

# Suppression in the Chinese: A Comparison between Different Social Partners

Cheng Tin Nok, Daniel (Student ID: 1008621763)

Supervisor: Professor Helene H. Fung

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

## Abstract

Past studies suggest that the negative effects of emotional suppression in social interactions have been moderated by culture, such that Asians have better social functioning even in the state of suppression as compared with European American. For the Chinese, suppression is highly valued for the purpose of upholding interpersonal harmony, but the extent of adopting suppression in different kinds of interpersonal relationships is still unknown. Given that Chinese has a clear classification of relationships into the ingroup and the outgroup, the present study explored whether there was a difference in the level of suppression according to such differentiation of relationships, with age as a predictor. Eighty-seven employees were recruited from insurance companies in Hong Kong. Their momentary suppression during social interactions was measured by an experience-sampling method over five working days. The results illustrated that there was significantly more suppression during interactions with ingroup as compared with outgroup. Age difference was not found in this study. Implications for such results were further discussed.

*Keywords:* Chinese relationships, suppression, emotion regulation, interpersonal harmony