

DOCTORAL THESIS

Workplace interactional unfairness and the new media generation: the impacts of social media exposure

Sze, Pik Shan

Date of Award:
2020

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

ABSTRACT

Workplace unfairness has been known as one of the influential elements towards workplace behavior. In the last decade, the rise and popularity of social media may have change people's perception of unfairness as well as their affect which may have an effect on their behavioral outcomes. Although research of unfairness on workplace behavior has been examined, little attention has been paid to the effect of social media exposure. Drawing on construal level theory, this research examined the effects of interactional unfairness on employees' behavioral outcomes through negative affect, as well as moderating effect of social media exposure on interactional unfairness and negative affect.

Two studies were conducted in China and the United States respectively to enhance the generalization. In Study 1, a two-wave survey of employees and one-wave survey of supervisors were conducted in China and Hong Kong. Hypotheses were tested in hierarchical linear modelling with 147 matched dyad relationships in the sample. In Study 2, a two-wave survey was conducted in the United States. 262 full time employees from a variety of occupations completed an online questionnaire. The results showed negative correlation on social media exposure and construal level. In addition, age was positively significant to construal level and organizational citizenship behavior, and negatively significant to turnover intention on both studies, and negatively significant to negative affect on Study 2. Additional implications for research and practice will be discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Research Background	1
1.2 Research Objectives	5
1.3 Preview of Chapters	7
Chapter 2: Literature Review	9
2.1 Construal Level Theory and Psychological Distances	9
2.2 Social Media Exposure and Generational Differences	17
2.3 Generational Differences	23
2.4 Fairness Theory	33
2.5 Affective Events Theory and Negative Affect	38
2.6 Workplace Behavior	42
Chapter 3: Hypothesis Development and Theoretical Framework	48
3.1 Theoretical Background and Research Model	48
3.2 The Mediating Role of Negative Affect in the Relationship of Interactional Unfairness and Workplace Behavior	50
3.2.1 The Direct Effect of Interactional Unfairness and Workplace Behavior ...	50
3.2.2 Interactional Unfairness and Negative Affect	53
3.2.3 The Direct Effect of Negative Affect and Workplace Behavior	55
3.2.4 The Mediating Role of Negative Affect in the Relationship of Interactional Unfairness on Workplace Behavior	57
3.3 Social Media Exposure and Construal Level	60
3.4 The Moderating Role of Construal Level on the Relationship of Interactional Unfairness and Negative Affect	65
3.5 The Moderating Role of Construal Level on the Relationship on Interactional Unfairness and Workplace Behavior Mediated by Negative Affect	67
Chapter 4: Method	71
4.1 Study 1	72
4.1.1 Pilot Test	72

4.1.2	Sample and Data Collection Procedure	77
4.1.3	Measures	81
4.1.4	Results	87
4.1.5	Discussion of Study 1	93
4.2	Study 2	94
4.2.1	Pilot Study	94
4.2.2	Sample and Data Collection Procedure	99
4.2.3	Measures	103
4.2.4	Results	107
4.2.5	Discussion of Study 2	112
Chapter 5:	Discussion and Conclusion	114
5.1	General Discussion	114
5.2	Theoretical Contributions	116
5.3	Practical Implications	118
5.4	Limitations	120
5.5	Conclusion	122
LIST OF REFERENCES:	124
APPENDICES:	146
Appendix 1:	Summary of Yearly Turnover Rates and Average Vacancy Rates (Weighted Average) in Hong Kong (2002–2019)	146
Appendix 2:	Smartphone Users and Internet Penetration in Hong Kong in 2019	146
Appendix 3:	Characteristics of Construal Level	147
Appendix 4:	Literature on Organizational Citizenship Behavior	147
Appendix 5:	Dimension of Organizational Justice	148
Appendix 6:	Scales Used in the Study 1	149
Appendix 7:	Scales Used in the Study 2	155
Appendix 8.1:	Survey Questionnaires in Study 1 – Staff Survey Time 1	159
Appendix 8.2:	Survey Questionnaires in Study 1 – Staff Survey Time 2	165
Appendix 8.3:	Survey Questionnaires in Study 1 - Supervisor Survey	171
Appendix 9.1:	Survey Questionnaires in Study 2 – Time 1	173
Appendix 9.2:	Survey Questionnaires in Study 2 – Time 2	178
CURRICULUM VITAE	182