactions by observers.

Other studies, however, have not found negative effects of showing fake emotions. One study of real customer-service employee interactions found that surface-acted happiness did not influence customers' ratings of service quality (Groth et al., 2009). A related study found that surface-acted happiness of customer service employees did not influence supervisors' ratings of affective performance (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Further, in an experience-sampling study, Beal, Trougakos, Weiss, and Green (2006) found that surface-acted happiness of cheerleaders was positively related to supervisors' ratings of affective delivery when cheerleaders' negative emotions were high. These findings indicate that fake displays of emotions sometimes do not lead to negative reactions by observers.

We suggest that fake displays of emotions sometimes, but not always, elicit negative reactions from observers, depending on characteristics of the observers. Past research has not considered observer characteristics in understanding the effects of displaying fake emotions. Given that observers play an active role in interpreting and responding to others' emotional expressions (Côté, 2005; Van Kleef, 2009), it is crucial to understand how observers' characteristics influence their reactions to fake emotional displays. We suggest that an important characteristic of observers that influences how they react to fake emotional displays is their tolerance for inconsistencies in the environment, namely, dialectical thinking.

3 | DIALECTICAL THINKING

Dialectical thinking (or naïve dialecticism) is a system of thoughts and beliefs characterized by the expectation of contradictions and change in the environment (Choi, Koo, & Choi, 2007; Peng & Nisbett, 1999; Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010). Past theorizing indicates that dialectical thinking can be seen as a facet of the broader construct of holism, which suggests that all things in the universe are in a constant state of flux (Choi et al., 2007; Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010). In particular, higher dialectical thinkers expect phenomena to change over time, they tolerate and embrace contradictions, and they accept the simultaneous existence of seemingly incompatible ideas. For example, they are likely to endorse seemingly contradictory notions such as that people are both inherently good and bad (Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, & Peng, 2012). Thus, higher dialectical thinkers regard and acknowledge contradictions as natural. By contrast, lower dialectical thinkers expect phenomena to remain constant and are generally uncomfortable with contradictions. Most importantly, past theorizing suggests that dialecticism may influence what kind of information is considered diagnostic of others' characters (Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010). That is, if higher dialectical thinkers may see both good and bad in people and tolerate that both can coexist, then they

may regard contradictory behaviors as less diagnostic of a person's character. On the other hand, lower dialectical thinkers may be more influenced by contradictory behaviors because they may be seen as undesirable, and those behaviors may therefore carry more weight for character inferences.

Our discussion of dialectical thinking above suggests that dialectical thinking may have important consequences for perceptions of others in interpersonal contexts. To date, however, most research has examined and shown that dialectical thinking influences self-perceptions, and the effects of dialectical thinking on perceptions about other individuals or objects are relatively unexplored (Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010). However, Spencer-Rodgers and colleagues (e.g., Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010; Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2012) have suggested that dialectical thinking also has consequences for perceptions of other objects and people. In line with this idea, Ma-Kellams, Spencer-Rodgers, and Peng (2011) found that dialectical thinking is related to higher in-group derogation. Similarly, recent research by Hideg and Ferris (2017) shows that dialectical thinking influences one's perceptions of procedural fairness entailed in affirmative action policies and support for such policies. Thus, emerging research shows that dialectical thinking is relevant in interpersonal contexts and that it influences perceptions of other individuals and objects such as policies. In this paper, we build on this recent work and suggest that dialectical thinking influences perceptions of and reactions to interaction partners.

Dialectical thinking tends to be more prevalent in East Asian than Western cultures, but it also varies substantially within cultures (Choi et al., 2007; Na et al., 2010; Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010). For instance, compared to lower dialectical thinkers, higher dialectical thinkers within a particular culture exhibit more ambivalent self-descriptions (Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, Wang, & Hou, 2004) and have more complex emotional experiences that involve both pleasant and unpleasant emotions (Hui, Fok, & Bond, 2009; Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, & Wang, 2010). Past research shows that dialectical thinking can be reliably measured in both East Asian and Western samples (e.g., English & Chen, 2007; Spencer-Rodgers, Boucher, Mori, Wang, & Peng, 2009). Past research also shows that individual differences in dialectical thinking are not highly related to other constructs that tend to be higher in East Asian than Western cultures such as endorsement of collectivism and interdependent self-construal when measured within cultures (e.g., $r = .15$ and $.19$, for correlations with collectivism and interdependent self-construal, respectively, as reported in Choi et al., 2007, Study 2).

4 | THE MODERATING ROLE OF DIALECTICAL THINKING IN REACTIONS TO FAKE EMOTIONS

Fake emotions involve an inconsistency between felt and displayed emotions (Côté, 2005; Grandey, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). Such inconsistencies can be reliably perceived by observers (Côté et al., 2013; Frank et al., 1993; Grandey et al., 2005; Walle & Campos, 2014). Even if observers may not know exactly how the expresser is feeling inside, they are able to detect that the expresser's outward displays of

emotion do not match his or her private feeling state. That is, the observers do not need to know exactly what another person is feeling privately to be able to gauge whether that person's expressions are genuine in that they match his or her private feeling state. Rather, observers respond to subtle nonverbal cues (e.g., awkward timing and asymmetrical facial contractions; Ekman, Hager, & Friesen, 1981; Hager & Ekman, 1985) that signal that a certain emotional expression was deliberately produced as opposed to spontaneously emitted, resulting in a discrepancy between a person's internally felt emotions and his or her outward expressions. How observers subsequently react to such inconsistencies, we argue, depends on their dialectical thinking, which reflects their tolerance and acceptance of inconsistencies. Indeed, the effects of dialectical thinking are the most potent in situations that involve inconsistencies (Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010).

We suggest that, because lower dialectical thinkers are not comfortable with contradictions in their environment, they may perceive contradictions between the externally displayed emotions and privately felt emotions of their interaction partners as undesirable. Previous theorizing suggests that such undesirable behaviors may be seen as diagnostic for other people's character. The notion that undesirable behaviors may be very influential in shaping one's inferences about others is supported by research on the negativity bias, which suggests that negative and extreme information is more powerful for impression formation than positive information (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001; Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). Thus, information on contradictions between felt and displayed emotions may lead lower dialectical thinkers to make negative character inferences about expressers, such as inferences that if expressers are willing to fake emotions, they may also be willing to fake or conceal other important issues (cf. Côté, 2005). Thus, the reliability and integrity of individuals who express fake emotions are undermined in the eyes of observers. As such, we suggest that one specific character inference, trust, may be undermined when interaction partners display fake emotions. We specifically focus on trust inferences because trust is critical for successful interpersonal interactions (Kim, Ferrin, Cooper, & Dirks, 2004). Trust is an expectancy that one can rely on a word, promise, verbal, or written statement of another individual (Rotter, 1967) and is an essential component of social exchanges (Barber, 1983; Deutsch, 1960). Lack of trust in social interactions is related to less cooperation in negotiations (Ferrin, Bligh, & Kohles, 2007), less information exchange (De Dreu, Giebels, & Van de Vliert, 1998), and more retribution (Ross & LaCroix, 1996). Reduced trust thus may lead to an array of negative behavioral reactions.

By contrast, higher dialectical thinkers are more comfortable with contradictions and find them more natural and common. As such, although they may perceive instances of fake emotions (i.e., they realize that externally displayed emotions may not be the same as internally felt emotions), they may not see such instances as undesirable. Given the tendency of dialectical thinkers to see contradictions in individuals as normal and inevitable, such as seeing people as both good and bad, an instance in which an individual fakes emotions may not be seen as particularly diagnostic of that individual's character. That is, dialectical thinkers may infer that their counterpart is exhibiting this behavior due to some contextual influences rather than due to their personality. Consequently, an interaction partner's fake emotion may

not fuel inferences of the counterpart's trustworthiness, and, in turn, may be less likely to have consequences for higher dialectical thinkers' behavioral reactions.

In short, on the basis of the foregoing considerations, we propose that fake displays of emotions should lead to more negative behavioral reactions than genuine displays of emotions from observers who are lower dialectical thinkers, and this effect should be mitigated for observers who are higher dialectical thinkers. Furthermore, this moderating effect of dialectical thinking on the relation between fake emotions and behavioral reactions should be mediated by trust.

5 | OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STRATEGY

We conducted two studies to test our model. Given that past research on emotional labor has focused on the effects of happiness, and that happiness is one of the most frequently displayed emotions in the workplace (Barsade & Gibson, 2007), we first tested our model with this emotion in a field experiment utilizing a real charity organization fundraiser (Study 1). We then extended our investigation to the effects of anger in Study 2, because anger is also commonly displayed in the workplace (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). In a laboratory negotiation experiment, we test the effect of anger and examine the proposed underlying mechanism of the moderating effect of dialectical thinking on the effects of expressing fake emotions: observers' trust in the expresser.

6 | STUDY 1

In Study 1, we conducted a field experiment in the context of a fundraiser for a charity organization (the United Way). We examined whether the effects of showing fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) on observers' monetary donations to the organization and intentions to volunteer for the organization depend on observers' dialectical thinking. We chose a fundraising context for the first test of our model because it provides an appropriate setting for displaying happiness in real face-to-face interactions, and it provides an objective behavioral measure of observers' reactions (i.e., monetary donations). Two crucial factors that contribute to the survival and effectiveness of charity organizations are monetary donations and the time that volunteers invest in helping these organizations (Bendapudi, Singh, & Bendapudi, 1996). As such, one index of observers' reactions consisted of their monetary donations. We also measured intentions to volunteer for the organization, which we could assess in one-time interactions as a second index of observers' reactions. Given that our theoretical arguments suggest that lower dialectical thinkers would react more negatively to fake emotions due to intolerance of inconsistencies between expressers' displayed and internally felt emotions, we included genuine displays of happiness as our comparison condition. In genuine displays of emotions, internally felt and externally displayed emotions are in sync. As such, lower dialectical thinkers should react more positively to genuine compared to fake displays of happiness. On the other hand, higher dialectical thinkers should respond similarly to genuine and fake displays of happiness. Thus, we tested the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. *Lower dialectical thinkers have lower intentions to volunteer when the fundraiser displays fake (vs. genuine) happiness; there are no such differences for higher dialectical thinkers.*

Hypothesis 2. *Lower dialectical thinkers donate less money when the fundraiser displays fake (vs. genuine) happiness; there are no such differences for higher dialectical thinkers.*

6.1 | Method

6.1.1 | Participants and design

Participants were 74 individuals (57% women; age: $M = 24.53$, $SD = 8.43$) who were solicited to donate to a fundraiser for a charity organization, listened to the fundraiser, and agreed to complete a survey (described below). Among the 74 participants, there were 48 students and 13 full-time employees (13 unreported). Twenty-five participants identified their ethnicity as Caucasian, 10 as East Asian, six as Southeast Asian, six as West Indian, four as Middle Eastern, four as African American, nine as South Asian, and seven as mixed ethnic background (three unreported). Participants were randomly exposed to one of two experimental conditions: fake happiness or genuine happiness displayed by the fundraiser.²

6.1.2 | Procedure

The procedures were adapted from Trougakos, Jackson, and Beal (2011). We conducted the study at a shopping center and a university library in a large North American city. A fundraising table was set up with a poster describing the fundraising initiative. A trained actor in the role of a fundraiser stood beside the table and approached people as they passed by the fundraising table and said "Excuse me, do you have a minute to hear about our fundraiser for the United Way?" while expressing either fake or genuine happiness (see below). If the person stopped, the fundraiser delivered a script (identical in both conditions) about the fundraising cause (see Appendix A.1) while continuing to display either fake or genuine happiness. The conditions were delivered in a rotating fashion. The fundraiser expressed fake happiness for 30 min, then genuine happiness for the next 30 min, and so on.

At the end of the script and after participants donated (if they wished to donate), the fundraiser asked participants if they could complete a brief survey. If they agreed, an experimenter administered a survey of participants' perceptions of the fundraiser's emotional display, dialectical thinking, intention to volunteer, and demographics. The percentage who agreed to complete the survey, out of those who listened to the fundraiser, did not vary by condition (58.67% in the fake happiness condition and 67.54% in the genuine happiness condition, $t(46) = 0.76$, ns [$d = 0.23$]). Participants received a \$5 gift card. The money collected was donated to the United Way.

²In a pilot test of the procedure, we also had a neutral condition where the fundraiser did not display any emotions. However, participants perceived fundraisers who displayed no emotion as very unusual and counter to what they thought the values of the charity organization would be (i.e., excitement and enthusiasm for promoting a good cause). Given these insights from our pilot test and the potential that the reputation of the charitable organization could be undermined, we decided not to include a neutral condition in the main study.

6.1.3 | Training actors

We trained two Caucasian actors (a woman and a man) to display fake and genuine happiness using established procedures (Côté et al., 2013). To display fake happiness, actors remained emotionally neutral inside while expressing happiness in their face. Actors manipulated their facial muscles without modifying their thoughts or subjective experiences of emotions. To express genuine happiness, actors recalled an event that had truly made them feel happy. These instructions were designed to make the actors express the authentic happiness that they felt while delivering the script.³

6.1.4 | Measures

All measures in this paper used a Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), unless otherwise noted.

Manipulation checks

To verify that we successfully manipulated authenticity of displays, we used six items from Côté et al. (2013) (e.g., “The fundraiser genuinely expressed emotions”; $\alpha = .84$). To verify that we successfully manipulated displays of happiness, participants rated how much the fundraiser displayed happiness using three items (“happy,” “satisfied,” and “joyful;” $\alpha = .88$) from Van Kleef, De Dreu, and Manstead (2004).

Dialectical thinking

Participants' dialectical thinking was measured using the 13-item contradiction subscale (e.g., “When I hear two sides of an argument, I often agree with both”; $\alpha = .68$; see Appendix A.2 for all items) of the Dialectical Self Scale (DSS) developed by Spencer-Rodgers et al., (2015). Prior research has shown that this scale has adequate psychometric properties (Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2009; Spencer-Rodgers, et al., 2015). Cronbach's α s among various cultural groups ranged from the high .60s to the high .80s, and test–retest reliability ranged from .70 to .91. In addition, the measure exhibited adequate discriminant and convergent validity (e.g., it was negatively correlated with need for cognitive closure; Kruglanski, Webster, & Klem, 2003).

Intention to volunteer for the charity organization

Following Liu and Aaker (2008), participants responded to the following item: “I would be very likely to volunteer for United Way.” We added this item after the first 2 days of data collection because some of the first participants said they would be more willing to donate time rather than money. Fifty-seven participants filled out this item.

Monetary donations

Donations to the organization were recorded in dollars and cents.

6.2 | Results

6.2.1 | Preliminary analyses

Before proceeding to test hypotheses, we examined whether there were differences in monetary donations and intent to volunteer between the male and female fundraisers (i.e., actors). Participants did not react differently in terms of intentions to volunteer ($M_{\text{male}} = 4.44$, $SD_{\text{male}} = 1.46$; $M_{\text{female}} = 5.10$, $SD_{\text{female}} = 1.99$), $t(55) = -1.41$, $p = .163$ ($d = 0.39$), and monetary donations ($M_{\text{male}} = 1.66$, $SD_{\text{male}} = 1.81$; $M_{\text{female}} = 1.47$, $SD_{\text{female}} = 1.99$), $t(72) = 0.41$, $p = .682$ ($d = 0.09$). Given that there were no differences, we combined the data from the two fundraisers and did not control for the gender of the fundraiser in the analyses.

We also examined whether male and female participants behaved differently, because some past research has reported that women are more likely than men to donate and volunteer (Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007; Wilson, 2000). There were no differences between male and female participants in intentions to volunteer ($M_{\text{male}} = 4.38$, $SD_{\text{male}} = 1.60$; $M_{\text{female}} = 4.94$, $SD_{\text{female}} = 1.75$), $t(55) = -1.23$, $p = .205$ ($d = 0.33$), and monetary donations ($M_{\text{male}} = 1.65$, $SD_{\text{male}} = 1.93$; $M_{\text{female}} = 1.53$, $SD_{\text{female}} = 1.86$), $t(72) = 0.28$, $p = .846$ ($d = 0.07$). Thus, we combined the data and did not control for participants' gender in the analyses.

6.2.2 | Manipulation checks

As expected, perceived authenticity was lower in the fake happiness condition ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.13$) than in the genuine happiness condition ($M = 5.61$, $SD = 0.79$), $t(72) = 2.15$, $p = .035$ ($d = 0.50$); and there were no differences in the levels of perceived happiness between the fake happiness condition ($M = 5.51$, $SD = 1.16$) and the genuine happiness condition ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 0.87$), $t(72) = .96$, $p = .343$ ($d = 0.22$). Thus, although participants perceived the same level of happiness in both conditions, they perceived the fake happiness condition as less authentic than the genuine happiness condition.

6.2.3 | Main hypotheses testing

To test the hypotheses, we conducted hierarchical moderated regression analyses where we mean-centered the moderating variable (dialectical thinking) and then created an interaction term from the cross-product of dialectical thinking and fake (vs. genuine) happiness (Aiken & West, 1991). Regression results are presented in Table 1. In predicting intention to volunteer, there was a significant interaction between fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) and dialectical thinking, $b = 1.27$, $t(53) = 2.41$, $p = .020$ ($f^2 = 0.11$; see Figure 1a). As expected, simple slope analysis revealed that lower dialectical thinkers (-1 SD) had lower intentions to volunteer in the fake happiness condition than in the genuine happiness condition, $b = -1.35$, $t(53) = -2.20$, $p = .033$; the intentions to volunteer of higher dialectical thinkers ($+1$ SD) did not vary by condition, $b = 0.74$, $t(53) = 1.23$, $p = .223$. We further examined differences in intentions to volunteer within the fake and genuine happiness conditions. As expected, higher dialectical thinkers had higher intentions to volunteer than lower dialectical thinkers in the fake happiness condition, $b = 1.05$, $t(53) = 3.07$,

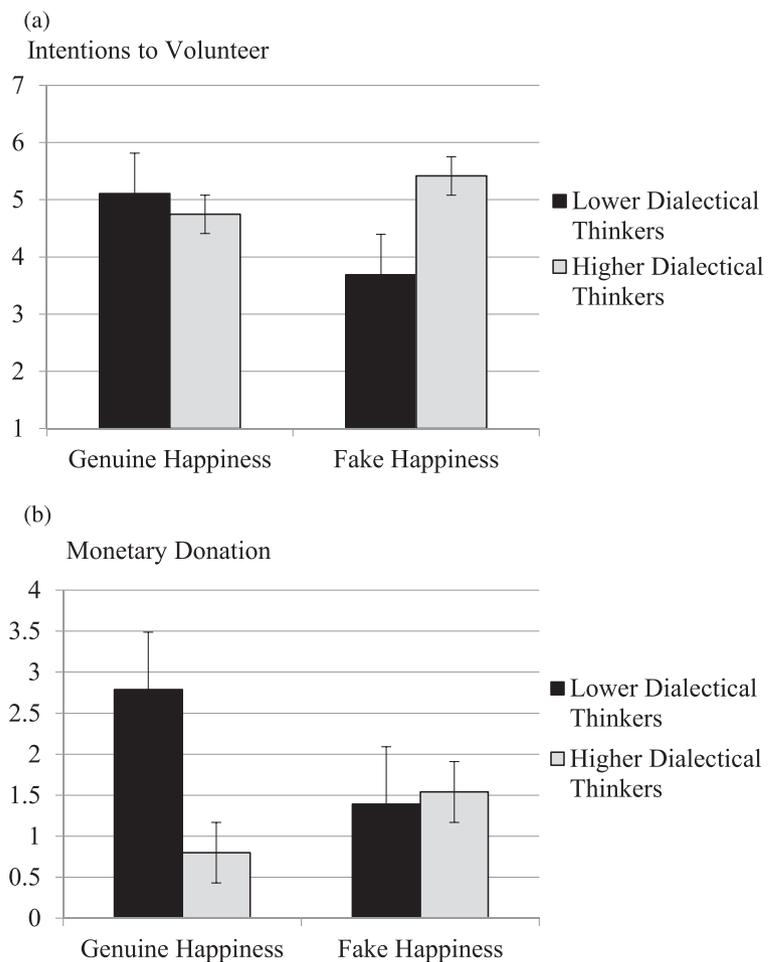
³To verify that the actors controlled their emotions as instructed, before the study, we recorded the actors while delivering the script in each condition. Two independent judges coded those recordings, and the results showed that the actors successfully followed the instructions. Complete analyses and results are available from the first author.

TABLE 1 Regression analyses results: The moderating effect of potential donors' dialectical thinking on the effect of fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) on intentions to volunteer and monetary donations (Study 1)

Predictor	Intention to volunteer			Monetary donation		
	ΔR^2	<i>b</i>	β	ΔR^2	<i>b</i>	β
Step 1	.08			.05		
Fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness)		-0.28	-.08		-0.32	-.09
Dialectical thinking		0.52 [†]	.25 [†]		-0.53 [†]	-.22 [†]
Step 2	.09*			.08*		
Fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) × Dialectical thinking		1.27*	.47*		1.37*	.42*
Total R^2		0.17*			0.13*	

Note. Fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) was a dummy variable coded 1 = fake happiness condition and 0 = genuine happiness condition. $n = 74$ when predicting monetary donation; $n = 57$ when predicting intention to volunteer.

* $p < .05$. [†] $p < .10$.

**FIGURE 1** Fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) × Dialectical thinking interactions in predicting intention to volunteer (a) and monetary donations (b; Study 1)

$p = .003$, but there were no such differences in the genuine happiness condition, $b = -0.22$, $t(53) = -0.54$, $p = .585$.

In predicting monetary donations, there was a significant interaction between fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) and dialectical thinking, $b = 1.37$, $t(70) = 2.54$, $p = .013$ ($f^2 = 0.09$; see Figure 1b). As expected, lower dialectical thinkers donated less money in the fake happiness condition than in the genuine happiness condition, $b = -1.40$, $t(70) = -2.35$, $p = .022$; the monetary donations of higher dialectical thinkers did not vary by condition, $b = 0.74$, $t(70) = 1.26$,

$p = .212$. We also further examined differences in monetary donations within the fake and genuine happiness conditions. Unexpectedly, we found that dialectical thinking was not related with monetary donations in the fake happiness condition, $b = 0.10$, $t(70) = 0.26$, $p = .794$, whereas higher dialectical thinkers donated less money than lower dialectical thinkers in the genuine happiness condition, $b = -3.20$, $t(70) = -3.20$, $p = .002$.

This unexpected finding was also apparent from visual inspection of Figure 1(a,b), where we can see differences in the pattern of the

interactions for intentions to volunteer and monetary donations. To shed light on these differences, we compared regression coefficients across the two dependent variables (intentions to volunteer and monetary donations) using procedures suggested by Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003). We found that the main effect of dialecticism significantly differed across the two dependent variables (95% confidence intervals [CI] = 1.32, 0.76). However, there were no differences between regression coefficients for the main effect of fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness; 95% CI [0.80, -0.07]) and for the interaction effect (95% CI [1.23, -0.103]). These results suggest that our differences observed in interactions were driven by differences in main effects of dialecticism across the two dependent variables, whereas the strength and general direction of the interaction were the same across both dependent variables (see Grant & Mayer, 2009, for another example of using these analyses to compare regression coefficients).

6.2.4 | Supplemental analyses

To ensure that our results were not driven by different abilities to perceive the authenticity and intensity of happiness by lower and higher dialectical thinkers, we tested for interactions between fake happiness (vs. genuine happiness) and dialectical thinking in predicting perceived authenticity and happiness, using the manipulation check items. The interactions were not significant in predicting perceived authenticity, $b = 0.22$, $t(70) = -0.75$, $p = .455$, or perceived happiness, $b = 0.43$, $t(70) = 1.39$, $p = .168$. These results suggest that the different reactions to fake (vs. genuine) happiness were not due to differences in how authentic or how intense lower and higher dialectical thinkers perceived the displays to be.

6.3 | Discussion

In Study 1, we examined how dialectical thinking moderates the social effects of fake (vs. genuine) happiness in a fundraising context. As predicted, lower dialectical thinkers donated less money and had lower intentions to volunteer for the charity organization when the fundraisers displayed fake happiness compared to genuine happiness. By contrast, higher dialectical thinkers were not influenced by the authenticity of the displays of happiness.

Although in general the pattern of interactions supported our hypotheses when predicting both intentions and monetary donations, there was one unexpected finding when predicting monetary donations. Namely, higher dialectical thinkers donated less money than lower dialectical thinkers in the genuine happiness condition, whereas dialectical thinking was not related with monetary donations in the fake happiness condition. One potential explanation for this unexpected finding is that dialectical thinking is (modestly) related to cultural constructs such as collectivism (Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010). Past research suggests that individuals in collectivistic societies donate less to charity organizations because they believe that governments should support such causes (e.g., Nelson, Brunel, Supphellen, & Manchanda, 2006). As such, higher dialectical thinkers could have been less propelled to donate on average.

7 | STUDY 2

We extended these findings in a second study, in which we examined whether a negotiator's responses to a counterpart's expressions of fake versus genuine anger depend on the negotiator's level of dialectical thinking. We chose to study anger because the effects of fake anger remain relatively unexplored, yet individuals often show anger that they do not genuinely feel. For example, in one study, managers indicated that they sometimes deliberately showed anger to influence subordinates (Fitness, 2000), and leaders' expressions of anger have a pervasive impact on follower behavior (Sy, Côté, & Saavedra, 2005; Van Kleef et al., 2009). However, little is known about the consequences of fake displays of anger (for an exception, see Côté et al., 2013). We selected a negotiation context because anger is a frequent emotion in negotiations (Allred, 1999; Barry, 1999), and expressions of anger have been shown to elicit concessions in negotiations (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004). Negotiations also provide an objective behavioral measure: the demands that negotiators make.

We also wanted to examine a potential mechanism proposed in our theoretical development explaining why lower and higher dialectical thinkers exhibit different behavioral reactions to fake (vs. genuine) displays of emotions: trust in the counterpart. We further extended the previous findings by adding a condition to the experimental design. In Study 1, we contrasted the effects of showing fake happiness to the effects of showing genuine happiness. A more comprehensive test of our model would involve a comparison to a baseline condition in which there are no displays of emotion (and also no inconsistency). That is, including a neutral condition would allow us to test whether fake emotional displays would actually produce more negative reactions for lower rather than higher dialectical thinkers compared to a baseline condition. In Study 2, we thus examine whether observers' dialectical thinking moderates the effects of showing fake anger relative to both showing genuine anger and showing no emotion. Finally, we sought to replicate the effect of dialectical thinking using a different measure to establish that the effects are not due to a specific measure but to the underlying construct instead.

Thus, in Study 2, we examined whether observers' dialectical thinking moderates the effect of negotiators' fake displays of anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral emotional display) on observers' trust and demands, a behavioral reaction that is typically examined in negotiation studies (e.g., Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004). In a distributive negotiation like the one we used in Study 2, higher demands reflect a more negative reaction because the observer is trying to claim more value at the expense of the other negotiator. We further examined whether trust mediates the moderating effect of dialectical thinking on the effects of fake anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral emotional display) on the behavior of negotiation counterparts in a mediated moderation model. In particular, we tested the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3. *Lower dialectical thinkers trust less the counterpart who displays fake anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral emotional displays); there are no such differences for higher dialectical thinkers.*

Hypothesis 4. *Lower dialectical thinkers demand more from the counterpart who displays fake (vs. genuine and neutral) anger; there are no such differences for higher dialectical thinkers.*

Hypothesis 5. *Observers' trust mediates the moderating effect of observers' dialectical thinking on the effect of fake anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral emotional displays) on observers' demands.*

7.1 | Method

7.1.1 | Participants and design

For this study, 368 participants were recruited. A measure of demands was not available for 57 participants who accepted an offer from their counterparts and thus ended the negotiation before this variable was measured (as explained below). These participants were not included in the analyses because demands constitute the criterion variable in the focal analyses. The final sample was composed of 311 undergraduate students (61% female; 51% East Asian, 16% Southeast Asian, 14% Caucasian, and 19% other) at a large North American university who received course credit or payment of \$10.⁴ Participants were randomly assigned to either the focal condition (fake anger) or one of the two comparison conditions (genuine anger or neutral emotional display).

7.1.2 | Procedure

Between four and 10 individuals participated in the study at the same time in two rooms. Half of the participants were seated in front of a computer in one room, and the other half were in the other room. The experimenters told all participants that they would negotiate about a used car with another participant from the other room. Participants were told that they had been randomly assigned to the role of seller, and that participants in the other room had been assigned to the role of buyer. In reality, all participants were assigned to the role of seller. Next, participants read their role instructions, which informed them that the car was worth between \$2,500 and \$3,500, and that they had advertised it for \$3,500. Participants also read that a main goal of the study was to compare the effectiveness of negotiations via text versus video messaging. Thus, they would negotiate via text messages during the first two rounds, followed by video messages in subsequent rounds. We inserted the manipulation of fake anger in the third round of negotiations, because it seemed more realistic for opponents to show anger after their offers had been rejected by participants (which happened in the first two rounds).

Participants then negotiated with the (computer-simulated) buyer via text messages, using a procedure that has been successfully employed in previous research (e.g., Van Kleef et al., 2004). The buyer started the negotiation by sending a message with an offer of \$2,200. All participants rejected this first offer and proposed a counteroffer. The buyer then sent a second offer of \$2,300. Two participants accepted this second offer, and 366 rejected it and proposed a second counteroffer.

After the second round, participants were reminded that the rest of the negotiation would occur via video message. Participants were informed that the buyer would record the first message because it was the buyer's turn to respond. After a short pause during which the buyer's message was ostensibly recorded, participants watched the message, in which the counterpart faked anger, was genuinely angry, or was emotionally neutral (see below). In this message, the buyer introduced himself, made a few statements about the car, and offered \$2,400. Fifty-five participants accepted the offer, and 311 rejected it and proposed a counteroffer. The rate of acceptance did not differ between conditions, $F(2, 363) = 0.33, p = .722$. Participants were then informed that the negotiation had ended, and they completed the measures described below.

7.1.3 | Video recordings

We used video recordings that were developed and validated in past research (Côté et al., 2013). We had three versions of the video recording featuring the same Caucasian, male actor, who either displayed fake anger or genuine anger or adopted a neutral emotional display. In the fake anger condition, the actor pretended to be angry using a surface-acting strategy for regulating emotions, in which individuals modify their external display of emotions while their internal feelings remain unchanged (Côté, 2005; Grandey, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). Specifically, the actor was instructed to lower his eyebrows and draw them together and to ensure that his eyes are glaring and his jaw is clenched. To display genuine anger, the actor used a deep-acting strategy for regulating emotions, in which both external expressions and internally felt emotions are changed to produce genuine displays of emotions (Côté, 2005; Grandey, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). To appear emotionally neutral, the actor was instructed to be business-like and to relax the muscles in his face so as to show no emotion.

These video recordings have been validated in past research, in which independent raters assessed the symmetry of the displays of anger in the video recordings, given past findings that fake displays of emotions are less symmetrical than authentic displays (Ekman et al., 1981; Hager & Ekman, 1985). This past research showed that displays were coded as more symmetrical in the genuine anger condition ($M = 0.81, SD = 0.40$) than in the fake anger condition ($M = 0.47, SD = 0.52$), $t(29) = 2.09, p < .05$ (see Côté et al., 2013).

7.1.4 | Measures

Manipulation checks

To verify the manipulation of authenticity, we administered the same six items as in Study 1 ($\alpha = .88$). To verify the manipulation of displayed anger, participants rated how much the buyer appeared "angry," "irritated," and "aggravated" ($\alpha = .89$; Van Kleef, De Dreu, Pietroni, & Manstead, 2006).

Trust

Trust in the counterpart was measured with six items from Naquin and Paulson (2003) that are relevant to a one-time negotiation between two previously unacquainted participants (e.g., "In my opinion the buyer is reliable"; $\alpha = .80$).

⁴The average counteroffer of the participants who received credit ($n = 190$; $M = 2,988.93, SD = 227.73$) did not differ from the average counteroffer of those who were paid ($n = 121$; $M = 2,988.68, SD = 319.43$), $t(309) = -0.008, ns$. Thus, we combined the participants in the analyses.

Demands

We recorded participants' demands following the counterpart's offer of \$2,400 ($M = \$2,988.83$, $SD = 266.68$).⁵

Dialectical thinking

We measured dialectical thinking with the six-item "Attitude toward contradiction" subscale of the Analysis-Holism Scale (Choi et al., 2007). This subscale assesses the degree to which respondents are comfortable with contradictions (e.g., "It is more desirable to take the middle ground than go to extremes"; $\alpha = .70$; see Appendix A.2 for all items). This scale has been validated in past research, which demonstrated adequate convergent validity (e.g., correlating positively with conceptually similar measures such as the Sternberg-Wagner Self-Assessment Inventory on the Global Style that indicates the extent to which people focus on larger issues rather than the details; Choi et al., 2007, Study 2) and discriminant validity (e.g., correlating less with cultural measures such as collectivism; Choi et al., 2007, Study 2).⁶

7.2 | Results

7.2.1 | Preliminary analyses

Before conducting our main analyses, we examined whether female and male participants behaved differently, because gender differences in negotiation behavior were found in some past research (Kray, Galinsky, & Thompson, 2002; Small, Gelfand, Babcock, & Gettman, 2007). There were no differences between men and women in their counteroffers ($M_{\text{men}} = 3001.21$, $SD_{\text{men}} = 249.08$; $M_{\text{women}} = 2980.84$, $SD_{\text{women}} = 277.80$), $t(309) = 0.66$, $p = .511$ ($d = 0.08$). Thus, we combined the data and did not control for gender in the analyses.

7.2.2 | Manipulation checks

To examine the levels of perceived authenticity and anger, we conducted one-way analyses of variance. There was a significant effect of condition on perceived authenticity, $F(2, 308) = 13.01$, $p < .001$ ($\eta_p^2 = 0.08$). As expected, participants perceived less authenticity in

⁵We examined this counteroffer as our main dependent variable rather than final outcomes because in this experimental study, the counterpart was not real, and his or her replies were pre-programmed. Thus, examining final outcomes was not possible in this design. However, past research has found that counteroffers during negotiations are predictive of final outcomes (Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001).

⁶Given that the dialectical thinking measure in Study 2 was different from the dialectical thinking measure in Study 1, we examined the correlation between the two measures in a separate sample of 200 undergraduate students (47% women). We found that the two scales correlated significantly ($p < .01$) at $r = .37$. In this sample, we also tested whether dialectical thinking was related to a measure of cognitive complexity, namely, the attributional complexity scale (Fletcher, Danilovics, Fernandes, Peterson, & Reeder, 1986). Attributional complexity includes preferences for complex rather than simple explanations, awareness of the extent to which people's behavior is a function of interaction with others, and tendency to infer abstract or causally complex internal attributions. We found that (a) the dialectical thinking measure from Study 1 was not significantly related to attributional complexity, $r = .11$, $p = .10$, and (b) the dialectical measure from Study 2 was weakly positively correlated with attributional complexity, $r = .16$, $p = .025$. These weak correlations suggest that dialectical thinking is distinctive from attributional complexity. Furthermore, Choi et al. (2007) found that the "Attitudes toward contradiction" subscale (the subscale we used in our Study 2) was only weakly correlated with attributional complexity ($r = .12$, $p < .05$).

the fake anger condition ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.32$) than in the neutral condition ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 1.14$, $p < .001$) and the genuine anger condition ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.21$, $p = .012$). There was no difference between the genuine anger condition and the neutral condition.

There was also a significant effect of condition on perceived anger, $F(2, 308) = 123.95$, $p < .001$ ($\eta_p^2 = 0.45$). As expected, participants perceived more anger in the fake anger condition ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.48$) than in the neutral condition ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 1.22$; $p < .001$), but there was no difference with the genuine anger condition ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 1.36$, $p = .064$). Perceived anger was also higher in the genuine anger condition than in the neutral condition ($p < .001$).

These results show that, as expected, participants' perceived intensity of anger displays did not differ between the genuine and fake anger condition; only perceptions of authenticity differed, such that the fake anger condition was perceived as more inauthentic than the genuine anger condition and the neutral condition. Thus, the manipulation was successful.

7.2.3 | Testing interactions

To test the interaction hypotheses (Hypotheses 3 and 4), we conducted hierarchical moderated regressions. We mean-centered the moderator variable (dialectical thinking) and created two dummy variables (fake anger vs. genuine anger, and fake anger vs. neutral display) that allowed us to directly compare the fake anger condition to the two comparison conditions. We then created two interaction terms from the cross-product of dialectical thinking and each dummy variable (see Table 2).

In predicting trust, there was a significant interaction between dialectical thinking and fake anger compared to both genuine anger, $b = -0.38$, $t(305) = -2.59$, $p = .010$ ($f^2 = 0.03$; see Figure 2), and neutral emotion, $b = -0.34$, $t(305) = -2.44$, $p = .015$ ($f^2 = 0.03$). As expected, lower dialectical thinkers trusted their counterpart less in the fake anger condition than in the genuine anger condition, $b = -0.59$, $t(203) = -3.37$, $p = .001$, whereas the trust of higher dialectical thinkers did not vary by condition, $b = 0.09$, $t(203) = -0.13$, $p = .897$. Similarly, lower dialectical thinkers trusted their counterpart less in the fake anger condition than in the neutral condition, $b = -0.96$, $t(203) = -5.74$, $p < .001$, but the trust of higher dialectical thinkers was not affected, $b = -0.32$, $t(203) = -1.43$, $p = .153$. Further, as expected, we found that higher dialectical thinkers had marginally higher levels of trust than lower dialectical thinkers in the fake anger condition, $b = 0.16$, $t(203) = 1.77$, $p = .078$, whereas dialectical thinking was not related to trust in the genuine anger condition, $b = -0.13$, $t(203) = -1.42$, $p = .144$, and the neutral display condition, $b = -0.12$, $t(202) = -1.37$, $p = .171$.

In predicting demands, there was a significant interaction between dialectical thinking and fake anger compared to both genuine anger, $b = 90.60$, $t(305) = 2.20$, $p = .029$ ($f^2 = 0.02$) and neutral emotion, $b = 102.57$, $t(305) = 2.59$, $p = .010$ ($f^2 = 0.02$; see Figure 3). As expected, lower dialectical thinkers demanded more in the fake anger condition than in the genuine anger condition, $b = 142.65$, $t(203) = 2.58$, $p = .010$, but the demands of higher dialectical thinkers were not affected, $b = -19.93$, $t(203) = -0.36$, $p = .718$. Similarly, lower dialectical thinkers demanded more in the fake anger condition than in the neutral condition, $b = 128.31$, $t(202) = 2.26$, $p = .025$, whereas the demands of higher dialectical thinkers did not differ,

TABLE 2 Regression analyses results: The moderating effect of observers' dialectical thinking on the relation between fake anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral display) and observers' trust and observers' demands (Study 2)

Predictor	Observers' trust			Observers' demands		
	ΔR^2	<i>b</i>	β	ΔR^2	<i>b</i>	β
Step 1	.07**			.01		
Fake anger (vs. genuine anger)		0.24 [†]	.12 [†]		-58.45	-.10
Fake anger (vs. neutral display)		0.63**	.30**		-28.35	-.05
Dialectical thinking		0.02	.02		3.55	.01
Step 2	.03*			.02*		
Fake anger (vs. genuine anger) × Dialectical thinking		-0.38*	-.20*		90.60*	.18*
Fake anger (vs. neutral display) × Dialectical thinking		-0.34*	-.20*		102.57*	.22*
Total R^2		0.10*			0.03*	

Note. Fake anger (vs. genuine anger) was a dummy variable coded 0 = fake anger condition and 1 = genuine anger condition; fake anger (vs. neutral display) was a dummy variable coded 0 = fake anger condition and 1 = neutral display condition.

** $p < .001$. * $p < .05$. [†] $p < .10$.

$b = -65.38$, $t(202) = -1.17$, $p = .244$. Furthermore, as expected, higher dialectical thinkers demanded less than lower dialectical thinkers in the fake anger condition, $b = -64.17$, $t(203) = -2.03$, $p = .041$, whereas in both the genuine anger condition, $b = 26.43$, $t(203) = 0.87$, $p = .385$, and the neutral display condition, $b = 38.39$, $t(202) = -1.36$, $p = .175$, dialectical thinking was not related to demands.⁷

7.2.4 | Testing mediated moderation

We further proposed that the moderating influence of dialectical thinking on the relation between a counterpart's fake anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral emotion) and demands is mediated by trust (Hypothesis 5). To test this hypothesis, we used Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes's (2007) bias-corrected bootstrapping technique (with 10,000 samples). As expected, there were indirect effects of the interactions between dialectical thinking and fake anger, relative to both genuine anger (indirect effect = 8.48, 95% CI [-27.49, -0.20]) and neutral emotion (indirect effect = -8.17, 95% CI [-23.37, -0.36]), on demands via trust (Figure 4). Thus, lower, but not higher, dialectical thinkers demanded more from their counterparts who faked anger because they trusted them less. These results corroborate Hypothesis 5.

7.2.5 | Supplemental analyses

As in Study 1, to ensure that our main results were not due to different perceptions of the displays by lower versus higher dialectical thinkers,

⁷We also tested our hypotheses using two alternative approaches. First, we re-ran our regression analyses by using a difference score (i.e., a difference between the participants' post-video counteroffer and the buyer's offer in the video). Our results remained virtually the same as when using post-video demands; that is, there was a significant interaction between dialectical thinking and fake anger compared to both genuine anger, $b = 90.60$, $t(305) = 2.20$, $p = .029$, and neutral emotion, $b = 102.57$, $t(305) = 2.59$, $p = .010$. Second, we re-ran our regression analyses by controlling for the first two counteroffers (i.e., pre-video offers) when predicting demands (i.e., post-video offer). Adding these controls did not substantially change the results, although the interactions became marginally significant when comparing fake anger to both genuine anger, $b = 50.63$, $t(303) = 2.20$, $p = .090$, and neutral emotion, $b = 51.13$, $t(303) = 1.78$, $p = .076$. However, it should be noted that the first two counteroffers happened before the introduction of emotion manipulation (i.e., video) and that participants were randomly assigned to see one of the three emotion (video) manipulations (genuine anger, fake anger, or neutral emotional display) regardless of their prior counteroffers. As such, given that we used random assignment, our results should have been less dependent on previous counteroffers.

we tested for interactions between fake anger (vs. genuine anger and neutral display) and dialectical thinking in predicting perceived authenticity and anger, using the manipulation check items. In predicting perceived authenticity, the interaction between dialectical thinking and fake anger (vs. genuine anger) was not significant, $b = -0.31$, $t(305) = -1.63$, $p = .103$; vs. neutral, $b = -0.26$, $t(305) = -1.42$, $p = .158$. In predicting perceived anger, the interaction between dialectical thinking and fake anger (vs. genuine anger) was marginally significant, $b = 0.39$, $t(305) = 1.88$, $p = .060$; but it was nonsignificant compared to neutral, $b = 0.26$, $t(305) = 1.30$, $p = .193$. Overall, these results suggest that perceptions of authenticity and anger did not depend on participants' level of dialectical thinking. Lower and higher dialectical thinkers were equally capable of perceiving anger and authenticity, but they made different trust inferences and showed different behavioral responses.

7.3 | Discussion

In Study 2, we examined how observers' dialectical thinking shapes their reactions to fake displays of anger by negotiators. As predicted, lower dialectical thinkers had reduced trust and posed higher demands when their counterpart displayed fake anger compared to both genuine anger and a neutral emotional display. By contrast, higher dialectical thinkers were not differentially influenced by genuine versus fake displays of anger. We also found that the moderating effect of observers' dialectical thinking on the relation between fake displays of anger and observers' demands was mediated by observers' trust. Study 2 thus provides additional evidence for our model of how observers' dialectical thinking shapes the consequences of fake emotional expressions.

8 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

8.1 | Theoretical contributions

This investigation increases our understanding of the effects of showing fake displays of emotions by developing and testing a model of how these effects depend on dialectical thinking of observers.

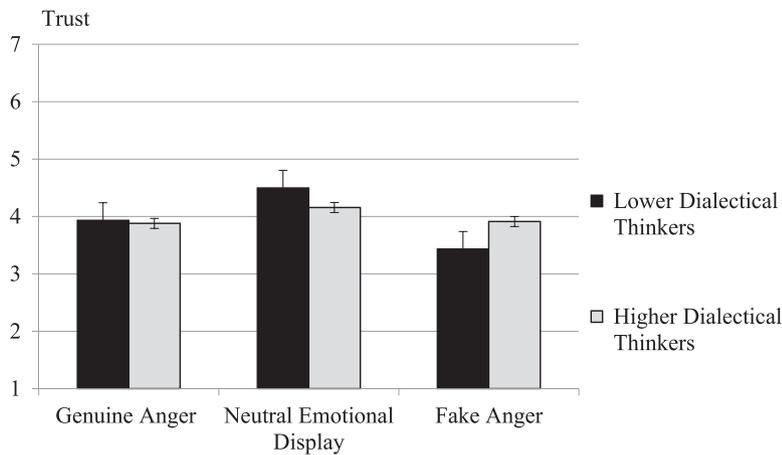


FIGURE 2 Emotional expression (fake anger, genuine anger, or neutral emotional display) x Dialectical thinking interactions predicting trust (Study 2)

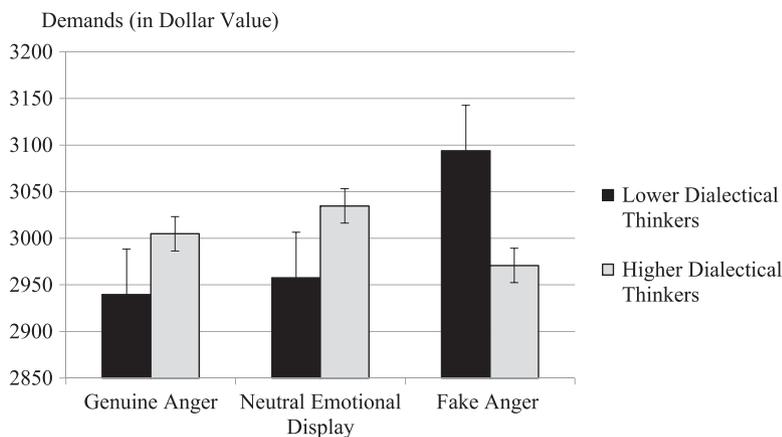


FIGURE 3 Emotional expression (fake anger, genuine anger, or neutral emotional display) x Dialectical thinking interactions predicting demands (Study 2)

Extending research suggesting that dialectical thinkers are more comfortable with opposing ideas and contradictions in their environment, we proposed and found that higher dialectical thinkers exhibit less negative reactions to fake displays of emotions, which involve inherent discrepancies between externally displayed and internally felt emotions.

Our findings help address past research inconsistencies by showing that dialectical thinking moderates the effects of displaying fake emotions. Although multiple factors likely shape observers' reactions to fake displays of emotions, our findings identify dialectical thinking as one of these factors. By identifying the moderating role of dialectical thinking, our findings show that emotional inauthenticity does not universally produce unfavorable reactions in others.

The findings also speak more generally to why expressions of fake emotions elicit negative reactions in some observers. Specifically, the finding that higher dialectical thinkers, who are comfortable with inconsistencies, do not exhibit negative reactions to these displays suggests that one reason why lower dialectical thinkers do exhibit negative reactions is that they have difficulty accepting that others express emotions that they do not feel internally. In Study 2, difficulty accepting inconsistencies between externally shown and internally felt emotions was manifested in reduced trust and, in turn, higher demands in a negotiation.

The findings support our model in two contexts, a more cooperative context (fundraising) and a more competitive context

(negotiation). Past research suggests that in more competitive situations where the goals of two parties are in conflict, individuals may be more attuned to seeking information about the other party's goals and ambitions, including their emotional authenticity (Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2010). In contrast, in more cooperative situations where the goals of the two parties are not in conflict and the situation does not seem to be threatening, individuals may be less likely to seek information about the other party. This reasoning would suggest that individuals may be less likely to observe emotional inauthenticity and react to it in cooperative than in competitive situations. Our results, however, show that observers identify and react to emotional inauthenticity in both types of situations, suggesting that the effects of emotional inauthenticity are stable across different contexts.

Our findings also have implications for the idea that emotional expressions help coordinate social exchange. Even though it is clear that genuine emotional expressions help coordinate social interactions (Hareli & Hess, 2010; Niedenthal & Brauer, 2012; Van Kleef, 2009), it remains unclear whether and how fake emotional expressions can have a similar function. Our findings begin to address this question by suggesting that the social functions of emotional expressions may be limited to genuine expressions for lower dialectical thinkers, whereas they may generalize to fake emotional expressions for higher dialectical thinkers.

Our research also contributes to the emerging literature on the *interpersonal* effects of dialectical thinking, that is, consequences for perceptions of others as opposed to the self. Past research has mostly

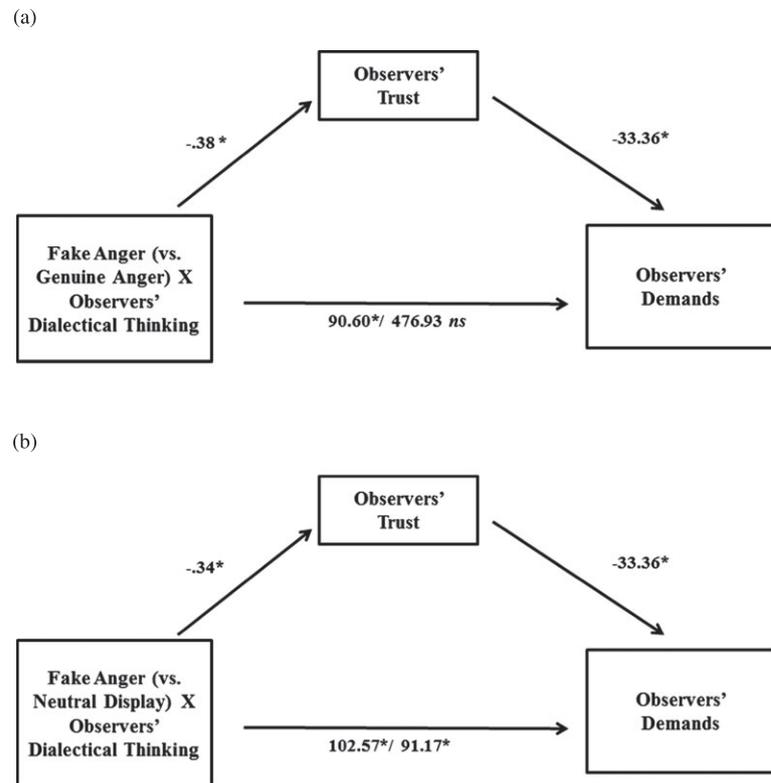


FIGURE 4 Observers' trust mediates the relation between fake anger (vs. genuine anger in (a) and neutral display in (b)) by observers' dialectical thinking interaction and observers' demands. The regression coefficients presented in the figure are unstandardized. * $p < .05$

examined and shown *intrapersonal* effects of dialectical thinking, that is, consequences for oneself such as self-perceptions, emotional experiences, and psychological well-being (e.g., Bagozzi, Wong, & Yi, 1999; English & Chen, 2007; Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2004; Suh, 2002). However, recent research has started documenting that dialectical thinking also has consequences for interpersonal perceptions. For example, recent research by Hideg and Ferris (2017) shows that dialectical thinking influences perceptions of procedural fairness in affirmative action policies and consequent support for such policies. Similarly, Ma-Kellams et al. (2011) found that dialectical thinking is related to in-group derogation. Our work builds on and contributes to this emerging research. By showing that nondialectical thinkers, but not dialectical thinkers, infer low trust from fake displays of emotion, our research shows that dialectical thinking also has important implications for inferences about others. This finding informs social-functional theories of emotion, which posit that emotional expressions provide important information to observers that helps them navigate social life (Keltner & Haidt, 1999; Van Kleef, 2009). Our studies indicate that observers distil different types of information from authentic versus inauthentic displays of emotion, and that these inferences are shaped by observers' dialectical thinking.

8.2 | Strengths, limitations, and future directions

Our research has a number of strengths. We provided converging evidence for our model in two studies using two methodologies (a field experiment and a laboratory experiment) and across two emotions (happiness and anger) and two contexts (fundraising and negotiation). In particular, we showed that lower dialectical thinkers reacted negatively to fake displays of happiness and anger in both face-to-face

interactions and controlled video-mediated interactions. These findings support both the internal and external validity of our findings.

We theorized and found that higher dialectical thinkers would react less negatively to displays of fake emotions because they tolerate inconsistencies in their environment (Peng & Nisbett, 1999). It is conceivable, however, that higher dialectical thinkers may have negative responses to some fake displays of emotion. Given that dialectical thinking is related to collectivism and interdependent self-construal (Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010) and that collectivism and interdependent self-construal are related to abiding by social norms (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), dialectical thinkers may react negatively to fake displays of emotions that are not normative or appropriate for the situation. In our studies, showing fake happiness in fundraising and fake anger in negotiation may have been seen as relatively appropriate in these contexts. As such, it remains unknown whether higher dialectical thinkers would accept fake displays that are clearly inappropriate for the situation, such as displaying fake emotions in close, personal relationships. Given that the effects of anger expressions in negotiations have been found to differ depending on their perceived appropriateness (Van Kleef & Côté, 2007), future research should explore the role of the perceived appropriateness of genuine versus fake displays of emotion.

Some limitations of our research should also be acknowledged. First, although our experimental design in Study 2 afforded high internal validity, it precluded us from examining more dynamic interactions. Participants in this study did not negotiate with a real counterpart, and as such, it was impossible to assess final distributive and integrative outcomes of the negotiation, which would be available in real negotiations. However, this was not the case in Study 1 where we were able to assess the bottom-line behavioral outcomes emerging from real social interactions (i.e., actual donations in a fundraising context).

Overall, although the internal validity came at the expense of external validity in Study 2, we believe this sacrifice was justified given that this is the first research examining reactions of dialectical thinkers to fake emotions, and establishing that such effects exist and ruling out potential confounds was therefore important (Sackett & Larson, 1990). Moreover, this shortcoming of Study 2 was offset by the more naturalistic setting of Study 1. Thus, together, the two studies provide support for both internal and external validity.

Second, the context of our two studies differed such that the fundraising context in Study 1 was predominantly cooperative in nature and relied on altruistic behavior of the participants (i.e., making voluntary donations and volunteering their time), whereas the negotiation context in Study 2 was mixed motive and thus contained considerable competitive incentives. One could argue that this differential emphasis on cooperation versus competition renders comparisons of the results across the two studies more complicated. At the same time, finding highly compatible effects across these different settings is illuminating as it shows that lower dialectical thinkers are attuned to emotional inauthenticity and react negatively to it in cooperative as well as competitive settings. These results thus suggest that the observed effects are robust and powerful across different contexts and situations.

Further, our Study 1 did not include a neutral emotional display condition, which precluded a more comprehensive test of our model for fake happiness by comparing the effects to a baseline condition where no emotions are displayed. In this regard, it should be noted that our research question was focused on differential responses to genuine versus fake emotional expressions as a function of the observer's dialectical thinking. Even though neutral emotional expressions can provide a useful baseline condition, our objective in Study 1 was to establish differences between real and fake displays of happiness. After having established the hypothesized moderating role of dialectical thinking in this study, we broadened our scope by examining a different context and testing the effects of real versus fake anger in a controlled laboratory setting. We further note that showing a neutral emotional display in the context of fundraising may not be perceived as plausible or appropriate. Indeed, our pilot test of procedures revealed that people perceived a neutral emotional display while trying to elicit donations as contrary to the expectations for the situation (i.e., displaying enthusiasm and happiness for the good cause). This issue did not pertain to the negotiation context of Study 2, in which we could therefore credibly introduce a nonemotional control condition. Future research could invoke different contexts to examine whether dialectical thinking modulates responses to fake happiness compared to a neutral emotional display.

One of the main arguments in our theory development has been that inconsistent or contradictory behaviors tend to be seen as undesirable. This notion is in line with a large body of literatures on self-verification theory (i.e., individuals behave in accordance with their self-perceptions because acting in an inconsistent manner would threaten their sense of coherence; Ferris, Lian, Brown, & Morrison, 2015), system justification theory (i.e., employees disidentify with stigmatized occupations to act consistent with social perceptions; Kreiner, Ashforth, & Sluss, 2006); emotions as social information theory (i.e., inauthentic emotional expressions are perceived as

inappropriate; Van Kleef, 2016); and cognitive dissonance theory (i.e., inconsistency motivates individuals to act in such a way as to eliminate inconsistency; Festinger, 1957). Thus, in general, it seems that inconsistent or contradictory behaviors are often deemed undesirable (at least in the Western world). At the same time, context may influence whether inconsistent behaviors are seen as undesirable or not. For example, research by Levine and Schweitzer (2014, 2015) shows that prosocial lies (a type of inconsistent behavior that is beneficial for the target of the lies) may not be undesirable and may actually lead to more positive outcomes. As such, there is a possibility that fake emotions that were enacted for prosocial reasons (e.g., not to hurt someone's feelings) may be reacted to more positively even by low dialectical thinkers. We encourage future research to examine this possibility.⁸

Finally, dialectical thinking refers to inherently dynamic thought processes (Kahle, Liu, Rose, & Kim, 2000), and one concern may be that it may be difficult to capture that dynamic process at a single point in time after limited interaction between subjects. Following common practice in the literature (English & Chen, 2007; Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2004; Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, et al., 2010), we conceptualized and assessed dialectical thinking as an individual difference variable rather than a process variable. As such, even though dialectical thinking may involve a dynamic process, individual differences in dialectical thinking capture people's usual tendencies to engage in dialectical thinking across different situations. This approach of conceptualizing and operationalizing dialectical thinking as an individual differences variable is grounded in theory and literature on dialectical thinking, which suggests that people vary in the degree to which they have tendencies to engage in dialectical thinking (see Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, et al., 2010, for a review).

8.3 | Practical implications

Potential limitations notwithstanding, we believe that our results have several practical implications. Fundraising and helping charities and nonprofit organizations have an enormous financial and social impact on our society. For example, in the United States, total giving to the nonprofit sector in 2008 was \$350 billion (Giving USA Foundation, 2008). This money is used to deliver the services to those that need them that are not adequately provided by the government and business. Given the importance of raising funds for charity and nonprofit organizations, a central concern in the fundraising literature is how to elicit more helping and donations. This paper offers an insight in how fundraisers may be more effective by showing that genuine displays of happiness will be most effective when targeting donors who are lower dialectical thinkers. Second, popular books advise negotiators to use their emotions strategically to show toughness and firmness and hence achieve their goals (e.g., Ury, 1993). Our results show that strategic displays of anger that are perceived as fake may backfire if the counterpart is a lower dialectical thinker.

More broadly, our research has implications for a variety of jobs that involve interactions with others and expressions of emotions during these interactions. Our findings suggest, for example, that police

⁸We thank a reviewer for this suggestion.

interrogators' strategies of showing anger to appear tough and elicit confessions (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1991) may not be successful if the displays come off as a "show" to lower dialectical thinkers. Also, managers who show anger to communicate dissatisfaction to their employees who are lower dialectical thinkers may not succeed if their displays of anger are deemed fake. Instead, these expressions may cause subordinates who are lower dialectical thinkers to mistrust their managers, which could hurt managers' performance over time.

Past research suggests that managers of service employees should be cautious when requiring organizationally desired emotional expressions at all costs, because employees may produce fake emotions as a result (Grandey, 2003; Groth et al., 2009). Our research qualifies these warnings by suggesting that fake emotional displays may not provoke negative reactions in all customers. Instead, whereas customers who are lower dialectical thinkers are likely to respond negatively to fake emotional displays by service agents, the consequences should be less harmful when customers are higher dialectical thinkers. This finding is particularly important for organizations that conduct business globally. For example, in cultures that foster higher levels of dialectical thinking (i.e., East Asia), the advice and practice developed in cultures that foster dialectical thinking to a lower degree (i.e., North America) regarding organizationally required emotions may not apply.

To conclude, our model and findings point to the important role of observers' dialectical thinking in shaping responses to fake emotional expressions. Incorporating the role of dialectical thinking in theory and research on emotion allows for more precise predictions regarding the effects of genuine versus fake emotional expressions and promises to contribute to a richer understanding of the social functions of emotions.

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APPENDIX A

A. 1 | Fundraising Script (Study 1).

On behalf of United Way, we're currently raising money to address social problems in different neighborhoods in our city. United Way is addressing these social problems by providing after-school programs for youth at risk, breakfast programs for young hungry children, shelter to abused women, employment training and much more. This initiative would be impossible without help of our donors. As such we would like to ask you if you could help our United Way initiative and help our city become a better place by donating today?

A. 2 | Dialectical Thinking Measures.

Study 1: The Contradiction Subscale from the Dialectical Self Scale (Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2015).

1. When I hear two sides of an argument, I often agree with both.
2. I often find that things will contradict each other.
3. I sometimes believe two things that contradict each other.
4. My world is full of contradictions that cannot be resolved.
5. If there are two opposing sides to an argument, they cannot both be right. (reversed)
6. Believing two things that contradict each other is illogical. (reversed)
7. I find that if I look hard enough, I can figure out which side of a controversial issue is right. (reversed)

8. For most important issues, there is one right answer. (reversed)
9. I find that my world is relatively stable and consistent. (reversed)
10. When two sides disagree, the truth is always somewhere in the middle.
11. When I am solving a problem, I focus on finding the truth. (reversed)
12. When two of my friends disagree, I usually have a hard time deciding which of them is right.
13. There are always two sides to everything, depending on how you look at it.

Study 2: Attitude Toward Contradiction Subscale from the Analysis-Holism Scale (Choi et al., 2007).

1. It is more desirable to take the middle ground than go to extremes.
2. When disagreement exists among people, they should search for ways to compromise and embrace everyone's opinion.
3. It is more important to find a point of compromise than to debate who is right/wrong, when one's opinions conflict with other's opinions.
4. It is desirable to be in harmony, rather than in discord, with others of different opinions than one's own.
5. Choosing a middle ground in an argument should be avoided. (reversed)
6. We should avoid going in extremes.