The Chain Reaction from Workplace Ostracism to Knowledge hiding: Testing a Sequential Mediation Model in Pakistan's BPO Sector

Dr Syed Harris Laeeque
Assistant Professor, Business Studies Department, Bahria University, Islamabad
harrislaeeque@hotmail.com
Dr. Altamash Khan
Assistant Professor, Department of Management Sciences, IBADAT International University, Islamabad.
altamash.khan@dms.iiui.edu.pk
Abdullah
Assistant Professor, Business Studies Department, Bahria University, Islamabad

Abstract

This research, grounded in the Social Exchange Theory, aims to investigate the intricate dynamics between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding, employing a sequential mediation model involving psychological safety and employee silence. The study, conducted through questionnaire-based data collection from 308 employees across three call centers in Islamabad over three waves, unveils significant insights. The results indicate that workplace ostracism does not influence knowledge hiding directly, but effects indirectly through the sequential mediation of psychological safety and employee silence. This nuanced exploration sheds light on the mechanisms through which interpersonal dynamics and knowledge-sharing behaviors intersect within organizational contexts. The implications of this study extend beyond theoretical contributions, offering practical insights for BPO managements to foster inclusive and transparent workplace cultures, ultimately mitigating knowledge hiding tendencies among employees.

Introduction

The Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry, a dynamic sector known for delegating specific business processes to external service providers, encompasses a variety of services such as customer support, data processing, and human resources (HR) functions (Hailu & Chebo, 2023). Within the realm of HR-related challenges faced by BPOs, the nature of the industry itself presents unique complexities (Kuruvilla & Ranganathan, 2010). High employee turnover rates (Juma & Arshad, 2019), often attributed to the demanding and repetitive nature of the work (Gonçalves-Candeias et al., 2021), pose ongoing challenges for talent retention and recruitment (Srivastav et al., 2019). Additionally, cultural differences in a globalized BPO environment can contribute to communication barriers and misalignment of expectations between employees and management (Feyerabend et al., 2018; Puyod & Charoensukmongkol, 2019). However, one challenge that stands out as particularly critical, with potentially devastating outcomes for both employees and the organization, is workplace ostracism.

Workplace ostracism, a pervasive interpersonal phenomenon, involves the exclusion or neglect of an individual within a work environment (Ferris et al., 2008). It manifests through subtle acts such as ignoring, avoiding, or excluding an employee, creating feelings of isolation and marginalization. Antecedents of workplace ostracism may include factors such as organizational culture, leadership styles, and individual differences (Howard et al., 2020). At the individual level, those experiencing ostracism may suffer from increased stress, reduced job satisfaction, and diminished performance (Bedi, 2021). Organizational-level outcomes encompass a toxic work environment, decreased morale, and potential increases in turnover rates (Li et al., 2021). The insidious nature of workplace ostracism makes it crucial for organizations to proactively address its antecedents and mitigate its negative impact on both

individual employees and the broader organizational culture (Mao et al., 2018).A prominent and critical outcome associated with workplace ostracism is the phenomenon of knowledge hiding, where employees intentionally withhold valuable information from their colleagues and superiors (Connelly et al., 2012). Numerous studies, supported by compelling evidence, have established a robust relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding (e.g. Fatima et al., 2023; Dash et al., 2023). Despite the recognized correlation, the specific process through which workplace ostracism translates into knowledge hiding remains under-researched (Bhatti et al., 2023). In other words, there is a lack of clarity on the factors that serve as a direct link between experiences of workplace ostracism and the subsequent manifestation of knowledge hiding behaviors. Further exploration of this understudied area is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play and for the development of targeted interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of workplace ostracism on knowledge sharing and collaboration within organizations.

Addressing the identified research gap, the present study puts forth the hypothesis that two key factors—psychological safety and employee silence—may operate as mediating mechanisms in the relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding. Psychological safety, rooted in the belief that one can express oneself without fear of negative consequences (Edmondson, 1999), is posited to influence how employees respond to ostracism. When psychological safety is compromised due to ostracism, individuals may feel inhibited in sharing knowledge, contributing to knowledge hiding behaviors (He et al., 2022). Simultaneously, employee silence, characterized by withholding opinions or concerns (Pinder & Harlos, 2001), could serve as another pathway through which the impact of workplace ostracism on knowledge hiding unfolds. Employees, when subjected to ostracism, may resort to silence as a coping mechanism, refraining from openly sharing information (Bari et al., 2020). This proposed mediating mechanism aligns with the principles of Social Exchange Theory (SET), asserting that individuals engage in reciprocal relationships where perceived support and fairness influence their behaviors (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). In this context, the breach of psychological safety and the adoption of employee silence may be seen as responses to the perceived violation of social exchanges within the workplace.

This study holds significant importance as the inaugural exploration within the call center subset of the BPO industry, contributing to the existing literature and paving the way for future investigations into the complex dynamics shaping workplace behavior and organizational outcomes within this specific context. By focusing on a previously unexplored area, this research offers a foundational understanding of the nuanced relationships prevalent in call centers, enriching the scholarly discourse on workplace interactions. The examination of a model grounded in SET adds a distinctive and uncharted dimension to past research, presenting a novel perspective on the mediating factors that underlie the relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding. This theoretical contribution not only enhances the academic understanding of interpersonal dynamics within organizations but also offers practical insights for BPO industry leaders seeking to foster a workplace culture conducive to open communication and knowledge sharing. Moreover, this study fills a notable gap in the limited literature on knowledge hiding within the Pakistani context, where unique socio-cultural values shape organizational dynamics. The findings contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of knowledge-related behaviors in this specific cultural setting, guiding future research endeavors and providing actionable insights for organizational leaders navigating the intricacies of the BPO industry in Pakistan.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory explores the dynamics of interpersonal relationships through the lens of mutual exchanges. The theory posits that individuals engage in social interactions with the expectation of receiving benefits and avoiding costs (Blau, 2017). Central to social exchange are the principles of reciprocity and fairness, emphasizing the idea that individuals strive to maintain equitable relationships (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). According to the theory, people weigh the perceived outcomes of their actions and investments against the associated costs, shaping their decisions to either continue or terminate the social exchange (Cook et al., 2013). Trust, commitment, and shared expectations play crucial roles in fostering positive social exchanges (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). This theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the intricate balance of give-and-take that underlies human interactions in diverse social settings.

Workplace Ostracism and Knowledge Hiding

Workplace ostracism, a pervasive phenomenon in organizational contexts, entails the deliberate exclusion or neglect of an individual, where colleagues or superiors intentionally avoid or ignore their presence (Ferris et al., 2008). This phenomenon can manifest in various ways, including being deliberately excluded from team activities, left out of important communication loops, or overlooked during collaborative efforts (Liu & Ma, 2021). The experience of workplace ostracism can engender feelings of isolation, marginalization, and a profound sense of being undervalued within the professional environment (Singh et al., 2024). Such negative experiences may result in heightened stress levels, diminished job satisfaction, and a decline in overall well-being (Howard et al., 2020; Bedi, 2021; Li et al., 2021). Employees subjected to workplace ostracism may develop coping mechanisms to navigate these adverse effects (Sharma & Dhar, 2024), and one prevalent response is knowledge hiding. Knowledge hiding is a workplace behavior characterized by the intentional concealment of valuable information, ideas, or expertise by individuals who choose not to share their insights with colleagues or within the organization (Connelly et al., 2012). This deliberate withholding can take various forms, including refusing to provide necessary information, avoiding sharing expertise, or intentionally misleading others. Knowledge hiding is often motivated by factors such as self-preservation, competitive concerns, or fear of negative consequences, leading individuals to keep valuable knowledge to themselves (Rezwan & Takahashi, 2021). This behavior has significant implications for organizational dynamics, as it can hinder collaboration, impede innovation, and create a less transparent work environment (Chatterjee et al., 2021). Thus, the transition from workplace ostracism to knowledge hiding reflects a nuanced interplay between interpersonal dynamics and knowledge-sharing behaviors, with the former acting as a catalyst for the latter in the complex fabric of organizational relationships (Fatima et al., 2023; Dash et al., 2023; Bhatti et al., 2023).

Drawing upon the SET, the relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding can be understood through the lens of reciprocal social interactions. In the workplace, individuals engage in social exchanges with the expectation of receiving support, recognition, and fair treatment in return for their contributions. When subjected to ostracism, employees may perceive a breach in this social contract (Liu et al., 2024), experiencing a lack of reciprocity and fairness. As a response to the negative social exchange, individuals may withhold knowledge as a form of self-protection or retaliation (Haar et al., 2022). The perceived social injustice of ostracism may lead to a breakdown in trust and commitment within the workplace (Paşamehmetoğlu et al., 2022), disrupting the positive reciprocity that typically underlies knowledge-sharing behaviors. Thus, workplace ostracism can be seen as a disruptor in the reciprocal relationships that encourage open communication (Liu & Ma, 2021), subsequently fostering a climate conducive to knowledge hiding as individuals seek to

restore perceived imbalances in social exchanges (e.g. Fatima et al., 2023; Dash et al., 2023; Bhatti et al., 2023) Consequently, deriving from this discussion, the hypothesis proposed is as follows:

H1: There is a positive relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding

2.3. The Mediating Role of Psychological Safety in the Workplace Ostracism—Knowledge Hiding Relationship

Psychological safety refers to the shared belief within a group or organization that individuals can express their thoughts, ideas, and concerns without fear of negative consequences (Edmondson, 1999). In psychologically safe environments, employees feel confident that their contributions will be respected and that they will not face ridicule or punishment for expressing differing opinions or taking interpersonal risks (Ge, 2020). This concept fosters an open and inclusive culture, encouraging collaboration, innovation, and constructive feedback (Edmondson, 2018). Psychological safety is crucial for creating a work environment where individuals feel empowered to share their insights (Jha, 2019), ultimately leading to enhanced team performance and organizational success (Edmondson, 2018; Abror & Patrisia, 2020).

Applying the SET, the mediation of psychological safety in the relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding can be understood through reciprocal social interactions. Workplace ostracism disrupts the positive social exchanges within an organization, creating a perceived breach of reciprocity and fairness (Rudert & Speckert, 2023; Liu et al., 2024). This breach, in turn, undermines employees' sense of psychological safety, as they fear negative consequences for expressing themselves (Jahanzeb & Fatima, 2018). As a mediator, psychological safety becomes crucial; when it is compromised due to ostracism, individuals are more likely to engage in knowledge hiding as a self-protective response. Conversely, a higher level of psychological safety can mitigate the negative impact of ostracism, promoting an environment where individuals feel secure enough to share knowledge openly (Kessel et al., 2012; Rivera et al., 2021). Thus, the workplace ostracism—knowledge hiding relationship is mediated by psychological safety in shaping the dynamics of reciprocal social exchanges within the organizational context. Therefore, building on this discussion, the following hypothesis is posited:

H2: Psychological safety mediates the workplace ostracism—knowledge hiding relationship

2.3. The Mediating Role of Employee Silence in the Workplace Ostracism—Knowledge Hiding Relationship

Employee silence refers to the intentional withholding of opinions, concerns, or feedback by employees in the workplace (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). It is characterized by a reluctance to voice one's thoughts, ideas, or grievances (Milliken et al., 2003), often due to perceived consequences or a lack of psychological safety (Hao et al., 2022). Employee silence can hinder open communication, impede organizational learning, and contribute to a less transparent and collaborative work environment (John & Manikandan, 2019). Understanding the factors influencing employee silence is crucial for organizations aiming to cultivate a culture that encourages open dialogue, innovation, and employee engagement (Brinsfield & Edwards, 2020).Drawing on SET, the mediation of employee silence in the relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding can be elucidated through the lens of reciprocal social interactions. As already discussed, workplace ostracism disrupts the positive social exchanges within an organization, leading to a perceived breach of reciprocity and fairness (Rudert & Speckert, 2023; Liu et al., 2024). In response to this breach, employees may resort to silence as a form of self-protection, withholding opinions and concerns to avoid potential negative consequences (Bari et al., 2020). Employee silence, therefore, becomes a mediator in this relationship, as the compromised social exchanges foster an environment where

individuals are less likely to openly share knowledge (Qi & Ramayah, 2022). Conversely, in an atmosphere of inclusivity and psychological safety, as emphasized by SET, employee silence may be mitigated (O'Donovan et al., 2021), allowing for a more transparent exchange of information and reducing the inclination for knowledge hiding as a coping mechanism. Given this discussion, the hypothesis outlined is as follows:

H3: Employee silence mediates the workplace ostracism—knowledge hiding relationship

2.4. The Sequential Mediation of Psychological Safety and Employee Silence

In a sequential mediation model rooted in SET (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Blau, 2017), workplace ostracism sets off a chain of dynamics involving psychological safety and employee silence in relation to knowledge hiding. Initially, workplace ostracism disrupts positive social exchanges, triggering a perceived breach of reciprocity and fairness (Chen & Song, 2019). This breach, in turn, compromises psychological safety as employees fear expressing themselves (Sherf et al., 2021). The diminished psychological safety then contributes to employee silence, where individuals withhold opinions or concerns as a self-protective response (Kassandrinou et al., 2023). Ultimately, the cumulative effect of workplace ostracism, compromised psychological safety, and ensuing employee silence creates an environment conducive to knowledge hiding, as employees opt to conceal valuable information as a coping mechanism in a less inclusive and trusting workplace setting. In light of this discussion, the following hypothesis is conjectured:

H4: Psychological safety and employee silence sequentially mediate the workplace ostracism—knowledge hiding relationship
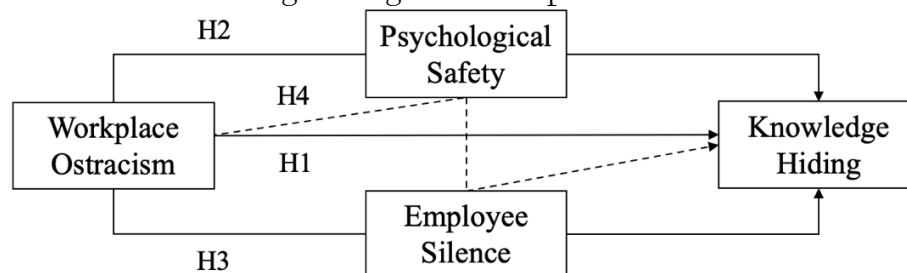
Methodology

Measures

In this study, the assessment of workplace ostracism relied on Ferris et al.'s (2008) comprehensive 10-item scale, capturing various facets of social exclusion within the organizational context. To gauge psychological safety, we adapted Edmondson's (1999) established seven-item scale, which delves into the employees' perception of their ability to take interpersonal risks within the workplace without fear of reprisal. Employee silence was measured using the adapted version of Detert and Edmondson's (2011) five-item scale, reflecting employees' tendencies to withhold information or opinions. Lastly, knowledge hiding was assessed through Peng's (2012) concise three-item scale. All the items across these scales were measured on a Likert-type scale, providing respondents with options ranging from 'never' to 'always', ensuring a nuanced exploration of the participants' experiences and behaviors within the organizational context.

Procedure

This study concentrated on call centers, a specialized segment within the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry specifically dedicated to managing telephone-based customer interactions. In Islamabad, home to an estimated 55-75 call centers, the authors sought to gather data from this significant subset. Using personal references, the authors reached out to the management of five call centers in Islamabad, securing permission for data collection from

three of them. During regular work hours, employees at the selected call centers were approached, and a comprehensive briefing was provided about the survey's purpose and voluntary nature. Consent was obtained from those willing to participate, and they were then given questionnaires to be completed within the next hour. The data collection process unfolded in three distinct waves, each separated by one week. During the first wave (T1), participants were tasked with rating their experiences of workplace ostracism, resulting in the distribution of 500 questionnaires and the receipt of 439 usable responses. In the second wave (T2), participants shared their perspectives on psychological safety and employee silence, with 366 usable responses obtained out of the 439 questionnaires distributed. The final wave involved participants rating their engagement in knowledge hiding behaviors, leading to the distribution of 366 questionnaires and the generation of 308 complete responses. This meticulous approach to data collection aims to enhance the study's validity and reliability by minimizing biases associated with a singular data collection point.

The participant demographic breakdown is as follows: 77% were male, 55% fell within the age range of 20 to 29 years, 58% held a four-year Bachelor's degree, and 43% reported having 1 to 3 years of organizational tenure.

Results

The analysis for this study utilized IBM SPSS. Initially, descriptive statistics and correlations were calculated to provide an overview of the data. Subsequently, Hayes' PROCESS Macro model 6 was employed to rigorously test the four hypotheses, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the proposed relationships. This sequential analytical approach ensured a thorough exploration of the dataset and a robust evaluation of the study's hypotheses.The Table 1 below presents reliability and correlations among workplace ostracism, psychological safety, employee silence, and knowledge hiding. Workplace ostracism demonstrates good reliability (α = .77), as does psychological safety (α = .85). Employee silence and knowledge hiding also have reliable scales (α = .81 and .86, respectively). In terms of correlations, workplace ostracism negatively correlates with psychological safety (-.43**, $p < .01$), indicating that increased ostracism is linked to reduced perceived safety. Employee silence positively correlates with workplace ostracism (0.39**, $p < .01$), suggesting a connection between ostracism experiences and a propensity for information withholding. Knowledge hiding correlates positively with psychological safety (r = .33**, $p < .01$) and negatively with workplace ostracism (-.47**, $p < .01$), highlighting the intricate associations between a psychologically safe environment, reduced ostracism, and increased knowledge-hiding behaviors in call centers' context.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Key Constructs

	Mean	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.
Workplace ostracism	3.23	.61	(.77)			
Psychological safety	3.17	.81	-.43**	(.85)		
Employee silence	3.57	.81	.39**	-.50	(.81)	
Knowledge hiding	3.25	.98	.33**	-.47**	.57**	(.86)

Note: ** p <.01, α values appear in parentheses

The Table 2 below showcases the direct and indirect relationships among study variables. In the direct relationships, workplace ostracism exhibits a strong negative association with psychological safety (b = -.57, $p < .01$) and a positive association with employee silence (b = .28, $p < .01$). Psychological safety, in turn, shows a negative relationship with employee silence (b = -.41, $p < .01$). However, the direct relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding is not statistically significant (b = .11, $p > .05$). In indirect relationships, the mediation of

psychological safety in the ostracism—knowledge hiding relationship is significant (b = .15, bootstrapped 95% CI [.07, .24]). Similarly, the indirect relationship involving workplace ostracism, employee silence, and knowledge hiding is also significant (b = .15, 95% CI [.06, .24]). Additionally, the three-stage sequential mediation including workplace ostracism, psychological safety, employee silence, and knowledge hiding is significant (b = .12, bootstrapped 95% CI [.07, .18]). Based on these results, hypothesis 1 is rejected, while hypotheses 2, 3 and 4 are confidently accepted.

Table 2: Hypotheses Testing Results

Direct relationships						
	coefficient	se	t	*p*	LLCI	ULCI
WO → PS	-.57	.06	-8.49	.00	-.71	-.44
WO → ES	.28	.07	4.02	.00	.14	.42
WO → KH	.11	.08	1.33	.18	-.05	.27
PS → ES	-.41	.05	-7.63	.00	-.51	-.30
PS → KH	-.26	.06	-4.00	.00	-.39	-.13
ES → KH	.52	.06	8.19	.00	.40	.65
Indirect relationships						
	coefficient	bootSE	bootLLCI	bootULCI		
WO → PS → KH	.15	.04	.07	.24		
WO → ES → KH	.15	.04	.06	.24		
WO → PS → ES → KH	.12	.02	.07	.18		

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

This study, grounded in SET, contributes theoretically to the understanding of workplace dynamics by examining the intricate relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding. By adopting a theoretical lens rooted in reciprocal social interactions, the research elucidates how workplace ostracism disrupts positive social exchanges within an organizational context. The identification of psychological safety and employee silence as sequential mediators enriches the theoretical landscape by providing insights into the underlying mechanisms through which workplace ostracism influences knowledge hiding behaviors. The study not only affirms the theoretical significance of SET in explaining workplace dynamics but also extends its application by illuminating the specific pathways involved in the complex interplay between interpersonal relationships and knowledge-sharing behaviors.

Furthermore, the acceptance of three mediation hypotheses in the study contributes to the validation and refinement of existing theoretical frameworks. The sequential mediation model, comprising workplace ostracism, psychological safety, employee silence, and knowledge hiding, offers a nuanced understanding of how these constructs unfold in a theoretically coherent manner. The findings contribute empirical evidence to support the theoretical propositions derived from SET, highlighting the importance of reciprocal relationships and perceived fairness in influencing employee behaviors. This study thus contributes to bridging the gap between theory and empirical evidence in the realm of organizational behavior, offering valuable insights for scholars, practitioners, and organizational leaders seeking to foster a workplace culture that encourages open communication and mitigates knowledge hiding tendencies.

Practical Implications

This study provides actionable insights for organizations aiming to foster a healthy and productive workplace environment. Firstly, recognizing the detrimental impact of workplace ostracism on knowledge hiding underscores the importance of cultivating inclusive and respectful organizational cultures (Gamian-Wilk & Madeja-Bien, 2021). By addressing the root causes of ostracism and implementing measures to enhance positive social exchanges, organizations can promote a climate that values open communication and collaboration. Strategies might include mindfulness-based interventions (Ramsey & Jones, 2015), promoting leadership styles that encourage inclusivity (Shore & Chung, 2022), and establishing clear communication channels to address concerns (Liu & Ma, 2021). This proactive approach not only mitigates knowledge hiding but also contributes to overall employee well-being and job satisfaction.Moreover, the identification of psychological safety and employee silence as sequential mediators provides actionable insights for interventions. Organizations can focus on enhancing psychological safety by fostering an environment where employees feel secure expressing their thoughts without fear of reprisal. Promoting a culture of openness, acknowledging diverse perspectives, and providing regular opportunities for feedback can contribute to building psychological safety (Murray et al., 2022). Additionally, addressing employee silence involves creating channels for individuals to voice their concerns, offering platforms for constructive dialogue, and implementing mechanisms to address grievances promptly (Shin et al., 2022). By strategically intervening at these intermediary points, organizations can disrupt the progression from workplace ostracism to knowledge hiding, fostering a workplace culture that encourages transparency, collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The findings of this study should be interpreted considering the potential influence of common method bias, as all variables were measured from a single source. To address this limitation, future research endeavors could enhance the robustness of their data by collecting information from multiple sources, thereby reducing the likelihood of common method bias. Additionally, while this study explored the relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential existence of reverse causation. Future investigations should delve into the possibility of bidirectional causation, examining how knowledge hiding may also contribute to or influence workplace ostracism. Another noteworthy consideration is the absence of moderating variables in this study. Given the demonstrated impact of various individual and contextual factors on mitigating or exacerbating the effects of workplace ostracism (e.g., Howard et al., 2020), future researchers are encouraged to incorporate moderating variables in their frameworks for a more comprehensive understanding. Lastly, this study focused on specific mediators within the model, but future research avenues could explore alternative mediating mechanisms. Researchers might also extend their inquiries to investigate the spillover effects of workplace ostracism from work to home, providing a more holistic perspective on the broader implications of such interpersonal dynamics.

Conclusion

This research, rooted in SET, explored the relationship between workplace ostracism and knowledge hiding, employing psychological safety and employee silence as sequential mediators. Results indicated an insignificant direct impact of workplace ostracism on knowledge hiding, but revealed a nuanced pathway where psychological safety and employee silence sequentially mediate this relationship. As the first of its kind within the call center subset of the BPO industry, this research not only enriches the existing literature but also provides a foundation for future inquiries into the intricate relationships shaping workplace

behavior and organizational outcomes. By shedding light on the sequential mediation process, this study offers actionable insights to the management of BPO companies, providing them with strategies to mitigate the negative consequences of workplace ostracism on knowledge sharing. This research not only expands the scholarly discourse but also has the potential to enhance organizational practices, fostering healthier workplace cultures within the BPO industry.

References

Abror, A., & Patrisia, D. (2020). Psychological safety and organisational performance: A systematic literature review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *16*, 7-21.

Bari, M. W., Ghaffar, M., & Ahmad, B. (2020). Knowledge-hiding behaviors and employees' silence: Mediating role of psychological contract breach. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, *24*(9), 2171-2194.

Bedi, A. (2021). No herd for black sheep: A meta-analytic review of the predictors and outcomes of workplace ostracism. *Applied Psychology*, *70*(2), 861-904.

Bhatti, S. H., Hussain, M., Santoro, G., & Culasso, F. (2023). The impact of organizational ostracism on knowledge hiding: Analysing the sequential mediating role of efficacy needs and psychological distress. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, *27*(2), 485-505.

Blau, P. (2017). *Exchange and power in social life*. Routledge.

Brinsfield, C. T., & Edwards, M. S. (2020). Employee voice and silence in organizational behavior. In A. Wilkinson, J. Donaghey, T. Dundon, & R. B. Freeman (Eds.), *Handbook of research on employee voice* (pp. 103-120). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Chatterjee, S., Chaudhuri, R., Thrassou, A., & Vrontis, D. (2021). Antecedents and consequences of knowledge hiding: The moderating role of knowledge hiders and knowledge seekers in organizations. *Journal of Business Research*, *128*, 303-313.

Chen, R., & Song, J. (2019). Effect of workplace ostracism on counterproductive work behavior–-Psychological contract breach as the mediator. *UTCC International Journal of Business and Economics (UTCC IJBE)*, *11*(2), 3-23.

Connelly, C. E., Zweig, D., Webster, J., & Trougakos, J. P. (2012). Knowledge hiding in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *33*(1), 64-88.

Cook, K. S., Cheshire, C., Rice, E. R. W., & Nakagawa, S. (2013). Social exchange theory. In J. DeLamater, & A. Ward (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (pp. 61–88). Springer.

Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, *31*(6), 874-900.

Dash, D., Farooq, R., & Upadhyay, S. (2023). Linking workplace ostracism and knowledge hoarding via organizational climate: A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Innovation Science*, *15*(1), 135-166.

Detert, J. R., & Edmondson, A. C. (2011). Implicit voice theories: Taken-for-granted rules of self-censorship at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, *54*(3), 461-488.

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *44*(2), 350-383.

Edmondson, A. C. (2018). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. John Wiley & Sons.

Fatima, T., Bilal, A. R., Imran, M. K., & Waqas, M. (2023, February). Relations outside the workplace matter! A nexus of coworker ostracism, relational capital, alternate belongingness and knowledge hiding. In *Evidence-based HRM: a Global Forum for Empirical Scholarship* (Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 52-67). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Ferris, D. L., Brown, D. J., Berry, J. W., & Lian, H. (2008). The development and validation of the Workplace Ostracism Scale. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *93*(6), 1348-1366.

Feyerabend, R., Herd, A. M., & Choi, N. (2018). Job satisfaction and turnover intentions among Indian call center agents: Exploring the role of emotional intelligence. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, *21*(2), 106-129.

Gamian-Wilk, M., & Madeja-Bien, K. (2018). Ostracism in the workplace. In P. D'Cruz, E. Noronha, L. Keashly, & S. Tye-Williams (Eds.),Spe*cial topics and particular occupations, professions and sectors* (pp. 1-30). Springer Nature.

Ge, Y. (2020). Psychological safety, employee voice, and work engagement. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, *48*(3), 1-7.

Gonçalves-Candeias, D., Chambel, M. J., & Carvalho, V. S. (2021). Is stress in contact centers inevitable?. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(6), 2999.

Haar, J., O'Kane, C., & Cunningham, J. A. (2022). Firm-level antecedents and consequences of knowledge hiding climate. *Journal of Business Research*, *141*, 410-421.

Hailu, T., & Chebo, A. K. (2023). Mapping business process outsourcing and innovation towards a future research. *Business Process Management Journal*, *30*(1), 158-182.

Hao, L., Zhu, H., He, Y., Duan, J., Zhao, T., & Meng, H. (2022). When is silence golden? A meta-analysis on antecedents and outcomes of employee silence. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *37*(5), 1039-1063.

He, P., Sun, R., Zhao, H., Zheng, L., & Shen, C. (2022). Linking work-related and non-work-related supervisor–subordinate relationships to knowledge hiding: A psychological safety lens. *Asian Business & Management*, 21, 525-546.

Howard, M. C., Cogswell, J. E., & Smith, M. B. (2020). The antecedents and outcomes of workplace ostracism: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *105*(6), 577-596.

Jahanzeb, S., & Fatima, T. (2018). How workplace ostracism influences interpersonal deviance: The mediating role of defensive silence and emotional exhaustion. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *33*, 779-791.

Jha, S. (2019). Team psychological safety and team performance: A moderated mediation analysis of psychological empowerment. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, *27*(4), 903-924.

John, S. P., & Manikandan, K. (2019). Employee silence: A meta-analytic review. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *7*(1), 354-366.

Juma, Z., & Arshad, M. W. (2019). Exploring turnover reason: A study of BPO Industry of Pakistan. *Journal of Law & Social Studies (JLSS)*, *1*(1), 1-12.

Kassandrinou, M., Lainidi, O., Mouratidis, C., & Montgomery, A. (2023). Employee silence, job burnout and job engagement among teachers: The mediational role of psychological safety. *Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine*, *11*(1), 2213302.

Kessel, M., Kratzer, J., & Schultz, C. (2012). Psychological safety, knowledge sharing, and creative performance in healthcare teams. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *21*(2), 147-157.

Kuruvilla, S., & Ranganathan, A. (2010). Globalisation and outsourcing: Confronting new human resource challenges in India's business process outsourcing industry. *Industrial Relations Journal*, *41*(2), 136-153.

Li, M., Xu, X., & Kwan, H. K. (2021). Consequences of workplace ostracism: A meta-analytic review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 641302.

Liu, C., & Ma, J. (Eds.). (2021). *Workplace ostracism: Its nature, antecedents, and consequences.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Liu, M., Liu, X., Muskat, B., Leung, X. Y., & Liu, S. (2024). Employees' self-esteem in psychological contract: Workplace ostracism and counterproductive behavior. *Tourism Review*, *79*(1), 152-166.

Mao, Y., Liu, Y., Jiang, C., & Zhang, I. D. (2018). Why am I ostracized and how would I react?—A review of workplace ostracism research. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, *35*, 745-767.

Milliken, F. J., Morrison, E. W., & Hewlin, P. F. (2003). An exploratory study of employee silence: Issues that employees don't communicate upward and why. *Journal of Management Studies*, *40*(6), 1453-1476.

Murray, J. S., Kelly, S., & Hanover, C. (2022). Promoting psychological safety in healthcare organizations. *Military Medicine*, *187*(7-8), 808-810.

O'Donovan, R., De Brún, A., & McAuliffe, E. (2021). Healthcare professionals experience of psychological safety, voice, and silence. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 626689.

Paşamehmetoğlu, A., Guzzo, R. F., & Guchait, P. (2022). Workplace ostracism: Impact on social capital, organizational trust, and service recovery performance. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *50*, 119-126.

Peng, H. (2012). Counterproductive work behaviors among Chinese knowledge workers, *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, *20*(2), 119-138.

Pinder, C. C., & Harlos, K. P. (2001). Employee silence: Quiescence and acquiescence as responses to perceived injustice. In K. M. Rowland & G. R. Ferris (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resources Management, vol. 20* (pp. 331-369). JAI.

Puyod, J. V., & Charoensukmongkol, P. (2019). The contribution of cultural intelligence to the interaction involvement and performance of call center agents in cross-cultural communication: The moderating role of work experience. *Management Research Review*, *42*(12), 1400-1422.

Qi, F. S., & Ramayah, T. (2022). Defensive silence, defensive voice, knowledge hiding, and counterproductive work behavior through the lens of stimulus-organism-response. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 822008.

Ramsey, A. T., & Jones, E. E. (2015). Minding the interpersonal gap: Mindfulness-based interventions in the prevention of ostracism. *Consciousness and Cognition*, *31*, 24-34.

Rezwan, R. B., & Takahashi, Y. (2021). The psychology behind knowledge hiding in an organization. *Administrative Sciences*, *11*(2), 57.

Rivera, A. E., Rodríguez-Aceves, L., & Mojarro-Duran, B. I. (2021). Enabling knowledge sharing through psychological safety in inter-organisational arrangements. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, *25*(5), 1170-1193.

Rudert, S. C., & Speckert, K. (2023). You shouldn't have shut them out: Justice sensitivity and norm adherence affect moral reactions to observed ostracism. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *201*, 111929.

Sharma, N., & Dhar, R. L. (2024). Workplace ostracism: A process model for coping and typologies for handling ostracism. *Human Resource Management Review*, *34*(1), 100990.

Sherf, E. N., Parke, M. R., & Isaakyan, S. (2021). Distinguishing voice and silence at work: Unique relationships with perceived impact, psychological safety, and burnout. *Academy of Management Journal*, *64*(1), 114-148.

Shin, D., Woodwark, M. J., Konrad, A. M., & Jung, Y. (2022). Innovation strategy, voice practices, employee voice participation, and organizational innovation. *Journal of Business Research*, *147*, 392-402.

Shore, L. M., & Chung, B. G. (2022). Inclusive leadership: How leaders sustain or discourage work group inclusion. *Group & Organization Management*, *47*(4), 723-754.

Singh, S., Subramani, A. K., David, R., & Jan, N. A. (2024). Workplace ostracism influencing turnover intentions: Moderating roles of perceptions of organizational virtuousness and authentic leadership. *Acta Psychologica*, *243*, 104136.

Srivastav, A. K., Gopalan, M. S., Agarwal, K., & Agarwal, V. K. (2019). Employee retention challenges in BPO Industry: An empirical study of problems and solutions. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, *28*(13), 708-717.