

Analyzing Workplace Ostracism Using PRISMA From a Bibliometric Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The literature on workplace ostracism has evolved, and our comprehensive research has identified 50 primary research articles. The study has used Scopus, a leading research database, to extract and select literature on workplace ostracism. Scopus is the most extensive database, containing more comparative articles than others. The bibliometric study has applied the PRISMA Framework for transparency to include articles relevant to the study. Using the PRISMA Framework, we applied some criteria for inclusion, searched for strategies, and ascertained research questions. The literature review study uses these bibliometric techniques to cite two or more research articles with a standard reference from a common source. To find related results, hidden connections, discover new research information, emerging topics and current trends in particular research topics, bibliographic coupling can be used. There are various theories associated with workplace ostracism. Conservation of Resources theory states that due to loss or threatened of losing of his resource, and stress emotionally exhausted that person. This is induced by workplace ostracism as, prompting person to save himself from the further loss through detachment, ignorance etc. The resources can vary from tangible to intangible things such as personal abilities that the person values. This may lead to incivility, a passive mistreatment from an individual, Individual's group or an organization. Future research studies should consider expanding the scope of the study to include other bibliometric analyses, as well as exploring the source of ostracism in more detail. Future studies should also investigate the effects of ostracism in greater detail. Future research could focus on how to prevent or mitigate the effects of ostracism..

Keywords: Workplace Ostracism, Counter productive work behavior, Bibliometric analysis, PRISMA framework, Citation analysis

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Word " Ostracism " derives from the Greek word "Ostrakismos". It is an ancient practice in Greece where the person facing ostracism puts the name of the person offending on a broken piece of pottery (ostraca) and places it in a large container in a public place. The entire community ignored him and gave silent treatment if a person's name was written more than 6000 times. *"Although the first references to ostracism seem to date back to 488—487 BC and the context of the son of Charmus of Collytus, Hipparchus, being "ostracized", and later to Aristotle and his constitution of Athens, where he mentioned that ostracism was used by Cleisthenes when he reformed the constitution of Athens following the expulsion of Hippias"*(Harvey et al., 2019, p. 2). It is a powerful and ubiquitous phenomenon (Harvey et al., 2019). Workplace Ostracism is the ignorance and exclusion of individuals or groups. Schachter, S. (1959) was the first researcher and psychologist examining the impact of ostracism on an individual person (Yang, 2012). According to William (2001), Workplace ostracism can be defined as when an employee thinks about overlooking by other employees in the organization. Ostracism in the workplace can make employees feel isolated and disengaged from their tasks, decreasing their productivity. When employees are ostracized at work, this

often leads to negative behaviors. It has been found that more than half of employees in an organization have experienced ostracism once in their lives. The most anticipated outcomes of workplace ostracism are a reduction in efficiency, counter productive work behavior, production deviance, etc.

There are various theories associated with workplace ostracism. Conservation of Resources theory states that due to loss or threatened of losing of his resource, and stress emotionally exhausted that person. This is induced by workplace ostracism as, prompting person to save himself from the further loss through detachment, ignorance etc. The resources can vary from tangible to intangible things such as personal abilities that the person values. This may lead to incivility, a passive mistreatment from a person, group of people or an organization. The social exchange theory states that ostracism and counterproductive work behavior are directly proportional. Blau 1964 states that in an employee-organization relationship, there is a silent expectation from each other. They expect return if they Favors or helps other. If these expectations are not fulfilled from either of parties, exclusion is made towards them and this results in aggressiveness, counterproductive work behavior. There are several reasons behind ostracism. Perceived non-alignment with organizational needs, Emotional reaction, unconscious social processes. Need to belong,

future orientation and political skills are inversely proportionate to ostracism in an organization.

Benign Violation theory plays a vital role between humor and morality. Moral leadership plays a crucial role in counterproductive work behavior of employee facing ostracism in post covid. It plays as a mediator between ostracism and counter productive work behavior. Due to the interference of moral leadership, counterproductive behavior such as abusing others, deviance of production, withdrawal, sabotage and theft will be low in the employee facing ostracism. There are positive and negative behavioral outcomes of Workplace Ostracism. The positive outcome can be innovative and creative thinking, being resilient, heightened awareness, Self-reflection, enhancing understanding level, and personal independence, empathy, improved social skills, motivation for self-improvement and seeking alternative connection and Diversifications.

There are various factors inducing ostracism in an organization (refer Table 1). Abusive Supervision, negative emotions, favorable self-perceptions,

Table 1: Direct and Inverse relationship of Workplace Ostracism

Direct Relationship	Inverse Relationship
Negative emotions, Deviance, silence, turnover, intention, exhaustions, emotional Job insecurity, Incivility,	Employee well-being, Job Satisfaction, identification, engagement, justice perceptions, perceived social support, positive emotions, in-behaviors, helping voice, Job embeddedness, Job Performance, LMX

The outcomes to be covered in the current study will be four: performance, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), counterproductive work behavior (CWB), and turnover. These four outcomes could be grouped into two, namely constructive (performance and OCB) and destructive (CWB and turnover). The rationale behind selecting these four organizational outcomes is, (1) they indicate a decent spectrum of prosocial to antisocial response to ostracism; (2) these organizational outcomes are essential in organizational survival and growth; hence, they are worth consideration.

Despite growing empirical attention, no comprehensive bibliometric synthesis has mapped the intellectual landscape of workplace ostracism research. Previous narrative reviews have focused narrowly on specific outcomes (e.g., counterproductive work behavior) or theoretical mechanisms, missing the broader patterns of theory development, methodological evolution, geographic concentration, and emerging trends. This gap

hinders theory integration, inhibits identification of replication opportunities, and obscures directions for novel investigation.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Literature Selection and Data Extraction of Workplace Ostracism

The literature on workplace ostracism has evolved, and our comprehensive research has identified 309 primary research articles. We have used Scopus, a leading research database, to extract and select literature on workplace ostracism. Scopus is the most extensive database, containing more comparative articles than others.

This bibliometric study has applied the PRISMA Framework for transparency to include articles relevant to the study. Using the PRISMA Framework, we applied some criteria for inclusion, searched for strategies, and ascertained research questions. For the inclusion of articles for the study, we included only those research articles that meet our inclusion criteria.

Peer-reviewed articles indexed in ABDC, Scopus and ABS-listed journals were considered for this study. These artists contribute significantly to developing novel studies, which is the primary reason for incorporating them.

We have considered both final and in-press articles to provide thorough coverage of the results and analysis and to conduct an up-to-date review of workplace ostracism. We then used these research articles to conclude, identify trends, and make recommendations for future research. We focused on these English articles to ensure accuracy and avoid bias. We then narrowed down the search results to exclude articles unrelated to this study.

Table 2: Summary of the Inclusion criteria

Database Search	Scopus
Article Type	Research Article (Empirical and Review)
Language	English
Analysis Period	2006-2024
Source Type/Category	Scopus-indexed
Framework	PRISMA

In Table 2, to retrieve the research article from the Scopus database, we used three main search Strings interchangeably: Workplace Ostracism, Psychological well-being and Emotional exhaustion. The strings for retrieving articles are mentioned in the PRISMA framework of the study (Figure 1). Search strings were combined using Boolean operators such as AND and OR. The search results were then narrowed to articles

focused on Workplace Ostracism. A total of 311 articles were retrieved that met the study's search criteria.

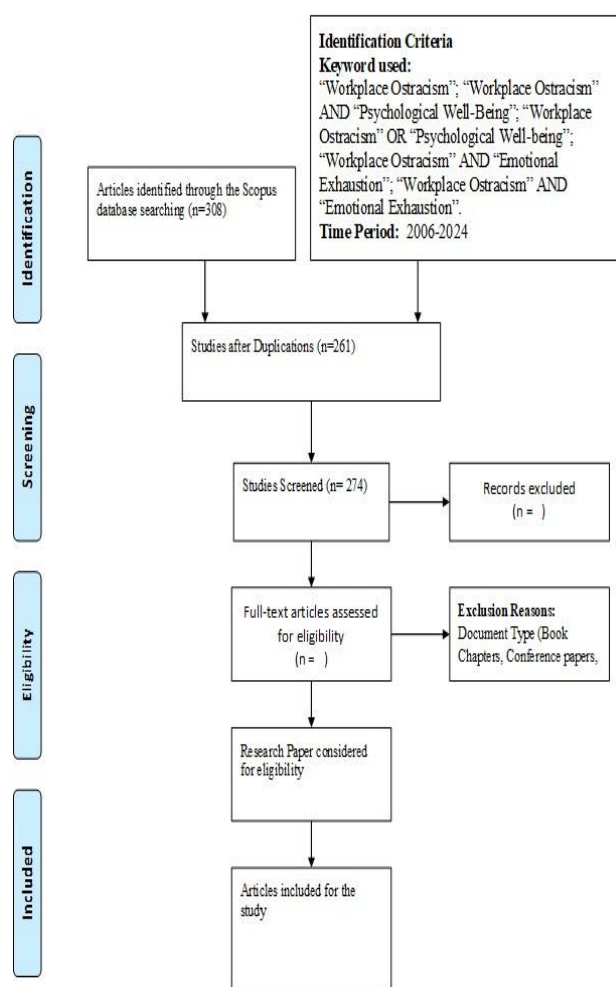


Figure 1: The PRISMA Framework

Search Strings: Three primary search strings were developed through iterative refinement:

"workplace ostracism"

"workplace ostracism" AND ("psychological well-being" OR "emotional exhaustion")

("social exclusion" OR "exclusion" OR "silent treatment" OR "workplace shunning") AND organization*

These strings were combined using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to capture direct ostracism terminology and conceptually related constructs frequently co-investigated.

Search Parameters:

Publication Period: 2006-2024 (rationale: workplace ostracism as organizational construct emergent post-Schachter's foundational 1959 psychology research, but accelerating after Williams' 2002 organizational focus)

Language: English

Document Type: Peer-reviewed research articles and reviews

Source Type: Scopus-indexed, ABDC-listed, ABS-listed journals

Advances in Consumer Research

Initial search conducted January 2024 yielded 311 articles. Final corpus comprised 309 articles following de-duplication.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

Inclusion Criteria:

Peer-reviewed empirical research (experimental, quasi-experimental, cross-sectional, longitudinal surveys) or conceptual/theoretical articles

Primary focus on ostracism/exclusion/silence as independent, mediating, or dependent construct

Organizational workplace context (excluding clinical, educational, sporting, or social psychology contexts)

Published 2006-2024 in English

Indexed in Scopus, ABDC-listed, or ABS-listed sources

Exclusion Criteria:

Non-peer-reviewed sources (dissertations, conference proceeding abstracts, editorials, news items)

Ostracism as peripheral construct (secondary mention without empirical investigation)

Clinical populations (mental health focus), educational bullying, cyberbullying outside organizational context

Gray literature, duplicate publications, retracted articles

2.5 Data Extraction and Coding

Standardized extraction protocols captured: (1) bibliographic information (author, year, journal, country); (2) study design (experimental, cross-sectional, longitudinal, qualitative); (3) sample characteristics (n, industry, cultural context); (4) primary constructs (antecedents, ostracism, outcomes, moderators); (5) theoretical grounding; (6) measurement approaches; (7) key findings. Two independent researchers extracted data from 10% random sample, compared extractions, and refined coding protocols. Disagreements (< 5% intercoder disagreement) were resolved through discussion.

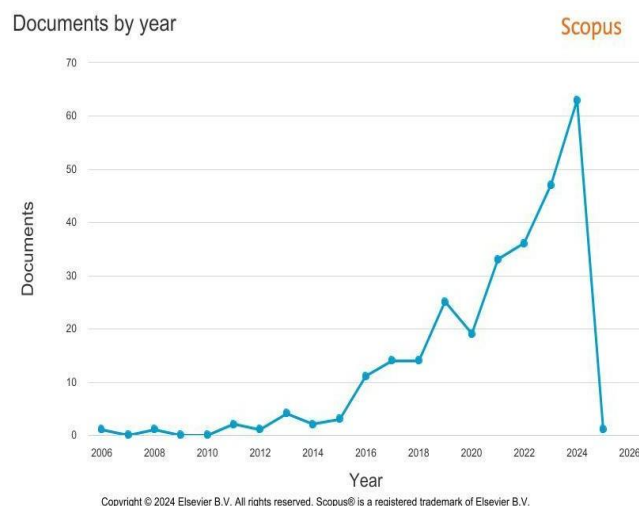


Figure 2: Publication of research articles per year

2.2. Different theories related to Workplace Ostracism

Table 3: Related Theories

Theories	Explanation in the context of Workplace Ostracism
Sociometer Theory	<p>The perceived social standing of a person, which may be caused by perception of ostracism in the workplace, affects the self-esteem of the individual negatively in terms of organization.</p> <p>In cases where an employee feels ostracized at the workplace, he or she is likely to feel threatened at his or her self-esteem. The empirical results of Leary et al. (1998) showed that the manipulations of rejection decreased self-esteem of persons, and the extent of change in self-esteem relates to the degree of being rejected by the individual.</p> <p>Sociometer theory is a well-known theory of self-esteem that suggests that people use self-esteem to measure how much they feel others value and accept them.</p>
The need-threat fortifying theory	<p>The need-threat fortifying theory has determined the four basic human requirements that are need to belong, need to control, need to maintain a positive self-esteem, and need to have a meaningful existence (Williams, 2002; 2007). Zadro, Williams, and Richardson (2004) concluded that, the ostracized individuals were found to have lower needs to belong, need to control, self-esteem, and meaningful existence compared to their included counterparts. In addition, Zadro, Williams and Richardson (2005) contrasted ostracism with verbal disputes and, the participants who were ostracized said that they had reduced the four-need satisfaction level compared to the participants who were the recipients of verbal dispute.</p>
Belongingness theory	<p>The high need to belong employee responds lower OCB to workplace ostracism compared to the low need to belong employee, who showed a steady low level of OCB regardless of the extent of workplace ostracism they have experienced. Such results demonstrate that need to belong enhances the magnitude of reaction of employees under ostracism, and is expected to correspond with the hypothesized correlation.</p>

Social identity theory.	<p>In case an employee feels that he or she is ostracized, his or her identity is threatened. The present research, in particular, focuses on the organization-based self-esteem as a by-process of threatened identity through ostracism.</p> <p>Moreover, the social identity theory has further opined that individuals do not equally emphasize every social group that they are members of. In this instance, identification with one group influences the extent of the influence that this group membership has on the self-definition of the individuals.</p>
Conservation of Resource Theory	<p>The workplace ostracism can be well comprehended using the COR theory. Ostracism at the workplace captures resources that can otherwise be used to sustain people in the workplaces (Leung et al., 2011). The defence mechanism of the people in this situation can be triggered. When guarding against the loss of additional resources, people can be aware of the feeling of constant stress and lose additional resources, which brings multiple undesirable consequences.</p> <p>Conservation of Resources theory posits that individuals value various resources, from tangible objects to personal abilities, crucial for stress management. These resources, when lost or threatened, trigger stress. Workplace ostracism induces resource loss, prompting individuals to prevent further depletion through detachment from the organization.</p> <p>This emotional disengagement diminishes commitment, loyalty, and motivation, aligning with William's need-threat model of ostracism. Employees aim to safeguard their remaining resources, opting to detach emotionally to preserve mental well-being and prevent excessive resource drainage</p>

There are various theories associated with workplace ostracism (Refer Table 3). Conservation of Resources theory states that due to loss or threatened of losing of his resource, and stress emotionally exhausted that person. This is induced by workplace ostracism as, prompting person to save himself from the further loss through detachment, ignorance etc. The resources can vary from

tangible to intangible things such as personal abilities that the person values. This may lead to incivility, a passive mistreatment from a person, group of people or an organization.

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Moral leadership plays a crucial role in counterproductive work behavior of employee facing ostracism in post covid. Benign Violation theory play a vital role between humor and morality. It plays as a mediator between ostracism and counter productive work behavior. Due to the interference of moral leadership, counterproductive behavior such as abusing others, deviance of production, withdrawal, sabotage and theft will be low in the employee facing ostracism. Moral leadership helps in reducing workplace ostracism, enhances positive workplace behaviors. Moral leadership enable with integrity, transparency.

2.3. Different models related to Workplace Ostracism

2.3.1. Fortifying Model of Workplace Ostracism

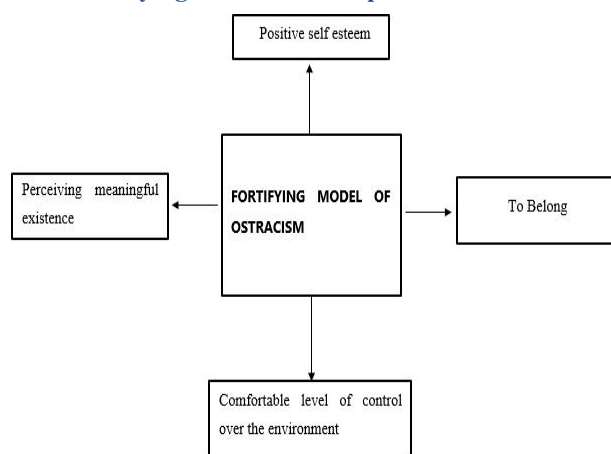


Figure 3. Components of Fortifying model

Refer Figure 3, Williams (2007) proposed a fortification framework to describe respond to ostracism at workplace. This theory is also known as need threat model. For an individual, ostracism four basic needs:

1. To belong
2. To maintain positive self-esteem
3. To feel adequate personal control over the environment
4. To perceive onset existing in a meaningful way.

3. Bibliometric Data Analysis

3.1. Citation Analysis

Researchers use citation analysis to analyse and assess the citations in research documents. The primary purpose of this analysis is to analyse the citations and co-citations of influential papers to measure their impact. **VosViewer Software** has been analysed for citations. This well-known software is used for a variety of bibliographic analyses.

Table 4: Top most cited Journals, Organizations and Authors

Journals	Country	TC	APY	TC
Journal of Applied Psychology	China	3763	2020.86	1111
International Journal of Hospitality	USA	254	2018.77	907
Management				
Journal of Management	Canada	1559	2017.85	541
Frontiers in Psychology	Hong Kong	1187	2016	291
Management Decision	Pakistan	994	2021.70	177
Personnel Review	UK	602	2020.77	136
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	Singapore	475	2017.50	122
Management				
Current Psychology	South Korea	370	2019.43	63
Personality and Individual Differences	Turkey	309	2021	46

Journal of Managerial Psychology 38 2022
Australia 232 2021.09

To analyse the citations of journals, we set 5 documents as the minimum number and five citations as the minimum number of citations (Refer Table 4). Only 12 journals meet the criteria. We analysed the total link strength of each of these 12 sources about others. Those journals with the highest link strength in the country were considered for the citation analysis.

As a basis for determining the citation analysis for the country, we have established two primary criteria. There should be at least five documents required for each country. Secondly, the country must have at least five

citations. Ultimately, only 16 countries in the 63 analysed met the criteria.

From the above citation analysis, it has been observed the journals having high number of citations have lower average publication per year. Countries like China, USA, Canada has highest number of citations but they have low average publication per year.

3.2. Bibliographic Coupling

We use this bibliometric technique to cite two or more research articles with a standard reference from a common source. To find related results, hidden connections, discover new research information, emerging topics and current trends in particular research topics, bibliographic coupling can be used.

Table 5: Bibliographic Coupling

Country	No. of documents	citations	Total link strength
China	132	3763	39217
Pakistan	54	994	21304
United States	48	2541	18446
India	27	188	13784
Canada	10	1559	8922
United Kingdom	13	602	7618
UAE	11	44	7015
Turkey	17	309	6474
Hong Kong	12	1187	6126
Oman	11	99	5982

From the above Table 5, it is observed that China has the highest number of articles, citations and total link strength. But this is different in other nations. Countries like Pakistan and the United States have a low number of documents, but these countries have a relatively higher number of citations. India has fewer articles and citations but is 4th highest in total link strength.

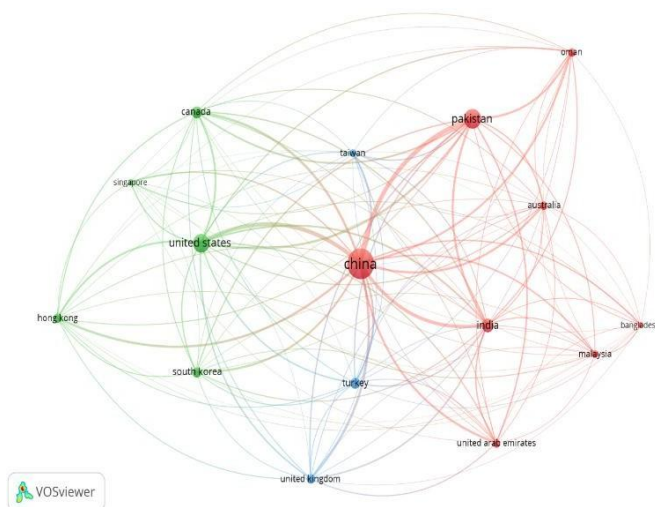


Figure 4: Countries Network

For bibliographic coupling, we have chosen Countries as the unit of analysis. Complete counting of documents was considered for the study. The maximum number of countries per article was set to 25 (Refer Figure 4). For the threshold, we have set 5 as the minimum number of documents of a country and five again as the minimum number of citations of countries. Out of 63 nations, only 16 nations meet the threshold value. For these 16 countries, the total link strength of the bibliographic coupling link with other countries has been calculated.

Co-occurrence Analysis

Co-occurrence analysis can be explained as the number of times a word was appeared in research study as keyword. It is a bibliometric analysis used in bibliometric research study. For co-occurrence analysis, this study has used VOSviewer software.

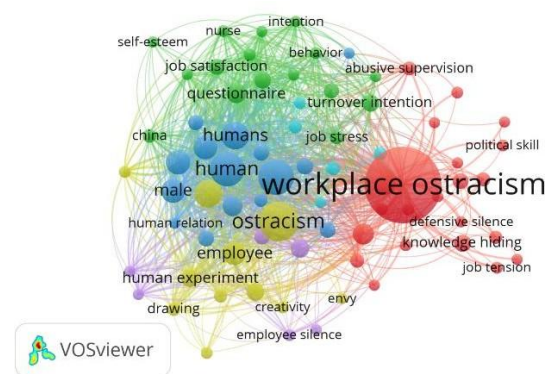


Figure 5:

The study has considered all keywords for the co-occurrence analysis depicted as in Figure 5. The full counting method was used for the study. The threshold for the occurrence of keywords is at least 5. Only 75 keywords out of 1050 keywords meet the criteria of analysis. For these keywords, the total strength of the co-occurrence link with other keywords keywords has been calculated. The keywords with the highest total link strength were selected for the study. The keywords have been categorized into 6 clusters with 1168 links and 4129 total link strength.

Table 6: Top 10 keywords

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link strength
Workplace ostracism	230	608
Human	46	531
Workplace	51	528
Ostracism	62	471
Humans	30	395
Article	31	390
Female	24	336
Adult	23	335
Male	23	317
Employee	22	261

From the above table, workplace ostracism is the most common Keyword with the highest total link strength. Keywords like ostracism have higher occurrence, but they have low link strength. Keywords like Adult, male employee, and female have relatively more link strength compared to workplace and ostracism.

5. Discussions and Conclusion

This PRISMA-guided bibliometric synthesis maps a rapidly expanding research domain addressing a pervasive yet understudied workplace phenomenon. Our analysis of 309 articles reveals mature theoretical diversity (five core theories plus emerging integrative models), exponential publication growth (56% published post-2020), geographic concentration bias favoring Asian samples, and methodological dominance of cross-sectional survey designs limiting causal inference capability.

5.1. Antecedents of Workplace Ostracism

This Research study has identified organizational, interpersonal, and individual triggers:

1. Organizational Antecedents: Competitive structures activating social comparison and threat (hierarchical organizations)

Perceived organizational deviance tolerance (poor ethical climates)

Remote/distributed work arrangements reducing informal contact and social integration

Demographic dissimilarity and identity-based categorization

2. Interpersonal Antecedents:

Violation of group behavioral norms or organizational values

Whistleblowing or moral courage confronting organizational wrongdoing (retaliation ostracism)

Status inconsistency or competitive dynamics with established members

Communication style misalignment or perceived arrogance

3. Individual Antecedents:

Personality traits (low agreeableness, high neuroticism)

Introversion and reduced social initiation capability

Prior experiences of exclusion (victim sensitivity)

Outgroup identification or perceived non-belongingness

Core findings demonstrate workplace ostracism operates through multiple mechanisms (resource depletion, identity threat, reciprocity violation) producing heterogeneous outcomes (from emotional exhaustion and turnover to creative growth and prosocial adaptation) contingent on moderating factors including moral leadership quality, political skill, and resilience orientation. While substantial empirical evidence demonstrates ostracism's organizational significance, critical research gaps persist: longitudinal investigation remains under-represented, cross-cultural research

severely limited, source differentiation underdeveloped, and intervention research nascent.

The study proposes workplace ostracism research's next phase prioritizes:

1. source-specific theoretical development
2. longitudinal experience sampling methodologies
3. Geographic and cultural expansion
4. Intervention design and implementation science
5. Organizational practice translation.

The reviewed literature provides robust foundations for such advancement; addressing these gaps promises enhanced organizational understanding of subtle mistreatment, evidence-based intervention architecture, and ultimately, more inclusive, humane workplaces.

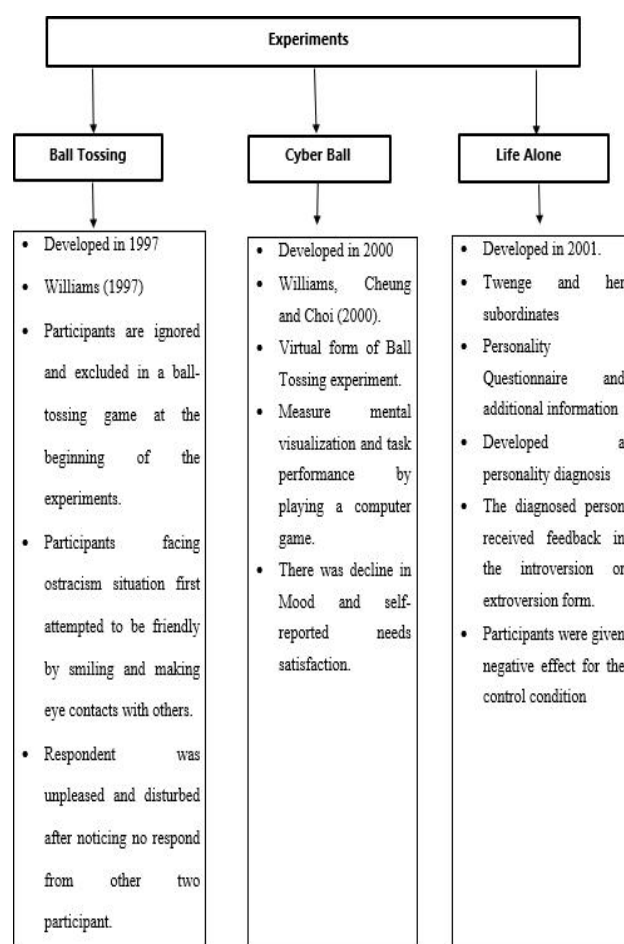


Figure 6: Ostracism Antecedents

Consequences of Workplace Ostracism

Table 7: Consequences of Workplace Ostracism

Consequences of Workplace Ostracism	
Prosocial Consequences	Antisocial Consequences
Developed in 1995	Developed in 2001

Baumeister and Leary 1995 Reverse effect of Workplace Ostracism on a number of outcomes.	Developed by Twenge and her subordinates Conducted multiple studies to check the impact of social exclusion and aggressive behaviors.
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The consequences of workplace ostracism are discussed from two main perspectives: prosocial and antisocial perspectives. There is a long, controversial debate on prosocial and antisocial responses to workplace ostracism. It has not been solved yet. In 1992, Miceli and Near found that whistleblowers in organizations were experiencing ostracism at their workplace. They experienced silent treatment, negligence, and shunning from their subordinates, colleagues and managers. They felt negative emotions, anxiety, distress and frustration. Due to these unpleasant experiences, the whistleblower had adverse work outcomes such as turnover intention.

5.2 Outcomes: Integrative Framework

Empirical evidence demonstrates heterogeneous ostracism responses, often characterized as prosocial versus antisocial dichotomy, though more nuanced conditional frameworks now predominate:

Outcome Domain	Constructive Responses	Destructive Responses
Performance Outcomes	Job performance maintenance; productivity sustainment; creative problem-solving (via meaning-restoration); learning motivation	Job performance decline; productivity loss; absenteeism; task disengagement; attention deficits
Citizenship Behaviors	Increased helping intentions (appeasement strategy); heightened organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) attempts; voice use (advocacy); prosocial initiatives	Organizational citizenship behavior suppression; silence (protective mechanism); withholding discretionary effort; selective cooperation withdrawal

Deviant Behaviors	Absence of counterproductive work behavior (CWB); behavioral constraint	Production deviance (quality compromise, output reduction); abuse/aggression toward coworkers or supervisors; theft; sabotage; rule violation; workplace incivility
Withdrawal Behaviors	Persistence; work embeddedness maintenance; job embeddedness factors retention	Turnover intention elevation; voluntary turnover; presenteeism (physical presence, psychological absence)
Emotional Outcomes	Resilience activation; post-traumatic growth; increased self-reflection; meaning reconstruction	Emotional exhaustion; negative affect amplification; depression/anxiety; reduced well-being; psychological distress

Workplace Ostracism comparison from subordinates and manager aspects

Table 8: Workplace Ostracism comparison

Subordinates	Manager
Interpersonal forms Subordinates' exclusion is interpersonal Employee reacts with interpersonal deviant behavior	Organizational forms Employees reacts with counter productive work behaviors Organizational level of Ostracism

Implications

Theoretical Implications

This research study provides some interesting theoretical implications for the workplace ostracism-related literature. According to this research study, it is a perceptual phenomenon. There may be some correlation between it and reality, but not necessarily. This study helps researchers extend their understanding of how

employees at the workplace evaluate themselves daily in social interactions rather than experimental manipulations in the laboratory. The experiments of William in 2007, Twenge and her subordinates in 2001, and Twenge, Catanese & Baumeister in 2002 were based on the laboratory. They used experimental and control manipulations to create ostracism-related perceptions. These studies established a well-constructed framework on ostracism affecting a person's behavior and attitude. They did not study the inherent subjectivity implicated in an employee's perception of workplace Ostracism. There is a long controversial debate on prosocial and antisocial responds to workplace ostracism. It has not been solved yet. Political skill acts as a moderator of perceived ostracism which is considered as consequence relationships.

Practical Implications

This research study provides a detailed response plan for choosing the best coping strategies for the person facing ostracism. The current study also provides insights for organizations to recognize and resolve issues related to the

hostile social environment of workplace ostracism. Most importantly, employees have demonstrated reduced OCB when experiencing workplace ostracism, which is not helpful for effective operations and the future development of organizations. An organization can examine the situation of an employee those facing ostracism. Depending on their context-specific situation, it can make a balanced decision on how much ostracism to apply.

Future Study

This research study has several limitations. Some of them provide opportunities for future research studies. One of the significant limitations is that this study has covered fewer bibliometric analyses. This research study does not specify the source of ostracism. Supervisors, co-workers, subordinates or any stakeholders are primary sources of ostracism. This study treated the theory of ostracism as an integrative perception

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