

# Putting customer service at risk: Why and when family ostracism relates to customer-oriented behaviors

H M Saidur Rahaman<sup>a</sup>, Ho Kwong Kwan<sup>b</sup>, Mayowa T. Babalola<sup>c,d</sup>, Haixiao Chen<sup>e,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Psychology, Jagannath University, Dhaka 1100, Bangladesh

<sup>b</sup> Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management Department, China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), Shanghai 201206, China

<sup>c</sup> College of Business and Law, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

<sup>d</sup> Graduate School of Business, Nazarbayev University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan

<sup>e</sup> School of Business Administration, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, Chengdu 611130, China

## ARTICLE INFO

### Keywords:

Family ostracism  
Harmonious passion for work  
Customer orientation  
Customer-focused organizational citizenship behavior  
Customer-focused voice  
Social skills

## ABSTRACT

This study examines why and when family ostracism can have an adverse effect on employees' customer service behaviors. Drawing on self-determination theory (SDT), we theorize the existence of moderated multi-mediation relationships between family ostracism and employees' customer service behaviors (i.e., customer-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors and customer-oriented voice behaviors) through harmonious passion for work and customer orientation, with social skills playing a moderating role. We used a time-lagged design to collect data from service employees in China. Our results show that controlling for workplace ostracism at Time 1, the relationship between family ostracism and employees' customer service behaviors is negative and serially mediated by both harmonious passion for work and customer orientation. Furthermore, employees who are less socially skilled are more prone to the adverse effects of family ostracism. Last, female employees are more vulnerable to the effects of family ostracism on their customer service.

In an era marked by heightened competition among service organizations, employees' customer-oriented behaviors can serve as a crucial competitive advantage by promoting both customer satisfaction and organizational success (Tang and Tang, 2012). Such behaviors include customer-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) and customer-oriented voice behaviors (Lam and Mayer, 2014). Customer-oriented OCBs are behaviors initiated by employees to benefit customers, such as satisfying the needs of customers in a way that makes them feel valued by providing a service that may even fall outside the scope of the employees' formal responsibilities (Garba et al., 2018). Customer-oriented voice behaviors are "behaviors that aim to promote, encourage, or cause changes such as developing and making recommendations to management concerning issues that affect the customer" (Lam and Mayer, 2014, p. 638). Thus, it is essential for the hospitality industry (e.g., hotels) to better understand the factors that may promote or undermine these customer-oriented behaviors to ensure high-quality service delivery, competitive advantages, and sustainable financial performance (Tang and Tang, 2012).

Researchers have started to uncover some antecedents of employees'

customer-oriented behaviors in the context of the hospitality industry, such as ethical leadership (Garba et al., 2018), high-performance work systems (Kloutsiniotis and Mihail, 2020), high-performance human resource (HR) practices (Tang and Tang, 2012), leader-member exchange (Kim et al., 2010), support from other departments (Sergeant and Frenkel, 2000), abusive supervision (Lyu et al., 2016), workplace ostracism (Zhu et al., 2017), and negative workplace gossip (Ye et al., 2019). However, these studies have predominantly focused on work-related factors and leadership, neglecting the potential role of work-family interfaces as an antecedent. We believe that this is a major gap in the hospitality management literature, as scholars have demonstrated that employees' family circumstances can influence their work lives and behaviors (e.g., Allen et al., 2000; Ford et al., 2007; Lin et al., 2021). In this regard, an emerging body of research has started to investigate how employees' family circumstances influence their service behaviors and vice versa. Deng et al. (2021) showed that workplace ostracism harms employees' family satisfaction and triggers family undermining. Zhang et al. (2022) found that individuals being ostracized at work tend to provide a low degree of family social support.

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [sayeed@psy.jnu.ac.bd](mailto:sayed@psy.jnu.ac.bd) (H.M.S. Rahaman), [kwanhokwong@ceibs.edu](mailto:kwanhokwong@ceibs.edu) (H.K. Kwan), [mayowa.babalola@rmit.edu.au](mailto:mayowa.babalola@rmit.edu.au), [mayowa.babalola@rmit.edu.au](mailto:mayowa.babalola@rmit.edu.au) (M.T. Babalola), [chenhaixiao1218@foxmail.com](mailto:chenhaixiao1218@foxmail.com) (H. Chen).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2022.103390>

Received 17 December 2021; Received in revised form 1 November 2022; Accepted 5 November 2022

Available online 21 November 2022

0278-4319/© 2022 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Cheng et al. (2019) showed that exposure to family incivility spurs employees' service sabotage behavior. Ye et al. (2021) recently investigated the potential influence of family ostracism on employees' work life. Family ostracism is a prevalent form of ostracism; in an in-depth study, 60% of the ostracized participants indicated that they had experienced ostracism from a partner or spouse, and 28% reported that they had experienced it from a mother or mother-in-law (Zadro et al., 2008).

Family ostracism is defined as "the extent to which an individual perceives that he or she is excluded, rejected, or ignored by other family members" (Ye et al., 2021, p. 646). Babalola et al. (2021) showed that family ostracism stifles employees' creativity at work. In the context of frontline hotel employees, Ye et al. (2021) showed that family ostracism has an adverse effect on proactive customer service performance via emotional exhaustion, and that the relationship is moderated by family centrality. Many service behaviors and their operating procedures are not minutely prescribed in advance in formalized job descriptions, leading to uncertain and volatile service behaviors (Zhu et al., 2017). Service behaviors are important not only for a high-quality customer experience but also for the financial success of the corresponding hotel industry (Wang et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2017). Therefore, further research is needed to unravel other potential mediating and moderating mechanisms in the influence of family ostracism on employees' service behaviors in the context of the hospitality industry (Babalola et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2021).

Based on this discussion, in this study we examine the influence of family ostracism on employees' customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors. Research has mainly focused on the resource-based perspective of the influence of family ostracism on different employee outcomes (Babalola et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2021). To advance the theoretical application, this study draws on self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2000) to theorize the influence of family ostracism on employees' service behaviors via harmonious passion for work and customer orientation. We focus on harmonious passion for work as a conduit for autonomous motivation (Liu et al., 2011). Harmonious passion is defined as "the autonomous internalization of an activity, making it part of one's identity and thus creating a sense of personal enjoyment and free choice about pursuing the activity" (Liu et al., 2011, p. 294). SDT suggests that the satisfaction of basic needs promotes autonomous motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2014). We view SDT as an appropriate theoretical lens for our study and suggest that family ostracism can diminish employees' autonomous motivation (Deci et al., 2017) by hindering the satisfaction of their basic needs (Legate et al., 2013). The decrease in autonomous motivation, in turn, translates into reduced harmonious passion for work. Consequently, employees become less focused on customers; in other words, employees show a lower degree of customer orientation, defined as "the importance that service providers place on their customers' needs relating to service offerings and the extent to which service providers are willing to put forth time and effort to satisfy their customers" (Susskind et al., 2003, p. 181). This reduction in customer orientation ultimately inhibits the employees' customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors.

Another purpose of this study is to determine ways to mitigate the adverse effects of family ostracism. We consider employees' social skills to be relevant in this regard. Social skills are defined as "interpersonal perceptiveness and the capacity to adjust one's behavior to different situational demands and to effectively influence and control the responses of others" (Ferris et al., 2001, p. 1076). In the hospitality industry, employees' social skills such as customer handling and self-presentation are closely linked to service quality (Hurrell and Scholarios, 2014). The reason for this link is that employee behaviors are the crucial determinant in shaping customers' perceived satisfaction with the employees and, eventually, the quality of the services offered by the employees (Liao and Chuang, 2004). Social skills are also important in the case of ostracism. Williams (2009) have argued that ostracized individuals may feel driven to seek assurance from others and may minimize the consequences of ostracism through attributional work

(Williams, 2009). Therefore, employees with better social skills are more likely to use these skills to minimize the adverse effects of family ostracism. Based on SDT, we further suggest that employees' social skills can act as a moderator and provide a boundary condition for the underlying processes through which family ostracism inhibits employees' customer-oriented behaviors. Specifically, employees who are more socially skilled may have a greater ability to find ways to meet their basic needs particularly the need for relatedness (Legate et al., 2013; Ryan and Deci, 2000; Wu et al., 2012), and this ability may make them less prone to the adverse effects of family ostracism. The importance of the three needs in fostering motivation may differ for individuals given their prevailing in specific contexts (Vallerand, 2000). Therefore, we suggest that social skills can moderate not only the relationship between family ostracism and harmonious passion for work but also the serially mediated relationship between family ostracism and employees' customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors through harmonious passion for work and customer orientation.

Last, inspired by studies that have demonstrated the existence of gender differences with regard to social relationships and supportive behaviors (see Ouyang et al., 2015, for a review), we investigate the moderating role of gender in the relationship between family ostracism and employees' customer service behaviors mediated by harmonious passion for work and customer orientation.

Our study makes several contributions to the service literature and ostracism literature. First, we extend the service literature by exploring family ostracism as an important antecedent (i.e., inhibitor) of employees' customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors, thus adding to the growing body of related work (Garba et al., 2018; Kloutsiniotis and Mihail, 2020; Lam and Mayer, 2014; Tang and Tang, 2012). By identifying family ostracism as a distal inhibitor of employees' customer-oriented behaviors, we expand the current understanding of why issues in employees' family lives can hamper their customer-oriented behaviors at work. Second, our study responds to the recent calls by Babalola et al. (2021) and Ye et al. (2021) for further research on the work-related consequences of family ostracism, including the effect on employees' service behaviors. Third, drawing on SDT, we develop a serial mediation mechanism that links family ostracism to employees' customer-oriented behaviors via harmonious passion for work and customer orientation. This approach can untangle the complexities of the work-family spillover effect of ostracism (Liu et al., 2013). Fourth, we illustrate the roles of employees' social skills and gender as moderators of the mediating mechanism. Thus, we put forward a more nuanced understanding of why and when family ostracism influences customer-oriented behaviors. In summary, we expand the application of SDT to emerging research on family ostracism and uncover new explanatory mechanisms and boundary conditions for the consequences of family ostracism. Fig. 1 shows our proposed conceptual model.

## 1. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

### 1.1. SDT

SDT stresses that optimal functioning and psychological flourishing of individuals depend on the satisfaction of three fundamental and universal psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Vander Elst et al., 2012). Autonomy refers to the need "to be self-regulating, to be the maker or at least the owner of one's choices," competence refers to the need "to be effective in what one does, mastering new skills in the process," and relatedness refers to the need "to feel connected and in sympathy with at least some others" (Sheldon et al., 2003, p. 366). The satisfaction of these three psychological needs can enhance an individual's autonomous motivation. Conversely, hindrances to the satisfaction of these needs can undermine autonomous motivation. Wu et al. (2019) have shown that individuals in organizations can satisfy these needs through social interaction and self-perception, thereby fostering self-growth, psychological well-being,

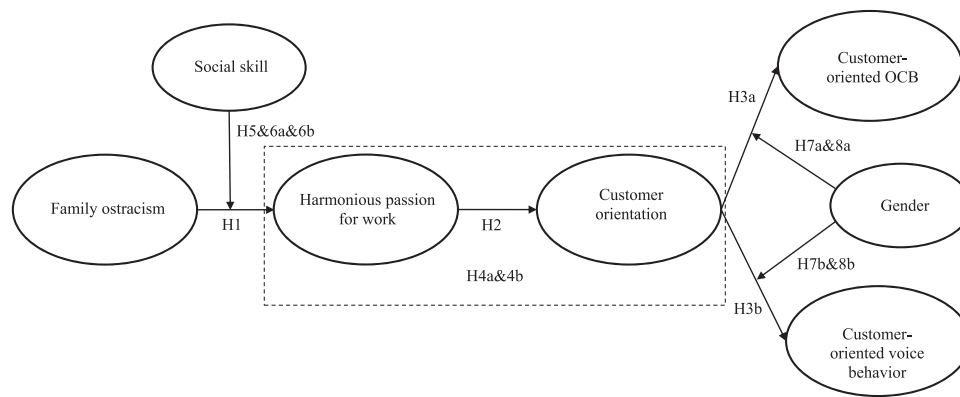


Fig. 1. The conceptual model.

and positive behavioral outcomes. Drawing on SDT, we suggest that family ostracism impedes the satisfaction of employees' basic psychological needs (Legate et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2019) and thereby undermines their harmonious passion for work, which is a form of autonomous motivation (Liu et al., 2011). Consequently, employees exhibit lower levels of customer orientation. Lower customer orientation, in turn, inhibits employees' engagement in extra-role behaviors, such as customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors. Fig. 1 presents the conceptual model of our study.

### 1.2. Family Ostracism and Harmonious Passion for Work

Family ostracism, a specific form of ostracism, is a negative social interaction at home that occurs when a family member avoids or severs social ties with the focal person, making the focal person feel like they do not belong in their own home. This experience can be demotivating for the target of ostracism, and the ill effects can extend to their work life. Lin et al. (2021) have shown that negative family experiences can spill over into the workplace and have serious implications for individuals' functioning at work. Ostracism by loved ones is likely to threaten individuals' sense of identity, undermine their psychological needs, and arouse negative self-perception. For instance, targets of family ostracism may feel that they have done something wrong or that they are worthless. Such negative self-perception can lead to social tensions that diminish individuals' capability to satisfying their basic psychological needs, making it difficult for them to stay motivated in their work (Babalola et al., 2021). The need for relatedness, in particular, is at stake in such circumstances. The reduced sense of belonging can spill over into the ostracized individuals' workplace (Lin et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2019). Therefore, we argue that family ostracism can undermine employees' harmonious passion for work.

SDT scholars have argued that "harmoniously passionate people are not only intrinsically motivated, they also autonomously internalize activities into their identities" (Liu et al., 2011, p. 296), and harmonious passion can be a conduit for autonomous motivation (Ho et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2011). Moreover, for an individual, harmonious passion for work can stem not only from liking a work-related activity but also from other sources such as deriving satisfaction from their family (Ho et al., 2018). SDT contends that the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs can aid autonomous motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2014). In this vein, we expect that the satisfaction of employees' needs can facilitate the autonomous internalization of their work activities, eventually enhancing their harmonious passion for work (Ho et al., 2018). However, studies have shown that ostracism can impede the satisfaction of employees' basic psychological needs (Wu et al., 2019), putting their need for relatedness in particular at stake (Vallerand, 2000), and ultimately hindering their ability to focus on work (Babalola et al., 2021;

Lin et al., 2021). Therefore, we expect a negative relationship between employees' perceived family ostracism and their harmonious passion for work. Based on this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1.** Perceived family ostracism is negatively related to employees' harmonious passion for work.

### 1.3. Harmonious Passion for Work, Customer Orientation, and Customer-oriented OCBs and Voice Behaviors

We expect the reduced harmonious passion for work because of family ostracism to lead to lower levels of customer orientation and, thus, lower levels of customer-oriented behaviors. Studies have shown that harmonious passion for work can enhance psychological well-being, work engagement, and task performance (Forest et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2011; Ho and Astakhova, 2018). Harmoniously passionate employees remain focused on their jobs and have a feeling of control over their work decisions and behaviors (Burke et al., 2015; St-Louis et al., 2018). Harmonious passion for work can also promote positive interpersonal relationships, including those with customers. In this regard, harmoniously passionate service employees are likely to have higher perceived work competence and a greater drive and capability to help others, including their customers (Ho et al., 2018). SDT suggests that autonomous motivation, which encompasses harmonious passion for work (Liu et al., 2011), can trigger individuals' extra-role behaviors (Wu et al., 2019). Therefore, harmoniously passionate employees are inclined to understand and meet their customers' demands and expectations, thus exhibiting customer orientation.

Employees who are more customer-oriented are, in turn, expected to have higher levels of customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors than those who are less customer-oriented. Customer orientation promotes altruism (Donavan et al., 2004), which motivates behaviors that contribute to positive customer experiences. Farrell and Oczkowski (2012) have shown that customer-oriented OCBs represent an important means by which service employees seek to improve the customer experience. Therefore, we contend that customer-oriented employees are more inclined to demonstrate behaviors that benefit customers, such as going beyond the formal responsibilities of their respective jobs.

We further theorize that customer orientation can trigger proactive motivation in employees and thereby promote customer-oriented voice behaviors. Because of their high levels of customer orientation, employees will strive for better customer satisfaction by proactively anticipating imminent issues or opportunities that their customers may encounter (Zhu et al., 2017). Such proactive motivation to serve customers can enhance employees' voice behaviors (Grant and Mayer, 2009). Therefore, customer-oriented employees are likely to speak up when issues or areas for improvement in customer service arise. Thus, employees' customer orientation is positively related to their

customer-focused voice behaviors (Lam and Mayer, 2014). Based on this discussion, we propose the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 2.** Harmonious passion for work is positively related to employees' customer orientation.

**Hypothesis 3.** Customer orientation is positively related to employees' (a) customer-oriented OCBs and (b) customer-oriented voice behaviors.

#### 1.4. *The Serially Mediated Relationships Between Family Ostracism and Customer-focused OCBs and Voice Behaviors*

Building on the above arguments, we further propose that harmonious passion for work and customer orientation serially mediate the relationships between family ostracism and customer-oriented behaviors (i.e., OCBs and voice behaviors). Drawing on the concept from SDT that failure to satisfy basic needs can lead to a lack of autonomous motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2014), we theorize that family ostracism can hinder the satisfaction of an individual's basic needs, leading to diminished passion for work in that individual. This, in turn, leads to a lower level of customer orientation, which then inhibits the individual's customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors. Based on this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 4.** Harmonious passion for work and customer orientation sequentially mediate the indirect relationships between perceived family ostracism and employees' (a) customer-oriented OCBs and (b) customer-oriented voice behaviors.

#### 1.5. *The Moderating Role of Social Skills*

According to SDT, humans have certain universal psychological needs that must be satisfied for optimal functioning and psychological flourishing of individuals. However, it is also important to consider differences between individuals (e.g., moderating effects) when determining the relationships between motivations and outcomes (Liu et al., 2011). We propose that social skills (Ferris et al., 2001) represent an appropriate moderating variable for establishing a boundary condition for the relationship between family ostracism and customer-oriented behaviors. Among the basic psychological needs that must be satisfied, the need for relatedness, in particular, is at stake when an individual is ostracized, that is, when a person is prevented from becoming attached or relating to others (Legate et al., 2013). The importance of satisfying the three psychological needs in promoting motivation can vary among individuals, depending on the context (Vallerand, 2000). In the case of family ostracism, the need for relatedness can be vital. Moreover, the need for relatedness is especially salient in a collectivist culture such as that in China (Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Therefore, to satisfy this need, ostracized individuals might feel driven to seek assurance from others and to alleviate the consequences of ostracism through attributional work (Williams, 2009). In this regard, individuals' social skills can assume considerable importance.

Employees who are more socially skilled are generally better at initiating social interactions and expressing themselves than less socially skilled employees (Wu et al., 2015). These skills will give them an advantage when seeking assurance from others, helping them pursue their psychological need for relatedness and thereby minimizing the adverse impact of family ostracism. Specifically, individuals who are more socially skilled have greater self-confidence and are perceived by others as competent and likable. They are also better at building and maintaining quality relationships (Riggio and Zimmerman, 1991). Furthermore, their qualities increase their ability to seek social support (Mortenson, 2009; Riggio and Zimmerman, 1991), which is a useful trait when seeking assurance to satisfy the need for relatedness. Thus, employees with better social skills may be less prone to the adverse effect of family ostracism on their harmonious passion for work. Therefore, we

theorize that the negative relationship between family ostracism and harmonious passion for work is weaker for individuals who are more (vs. less) socially skilled.

Conversely, employees who are less socially skilled are less likely to be successful in reaching out to others (Wu et al., 2015). They may "lack the ability to accurately read the emotional states of others and are unskilled at initiating and managing social interactions" (Mortenson, 2009, p. 36). Their "poorly crafted efforts to seek support may accomplish more harm than good; they may fail to obtain any support, garner the wrong type of support, damage the relationship between the seeker and helper, and exacerbate the seeker's coping difficulties" (Feng and Burleson, 2006, p. 249). Therefore, individuals who are less socially skilled are likely to be at a disadvantage when seeking assurance from others to minimize the impact of family ostracism. Thus, we expect the negative relationship between family ostracism and harmonious passion for work to be stronger for employees who are less (vs. more) socially skilled.

Ultimately, social skills can have implications for customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors. When employees are less socially skilled, the strengthening of the negative relationship between family ostracism and harmonious passion for work is likely to weaken their customer orientation, leading to lower levels of customer-focused OCBs and voice behaviors. Based on this discussion, we propose the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 5.** Employees' social skills moderate the negative relationship between perceived family ostracism and harmonious passion for work, such that the relationship is weaker for employees with more (vs. less) social skills.

**Hypothesis 6.** Employees' social skills moderate the serially mediated relationships between perceived family ostracism and (a) customer-oriented OCBs and (b) customer-oriented voice behaviors, such that the relationships are weaker for employees with more (vs. less) social skills.

#### 1.6. *The Moderating Role of Gender*

We explore the moderating role of gender based on social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly and Wood, 1999). Role theory states that social structure has a major influence on human behavior and that men and women tend to assume different social roles. Men and women need to adjust to their respective roles, thus leading to psychological differences between them in the context of these roles. As Ouyang et al. (2015) summarized, women tend to be more empathetic and relationship-oriented and accord importance to interaction and social support. Therefore, they exhibit strong customer orientation by demonstrating customer-oriented service behaviors. In contrast, men tend to be more competitive and task-oriented and focus on their autonomy. They accord less importance to relationships and are less focused on customer orientation. Building on this insight, we argue that the relationships between customer orientation and customer-oriented OCBs and between customer orientation and customer-oriented voice behaviors will be stronger for female employees than for male employees.

Research suggests that in the face of stress and difficult behavior, men and women respond differently. As such, relationship stress triggers negativity in women, and they tend to exhibit care toward others. In contrast, men tend to detach themselves from such issues and become self-focused (Iwasaki et al., 2004; Maki et al., 2005). Ouyang et al., (2015, p. 676) further noted, "when experiencing negative behaviors related to interpersonal relationships, women appear to be more sensitive to, and influenced by, these events than men." Therefore, we expect the negative effect of family ostracism on customer-oriented service behaviors to be more pronounced in the case of women than in the case of men. Specifically, the adverse effects of family ostracism through harmonious passion for work and customer orientation on customer-oriented OCBs and customer-oriented voice behaviors will be more pronounced in female employees than in their male counterparts.



Thus, employees' gender moderates the serially mediated relationship. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 7.** Gender moderates the relationship between customer orientation and (a) customer-oriented OCBs and (b) customer-oriented voice behaviors, such that the relationships are stronger in the case of female employees than in the case of male employees.

**Hypothesis 8.** Gender moderates the serially mediated relationships between perceived family ostracism and (a) customer-oriented OCBs and (b) customer-oriented voice behaviors, such that the relationships are stronger in the case of female employees than in the case of male employees.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Sample and Procedures

We targeted married employees and their supervisors who worked in the front office department and food and beverage service department of 16 five-star hotels in a city in northeastern China. The five-star rating was the highest rating for hotels in this city. These five-star hotels competed with other hotels on service quality (Sun et al., 2007), which was an appropriate research context for our proposed model. This study focused on married employees because this approach ensures the internal validity of research findings on work–family interfaces (e.g., Babalola et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2019), as diverse family structures could have potential confounding effects (Allen and Eby, 2016). Considering that spouses are key members of a family, a focus on this clearly identified family context helps avoid potential confounding effects.

With the assistance of HR managers, we randomly selected 6–37 employees from each of the 16 hotels, resulting in 360 employee respondents. We used a multi-wave, multi-source design to reduce common method bias, which refers to the shared variance among measured variables when using a common method (Spector and Brannick, 2009) and is one of the main sources of measurement error (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

In June and July 2018, we collected four waves of data with a 2-week interval between waves and included both the employees and their direct supervisors in the surveys (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In the first wave of surveys (Time 1), the employees provided demographic information and rated their perceived workplace ostracism (control variable), social skills, and perceived family ostracism. In the second wave of surveys (Time 2), the employees reported their harmonious passion for work over the previous 2 weeks. In the third wave of surveys (Time 3), the employees reported their customer orientation over the previous 2 weeks. In the fourth wave of surveys (Time 4), we contacted the direct supervisors of the 360 employees to gather evaluations of each employee's customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors over the previous 2 weeks.

Response-enhancing techniques were adopted during the data collection process (Anseel et al., 2010). Specifically, advance notification was provided to the participants to inform them that they would receive a questionnaire to complete later and that they would be contacted for follow-up surveys (Edwards et al., 2002). All of our questionnaires were distributed in envelopes, with a cover letter providing a short description of the study and a statement that the data would be used solely for academic research purposes. We used hand-delivered surveys rather than web surveys or mail surveys (Dillman, 2000; Heerwegh and Loosveldt, 2008). We also assured the participants that participation in this study was voluntary. Identification numbers were used to match the questionnaires and ensure the anonymity of the participants. In addition, RMB30, approximately US\$5, was paid as a monetary incentive for each completed questionnaire.

At Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3, we sent questionnaires to the 360 employees and received 295, 324, and 332 usable completed

questionnaires, respectively. At Time 4, we asked 85 supervisors to evaluate the 360 employees (with each supervisor rating a maximum of six employees) and received usable evaluations for 330 employees. The response rates for the surveys at Time 1, Time 2, Time 3, and Time 4 were 81.94%, 90.00%, 92.22%, and 91.67%, respectively. The Chinese context, in which people accord importance to *guanxi* and positive reciprocation (Xin and Pearce, 1996), facilitates the achievement of high response rates for researchers (Liu et al., 2014). Compared with the response rates of 100% in other Chinese studies (e.g., Hui et al., 2010), our response rates were not surprising.

We carefully selected the questionnaires that had complete responses in each of the four surveys. The final sample consisted of 262 supervisor–employee matches (with each supervisor rating four employees on average). Of the 262 employees, 209 (79.8%) were women. The average age of the participants was 30.71 years ( $SD = 8.87$ ) and their average tenure was 2.38 years ( $SD = 2.89$ ) with their current supervisors. In terms of education, 173 (66%) participants had a high school or lower level of education, 77 (29.4%) had obtained a community college degree, and 12 (4.6%) had obtained a bachelor's degree or higher.

### 2.2. Measures

We adopted a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) for all of the measures in the study except the demographic variables. For all of the key variables except customer-oriented voice behaviors, the measures were available in Chinese. A professor in management translated the English version of the customer-oriented voice behavior measure into Chinese, and two doctoral students in management back-translated the Chinese version into English. All of the key contents of the items were retained in the back-translation.

**Family ostracism.** We used the 10-item scale of Ye et al. (2021) to measure family ostracism. A sample item is “My family members ignore me at home” ( $\alpha = 0.97$ ).

**Social skills.** To measure the employees' social skills, we used the 11-item scale of Ferris et al. (2001), which was used by Wu et al. (2015) in a Chinese context. A sample item is “In social situations, it is always clear to me exactly what to say and do” ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ).

**Harmonious passion for work.** We used the 7-item scale developed by Liu et al. (2011) to measure harmonious passion for work. A sample item is “My job is in harmony with the other activities in my life” ( $\alpha = 0.94$ ).

**Customer orientation.** To measure customer orientation, we used the 6-item scale originally developed by Liao and Subramony (2008) and later used by Kwan et al. (2015) in a Chinese setting. A sample item is “I have a deep understanding of our customers” ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ).

**Gender.** We considered gender as binary and treated it as a dummy variable (i.e., female = 0 and male = 1).

**Customer-oriented OCBs.** We measured customer-oriented OCBs using the 7-item scale originally developed by Dimitriades (2007) and later used in a Chinese context by Wu et al. (2013). A sample item is “To serve customers, this employee volunteers for things that are not required” ( $\alpha = 0.93$ ).

**Customer-oriented voice behaviors.** We measured customer-oriented voice behaviors using the 4-item scale of Lam and Mayer (2014). A sample item is “This employee spoke up and encouraged others in this group to get involved in issues that affect customers” ( $\alpha = 0.85$ ).

**Control variables.** The employees' age, education level (coded 1 = high school or lower, 2 = community college, 3 = undergraduate degree, 4 = Master's degree or above), years with the current supervisor, and perceived workplace ostracism were controlled in this study. Studies have demonstrated that these variables may be related to employees' harmonious passion (e.g., Liu et al., 2011) and customer-related behaviors (e.g., Lam and Mayer, 2014; Ye et al., 2021). To measure workplace ostracism, we used the 10-item scale originally developed by Ferris et al. (2008) and later applied in a Chinese setting by Wu et al.

(2012). A sample item is “Others ignore me at work” ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ).

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Validity Assessment and Descriptive Statistics

We first conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity of all of the multi-item variables, including the six key variables (i.e., family ostracism, social skills, harmonious passion for work, customer orientation, customer-oriented OCBs, and customer-oriented voice behaviors) and the control variable (i.e., workplace ostracism). The CFA results in Table 1 indicated that the seven-factor measurement model yielded a good model fit ( $\chi^2 [188] = 337.34$ ,  $p < .001$ ; TLI = 0.97; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.055), confirming convergent validity. To examine the discriminant validity of the measurement model, we compared the seven-factor model with four alternative six-factor models. The alternative models were built by combining two variables that were collected either in the same wave or from the same source. As shown in Table 1, the results of the chi-square test indicated that the seven-factor model had a significantly better fit than the alternative models (Bentler and Bonett, 1980; Cheung and Rensvold, 2002), indicating good discriminant validity.

The descriptive statistics, correlations, and scale reliability of each variable are presented in Table 2.

#### 3.2. Hypothesis Testing

To test the proposed hypotheses, we applied multiple regression using Mplus 8.0 (Muthén and Muthén, 2017). The results in Table 3 (Model 2) showed that family ostracism was negatively related to

**Table 1**  
Results of Confirmatory Factor Analyses<sup>a</sup>.

Model	$\chi^2$	df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	$\Delta\chi^2$ (df)
<b>Seven-factor measurement model</b>	337.34	188	0.97	0.97	0.055	
<b>Six-factor alternative model 1</b>						
Family ostracism and workplace ostracism combined	1381.86	194	0.74	0.78	0.153	1044.52 ** (6) <sup>b</sup>
<b>Six-factor alternative model 2</b>						
Family ostracism and social skill combined	1514.61	194	0.71	0.76	0.161	1177.27 ** (6) <sup>b</sup>
<b>Six-factor alternative model 3</b>						
Workplace ostracism and social skill combined	787.04	194	0.87	0.89	0.108	449.70 ** (6) <sup>b</sup>
<b>Six-factor alternative model 4</b>						
Customer-oriented citizenship behavior and customer-oriented voice behavior combined	410.73	194	0.95	0.96	0.070	73.39 ** (6) <sup>b</sup>

<sup>b</sup> The model was compared with the measurement model. \*  $p < .01$ .

<sup>a</sup>  $n = 262$ . TLI is the Tucker-Lewis index; CFI is the comparative fit index; and RMSEA is the root-mean-square error of approximation.

harmonious passion for work ( $B = -0.30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 1. In accordance with Hypothesis 2, the results in Table 3 (Model 6) show that harmonious passion for work was positively related to customer orientation ( $B = 0.35$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The results in Table 3 also showed that customer orientation was positively related to customer-oriented OCBs ( $B = 0.23$ ,  $p < .01$ ; Model 8) and customer-oriented voice behaviors ( $B = 0.24$ ,  $p < .01$ ; Model 11), supporting Hypotheses 3a and 3b.

We applied the Monte Carlo bootstrap approach and created confidence intervals (CIs) to test the sequential mediating roles of harmonious passion for work and customer orientation (Preacher and Selig, 2012; Selig and Preacher, 2008). Table 4 summarizes the results. The bootstrap results based on 20,000 bootstrap samples showed that the indirect effect of perceived family ostracism on customer-oriented OCBs through harmonious passion and customer orientation was significant (indirect effect =  $-0.016$ ,  $S.E. = 0.008$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.040, -0.003]$ ), supporting Hypothesis 4a. Moreover, the bootstrap results showed that the indirect effect of perceived family ostracism on customer-oriented voice behaviors through harmonious passion and customer orientation was significant (indirect effect =  $-0.015$ ,  $S.E. = 0.008$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.039, -0.003]$ ), supporting Hypothesis 4b.

We used multiple approaches to test the moderating role of employees' social skills in the relationship between perceived family ostracism and harmonious passion for work (Hypothesis 5), and the moderating role of gender in the relationship between customer orientation and customer-oriented OCBs and in the relationship between customer orientation and customer-oriented voice behaviors (Hypotheses 7a and 7b, respectively). A summary of the results is shown in Fig. 2. According to the regression results in Table 3 (Model 4), the interaction term of perceived family ostracism and social skills was positively related to harmonious passion for work ( $B = 0.45$ ,  $p < .05$ ). To illustrate the moderating results, we plotted the interaction effects using Aiken and West's (1991) procedure. As shown in Fig. 3, the negative relationship between perceived family ostracism and harmonious passion for work was not significant when the level of employees' social skills was high (+1 SD) rather than low (−1 SD). Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

According to the results in Table 3, the interaction of customer orientation and gender was negatively related to customer-oriented OCBs ( $B = -0.27$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Model 9) and voice behaviors ( $B = -0.31$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Model 11). Fig. 4 indicates that the positive relationship between customer orientation and customer-oriented OCBs was not significant for male employees but was significant for female employees, supporting Hypothesis 7a. Similarly, Fig. 5 indicates that the positive relationship between customer orientation and customer-oriented voice behaviors was not significant for male employees but was significant for female employees, supporting Hypothesis 7b.

We also tested the conditional indirect effects of social skills (Hypotheses 6a and 6b) and gender (Hypotheses 8a and 8b). For the mediated relationship between perceived family ostracism and customer-oriented OCBs via harmonious passion for work and customer orientation, the bootstrap results, summarized in Table 4, showed that the indirect relationship was not significant when the level of social skills was high ( $B = 0.005$ ,  $S.E. = 0.015$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.023, 0.036]$ ), and the indirect relationship was significant when the level of social skills was low ( $B = -0.036$ ,  $S.E. = 0.014$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.074, -0.015]$ ). The difference in the indirect effect was significant (group difference =  $0.041$ ,  $S.E. = 0.021$ ; 95% CI =  $[0.009, 0.105]$ ). Hypothesis 6a was thus supported. For the same mediated relationship, the results indicated that the indirect relationship was significant for female employees ( $B = -0.032$ ,  $S.E. = 0.014$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.073, -0.011]$ ) but was not significant for male employees ( $B = -0.011$ ,  $S.E. = 0.007$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.028, 0.002]$ ). The difference in the indirect effect was significant ( $B = 0.021$ ,  $S.E. = 0.010$ ; 95% CI =  $[0.004, 0.055]$ ). Hypothesis 8a was thus supported.

For the mediated relationship between perceived family ostracism

**Table 2**  
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations<sup>a</sup>.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	0.20	0.40											
2. Age	30.71	8.87	-0.200 **										
3. Education	1.39	0.57	0.175 **	-0.346 **									
4. Years with current supervisor	2.38	2.89	0.061	0.225 **	-0.025								
5. Workplace ostracism	1.92	0.82	0.127*	-0.005	0.121	0.076	(0.95)						
6. Family ostracism	1.36	0.66	0.228 **	-0.007	-0.078	0.128*	0.413 **	(0.97)					
7. Social skill	3.31	0.57	0.019	-0.027	-0.025	0.039	-0.110	-0.171 **	(0.86)				
8. Harmonious passion for work	3.75	0.79	-0.090	-0.044	-0.046	-0.141 *	-0.289 **	-0.329 **	0.122*	(0.94)			
9. Customer orientation	3.94	0.76	-0.020	0.084	0.015	0.021	-0.038	-0.116	0.177 **	0.332 **	(0.95)		
10. Customer-oriented OCB	3.92	0.76	-0.102	0.074	0.060	0.065	0.089	-0.143*	0.045	0.046	0.228 **	(0.93)	
11. Customer-oriented Voice	3.74	0.77	-0.086	0.105	0.013	-0.020	0.014	-0.127*	0.087	0.059	0.221 **	0.781 **	(0.85)

<sup>a</sup>  $n = 262$ . Reliabilities are in parentheses.\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .**Table 3**  
Results of Hierarchical Regression Analyses<sup>a</sup>.

Variables	Harmonious Passion for Work				Customer Orientation	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	Coeff. (S.E.)	Coeff. (S.E.)	Coeff. (S.E.)	Coeff. (S.E.)	Coeff. (S.E.)	Coeff. (S.E.)
Gender	-.10 (0.12)	-.01 (0.12)	-.01 (0.12)	-.01 (0.12)	0.04 (0.13)	0.04 (0.12)
Age	-.00 (0.01)	-.01 (0.01)	-.00 (0.01)	-.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Education	-.02 (0.09)	-.09 (0.09)	-.08 (0.09)	-.08 (0.09)	0.05 (0.09)	0.08 (0.09)
Years with current supervisor	-.03 (0.02)	-.03 (0.02)	-.03 (0.02)	-.02 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Workplace ostracism	-.26 * ** (0.06)	-.16 * * (0.06)	-.16 * ** (0.06)	-.17 * * (0.06)	0.00 (0.07)	0.06 (0.06)
Family ostracism		-.30 * ** (0.08)	-.29 * ** (0.08)	-.21 * * (0.08)	-.14 (0.08)	-.03 (0.08)
Social skill			.09 (0.08)	0.16 (0.09)		
Family ostracism * Social skill				.45 * (0.19)		
Harmonious passion for work						.35 * ** (0.06)
Customer orientation						
Customer orientation * Gender						
R <sup>2</sup>	.10	0.15	0.15	0.17	0.02	0.13
ΔR <sup>2</sup>		.05 * *	0.00	0.02 *		.11 * **
F	4.82 * **	6.39 * **	5.74 * **	5.83 * **	0.84	4.75 * **

Variables	Customer-Oriented OCB		Customer-Oriented Voice Behavior			
	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Gender	-.16 (0.12)	-.14 (0.12)	-.16 (0.16)	-.09 (0.13)	-.06 (0.13)	-.06 (0.13)
Age	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Education	0.09 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	0.07 (0.09)	0.06 (0.09)	0.08 (0.09)	0.08 (0.09)
Years with current supervisor	0.03 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	-.02 (0.02)	-.01 (0.02)	-.01 (0.02)	-.01 (0.02)
Workplace ostracism	0.17 * (0.07)	0.14 (0.08)	0.13 (0.06)	0.08 (0.07)	0.05 (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)
Family ostracism	-.23 * (0.08)	-.20 * (0.08)	-.19 * (0.08)	-.16 (0.08)	-.13 (0.08)	-.13 (0.08)
Harmonious passion for work	0.04 (0.06)		-.03 (0.07)	0.05 (0.07)	-.04 (0.07) *	-.03 (0.07)
Customer orientation		.23 * * (0.06)	0.23 * * (0.06)		.24 * * (0.06)	0.23 * ** (0.07)
Customer orientation * Gender			-.27 * (0.14)			-.31 * (0.14)
R <sup>2</sup>	.07	0.11	0.13	0.04	0.09	0.11
ΔR <sup>2</sup>		.04 * *	0.02 *		.05 * *	0.02 *
F	2.58 *	3.69 * **	3.85 * **	1.40	2.73 * *	2.91 * **

<sup>a</sup>  $n = 262$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \* \*  $p < .01$ , \* \*\*  $p < .001$ .

and customer-oriented voice behaviors via harmonious passion for work and customer orientation, the bootstrap results, shown in [Table 4](#), indicated that the indirect relationship was not significant when the level of social skills was high ( $B = 0.005$ ,  $S.E. = 0.014$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.022, 0.035]$ ), and the indirect relationship was significant when the level of social skills was low ( $B = -0.035$ ,  $S.E. = 0.014$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.076, -0.014]$ ). The difference in the indirect effect was significant (group difference = 0.040,  $S.E. = 0.020$ ; 95% CI =  $[0.008, 0.101]$ ). Thus, [Hypothesis 6b](#) was supported. For the same mediated relationship, the results indicated that the indirect relationship was significant for female employees ( $B = -0.031$ ,  $S.E. = 0.014$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.071, -0.012]$ ) but was not significant for male employees ( $B = -0.009$ ,  $S.E. = 0.007$ ; 95% CI =  $[-0.023, 0.001]$ ). The difference was significant (group difference

= 0.022,  $S.E. = 0.011$ ; 95% CI =  $[0.005, 0.059]$ ). [Hypothesis 8b](#) was thus supported.

#### 4. Discussion

In this study, we used a multi-source and multi-wave survey design to test our proposed theoretical model of why and when family ostracism can ultimately inhibit employees' customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors via sequential negative effects on harmonious passion for work and customer orientation. The results showed that family ostracism can have an effect on employees' customer-oriented behaviors above and beyond the effect of workplace ostracism. We discuss in detail the theoretical and practical implications of the findings of this study, its

**Table 4**  
Results of Conditional Indirect Effects<sup>a</sup>.

Family ostracism → Harmonious passion for work → Customer orientation → Customer-oriented OCB			
Relationships	B	S.E.	95% bootstrap CIs
Mean level	-0.016	0.008	[- 0.040, - 0.003]
<i>Conditional indirect effect of social skill :</i>			
Low social skill (-1 SD)	-0.036	0.014	[- 0.074, - 0.015]
High social skill (+1 SD)	0.005	0.015	[- 0.023, 0.036]
Group Difference	0.041	0.021	[0.009, 0.105]
<i>Conditional indirect effect of gender :</i>			
Female	-0.032	0.014	[- 0.073, - 0.011]
Male	-0.011	0.007	[- 0.028, 0.002]
Group Difference	0.021	0.010	[0.004, 0.055]
Family ostracism → Harmonious passion for work → Customer orientation → Customer-oriented voice behavior			
Relationships	B	S.E.	95% bootstrap CIs
Mean level	-0.015	0.008	[- 0.039, - 0.003]
<i>Conditional indirect effect of social skill :</i>			
Low social skill (-1 SD)	-0.035	0.014	[- 0.076, - 0.014]
High social skill (+1 SD)	0.005	0.014	[- 0.022, 0.035]
Group Difference	0.040	0.020	[0.008, 0.101]
<i>Conditional indirect effect of gender:</i>			
Female	-0.031	0.014	[- 0.071, - 0.012]
Male	-0.009	0.007	[- 0.023, 0.001]
Group Difference	0.022	0.011	[0.005, 0.059]

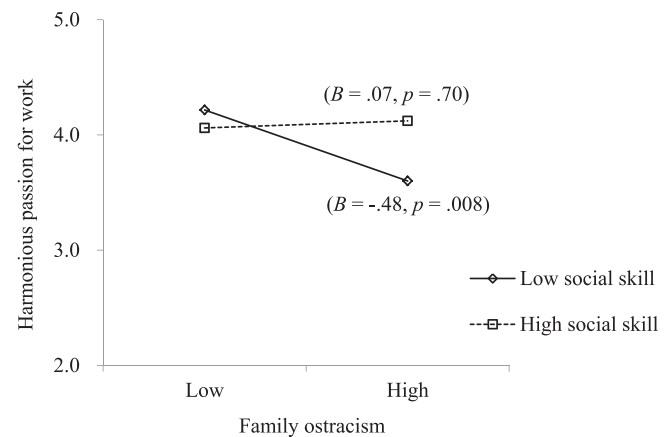
<sup>a</sup> Bootstrapping = 20,000

limitations, and future research directions.

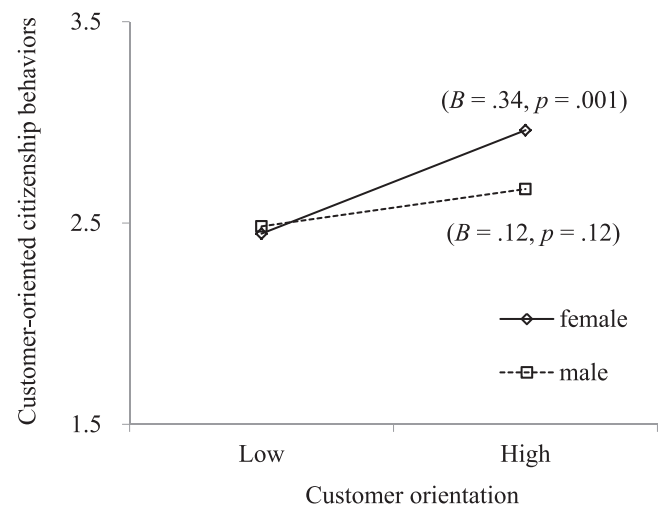
This study makes several contributions to the hospitality management literature. First, we show that family ostracism can act as a distal inhibitor of hospitality employees' customer-oriented behaviors. This contribution is notable as employees' family lives can have a considerable impact on their functioning both at home and at work (Allen et al., 2014). Specifically, hospitality employees often find it difficult to maintain a balance between family life and work life due to their long and irregular working hours (Karatepe and Bektashi, 2008). Moreover, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, issues related to work and family can be even more crucial for the well-being of frontline hospitality industry employees at work. The stress experienced by hospitality employees during COVID-19 is influenced not only by work-related stressors and their appraisal but also by family-related stressors and their appraisal (Yan et al., 2021). In summary, we contribute to the service behavior literature by showing how hospitality employees' family lives can put their service behaviors at risk.

Second, our study contributes to the emerging line of research on family ostracism. While a relatively mature body of studies has shown the consequences of workplace ostracism, our work responds to the recent calls by Babalola et al. (2021) and Ye et al. (2021) for further research on the effects of family ostracism. Our results show that family ostracism can have an effect on hospitality employees'

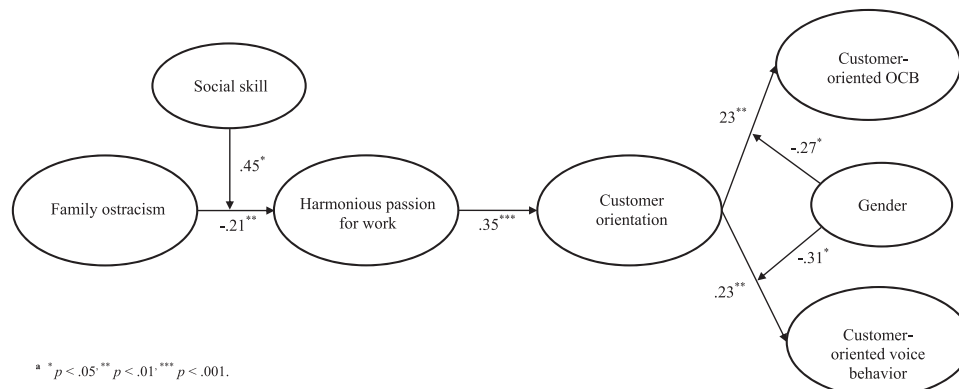
customer-oriented behaviors above and beyond the effect of workplace ostracism. We uncover a novel mediating mechanism in this process—harmonious passion for work and customer orientation serially mediate the relationship between family ostracism and employees' customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors. This serial mediating mechanism is important, as it demonstrates why employees' family lives can interfere with their work lives and ultimately have an adverse effect on their customer service behaviors.



**Fig. 3.** Moderating effect of social skill on the relationship between family ostracism and harmonious passion for work.



**Fig. 4.** Moderating effect of gender on the relationship between customer orientation and customer-oriented citizenship behaviors.



\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Fig. 2.** The moderated mediation model<sup>a</sup>.



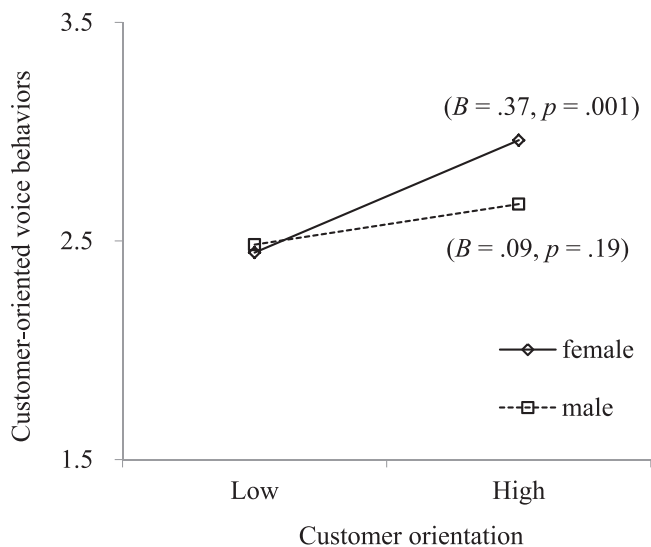


Fig. 5. Moderating effect of gender on the relationship between customer orientation and customer-oriented voice behaviors.

Third, our study helps to extend the application of SDT to family ostracism. The emerging body of work on family ostracism has mainly examined the consequences of family ostracism through the lens of the resource-based view (Babalola et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2021). In contrast, drawing on SDT, our research shows that family ostracism can hinder the satisfaction of hospitality employees' basic needs and ultimately undermine their customer-oriented behaviors. Thus, we demonstrate the importance of the satisfaction of basic needs in family ostracism research specific to hospitality management. In doing so, we address the call by Van den Broeck et al. (2016) for research on how failure to satisfy basic needs (i.e., due to family ostracism) can trigger adverse outcomes. In summary, we extend the application of SDT to family ostracism for hospitality workers and uncover a new explanatory mechanism for the consequences of family ostracism.

Fourth, our work contributes to the ostracism literature (i.e., family ostracism) by identifying a boundary condition (i.e., social skills as a moderator) for its prediction. Specifically, we show that family ostracism is less likely to influence hospitality workers' customer service behaviors when they have better social skills. Thus, we respond to the call of scholars to unravel possible buffering mechanisms that can minimize the adverse effects of ostracism (Williams, 2009).

Last, to the best of our knowledge, our study is the first to introduce the role of gender in research on family ostracism and customer orientation. We show that female employees in the hospitality industry are more reactive to the indirect effect of family ostracism and to the main effect of customer orientation in terms of their customer-oriented service behaviors than male employees in the hospitality industry. This finding is noteworthy given that the specific role of gender in customer-oriented service behaviors can provide us with important insights into determining ways to alleviate the adverse effect of family ostracism and improve employees' customer-oriented service behaviors. Our study also adds to the emerging body of research examining the role of gender in employees' proactive behavior (Ouyang et al., 2015). In summary, we demonstrate why and when family ostracism stifles hospitality employees' service behaviors at work.

Our study also offers a number of practical implications, given that customer-oriented service behaviors are often vital to the success of service organizations, particularly hotels. Customer-focused behaviors are crucial to sustaining the quality of service delivery, building competitive advantages, and safeguarding the financial performance of the hospitality industry (Tang and Tang, 2012). Our findings show that family ostracism can be detrimental to hotel employees. Employees experiencing family ostracism have lower levels of harmonious passion

for work, which ultimately hampers their customer orientation and customer-oriented behaviors. Therefore, managers should be aware of the ways in which employees' family lives affect their work lives—an issue that is not known or understood well in the hospitality industry. The top management team should focus on creating a family-supportive work environment. Managers could achieve this goal by upholding family-supportive policies and family-supportive supervisors. First, they could provide benefits such as paid family leave, insurance packages compatible with family needs, and flexible work schedules. Such benefits can play a vital role in integrating the family and work lives of hospitality employees (Karatepe and Bekteshi, 2008). Second, managers need to be family-supportive (Kwan et al., 2022; Lyu et al., 2019; Tang et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2012). They should find out about their employees' family lives by asking how their family lives are, whether the employees are facing any issues in their family lives, and whether the managers can help them with these issues in any way. Managers should also be supportive at work (e.g., facilitate employee socializing, create a climate of psychological safety) so that employees can offset their family issues (i.e., hindrance to the satisfaction of basic needs in the family due to family ostracism) and become more productive at work. Additionally, training programs and workshops should be organized to raise awareness of these issues. Organizations should cultivate a supportive work climate in which employees get opportunities that satisfy their need for relatedness to minimize the adverse effects of family ostracism (Carlson and Perrewé, 1999; Ye et al., 2021).

Our study shows that employees who are more socially skilled are less likely to experience the adverse effects of family ostracism. The literature has suggested that employees' social skills can be improved through interpersonal relations training (see Burke and Day, 1986). Specifically, such training programs can be impactful and successful in improving the interpersonal (i.e., social) skills of employees in the hotel industry (Garavan, 1997). Therefore, hospitality organizations (e.g., hotels) should consider offering training courses on interpersonal relations for their employees, as any enhancement in their social skills is likely to diminish the adverse effect of family ostracism on the quality of their customer service.

Last, the findings of our study indicate that female employees in the hospitality industry are more prone to face the adverse effects, and the resulting costs, of family ostracism. Therefore, top management and other managers should be aware of the role of gender and take appropriate steps, as outlined above, for female service employees. This study also shows that female employees are more reactive to customer orientation than male employees. Therefore, organizations must keep in mind that customer orientation is particularly important to female employees, who are more likely to enhance their customer-oriented behaviors through customer orientation than male employees. Studies have evidenced that a mentoring relationship is particularly effective for enhancing female employees' customer orientation (Kwan et al., 2015). Therefore, organizations should initiate mentoring programs to promote customer orientation.

This study has a number of limitations that should be acknowledged. First, although we used a multi-wave and multi-source design to reduce common method bias concerns (Podsakoff et al., 2003), such concerns were not completely eliminated. To address this issue, future studies could collect family ostracism data not from the employees themselves but from their family members. Second, we did not confidently control temporal bias, which impedes the establishment of causal relationships among the variables in our research model. A cross-lagged or experimental design would be helpful for fully establishing the causal links in our study. However, our research model was grounded in strong theoretical inference, which we consider to be the strength of our study. Third, our data were collected in China, thus potentially preventing the generalization of our findings to other cultures. In particular, the Chinese culture values collectivism and interpersonal relationships, making individuals more sensitive to ostracism and other forms of family

mistreatment (Ye et al., 2021). Therefore, future studies should use a sample from the West to further generalize the findings. Fourth, the findings may not be generalizable for all types of families, as our dataset considered only married couples. While such an approach reduced potential confounding issues, future research should involve participants living with parents, partners, siblings, or children (Babalola et al., 2021). Fifth, we did not control for other forms of family mistreatment (Lim and Tai, 2014). Therefore, future research that considers these factors could provide a broader understanding of the impact of family ostracism. Sixth, while we focused on the moderating role of employees' social skills, we acknowledge that there could be other potential moderators, such as mindfulness, psychological capital (Mao et al., 2018), or a supportive organizational or family environment (Ye et al., 2021). Exploring these other potential moderators could further increase our understanding of the consequences of family ostracism. Seventh, we did not measure the satisfaction of basic needs in our study. However, we relied on prior research for our theoretical model (Legate et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2019). The incorporation of the satisfaction of basic needs into family ostracism research could provide a broader understanding of the consequences of family ostracism. Another area for future research could be to examine whether employees ostracized at home are likely to ostracize others at work, and how their functional or dysfunctional coping methods may affect work relationships. Last, in our study, the mean score for family ostracism was slightly low (i.e., 1.36 on a 5-point response scale), which is similar to the score of research conducted on the same population (e.g., 1.43 on a 5-point response scale; Ye et al., 2021). Shift work is common in the hotel industry, and therefore the frequency of interactions with family members is lower for employees in hotel jobs than for those in other types of jobs. Therefore, exposure to family ostracism was relatively low for our targeted participants. However, Zhang et al. (2014) have suggested that individuals are more responsive to mistreatment that occurs less frequently than to mistreatment that occurs more frequently. Therefore, we do not consider the low score for family ostracism to be a major issue in interpreting our findings in the case of the hospitality industry.

## 5. Conclusion

This study proposed and tested a mediating process involving harmonious passion for work and customer orientation to examine whether and why family ostracism has implications for employees' customer-oriented behaviors. The findings indicate that family ostracism can have a considerable effect on employees' service behaviors above and beyond the effect of workplace ostracism, as family ostracism influences their harmonious passion for work, customer orientation, and subsequent customer-oriented OCBs and voice behaviors. This relationship is particularly strong for employees who are less socially skilled and for female employees. We hope that our study will encourage future studies to examine the consequences of family ostracism on employees' family lives and work lives.

## Funding

This work was supported by China Europe International Business School (Grant Number: AG22HPL).

## Data Availability

Data will be made available on request.

## References

- Aiken, L.S., West, S.G., 1991. Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Allen, T.D., Eby, L.T., 2016. Advancing work-family research and practice. In: Allen, T.D., Eby, L.T. (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of work and family*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 477–485.
- Allen, T.D., Herst, D.E.L., Bruck, C.S., Sutton, M., 2000. Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: a review and agenda for future research. *J. Occup. Health Psychol.* 5 (2), 278–308.
- Allen, T.D., Cho, E., Meier, L.L., 2014. Work-family boundary dynamics. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 1, 99–121.
- Anseel, F., Lievens, F., Schollaert, E., Chorghagwica, B., 2010. Response rates in organizational science, 1995–2008: a meta-analytic review and guidelines for survey researchers. *J. Bus. Psychol.* 25 (3), 335–349.
- Babalola, M.T., Kwan, H.K., Ren, S., Agyemang-Mintah, P., Chen, H., Li, J., 2021. Being ignored by loved ones: understanding when and why family ostracism inhibits creativity at work. *J. Organ. Behav.* 42 (3), 349–364.
- Bentler, P.M., Bonett, D.G., 1980. Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychol. Bull.* 88 (3), 588–606.
- Burke, M.J., Day, R.R., 1986. A cumulative study of the effectiveness of managerial training. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 71 (2), 232–245.
- Burke, R.J., Astakhova, M.N., Hang, H., 2015. Work passion through the lens of culture: harmonious work passion, obsessive work passion, and work outcomes in Russia and China. *J. Bus. Psychol.* 30, 457–471.
- Carlson, D.S., Perrewé, P.L., 1999. The role of social support in the stressor-strain relationship: An examination of work-family conflict. *J. Manag.* 25 (4), 513–540.
- Cheng, B., Zhou, X., Guo, G., 2019. Family-to-work spillover effects of family incivility on employee sabotage in the service industry. *Int. J. Confl. Manag.* 30 (2), 270–287.
- Cheung, G.W., Rensvold, R.B., 2002. Evaluating goodness-of-fit indexes for testing measurement invariance. *Struct. Equ. Model.* 9 (2), 233–255.
- Deci, E.L., Ryan, R.M., 2014. The importance of universal psychological needs for understanding motivation in the workplace. In: Gagne, M. (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of work engagement, motivation, and self-determination theory*. UK: Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 13–32.
- Deci, E.L., Olafsen, A.H., Ryan, R.M., 2017. Self-determination theory in work organizations: The state of a science. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 4 (1), 19–43.
- Deng, X., He, S., Lyu, P., Zhou, X., Ye, Y., Meng, H., Kong, Y., 2021. Spillover effects of workplace ostracism on employee family life: the Role of need for affiliation and work-home segmentation preference. *Acta Psychol. Sin.* 53 (10), 1146–1160.
- Dillman, D.A., 2000. *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. Wiley, New York.
- Dimitriadis, Z.S., 2007. The influence of service climate and job involvement on customer-oriented organizational citizenship behavior in Greek service organizations: a survey. *Empl. Relat.* 29 (5), 469–491.
- Donavan, T.D., Brown, T.J., Mowen, J.C., 2004. Internal benefits of service-worker customer orientation: job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *J. Mark.* 68, 128–146.
- Eagly, A.H., 1987. Sex differences in social behavior: A social-role interpretation. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
- Eagly, A.H., Wood, W., 1999. The origins of sex differences in human behavior: evolved dispositions versus social roles. *Am. Psychol.* 54 (6), 408–423.
- Edwards, P., Roberts, I., Clarke, M., DiGiuseppi, C., Pratap, C., Wentz, R., et al., 2002. Increasing response rates to postal questionnaires: systematic review. *Br. Med. J.* 324, 1–9.
- Farrell, M.A., Oczkowski, E., 2012. Organisational identification and leader member exchange influences on customer orientation and organisational citizenship behaviours. *J. Strateg. Mark.* 20 (4), 365–377.
- Feng, B., Burleson, B.R., 2006. Exploring the support seeking process across cultures: Toward an integrated analysis of similarities and differences. In: Orbe, M.P., Allen, B.J., Forbe, L.A. (Eds.), *The same and different: Acknowledging the diversity within and between cultural groups*. National Communication Association, Washington, DC.
- Ferris, D.L., Brown, D.J., Berry, J.W., Lian, H., 2008. The development and validation of the workplace ostracism scale. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 93 (6), 1348–1366.
- Ferris, G.R., Witt, L.A., Hockwarter, W.A., 2001. Interaction of social skill and general mental ability on job performance and salary. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 86 (6), 1075–1082.
- Ford, M.T., Heinen, B.A., Langkamer, K.L., 2007. Work and family satisfaction and conflict: a meta-analysis of cross-domain relations. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 92 (1), 57–80.
- Forest, J., Mageau, G.A., Sarrazin, C., Morin, E.M., 2011. "Work is my passion": the different affective, behavioral, and cognitive consequences of harmonious and obsessive passion toward work. *Can. J. Adm. Sci.* 28, 17–30.
- Garavan, T.N., 1997. Interpersonal skills training for quality service interactions. *Ind. Commer. Train.* 29 (3), 70–77.
- Garba, O.A., Babalola, M.T., Guo, L., 2018. A social exchange perspective on why and when ethical leadership fosters customer-oriented citizenship behavior. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 70, 1–8.
- Grant, A.M., Mayer, D.M., 2009. Good soldiers and good actors: prosocial and impression management motives as interactive predictors of affiliative citizenship behaviors. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 94 (4), 900–912.
- Heerwegh, D., Loosveldt, G., 2008. Face-to-face versus web surveying in a high-internet-coverage population: differences in response quality. *Public Opin. Q.* 72 (5), 836–846.
- Ho, V.T., Astakhova, M.N., 2018. Disentangling passion and engagement: an examination of how and when passionate employees become engaged ones. *Hum. Relat.* 71 (7), 973–1000.
- Ho, V.T., Wong, S., Lee, C.H., 2011. A tale of passion: linking job passion and cognitive engagement to employee work performance. *J. Manag. Stud.* 48, 26–47.
- Ho, V.T., Kong, D.T., Lee, C., Dubreuil, P., Forest, J., 2018. Promoting harmonious work passion among unmotivated employees: a two-nation investigation of the compensatory function of cooperative psychological climate. *J. Vocat. Behav.* 106, 112–125.

- Hui, C., Lee, C., Niu, 2010. The moderating effects of polychronicity and achievement striving on the relationship between task variety and organization-based self-esteem of mid-level managers in China. *Hum. Relat.* 63 (9), 1395–1416.
- Hurrell, S.A., Scholarios, D., 2014. The people make the brand: reducing social skills gaps through person-brand fit and human resource management practices. *J. Serv. Res.* 17, 54–67.
- Iwasaki, Y., MacKay, K.J., Ristock, J., 2004. Gender-based analyses of stress among professional managers: an exploratory qualitative study. *Int. J. Stress Manag.* 11 (1), 56–79.
- Karatepe, O.M., Bektashi, L., 2008. Antecedents and outcomes of work–family facilitation and family–work facilitation among frontline hotel employees. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 27 (4), 517–528.
- Kim, S., O'Neill, J.W., Cho, H.-M., 2010. When does an employee not help coworkers? The effect of leader–member exchange on employee envy and organizational citizenship behavior. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 29 (3), 530–537.
- Kloutsiniotis, P.V., Mihail, D.M., 2020. The effects of high performance work systems in employees' service-oriented OCB. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 90, 102610.
- Kwan, H.K., Yim, F.H., Zhou, X., 2015. Effects of mentoring on customer orientation: the moderating role of gender. *Asia Pac. J. Hum. Resour.* 53 (1), 124–140.
- Kwan, H.K., Chen, H., Chiu, R.K., 2022. Effects of empowering leadership on followers' work-family interface. *Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag.* 33 (7), 1403–1436.
- Lam, S.F., Mayer, D.M., 2014. When do employees speak up for their customers? A model of voice in a customer service context. *Pers. Psychol.* 67, 637–666.
- Legate, N., DeHaan, C.R., Weinstein, N., Ryan, R.M., 2013. Hurting you hurts me too: the psychological costs of complying with ostracism. *Psychol. Sci.* 24 (4), 583–588.
- Liao, H., Chuang, A., 2004. A multilevel investigation of factors influencing employee service performance and customer outcomes. *Acad. Manag. J.* 47 (1), 41–58.
- Liao, H., Subramony, M., 2008. Employee customer orientation in manufacturing organizations: joint influences of customer proximity and the senior leadership team. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 93 (2), 317–328.
- Lim, S., Tai, K., 2014. Family incivility and job performance: a moderated mediation model of psychological distress and core self-evaluation. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 99 (2), 351–259.
- Lin, S., Chang, C., Lee, H.W., Johnson, R.E., 2021. Positive family events facilitate effective leader behaviors at work: a within-individual investigation of family-work enrichment. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 106 (9), 1412–1434.
- Liu, D., Chen, X.P., Yao, X., 2011. From autonomy to creativity: a multilevel investigation of the mediating role of harmonious passion. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 92 (2), 294–309.
- Liu, J., Kwan, H.K., Lee, C., Hui, C., 2013. Work-to-family spillover effects of workplace ostracism: The role of work–home segmentation preferences. *Hum. Resour. Manag.* 52 (1), 75–94.
- Liu, X.-Y., Kwan, H.K., Chiu, R.K., 2014. Customer sexual harassment and frontline employees' service performance in China. *Hum. Relat.* 67 (3), 333–356.
- Lyu, Y., Zhu, H., Zhong, H.J., Hu, L., 2016. Abusive supervision and customer-oriented organizational citizenship behavior: the roles of hostile attribution bias and work engagement. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 53, 69–80.
- Lyu, Y., Wang, M., Le, J., Kwan, H.K., 2019. Effects of authentic leadership on work-family balance in China. *J. Manag. Psychol.* 34 (2), 110–123.
- Maki, N., Moore, S., Grunberg, L., Greenberg, E., 2005. The responses of male and female managers to workplace stress and downsizing. *North Am. J. Psychol.* 7 (2), 295–312.
- Mao, Y., Liu, Y., Jiang, C., Zhang, I.D., 2018. Why am I ostracized and how would I react?—A review of workplace ostracism research. *Asia Pac. J. Manag.* 35 (3), 745–767.
- Mortenson, S., 2009. Interpersonal trust and social skill in seeking social support among Chinese and Americans. *Commun. Res.* 36, 32–53.
- Muthén, L.K., Muthén, B.O., 2017. *Mplus user's guide* (8th Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Author.
- Ouyang, K., Lam, W., Wang, W., 2015. Roles of gender and identification on abusive supervision and proactive behavior. *Asia Pac. J. Manag.* 32 (3), 671–691.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Lee, J.-Y., Podsakoff, N.P., 2003. Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 88 (5), 879–903.
- Preacher, K.J., Selig, J.P., 2012. Advantages of Monte Carlo confidence intervals for indirect effects. *Commun. Methods Meas.* 6 (2), 77–98.
- Riggio, R., Zimmerman, J., 1991. Social skills and interpersonal relationships: Influences on social support and support seeking. In: Jones, W.H., Perlman, D. (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships*, Vol. 2. Jessica Kingsley Press, London, pp. 133–155.
- Ryan, R.M., Deci, E.L., 2000. Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *Am. Psychol.* 55, 68–78.
- Selig, J.P., & Preacher, K.J., 2008. Monte Carlo method for assessing mediation: An interactive tool for creating confidence intervals for indirect effects [Computer software]. Retrieved from <http://www.quantpsy.org>.
- Sergeant, A., Frenkel, S., 2000. When do customer contact employees satisfy customers? *J. Serv. Res.* 3 (1), 18–34.
- Sheldon, K.M., Turban, D.B., Brown, K.G., Barrick, M.R., Judge, T.A., 2003. Applying self-determination theory to organizational research. In: Joseph, J., Mortocchio, Gerald, R.Ferris (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resource management*, Vol. 22. Elsevier Science Ltd, Oxford, pp. 357–393.
- Spector, P.E., Brannick, M.T., 2009. Common method variance or measurement bias? The problem and possible solutions. *Sage Handb. Organ. Res. Methods* 346–362.
- St-Louis, A.C., Verner-Filion, J., Bergeron, C.M., Vallerand, R.J., 2018. Passion and mindfulness: accessing adaptive self-processes. *J. Posit. Psychol.* 13 (2), 155–164.
- Sun, L.-Y., Aryee, S., Law, K.S., 2007. High-performance human resource practices, citizenship behavior, and organizational performance: A relational perspective. *Acad. Manag. J.* 50 (3), 558–577.
- Susskind, A.M., Kacmar, K.M., Borchgrevink, C.P., 2003. Customer service providers' attitudes relating to customer service and customer satisfaction in the customer-server exchange. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 88, 179–187.
- Tang, G., Kwan, H.K., Zhang, D., Zhu, Z., 2016. Work–family effects of servant leadership: The roles of emotional exhaustion and personal learning. *J. Bus. Ethics* 137 (2), 285–297.
- Tang, T.-W., Tang, Y.-Y., 2012. Promoting service-oriented organizational citizenship behavior in hotels: the role of high-performance human resource practices and organizational social climates. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 31 (3), 885–895.
- Vallerand, R.J., 2000. Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory: a view from the hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. *Psychol. Inq.* 11, 312–318.
- Van den Broeck, A., Ferris, D.L., Chang, C., Rosen, C.C., 2016. A review of self-determination theory's basic psychological needs at work. *J. Manag.* 42 (5), 1195–1229.
- Vander Elst, T., Van den Broeck, A., De Witte, H., De Cuyper, N., 2012. The mediating role of frustration of psychological needs in the relationship between job insecurity and work-related well-being. *Work Stress* 26 (3), 252–271.
- Wang, M., Kwan, H.K., Zhou, A., 2017. Effects of servant leadership on work-family balance in China. *Asia Pac. J. Hum. Resour.* 55 (4), 387–407.
- Wang, Z., Xing, L., Song, L.J., Moss, S.E., 2022. Serving the customer, serving the family, and serving the employee: Toward a comprehensive understanding of the effects of service-oriented high-performance work systems. *Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag.* 33 (10), 2252–2282.
- Williams, K.D., 2009. Ostracism: A temporal need–threat model. In: Zanna, M. (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*, Vol. 41. Academic Press, New York, NY, pp. 275–314.
- Wu, L.-Z., Yim, F.H.-K., Kwan, H.K., Zhang, X., 2012. Coping with workplace ostracism: The roles of ingratiation and political skill in employee psychological distress. *J. Manag. Stud.* 49 (1), 178–199.
- Wu, L.-Z., Tse, E.C.-Y., Fu, P.P., Kwan, H.K., Liu, J., 2013. The impact of servant leadership on hotel employees' "servant behavior". *Cornell Hosp. Q.* 54 (4), 383–395.
- Wu, L.-Z., Ferris, D.L., Kwan, H.K., Chiang, F., Snape, E., Liang, L.H., 2015. Breaking (or making) the silence: How goal interdependence and social skill predict being ostracized. *Organ. Behav. Hum. Decis. Process.* 131, 51–66.
- Wu, W., Qu, Y., Zhang, Y., Hao, S., Tang, F., Zhao, N., Si, H., 2019. Needs frustration makes me silent: Workplace ostracism and newcomers' voice behavior. *J. Manag. Organ.* 25 (5), 635–652.
- Xin, K.R., Pearce, J.L., 1996. Guanxi: connections as substitutes for formal institutional support. *Acad. Manag. J.* 39 (6), 1641–1658.
- Yan, J., Kim, S., Zhang, S.X., Foo, M.-D., Alvarez-Risco, A., Del-Aguila-Arcentales, S., Yáñez, J.A., 2021. Hospitality workers' COVID-19 risk perception and depression: a contingent model based on transactional theory of stress model. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 95, 102935.
- Yang, Z., Zhang, H., Kwan, H.K., Chen, S., 2018. Crossover effects of servant leadership and job social support on employee spouses: the mediating role of employee organization-based self-esteem. *J. Bus. Ethics* 147 (3), 595–604.
- Ye, Y., Zhu, H., Deng, X., Mu, Z., 2019. Negative workplace gossip and service outcomes: an explanation from social identity theory. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 82, 159–168.
- Ye, Y., Zhu, H., Chen, Y., Kwan, H.K., Lyu, Y., 2021. Family ostracism and proactive customer service performance: an explanation from conservation of resources theory. *Asia Pac. J. Manag.* 38 (2), 645–667.
- Zadro, L., Arriaga, X.B., Williams, K.D., 2008. Relational ostracism. In: Forgas, J.P., Fitness, J. (Eds.), *Social relationships: Cognitive, affective, and motivational processes*. Psychology Press, New York, NY, pp. 305–320.
- Zhang, H., Kwan, H.K., Everett, A.M., Jian, B., 2012. Servant leadership, organizational identification, and work-to-family enrichment: the moderating role of work climate for sharing family concerns. *Hum. Resour. Manag.* 51 (5), 747–768.
- Zhang, H., Kwan, H.K., Zhang, X., Wu, L.-Z., 2014. High core self-evaluators maintain creativity: a motivational model of abusive supervision. *J. Manag.* 40 (4), 1151–1174.
- Zhang, H., Yang, Z., Kwan, H.K., Wu, F., 2022. Social impact of workplace ostracism on family social support: a moderated mediation model (Advance online publication). *Asia Pac. J. Manag.*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-022-09833-w>.
- Zhao, K., Zhang, M., Kraimer, M.L., Yang, B., 2019. Source attribution matters: mediation and moderation effects in the relationship between work-to-family conflict and job satisfaction. *J. Organ. Behav.* 40 (3), 492–505.
- Zhu, H., Lyu, Y., Deng, X., Ye, Y., 2017. Workplace ostracism and proactive customer service performance: a conservation of resources perspective. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 64, 62–72.