

Impact of Workplace Bullying on Knowledge Hiding Behaviors: Mediating Role of Negative Emotions

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Abstract

In this era of Knowledge economy sharing of knowledge is essential for the progress of the organization. Behaviors of individuals effect the way employees share or hide their knowledge. Workplace bullying is a negative behavior that leads towards negative emotions and behaviors. Being bullied at workplace evoke negative emotions among employees that ultimately leads towards negative behaviors. In information technology depends on sharing and creating of knowledge, hiding knowledge cause hurdles in development of organization and employees. Quantitative analysis has been used in this study. Sample size was 150 employees working in IT sector of twin cities (Rawalpindi and Islamabad). SPSS and endnote are used as software's in the study. It has been established that workplace bullying leads towards knowledge hiding behavior, and negative emotions mediate the relationship between workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behaviors in IT (Software development) industry of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Recommendations for future research has been proposed.

Keywords: Workplace Bullying, Negative Emotions, Knowledge Hiding Behavior.

Introduction

Workplace bullying has a significant impact on knowledge-hiding behaviors, as evidenced by various studies. Research has shown that workplace bullying is positively associated with knowledge-hiding behaviors (Lijing Zhao et al 2023), (Petros Galanis et al 2024). Additionally, negative coping strategies, which can arise from workplace bullying, are positive predictors of knowledge-hiding behaviors (Petros Galanis et al 2024). Furthermore, the mediating role of negative emotions, such as those stemming from workplace bullying, in the relationship between workplace bullying and knowledge-hiding behaviors is crucial to consider. Negative emotions can exacerbate the effects of workplace bullying on knowledge-hiding behaviors, highlighting the intricate interplay between negative workplace experiences, emotions, and behaviors in organizational settings.

Understanding and addressing these dynamics are essential for promoting a healthy and productive work environment. In this time of knowledge economy, resources of individual knowledge are becoming important sources of organizations. In the current time, it's a major issue to identify the way in which knowledge stimulation among employees in the organization is processed (Gagné et al., 2019; Ouakouak & Ouedraogo, 2019). Several workers do not share their knowledge to stay competitive and hide it from themselves creating an unrecoverable loss to the organization, in this competitive work environment (Burmeister, Fasbender, Gerpott, & psychology, 2019; Fong, Men, Luo, & Jia, 2018; Yao, Luo, Fu, Zhang, & Wan, 2021). Hence there it is necessary to identify the variables that affect and cause the knowledge-hiding behaviors, so this activity of knowledge-hiding could be minimized.

Objectives of Study

Given are detailed research objectives of this research.

1. To discover the influence of workplace bullying on knowledge hiding.
2. To discover the association among workplace bullying and negative emotions.
3. To discover the association among negative emotions and knowledge hiding.
4. To discover how culture effect the association among workplace bullying and negative emotions?

Literature Review

Workplace bullying and Knowledge-hiding:

Workplace bullying could be described as conflict between individuals at workplace, like language, behaviors and phenomena of this kind. For instance, it is like unfair treatment; misconduct that workers experience at the workstation (Einarsen et al., 2011; Einarsen et al., 2009). Bullying at workplace is more dangerous for workers, like uncivilized behavior, abusive management, and workplace exclusion. In past research it has been established that workplace bullying leads to increased absenteeism, worsen or decrease job satisfaction, high turnover intentions, and less insecurity (Glambek et al., 2014; Magee et al., 2017; Nielsen and Einarsen, 2012). Employees get physically and mentally effected by workplace bullying (Nielsen and Einarsen, 2012; Tynes et al., 2013).

The behavior of employees to intentionally withhold and conceal the knowledge while they are requested to share knowledge from co-workers or colleagues is called as knowledge hiding behavior (Connelly et al., 2012). This kind of behaviors have negative effects on innovative work behaviors, team creativity and job performance of employees in an organization (Cerne et al., 2017; Fong et al., 2018; Zhang and Min, 2019). Due to negative effects caused by knowledge hiding behaviors, it is suggested by many researchers to mangers to stimulate the knowledge sharing culture between the workers of the firm, so organization could build competitive advantage, innovation and performance (Pian et al., 2019; Podrug et al., 2017)

According to Conservation of resource theory (COR), individuals having higher resources are less likely to face resource lose, whereas workers are able to gain resources. While workers with limited resources face consumption of resource, they normally fall into a loss block that will ultimately increase the consumption their personal capitals (Buchwald and Hobfoll, 2004; Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989). So therefor, individuals actively work to preserve their worthy resources, in an attempt to have a protection against the negative effect affected by consumption of their own capitals (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989; Jin et al., 2018). Personality traits of a person get depleted as he suffers workplace bullying. In conditions of much pressure, employees try much to preserve their further capitals those that was not used in compensation of that harm (Nielsen and Einarsen, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2009; Hobfoll, 2001; Tynes et al., 2013).

According to the COR theory it is suggested that individuals must invest resources to gain more resources (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989), but it is more difficult to acquire more resources effectively while employees face workplace bullying (Yao et al., 2020). This happened because a person have to use their mental capitals to evade the impact of undesirable actions in the firm, and some resources are used in the additional occasions at the workplace (Bear et al., 2015; Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 2001; Jin et al., 2018; Wheeler et al., 2010). Thus, in short, when an employee's gets a request from his co-worker for knowledge, in response he will remain silent and protect his resources by hiding his knowledge (Rai and Agarwal, 2018). Thus, according to the above discussion, following hypothesis has been generated:

H1: There is a positive relationship between workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behaviors.

Workplace bullying and Negative Emotions:

“Emotion is a general term, which refers to sentiment, moods, temperament and other psychological and physiological structures related to positive or negative feelings” Fiske and Taylor (1991). Mood and sentiments are emotional conditions and are temporary. Behavior, attitude and cognition of a person get effected by traits, as trait is linked with temperament (Ekkekakis, 2013). In the current study emotional condition will be focused because appearance of emotions get change according to the environment. Emotions get fueled by the environment of the organization that ultimately effect the behavior at workplace. Negative and positive emotions are based on the perception of emotional experience, objectives and activities by and individual at work. (Lindebaum and Jordan, 2012; Ou and Verhoef, 2017). Whereas this study will focus on the effect of workplace bullying on emotions and knowledge hiding behavior.

“Negative emotion as the necessary subjective experience of depression and unpleasant activation, including various disgusting emotional states such as anger, shame, hatred, guilt, fear and tension” Watson et al. (1988). Personal experience of an individual and the environment outside the organization create the negative or positive emotions. Emotions appraisal theory suggest that cognitive process, events, environment and psychological conditions have influence on the generation of emotions. A persona’s emotional response get effected by the mental processing and evaluation of an event (Roseman, 1990).

Workplace bullying are linked with emotions in a way to have relations with stress outcome, like emotions get triggered as consequence of negative and stressful events at workplace, (e.g., Lazarus, 1999). In previous research it was established that fear, shock and anxiety are emotional reactions caused by harassment or stressful event (Rospenda, Fujishiro, Shannon, & Richman, 2008). Likewise, it could be established that bullying result in depression and anxiety at workplace (Glasø & Notelaers, 2012; Leymann, 1996). In a recent study conducted in psychiatric clinic, it was found that regardless of position, age and gender, bullying cause depression, anxiety and anger (Tracy et al., 2006). With the increase in exposure to bullying, anxiety, fear and anger get increased (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). It was found in previous studies that individuals who observe bullying at work experience a decrease in their happiness as compared to those who do not experience bullying or those who experience less bullying. Based on the above information it could be established that bullying trigger negative emotions at workplace.

H2: Workplace bullying has a positive relationship with negative emotions.

Negative Emotions and Knowledge Hiding:

Knowledge hiding is called as a person’s intentional behaviors to withhold, retain and conceal the demanded knowledge or information by other workers (Connelly et al., 2012). Although, knowledge hiding and sharing both are different, knowledge hiding does not mean not having knowledge, rather person intentionally withhold the knowledge and information asked by other workers. Deficiency of sharing knowledge or knowledge hiding knowledge is caused by lack or deficiency of knowledge (Connelly et al., 2012). Sharing and hiding are caused by motivation (Connelly et al., 2012). This research will focus on knowledge hiding caused by workplace bullying in the times of negative emotion within an organization. Past studies were revealed that negative emotions cause the destructive conducts like deviant behaviors and counterproductive behaviors (Samnani et al., 2014). There exists an overlap among hiding knowledge and counterproductive behaviors (Connelly et al.

(2012) and Schreurs et al. (2020)). A limited little amount of research has been done on how negative emotions lead towards knowledge hiding behaviors. In past studies it was found that employees hide knowledge because individuals instantaneous thinking action system got affected by negative emotions that ultimately cause limit action, and freedom of thought process (Fredrickson, 2001), therefore workers hide knowledge from others deliberately.

This could be said as one aspect of negative emotions, while there exist other factors that affect negative emotions and outcomes like emotional regulations strategies hit that how negative emotions get generated, perceived and expressed in their personal feelings and emotions, by reducing, increasing and preserving emotional experience (Gross, 1998; Aldao et al., 2015). According to research conducted by social psychologist on emotion regulations depict that a number of phenomenon get effected by negative emotions. By use of emotional regulation behaviors and processes these negative effects of negative emotions could be controlled (Koole et al., 2015). Negative emotions s said to be a deviation (change) from ideal point, an emotional regulation action will be taken by individuals to control this negative event (Ma & Zhang , 2021) . Negative emotions play a role that individual should perform some action (Chuang et al., 2019), and he must utilize some means to balance the situation (Houle and Philippe, 2020). Deviation from ideal point are said as negative emotions, so individual has to take actions of emotional regulations to reduce the impact of this deviation.

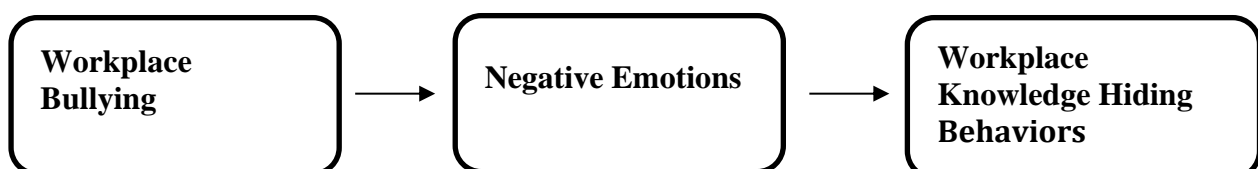
According to studies conducted by Usai et al. (2020), Innovation capital and entrepreneurial initiative are derived by happiness. Individuals plan to have a good development in career and will have a happy and successful career while they entre in the organization for the first time, that leads to control their behavior to leave the organization or control turnover and absenteeism (Boehm and Lyubomirsky, 2008). While, negative events are caused by negative emotions like irritability, depression, shame, sadness and fear, that in not according to the alignment of individuals ideal life directions and plans.

According to the theory of emotional regulations emotional neutrality is established and maintained by individuals, individuals work n their emotion to establish a positive emotional state via specific emotions reactions (Karwowska and Kobylinska, 2014). In recent study it was established that overqualified persons tried much to maintain positive emotions by taking different actions that leads to change their negative emotions and maintain a positive emotional state. When negative emotions are in lower state, they have ability to control the negative emotions (Ms & Zang, 2021). An employee get positive evaluation of performance by sharing his knowledge with workers of the organization, and can highlight his personal knowledge within the firm and obtain value and respect. An individual salary get increased by sharing knowledge, his team network get stronger. Knowledge sharing creates teams and enhance the relationship of team members. Knowledge sharing leads to increase the chances of promotion, salary and career development in the firm (Bergeron et al., 2013). Hence it is beneficial and effective to share knowledge with the workers and tackle with negative emotions strategically in the times of over qualification.

H3: There is positive relationship between workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behaviors.

H4: Negative emotions mediate the relationship between workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behavior.

Theoretical Framework



Methodology

Research Design

Type of Study

In this study the impact of workplace bullying on hiding knowledge behavior with mediating effect of negative emotions has been explored, on the basis self-reported questionnaires. Data was obtained and recorded in real working conditions. For data analysis mode, mean, standard deviation and median has been used.

Study Setting

Participants (Software developers) filled the responses in the real working conditions.

Time Horizon

Nature of the data was cross sectional. During the tenure of research, throughout the year data was collected.

Research Interference.

Interference is minimal in is study because it is based on field data. Nature of data is cross sectional. Self-administered questionnaires were used in the study because in previous researches this method was used to collect data. Moreover, this method decrease bias and is less costly.

Unit of Analysis

Workers of software companies from Rawalpindi and Islamabad are unit of analysis in the current study

Population and sampling

Population

The workers working in the IT sector of Rawalpindi of Pakistan was population of the research. Maximum no of software engineers were connected to obtain thee data.

Sampling techniques

Due to limited time convenient sampling was used in this study. Employees of IT sector (Software Engineers) filled the data and collection of data was convenient from this sector.

Sampling

Questionnaires were distributed based on convenient sampling to the employees of IT sectors firms in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. According to (DE Vos, et al., 2015) sample size should be appropriate enough to to study the features of the variables. Sample size confirm the rationalization and rationalization of end result. Hence according to (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 2001; Teddlie. 2007) in a study a true picture depends on the sample size. Statistics and rule of thumb are best ways to calculate the sample size. It takes a lot of time and cost to calculate a precise sample size. Sample size of 200 software developers working in IT firms from Rawalpindi and Islamabad was applied in the study. 200 questionnaires were distributed. Only 152 questionnaires were returned from sample size 200 questionnaires. Response rate was 76%.

Scales and Measures

Variables of the research were measured on the Likert scale of 5 points, that includes 5 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree. Negative emotions were measured from scale ranging from “not at all” (1) to “very much” (5). Whereas negative emotions was measured likert scale that includes: “1 = slightly or not at all, 2 = a little bit, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely”.

Workplace Bullying

A 22 items scale developed by (NAQ-R, Einarsen et al., 2009) was used to measure workplace bullying (work related bullying, physical bullying, and personal related bullying). Nine items that are related workplace bullying are used to measure workplace bullying. Employees indicated their experience of bullying in the recent six months. Sample items comprised of “excessive monitoring of my work” and “being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with my work”.

Negative Emotions

Negative emotion was measured by A 10 item questionnaire established by Watson et al (1988) was used to measure the negative emotions experienced by workers at workplace. Employees recorded their experience of feeling as tense, depressed, gloomy etc at work during recent two months, from “not at all = 1 to very much = 5”.

Knowledge Hiding

The measure for knowledge hiding behavior is a 12-item scale developed by Connelly et al. (2012), which captures the playing dumb, evasive hiding and rationalized hiding. The representative item is “I said that I did not know, even though I did” (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) or KHS will be measured by a 5-item scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Knowledge hiding behavior was measured using a 12 item scale developed by Connelly et al (2012), includes evasive hiding, dumb play, rational hiding. Sample items are ““I said that I did not know, even though I did” “(1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)”.

Control Variables

To identify the control variables of the study one way ANOVA was performed.

Data analysis procedure

Reliability of Workplace bullying Scale:

A 22 items scale developed by ((NAQ-R, Einarsen et al., 2009) has been use to study the workplace bullying. Analysis showed a reliability of 0.934.

Reliability of Negative Emotions Scale:

Negative emotions has been measured by a 20 items scale on emotions established by (Watson et al. (1988). Analysis depict the of 0.87.

Reliability of knowledge hiding behavior scale:

A 12 items scale established by Connelly et al. (2012) was used to measure the KHB. Analysis depict the reliability of 0.86.

Data Analysis Tool

“Statistical Program for the Social Sciences” version 20.1 is used was used to analyze the data. For analysis Preacher and Hayes has been used.

Results and Discussions

Results and Analysis

Descriptive:

Table 4.1 shows the descriptive statistics (Average, Median and Standard Deviation). 152 software engineers working in IT industry filled the data sheets to record their responses. There were 44% males, 52% females, and 6% did not disclosed their gender within sample of 152 workers. Software engineers working in IT companies of Rawalpindi was target population of the study.

Table 4.1: Gender

Variables	Variable Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Male	67	44	44.0	44
Female	69	52.	52.0	100
Missing	6	3.9	3.9	
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2: Employment Nature

Variables	No of Frequency	%age	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Contractual	64	63.5	63.5	63.5
Permanent	85	49.0	49.0	100
Missing	6	3.9	3.9	
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Result revealed that from total 152 respondents 63.5% are contractual employees. While 49.5% were permanent employees, and 3.9% did not disclosed their nature of employment status working in the software houses (IT sector).

Table 4.3: Respondents Experience

Variables	No of Frequency	%age	Valid %age	Cumulative percent
1	123	80.9	80.9	80.9
2	20	13.2	13.2	13.2
3	1	0.7	0.7	100
missing	7	5.3	5.3	
Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Results of the study also revealed that there were 80.9% workers have 1 to 5 years of experience, 13.2% workers have 5 to 10 years of experience employees of population. While only 0.7% workers have 10 years of experience, and 5.3% employees preferred not to say. Five-point Likert scale has been used to collect the responses of workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behavior where “1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree”. Actual meaning of workers responses were indicated by Mean value. Here mean value of Workplace bullying is 3.14 and standard deviation is .730. Workplace bullying shows 3.14 mean value that shows the neutral response of workers, while standard deviation is 73%. Knowledge hiding behavior shows a mean value of 3.12 and standard deviation of .653. This shows that knowledge hiding behavior deviated 65% from mean, and is closer to neutral. Responses of negative emotions were collected on five point scale, “where 1 = slightly or not at all, 2 = a little bit, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, and 5 = extremely”. Mean value of negative emotions responses was 3.14 that is closer to moderately observed behavior. Whereas standard deviation was 0.78, that indicated that responses deviate 78% from average.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Analysis of the study

Variables of the study	Minimum	Maximum	Average/ Mean	Standard Deviation
Workplace bullying	1.46	4.57	3.14	.730
Negative emotions	1.00	4.60	3.14	.783
Knowledge hiding Behavior	1.00	5.00	3.12	.653

ANOVA

To identify the control variables of the study One-way ANOVA test was performed. Results from one way ANOVA showed that there are no control variables in the study. For Nature of employment nature (F = .252, p = .612 means non-significant), Gender (F = 1.68, p = .197, or insignificant), for Employee Designation (F = .921, P = .41 (non-significant)).

Table 4.5: ONE-WAY ANOVA

Demographics of study	F value	p value
Emp. Gender	1.69	.196
Emp. Designation	.921	.41
Employment Nature	.252	.672

Correlation Analysis

Correlation and regression analysis has been performed for empirical analysis of the data. In this analysis indirect and direct connections has been observed. There was no control variable has been observed in the study. Model fitness was also analyzed.

Correlation indicates the relationship or connection between the variables of the study. The way two or more study variables are connected in the study has been observed. Correlation is shown in the table given below: Table 4.3.

The Pearson-product correlation was used to analyze the correlation between study variables. Correlation results indicate that there is a positive and significant correlation between workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behavior where (r = .587**, p < .000) that provide preliminary support for the given hypothesis 1.

A positive correlation between workplace bullying and negative emotions has been observed (r = .951**, p < 0.000), that deliver preliminary support for the given hypothesis.

Results of correlation provide a significant positive connection among negative emotions and

knowledge hiding behavior ($r = .520^{**}$, $p = < .000$) that deliver preliminary backing for hypothesis.

Table 4.6: Analysis of Correlation

Variables of study	Avg./ Mean	SD	I	II	III
Workplace Bullying	3.14	.730	1		
Negative Emotions	3.14	.738	.574 ^{**}	1	
Knowledge hiding behavior	3.12	.653	.587 ^{**}	.520 ^{**}	1

N = 152, *significant correlation level 0.01

$p > .05$ insign., $p < .05$ signi. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Regression

Analysis of regression is performed to examine the hypothesis of the study. Process Macro developed by Andrew F. Hayes (version 3.3, 2019) has been used to examine the regression of the study. Hypothesis no 1 indicates a positive association between workplace bullying and knowledge- hiding behavior. Regression analysis result shows positive association among workplace bullying and Knowledge hiding behavior; where $\beta = 0.587$ & $p = .000$ ($p = < .05$, signi.). For LLCI = .1495 0.4908 and ULCI = 1.2439. Consequently hypothesis 1 was supported from results.

Hypothesis 2 assumes a positive association among workplace bullying and negative emotions. Regression analysis indicates $\beta = .951$, & $p = .000$ ($p = < 0.05$, significant). Value of LLCI = .9669 and ULCI = 1.0734. Hence hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 3 indicates a positive connection among negative emotions and knowledge hiding behavior. Regression analysis indicate $\beta = 0.520$ and $p = .000$ ($p = < 0.05$, signi.). Therefore hypothesis got accepted.

Mediation Analysis:

Baron and Kenny (1986) reports that three conditions should be met for a perfect mediation:

1. There should be a relationship between independent and dependent variable.
2. There should be a relationship between independent variable and mediator.
3. There should be a relationship between mediating variable and dependent variable.

In absence of any of the above condition mediation could not be tested. So according to Preacher and Hayse method if there is no association among independent, moderator and mediating variable, then too mediation can be possible. In current research Preacher and Hayse method is opted. Hypothesis 4 depicts that negative emotions mediates the connection between workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behavior. Regression analysis performed by process macro (3.3) report, $\beta = .599$ and $p = 0.000$ (significant). The LLCI = .4908 and ULCI = 1.2439. While indirect effect shows $\beta = .2964$. The LLCI = .8020 and ULCI = .0899. “A confidence interval that do not contain any of the zero indicates a significant indirect effect between variables, so it will be a mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2008)”. Hence there is a partial mediation. So hypothesis has been supported. Simple mediation analysis process macros by Hayes was used for simple mediation analysis, the indirect effect of workplace bullying on knowledge hiding behavior via negative emotions was measured (Preacher & Hayes,

2008). Ordinary least square has been used for path estimation in process macros by Hayes. The effect of workplace bullying on knowledge hiding behavior was mediated by negative emotions (SE: 0.22, 95% CI: 0.8020-0.0.899). A CI that has not shown a zero number contains significant mediation (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). The presence of non-zero CI (confidence interval) reveals that there is a mediating influence of negative emotions on workplace bullying & knowledge sharing behavior.

Table: 4.7 Regression

Variables	B	P	R ²	LLCI	ULCI
WPB NE	.951	0.000	.353	.9669	1.0734
	.520	0.000			
NE KHB					
WPB KHB	.599	0.000	.359	.4908	1.2439
Direct Effect	.599	0.000		.4908	1.2439
Indirect Effect				.8020	.0899
VPB NE KHB					

“LLCI = lower limit confidence interval

ULCI = Upper limit confidence interval

Bootstrap size 5000”

Results Summary:

No.	Statements	Outcome Results /
H1	“There is a positive relationship between workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behavior.	Supported
H2	There is a positive relationship between workplace bullying and negative emotions.	Supported
H3	There is a positive relationship between negative emotions and knowledge hiding behavior.	Supported
H4	Negative emotions mediate the relationship between workplace bullying and negative emotions.	Supported

Discussion

In the previous studies workplace bullying has been studied in relation with family incivility (SAjid bahsir., 2019), Workplace engagement (JF hamel., 2023), psychological distress, and organization performance and employee creativity (E Anasori., 2023), silence (A Krishna., 2023), turnover intention (EH Al Muharraq, 2022), occupational burnout and turnover (STS Hsiao, 2022). Bullying is negative behavior that “Workplace bullying refers to interpersonal conflicts in the workplace, including behaviors, language and phenomena. In detail, it means the isolation, accusation and unfair treatment experienced by employees in the workplace (Einarsen et al., 2011; Einarsen et al., 2009).”

Hypothesis 1 indicate there to be a positive association among workplace bullying and

knowledge hiding behavior. The hypothesis was supported in line with the previous studies. Workplace bullying leads to enhance the negative behaviors among works as they feel being humiliated, or misconduct that cause to generate the negative behaviors among workers like high absenteeism, poor mental health (A Lene., 2023), turnover intention (GL Baek., 2023), harassment (C Osterman., 2023), psychological contract breach and knowledge hiding (MW Bari., 2022). Due to the bullying like unfair treatment from worker or boss, miss treatment etc. employees get involved in negative behaviors and find it as their best revenge.

Hypothesis 2 assume there to be a positive association between workplace bullying and negative emotions get supported in accordance with the previous studies. "Negative emotion as the necessary subjective experience of depression and unpleasant activation, including various disgusting emotional states such as anger, shame, hatred, guilt, fear and tension Watson, 1988". Workplace bullying enhance the emotional exhaustion among employees (T Islam., 2022, Sajid Bashir 2019, C Balducci., 2021). When a person feel misconduct, a negative treatment being bullied, his emotions get disturbed and turned into the negative state that eventually leads to negative outcomes.

Hypothesis 3 assume there to be a positive association among negative emotions & knowledge hiding behavior. This hypothesis has been proved successful. In recent researches it was established that there is a positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and family incivility (P Choudhary, 2022). For instance when an employee emotional feel disturbed his negative behavior and activities get increases like hiding knowledge, job burnout, leaving the organization as practice to take revenge or relief. In hypothesis 4 it was assumed negative emotions mediates the association amongst workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behaviors. It was also proved to be true in statistical analysis performed in current study. In the previous studies emotional exhaustion mediate the connection between workplace bullying and family incivility (Yao et al., 2021; T Islam 2022). When a person face bullying his emotional state get triggered negatively and leads to hide knowledge (MM Bari., 2022; T Islam., 2022), Burnout (K Amini., 2022), Turnover (EH AI Muharraq, 2022), occupational burnout and turnover (STS Hsiao, 2022). That leads to decrease the performance and productivity of workers and organization.

Conclusion and Recommendations

An earlier study conducted by Sajid Bashir (2019) association among workplace bullying and workplace incivility was mediated via implementation of emotional exhaustion. While in another study conducted by Yao et al (2021) it was indicated that emotional exhaustion mediates the connection among workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behaviors. Workplace bullying leads to knowledge hiding behaviors (Zhao et al. 2016). According to Mai and Zang (2021) overqualified workers are involved in knowledge hiding behaviors. Workplace bullying leads to turnover intention, workplace exclusion.

This research study explored the association among workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behavior. It was further analyzed that negative emotion mediate the connection among workplace bullying and knowledge hiding behavior in IT sector (software development) within twin cities of Pakitsan.

It is being established on the basis of earlier studies that negative activities like bullying hurting others evoke the negative emotions and feelings in the workers that ultimately provoke the negative behavior like hiding knowledge, turnover, counter productive work behaviors etc.

Limitations

It was much tried to make the research errorless, while there are some limitations of research given as under:

- Research data has not been collected from all the IT companies of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.
- Results of this study was consistent with previous studies since it is purely a new research.
- Small size has been used.

Recommendations for Future

For researchers:

- Limitations of the study must be retained in consideration for future research.
- Model should be tested on longitudinal basis in other sectors.
- Same study should be done in other sectors like nursing, banking etc.
- Culture should be used as moderator.
- Fairness and trust can be opted as mediator.
- To enhance the generalizability of the study sample size should be increased.

For policy makers

- Policies, strategies and plans must be developed to reduce bullying at work to enhance the productivity of the workers and organization's profitability.
- Strategies and plans should be made on how to reduce knowledge hiding behavior.

For managers

- Results of the study depicts that managers should provide training and development programs to control the bullying behavior, to increase the knowledge sharing and decrease the conduct of knowledge hiding.
- Lectures and seminars must be conducted on importance of emotions, feeling and knowledge management.

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