

| |
|---|
| RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS16/B01/15 <hr/> (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)

| |
|--|
| <p><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within <u>six</u> months of the approved project completion date. 2. Completion report: within <u>12</u> months of the approved project completion date. |
|--|

Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)

1. Project Title

Why Don't They Return the Favor? A Study of Antecedents to Team-Member Exchange and its Impact on Work-Life Balance

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

| Research Team | Name / Post | Unit / Department / Institution |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Principal Investigator | Dr LAU Rebecca Suk-yin / Associate Professor | Lee Shau Kee School of Business & Administration / The Open University of Hong Kong |
| Co-Investigator(s) | Dr COBB Anthony Terry / Associate Professor | Pamplin College of Business / Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University |
| Others | NA | |

3. Project Duration

| | Original | Revised | Date of RGC / Institution Approval <i>(must be quoted)</i> |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| Project Start Date | 1 January 2016 | 1 January 2016 | NA |
| Project Completion Date | 31 December 2017 | 31 March 2018 | 28 June 2017 |
| Duration (<i>in month</i>) | 24 months | 27 months | 28 June 2017 |

| | | | |
|--|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Deadline for Submission of Completion Report | 31 December 2018 | 31 March 2019 | 28 June 2017 |
|--|------------------|---------------|--------------|

Part B: The Final Report

5. Project Objectives

5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. Drawing from social exchange theory (Blau, 1694; Molm, 2006), identify narrow, specific individual dispositional factors (propensity to trust, reciprocation wariness, exchange ideology) that may influence TMX.
2. Identify institutional factors (task interdependence, shared leadership) that may moderate the personality-TMX relationship based on the predictions from trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000) and social identity theory (Hogg, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).
3. Examine how these situational cues may magnify the positive impact or mitigate the negative influence of the individual traits on TMX.
4. Develop a two-level model to investigate how the group-level influence is affecting the impact of the individual-level influence on TMX.
5. Explore workers' work-life balance as a consequence of TMX.
6. Develop a holistic picture of the "input-process-outcome" (Hackman, 1987) mechanism (personality x situation – TMX – work-life balance) of TMX.

5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: NA

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)

The six objectives were achieved through the following means.

A rigorous literature review on different constructs, including individual dispositional factors (propensity to trust, reciprocation wariness, and exchange ideology), team-member exchange (TMX), work-life balance, and situational factors (task interdependence and shared leadership) was first conducted. Based on the literature review, a conceptual model and related hypotheses were developed, linking these constructs together at two levels of analysis: individual level and group level of analysis.

A pilot study using a survey design was conducted in October, 2016 to preliminarily test the proposed relationships at the individual-level of analysis. The data collected from a sample of 26 respondents were analyzed for reliability and examined if they demonstrated relationships consistent with the hypotheses.

Based upon the findings in the pilot study, minor adjustments were made to the measures. A full-scale study using a survey design was conducted in early 2017. Data were collected from four organizations in Hong Kong. The employees worked in groups with differing degrees of task interdependence and shared leadership. In total, 176 questionnaires from 41 groups were collected. Hierarchical regression and hierarchical linear modeling analyses were conducted to test the proposed hypotheses.

Theoretical and practical implications together with directions for future research were developed.

5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

| Objectives <i>(as per 5.1/5.2 above)</i> | Addressed <i>(please tick)</i> | Percentage Achieved <i>(please estimate)</i> |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Drawing from social exchange theory (Blau, 1994; Molm, 2006), identify narrow, specific individual dispositional factors (propensity to trust, reciprocation wariness, exchange ideology) that may influence TMX. | √ | 100% |
| 2. Identify institutional factors (task interdependence, shared leadership) that may moderate the personality-TMX relationship based on the predictions from trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Tett & Guterman, 2000) and social identity theory (Hogg, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). | √ | 100% |
| 3. Examine how these situational cues may magnify the positive impact or mitigate the negative influence of the individual traits on TMX. | √ | 100% |

| | | |
|--|---|------|
| 4. Develop a two-level model to investigate how the group-level influence is affecting the impact of the individual-level influence on TMX. | √ | 100% |
| 5. Explore workers' work-life balance as a consequence of TMX. | √ | 100% |
| 6. Develop a holistic picture of the "input-process-outcome" (Hackman, 1987) mechanism (personality x situation – TMX – work-life balance) of TMX. | √ | 100% |

6. Research Outcome

6.1 Major findings and research outcome

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

Major findings:

- i) The findings from the full-scale empirical study show that propensity to trust is positively associated with team-member exchange (TMX) whereas reciprocation wariness is negatively associated with TMX. In other words, those who are willing to trust others and those who are less worried to be taken advantage of in a social exchange relationship show a higher tendency to get involved in social exchanges with others. However, exchange ideology is not found to be related to TMX as predicted in the hypothesis.
- ii) Consistent with the hypotheses, shared leadership which is a group level variable is found to interact with propensity to trust and reciprocation wariness to affect TMX in the hierarchical linear modeling analyses. Specifically, those who have low propensity to trust show higher quality TMX when shared leadership is high than when shared leadership is low. Likewise, those who have high reciprocation wariness tend to have higher quality TMX when shared leadership is high than when it is low. Therefore, shared leadership can magnify the positive influence of propensity to trust and mitigate the negative influence of reciprocation wariness. The moderating effect of task interdependence, however, is non-significant.
- iii) Also consistent with the hypothesis, TMX shows a positive association with work-life balance which is operationalized as work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment. In addition, when the principal investigator (PI) made the presentation at the Australian New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Conference 2016, some researchers suggested the PI to look into any potential mediator in the relationship. One possible mediator they suggested was work engagement. Therefore, work engagement was added into the investigation as exploratory examination. It was hypothesized to be a mediator in the relationship from TMX and work-life balance. The findings suggest that it is a partial mediator in the relationship.
- iv) Exploratory investigation on the Big Five personality traits, moderated mediation effects, and types of task interdependence was conducted but no significant results were found.

- v) The findings provide important managerial implications. It is difficult, if not impossible, for managers to select employees on the basis of personality. However, the findings suggest that managers can enhance employees' reciprocations by implementing shared leadership, even if employees are less inclined to engaging in social exchanges. In addition, instead of offering costly measures, managers can consider improving employees' social exchanges so as to improve employees' work-life balance.

Research outcome:

- i) The conceptual model and empirical findings were presented in three conferences, as stated in Session 9, Part C below. Moreover, a manuscript is being prepared and is targeted to be submitted to *Journal of Organizational Behavior* by the end of February, 2019 as stated in Session 8, Part C.

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

Below are some areas for further development of the research:

- i) A number of causal relationships were hypothesized and tested in this study. While a cross-sectional survey design was employed, it could not examine the causality among the constructs as stated in the hypotheses. To address this concern, a longitudinal design should be considered in future research.
- ii) In the original hypothesized model, team-member exchange was proposed to be directly related to work-life balance. However, as mentioned in point iii) in Section 6.1 above, a literature search on work engagement was conducted, a measure of work engagement was included in the full-scale study, and work engagement was tested as a mediator in exploratory examination. The findings demonstrated that work engagement partially mediated the impact of team-member exchange on work-life balance. These findings therefore encourage future investigation along this line – identifying and testing mediators from team-member exchange to work-life balance.
- iii) Data were collected from one single source using self-report measures. Although the fact that the data of task interdependence and shared leadership were grouped at the group-level of analysis might mitigate the potential issue arising from common method variance, future studies can explore the possibility of data collection from multiple sources.
- iv) The exploratory investigation on the Big Five personality traits, moderated mediation effects, as well as types of task interdependence did not reveal any significant results. More literature review and data analysis could be conducted to identify the reasons for lack of significance.

7. Layman's Summary

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

Teams are common in organizations nowadays. Teams in which members are willing to share and exchange various types of resources enjoy higher performance. Nevertheless, not all members are willing to get involved in reciprocations. This research project first investigates why some individuals are less motivated to exchange from a personality perspective. Next, it explores how organizational settings may affect the association between personality traits and team members' reciprocations. Finally, it extends the current understanding of the positive influence of team members' reciprocations by examining whether such reciprocations may affect team members' work-life balance. An empirical study using a survey design was conducted and data were collected from employees in Hong Kong. The results reveal that those who are less willing to trust others or more worried that he/she will be taken advantage of in a social relationship are less engaged in reciprocations in a team setting. However, if team members can share leadership among themselves, such negative influence can be mitigated. Finally, members' reciprocations can bring them more social resources which in turn will be beneficial to their work-life balance. This project encourages managers to develop a workplace that can encourage employees with certain personality characteristics to foster closer relationships.

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) <i>(denote the corresponding author with an asterisk*)</i> | Title and Journal / Book <i>(with the volume, pages and other necessary publishing details specified)</i> | Submitted to RGC <i>(indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)</i> | Attached to this Report <i>(Yes or No)</i> | Acknowledged the Support of RGC <i>(Yes or No)</i> | Accessible from the institutional repository <i>(Yes or No)</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Year of Publication | Year of Acceptance <i>(For paper accepted but not yet published)</i> | Under Review | Under Preparation <i>(optional)</i> | | | | | | |
| | | | Yes (Dec, 2018) | Rebecca S. Lau*, A. Terry Cobb | Target journal: <i>Journal of Organizational Behavior</i> Tentative paper title: Interaction of personality and shared leadership on team-member exchange | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

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 <i>(indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)</i> | Attached to this Report <i>(Yes or No)</i> | Acknowledged the Support of RGC <i>(Yes or No)</i> | Accessible from the institutional repository <i>(Yes or No)</i> |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| December / 2016 / Brisbane | Personality and Contextual Influence on Team-Member Exchange | Australian New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Conference 2016 | Yes | Yes (Attachment 1) | Yes | Yes |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|----|--------------------|-----|-----|
| December / 2017 / Hong Kong | The Intersection of Innovation in Human Resource Management and Work-Life Balance | Institute of International Business and Governance (IIBG) 2017 Annual Academia-Industry Exchange | No | Yes (Attachment 2) | Yes | Yes |
| February / 2018 / Adelaide | Achieving Work-Life Balance through Team-Member Exchange | The Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand (AIRAANZ) Conference 2018 | No | Yes (Attachment 3) | Yes | Yes |

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

(Please elaborate)

The findings from the research project have contributed to the principal investigator (PI)'s teaching. In the past two years, the PI was involved in the teaching of courses that were related to organizational behavior and human resource management. During the teaching, when the PI covered such topics as work-life balance, groups and teams, and social exchanges, the PI shared with the students about some interesting findings from this research project. Specifically, the PI would highlight the importance of reciprocations among team members and how such reciprocations might impact their work-life balance.

11. 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 |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------|--|
| NA | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

12. Other Impact

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

NA

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 |
|--|----------------|
| NA | |

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

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)

Completion Report - Attachment

(for completed projects only)

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS16/B01/15

Principal Investigator: Dr. LAU, Suk Yin Rebecca

Project Title: Why Don't They Return the Favor? A Study of Antecedents to Team-Member Exchange and Its Impact on Work-Life Balance

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 [or conference] | (1 in preparation) | 3 | | | |