



FIND Faculty, publications, topics

FACULTY RESEARCH FEATURED TOPICS ACADEMIC UNITS

WORKING PAPER | HBS WORKING PAPER SERIES | 2014

Competition and Social Identity in the Workplace: Evidence from a Chinese Textile Firm

by Takao Kato and Pian Shu

- PRINT
- EMAIL

About the Author



Pian Shu
Technology and
Operations
Management

[VIEW PROFILE »](#)

[VIEW PUBLICATIONS »](#)

Abstract

We study the impact of social identity on worker competition by exploiting the exogenous variations in workers' origins and the well-documented social divide between urban resident workers and rural migrant workers in large urban Chinese firms. We analyze data on weekly output, individual characteristics, and coworker composition for all weavers in an urban Chinese textile firm between April 2003 and March 2004. The firm's relative performance incentive scheme rewards a worker for outperforming her coworkers. We find that a worker does not act on the monetary incentives to outperform coworkers who share the same social identity, but does aggressively compete against coworkers with a different social identity. Our results highlight the important role of social identity in overcoming self-interest and enhancing intergroup competitions.

Keywords: [Wages](#); [Networks](#); [Motivation and Incentives](#); [Identity](#); [Performance](#); [Manufacturing Industry](#); [China](#);

Language: English | Format: Print | 38 pages

SSRN

READ NOW

Citation:

Kato, Takao, and Pian Shu. "Competition and Social Identity in the Workplace: Evidence from a Chinese Textile Firm." Harvard Business School Working Paper, No. 14-011, July 2013. (Revised September 2014.)

Export Citation

Related Work

HBS WORKING PAPER SERIES 2014

[Competition and Social Identity in the Workplace: Evidence from a Chinese Textile Firm](#)

Takao Kato and Pian Shu

Harvard Business School
Soldiers Field
Boston, MA 02163
infoservices@hbs.edu

[Map/Directions](#)

Related Links

[Christensen Center for Teaching and Learning](#)
[Global Research Centers](#)

[Global Research Centers](#)
[Asia-Pacific Research Center](#)
[Japan Research Center \(English\)](#)
[Europe Research Center](#)
[Latin America Research Center](#)
[India Research Center](#)

[Initiatives & Projects](#)

[Initiatives & Projects](#)
[Business & Environment](#)
[Business History](#)
[Entrepreneurship \(Rock Center\)](#)
[Forum for Growth & Innovation](#)
[Global](#)
[Healthcare](#)
[Institute for Strategy & Competitiveness](#)
[Leadership](#)
[Networked Business](#)
[Public Education Leadership Project](#)
[Social Enterprise](#)
[U.S. Competitiveness](#)



Harvard Business School
Soldiers Field
Boston, MA 02163



[Map & Directions](#)

[More Contact Information](#)



→ [All Social Media](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Jobs](#)

[Harvard University](#)

[Trademarks](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)