

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS14/B07/19 (please insert ref. above)
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**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL  
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR  
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

**FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)**

**Completion Report**  
(for completed projects only)

<p><b><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within <b><u>six</u></b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> <li>2. Completion report: within <b><u>12</u></b> months of the approved project completion date.</li> </ol>
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**Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)**

**1. Project Title**

Ostracism for the Common Good? A Social Information Processing Examination of the  
Effects of Workplace Ostracism on Third Part Observers

**2. Investigator(s) and Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved**

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr. Amy Yamei Wang/ Assistant Professor	Department of Management, School of Business, HSUHK
Co-Investigator(s)	Dr. Eko Liao Yi/ Associate Professor	Department of Management, School of Business, HSUHK
Others		

**3. Project Duration**

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval (must be quoted)
Project Start Date	2020.01.01		
Project Completion Date	2022.06.30	2023.06.30	2022.09.22 (RGC)
Duration (in month)	30	42	2022.09.22 (RGC)
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	2023.06.30	2024.06.30	2022.09.22 (RGC)

- 4.4 Please attach photo(s) of acknowledgement of RGC-funded facilities / equipment.  
N/A

## **Part B: The Final Report**

### **5. Project Objectives**

#### 5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. *Establish a theoretical framework and develop empirical findings to examine the effects of workplace ostracism from a third-party observer perspective.*
2. *Distinguish between and explore third-party observers' perceptions of constructive and harmful workplace ostracism.*
3. *Identify different patterns of effects of observed workplace ostracism by including both positive and negative outcomes for third-party employees.*
4. *Highlight and examine two mechanisms through which observed workplace ostracism results in different outcomes by using a social information processing approach as the underlying theory.*
5. *Build on the theoretical implications of workplace ostracism in understanding individual-level and group-level responses to observing ostracism at work and also in examining workplace ostracism as a manifestation of the social context that informs social participants.*
6. *Examine the practical implications of workplace ostracism, particularly in a collectivist culture such as Hong Kong that is highly dependent on social interactions.*

#### 5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: N/A

Reasons for the change:

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#### 5.3 Realization of the objectives

*(Maximum 1 page; please state how and to what extent the project objectives have been achieved; give reasons for under-achievements and outline attempts to overcome problems, if any)*

The project objectives have been primarily realized through the formulation, design, and execution of empirical research to test our objectives.

1. Firstly, comprehensive literature reviews were conducted to:
  - a. Find relevant theories, papers, and discussions that shaped our understanding of workplace ostracism, third party observations and effects, and other related organizational concepts
  - b. Pinpoint gaps in the literature to see if our proposed research has potential for empirical, theoretical, and practical contributions to the field
  - c. Appropriately construct a theoretical framework based on our review

2. We then designed a quantitative study to collect data and to test our theoretical framework, followed by data analysis to see if our hypothesis were supported.
3. Further literature review and discussions based on the actual results helped determined the implications and recommendations our research. Additionally, our actual data results helped launch new ideas and reconsideration of our research (i.e. adjustments for second waves of data, considerations of alternative explanations, etc.).

Through our research, we have been largely able to fulfill the objectives and have a clearer understanding of the topic at hand. For example, our data confirms that third party observers are indeed affected by workplace ostracism and are able to distinguish between different forms of ostracism (Objectives 1 & 2). This also confirms that in addition to direct experiences, the social context in which ostracism occurs also shapes individual outcomes (Objective 5). We also identified that workplace ostracism can lead to both positive and negative outcomes (Objective 3). However, one difficulty we encountered with our research was the robustness of the results and some objectives were not confirmed with the lack of results in our data (e.g., Objective 4). All in all, we believe the topic warrants sustained interest and may be beneficial of a larger quantity of data. We tried to overcome this issue by collecting data directly from organizations as well as online platforms to increase the data size.

#### 5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

<b>Objectives</b> (as per 5.1/5.2 above)	<b>Addressed</b> (please tick)	<b>Percentage Achieved</b> (please estimate)
1. Establish a theoretical framework and develop empirical findings to examine the effects of workplace ostracism from a third-party observer perspective.	✓	100
2. Distinguish between and explore third-party observers' perceptions of constructive and harmful workplace ostracism.	✓	95
3. Identify different patterns of effects of observed workplace ostracism by including both positive and negative outcomes for third-party employees.	✓	100
4. Highlight and examine two mechanisms through which observed workplace ostracism results in different outcomes by using a social information processing approach as the underlying theory.	✓	95

5. Build on the theoretical implications of workplace ostracism in understanding individual-level and group-level responses to observing ostracism at work and also in examining workplace ostracism as a manifestation of the social context that informs social participants.	✓	100
6. Examine the practical implications of workplace ostracism, particularly in a collectivist culture such as Hong Kong that is highly dependent on social interactions.	✓	100

## 6. Research Outcome

### 6.1 Major findings and research outcome

*(Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)*

The research outcome of this project translates into three working projects, two of which are under preparation for submission, and one of which is under review (see Part C).

**Project 1:** In this project, our goal was to identify and theoretically distinguish meaningful job crafting profiles, determine what predicts for different profiles, and how these profile will relate uniquely to various work outcomes. Specifically,

- We were able to use latent profile analysis to identify four distinct job crafting profiles
- We found that employee's social comparison behaviors helped shape their job crafting profiles
- We then found that job crafting profiles related differentially to performance outcomes

**Project 2:** In this project, our goal was to examine how employees use job crafting as a way to navigate organizational politics so that they can still function effectively at work. Specifically,

- We found that job crafting behaviors can be a strategy to deal with organizational politics by improving team-member exchange relationships which help employees function better at work.

**Project 3:** In this project, our goal was to examine how observing coworkers being ostracized can affect an individual's own behaviors. Specifically,

- We found that employees' own work behaviors are affected when they witness ostracism in the workplace
- We found that employees are less likely to be prosocial (e.g., speak up to their managers) when they observe ostracism in the workplace
- We also found that some employees react differently to ostracism in the workplace; specifically, employees who are attuned to organizational politics and have the ability to deal with politic environments are less likely to be affected by observing ostracism in the workplace.
- In summary, we found that employees may differ in how they perceive and make sense of ostracism in the workplace and can react in both positive and negative ways

## 6.2 Potential for further development of the research and the proposed course of action (Maximum half a page)

The area of social dynamics and interpersonal relationships remain relevant in organizational studies, particularly as the structure and nature of work changes (e.g., from physical organizational interactions to technologically enabled relationships). Ostracism, as a social perception, may in fact be more enhanced as individuals become physically distant from one another. For example, remote workers may higher targets of ostracism because they may be left out of important communications, decision-making processes or even discussions around the water cooler. Additionally, remote workers may perceive ostracism when they are unable to engage in informal conversations, social activities or other physical social interactions. In these new organizational structures, it will be implicative for organizations to continue to investigate the impact of ostracism on employees. Some interesting questions in the context of third party observers could be how does the perceived ostracism of one's (remote) coworkers influence an individuals' motivations and working behaviors? Would they feel threatened by the ostracism or remote workers or would they feel more justified given the nature or remote work?

## 7. Layman's Summary

(Describe in layman's language the nature, significance and value of the research project, in no more than 200 words)

As feelings of exclusion in any social arena is a ubiquitous and common human experience, the nature of this research project is to create a deeper understanding of how feeling excluded at work impacts observing coworkers and their workplace behaviors. Although much research has examined the direct effects of workplace ostracism on a focal employee, less is known about how workplace ostracism impacts, shapes, or affects the social context in which all employees (including observing coworkers) engage in. Studying how ostracism manifests in the social context is significant because social dynamics and interactions inform employee behaviors and motivations. Therefore, it is valuable for organizations to understand and have interventions in place that may minimize potential outcomes of exclusionary behaviors or assist employees in navigating such types of social situations. In particular, organizations in collectivist cultures should be particularly mindful because individuals place a lot of worth on community interaction and how they fit into a group.

**Part C: Research Output****8. Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising Directly From This Research Project**

*(Please attach a copy of the publication and/or the letter of acceptance if not yet submitted in the previous progress report(s). All listed publications must acknowledge RGC's funding support by quoting the specific grant reference.)*

The Latest Status of Publications				Author(s) (denote the corresponding author with an asterisk*)	Title and Journal / Book (with the volume, pages and other necessary publishing details specified)	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the Institutional Repository (Yes or No)
Year of Publication	Year of Acceptance (For paper accepted but not yet published)	Under Review	Under Preparation (optional)						
		Project 1: A Latent Profile Analysis of Job Crafting: The Social Comparison Perspective		Liao, E.Y.*, Kong, K.H., Gu JY, Wang, A.Y.	Journal of Personnel Psychology	No	No	Yes	No
			Project 2: Observing Coworker Ostracism and Speaking Up	Wang, A.Y.*, & Liao E.Y.	To be determined	No	No	Yes	No
			Project 3: Job Crafting as Strategies for Organizational Politics	Wang, A.Y.*, & Liao E.Y.	To be determined	No	No	Yes	No

**9. Recognized International Conference(s) In Which Paper(s) Related To This Research Project Was / Were Delivered**

*(Please attach a copy of each conference abstract)*

Month / Year / Place	Title	Conference Name	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the Institutional Repository (Yes or No)
12/2020/ Hong Kong	Observing Coworker Ostracism and Perceptions of Organizational Politics	2020 AIBSEAR Hong Kong Conference	31.12.2020	Yes (Annex I)	Yes	No

08/2022/ USA (Online)	Does Political Savviness Enhance Employee Voice? Speaking Up when Coworkers are Ostracized	2022 Academy of Management Annual Conference	No	Yes (Annex II)	Yes	No
12/2023/ New Zealand	Relationship Creation in Navigating Political Environments: The Role of Job Crafting	2023 Australian & New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Conference	No	Yes (Annex III)	Yes	No

### 10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning

*(Please elaborate)*

I was a supervisor for three Masters of Business Management students who undertook a thesis project. I helped guide them using my own research topic as a context to demonstrate how to construct and conduct empirical research. The students took interest in my topic to complete their own dissertation projects.

In my Master of Entrepreneurial (Asian Family Business) class, one lecture was centered around the ostracism of family members/ managers in the businesses and their impact on the individual as well as the organization.

### 11. Student(s) Trained

*(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)*

Annex IV

Name	Degree Registered for	Date of Registration	Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation
██████████	Masters of Business Management	01.09.2022	31.07.2023
██████████	Masters of Business Management	01.09.2022	31.07.2023
██████████	Masters of Business Management	01.09.2022	31.07.2023

### 12. Other Impact

*(e.g. award of patents or prizes, collaboration with other research institutions, technology transfer, teaching enhancement, etc.)*

N/A

### 13. Statistics on Research Outputs

	Peer-reviewed Journal Publications	Conference Papers	Scholarly Books, Monographs and Chapters	Patents Awarded	Other Research Outputs (please specify)	
No. of outputs arising directly from this research project	1 under review 2 in preparation of submission	3			Type	No.
					Student dissertations	1

### 14. Public Access Of Completion Report

*(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)*

Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access	Reasons