

Ostracism, Personality and Workplace Deviant Behaviours in Employees of Private Organization

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Ostracism at workplace can lead to workplace deviant behaviours. Personality traits of the employees might be important determinant of work behaviors and are expected to moderate the ostracism-workplace deviance link. The aim of the present study was to find if ostracism predicts two dimensions of workplace deviance, namely organizational deviance and interpersonal deviance; and to check the moderating role of personality. A correlational research design was used to conduct the study. Sample consisted of 120 employees (104 male and 16 female) of private organization of Lahore selected through purposive sampling. Workplace Ostracism Scale (Ferris, Brown, Berry & Lian, 2008), Ten Item Personality Inventory (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003) and Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale (Bennett & Robinson, 2000) were used to measure the study variables. Preliminary analysis showed that the current job position was negatively related to ostracism. Ostracism was significantly linked to workplace deviant behaviours. Agreeableness showed negative relation to Ostracism. Emotional stability had significant negative relation with both ostracism and interpersonal deviance. Using interpersonal and organizational deviance as dependent variables, moderation through hierarchical regression was carried out. Agreeableness, emotional stability and openness to experience moderated the relationship of ostracism and interpersonal deviance. Emotional stability moderated the relationship of ostracism and organizational deviance. Results were discussed and limitations, suggestions and implications were presented for future research and practice.

Keywords: Ostracism, Personality, Workplace Deviant Behaviours, Big Five, Employee¹

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Social interactions at workplace provide the employees with a sense of belongingness and association that is essential for workplace citizenship. When an employee is denied such social interactions, he/she can turn to possible negative reactions. Previous research on ostracism has indicated that personality might determine and change the reaction towards ostracism. This study focuses on workplace deviant behaviours possibly springing from ostracism and the role of personality in moderating them.

Ostracism is being ignored or excluded by one or more others. Despite the absence of verbal derogation or physical assault, ostracism is painful (Williams & Nida, 2011). Exile and banishment represent extreme forms of ostracism, but the phenomenon is also represented by less dramatic behaviours like using silent treatment or avoiding eye contact (Ferris et al., 2008). Motive and intention to harm might be lacking whereas ambiguity is its prominent feature. Ostracism is the only implicit act whereas some other related behaviours like bullying, rejection, social exclusion are all explicit in nature (Williams, 2007). Robots can work productively, efficiently and smoothly in such detached environments but for humans, so is not the case. Hence, in an act to get a better hold of the situation, ostracism yields different responses from ostracized individuals i.e. positive or negative. Positive is when people tend to engage in pro-social behavior as a result of ostracism. Negative is when the reverse happens and they tend to indulge in antisocial behaviors (Williams, 2001).

Immediate reaction to ostracism includes stress, negative mood and feelings of dissatisfaction (Gerber & Wheeler, 2009), whereas long lasting ostracism leads the victims to become more aggressive. A review of research indicates depression, alienation, helplessness and feelings of unworthiness, emotionless and affectless state, flight response, attraction towards extreme groups, damaged sense of good and bad, violence and biasness among the possible consequences of being ostracized (Balliet & Ferris, 2013; Le, Peng & Gao, 2013; Liu & Xia, 2016; Williams, 2007). Furthermore, ostracism at workplace is detrimental for overall organization's productivity (Zhao, Peng & Sheard, 2013).

Among the most notable works on ostracism are the foundational work and development of scale by Ferris et al. (2008) and development of three stages. Temporal need threat model (Williams, 2007) explains three stages of ostracism, namely immediate or reflexive, coping or reflective and long-term or resignation. In first stage, ostracism is viewed to be dangerous to basic needs of belonging, self-esteem, control and meaningful existence. In second stage, ways to re-establish the demolished needs will be sought and acted out. Contextual features and individual

differences are extremely important here. At third stage, if ostracism continues for long, target's resources weaken and alienation, depression, helplessness, loss of self-worth etc. might be experienced (William & Nida, 2011), which in turn might lead toward workplace deviant behaviors.

Workplace deviance has been defined as voluntary behaviour that violates significant organizational norms and, in so doing, threatens the wellbeing of the organization or its members, or both (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Some researchers (for example Bowling & Gruys, 2010; Sackett & DeVore, 2002) use counterproductive work behaviours and deviant behaviours as alternate terms. Sackett and DeVore (2002) indicated that the general factor is "counter-productivity". Group factors, interpersonal deviance and organizational deviance, existed below the general factor (Bowling & Gruys, 2010). It is imperative that any minor violation of norm that does not potentially or actually harms the organization or its members is not considered as workplace deviance (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Workplace deviant behaviours include employee theft, sabotage, computer fraud, drug abuse, employee withdrawal, absenteeism, embezzlement, lateness, aggression, sexual harassment, mistreatment of coworkers, vandalism, employee revenge, unethical decision making and political behaviour. (Bowling & Gruys, 2010; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; O'Neill & Hastings, 2010; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Spector et al., 2006). An array of interconnected factors like personality type, job characteristics, organizational culture, work group characteristics, moral disengagement, among others, are important factors of workplace deviant behaviours (Sackett & DeVore, 2002; Hystad, Mearns & Eid, 2014).

Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco and Twenge (2006) stated that rejected people express failure of self-regulation and hence it allows an inclination for antisocial and aggressive behaviors (Azar, 2009). Different personality factors or situational factors might be playing their roles in determining the response path selected by the target individual (Williams, 2007). There is little evidence that individual differences like gender, introversion or social anxiety can moderate the relationship of ostracism with immediate distress (Williams, 2007). Similarly, research on the long term effects of ostracism namely counter productive work behaviors or workplace deviant behaviors, is scarce. A recent study (Rudert et al., 2019) found evidence on the effect of personality on the likelihood of becoming a victim of ostracism. Among the big five personality traits, low agreeableness and conscientiousness were identified as risk factors. A substantial body of research is available indicating the mixed role of

personality in workplace deviant behaviors, among other forms of deviance. More specifically, big five traits are extensively researched in organizational context. For example, Bolton, Becker and Barber (2010), found agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion associated with deviant behavior in the workplace. Kozako, Safin and Rahim (2013) found differential relationship of big five traits with organizational and interpersonal workplace deviance. Weldali and Lubis (2016) found emotional stability negatively linked to workplace deviance but no significant relationship between agreeableness, conscientiousness and workplace deviance. These findings indicate that the three variables i.e. ostracism, personality and workplace deviant behaviours might interlink and interplay. The specific nature of the link, as found from the previous research, might be the moderating role of personality traits in the link between ostracism and workplace deviance (Leung, Wu, Chen & Young, 2011; Zhao, Peng & Sheard, 2013; Bolton et al., 2010). Personality, on one hand, seems to affect the perception and experience of ostracism itself. On the other hand, it might determine how the perceived or experienced ostracism is translated into workplace deviance. This study aims to find out the role of personality characteristics as possible mediational mechanism between ostracism and workplace deviant behaviours. It was hypothesized that the personality traits (big five) might differentially link with both study variables (i.e., ostracism and workplace deviant behaviours). Specific hypotheses about the direction of relationship/mediation were not made.

Method

Research Design

Correlation research design was used to find the relationships between ostracism, personality and workplace deviant behaviours.

Sampling Strategy

Non probability purposive sampling strategy was used to select a sample of employees from private business organizations of Lahore, Pakistan. Inclusion criteria comprised at least graduation level education, minimum experience of six months in their present organization, between the age of 20 to 55 years. The participants with any physical disability or self-reported psychological diagnosis were excluded from the sample as this might relate with experience/perception of ostracism at workplace.

Sample

The sample consisted of 120 employees, 104 male and 16 female, with mean age of 30.23 years ($SD=6.57$). The education of the sample averaged at 15.78 years with a range of minimum 14 years and maximum

18 years. As far as employees job positions are concerned, they were divided into three main categories which are supervisor i.e. someone who is not answerable to any one at current job position but has employees who are answerable to him; middleman i.e. someone who is answerable to someone at current job and there are also employees who are answerable to him; supervisee i.e. someone who is answerable to someone above him but no one is answerable to him in current job position. Most of the employees included in the sample were middlemen. Mean job experience of the participants in current job was 3.72 years, in current organization was 5.09 years whereas total job experience was 7.18 years. Although the experience varied from 0.67 to 34 years; but mean value showed that most of the employees in the sample had not a long history of organizational work experience. The sample consisted of mostly male employees i.e.104 males. Similarly, most of the supervisors were male as well i.e.112. The gender of employee and immediate supervisor was same in 83.34% of the cases. See Table 1 for detail of participant's characteristics.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N = 120)

| Variable | Range | Mean | SD | f | % |
|--|--------|-------|------|-----|-------|
| Age (in years) | 20-55 | 30.23 | 6.57 | | |
| Education (in years) | 14-18 | 15.78 | 1.49 | | |
| Current job position | | | | | |
| Supervisor | | | | 22 | 10 |
| Middleman | | | | 86 | 71.70 |
| Supervisee | | | | 12 | 18.30 |
| Job experience at current position | .5-25 | 3.72 | 3.39 | | |
| Job experience in current organization | .5-25 | 5.09 | 4.63 | | |
| Total Job experience | .67-34 | 7.18 | 6.14 | | |
| Gender | | | | | |
| Male | | | | 104 | 86.70 |
| Female | | | | 16 | 13.30 |
| Supervisor's gender | | | | | |
| Male | | | | 112 | 93.33 |
| Female | | | | 8 | 6.77 |
| Gender of employee and supervisor | | | | | |
| Same | | | | 100 | 83.33 |
| Different | | | | 20 | 16.70 |
| Colleagues, gender | | | | | |
| Only males | | | | 43 | 35.80 |
| Majority males | | | | 67 | 55.80 |
| Equal males and female | | | | 10 | 8.30 |

Assessment Measures

Demographic Information Sheet. Demographic information sheet included questions about age of the participants, education, current job position, job experience at current designation and organization, total job experience, gender, gender of immediate supervisor, gender of majority of colleagues and monthly income. Monthly income was later excluded as sample was from private organizations and most of the employees, particularly from higher ranks, refused to report their salary.

Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI). TIPI was developed by Gosling, Rentfrow and Swann (2003). It assesses the big-five personality traits—emotional stability, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness—using two items for each dimension. Each item lists adjectives representing big five personality traits and is rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 7 (agree strongly). Sample adjectives include anxious, easily upset (for emotional stability) and reserved, quiet (reversed scored for extraversion). The scale has 5 items with reverse scoring i.e. 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10. The Cronbach's alpha for five dimensions were .68, .40, .50, .73, and .45 respectively, as reported by the authors (Gosling et al., 2003). TIPI was used for its brevity as employees were less likely to respond to extensive scales due to their busy work schedules.

Work Ostracism Scale (WOS). To measure ostracism, Work Ostracism Scale (WOS; Ferris et al., 2008) was used. It is a 10 item scale with uni-dimensional factor structure. Participants report how often they experience ostracism on a 7 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never), 2 (once in a while), 3 (sometimes), 4 (fairly often), 5 (often), 6 (constantly), 7 (always). Sample items included 'others avoided you at workplace' and 'your greetings have gone unanswered at work'. WOS possesses adequate internal reliability (Ferris et. al, 2008). The alpha reliability for the current sample was .92.

Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale. For workplace deviant behaviour, Bennett and Robinson's (2000) Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale (IODS) was used. The measure consists of 19 items out of which 7 items measure interpersonal deviance and 12 items measure organizational deviance. Participants are asked how frequently they show the listed behaviors at workplace, for example 'come in late to work without permission' (organizational deviance) and 'said something hurtful to someone at work' (interpersonal deviance). Participants respond on 7-point scale i.e. 1(never), 2(once a year), 3(twice a year), 4(several times a year), 5(monthly), 6(weekly) and

7(daily). The internal reliabilities of subscales were .81 and .78 respectively, as reported by the authors (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). The alpha reliabilities for the current sample were .92 and .93 respectively.

Procedure

Permissions to use the measurement scales were sought from authors of the scales via emails. Permission to collect the data was sought from the organizational authorities and informed consent was obtained from individual participants. Pilot testing on 30 participants smoothly turned into data collection as no issues came forward. For data collection, researcher personally visited the organizations and distributed the questionnaires among the respondents. In most of the cases, filled questionnaires were returned immediately. Response rate was 75%. The busy work schedules, urgent work demands and deadlines of employees caused a drop in response rate.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was done using SPSS version 21. All the five subscales of personality were scored separately with no composite score. Both subscales of IODS were considered separate as author did not suggest a composite score and reported results of repeated measure t test showed that responses on both dimensions of workplace deviance were significantly different. Descriptive and reliability analyses and correlation analyses were conducted for the main study variables. Regression analysis was used to find out the moderating role of personality in the relationship of ostracism and two dimensions of workplace deviance i.e. interpersonal deviance and organizational deviance.

Results

The descriptive and psychometric properties of the study measures are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Psychometric Properties of Work Ostracism Scale, Ten Item Personality Inventory and Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale (N=120)

| Variable | M | SD | α | Range | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|----------|-----------|--------|
| | | | | Potential | Actual |
| Work Ostracism Scale | 22.12 | 10.76 | .92 | 10-70 | 10-52 |
| Ten Item Personality Inventory | | | | | |
| Extraversion | 8.60 | 2.63 | .77 | 2-14 | 3-14 |
| Agreeableness | 9.50 | 2.26 | .71 | 2-14 | 6-14 |
| Conscientiousness | 10.15 | 2.65 | .52 | 2-14 | 2-14 |
| Emotional stability | 8.95 | 2.35 | .43 | 2-14 | 2-13 |
| Openness to experience | 9.50 | 2.39 | .35 | 2-14 | 4-14 |

| Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|
| Interpersonal Deviance | 20.03 | 11.09 | .92 | 7-49 | 7-47 |
| Organizational Deviance | 26.19 | 13.86 | .93 | 12-84 | 12-68 |

Note: M=Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, α = reliability coefficient

Cronbach alpha for WOS and the subscales of IODS were high. For subscales of TIPI, values ranged from poor to good, owing to small number of items in each scale i.e. two items per scale. The authors of the scale also reported the reliabilities ranging between .40 and .73.

Preliminary Analysis. As preliminary analysis, a one way ANOVA was run to find difference in ostracism in various job positions. The mean difference between supervisor and supervisee was significant ($F(2,117) = 4.35; p = .02$). The supervisees reported greater ostracism as compared to the supervisors. Middle men were not significantly different from supervisor and supervisee on ostracism. No other demographic variable correlated significantly with study variables.

Correlation analysis was carried out to find the relationship between study variables.

Table 3

Correlations among Ostracism, Personality and Workplace Deviant Behaviours (N=120)

| Variables | Ext | Agree | Consc | ES | Openness | ID | OD |
|-----------|-----|--------|-------|-------|----------|--------|--------|
| WO | .03 | -.28** | -.04 | -.19* | -.09 | .61*** | .64*** |
| Ext | - | .17 | .09 | .28** | .42** | .13 | .09 |
| Agree | - | - | .42** | .32** | .2* | -.18 | -.08 |
| Consc | - | - | - | .49** | .42** | -.12 | -.14 |
| ES | - | - | - | - | .55** | -.20* | -.17 |
| Openness | - | - | - | - | - | -.05 | -.11 |
| ID | - | - | - | - | - | - | .84*** |

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, WO= Work Ostracism, Ext= Extraversion, Agree= Agreeableness, Consc= Conscientiousness, ES= Emotional Stability, Openness= Openness to Experience, ID= Interpersonal Deviance, OD= Organizational Deviance

Table 3 shows that ostracism is positively correlated with both types of deviance and negatively correlated with big five traits of agreeableness and emotional stability. ID correlates negatively with emotional stability.

All subscales of TIPI are significantly inter-correlated except for two pairs i.e. extraversion and agreeableness; extraversion and conscientiousness.

Main Analysis. A series of regression analyses was carried out to explore the predictive role of ostracism and various subscales of TIPI as the moderator between IV (ostracism) and the two types of workplace deviant behaviours. In the first set of regression analyses, interpersonal deviance was the dependent variable. For the independent variable, control variable (job position) was entered at first step; ostracism was added along with a personality subscale in the second step. The third step included interaction term of that same personality subscale with ostracism. In the second set, organizational deviance was the dependent variable while rest of the procedure was kept same. The same analyses were repeated for each big five traits as moderator. Ostracism and five personality subscales were centered. Interaction terms were formed by multiplying each centered subscale of personality with centered ostracism. Hence, five interaction terms were formed. For each analysis, job position was entered as control variable. Results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Hierarchical Multiple Regression (Moderation) Analysis of Ostracism and Personality Subscales (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Openness to Experience) as Predictors of Interpersonal Deviance and Organizational Deviance (N=120)

| Predictor | Interpersonal Deviance | | | Organizational Deviance | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------|-------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| | R ² | ΔR ² | β | R ² | ΔR ² | β |
| Analysis 1 | | | | | | |
| Extraversion as moderator | | | | | | |
| Step 1 | | | | | | |
| Control variable | | | | | | |
| Step 2 | | | | | | |
| Ostracism | .39*** | | .61*** | .41*** | | .63*** |
| Extraversion | | | .11 | | | .07 |
| Step 3 | | | | | | |
| Ostracism x Extraversion | | .00 | -.10 | .01 | | -.23 |
| | .39 | | | .42 | | |
| Analysis 2 | | | | | | |
| Agreeableness as moderator | | | | | | |
| Step 1 | | | | | | |
| Control variable | | | | | | |
| Step 2 | | | | | | |
| Ostracism | .38*** | | .61*** | .40*** | | .63*** |
| Agreeableness | | | -.01 | | | .11 |
| Step 3 | | | | | | |
| Ostracism x Agreeableness | | .02* | -.56* | .01 | | -.25 |
| | .40* | | | .42 | | |

| Analysis 3 | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|
| Conscientiousness as moderator | | | | | |
| Step 1 | | | | | |
| Control variable | | | | | |
| Step 2 | | | | | |
| Ostracism | .38*** | .61*** | .42*** | .63*** | |
| Conscientiousness | | -.10 | | -.12 | |
| Step 3 | | | | | |
| Ostracism x Conscientiousness | .01 | -.20 | .00 | -.26 | |
| | .39* | | .42* | | |
| Analysis 4 | | | | | |
| Emotional Stability as moderator | | | | | |
| Step 1 | | | | | |
| Control variable | | | | | |
| Step 2 | | | | | |
| Ostracism | .37*** | .61*** | .40*** | .63*** | |
| Emotional stability | | -.29* | | -.05 | |
| Step 3 | | | | | |
| Ostracism x Emotional stability | .03* | .71* | .03* | .82* | |
| | .41* | | .44** | | |
| Analysis 5 | | | | | |
| Openness to experience as moderator | | | | | |
| Step 1 | | | | | |
| Control variable | | | | | |
| Step 2 | | | | | |
| Ostracism | .36*** | .61*** | .41*** | .63*** | |
| Openness to experience | | .00 | | -.06 | |
| Step 3 | | | | | |
| Ostracism x Openness to experience | .03* | .69* | .01 | .29 | |
| | .40* | | .41* | | |

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. ^a Job position

Table 3 indicates that ostracism was significantly linked to ID and OD in all analyses. In case of ID, higher levels of emotional stability predicted low ID. The interaction of agreeableness, emotional stability and openness to experience was significant in predicting ID whereas in case of OD, only emotional stability significantly interacted with ostracism. . The figures given below present a clear picture of moderating effects.

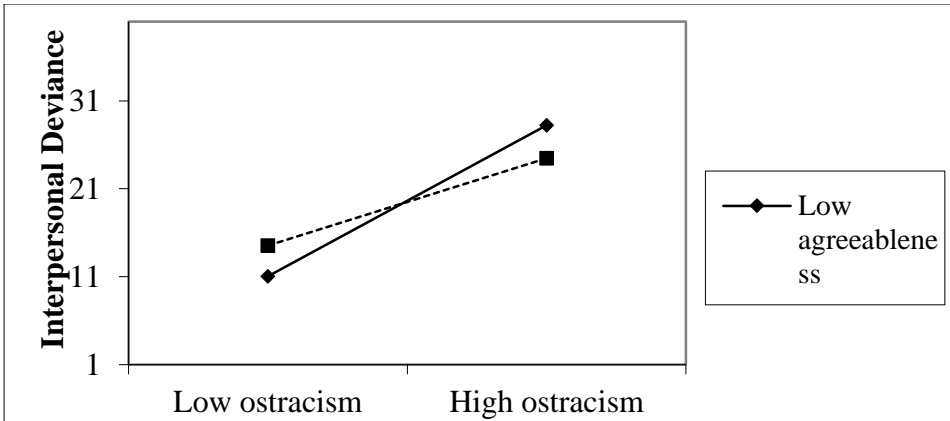


Figure 1 Interaction between Ostracism and Agreeableness in prediction of Interpersonal Deviance

The figure represents that on facing low levels of ostracism, employees with low agreeableness showed less interpersonal deviance as compared to those who had high agreeableness. When ostracism levels were high, employees with low agreeableness showed more interpersonal deviance as compared to those who had high agreeableness.

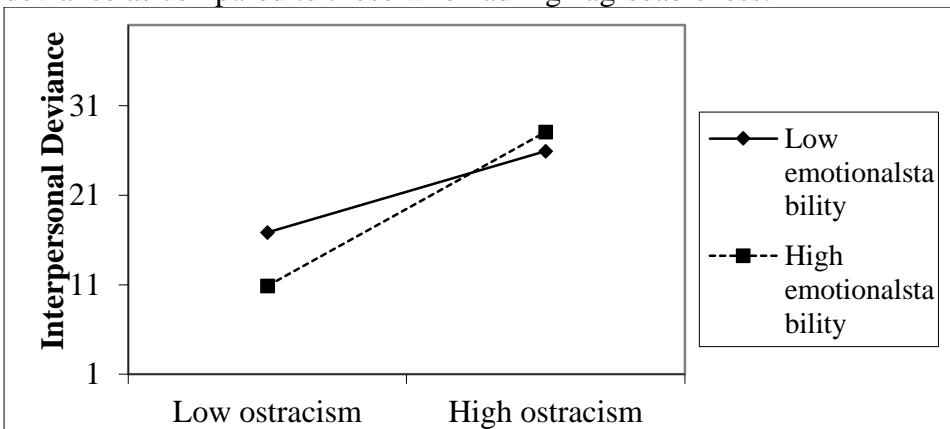


Figure 2 Interaction between Ostracism and Emotional Stability in prediction of Interpersonal Deviance

The figure shows that employees possessing low emotional stability, when experience low ostracism, express greater ID than those who have high emotional stability. On the other hand, when ostracism

levels were high, employees having higher emotional stability showed greater ID than those with low emotional stability.

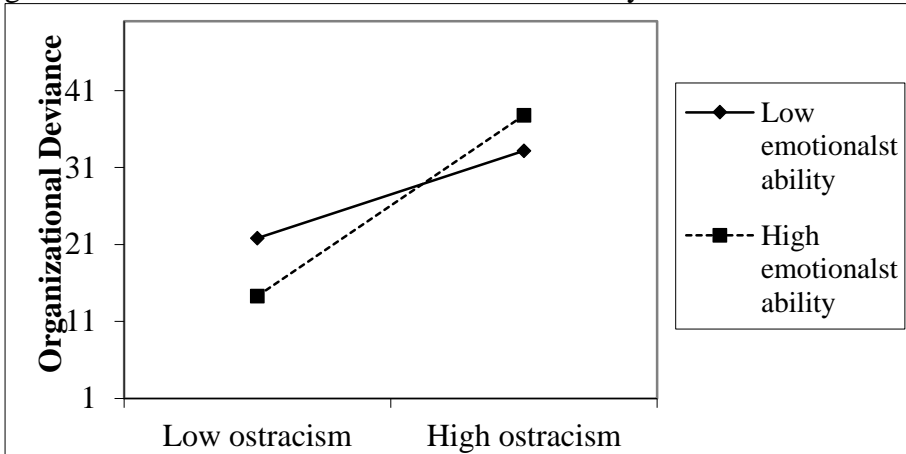


Figure 3 Interaction between Ostracism and Emotional Stability in prediction of Organizational Deviance

When ostracism levels were low, employees with high emotional stability had low OD as compared to the employees with low emotional stability. Whereas, when ostracism levels were high, employees possessing low emotional stability showed lesser OD than the employees with higher emotional stability.

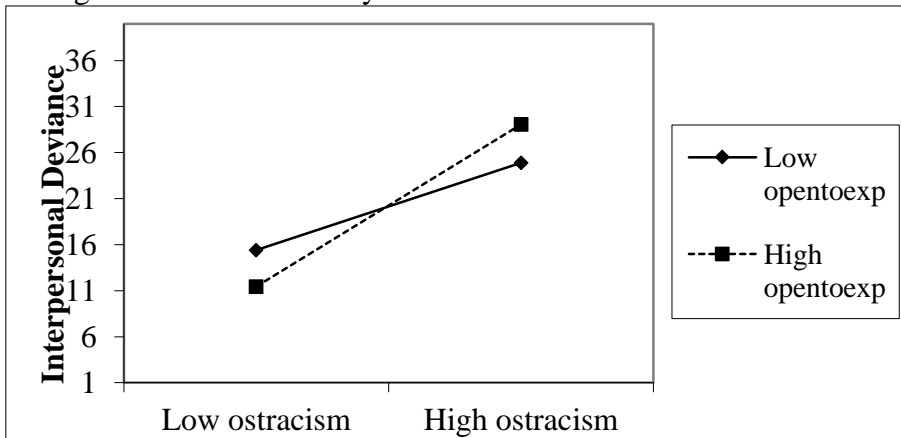


Figure 4 Interaction between Ostracism and Openness to Experience in prediction of Interpersonal Deviance

Employees possessing high levels of openness to experience showed lesser ID when faced with ostracism as compared to those with low levels of openness to experience. While at high ostracism, those with high openness to experience also showed greater ID as compared to those with low openness to experience.

The following models represent the significant predictors of ID and OD.

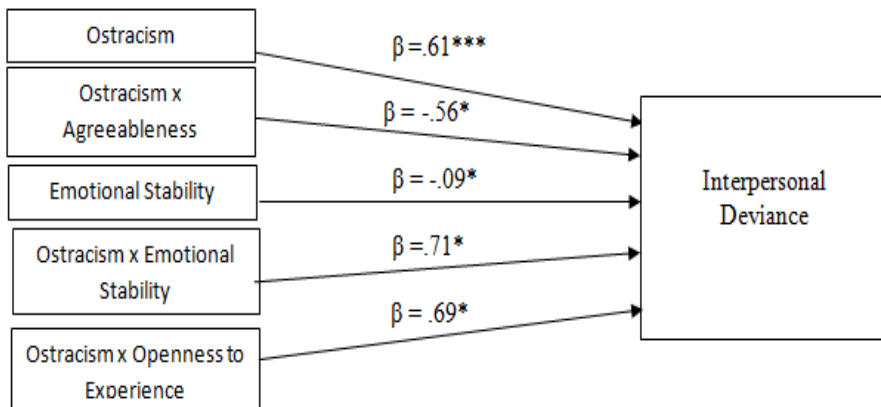


Figure 5 Significant predictors of Interpersonal Deviance

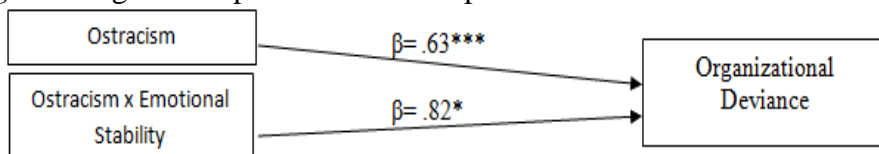


Figure 6 Significant predictors of Organizational Deviance

Discussion

The aim of the current study was to explore if ostracism predicts workplace deviance and if personality moderates the relationship between ostracism and workplace deviance. Initial analysis showed that employees at lower job positions faced greater ostracism and those at higher job positions experienced lesser ostracism. High rank employees possibly express their contempt by ostracism towards those at lower ranks (Williams, 2001; Zadro & Gonsalkorale, 2014). In the organizational culture of Pakistan, people holding higher job positions are regarded with reverence but those at lower job positions are subjected to behaviours like avoiding, ignoring, not answering their greetings, shutting them out of conversation etc.

ID and OD were found significantly correlated with ostracism. Severe cases of ostracism show an employee's compromised sense of good and bad (Balliet & Ferris, 2013; Williams, 2007). The theory of cognitive deconstruction and self-regulation impairment also supports this notion (Baumeister et al., 2006; Baumeister, Twenge & Nuss, 2002). According to the theory of cognitive deconstruction, people when faced with emotional distress and troublesome thoughts specially in case of social exclusion, they may develop lack of emotions and absence of any sense of future. They try to regulate their negative affect but when this self-regulation fails, it results in alleviation of self-awareness and disinhibition of negative destructive behaviors. Ostracism like rejection leads to aggression or workplace deviant behaviours, directed towards organization or towards other employees (Catanese & Tice, 2005).

Emotional stability had significant negative relation with ostracism. Neurotic employee might not be invited to coffee breaks, shut out of conversation etc. more often due to his vulnerability to emotionally unstable behaviours (being anxious, expressing nervousness etc). Also, emotionally unstable employees might be perceiving, and hence reporting, high ostracism. Work commitment and relational satisfaction is low in emotionally unstable employees (John, Naumann & Soto, 2008). An employee might show ID due to low relational satisfaction and OD due to low organizational commitment and ostracism might be the result of deviances rather than the cause of it. Also, researchers have found low levels of emotional stability in bullied individuals (Persson et al., 2009; Glaso, Matthiesen, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2007; Coyne, Chong, Seigne, Randall, 2003; Samnani & Singh, 2012).

Low agreeableness was linked to high ostracism in the present research. John, Naumann and Soto (2008) asserted that high agreeableness would mean better performance in work groups which in turn might lead to low ostracism. Low agreeableness employees might be bullied due to unwillingness to agree with others (Glaso et al., 2007; Samnani & Singh, 2012). It seems like a sound explanation in case of ostracism as well.

Employees having low levels of emotional stability would exhibit greater ID. They might displace their own anxiety onto others or lash out on others more often. Literature has shown varied relation between the personality and deviant workplace behaviours (Bolton, Becker & Barber, 2010; Berry, Ones & Sackett, 2007; Cullen & Sackett, 2003; Ones, Viswesvaran & Schimdt, 2003; Salgado, 2002).

Regarding ID, three personality variables, agreeableness, emotional stability and openness to experience, moderated the relationship

of ostracism and ID. Regarding OD, only emotional stability moderated the relationship between ostracism and OD. Overall, more personality traits played significant moderating role in case of ID. The reason for this might be that an individual is free to behave as per his wish while dealing with other people. There is a greater chance of manifestation of personality traits in interpersonal situations. Whereas the employee has to abide by some rules and norms regarding the work attitude and personality does not play that big a role in OD.

Employees having low agreeableness had a greater chance of turning to ID. They might be more prone to ostracism as other might ostracize them for non-conformity and they might then turn on them by showing ID. While those with high agreeableness might also show the same reaction but its intensity is likely to be much lesser. They would possibly conform to the group and show lesser level of ID. Also, high agreeableness stands for trustfulness and cooperation and hence better interpersonal relations, leading to less ID (John & Srivastava, 1999). The research by Bolton et al. (2010) also pointed out that agreeableness was a predictor of ID. But agreeableness was linked to high levels of other counterproductive work behaviours as well.

Emotional stability also had a moderating effect on the relationship of ostracism with both ID and OD. Employees who are emotionally unstable, would show lesser deviance when facing high levels of ostracism. While emotionally stable ones would be more prone to deviance when highly ostracized. Somewhat contradicting to the basic human logic, some previous researches have specified findings which are not in line with this particular result finding (Bolton et al., 2010). Ostracism reported by the employees is actually perceived ostracism whereas deviant behaviours are the actual behaviours exhibited by them. Emotionally unstable people might report lesser levels of deviance due to social desirability or to maintain a good image or due to attributing such deviant behaviours to other situational factors rather than to themselves. Additionally, people follow norm of reciprocity. Emotionally stable employees might reciprocate to the exact amount they perceived to be done onto them whereas unstable ones might act out in ways which are much vast than the scope of workplace deviance scale used for this study like scheming against perpetrator, spreading rumors against them, indulging in dirty organizational politics, selling trade secrets or leaking other organizational information etc. Such behaviours have been observed in the organizational workings of the current society.

Furthermore, when employee's openness to experience level is low i.e. traditional, there is a lesser chance of indulgence in ID as compared to when openness to experience is high i.e. explorative and keen. He would potentially indulge in regaining his position in the social group, going the extra mile to gain approval etc. whereas highly open to experience would behave in ways that might be perceived by others as deviant behaviour like neglecting the boss's instruction etc. Bolton et al. (2010) found that production deviance was predicted by openness to experience. Hence the deviant behaviours were organization directed unlike current findings. Literature has surely found negative link between openness and deviant behaviours (Lee, Ashton & Shin, 2005; Mount, Ilies & Johnson, 2006).

Limitations and Suggestions

The study produced important insights into employee behaviors, but it had certain limitations. First of all, data was collected from employees during work hours. It might lead to some bias in responses. Additionally, behaviours covered in the ostracism and deviance scales might not be fully culturally representative. Particularly developed measure for the indigenous population should be used in future studies to find there are some other manifestations of ostracism or workplace deviance (Bowling & Gruys, 2010). Short version of personality measure was used in the present research that yielded low reliabilities. Longer version of personality scale might reveal further details. Also, social desirability is likely to prevail in the reported data. It is also possible that the employees who did not willingly participate in the study might be facing high ostracism and showing high workplace deviance. Findings of the current study should be considered with caution and in light that other interplaying factors were not included. If personality traits are considered pair wise (Jensen & Patel, 2011) and other variables like environmental factors (Spector, 2011), attribution, self-control, narcissism, threatened needs (Williams, 1997), rational choice (Clinard & Meier, 2011) etc. are considered, further findings might come to surface.

Implications

The current study implies that there is a need of trainings for managers and their employees in order to reduce ostracism as it leads to deviant behaviours at workplace. Apart from it, during recruitment and hiring, the employers should focus on those personality traits that are not prone to ostracism. It was also suggested by Samnani and Singh (2012) that organizations should focus on personality variables which are less prone to ostracism as high ostracism leads to poorer performance and less job satisfaction levels (Samnani & Singh, 2012). It is highly important and

crucial for human resource management professionals to understand how personality interacts with ostracism at workplace and how these interactions can be handled within the organizational environment. Moreover, those at lower job status should be monitored and provided with a conducive environment to free them of ostracism. Overall, ostracism must be controlled to maintain a healthy work environment.

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