Cover Letter

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Dear Editor,

We would appreciate your consideration of our original manuscript, “Toward an Employee Communication Mediation Model: Exploring the Effects of Social Media Engagement on Employee–Organization Relationships and Advocacy.” We confirm that this manuscript is original and has not been published, in press, or submitted elsewhere.

Grounded in the framework of the communication mediation model, this study examines the effects of employees’ organizational identification and engagement with social media on employee–organization relationship quality and the subsequent advocacy through a national survey of 466 Chinese employees working in large organizations in 2020. The study advances the literature on social media engagement and relationship management. It serves as a pioneering study to apply the communication mediation model to the public relations field and propose the employee communication mediation model to enrich public relations theories. Furthermore, it advances crisis communication literature by exploring the influence of social media engagement on employee relationship building in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The results have some practical implications for the use of social media by organization management to engage and establish a positive relationship with their employees during crises.

We believe that this manuscript is appropriate for publication in the *International Journal of Communication.* This manuscript should be of interest to global scholars and professionals in the fields of social media and public relations. Our findings will help your readers gain insight into social media engagement, employee–organization relationships, and the COVID-19 effect. This manuscript can advance previous studies on social media and public relations published by the *International Journal of Communication*, which include the following articles.

Cheng, Y. (2016). Social media keep buzzing! A test of the contingency theory in China’s Red Cross credibility crisis. *International Journal of Communication, 10,* 3241-3260.

Kim, S., & Austin, L. L. (2020). Employee mistreatment crises and company perceptions. *International Journal of Communication, 14,* 6133-6153.

Wei, R., Lo, V. H., & Golan, G. (2017). Examining the relationship between presumed influence of US news about China and the support for the Chinese government’s global public relations campaigns. *International Journal of Communication, 11,* 2964-2981.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this manuscript. Please feel free to address all correspondence concerning this manuscript to me at yuanwang0401@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

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