

A Study on Workplace Ostracism, Psychological Capital and Its Impact on Work Engagement

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Abstract - Workplace ostracism, Psychological Capital (PsyCap), intrinsic motivation and Organization Citizenship Behavior (OCB) are the critical factors influencing work engagement of the employees which enhances the organizational performance. This study examines the relationships between these factors to provide insights into the dynamics of employees' work engagement within organizational contexts. Data were collected from a diverse sample of 285 employees within an organization through Google forms Questionnaire to explore experiences of workplace ostracism, levels of psychological capital, intrinsic motivation, Organization Citizenship Behavior and work engagement. Findings reveals that psychological capital are negatively correlated with workplace ostracism and positively correlated work engagement. The study highlights the importance of fostering a positive organizational culture and providing support mechanisms to mitigate the effects of workplace ostracism and promote work engagement. By recognizing and addressing the factors influencing workplace engagement, organizations can enhance employee well-being, performance, and organizational success.

Keywords: Workplace Ostracism, Psychological Capital, Intrinsic Motivation, Organization Citizenship Behavior, Employee Engagement

1. INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of modern workplaces, the concept of ostracism has gained significant attention in recent years. Ostracism in the workplace can harm an individual's well-being, job satisfaction, and overall performance. Ostracism refers to the behavior, in which an individual starts to perceive

that he/she is being excluded, ignored, or being received cold attitude from his/her team members. Most Organisations restructured to flatter, more agile designs that emphasized cross-functional teams and free flow of information (Thomas, 2009). The difference between levels of anxiety was significantly greater between sources and targets of ostracism than between sources and targets of argument (Williams, 2001). Hence his/her contribution towards the task is not being recognized. Researchers have found that being ostracized at work can be more psychologically harmful than bullying. (Bonafacio, 2024)

Intrinsic Motivation is defined as the reason to perform a behavior because of the satisfaction of the activity and not because of specific rewards or consequences. The person's intrinsic motivation for the activity may increase as a means of reducing dissonance (Ryan, 1975). The three most important determinants of performance are autonomy, direction, and skill. People are motivated if they can work independently, if they find their efforts important, and if they are satisfied with their skills. People tend to be more creative when they are motivated.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is a term that's used to describe all the positive and constructive employee actions and behaviors that aren't part of their formal job description. It's anything that employees do, out of their own free will, that supports their colleagues and benefits the organization as a whole. (Verlinden, n.d.)

Work engagement primarily revolves around an individual's relationship with their specific job or role within the organization. It's often described as a state of deep immersion, where an employee is fully absorbed in and genuinely passionate about their work. (Insight, n.d.)

Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis:

Workplace Ostracism

Workplace Ostracism is known to be both a physically and emotionally painful experience. (Singh, Sharda, et al 2024). Workplace ostracism is one of the negative behaviours that is considered to have negative consequences and outcomes that are harmful to any organization. Silence due to deviant behaviour can cause negative outcomes in the workplace. (Jamil, Siddiquie, Lodhi, Arshad, & Aslam, 2023).

Psychological Capital

Employees with higher psychological capital will actively utilize other resources, learn new skills related to work which helps them to do more effectively, and promote individual growth, development, and performance improvement (Yao, Qiu, Yang, Han, & Li, 2022). Deviant workplace behaviours are such a form of negative behaviour that fallouts as a result of workplace ostracism. The degree to which an employee has any deviant workplace behaviours is determined by their level of psychological capital (Preena R, 2021). Individuals with high levels of psychological capital are very important for organizations as the work pressure and work demands are increasing each day (T Ashraf, DA Siddiqui 2020).

Organization Citizenship Behaviour

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is a practice in which an employee feels they as a part of the organization like a citizen of a country (Tandon S, Mathur G, & Arora S, 2022). Ostracism at the workplace can lead to different work outcomes, such as emotional exhaustion, job stress, turnover intentions, job insecurity, and job tension (Chaman S, Bhatti, & Hussain, 2021). Workplace ostracism is thought to be a universal phenomenon that quietly harms the human heart. (Oberai H, 2021). Burnout reduces productivity and enhances desperate feelings among employees (Farasat, Afzal U, Jabeen S, Farhan M, & Sattar A, 2021).

Employee Engagement

The author discusses the negative effects of ostracism on employee engagement and the moderating role of psychological capital. The results showed that workplace ostracism has a

significant negative impact on employee engagement. (Muhammad A, Riaz Ahmed M and Minhoon K L, 2020).

Hypothesis 1 - There is significance difference between the mean rank of employees who belong to nuclear and joint family with reference to Workplace Ostracism and Individual Psychological Capital.

Hypothesis 2 - There is significance difference between the mean rank of the employees work experience with reference to Workplace Ostracism and Individual Psychological Capital.

Hypothesis 3 - There is relationship among the variables of Workplace Ostracism, Individual Psychological Capital and Work Engagement.

Hypothesis 4 - There is relationship between dependent and independent variables

2. Research Methodology

Data Collection and Sample

The present study employs a questionnaire approach to collect data for testing the research hypothesis. All independent and dependent variables require 5-point Likert style responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The population is known. It is a finite population. A study is conducted on 285 Employees in a tube Manufacturing firm. Sample size has been determined by using Krejcie and Morgan table. Data are analysed and relationships are tested using linear regression.

Assessing reliability

The reliability was tested using Cronbach’s alpha. The Cronbach's alpha parentheses indicating the internal consistency reliability as the value is ranging from 0.762 to 0.845

Data analysis and Findings

Table -1: Demographic details of the respondents.

| Particulars | | Count | Percent |
|-------------|----------|-------|---------|
| Gender | Male | 215 | 75 |
| | Female | 70 | 25 |
| Age | 18 - 28 | 198 | 69 |
| | 29 - 39 | 57 | 20 |
| | 40 - 50 | 25 | 9 |
| | Above 50 | 5 | 2 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|----|
| Years of experience | Below 10 years | 242 | 85 |
| | 11 to 20 years | 32 | 11 |
| | 21 to 30 years | 9 | 3 |
| | Above 30 years | 2 | 1 |
| Family | Nuclear family | 193 | 68 |
| | Joint family | 92 | 32 |

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of all the variables. All the variable mean value is 3 which indicates the neutral. Some of the variables are more than 3.5 which close to the value of 4 indicates agree. The standard deviation is low which indicates that the most of the responses fall closely to the average value. There is workplace ostracism in the company among the employees but the high individual psychological capital helps the employees to be engaged towards their work.

Table -2: Descriptive statistics

| Variables | N | Std. Devtn. | Mean | Median | Mode |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-------------|-------|--------|------|
| Workplace Ostracism | 285 | 0.423 | 3.316 | 3.5 | 4 |
| Work Engagement | 285 | 0.35 | 3.780 | 4 | 4 |
| Organization Citizenship Behavior | 285 | 0.348 | 3.809 | 4 | 4 |
| Individual Psychological Capital | 285 | 0.409 | 3.825 | 4 | 4 |
| Intrinsic Motivation | S28 5 | 0.398 | 3.875 | 4 | 4 |

Table 3 displays the differences of the ostracism experienced by the employees and the level of psychological capital of the employees regarding the years of experience of the employees and the nature of the family they belonged to. For H test Sig value is lesser than 0.05 for Workplace Ostracism (.002) and greater than 0.05 for Individual Psychological Capital (.673). It denotes there is significance difference between the mean rank

of the employees work experience with reference to Workplace Ostracism and there is no significance difference between the mean rank of the employees work experience with reference to Individual Psychological Capital. The sig value of Workplace Ostracism is 0.393 and Individual Psychological Capital is 0.345. It is inferred that employees from both nuclear and joint family does not show much difference in the Workplace ostracism and Individual Psychological Capital.

Table -3: H test and U test

| | Workplace Ostracism | Individual Psychological Capital |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Asymp. Sig. (H test) | .002 | .673 |
| Asymp. Sig. (U test) | .393 | .345 |

Grouping Variable: Experience (H test)

Grouping Variable: Family (U test)

The value (0-.601) from above table 4 shows a strong negative relationship between Workplace Ostracism and Individual Psychological Capital. There is a negative relationship between Workplace Ostracism and Work Engagement since the value is (0-.526) There is a strong positive relationship between Individual Psychological Capital and Work Engagement since the value is (0.651)

Table -4: Correlation

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. Workplace Ostracism | 1.000 | -.601** | -.526** |
| 2. Individual Psychological Capital | -.601** | 1.000 | .651** |
| 3. Work Engagement | -.526** | .651** | 1.000 |

The table 5 shows the multiple regression which helps to know the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable is Work Engagement. The independent variables are Intrinsic Motivation, Individual Psychological Capital and Organization Citizenship Behavior.

The table shows that for every 1 unit increase in Individual Psychological Capital, Work Engagement is expected to increase by 0.384 units. Every 1 unit increase in Organization Citizenship Behavior, Work Engagement is expected to increase by 0.234 units and for every 1 unit increase in Intrinsic Motivation, Work Engagement is expected to increase by 0.334 units.

The equation is $y = 0.134 + 0.384 x_1 + 0.234 x_2 + 0.334 x_3$

Where x_1 = Individual Psychological Capital, x_2 = Organization Citizenship Behavior, x_3 = Intrinsic motivation and y = Work Engagement. The R value 0.791, indicating a strong positive relationship among the variables Intrinsic Motivation, Individual Psychological Capital, Organization Citizenship Behaviour and Work Engagement. The R Square value 0.726, indicates that approximately 72.6% of the dependent variable Work Engagement is explained by Intrinsic Motivation, Individual Psychological Capital and Organization Citizenship Behavior. The adjusted R square value is 0.719 indicates a good fit.

Table -5: Multiple regression Coefficients^a

| Model | Unstandardize d Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | .134 | .171 | | .779 | .036 |
| Individual Psychological Capital | .384 | .052 | .367 | 7.450 | .000 |
| Organization Citizenship Behvaour | .234 | .055 | .322 | 6.064 | .000 |
| Intrinsic Motivation | .334 | .060 | .217 | 3.910 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable:

Work Engagement

3. CONCLUSION

The study concludes by examining the relationship between workplace ostracism, psychological capital, and work engagement and how these factors shape employee experiences and organizational outcomes. By addressing these factors, organizations can create a supportive and positive work environment that supports employee engagement, well-being, and ultimately organizational success. Moreover, fostering intrinsic motivation among employees further amplifies these positive effects, as individuals are driven by a genuine passion for their work and a desire to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. The study highlights the critical role that psychological factors play in shaping employee experiences and organizational outcomes. By recognizing and leveraging the power of psychological capital and intrinsic motivation, organizations can cultivate a resilient and engaged workforce capable of driving sustained success and growth. Psychological capital is an internal resource of the employees that plays a

moderating role in workplace ostracism and helps to achieve the workplace engagement of the employees in the company

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