

Environmental Research, Technology Demonstration and Conference Project

ECF Project:	ECF 2018-114
Project Title:	Single use plastics reduction in Hong Kong Promoting environmentally sustainable behaviors through public engagement campaigns
Principal Investigator:	Dr Marko M Skoric, Associate Professor, Department of Media and Communication, City University of Hong Kong
Total Approved Grant:	\$424,200
Duration:	1/5/2019 to 31/10/2021
Project Status/Remarks:	Completed
Project Scope:	This project aims to provide empirically derived strategies for effective public engagement campaigns aimed at reducing plastic pollution in Hong Kong. More specifically, the project strives to identify the most effective media channels and types of messages that would promote reduction in the use of disposable plastics and encourage environmentally friendly behaviors such as re use and recycling among Hong Kong residents.
Summary of the Findings/Outcomes:	<p>This study provides a comprehensive assessment of the attitudes, knowledge, and past behaviors of Hong Kong residents regarding the environmental impact of single use plastics, and identifies distinct segments of the population that can be targeted by public campaigns. It also shows media use habits of Hong Kong residents, which should be helpful in choosing the most effective ways of reaching them with pro environmental messages.</p> <p>The study shows that in general Hongkongers are aware of the severe dangers that single use plastics pose to the environment and appreciate the importance of recycling. Still, analyses indicate that there are distinct segments of the population that show lower awareness of the problem, coupled with a relatively high usage of single use plastics, which makes them a potential target for public awareness campaigns. This group, termed “the passive cluster” could be reached via free to air TV, radio, and social media campaigns particularly when messages are embedded in a context messages are embedded in a context that is not directly related to the hat is not directly related to the environment, such as finance, politics, fashion, travel, and cooking content.</p> <p>Experimental findings indicate that while both gain and loss frames lead to measurable effects on reducing the intentions to use single use plastics, loss frames are likely to exert a more robust impact, largely by triggering negative emotional reactions in citizens.</p> <p>In terms of the message modality, the study finds that text and infographics can often produce stronger effects than image based messages, and recommend creating a large number of infographics and other types of mixed mode messages that can be easily shared via social media</p>