



H A R V A R D | B U S I N E S S | S C H O O L

**Rising Scholars Conference
Emotions Research Presentations**

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I am a PhD Candidate in Organizational Behavior at the University of Washington Foster School of Business. My research examines the impact of culture and moral emotions on norm-abiding and norm-violating behavior in organizations. My dissertation on organizational guilt and shame cultures develops and tests theory on how these moral emotional systems of social control guide feeling-rules and behavior surrounding norm violations in organizations.

ABSTRACT:

The Power of the Public Slap: The Socializing Effect of Witnessing Shaming

A recent account of prominent Chinese leaders describes how Zhang Ruimin, CEO of Haier, popularized public shaming as a management technique throughout China. In this ritual, poor performers were made to stand before their fellow employees and explain their mistakes (Useem et al. 2017). Shaming refers to the practice of public, social disapproval meted out by institutional leaders. Shaming has been used for centuries and across cultures to punish violators and reinforce social norms (Greenwald & Harder 1998, Stearns 2017). While shaming may seem a distant relic of Western cultural past, recent manifestations of public shaming have re-emerged in modern institutions to address mask-wearing (Martin 2020, Max 2020), gender equality (MeToo!, Yanisky-Ravid 2019), and racial justice violations (BLM, Lalami 2018), suggesting that shaming is not only present, but may even be useful in the modern workplace.

Despite its growing prevalence, theory on shaming and its potential functions in organizations is critically underdeveloped. First, although a wide body of ethnographic research indicates the social functions of shame in many non-Western moral systems (Benedict, 1946/2005; Wong & Tsai, 2007), management literature primarily adopts a Western psychological perspective in which shaming is largely described as an exclusively damaging form of punishment (Tangney, et al., 1992). Second, much of this work focuses on the impact of shaming on the violator and thus overlooks how shaming influences another critical party in shaming rituals: the audience. Therefore, what remains unknown is *whether witnessing shaming encourages norm compliance among audience members, and if so, when this is more likely to occur.*

To address these questions, I integrate theory on the process of moralization and affective social learning to illustrate the effects of shaming for audience members (Clément & Dukes 2017; Rozin et al., 1997). By spotlighting a violation and engaging witnesses in the punishment, I argue that witnessing shaming invokes moral anger toward the violation (i.e., affective response), which ultimately leads to greater norm commitment (i.e., cognitive response) and norm compliance (i.e., behavioral response). I further propose that these effects are especially pronounced for violations that perceived by audience member as being low in moral intensity—i.e., violations that are viewed as morally neutral. Whereas morally intense violations draw forth moral anger, norm commitment, and norm compliance from audience members regardless of shaming, less morally intense violations present an opportunity in which audience members can learn the most from witnessing shaming as a moralizing experience.

To test these predictions and given the nascency of research on shaming, I first conducted 15 semi-structured interviews on 15 members of the Armed Forces to enrich understanding of the mechanisms underlying the functionality of witnessing shaming (Edmondson & McManus 2007). I then tested the full empirical model in a three-wave, time separated panel survey study across a spread of industries with a final sample of 179 working

adults. Analysis of the results using structural equation modeling revealed significant conditional indirect effects of witnessing shaming on norm compliance, such that when moral intensity is low, the serial mediation of witnessing shaming on norm compliance through moral anger and norm commitment is positive and significant. In other words, for violations that were perceived as morally low in intensity, witnessing shaming, increased audience member norm compliance by changing the way members felt and thought about the violation. Altogether, these findings illustrate an affective social teaching function of public discipline in organizations, whereby shaming is used as a top-down mechanism to edify and socialize members to the moral relevance of cherished norms.

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Herrison Chicas is a 3rd-year PhD student in Organizational Behavior at UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School. Chicas' research centers around the workplace experiences of first-generation (i.e. foreign-born immigrants) and second-generation (i.e. children of immigrants) immigrant employees.

ABSTRACT:

Paying Off The Psychological Debt: Children of Immigrants & Status-Striving

Children of immigrants—called second-generation immigrants (or "second-gens")—are increasingly making up the labor force in the United States. By the end of this decade, nearly seven million second-gen employees will enter the workforce; in contrast, nearly seven million children of native-born parents (or "third-gens") will retire out of the workforce (Singer & Myers, 2016). This demographic shift in the labor force is projected to accelerate with the rapid population growth of second-gens, as one out of every four children in the United States is now a child of an immigrant (Urban Institute, 2019). Other developed nations, such as France, Germany, and Spain, are also experiencing an incoming wave of second-gen employees and similar shifts in their labor force (Jara, 2018; Kirszbaum et al., 2009; Mohdin, 2017).

Yet, despite the urgency to understand this emerging workforce, immigrants and their descendants have been notably absent in diversity research in management (Bell et al., 2010; Harrison et al., 2019), even as work in other domains finds that second-gens tend to be more ambitious (e.g. Goyette and Xie 1999), perform better academically (e.g. Feliciano & Lanuza, 2016), and derive motivation from their first-gen immigrant parents (e.g. Kang & Larson, 2014).

Our research, thus, seeks to explore if, and how, second-gen employees manifest these differences at work. Specifically, in this presentation, we build a model that empirically answers two research questions: 1) Do second-gens engage in greater status-striving behavior, relative to first- and third-gens? And 2) if so, what is the mechanism driving this behavior? We hypothesize that the immigrant bargain—the psychological contract between the first-gen immigrant parent and the second-gen child, whereby the sacrifices of the parent are expected to be redeemed and validated by their child's achievements (R. Smith, 2005)—causes second-gens to engage in greater status-striving behavior. While such a bargain occurs in most families, immigrant and non-immigrant, the life-defining sacrifices of migration alters the way this bargain is perceived, internalized, and enacted by children of immigrants. As such, we hypothesize that this immigrant bargain creates a form of social

exchange that then leads second-gens to experience a greater sense of indebtedness to their parents, which in turn leads to greater status-striving behavior.

We test our model in two studies. In Study 1, we explore whether second-gens are more likely to engage in status-striving behaviors using a European Union archival dataset (N = 55,860,800 respondents; 6 countries). Utilizing occupational status as a proxy for status-striving behavior (with the underlying assumption that individuals who engage in greater status-striving obtain higher status occupations), our multilevel analyses show that second-gens across Europe have higher occupational status (M = 44.04; SD = 12.20) compared to that of first-gens (M = 42.12; SD = 13.56), $t(55,860,791) = -266.84$, $p < .01$ and third-gens (M = 43.07; SD = 12.20), $t(55,860,791) = -118.48$, $p < .01$. In Study 2, we perform a factor analysis to develop the scale for the immigrant bargain construct (EFA N = 403; CFA N = 193) and then test our model with a separate sample (N = 322). Our results showed that second-gens have higher immigrant bargain (M = 5.81; SD= 1.02) than third-gens (M= 4.83; SD= 1.06), $t(265) = -6.90$, $p < .01$. Additionally, as predicted, the indirect effect between immigrant generation and status-striving behavior through immigrant bargain and indebtedness (in order) was significant, $b = 0.07$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.15], suggesting that the overall model holds.

Taken together, our preliminary results show that second-gens do engage in greater status-striving behavior via the immigrant bargain. This work then extends diversity research by enabling us to understand the differences among these immigrant generation groups and the intergenerational, cultural, and psychological experiences that may especially affect second-gen employees.

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ABSTRACT:

The Grateful Exchange Process: The Emergence of Interpersonal Gratitude at Work

Florencio Portocarrero

Hooria Jazaieri

Workplace relationships define how work gets done — they are crucial to meaning-making and employee well-being (Ragins & Dutton, 2017). The changing nature of work reduces opportunities for meaningful workplace interactions, which are core for the formation, nourishment, and maintenance of workplace relationships. In this paper, we argue that gratitude (i.e., the positive emotion felt when one recognizes that another has given one something of value) is vital for building and maintaining high-quality workplace relationships (Algoe, 2012). To this end, we introduce the grateful exchange process (GEP), a novel theoretical framework for understanding gratitude's interpersonal nature at work.

With a few exceptions (e.g., Fehr et al., 2017), the literature on gratitude focuses on the individual level of analysis. While it is valuable to understand the positive influence of gratitude on individuals' well-being (Portocarrero et al., 2020) and prosocial outcomes (Ma et al., 2017), this narrow focus omits the necessary dyadic social exchange, which is core to the emergence of gratitude in organizations. This individual-level focus paints an incomplete picture of gratitude, as it does not account for the interpersonal complexity of gratitude that is present in organizations—which can hinder its positive effects and even damage individuals and organizations.

We conceived our theoretical model as an exchange process between organizational actors, encompassing the experience, expression, and receipt of gratitude between a benefactor and a beneficiary. The GEP starts with a benefactor acting on a workplace opportunity to aid someone (see Figure 1: Exchange 1), and it ends after that benefactor receives an expression of gratitude (see Figure 1: Exchange 3). Specifically, the GEP draws attention to gratitude's role in interpersonal exchange dynamics at work, leading to improvements in the shared sense of interpersonal trust and relationship quality between benefactors and beneficiaries. In opening the "black box" of grateful exchanges between individuals in organizations, the GEP incorporates the complexities happening within (cognition, feeling, motivation) and between (exchanges) individuals as part of the emergence of gratitude. In doing so, we describe the potential for "wrong turns" in each step of the process. These "wrong turns" not only prevent the emergence of gratitude (feelings and/or expressions) but can also damage workplace relationships and have detrimental organizational consequences.

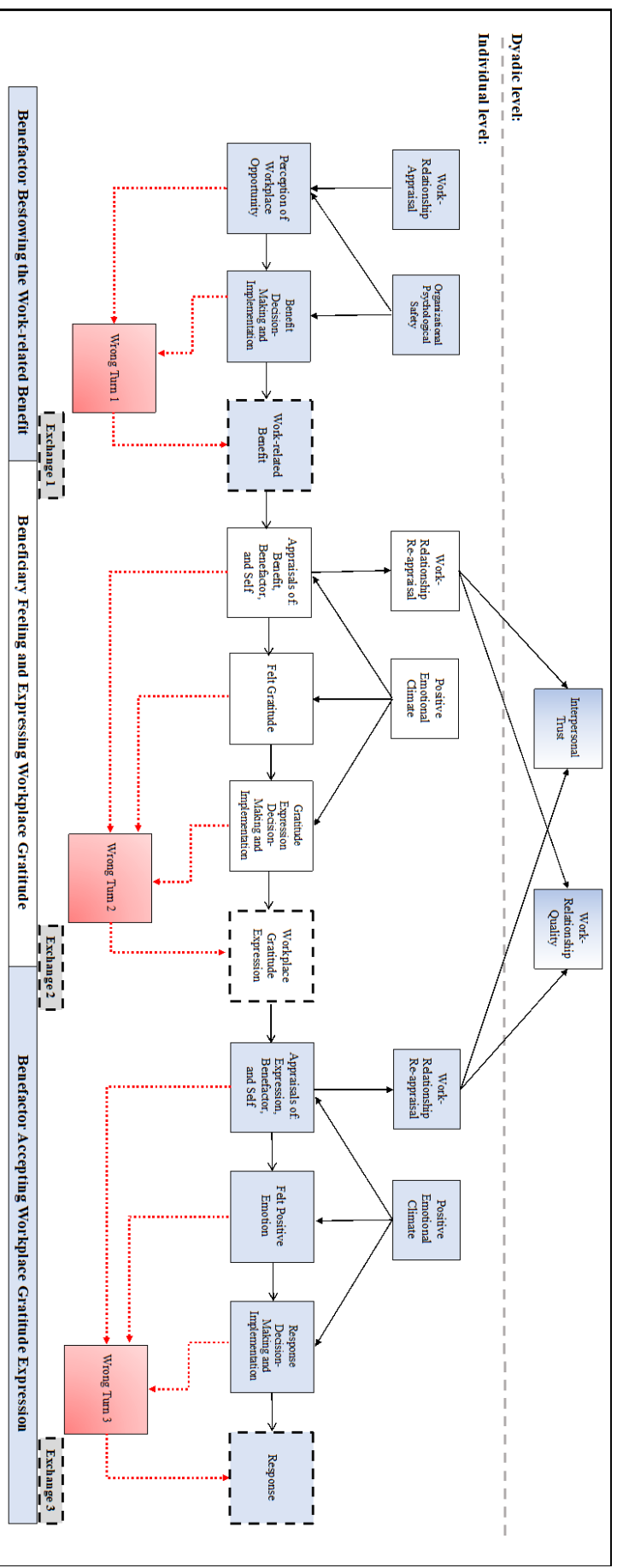
Our novel theoretical framework contributes to two bodies of literature. First, we contribute to the literature on gratitude in the workplace by detailing the specific within- and between-person processes that comprise the emergence of gratitude at work. The GEP illustrates how employees engage in meaningful work exchanges that can trigger not only gratitude but also an array of positive emotional consequences (e.g., compassion, empathy, care), which can improve the quality of work relationships and can create a more caring, inclusive, and collaborative organizational culture. Second, we advance the literature on social exchange and emotions. While emotions are an essential part of social exchanges (Lawler, 2001), social exchange theories remain focused on

the pattern of exchange that develops over multiple exchanges between individuals (Lawler & Yoon, 1993). Thus, researchers have neglected the specific emotional processes through which exchange patterns emerge (or not) (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Flynn, 2006). The GEP opens the “black box” of interpersonal episodes of social exchange at work (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). By bringing into focus the notion that employee’s appraisals and expectations at work are central to workplace interactions, the GEP also contributes to the social exchange literature by providing predictions of employees’ behavior within specific work exchanges (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

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Figure 1. The Grateful Exchange Process



Ayana Young is a Postdoctoral Research Associate and Behavioral Lab Manager at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in the Kenan-Flagler Business School, where she also obtained her Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior. Her research lies at the intersection of emotions, social hierarchy, and interpersonal processes; her passion for cultivating positive relationships at work are what drive her questions. She explores how positive emotions (e.g., gratitude) influence relational perceptions and behaviors within organizations. She also studies how an organization's social hierarchical context may play a role in shaping emotion perception within interpersonal relationships. Thus far, she has published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. Ayana has experience teaching courses on "Leading and Managing in Organizations" to undergraduate students. Ayana was the Kenan-Flagler PhD Student President from 2017-2020, and heavily involved in multiple committees within her Organizational Behavior department as a PhD student. Additionally, as a Postdoctoral Associate, she helped found her department's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee. Furthermore, Dr. Young is a proud member of the PhD Project and served as the 2019-2020 President of the Management Doctoral Student Association and is now a part of the Management Faculty of Color Association.

ABSTRACT:

Perceptions of Authentic (or Slimy?) Gratitude in Organizations
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While the understanding of gratitude within organizations has been conceptualized as having universal benefits, empirical work on this phenomenon is lacking. Indeed, innumerable findings have highlighted the unique affiliative outcomes of the positive emotion of gratitude in interpersonal relationships, but might the contextual features of organizations alter these affiliation intentions toward the expresser? In this paper, we explore how two embedded and distinct factors of organizations--power and perspective--create situations in which a gratitude expression may be perceived as inauthentic, subsequently impacting affiliation outcomes.

Across four experimental studies (3 online and 1 laboratory; total N = 1,518), we demonstrate that in a context of social hierarchy, where low-power individuals may express upward gratitude and high-power individuals may express downward gratitude, one's perspective as a recipient or third-party witness of that behavior creates different perceptions of how authentic that gratitude expression is. Specifically, we find that third-party witnesses of upward gratitude perceive those expressions as the least authentic (Studies 2-4), and this is due to the witness's tendency to make cynical attributions for low-power individuals' gratitude expressions--viewing this expression as slimy (Studies 3-4). Results also show that perceivers, in general, indicate a lower interest in affiliating with those gratitude expressers they perceive as inauthentic (Studies 1-4).

These findings extend research on gratitude in organizations and highlight how perceptions of emotional authenticity may be shaped by both social hierarchical relationships and one's perspective of the social interaction. Additionally, this work opens the door to consider many possible factors that may influence when and why we perceive gratitude as more or less authentic. Thus, in the presentation, I hope to build on the current findings by addressing additional ideas, and some recent data, related to future work on the perceptions of authentic gratitude.