RGC Ref. No.:
UGC/FDS14/B09/17
(please insert ref. above)

RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)

Completion Report
(for completed projects only)

Submission Deadlines:	1. *Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within six months of the approved project completion date.*
	2. *Completion report: within 12 months of the approved project completion date.*

Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)

1.   Project Title

Crafting for better or worse? An empirical investigation on different foci of employee job

crafting behaviors

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

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr. Eko LIAO/ Associate Professor	Dept. of Management, The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
Co-Investigator(s)	Prof. Chun HUI/Professor	School of Business/The University of Hong Kong

3.   Project Duration

	Original	**Revised**	**Date of RGC / Institution Approval** *(must be quoted)*
Project Start Date	2018.01.01		
Project Completion Date	2020.06.30	2021.04.30	2020.08.27
Duration *(in month)*	30	40	2020.08.27
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	2021.06.30	2021.04.30	2020.08.27

Part B: The Final Report

5.   Project Objectives

5.1   Objectives as per original application
   a. Establish a theoretical framework and develop empirical findings to explore the value of employees' job crafting behavior.
   b. Distinguish between and explore employees' task- and relationship-focused job crafting behavior.
   c. Investigate different patterns of effects of employee job crafting through incorporating both favorable and unfavorable employee outcomes.
   d. Identify and examine two mechanisms through which employees' job crafting behavior delivers different patterns of outcomes, based on the adoption of motivational goal framework as the underlying theory.
   e. Explore the theoretical implications of job crafting in understanding employees' constructive behavior and relational outcomes in the workplace.
   f. Examine the practical implications of job crafting behavior, particularly in Hong Kong organizations.

5.2   Revised objectives

   Date of approval from the RGC: N/A

   Reasons for the change:

   1.

   2.

   3. ....

5.3   Realisation 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)

For the proposed project of employees' proactivity at workplace, especially their crafting behaviors that create a better suit with their work environment, a series of research activities were performed. First, comprehensive literature search and review were conducted to gain understanding of existing knowledge in employees' proactivity (motives, attitudes, and behaviors), specifically on employees' intrinsic motives in making the job more suitable, meaningful, and enjoyable for themselves. While employees' job performance includes task performance, citizenship behaviors, and counterproductive behaviors, it is important to understand employees' proactive behaviors such as job crafting and those counterproductive behaviors. As job crafting may have negative influence on employee work performance (e.g., an employee crafts the job for self-interest while at the expense of organization's interest), how it may (or not) relate to other forms of counterproductive behaviors needs to be further clarified. A meta-analysis was conducted and completed accordingly. From the results, a further understanding of employees' various behaviors, especially the scope and forms of counterproductive behaviors,at workplace was developed.

Second, based on the literature review on employees' proactive and counterproductive behaviors, a conceptual model of how workplace contextual factors may influence employees' job crafting behaviors was proposed and developed. Specifically, we investigated how employees deal with unfavorable experiences at work such as organizational politics by proactively crafting their jobs. Accordingly, they are still able to create meaningful relationships that are crucial for consequent individual and organizational performance.

Third, to examine the proposed conceptual model as described previously, an empirical study was conducted with one hundred and sixty-five employee-supervisor dyads. Findings from the sample generally supported our research model and hypotheses. We found that political climate relates to employee job crafting behaviors (i.e., seeking challenges, seeking resources, and reducing demands), which in turn relates to higher level of team-member exchange relationships. Employees experiencing better exchange relationships with their teammates are then more willing to speak up and have more voice behaviors at work.

Fourth, according to our research findings, several implications are discussed. Particularly, we suggested that job crafting can be a constructive bottom-up proactive behavior that helps employees to deal with unfavorable organizational experiences. In this way, employee job crafting can be regarded as a coping and reviving mechanism to transform negative mechanisms into constructive outcomes. In addition, incorporated the specific three-dimensional conceptualization of job crafting—seeking challenges, seeking resources, and reducing demands—that are much less studied but of equal importance with other job crafting dimensionalities (e.g., another three-dimensional job crafting which includes task crafting, relationship crafting, and cognitive crafting). These three dimensions captured the frequently adopted aspect of job crafting by suggesting that employees engage in different elements of job crafting as a bottom-up and self-designed work behaviors. In addition, this dimensionality focuses on specific approaches employees use to adjust work tasks to better suit their needs and to seek for support and help in better managing the work tasks. These three dimensions are particularly suitable to understand employee's reactions and coping behaviors under political climate, which is often perceived by employees especially the low-status ones as a signal of lacking fairness and justice. Employees who feel they are deprived of fair treatment are often less satisfied, show less commitment. How these perceptions and psychological reactions facilitate employee's next moves in managing task fronts need detailed specification.

5.4   Summary of objectives addressed to date

Objectives *(as per 5.1/5.2 above)*	Addressed *(please tick)*	Percentage Achieved *(please estimate)*
1. Establish a theoretical framework and develop empirical findings to explore the value of employees' job crafting behavior.	✓	100%
2. Distinguish between and explore employees' task- and relationship-focused job crafting behavior.	✓	100%
3. Investigate different patterns of effects of employee job crafting through incorporating both favorable and unfavorable employee outcomes.	✓	100%
4. Identify and examine two mechanisms through which employees' job crafting behavior delivers different patterns of outcomes, based on the adoption of motivational goal framework as the underlying theory.	✓	100%
5. Explore the theoretical implications of job crafting in understanding employees' constructive behavior and relational outcomes in the workplace.	✓	100%
6. Examine the practical implications of job crafting behavior, particularly in Hong Kong organizations.	✓	100%

6.   Research Outcome

6.1   Major findings and research outcome
       (Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)

There are several findings from this project. First, we developed a multi-foci framework of employee counterproductive behaviors, which is regarded as a reverse form of employee proactive behaviors. From this study, the importance of organizational contextual factors in influencing employee behaviors was established. Second, we established a conceptual model of how employee job crafting behaviors can function as a coping mechanism in dealing with unfavorable work situations. The three dimensions of job crafting, namely seeking challenges, seeking resources, and reducing demands, are empirically investigated in terms of how they allow employees to proactively deal with unfavorable experiences and transform negative situations into more constructive outcomes. Lastly, we found that employees are able to deal with organizational politics with proactive behaviors (i.e., job crafting) and explore opportunities to further the exchange relationships within the work team. With more crafting focus on relationship building, employees can strengthen the social exchange relationships with team members. In turn, such team relationships facilitate a psychological safe perception, allowing employees to voice their ideas.

For major research outcomes:
 • A Master-degree student's degree project was completed with the theme of employee job crafting.
 • The topic of job crafting was incorporated in the PI's teaching with undergraduate and postgraduate modules. Students gained theoretical knowledge of the topic as well as practical implications of workplace crafting behaviors.
 • A meta-analysis was completed and published in Asia Pacific Journal of Management.

- Research collaborations were established to collective investigate the research questions. The project was discussed, planned, conducted, and the manuscript was completed and ready for submission to a peer-review journal.

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

- The PI will continue incorporate the topic of employee proactivity and job crafting in her teaching in both undergraduate- level and postgraduate-level.
- From the findings of this project, the PI will explore future opportunities in conducting other research projects relating the topic of employee job crafting.
- As the topic of employee proactive behaviors, including job crafting, has received more scholarly and industry's attention, the PI will continue to conduct research projects related to the topic.

7. Layman's Summary

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

Perceptions of politics in organizations have been consistently linked to negative outcomes which may affect both individual and organizational performance. However, research has also identified certain behaviors that individuals may enact to function adequately in political climates. This study identifies and examines one type of such behaviors – job crafting – that enables individuals to structurally, socially and cognitively (re)design their job boundaries as a constructive strategy to cope with the unpredictability of the work environment that threatens the creation and maintenance of employee exchange relationships. Specifically, we investigate how employees deal with perceptions of organizations by proactively crafting their jobs such that they are still able to create meaningful relationships that are crucial for individual and organizational performance. Findings from 165 employee-supervisor dyads generally supported our research model and hypotheses. We found that political climate relates to employee job crafting behaviors (seeking challenges, seeking resources, and reducing demands), which in turn relates to higher level of team-member exchange relationships. Employees experiencing better exchange relationships with their teammates are then more willing to speak up and have more voice behaviors at work.

Part C: Research Output

8. **Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising <u>Directly</u> 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 correspond-ing 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)*	Acknowl-edged 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)*						
2021	NA	NA	NA	Eko Liao, Amy Wang, Cheryl Zhang*	Who Influences Employees' Dark Side: A Multi-Foci Meta-Analysis of Counterproductive Workplace Behaviors */Organizational Psychology Review*, 11(2), 97-143	2020	No	Yes	**Yes** https://researchdb.hsu.edu.hk/view/publication/202000216

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)*
August/ 2019/ USA	Who influences employees' dark side: A multi-foci meta-analysis of counterproductive behaviors	Academy of Management Annual Meeting	No	Yes (Annex I)	Yes	Yes https://researchdb.hsu.edu.hk/view/publication/201900371
#						

Though the conference paper, "*Crafting for better or worse? An empirical investigation on employee job crafting behaviors*", reported in the first mid-term progress report, was accepted for presentation in the International Organisational Learning, Knowledge and Capabilities Conference 2019, the project team members were unable to attend the conference due to unforeseen circumstances in scheduling the conference trip.

10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning
(Please elaborate)

Yes. The PI has incorporated the topic of job crafting in her teaching at The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong, for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Students are guided to learn the concept, discuss relevant cases, and explore advantages, disadvantages of such behaviors, as well as encouraged to explore ways for them to resort to similar behaviors to make their future jobs fit them more.

7. Student(s) Trained
(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)

Name	Degree Registered for	Date of Registration	Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation
███████	███	████████	████████████

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

N/A

12. 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	1	0	0	Type	No.
					Teaching enhancement	1
					Student project	1

13. 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
N/A	