



Assessment of Workplace Ostracism on Job Performance Through the Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing: Emotional Intelligence Works As A Moderator

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Abstract

The study inspects the impact of performance of an employee at the ostracized workplace in the mediating role of knowledge sharing, where emotional intelligence is used as a moderator deployed at the main office of the Water and Power Development Authority, Pakistan. Based on conservation of resources theory, role of knowledge sharing and emotional intelligence accentuated the impact of performance on the job of prevailing ostracism at the place of work. Data was collected from 500 respondents through a simple random sampling method. Adopted structured questionnaires were used to gather data through E-mail. For result of the study, SPSS and Smart PLS were done to test the data for explore the associations and examined the hypothesized model. Results showed that the impact of workplace ostracism on job performance was significant and negative. This study improved the performance of an employee through knowledge sharing to mitigate the impact of ostracism at work. Furthermore, emotional intelligence moderated the relationship of workplace ostracism and job performance was found significant and positive. Regulators create a flexible atmosphere that will encourage job performance in ostracized environment. This study broadens its focus and has an impact on its conclusions. Due to

methodological limitations resulting from the quantitative design and self-reported questionnaire data, subtle factors influencing attitudes and behaviors may be missed. Furthermore, the cross-sectional methodology makes longitudinal analysis difficult, and the study's narrow emphasis on Pakistan context limits its generalizability to a variety of cultural and socioeconomic circumstances. These restrictions underline the necessity of exercising caution when interpreting the data and point to directions for further study to fill the knowledge gaps about the dynamics of job performance.

Keywords: Workplace Ostracism, Knowledge Sharing, Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance, and Water and Power Development Authority of Pakistan.

Introduction

Workplace ostracism refers that an individual has been neglected or excluded at work (Haldorai et al., 2020). Workplace ostracism are less likely to fulfill their performance duties, displays disengaged behavior, less willing to speak up, get involved in, or alter the state of affairs. Workplace ostracism distorts an employee's ability to self-regulate (CC Kuo & CY Wu, 2022). Knowledge sharing is enhanced an individual capability to share through knowledge, experiences, and documented (Ali and Rajesh, 2020). The exchange of task-relevant competence, concepts, and ideas among individuals are to complete specific duties (Stachová, Stacho, Cagánová, & Stareček, 2020; E. Swanson, Kim, Lee, Yang, & Lee, 2020). Individuals who are emotionally intelligent have the capacity to be aware of, regulate, manage, and utilize their own emotions effectively and also their relationships with others in terms of retaining a positive mental state, a situation that leads to improved performance (Faeq & Ismael, 2022; Zhang & Shi, 2017; Faeq, Garanti, & Sadq, 2021). Job performance is the capacity of an individual to accomplish the objectives of their job related work, to fulfill the beliefs or expectations of their superiors, to meet standards, and to realize the goals (Dirk De Clercq et al, 2021; Shin & Hur, 2020).

Literature Review

Ostracism dates back to ancient Greece, is a detrimental phenomenon which impacts individuals in a very harmful manner blaming them for having done something wrong. Ostracism, confusing, results in reduces social interaction in the absence of positive behavior, mindfulness, knowledge sharing, negative attitude and conduct (Chung & Kim, 2017; Kwan, Zhang, Liu, & Lee, 2018).

According to O'Reilly et al. (2015), working exclusion is a mutual phenomenon that varies employees' understanding of the workplace. Some of these include workplace harassment (Bedi, 2021), bullying at work (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001), mobbing at work (Sun et al., 2017), and ostracism at work (Ferris, Brown, Berry, & Lian, 2008). Workplace bullying might also be shown through powerful speech (Taimur, 2017). Ostracism is the administration's willful rejection of a person (Andresen et al., 2018). If someone finds

himself in an extreme situation (O'reilly & Robinson, 2009) where they are cut off from their colleagues, they may want to flee workplace (Bedi, 2021).

Knowledge sharing is a potent tool that improves learning and decision-making (Al-Busaidi, Olfman, Ryan, & Leroy, 2010) having potential advantages of sharing information (Noe, 2010). According to Lin (2007) knowledge sharing is a workplace interaction- based culture in which staff members share their knowledge, experiences, and abilities across the board.

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to affect other people's perceptions and behavior in light of their own and other people's feelings (Faeq & Ismael, 2022). Emotional intelligence has a favorable relationship having (Anwar, 2017) the capacity to comprehend others' psychological states (Faeq, Garanti, & Sadq, 2021) (Terry & Lonto, 2021). (Sadq, Khorsheed, Mohammed, Othman, & Technology, 2020) numerous significant work outcomes and personality qualities, have been indicated emotional intelligence (Y. Yang et al., 2022).

The performance of workers is a highly condemnatory problem (H.J. Wang, Lu, & Siu, 2015). It is possible to characterize a set of behaviors that demonstrate what and how workers do their duties (Saw, Lim, Mok, Chin, & Tey, 2017). According to research conducted by (Yang & Hwang, 2014), job performance is essential in determining or accomplishes its goals. Job performance is symbolic of perceptions, aspirations, and the vision of work (Peck & Levashina, 2017).

The Conservation of Resource theory contends that employees' energy depletion in the face of challenging work circumstances, such as being shunned, may become so distracting that it impairs their capacity to perform job-related duties (Abbas, Raja, Darr, & Bouckenoghe, 2014; Hobfoll, 2001; Ng & Feldman, 2012). If workers feel their co-workers are encouraging and involve them in everyday activities, they are more likely to be motivated and effective (Quinn, Spreitzer, & Lam, 2012; Williams, 2007). Employees who feel neglected or left out by others are less likely to have this belief than those who do not (Wu et al., 2012). Employees under stress at work are more prone to focus on negative behaviors like worrying and agonizing than on productive actions that can help them complete their jobs successfully (Ismail et al., 2009; McCarthy, Trougakos, & Cheng, 2016; Bedi, 2021).

H1: Workplace Ostracism has a significant and negative in relation to Job Performance.

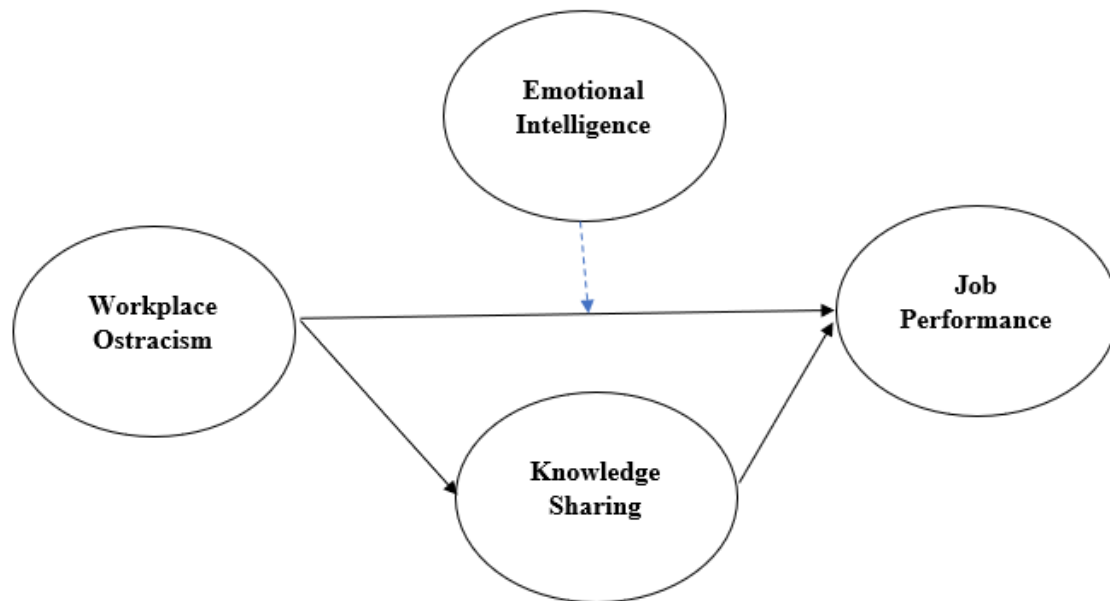
H2: Workplace Ostracism has a significant impact on Knowledge Sharing.

H3: Knowledge Sharing has a positive in relation to Job Performance.

H4: Emotional Intelligence significantly moderates the influence of Workplace Ostracism on Job Performance.

H5: Knowledge Sharing significantly mediates the impact of Workplace Ostracism on Job Performance.

Structural Framework



Research Methodology

The researcher collected data through structured questionnaire. The research approach is deductive, and the research type is explanatory. The method of the research design converts the research question (Al-Ababneh, 2020) (Massaro, Dumay, & Bagnoli, 2019); quantified by a questionnaire coded through statistical technique and leads to generalization. The goal of this investigation is to test an experimental hypothesis regarding the relationship between variables in a theoretical model. The study is limited to the cross-sectional design, and a longitudinal study will be helpful for in-depth understanding of the variables (Bureshaid, 2021).

The allocated time and financial resources for the completion of this study place restrictions on the purpose, goal, and research topic. Therefore, a cross-sectional survey was thought to be more appropriate for this kind of study (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Population and sampling

A population is referred to the universe of the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The population of the study included all technical and non-technical employees of WAPDA, i.e., 18,497, who were appointed at WAPDA House, Lahore (initially, it was also known as the main office of WAPDA, but in some cases, the general public still called it the main office). The information is served as the sampling frame for our study as it describes characteristics of the target population. For simple random sampling, a sample of 500 respondents from WAPDA, Wapda House Lahore has been selected to conduct the present study; they are expected more diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Individuals will be the unit of analysis related to the said organization. Findings of the study will help policymakers to devise policies for individuals (employees of WAPDA).

Instrument development

The current study was carried out with the objective to explain the impact of workplace ostracism on job performance in the presence of knowledge sharing, and emotional intelligence. The questionnaire was sent through email to the respondents (employees of WAPDA). This process of data collection took almost six months, starting from May 2024 to October 2024. The filled questionnaires were challenging activities of the whole data collection process.

Responses will be measured through five points Likert scale ranging from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 5 “Strongly Agree”. Data will be collected irrespective of any discrimination i.e. gender, race, marital status, educational qualification or any other. For anonymity, the respondents’ name, employment number or any information through which they can be traced will not be asked.

The first section of the questionnaire was related to information about the demographics of individuals, including age, gender, and education. The second section measured workplace ostracism of the employees; it consisted of ten (10) items (Deng et al., 2021). The third section will be related to the measure of job performance; it consists of five (05) questions (A. Williams, Stella 1991); fourth section will be related to the knowledge sharing it consists of ten (10) questions (Lee, 2001); fifth section will be related to the emotional intelligence it consists of fourteen (14) questions (Palmer, Stough, Harmer, & Gignac, 2009).

Data Analyses

The present study uses SPSS for preliminary descriptive analysis and Smart PLS (Hair *et al.*, 2017) for hypotheses testing. First, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were performed in SPSS to explore the associations. Second, measurement model was used the association and direction among the key variables and the hypothesized model was examined via structural equation modeling (SEM) (Hair *et al.*, 2016). So, validity, reliability, path coefficient, and goodness-of-fit were investigated.

The research model of the present study is complex. This research endeavor explores novel and causal relationships among workplace ostracism, job performance, knowledge sharing, and emotional intelligence.

Demographic Profile

Response rate of the final received questionnaire would be 80%. For this study demographic factors are gender, age, qualification and marital status. However, female respondents are 26% and 74% male members. Education level for respondents is categorized into bachelors, masters, M. Phil/MS and Doctoral. 25.8% respondents were belonged to bachelor degree, 44.2% respondents had a master degree, 12.7% respondents had M. Phil/MS degree and 17.3% had a Doctoral degree. Age are respondents is categorized as 5.3% respondents are below 20 years old, 24.5% are 20-30 years old, and 28% are 30-40 years old, 23.3% are 40-50 years old, 15% are 50-60 years old, and 4% are more than 60 years old. The marital status of respondents are

mostly married as 73.8%, unmarried are 22.8%, widow as 1.5%, and separated as 2%. Details of respondents are;

Table 1: Demographic Detail

Demographics category	(n = 500)	
	Frequency	Percentage%
Gender		
Male	296	74%
Female	104	26%
Age		
Below 20 years	21	5.3%
20-30 years	98	24.5%
30-40 years	112	28%
40-50 years	93	23.3%
50-60 years	60	15%
Above 60 years	16	4%
Qualification		
Bachelor degree	103	25.8%
Master degree	177	44.2%
M. Phil / MS	51	12.7%
Doctoral	69	17.3%
Marital Status		
Married	295	73.8%
Unmarried	91	22.8%
Widow	6	1.5%
Separated	8	2%

Evaluation of Measurement Model

The measurement model is an essential part of the analysis in partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

Composite reliability (CR)

Outer loading values are assessed for composite reliability measurement in order to improve the consistency of each variable's results. Composite reliability (CR) and convergent validity can be evaluated with the result of PLS-SEM utilizing Smart PLS. To demonstrate the reliability and convergent validity of your measurement model, make sure that each latent construct's CR and AVE values are above 0.70 and 0.50, respectively. (Huffman et al., 2021).

Table 2: Construct's reliability and validity

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance
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			extracted (AVE)
Emotional Intelligence	0.892	0.902	0.648
Job Performance	0.881	0.905	0.656
Knowledge Sharing	0.861	0.900	0.643
Workplace Ostracism	0.864	0.915	0.607

Convergent Validity

In PLS-SEM, outer loadings are required to assess the quality of the measurement model and to verify that observable variables properly represent their latent constructs (Gye-Soo, 2016). They are helping researchers decide which indicators they should use and how they could be improved.

Table 31: Measurement Model Loadings

Variables	Items	Factor loadings
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	EI1	0.779
	EI2	0.736
	EI3	0.864
	EI4	0.847
	EI5	0.792
Job Performance (JP)	JP1	0.800
	JP2	0.802
	JP3	0.822
	JP4	0.828
	JP5	0.798
Knowledge Sharing (KS)	KS1	0.754
	KS2	0.756
	KS3	0.842
	KS4	0.843
	KS5	0.810
Workplace Ostracism (WO)	WO1	0.747
	WO2	0.863
	WO3	0.770
	WO4	0.796
	WO5	0.727
	WO6	0.766

WO7

0.778

Discriminant Validity

It is to the guarantee that indicators measuring different constructs will have lower relationships than those measuring the same construct due discriminant validity. Various methods, such as the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations and Fornell-Larcker Criterion can be used to assess this (Yalabik et al., 2013 & Henseler et al., 2015).

However, the self-loading value for each of the constructs should be greater than that of the other two to assess discriminant validity.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

	WO	KS	EI	JP
Workplace Ostracism	0.805	0.556	0.638	0.600
Knowledge Sharing	0.562	0.802	0.802	0.713
Emotional Intelligence	0.494	0.559	0.779	0.681
Job Performance	0.533	0.432	0.521	0.782

Fornell-Larcker criterion appears below the diagonal while HTMT positioned above it.

Evaluation of Structural Model**Path Analysis (Hypotheses Testing)**

A fundamental component of the SEM approach, which is a statistical technique that studies relationships among variables in a structural model is PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2014). Structural Path Models in PLS-SEM help researchers to understand and evaluate the relationships between different concepts involved in their projects. Bootstrapping is often applied to assess the reliability of your results, and test for the significance of your route coefficients. Enter the weights of paths and test if they were statistically significant or not (Tang et al., 2022). Findings are being interpreted with respect to your hypothesis. Depending on the results, you MAY come to think you need to revise your theory, add or delete paths from the model, use another measure for some construct etc.

The structural route model is used to evaluate hypotheses and determine whether they are accepted or rejected. It is employed to measure the path coefficient, beta value, t-value, and p-value (Hair et al., 2020). However, a link between variables is deemed negligible if values exceed 0.05. The acceptable threshold range for t^2 is 1.96, however it should be higher (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 5 shows that the relation of workplace ostracism has significant and negative effect on job performance as ($\beta = -0.248$, $t = 3.647$, and $p < 0.05$). However, the result shows that workplace ostracism has significant and negative effect on knowledge sharing as ($\beta = -0.314$, $t = 6.157$, and $p < 0.05$). Knowledge sharing has significant and positive effect on job performance as ($\beta = 0.443$, $t = 6.821$, and $p < 0.05$). Emotional intelligence has significant and positive effect on job performance as ($\beta = 0.405$, $t = 6.543$, and $p < 0.05$).

For mediation analysis, workplace ostracism positively mediates the relationship among knowledge sharing and job performance ($\beta = 0.185$, $t = 3.007$, and $p < 0.05$).

For moderation analysis, emotional intelligence significantly moderates the relationship among workplace ostracism and job performance ($\beta = 0.415$, $t = 5.516$, and $p < 0.05$).

Table 5: Hypotheses Testing

Variables	β -values	SD	t-values	p-values	Results
Direct results					
WO -> JP	-0.248	0.068	3.647	0.000	Accepted
WO -> KS	-0.314	0.051	6.157	0.008	Accepted
KS -> JP	0.443	0.067	6.821	0.000	Accepted
Mediation results					
WO -> KS -> JP	0.185	0.061	3.007	0.003	Accepted
Moderation results					
EI*WO -> JP	0.415	0.075	5.516	0.000	Accepted

Note: WO = Workplace ostracism, KS = Knowledge sharing, EI = Emotional intelligence, JS = Job performance

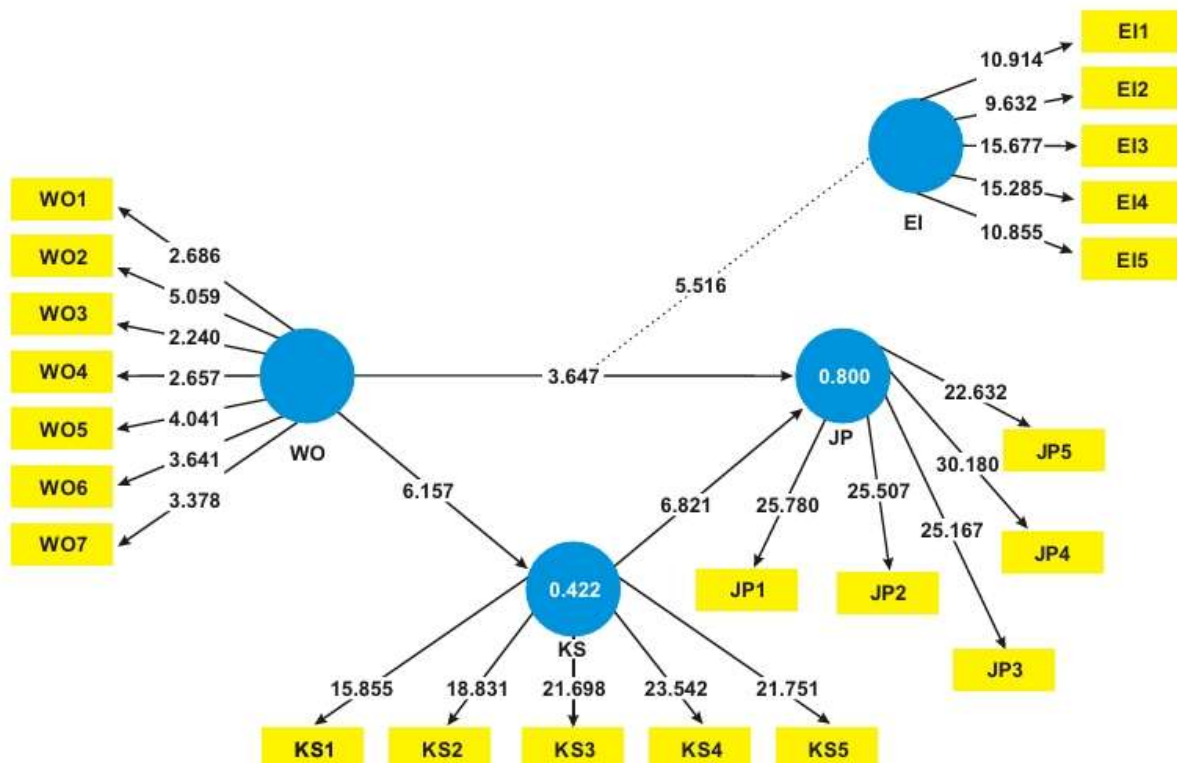


Figure 1: Structural model (PLS-SEM bootstrapping analysis)

Discussion

This study investigates the influence of workplace ostracism on job performance, with a specific focus on the mediating effect of knowledge sharing and the moderating role of emotional intelligence. For organizations, understanding this dynamic is critical for improving performance by fostering an environment where employees feel included and motivated to contribute their knowledge.

The findings offer empirical support for the theoretical connection between workplace ostracism and job performance, yielding several key theoretical and practical implications.

First, the analysis confirms that workplace ostracism is a significant negative predictor of job performance among employees at the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), supporting Hypothesis 1. When employees experience ostracism—a form of negative interpersonal interaction—they often respond based on principles of negative reciprocity, leading to knowledge-hiding behaviors (Zhao et al., 2016). Grounded in Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, this study examines the phenomenon through the lens of resource loss. It extends the work of Zhao et al. (2016) by revealing that the decline in performance is driven not only by rational calculations but also by distinct emotional mechanisms, thereby providing a more comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the impact of ostracism.

Second, the research establishes that knowledge sharing acts as a key mediator in the relationship between workplace ostracism and job performance. This verifies Hypothesis 4, showing that ostracism indirectly impairs performance by stifling the exchange of knowledge. The direct negative effect of ostracism on performance (Hypothesis 2) is also confirmed, aligning with previous research (Takhsha et al., 2020). This study addresses a gap in the literature by demonstrating this mediating effect within a public sector context. From a COR theory perspective, ostracism depletes employees' valuable resources, which in turn diminishes their willingness to share knowledge. Conversely, employees who actively engage in knowledge sharing represent a resource-rich group that is more resilient to such negative spirals (Hypothesis 3). They can draw upon these abundant resources to maintain performance despite situational pressures.

Third, the data reveal the important moderating role of emotional intelligence. While workplace ostracism generally harms performance, emotional intelligence can buffer this negative effect. The significant interaction supports Hypothesis 5, indicating that higher emotional intelligence weakens the link between ostracism and poor performance. This finding is consistent with the idea that while ostracism drains resources, alternative channels can help mitigate the damage. For instance, research suggests that digital communication tools can allow ostracized employees to maintain work-related connections and positive feelings toward their roles, even when direct interaction is difficult (Zhang and Leung, 2015). Emotional intelligence serves as a

personal resource that can fulfill needs for information and social connection, thereby reducing the performance-debilitating impact of being ostracized.

For the decision-makers and selection committees at WAPDA, these findings highlight a strategic priority. To enhance service quality and public satisfaction, the organization should focus on two key areas in its hiring and management practices:

- i. Selecting for Emotional Intelligence: Prioritizing candidates with high emotional intelligence can build a more resilient workforce capable of maintaining performance and collaboration even in challenging social dynamics.
- ii. Cultivating Knowledge Sharing: Actively fostering a culture that rewards open knowledge sharing can protect against the resource loss caused by ostracism and directly boost collective performance.

By deploying such employees in dynamic and challenging roles, WAPDA can improve its operational effectiveness and strengthen its public image.

Practical Implications

The research on workplace ostracism, knowledge sharing, emotional intelligence, and job performance in WAPDA Pakistan has many practical implications for organizational policies and practices. First, WAPDA Pakistan should prioritize workplace ostracism detection and reduction. Employee training and awareness efforts may foster inclusion, respect, and open communication. Encourage workers to report ostracism without retribution and develop clear avenues for timely and effective resolution. Second, knowing that information sharing improves work performance, WAPDA Pakistan should motivate staff to share their expertise and experiences. Facilitate knowledge exchange using collaborative digital platforms and frequent workshops. Third, invest in emotional intelligence training for all personnel. These programs should improve self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Encourage emotional intelligence-focused leadership because it sets a good example for teams. Fourth, Train managers and leaders to identify and resolve workplace ostracism. Leaders must learn to create an inclusive atmosphere. Monitor and evaluate leadership practices to ensure managers promote emotional intelligence and information sharing in their teams. Fifth, change performance appraisals to include knowledge sharing and inclusive workplace advancement. Employees with emotional intelligence may mitigate the effects of ostracism on work performance, therefore reward them. Sixth, create a feedback loop where workers may share their thoughts on workplace characteristics including ostracism, information exchange, and emotional intelligence. Feedback should be used to improve organizational policies and practices to create a supportive and high-performing workplace. Seventh, measure workplace ostracism, knowledge sharing, and emotional intelligence are using frequent questionnaires.

Conclusion

In this study, authors draw workplace ostracism hurts job performance. Exclusion, loneliness, and social rejection may lower employee engagement, motivation, and performance. Workplace

ostracism also hinders knowledge exchange. When employees feel shunned, they share less information with coworkers. This hinders the flow of vital information and new ideas, reducing employees' agility and effectiveness. Positively, our research shows that workplace information sharing improves job performance. A culture of information sharing boosts individual performance and resilience (Chen & Wang, 2017) (Jiang, Chai, Li, & Feng, 2018). Sharing of knowledge and emotional intelligence could moderate the harmful impact of workplace ostracism among one with great characteristics. From there, this study can be seen as a step forward that leads to further research into how organizations might minimize "the potential failure in performance outcomes in the context of social isolation." Objectives: Considering ongoing study the work environment ostracism is substantially different and its effect on job performance through mediating role of knowledge sharing with moderating impact of emotional intelligence specially among WAPDA, Pakistan.

Recommendations

This research examined the criticality of employee fulfilment to employee capacity and employee turnover as well as social responsibility behaviour towards job performance mediated by knowledge sharing, and emotional intelligence. It also focuses on the need for trust and security among employees, as well as adapting strategies for various ranks. Finally, recommendations of regulation and policy are provided to facilitate an enabling environment for development. The purpose of this article is to detail the effects that these shareholder, customer, policy-makers and academic driven recommendations have on HR strategy. More research is proposed to improve understanding and resolve pending issues. In addition, an essential contribution is the creation of a conceptual model tailored to the Pakistani context, which provides a framework for forecasting and elucidating the factors influencing the performance of employees in the ostracized workplace.

Limitation of the Study

First, the sample size in our study was maintained at the critical value to minimize time and financial costs. Study was evaluated in the perspective of unidimensional construct and with respect to unique Wapda, Pakistani culture influencing behavior and attitudes. Longitudinal survey is therefore recommended for the next research to be able to find out more solid findings in future. Finally, future studies are advised to investigate the impact of employees' demographic characteristics (including age, gender, occupation, family background and cultural diversity) on job performance.

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