Exploring the Impact of Workplace Ostracism on Anxiety and Emotional Exhaustion: A Sequential Mediation Model of Acquiescent Silence and Procrastination with Moderation of Self-Esteem

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved family specially, parents for their constant support, my friends and mentors for their invaluable guidance, and all who have influenced the development of this thesis, I express my profound gratitude for your contributions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

WO	Workplace Ostracism
LSEs	Low Self Esteem
GAD	Generalized Anxiety Disorder
MAD	Major Depressive Disorder
A	Anxiety
E.E	Emotional Exhaustion
A.S	Acquiescent Silence
SMC	Squared multiple correlations
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
AVE	Average variance extracted
SEM	Structural equation modeling
MLE	Maximum Likelihood
GFI	goodness of fit index
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
AGFI	Adjusted goodness-of-fit index
CR	Critical ratio
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
HTMT	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio
SPSS	Software Packages for Social Sciences
TLI	Tucker Lewis Index
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
AGFI	Adjusted goodness of Fit Index
NFI	Normal Fit Index

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of workplace ostracism on anxiety and emotional exhaustion through the sequential mediating role of acquiescent silence and procrastination. Low self-esteem acts a moderator for the study. Data was garnered from 580 employees working in hospitality industry. Convenient sampling technique used to collect the data. Belongingness theory used as a overarching theory to support the proposed model.This study contributes in several managerial and practical implications which encourage adopting strategies to eliminate workplace ostracism such as to strengthen the collaborative work environment, welcoming behaviours from managers, to appreciate the employees ideas and opinions. The findings suggest that workplace ostracism has direct and positive impact on anxiety and emotional exhaustion as well through sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination.and low self-esteem moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence in such a way that high the low self-esteem, stronger the relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence.

Keywords: *Workplace ostracism, acquiescent silence, procrastination, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, low self-esteem.*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Workplace ostracism (WO) is a severe and ubiquitous concern for today's organizations as it is regarded as a pervasive workplace phenomenon (Hsieh & Karatepe, 2019; Liu et al., 2013). This phenomenon holds substantial repercussions, as it consistently engenders negative effects on employee behavior, often leading individuals to participate in activities that are ultimately harmful to their own well-being (Haldorai et al., 2020). Described by Ferris et al. (2008) similarly, the perception of being disregarded or excluded by peers, WO is also synonymous with social exclusion, peer exclusion and social isolation, all of which have its roots in the early studies on social rejection (O'Reilly et al., 2015).

Past research indicates that during a five-year span, 66% of respondents dealt with WO in the form of the silent treatment, while 28.7% reported coworkers deliberately leaving the workplace prior to their arrival (Fox & Stallworth, 2005). WO significantly contributes to workplace stress, exerting its impact on behavioral, psychological and attitudinal outcomes among targets (Zimmerman et al., 2016; O'Reilly et al., 2015). As highlighted by Hsieh and Karatepe (2019), WO is linked to various outcomes, including work dissatisfaction, diminished firm loyalty, Impaired work efficiency, increased instances of unproductive workplace actions, and a higher likelihood of intending to leave an organization.

Despite garnering considerable scholarly attention recently, the antecedents of this phenomenon have received scant exploration (Liu et al., 2019). Thus, there is an imperative to discern the variables that influence WO and elucidate the mechanisms through which these constructs exert their affect on the occurrence of workplace ostracism (Zhang & Dai, 2015).

According to Pekrun (2006), emotions are intricate occurrences characterized by a network of intertwined psychological aspects, spanning across the domains of emotion, cognition, motivation, peripheral physiology, and expression. When people confront anxiety, it frequently results in a constellation of interconnected elements, such as heightened sensations of tension and discomfort (in terms of affect), ongoing apprehension (in the realm of cognition), a motivation to evade specific situations or stimuli, increased physiological activation (at the periphery), and the overt display of anxious facial expressions (Pekrun, 2006). According to Jahanzeb and Fatima (2018), WO prevents workers from developing strong connections inside an organization, which causes ostracized workers to frequently experience elevated anxiety and dysfunctional behavior. Ostracism at work has also been shown to have negative consequences on both individuals and organizations. Leung et al. (2011) claimed that WO adversely affects the quality of the services provided.

According to Williams (1997) and (2001), ostracism is a social stressor. Ostracism is a type of resource scarcity in context of professional assistance from others. According to research (Lee and Ashforth, 1996) claim that, when people believe they lack the resources to handle the daily tasks they must complete, they get emotionally exhausted. This is necessary for both maintaining their mental and physical well-being. As highlighted by Maslach et al. (2001), emotional exhaustion signifies a state of emotional drained arising from one's professional responsibilities, leading to both physical fatigue and psychological strain. This phenomenon is accompanied by various repercussions, encompassing elevated absenteeism, a pessimistic organizational outlook, and a detrimental perspective on one's occupation. Furthermore, emotional exhaustion triggers detrimental emotional states characterized by anxiety, diminished self-esteem, and a notion of helplessness (Cropanzano et al.,

2003 ; Ogungbamila et al., 2014). A person's emotional connection to others goes away when they are rejected as employees. To improve their emotional capabilities and to share their emotional experiences with others, humans require social connection (Heaphy & Dutton, 2008). This is necessary for both maintaining their mental and physical well-being.

There is no doubt that individuals working in the hospitality industry must be capable of managing a variety of emotions. Researchers have carried out a plenty of research on how to manage with emotions for the best outcomes because emotions are crucial factors influencing how effective people are in leading their own lives and professions (Mikolajczak et al., 2009). In order to study workplace ostracism through field observation, we collected employees working in Pakistan service sector organization . This was done with the understanding that employees in this sector frequently interact with a variety of stakeholders. According to Zhu et al. (2017), WO is common in the hospitality industry and may effect the performance in hotel employees. There hasn't been much research done on how WO affects the hospitality sector (Hsieh & Karatepe, 2019). Due to its high-stress employment features, the hospitality business is renowned for emotional labour. Because working "anti-social" hours and shifts is necessary in the hospitality sector, it might be difficult to maintain strong interpersonal interactions among staff (Haldorai et al., 2019).

According to Williams (1997) and (2001), WO is a social stressor that can potentially give rise to psychological issues. According to research (Zeng & Peng, 2017 ; Cropanzano and Grandey, 1999), there is a strong correlation between the pain people face at work and life's challenges, employee turnover intentions, and poor physical health outcomes. Consequently, it becomes crucial to thoroughly scrutinize the connection between WO and psychological distress. However, a multitude of

investigations have consistently uncovered robust correlations between burnout and an array of psychological maladaptive behaviour, with a particular emphasis on depression, anxiety, and stress (Calvete & Villa, 2000; Schonfeld & Bianchi, 2016 ; Bianchi & Schonfeld, 2016; Matud, Garca, & Matud, 2002; Greenglass & Burke, 2003). For instance, Matud et al. (2002) underscored the interrelation between various job-related pressures and manifestations such as physical symptoms, depression, anxiety, and insomnia-like experiences. Similarly, a noteworthy connection has been established by Calvete and Villa (2000) between signs of anxiety, somatization, depression, cognitive impairments, and interpersonal sensitivity and emotional exhaustion.

This study is focusing on acquiescent silence and procrastination as explanatory mechanism. Acquiescent silent people withhold work-related difficulties because they lack the self-confidence to change effect and are disinterested in organizational problems by Van Dyne et al., (2003). Acquiescent silence employees are hesitant to alter their surroundings (Pinder & Harlos, 2001).When management forbids people from speaking up during meetings on matters related to the organization or when superiors do not address the information offered by employees, employees believe that speaking up is pointless and does not result in change. When employees refuse to conform by social standards and participate in deviant or counterproductive behaviours (such as silence) it means their social connections inside the organization have been destroyed. Procrastination is defined as the deliberate postponement of a desired action in the face of painful or unfavorable outcomes (Steel, 2007). In the meantime, procrastination may increase among those who avoid tasks by remaining silent out of fear of speaking (Fatimah et al., 2011, Freund & Krause, 2016; Haghbin et al., 2012,). We investigate the influence of WO

on anxiety and emotional exhaustion through the sequential mediation mechanism of acquiescent silence and procrastination.

Moreover , our theoretical justifications are in line with the belongingness theory. People's desire to have strong connection with others and a sense of belonging is considered one of the vital elements in personal motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). A vast spectrum of human motives, emotions, behaviour, and mental processes are defined by the desire for belongingness. When a person's need to belong is satisfied, they feel happy; conversely, when that need isn't satisfied, they feel bad a variety of detrimental behavioral, psychological, and societal consequences including loss of sense of belonging, mental illness. Those who have a strong sense belonging are more attentive and receptive to other people's needs. People behave differently when they feel a connection to someone (Green et al., 2017). When employees feel like they belong at work, their performance goes above and beyond what is expected of them. Encouragement of a sense of belonging at work can lead to employees acting in ways that align with the goals of the company (Robinson & O'Reilly, 2009). Strong social links, according to (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), increase the likelihood of good outcomes, such as increased psychological and physical health.

1.2 Problem Statement

Workplace Ostracism encompass physical discomfort, aggressive conduct, intense anger, and feelings of sadness, as demonstrated by the research of Stroud et al. (2000), Leary & MacDonaldy (2005), and Williams & Smiths (2004). In hospitality industry, this study addresses the critical issue of workplace ostracism, where employees experience anxiety and emotional exhaustion. The research comprehensively examine the impact of WO on two vital dimensions of employee well-being: anxiety and emotional exhaustion because these were the problems in

hospitality industry that need to be addressed.This investigation further delves into the unexplored territory of how acquiescent silence and procrastination play sequential mediating roles in the association between WO and negative outcomes of employee well being like anxiety and emotional exhaustion in the hospitality industry.

Moreover, this study takes into consideration the potential moderating effect of low self-esteem, in shaping the dynamics between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence within the hospitality sector.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The primary goal of this study is to investigate whether workplace ostracism contributes to the development of anxiety and emotional exhaustion among individuals. Additionally, this study seeks to explore the sequential mediation roles played by acquiescent silence and procrastination in this relationship. Furthermore, it delves into the moderating impact of low self-esteem in the association between WO and acquiescent silence.

This study represents a pioneering effort in shedding light on the influence of WO specifically within the context of the hospitality sector in Pakistan. Our research underscores the pivotal role played by low self-esteem, demonstrating how it fortifies the association between WO and acquiescent silence. Consequently, this heightened association between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence leads to procrastination, ultimately culminating in heightened levels of anxiety and emotional exhaustion within the hospitality industry.

Since there are numerous new business prospects in the hospitality sectors in Pakistan burgeoning and growing economy, the study's contribution is contextually pertinent. The primary motivation for this study stemmed from the increasing worry that workplace ostracism is placing substantial stress on employees within the

hospitality industry. This stress is compelling them to either navigate the situation through emotional resilience or consider leaving their respective organizations.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study is crucial for a few reasons. In the first place, it sheds light on how workplace ostracism affects the hospitality industry. It also emphasizes the importance of workplace behaviors and behavioral objectives for employees. It aims to investigate the fundamental process linking workplace ostracism to employee anxiety and emotional exhaustion.

This study is poised to make valuable contributions in several key areas. First and foremost, it will offer valuable perspectives into the influence of WO on the development of anxiety and emotional exhaustion among individuals. Secondly, it will meticulously investigate the mechanisms, particularly the sequential mediating roles played by acquiescent silence and procrastination in the pathway between WO and adverse outcomes, such as anxiety and emotional exhaustion.

Furthermore, this research will make a noteworthy contribution by shedding light on the moderating role of low self-esteem in the correlation between WO and acquiescent silence. The theoretical framework underpinning this study draws from belongingness theory (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), which will be instrumental in elucidating how workplace ostracism detrimentally impacts employee mental health, ultimately leading to increased anxiety and emotional exhaustion. This adverse process is believed to be perpetuated by non-conforming behaviors, specifically acquiescent silence and procrastination.

Lastly, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding role of low self-esteem as a buffering mechanism, exerting its influence within the complex dynamics of WO and its association with acquiescent silence.

1.5 Research Gap

Workplace Ostracism undermines people's capacity for self-regulation and basic human needs (Baumeister et al., 2005) and it leads in individuals to participate in various counterproductive actions (Thau et al., 2007). These findings suggest that ostracism consistently has a detrimental impact on people's feelings and actions in daily life. In a similar line, It is plausible to infer that WO have adverse effect on employees' attitudes and conduct at work. There is an extensive amount of literature that has examined psychological health and behavior as possible outcome of workplace ostracism (Ferris et al., 2015).Our study contributes that WO is likely to stifle the victims' need for control, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and a meaningful life are among the many basic human needs. Speaking up carries too great a risk, especially in ostracized work environments (Jahanzeb et al., 2020); people who do so risk losing important job responsibilities or maybe losing their employment. Employees who feel ostracized do not take the risk of speaking up and thus show procrastination in their work. The impact of these two mediators together have not discussed previously. So there was a need to determine the role of WO on anxiety and emotional exhaustion though the sequentially mediating mechanism of acquiescent silence and procrastination. Our study fulfills the gap of discussing the impact of sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination on anxiety and emotional exhaustion for the employees who feels workplace ostracism.

People who have low self-esteem (LSEs) are especially sensitive to rejection cues (Dandeneau, Baldwin, Baccus, Sakellaropoulo & Pruessner, 2007) and may mistakenly believe that they have been rejected when this is not even the case (Murray, Bellavia et al., 2003). LSEs has been found with detrimental traits like anxiety and depression (Bajaj et al., 2016). According to Cannella et al. (2007), self-

esteem influences how people perceive, evaluate cognitively, and react to a variety of situations, including stress. But there was a need to explore the role of low self-esteem among the people who become acquiescent silent because of workplace ostracism.

Employees who suffer emotional exhaustion may get fatigue and depletion (Schaufeliet al., 1996). When employees feel emotionally exhaustion, they feel powerlessness and have less trust in the organization (Son, 2014). Our studies contribute how workplace ostracism makes the employee emotionally exhausted.

Being rejected psychologically hurts individuals so much that they may even begin to feel less human (Haslam & Bastian, 2010). Ostracism has been found to be associated with anxiety (Ferris et al., 2008; Niu et al., 2016; Ferris et al., 2016) Feelings of sorrow and emotional distress (Buckley et al., 2004); Reduced positive moods and increased depressive states (Choi 2019; Lustenberger & Jagacinski 2010;Wu et al., 2012); stress (Chung, 2018) . Being rejected psychologically hurts individuals so much that they may even begin to feel less human (Haslam & Bastian, 2010).Our research adds to the understanding of how WO induces anxiety in employees. So, this study contributes the gap of discussing the effect of sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination on anxiety and emotional exhaustion for the employees who feel ostracized at workplace.

In addition, belongingness theory describes how workplace ostracism causes anxiety and emotionally exhaustion among employees through sequentially mediating mechanism of acquiescent silence and procrastination. One of the most significant elements of personal motivation, according to people, is the need for social connections and a sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). When a person's need to belong is met, they experience sensations of happiness, however when that need isn't met, they may experience negative emotions. Numerous negative behavioral, psychological effects, such as mental illness and behavioral inclination, are explained by a loss of sense of belonging. This study justifies how belongingness theory contributes to our study.

1.6 Research Questions

These questions have been formulated based on the study objectives and identified gaps in the pertinent literature Following are the questions that arise:

1. What is the impact of workplace ostracism on anxiety?

2. What is the impact of workplace ostracism on emotional exhaustion?

3. Is the correlation between workplace ostracism and anxiety sequentially mediated by acquiescent silence and procrastination?

4. Is the correlation between workplace ostracism and emotional exhaustion sequentially mediated by acquiescent silence and procrastination?

5. Is the correlation between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence moderated by low self-esteem?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Procrastination

Ferrari (2010) highlights that while procrastination is a common behavior, it does not categorize everyone as a procrastinator. Many individuals frequently engage in the act of waiting, postponing, or deferring tasks, while some consistently participate in the process of delaying actions in their daily lives. The prevailing conceptualization of procrastination, as expounded by Sirois & Giguère (2018) and Sirois & Pychyl (2013), characterizes it as the "deliberate postponement of significant, necessary, and intended activities, despite an awareness of the adverse consequences that will result from this delay."

The exploration of procrastination has been undertaken through diverse approaches, encompassing personality, motivational, clinical, and situational viewpoints (Klingsieck, 2013). These investigations have revealed a multitude of individual and environmental factors contributing to its prevalence (Van Eerde, 2003). Importantly,these postponements have been linked to negative consequences, including impaired mental and physical health, reduced performance, and impaired financial stability (Steel, 2007).

Two Types of Procrastination have been discussed in literature i.e Situational Procrastination and Dispositional Procrastination. Situational procrastination has primarily been researched in academia, while it has also recently received attention in other spheres of life like work and health. According to Metin et al. (2016), Procrastination is the intentional postponement of work-related tasks by diverting one's focus to non-work-related activities, even when there is no intent to harm others. Research indicates that a substantial portion of college students, approximately 75%,

partake in situational procrastination within academic contexts (Ferrari et al., 2007 ; Day et al., 2000). While the act of occasionally deferring tasks due to prioritization is natural and acceptable, persistently and compulsively failing to initiate or complete assigned tasks characterize a counterproductive behavior referred to as (chronic) dispositional procrastination (Tibbett &Ferrari, 2017 ; Ferrari, 2010; Yuen & Burka, 1983).

Notably, a significant portion, up to 20%, of healthy adults in the US and various nations grapple with chronic procrastination, as indicated by several studies (Harriett & Ferrari, 1996 ; Diaz-Morales et al., 2006 ; Ferrari et al., 2009; Ferrari et al., 2005; Mariani & Ferrari, 2012). This widespread prevalence highlights the pervasive nature of this phenomenon across diverse populations.

For instance, (Ferrari et al. 2005) it was discovered that employees in corporate environments exhibited elevated levels of dispositional procrastination, which was exacerbated by performance due to performance anxiety and concerns about evaluation. According to additional research, persistent work procrastinators frequently miss deadlines, jeopardize the success of projects, and encourage their coworkers to procrastinate as well (Sutton & Harris, 1983 ; Van Eerde, 2003 ; Flett & Pychyl, 2012).

Various forms of procrastination exhibit a range of drawbacks. Situational procrastination has been associated with decreased academic attainment (Özer et al., 2009 ; Ferrari, 2010), as affirmed by a comprehensive meta-analysis by Kim & Seo (2015). On the other hand, dispositional procrastination has been linked to delays in pursuing health-related problems and behaviour (Pychyl et al., 2000). Procrastination are also connected to diminished overall well-being (VanEerde, 2013; Özer et al., 2009 Pychyl & Sirois, 2016) and an increased prevalence of depression symptoms

(Flett et al., 1995, 2016; Ferrari et al., 1995). These findings underscore the detrimental consequences associated with procrastination across multiple domains.

According to other studies, employee procrastination exhibited an adverse correlation with future time perspectives and a positive relationship with present-fatalistic time perspectives, as well to job stress (Gupta et al., 2012; Vere'sov'a, 2013). According to (Kühnel et al. 2016), from a self-regulation standpoint, employees procrastinated more at work the more they experienced "social sleep lag," or brief and inadequate sleep brought on by job demands.

Despite having short-term benefits, procrastination is frequently linked to postponed behavior that has unfavorable consequences in the long run. For instance, persons who procrastinate in their typically get worse scores and become sick more frequently than those who don't (Tice & Baumeister, 1997). This tendency might originate from procrastinators' propensity to underestimate how long things would take, which puts them under time pressure and raises their stress levels (Choi &Moran, 2009). Procrastinators, according to (Gupta et al. 2012), are aware of the possible effects of their behaviour but lack the self-control, discipline, persistence, diligence, systematic ethical work practices, and effective time management abilities required to avoid them. Tasks that are given become unorganized, and the use of cognitive and meta-cognitive methods decreases to the people who procrastinate (Howell & Watson, 2007). Additionally, the procrastinator's capacity to obtain vital data is hampered by the little time available, which lowers accuracy and consequent performance (Ferrari, 2001). Gupta et al. (2012) found that procrastinators frequently overlook crucial long-term tasks in favour of short-term goals. Performance is negatively impacted by the insufficient time allotted for jobs that call for thorough thought and planning (Tice & Ferrari, 2000 ; Van Eerde, 2003). Although not specifically researched, it is

conceivable that procrastination negatively impacts group dynamics through the exchange of emotions. For instance, members of a group who are viewed as "bad apples" might lead to unfavorable psychological states, defensive behaviors, and a decline in the efficacy of the group (Felps et al., 2006). In particular, this could lead to feelings of injustice, unfavourable emotions, a decrease in trust, and behaviour including emotional well-being maintenance, outbursts (Felps et al., 2006). Given that it is considered to be sub-optimal (Gupta et al., 2012) and is criticized (Tice & Ferrari, 2000), procrastination may enhance the negative effects on group members.

Additionally, procrastination in the workplace can be seen as a deviant behaviour because it results in outcomes that are counterproductive, defying organizational norms can undermine both individual and group performance (Gupta et al., 2012 ; Lee & Dunlop, 2004).

2.2 Workplace Ostracism

Social psychologists contend that people are motivated by a basic need to fit in and a tendency to establish and preserve a stable and positive social gathering affiliation (Baumeister et al., 2005). Therefore, the fear of being ignored by social groupings has become embedded in people on a deep level. This idea has generated curiosity about the ostracism phenomenon. The term "ostracism" in English originates from the Greek term "ostrakon," which refers to "a piece of pottery." In historical practice, these pieces of pottery were used as ballots to vote on whether someone should be expelled or excluded from society (Bellou, 2016). Recently, particularly from social scientists, ostracism has garnered scholarly attention (Williams, 2007).

A difficult and unpleasant experience for employees, workplace ostracism (WO) refers to the sense of being ostracized by coworkers in the workplace (Ferris et al., 2008). In the literature, many terminologies (such as ostracism, social rejection,

and social exclusion) are used to characterize social situations in which one person's urge to belong is threatened by another. Unfortunately, organizations only takes into account threats like bullying and workplace harassment, when drafting their ethical guidelines; they do not consider workplace ostracism as an offense. Being ostracized can negatively affect a person's attitude, behavior, performance, and well-being as well as their work satisfaction and social involvement (Bellou, 2016).

Workplace Ostracism has a harmful effect on fundamental human needs, people's capacity for self-regulation, and causes them to engage in a number of self-defeating behavior (Thau et al., 2007). These findings suggest that WO consistently has a detrimental impact on people's feelings and actions in daily life. In a similar line, it is reasonable to expect that workplace ostracism (WO) have an adverse impact on employees' attitudes and conduct at work. There is a significant amount of literature that has examined psychological health and behaviour as possible WO consequences (Ferris et al., 2015). The impact of WO on employees' sentiments and the mechanisms underlying these interactions are, however, poorly understood (Zhu & Lyu, 2017). Moreover, although studies have predominantly concentrated on the outcomes of WO, limited information is available regarding the elements that could enhance or diminish the connection between workplace ostracism and positive work results. (Zeng & Peng &, 2017). As a result, scientists have urged more research into WO (Wu et al., 2019 ; Zhu &Lyu, 2017).

Employees may become dissatisfied with their work environment and even consider leaving the company if they feel that their immediate work environment is impeding their ability to perform their job duties and advance their careers (Chen et al., 2011; Zimmerman & Darnold, 2009). The feeling of exclusion or ostracism that organization members may experience is a problematic trait that many workplaces

share (Williams, 2001). Employee ostracism prevents them from engaging in interacting socially with other organization members (Parker, 1998 ; Ferris et al., 2008), it may be even more detrimental to an employee's well-being than verbal abuse or overt rage and bullying. This is because it erodes the fundamental urge for belonging and finding meaning (Zadro et al., 2004, 2005; Williams, 2001). Workplace ostracism exhibits some degree of overlap with other counterproductive workplace behaviors but it is conceptually separate and has the potential to explain more variation in employee job results, therefore it merits further study (Liu et al., 2013).

According to research on the mental and physical effects of WO, they also include physical discomfort, aggressive behaviour, rage, and sadness (Stroud et al., 2000 ; Leary & MacDonaldy, 2005 ; Williams & Smiths, 2004). Other research that examined how workplace ostracism affected employee behaviour found that it reduced pro-social behaviour and increased hostility, even towards coworkers who were not directly involved in the ostracism (Twenge et al., 2007).

O'Reilly et al. (2015) claimed that, WO regularly happens in social settings. Ostracism at work comprises actions like concealing information, avoiding, or limiting visual contact with an employee (Williams, 2001; Leung et al., 2011). (O'Reilly et al. 2015), (Robinson et al. 2013) and (Zhu et al. 2017)) noted that despite workplace ostracism's similarities to other workplace behaviour including harassment, rudeness, and interpersonal deviance, it also has certain distinctive traits of its own. For instance, workplace ostracism is a quieter passive, and indirect kind of rage compared to bullying, which is blatant and obvious. It is non interactive in nature and manifests as a lack of greeting back or leaving the target out of conversations (Hitlan et al., 2006). WO can harm a person's physical and psychological well-being, but it can also happen accidentally (Robinson et al., 2013). It damages the victim's

"fundamental human needs for belonging, self-esteem, and control, as well as pursuing a meaningful life" (Ferris et al., 2017), primarily due to its non-collaborative and isolating characteristics.

Since being ignored neither acknowledges a person's presence nor gives them any power over the situation, most people would rather have an argument than be ignored (Ferris et al., 2017; Williams, 2001).According to literature, victims of persistent ostracism prefer verbal or physical maltreatment rather than being ostracized because such behaviour at least makes the aggressors feel like they are paying attention to them (Ferris et al., 2008; Williams, 2001). These results make the conclusion made by employees It is hardly surprising that workplace ostracism can be more damaging than any other form of abuse. (O'Reilly et al., 2014)

WO can lead to extreme consequences, such as suicidal ideation (Poon, Chen, Jiang, & DeWall, 2020). It is alarmingly a very prevalent problem in organization, with most employees having encountered it (Berry, Lian Ferris, and Brown, 2008). For instance, 71% of participants in a survey of more than 1300 employees acknowledged who were ostracized at work (Berdahl, Robinson, O'Reilly, & Banki, 2014).

Workplace ostracism has severe repercussions for both employees and organization as a whole. Employees who experience ostracism at work face detrimental effects on their self-esteem and overall health (Tams, Schippers, Scott, & Lee, 2015 ; Ferris et al., 2008). Furthermore, workplace ostracism fosters behaviors that are likely to result in significant organizational costs, including high staff turnover (Allen, Renn, & Huning, 2013), unethical conduct (Wareham & Kouchaki, 2015), sabotage behaviors (Hafeez, , Chughtai, Abdullah, Sarwar & Hafeez, 2020). These outcomes underscore

the need for organizations to address and mitigate the impact of workplace ostracism to maintain a healthy and productive work environment.

2.3 Low Self-Esteem

Rosenberg (1965) stated that self-esteem is a person's comprehensive perception of their self-worth or personal value.. It has been linked to several beneficial psychological consequences, including pro-social behaviour, pleasurable feelings, and psychological growth (Leary & MacDonald, 2003). According to (Cannella et al. 2007), self-esteem affects how individuals interpret, assess cognitively, and respond to a range of circumstances, including stress. Person's with high level self-esteem often experience greater happiness and are more inclined to cultivate fulfilling relationship with others (Leary et al., 1995). Conversely, low self-esteem is a potent predictor of emotional and behavioral difficulties (Leary et al., 1995) and has been associated with a range of issues in individuals (Barry et al., 2007), involving the emergence of antisocial behavior (ASB; Trzesniewski et al., 2006).

When someone has low self-esteem, they typically have a negative perception of themselves that is pervasive, long-lasting and persistent (Fennell, 1997). LSE can play a major role in a variety of mental health issues when outdated, unhelpful opinions about oneself are trusted. According to (Fennell 2006), adverse life experiences, especially those that occur in early life, contribute to the establishment of the "Bottom Line," a pervasive negative perception that reflects one's feeling of worth. This Bottom Line can be activated by particular life experiences or circumstances, which causes an increase in self-critical automatic thoughts, self-destructive behaviour, and painful feelings, all of which appear to confirm the Bottom Line (Fennell,1997). When a person has poor self-esteem, they will interpret information

according to how they see themselves, emphasizing their flaws and undervaluing their strengths. Negative characteristics including anxiety and depression have been linked to low self-esteem (Bajaj et al., 2016).

Individuals who have low self esteem are intensely sensitive to signals of rejection (Baccus, Sakellaropoulo, Baldwin, Dandeneau, & Pruessner, 2007) and may mistakenly believe that they have been rejected when this is not the case (Murray, Bellavia et al., 2003). According to (Murray Rose, Kusche, Bellavia and Holmes 2002), LSE are quick to assume that unfavourable relationship experiences (such as transgressions or disagreements) will cause other people to discover significant flaws in them. Trzesniewski et al. (2006) claimed that people with low self-esteem are at a greater risk of experiencing a criminal conviction during adulthood in contrast to those individuals who have high self-esteem.. Historically, LSEs has been linked to behavioral addictions (Hyun et al., 2015). This connection arises from the people with LSE tends to engage in maladaptive coping strategies, often involving dysfunctional behaviors (Tomaka et al., 2013). Aligning with this perspective, the connection between self-esteem and various compulsive behaviors has been demonstrated to be influenced by mechanisms such as avoidance coping (Melodia et al., 2020) or motives related to self-medication (Backer-Fulghum, Roufa, Patock-Peckham, King, & Hagen, 2012). Lee and Cheung (2014) also emphasize that person's with LSE are more likely to develop a preference for online social interactions. However, limited research has directly explored the impact of gender on the connection between self-esteem and depression. Prior investigations indicate that the future repercussions of LSE on depressive symptoms remain consistent for both adolescent females and males (Guo, 2021; Orth et al., 2009b).

Earlier theories, such as proposed by Harris and Brown (1978) and Murrell et al. (1991), suggested a positive association between poor self-esteem and depression, contemporary empirical studies have introduced a more nuanced understanding of the association between LSEs and depression. For instance, several studies (Gotlib and Roberts, 1997 ; Kernis et al., 1991; De Raedt and Franck, 2007) have indicated that low self-esteem should be viewed as a trait that distinguishes individuals predisposed to developing depressive symptoms, rather than solely focusing on the absolute level of self-esteem. A person's self-esteem level alone does not reliably predict future depressive states. Instead, self-esteem is highly variable and responsive to daily stressors and boosts, particularly when it is based on external factors (Knight and Crocker, 2005; Sargent et al., 2006). This fluctuation in self-esteem can render individuals susceptible to future depressive symptoms.

It's crucial to recognize that while there is a notable connection between the current state of depression and a persons level of self-esteem, the latter appears to be an inadequate indicator of future depression. Depressed individuals often hold low opinions of themselves and their self-worth. In fact, the association between LSE and current depressive symptoms is so intertwined that some studies have even suggested that these two dimensions are largely interchangeable (Lakdawalla, Abela, Carter, Hankin, & Adams, 2007).

According to (Caplan, 2003), person's with LSE tend to hold the belief they lack social communication skills. They prefer online conversation because it puts them at ease and gives them more control over how they come across. Additionally, (Lee and Cheung, 2014) note that having LSEs makes people more likely to favour online social engagement. People who struggle with social skills seem to favour online social engagement over face-to-face connection (Caplan, 2006). This

preference promotes excessive Internet use, which has unfavorable effects. Poor self-esteem has been associated with detrimental traits like anxiety and depression (Bajaj et al., 2016). According to (Cannella et al. 2007), self-esteem influences how people perceive, evaluate cognitively, and react to a variety of situations, including stress.

Through three different pathways, low self-esteem leads to victimization. First of all, teenagers who have a poor sense of their own worth are more likely to experience social avoidance from their peers, which can inadvertently turn into bullying (Nguyen et al., 2019). Teenagers who lack self-worth frequently struggle with emotional and behavioral issues like anxiety, despair, and suicidal thoughts, which makes it difficult for them to interact with their peers and leaves them open to bullying (Kochel et al., 2017).

Second, the ability to protect themselves from damage or take retaliatory action is also lacking in individuals with poor self-esteem (Masselink et al., 2018). They take social disagreements as dangerous and frequently use unhealthy coping mechanisms to deal with them (Borecka-Biernat, 2020). Peers, especially spectators, frequently blame the victims' lack of popularity on their own flaws and may think that the targets are deserving of bullying (Obermann, 2011; Bandura, 2002). Employees with LSE believe the concept that they feel helpless to make things better.

Thirdly, the power imbalance component of bullying is naturally correlated with LSEs. In peer groups, individuals with LSEs frequently hold positions of lower social standing (Litwack et al., 2012). People who have LSEs are more likely to bully others than those who have moderate or high levels of self-esteem because their own fears may make them want to dominate others (Litwack et al., 2012).

2.4 Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion, according to Wright and Cropanzano (1998), is a long-term condition brought on by high work expectations, individual stress, and ongoing strain. According to (Zohar, 1997), overwork can result in emotional exhaustion, which can then cause employees to feel physically and psychologically exhausted. Due to cumulative stress from personal and professional commitments, this syndrome is characterized by feelings of physical and mental exhaustion. It acts as a precursor to potential collapse, physically or emotionally.

Emotional exhaustion, according to Maslach and Jackson (1981), is the sensation of having used up all of one's emotional reserves. The importance of working environment, particularly its psychological components are emphasized because they can either foster or hinder employee comfort and hinder innovation (Adler & Koch, 2019). Organizations need to form a good working association between employees and their managers in order to connect and communicate with people while addressing interpersonal behaviour (Seger-Guttmann & Medler-Liraz, 2018). Employee attitudes towards the organization are impacted by their emotions. When employees get emotionally exhausted, they frequently feel useless and have less trust in the company (Son, 2014). According to Gaines and Jermier (1983), it is regarded as the primary aspect of burnout and is especially relevant to professions outside the human services sector. Burnout, a long-term stress reaction, affects persons who work with people and is identified by emotional exhaustion, diminished individual sense of accomplishment and depersonalization, (Maslach et al., 1986).

Hang-yue et al. (2005) have highlighted that stressors linked to the job work, such as role overload directly contribute to emotional exhaustion among employees. This suggests that an upsurge in stressors encompassing conflict, job overload

corresponds to an increase in the levels of emotional exhaustion experienced by employees.

Given its strong correlation with heightened intentions of employee turnover, emotional exhaustion has garnered substantial attention from organizations (Noh et al., 2019; Braun & Schiffinger, 2020; Hang-yue et al., 2005). The idea to leave a job is recognized as a valuable indicator for predicting actual turnover, as emphasized by (Lewis & Cho, 2012 ; Tett & Meyer, 1993). The escalation of employee turnover can carry adverse financial ramifications and result in a loss of valuable knowledge, thereby exerting a profound impact on businesses if not adequately addressed (Tracey & Hinkin, 2008 ; Ramlall, 2003; Tracey & Hinkin, 2000).

According to numerous studies (Hang-yue et al. 2005 ;Lee et al. 2019; Khan et al. 2019; Baeriswyl et al. 2016; Richards et al. 2019; Koon and Pun, 2018), emotional exhaustion has an adverse impact on employees' levels of job satisfaction. Therefore, it is thought that professionals working on projects have reduced job satisfaction when their emotional resources are drained as a result of increased levels of work-family conflict. It is therefore anticipated that mediation takes place, wherein increasing levels of work-family conflict directly contribute to increased emotional exhaustion, ultimately lowering employees' job satisfaction.

Individuals who experience emotional exhaustion often hold the perception that they lack control over their lives and perceive themselves as being "stuck" or "trapped" in their circumstances. Lethargy, lack of sleep, and diminished excitement are examples of physical signs of emotional exhaustion. An individual's health may be harmed over time if they are exposed to this high-stress mental state for a prolonged duration. A lack of motivation, sleep issues, mood swings, physical weakness, feelings of futility, inattention, indifference, migraines, fluctuating appetite,

restlessness, difficulty concentrating, unpredictable anger, increased skepticism or negativity, anxiety, and major depressive disorder are common signs of emotional exhaustion. According to longitudinal research (Cropanzano and Wright, 1998 ; Grandey et al. 2004), emotionally exhausted employees not only perform poorly on activities connected to their jobs but also have higher absenteeism rates and are more likely to look for alternative employment.

According to research by Reb et al. (2017), deviant behaviour and other important organizational outcome variables have been linked to emotional exhaustion. Employees who suffer emotional exhaustion may get fatigue and depletion (Schaufeliet al., 1996), which makes them more likely to be unsatisfied with their work (Judge et al., 2006). These employees may also engage in deviant behaviour as a way to vent their dissatisfaction. Additionally, past research has shown a link between emotional exhaustion and deviant behaviour (He et al., 2018 ; Fatima & Jahanzeb, 2018 ; Golparvar, 2015; Simha et al., 2014 ; Kong et al., 2018).

2.5 Acquiescent Silence

Organizational behavior literature has given the topic of employee silence a lot of attention (Jahanzeb et al., 2020; Srivastava et al., 2019; Donaghey et al., 2011; Ayub et al., 2021a, b). The focal point of this study is on specific employees and their underlying reasons for choosing silence (actively withholding thoughts). Although silence and voice (expressing opinions) are sometimes seen as opposite behaviour, both are complex and have many different aspects (Nechanska et al., 2020). The study shows a number of important differences between silence and voice, drawing on (Van Dyne et al., 2003). First off, the motivations behind silence and voice are different. According to Brinsfield (2013) and Van Dyne et al. (2003), silence refers to the intentional hiding of thoughts, knowledge, and opinions to avoid personal

consequences. Meanwhile, voice results from the desire to communicate thoughts or knowledge, making it a prosocial behavior intended to improve work (Van Dyne et al., 2013 ; Brinsfield, 2013).

Organizational silence, according to Knoll et al. (2016), has a significant impact on how well individuals, teams, and organizations perform. It hampers decision-making, inhibits individual and organizational development, and puts employees' well-being and organizational commitment at risk. Furthermore, (Zill et al. 2020) contend that silence in workplaces can impede communication, which is essential for establishing organizational success and efficient operation.

(Morrison and Milliken, 2000) initially proposed the idea of organizational silence . (Zill et al., 2020) proposed that, silence involves intentional hiding of thoughts, attitudes, and worries about workplace issues. Researchers have expressed a great deal of interest in this subject and are working hard to gain a complete grasp of it (Knoll et al., 2016). According to their research, there are two kinds of organizational silence: individual employee silence and collective perceptions of environmental circumstances that prevent voice (Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Dyne et al., 2003; Morrison et al., 2015; Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

First, organizational silence, according to Knoll et al. (2016), is a complicated phenomenon influenced by several social dynamics. To study its conception, antecedents, and results within the organizational environment, they emphasize the necessity for a comprehensive and integrated framework. In addition, they emphasize that silence is more complex than simply being silent and is influenced by a variety of elements, including organizational structures, practices, team dynamics, Leadership approaches, personal and group traits, workplace drive, and dynamics within the

company's culture, encompassing the past experiences of both managers and employees (Knoll et al., 2016).

Second, (Donaghey et al. 2011) noted that the phenomenology of silence and voice differs. According to Brinsfield (2013), situations in which one consciously decides to withhold ideas and information despite having the chance to express them differ from the experience of not communicating when lacking ideas and information phenomenologically.

Thirdly, silence and voice are theorized differently in terms of antecedents and outcomes (Nechanska et al., 2020). People with proactive personalities are more likely to use voice behaviour by seeking out possibilities for growth. The presence of speech opportunities, rather than the quantity of thoughts one has, is thought to be more closely related to quiet than a proactive personality (Alparslan et al., 2015).

Fourthly, by perceiving silence as a unique aspect within the workplace, rather than merely the lack of verbal expression, we can more comprehensively understand its boundaries and additional obstacles. For example, managers should not solely focus on motivating employees to voice their thoughts but should also identify potential obstacles that hinder such communication (Brinsfield, 2013). This approach contributes to fostering organizational learning. Employee silence, according to researchers like Van Dyne et al. (2003) and (Harlos and Pinder 2001), is a multifaceted concept with several aspects.

Employees' tendencies towards silence can be affected by their motivations. According to the literature, there are three different categories of silence. Acquiescent silence was first described by Harlos and Pinder (2001), and defensive silence behaviour were named by (Van Dyne et al., 2003). Defensive silence is a self-protective behaviour that is characterized by a fear of undesirable outcomes like job

loss or firing. In this situation, remaining silent is a protective measure taken by people to protect themselves from unfavorable outcomes. Prosocial silence, which is motivated by altruism or cooperative goals and seeks to benefit others, was not considered in this study because it typically has no negative effects on organization (Van Dyne et al., 2003).

According to Pinder and Harlos (2001), acquiescence is a tendency to ignore available options and a reluctance to actively seek out alternatives. People that demonstrate acquiescent silence are typically not motivated to change their surroundings (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). (Van Dyne et al. 2003) claim that those who keep quiet about work-related challenges do so because of a mix of low self-efficacy to bring about change and disengagement from organizational problems. Employees begin to believe that speaking up is pointless and won't produce any real change when they feel that management doesn't care about the feedback they give or when management discourages them from participating in organizational discussion. Based on this perception, employees choose to behave in a compliant manner.

Organization may suffer from acquiescent silence because it hinder advancements in organizational performance (Ramanujam & Tangirala, 2008; Van Dyne et al., 2003) and impedes organizational change (Morrison & Milliken, 2000. Researchers experienced that when people feel threatened, they tend to hold back on speaking up honestly out of fear of ruining their reputation (Wynen et al., 2020). They often have a fear of speaking up because of this tendency (Morrison, 2014). This silence may lead to tension, cynicism, depersonalization, and unhappiness, according to earlier research (Knoll et al., 2019). Because silence fosters feelings of guilt, resentment, and dissatisfaction, employees who choose to keep silence suffer losses in creativity, productivity, and interpersonal connections (Van Dick & Knoll, 2013 ;

Morrison, 2014). They purposefully withhold their opinions and recommendations on matters related to their jobs (Xu et al., 2015), and as a result of this deliberate behaviour, the organization's overall performance suffers (Akcin et al., 2017).

2.6 Anxiety

Anxiety recognized as an emotional response, mood disorder, and specific anxiety disorder with cognitive, physiological, and behavioral components (Steimer, 2002) and is a construct that encompasses affective features. It is a typical illness that is described as "something felt" (Freud, 1924) and includes sensations of unease, anxious thoughts, tension, and shaking, as well as bodily changes such elevated blood pressure and trembling, perspiration, and dizziness (Kazdin, 2000).

According to Gudykunst (2005), anxiety is an emotional phenomenon. Anxiety has an impact on people's feelings about interacting with others. These emotions include the feeling of discomfort, unease, etc. According to Turner (1988), anxiety is a "generalized or unspecified sense of disequilibrium." Anxiety impacts a person's motivation to approach others or avoid them (Gudykunst, 1993, 1995). Anxiety is a type of tension that develops when people estimate how their interactions with other people will turn out (Stephan & Stephan, 1985).

Anxiety disorders rank among the most prevalent mental illnesses in the US. According to a 2017 estimate from the National Institute of Mental Health, approximately 19.1% of American adults aged 18 and over have experienced an anxiety disorder. This condition affects a significant portion of the population, with more than 40 million individuals in the United States being impacted, often in conjunction with medical conditions (Kroenke et al., 2007). For instance, data from U.S studies have shown that 59% of persons diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and major depressive disorder (MDD), a severe subtype of depression,

meet the diagnostic criteria for both conditions. Consequently, GAD and MDD are among the mental health comorbidities with the highest prevalence (Gao et al., 2013; Brown et al., 2001).

The societal and healthcare implications of untreated anxiety are profound. As highlighted by Katon (1996), Devane et al. (2005), Marcus et al. (1997) and Hirschfeld (2001), the clinical consequences of anxiety include an higher chances of suicide, a higher likelihood of psychiatric hospitalization, and a substantial rise in the utilization of medical resources. Furthermore, individuals suffering from anxiety often contend with chronic and recurrent illnesses that demand long-term care (Hirschfeld, 2001).

Although anxiety is highly treatable, the reality is that only a minority of adults in the U.S., specifically 36.9%, receive proper care for their anxiety. In comparison, the National Institute of Mental Health (2019a, 2019b) indicates that 65% of people who have feel MDD seek assistance. Strikingly, despite the fact that anxiety affects approximately four times as many individuals in the U.S. compared to depression. The three areas of therapy barriers for anxiety disorders include acceptance, availability, and accessibility. Treatment acceptance is frequently hampered by the stigma attached to mental issues, reduced in apparent efficacy, and discomfort with medical personnel (Robinson et al., 2012; Mojtabai, 2007; Jimenez et al., 2013).

The availability and accessibility of mental health care presents another obstacle to appropriate treatment and diagnosis of anxiety disorders. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2016), 111 million Americans are thought to reside in locations where there is a deficit of mental health professionals. According to the National Council for Behavioral Health (2017), 77% of U.S.

countries lack access to psychiatrists, which is made worse by the 10% decline in the number of psychiatrists working with public sector populations between 2003 and 2013 (Bishop et al., 2016). Furthermore, shortages for clinical, counseling, and school psychologists, as well as for mental health school counselors, will develop by 2025 according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2016). Since there are so few behavioral health professionals in the country, many people are finding it harder and harder to get the essential resources and support they need to manage their anxiety symptoms.

From the perspective of social control, employee perceptions of powerlessness caused by ostracism shape their behavioral and psychological responses (Berdahl & Anderson, 2002). As an instance, it increases their sensitivity to threats, causes them to low in confidence, causes anxiety, and encourages restrained non-compliant behavior (Keltner et al., 2003). Ostracism has a detrimental impact on people's sense of belonging, which has an impact on their performance at work.

2.7 Belongingness Theory

One of the most significant elements of personal motivation, according to people, is the need for social connections and a sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). They suggested that the desire for consistent interaction and the belief that the interpersonal connection is significant, solid, and permanent . An individual's idea that others care about them and are interested in their well-being is supported (or starved) by their sense of belonging. The urge for belongingness defines a wide range of human motivations, emotions, behaviour, and thought processes. When a person's need to belong is met, they experience sensations of happiness, however when that need isn't met, they may experience negative emotions. Numerous adverse behaviours, psychological, and social effects, such as mental issues and behavioral inclination, are

explained by a loss of sense of belonging. People who feel a sense of belonging are more attuned, understanding to accommodate others. People interaction varied with people they feel a connection to others (Green et al., 2017). Employee performance goes above and beyond that is required from them when they have a feeling of belonging in their workplace. In the workplace, encouraging a sense of belonging can influence employees' actions to reflect the ideas of the organization (O'Reilly & Robinson, 2009). According to previous research (Maslow, 1943; Leary & Baumeister, 1995), our enduring need to maintain healthy relationships that has a significant influence on our emotions, cognition processes, and behaviors. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), those who feel strong social ties are more inclined to have favorable results including increased psychological and physical health. In contrast, any potential dangers to our social connections may have a negative impact on our well-being.

2.8 Hypotheses Development

2.8.1 Workplace Ostracism and Acquiescent Silence

Employees facing workplace ostracism often opt silence as a coping strategy. This can manifest in passive behaviors, like refraining from expressing their opinions due to a belief that it won't yield any positive change (Jahanzeb et al., 2020). Alternatively, it can take on an active form, involving the suppression of valuable ideas or data for fear of personal repercussions within the organization (Fatima & Jahanzeb, 2018). Jahanzeb et al. (2020) have observed that ostracized workers tend to engage in disengaged behaviors, specifically adopting acquiescent silence, in response to non-retaliatory ostracism. Additionally, they often express feelings of powerlessness in such situations:

Hypothesis 1: Workplace ostracism is positively correlated to acquiescent silence.

2.8.2 Acquiescent Silence and Procrastination

People who are afraid of speaking and disengaged from the workplace may have received severe criticism from others and think they need to be exceptionally talented in order to be valuable. People who repeatedly perform poorly at work internalize a negative picture of themselves and try to avoid any situations where they would be evaluated by procrastinating, which offers them justifications to blame their failure on incapacity rather than effort (Stuart, 2013). Meanwhile, procrastination may become more common among people who are afraid of speaking and opt silence to avoid conflict (Haghbin et al. 2012, Krause & Freund 2016; Fatimah et al. 2011)

Hypothesis 2: Acquiescent silence is positively correlated to procrastination.

2.8.3 Procrastination and Anxiety

Procrastination at work has been found with a number of severe psychological disorders, involving stress, worry, overthinking, and depression (Klingsieck, 2013). Existing research asserted that ostracized person would put off crucial duties till last due to their withdrawing behaviour, emotional condition, and psychological issues even though they were aware of the consequences (Steel, 2007). According to (Takagi et al. 2018; Goes et al. 2018; Spielberger et al. 1983) anxiety is described as a temporally extended emotional condition that arises from a situation with the potential for harm. Procrastinating before the deadline of work may be a sign of depression or anxiety. Hence, hypothesis formed the anxiety level of employee increases when employee procrastinates so:

Hypothesis 3: Procrastination is positively correlated to Anxiety.

2.8.4 Procrastination and Emotional Exhaustion

The term "emotional exhaustion" denotes the sensation of being emotionally stretched thin and depleted, constituting a noteworthy facet of job burnout (Jackson & Maslach, 1981). When employees who engage in procrastination opt for an alternative activity instead of completing their work, a sense of guilt often accompanies their avoidance behavior (Pychyl et al., 2000; Pychyl &Lavoie, 2001). Recent investigations suggest that individuals who habitually procrastinate frequently experience negative emotions in response. This might stem from their recognition of how their actions reflect disengagement, ultimately culminating in emotional exhaustion. The immediate consequence of work delay is often a last-minute rush to complete numerous tasks, leading to inadequate sleep, which in turn may yield various adverse consequences, including emotional exhaustion (Perlman et al., 2010; Brostrom et al., 2017).

Hypothesis 4: Procrastination is positively correlated to Emotional Exhaustion .

2.8.5 Workplace Ostracism and Anxiety

WO includes situations where coworkers' recommendations and comments are ignored, such as when a session is started without a certain colleague present or when critical emails are ignored (De Clercq et al., 2019). Ostracized employees are inclined to doubt their efficacy and value to their organization (Wan et al., 2016).

Employee perceptions of powerlessness caused by ostracism shape their behavioral and psychological responses (Berdahl & Anderson, 2002). Workplace Ostracism increases their sensitivity to threats, causes them to lose confidence results in anxiety, and encourages restrained non-compliant behaviour (Keltner et al., 2003).

Hypothesis 5: Workplace ostracism is positively correlated to Anxiety.

2.8.6 Workplace Ostracism and Emotional Exhaustion

WO is a stressor that can put employees' resources in danger and stress them out psychologically (Harvey & Heames, 2006; Sommer &Williams, 1997). According to Lee and Ashforth (1996), employees that are ignored experience emotional exhaustion as well as a lack of support from coworkers and superiors(Dutton & Heapy, 2008). Choi (2019) has shown that WO was positively correlated with employees' emotional exhaustion at work. Based on the prior discussion we proposed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: Workplace Ostracism is positively correlated to Emotional Exhaustion.

2.8.7 Sequential Mediating Role of Acquiescent Silence and Procrastination with Anxiety and Emotional Exhaustion

Workplace ostracism referred to the extent to which employees perceive at the workplace neglected or excluded (Fatima & Jahanzeb, 2018). (Jahanzeb et al. 2020) claim that ostracized employees engage in disengaged behaviour like acquiescent silence in response to non-revengeful ostracism over the problem. People who are afraid of speaking and disengaged from the workplace may have received severe criticism from others and think they need to be exceptionally talented in order to be valuable. The act of remaining silent has been linked to the cultivation of emotions like guilt, resentment, and dissatisfaction.Prior studies have suggested that this reluctance to communicate can result in adverse outcomes such as heightened tension, increased cynicism, depersonalization, and reduced overall well-being (Knoll et al., 2019). Consequently, employees who opt for silence often experience declines in their levels of creativity, productivity, and the quality of their interpersonal relationships (Van Dick & Knoll, 2013; Morrison, 2014). People who repeatedly perform poorly

perceive themselves negative and try to avoid any situations where they would be evaluated by procrastinating, which offers them justifications to blame their failure on incapacity rather than effort (Stuart, 2013). Meanwhile, procrastination may become more common among people who are afraid of speaking and opt silence to avoid conflict (Freund & Krause, 2016; Haghbin et al. 2012; Fatimah et al. 2011). Procrastination has been linked with delays in engaging in health-related behaviors (Pychyl et al., 2000).Procrastination is also correlated with reduced overall well-being (VanEerde, 2013; Özer et al., 2009; Pychyl & Sirois, 2016) and a higher likelihood of experiencing symptoms of depression (Flett et al., 1995, 2016; Ferrari et al., 1995). Procrastination results in variety of negative effects like insufficient sleep, anxiety and emotional exhaustion among employees (Perlman et al., 2010; Brostrom et al., 2017). (Sirois, et al. 2018) found a correlation between procrastination and people's ability to control their emotions, implying that those who put off doing their task can suffer more unpleasant emotions and anxiety symptoms.

Hypothesis 7: Acquiescent Silence and Procrastination play a sequential mediating role between workplace ostracism and anxiety.

Hypothesis 8: Acquiescent Silence and Procrastination play a sequential mediating role between workplace ostracism and emotional exhaustion.

2.8.8 Moderating Role of Low Self Esteem (LSE)

Workplace ostracism exerts harmful impact on both employees and organization. When employees encounter ostracism at work, their self-esteem becomes low and their health suffers (Tams,Scott, Lee & Schippers, 2015; Ferris et al., 2008). (Jahanzeb et al. 2020) claim that ostracized employees engage in disengaged behaviour like acquiescent silence in response to non-retaliatory mechanism over the problem.

(Cannella et al. 2007) claim that self-esteem influences how people perceive, assess cognitively, and respond to a variety of circumstances, including stress. A person with poor self-esteem often has a pervasive, enduring, and persistently unfavorable perception of themselves (Fennell, 1997). A person with low self-esteem may evaluate information based on how they perceive themselves, focusing on their defects and underestimating their qualities. Low self-esteem stands out as a potent predictor of emotional and behavioral challenges (Leary et al., 1995) and has been associated with various issues in young individuals (Barry et al., 2007), including the emergence of antisocial behavior (ASB; Trzesniewski et al., 2006). Low self-esteem (LSE) individuals are more susceptible to rejection cues than other people are (Baccus, Sakellaropoulo, Dandeneau, Baldwin & Pruessner, 2007). As a result, they may believe that they have been rejected when they even they are not (Murray, Bellavia et al., 2003). So, according to above discussion employees with low self -esteem strengthen the relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence.

Hypothesis 9: The relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence is moderated by low self-esteem such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of low self-esteem.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework Model
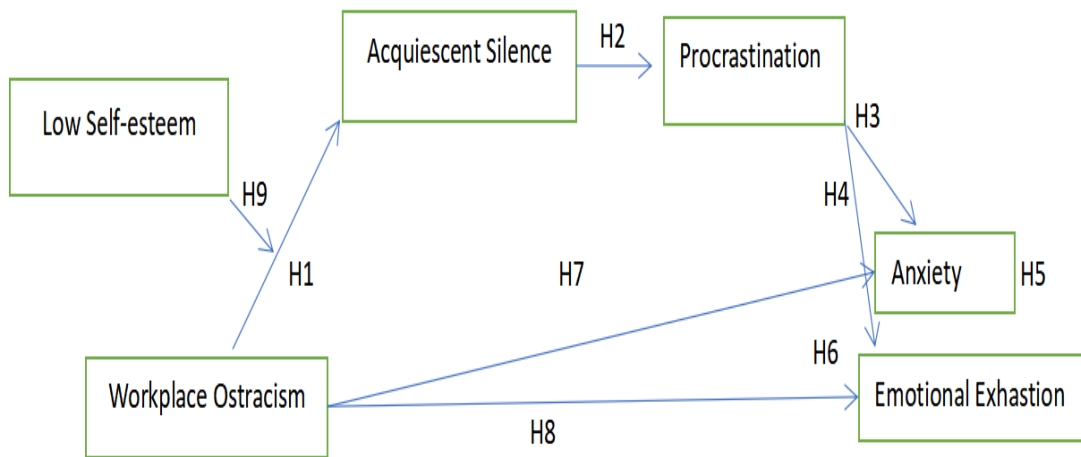
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the comprehensive research plan, detailing the foundational research philosophies, methodologies, designs/strategies, sample frameworks, data collection methods and tools, as well as the statistical framework employed in the study.

3.1 Purpose of the study

In hospitality sector, employee is getting anxious and emotionally exhausted because he/she feels excluded at workplace. So the aim of our study is to investigate the impact of WO on anxiety and emotional exhaustion through sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination and moderating role of low self-esteem.

3.2 Research Philosophy

According to Saunders, Thornhill and Lewis (2012) , research philosophy incorporates both the process by which knowledge is created and its nature. Research philosophy provides significant assumptions about how people encounter the things. We make our study strategy and techniques decisions based on these assumptions. A researcher must therefore be aware of the philosophical foundations of the study approach and process they will use. In this sense, ontology and epistemology are two facets of research philosophy that direct the selection of the research procedure to be used (Saunders et al., 2012).

Positivism, realism, and interpretivism are the three subcategories of epistemology, the study of the nature of knowing. The positivist viewpoint centers on the assessment of hypotheses generated from established theories (employing

deductive methods) through the examination of observable social phenomena and principles rooted in the natural sciences. Positivists contend that knowledge holds credibility when it stems from the observation of this external reality and results in a generalization to a scientific law (Saunders et al., 2012). Positivists also hold that the social world is an external, objective reality. Quantitative methods including experiments, surveys, and statistical analysis are used in the positivist paradigm. Positivism and realism share the presumption that knowledge is gained through a scientific process. Realism contends that reality is what we see, and reality is mainly apart from the mind (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

An opposing perspective is adopted by interpretivism, which advocates that social scientists should seek to understand the subjective significance of social behaviors. Tuli (2011) and Scotland (2012) assert that the interpretivist paradigm employs qualitative methodologies such as focus groups, case studies, interviews, and naturalistic observations. Qualitative approaches align with the inductive method, as they center on uncovering and grasping social phenomena, relying on continuous, direct interactions between the researcher and the studied group (Tuli, 2011).

The following self-explanatory image from (Tuli, 2011) illustrates the foundational elements of a research investigation as shown in fig no 2:

Figure 2: Research Philosophy
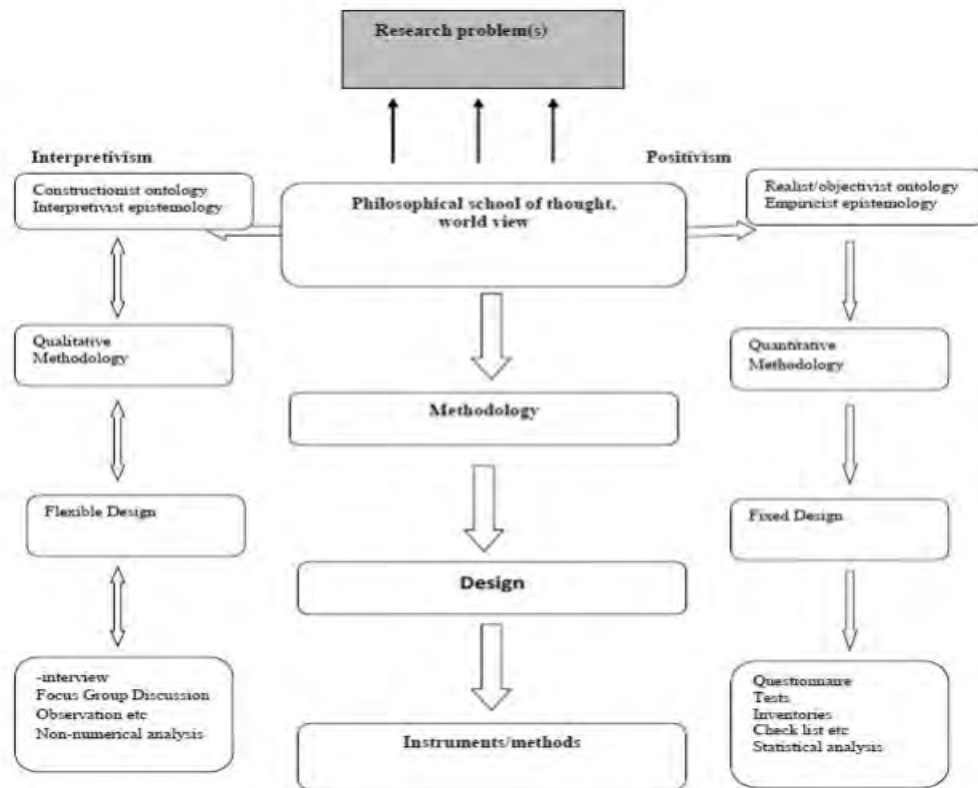
Various research paradigms' perspectives have contributed to our selection of the ontological and epistemological framework for this study. The chosen ontological stance is objectivism, as it aligns with the researcher's conviction that reality exists externally, remains objective, and maintains its constancy across individuals. Furthermore, the researcher posits that surveys and questionnaires serve as viable tools for probing into the majority of these realities.

The study's chosen epistemological perspective, namely positivism, harmonizes with the objectivist ontology. This alignment occurs because positivist epistemology advocates for scientific inquiry grounded in measurable facts derived from a substantial sample of the broader population. The primary objective of this study is to assess the influence of WO on anxiety and emotional exhaustion. This

assessment will consider the sequential mediation effects of acquiescent silence and procrastination, alongside the moderating influence of low self-esteem.

3.3 Research Approach

The study's research strategy and approach were further guided by the objectivism ontology and positivism epistemology. There are two methods for conducting research: deductive method and inductive method. Inductive technique investigates the data and theory is formed on the basis of data analysis, whereas deductive strategy cohere to an already existing theory on the basis of which hypotheses are developed (Saunders et al., 2012). For example, surveys, and interviews questionnaires are frequently used in deductive research, whereas focus groups, case studies, interviews, and observations are typically used in inductive research (Babbie, 2012).

Deductive research is replicable and has an objective nature unlike inductive research is particularly challenging to duplicate due to its subjective nature. The current study employs a deductive approach as it formulates hypotheses rooted in an established theory, specifically the belongingness theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Its primary aim is to elucidate the association between WO and its adverse consequences of employee well being , including anxiety and emotional exhaustion, while also exploring the sequential mediating roles of acquiescent silence and procrastination. The utilization of the belongingness theory serves as the foundation for constructing multiple research hypotheses, thus following a deductive reasoning process.

3.4 Research Design

The research design involving a comprehensive strategy for conducting the study, as elucidated by Greener (2008). It transforms ontological and epistemological concepts into rules that provides researchers with direction for their work (Tuli, 2011). Multiple methods research designs and mono methods research designs, such as quantitative or qualitative designs are used as research designs (Saunders et al., 2012). Saunders et al. (2012) define quantitative research as an approach that investigates relationships between variables, which are quantitatively measured and subjected to analysis through diverse statistical methods. The experimental and survey research approaches are related to this design. Questionnaires, structured interviews, or observations are used to conduct survey research (Saunders et al., 2012).

Qualitative research take respondents meanings and their interactions into account by considering variety of data collection methods and analytical techniques. To allow for flexibility in questions or methods, data collecting is not standardized. Various research methodologies, such as ,grounded theory, action research and narrative research, case studies, ethnography are found in qualitative research, as outlined by Saunders et al. (2012). Saunders et al. (2012) also note that multiple methods research designs can incorporate either deductive or inductive approaches or even combine both. In our study, we employed elements of a quantitative research design.

A quantitative research design is underpinned by an objective ontology and a positivist epistemology. As a result, the study has opted for a survey approach. Surveys have been selected as the preferred data collection method due to their ability to efficiently gather extensive data from a sizable population. This approach proves to be cost-effective, particularly when studying a large population directly would present

logistical challenges. This approach aligns with the deductive method and is widely utilized and favored in the field of business and management research. Furthermore, It gives the opportunity to carry out quantitative analysis, employing both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, as indicated by Mouton (1996) and Saunders et al. (2012).

A descriptive survey functions as a technique for gathering information from a portion of the population.. The outcomes generated through this approach can be employed to explore and comprehend the connections among the variables under investigation, thus aiding in the formulation of models applicable to the entire population. Survey investigations are carried out within a non-experimental framework with a predetermined design, and they can be utilized for exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive aims, as indicated by Robson (2011). Within the scope of this particular research, the primary emphasis is explanatory. The goal is to delve into matters and clarify the connections between the variables under study, relying on numerical data to arrive at conclusions (Robson, 2011).

This explanatory research also aims to figure out the underlying mechanisms relating workplace ostracism with negative outcomes like anxiety and emotional exhaustion as well as through the sequential mediating role of acquiescent silence and procrastination and moderating role of low self-esteem. The survey technique was deemed to be more acceptable as it provides light on organizational practices and policies as well as individual views, attitudes, and behaviour (Holtom & Baruch, 2008). Furthermore, a standardized survey's high validity and reliability allow it to be very objective and have less bias.   The study adopts a cross-sectional approach, enabling the researcher to collect data from multiple population subgroups concurrently (Saunders et al., 2009). This design is particularly suitable when there is

no temporal sequence among the study variables. Cross-sectional designs have the drawback of making it impossible to prove the causation between variables due to the lack of aspects of experimental design, such as internal validity (Bell & Bryman, 2011).A longitudinal design is a form of correlational research that involves the repeated assessment of responses or data over an extended period, as opposed to the cross-sectional approach, which examines data at a single point in time. It provides for an ongoing analysis of responses (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Gryphon, 2009). Cross-sectional research is better appropriate for this study because it gives a snapshot of interactions among the study's key dimensions, whereas longitudinal research aims to analyze continuity of response and track change over time.

3.5 Sample Design

This study used the sampling strategy recommended by Zikmund et al. (2009) for a quantitative investigation to enable population-level generalization of the results. The sampling process includes a number of steps, starting with the definition of the target population selection and ending with the selection of the sampling frame (Zikmund et al., 2009).

Following that, sample units are chosen and the sample size is decided.The description of each stage is provided below.

3.6 Target Population

Target population is a collection of elements (units of an organization) to whom the researcher intends to draw conclusions. The hospitality industry in Pakistan is among the study's target population. This industry involves Serena, Marriot, Margala, Islamabad hotel as a major sectors in Islamabad, Pakistan.

The hospitality sector was chosen because it is one of Pakistan's fastest-growing industries because it offers its workers a demanding work environment. As a result, it is important to investigate any phenomenon that may have an impact on the employee negative outcomes like anxiety and emotional exhaustion, chosen hospitality sector was an ideal choice to check this phenomenon.

3.7 Sampling Technique and Methods

Multiple techniques exist for sample selection, with probability and non-probability sampling approaches emerging as the two most commonly employed methods (Robson, 2011). In non-probability sampling, the researcher possesses the liberty to select the sample based in their personal preferences. Saunders et al. (2012) emphasize that the focus of generalizations lies in relation to the theory, rather than the entire population. In probability sampling, every participant is afforded an equal opportunity for selection (Zikmund et al., 2009). This sampling method is commonly linked to research designs centered around surveys, where the researcher aims to draw population-level conclusions from the sample in order to address research inquiries and attain study objectives (Saunders et al., 2012).The most appropriate sampling strategy for this study has been identified as a probability sampling methodology.

Convenient sampling was used as the sampling technique. Because this study includes employees from various hospitality companies, including Serena, Margala,

Marriot and Islamabad Hotel. There is such a broad range in the number of employees inside each service provider organization.

3.8 Data Collection

Self-administered surveys have been utilized for collecting primary data due to their capacity for efficiently reaching a substantial number of individuals within a brief time frame. Additionally, they provide a comprehensive insight into the attitudes, convictions, and principles of a broad population, minimizing sampling-range errors (Cargan, 2007).

The questionnaire is a highly versatile data collection method, typically distributed in two distinct manners. (Bousmaha & Nicholas, 2001). In this study, questionnaires were distributed via email to boost the response rate. Since the study's sample of employees showed a comfort level with the English language, so questionnaires were provided out in English language.

As participants were not obligated to disclose their identities, the cover page of the questionnaire dealt with getting their informed consent as well as protecting their privacy and confidentiality. It was optional to take part in the study. The goal of the study was also stated on the cover page. The survey's instructions were presented to the respondents. Two weeks after first survey questionnaire distribution, an extra soft copy of the survey was sent to the participants who had not finished responding., serving as a reminder. A second reminder was given one week after the first one, and the employees responded with 600 completed questionnaires. However, 5 of these 600 questionnaires were discarded because the data were insufficient and 15 were not included because the responses were too similar. A total of 580 valid questionnaires were selected for further analysis.

An online survey questionnaire proves to be a valuable and easily accessible instrument for data collection. Within this study, the questionnaires were accompanied by a covering letter that expounded upon the study's goals, assured the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents' answers. Additionally, this methodology furnished participants with the confidence that their involvement in the study was entirely optional and that they could opt out at any point.. It was stated to the respondents that the questionnaire was meant to assess their attitudes and behavior as well as how they perceive workplace ostracism. Additionally, the participants received the researcher's contact information so they can get in touch with him or her for any pertinent questions or clarifications.

The questionnaire given to the respondents had 7 components that were all connected to the study's constructs. There were 58 overall questions in the survey: 54 scaled items and 4 demographic questions. To make it easier for the respondents, brief instructions were added at the start of each part. The order of the every part was deliberately varied to maintain participant interest and prevent any bias caused by answer consistency. At the start of the questionnaire, demographic descriptions such E-mail, age, experience and income were required. A 10-item questionnaire to measure workplace ostracism, 10 items for self-esteem and 5 items for acquiescent silence and procrastination contain 11 items , 7 items for anxiety and 11 items for emotional exhaustion was used by employees to measure the proposed theoretical framework model as shown in figure 1.

All the questions were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale because respondents may choose how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement using this scale. Since they produce statistically significant results, likert scales are strongly favoured in social science research (Schindler & Cooper, 2006).

3.9 Outliers

An outlier is an observation that deviates significantly from previous observations, raising the possibility that it originates from a distinct mechanism (Hawkins, 1980). Outliers can be categorized as multivariate or univariate. Multivariate outliers are instances with an unusual combination of values across multiple variables, while univariate outliers are data points with exceptionally high or low values in a single variable (Kline, 2005).

3.10 Normality

Every measured item underwent an assessment for normality, as it represents a critical assumption in multivariate analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Normality can be evaluated by inspecting statistics related to skewness and kurtosis. The symmetry of a distribution is intricately linked with its skewness. A variable is characterized as skewed when its mean value is not in alignment with the distribution's center. Positively skewed distributions exhibit a clustering of cases on the left side with a long tail to the right, while negatively skewed distributions display the opposite pattern (Saunders et al., 2009).

Kurtosis, as defined by Saunders et al. (2009), pertains to the extent of peakedness or flatness evident in a distribution in relation to a standard normal distribution. This attribute is measured by the kurtosis value, which assumes a positive value when the distribution is more pointed and a negative value when the distribution is flatter (Saunders et al., 2009).

Fidell and Tabachnick (2007) emphasize that it is recommended for both skewness and kurtosis values to remain within the range of ±2, as these statistics provide insights into the shape and symmetry of the data distribution.

Furthermore, the examination of multicollinearity among independent variables was conducted in line with the guidelines provided by Fidell & Tabachnick (2007). Their recommendation is that correlation coefficient values should stay below 0.85 to mitigate concerns associated with multicollinearity.

3.11 Variables Scales

3.11.1 Workplace Ostracism

Workplace ostracism was measured by a 10 items scale adopted from the study of (Ferris et al.,2008). Example: Others ignored you at work. The reliability of this scale was 0.92.

3.11.2 Acquiescent Silence

Acquiescent silence was measured by 5 items scale adopted from the study (Van Dyne et al., 2003). For instance: This employee is unwilling to speak up with suggestions for change because he/she is disengaged. The reliability of this scale was 0.76.

3.11.3 Procrastination

The Procrastination scale consists of 11 scale items developed by (P.Steel 2010) . Example: I delay making decisions until it's too late. The Cronbach alpha for this scale was 0.89.

3.11.4 Anxiety

Anxiety consists of 7 items developed by (Spitzer et al., 2006) . Example: Feeing nervous anxious or on the edge. The reliability of this scale was 0.83.

3.11.5 Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion scale consists of 11 scale items developed by (Francis et al 2005). This scale has been widely used in research for emotional exhaustion. Example: I feel drained in fulfilling my functions in my congregation. The reliability for this scale was 0.883.

3.11.6 Low Self-Esteem

Low Self-esteem measured by 10 items scale developed from study of Rosenberg self-esteem scale 1989. For instance: I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.The reliability for this scale was 0.81.

3.12 Reliability and Validity of Scales

Reliability pertains to the consistency of a measurement or, in simpler words, the extent to which an instrument yields consistent results when used repeatedly under identical conditions with the same subjects. (Khan, Raeside, Adams, & White 2014)." When a measurement produces consistent findings at all time, it is said to be reliable, although this does not always imply that the scale is genuine. Reliability is a required condition for validity but insufficient requirement on its own (Adams et al., 2014).

To assess the reliability of the scales, an examination was conducted using Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha yields a score between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating greater internal consistency (Sekaran, 2006). In accordance with Sekaran (2006), reliability is classified as follows: values below 0.5 are considered poor, values around 0.6 are deemed acceptable, and values exceeding 0.7 are considered good.

Hungler and Polit (1993) define validity as the extent to which an instrument accurately measures its intended construct. In this study, since common scales are utilized, external validity is assumed to be established. Internal validity, on the other hand, encompasses three key categories: content validity, criterion-related validity, and construct validity (Saunders et al., 2012). As defined by Saunders et al. (2012), content validity pertains to the "degree to which measurement questions effectively capture their conceptual definitions." A panel of experts is typically used to determine the content validity (Hair et al., 2010). A group of experts is typically used to establish the content validity (Hair et al., 2010). A focus group of employees' staff members analyzed the scale items' coverage of the entire domain of the dimensions being measured in order to evaluate the scales' content validity. The ability of a measure to predict outcomes accurately is referred to as the measure's criterion validity or predictive validity (Saunders et al., 2012).

Saunders et al. (2012) elaborate on construct validity, characterizing it as the extent to which measurement questions genuinely depict the constructs under investigation. To evaluate construct validity, two methods are commonly employed: factor analysis and item response theory (Greener, 2008). In this study, factor analysis was employed as the means to assess the construct validity of the measures.

3.13 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics entail the generation of distinct indices derived from raw data. As delineated by Kothari (2004), these statistics encompass a range of components, including indicators of asymmetry (skewness), indicators of association (correlation), indicators of dispersion (variance and standard deviation), and indicators of central tendency (mean, median, mode). In the context of this research,

correlation analyses were performed for each of the study variables to evaluate the interrelationships among the constructs under investigation (Kothari, 2004).

3.14 Composite Reliability

During the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) procedure, the conclusive stages involve assessing the squared multiple correlations (SMC) or squared factor loading of the observed variables with respect to the latent constructs. These stages are pivotal for appraising the measurement model's reliability (Schreiber et al., 2006). This process elucidates the extent of variability in a specific item attributed to an underlying construct. According to Awang (2015), the designated threshold value for item composite reliability stands at 0.6.

3.15 Construct Validity

The degree to which the items accurately represent the underlying construct is referred to as construct validity. Construct validity can be categorized into two main types i.e Convergent validity and discriminant validity are the two types of construct validity. The degree to which two items measuring the same construct have a strong correlation with one another is known as convergent validity, whereas the degree to which an item varies from items measuring a different construct is known as discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2006).

Convergent validity is considered to be arised when factor loading and the average variance extracted (AVE) both exceed 0.5, as outlined by Hair et al. (2010). AVE represents the average proportion of variation in a latent construct that can be accounted for by its measuring items, as defined by Awang (2015).

Discriminant validity, on the other hand, is established by comparing the correlation estimates among latent constructs with the square root of the average

variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity is evident when the square root of the AVE is greater than the correlation estimates between that particular construct and all other constructs, as indicated by Hair et al. (2010).

3.16 Hypotheses testing using Structural Equation Modeling

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) stands as a potent multivariate statistical approach employed to clarify and unveil the connections between numerous observable or latent variables (Schreiber et al., 2006). SEM empowers researchers to address a complex web of interconnected research inquiries within a unified, systematic, and comprehensive analysis. This is accomplished by concurrently modeling the interactions among diverse independent and dependent factors (Gefen et al., 2000).

Dion (2008) posits that the fundamental aim of SEM is to determine the adequacy of a theoretical model in fitting the sample data, especially in relation to the differences between the sample and the model's predicted covariance matrices.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a highly recommended method of analysis due to its unique ability to integrate elements of both multiple regression and factor analysis, as emphasized by Schreiber et al. (2006). Unlike traditional regression analysis, where multicollinearity issues can arise among predictors and potentially influence the magnitude of coefficients, SEM provides a solution for modeling and evaluating the challenges posed by multicollinearity.

Moreover, SEM stands out in its capacity to estimate measurement error, a capability that distinguishes it from many other multivariate techniques that are unable to detect or account for measurement error. SEM also excels in its ability to assess complex models involving numerous dependent variables and mediators.

Furthermore, it can handle diverse data types, including time series data, non-normally distributed data, and even incomplete data sets.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) serves as the chosen analytical approach for assessing the model's goodness of fit in this study. This choice is primarily driven by the study's inclusion of multiple predictors, mediators, and criterion variables. SEM is highly recommended for such complex investigations because it offers the ability to estimate all model coefficients simultaneously (Brooke & Price, 1989; Byrne, 2001).

Unlike traditional multiple regression analysis, SEM distinguishes itself by its capability to estimate multiple relationships within a model. It provides a framework where the concepts of independent and dependent variables are used in relative terms rather than as distinct roles. Consequently, SEM can estimate multiple equations concurrently, allowing for the possibility that a variable acting as a dependent variable in one equation can become an independent variable in another (Gunzler, Zhang, Wu, & Chen, 2013).

SEM incorporates both exogenous and endogenous variables within its models. Endogenous variables may transition into the role of independent variables in other equations within the SEM framework, which explains why they are categorized as endogenous rather than simply response variables within at least one of the SEM equations where they function as dependent variables. Conversely, exogenous factors are typically treated as independent variables in SEM equations (Gunzler et al., 2013). In essence, SEM empowers researchers to evaluate the significance and strength of specific relationships within the comprehensive model context (Dion, 2008).

In the study, a two-step , (SEM) approach was employed using Smart PLS, as outlined by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). This process involves two phases, with the

first phase dedicated to scrutinizing the measurement model to confirm the operationalization of the theoretical constructs, a procedure commonly referred to as Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

To test the measurement model, the maximum likelihood estimation method was employed, following the guidance of Hair et al. (1998). The utilization of the maximum likelihood technique was deemed appropriate because the model contained some constructs with fewer than five items, which is a requirement for other estimation methods (Hair et al., 1998). Furthermore, the maximum likelihood method was favored due to its ability to minimize the disparities between the covariance and observed matrices, thereby improving the accuracy of parameter estimations (Hair et al., 2010). This made it the preferable choice for the study's SEM analysis.

3.17 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFA serves as a valuable tool for assessing the measurement model's validity. The endorsement of Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as a crucial method for gauging scale validity is notable. Within the context of CFA, it enables the assessment of both the scale's reliability, essentially measuring the concept accurately, and the individual contributions of each item within the scale (Hair et al., 2010).

The first step in CFA involves model specification. During this phase, the model is constructed using a priori theory, establishing connections between factors and their corresponding measures, as well as specifying the correlations between these factors. Following model specification is the stage of model identification, succeeded by model parameter estimation. The degree to which the sample data aligns with the hypothesized model ultimately determines the overall model fit, as outlined by (Schreiber, 2006).

The evaluation of the fit quality for the proposed model involves the utilization of a range of fit indices. These fit indices are categorized into three distinct types: absolute fit indices, incremental fit indices, and parsimonious fit indices, as outlined by Hair et al. (1998). The assessment of the overall model's performance relies on the absolute fit indices. These encompass metrics like the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and the chi-square statistic (χ2) with its associated degrees of freedom and p-value (Boomsma, 2000; Hair et al., 2010). For the RMSEA, a value equal to or less than 0.08 is generally indicative of a reasonably good fit.

The incremental fit indices encompass measures such as the Normal Fit Index (NFI) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), serving the purpose of comparing the proposed model against baseline models, as outlined by Hair et al. (1998). Values equal to or exceeding 0.95 are considered indicative of a favorable fit for both of these indices. As per the guidelines put forth by Bentler and Hu (1998), both relative and absolute indices are employed to assess the goodness-of-fit of the models. The assessment of the estimated model goes further to determine whether it can be further simplified by reducing the number of estimated paths, utilizing the parsimonious fit indices. One component of this index is the Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI).

In conjunction with the model fit indices, the assessment of the measurement model also involves the utilization of standardized estimates, such as standardized regression weights or factor loadings (denoted as "a"). For robust model validation, it is recommended that factor loading values surpass the threshold of 0.7, as suggested by Holmes-Smith (2002). Nevertheless, a value greater than 0.5 is also deemed acceptable, in line with the criteria laid out by Churchill (1979). It's important to consider that the t-values associated with each of the factor loadings should exceed

1.96, and R-square values should exhibit a relatively high level of variance explained, as advocated by Byrne (2001).

3.18 Testing of Mediation

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) offers a powerful framework for formulating and assessing intricate models that encompass multiple mediators. It enables the concurrent examination of numerous paths while maintaining comprehensive statistical control over the relationships among indicator variables. This approach is particularly advantageous when conducting examinations that involve sets of predictor, mediator, and criterion variables, as highlighted by (Goodman, Beckmann, Wood, & Cook 2008).

According to Iacobucci, Saldanha, and Deng (2007), SEM is the most advanced tool for analyzing mediated interactions and is more effective from a theoretical and statistical standpoint. Two mediators were used in the current study; hence SEM was deemed to be the most suitable analytical method.

In accordance with the insights provided by (Hayes and Preacher, 2008)the concept of mediation comes into play when a predictor has an impact on a criterion variable by involving at least one intermediary variable, often referred to as a mediator. Echoing this perspective, Mackinnon, Fairchild, and Fritz (2007) describe mediators as constructs of a behavioral, biological, psychological, or social nature that serve as conduits, transmitting the influence of one variable to another.

Under the mediator hypothesis, as delineated by Preacher and Hayes (2008), an independent variable (X) possesses the capacity to exert its influence on a dependent variable (Y) through the involvement of one or more potential intervening variables or mediators (M). Consequently, a mediator is a key variable situated within

the sequence of interactions connecting two variables, as elucidated by (Mackinnon et al., 2007).

According to Fairchild and MacKinnon (2009), the process of mediation involves an antecedent variable having an impact on a mediator variable, which then has an impact on a dependent variable, creating a chain of relationships between the three variables. A direct effect is one that is not in any way mediated.

The examination of each mediator's role in mediation was undertaken by employing the bootstrap method, following the recommendations of (Hayes & Preacher, 2008) as well as Fairchild, Fritz, & Mackinnon (2007). Bootstrap, a non-parametric resampling technique, was chosen for its ability to sidestep the assumption of normality in the sampling distribution. This computational approach involves iteratively drawing samples from the dataset and calculating the indirect effect in each resampled dataset, as outlined by (Hayes & Preacher, 2008).

Through the execution of this procedure millions of times, a sample distribution is generated, allowing for the derivation of estimates for the total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect between the constructs. This methodology, as elucidated by Awang (2015), offers a means to construct a robust sample distribution, providing insights into the estimations of these effects.

3.19 Moderation

The Smart PLS software was utilized to evaluate and record the responses obtained from the 580 completed surveys for moderation. Prior to investigating the moderating variables, the product or interaction of the independent and moderating variable was calculated using PLS . This calculation was performed to facilitate an examination of the moderating role of LSEs a in the correlation between workplace

Ostracim and Acquiescent Silence. Subsequent to the computation of these interactions, the model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

The outcomes of the data analysis and hypothesis testing using structural equation modelling are presented in this chapter along with their interpretation. The preliminary data analysis, starts this chapter which presents information on demographics of participants. Additionally, data screening, outliers, normality, multicollinearity, and descriptive statistics of the study constructs are included. The results of confirmatory factor analysis are then presented. The conclusion presents the findings of the bootstrapping hypothesis testing.

There were 600 questionnaires sent to employees. But 580 responses were obtained from them.

4.1 Outliers

As per Hair et al. (2010), outliers are values that deviate significantly from the norm, either being unusually high or low on a particular variable, potentially causing data irregularities and skewed statistical outcomes. To identify univariate outliers, researchers can analyze the frequency distributions of Z-scores derived from the observed data, as outlined by Kline (2005). In the current study, a 5-point Likert scale was employed, with scores ranging from 1 denoting "strongly agree" to 5 signifying "strongly disagree." Consequently, there were no instances of univariate outliers detected. It's worth noting that the extreme points of this Likert scale, representing "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree," have the potential to be considered outliers due to their position at the edges of the response spectrum.

4.2 Normality

Once the analysis of outliers is complete, the subsequent stage involves assessing the normality of the data. Skewness, indicating the symmetry of the distribution, and kurtosis, reflecting the distribution's pointedness or flatness in comparison to the normal distribution, are utilized to evaluate the data's normality, as indicated by Saunders et al. (2012). According to Fidell and Tabachnick (2007), it is recommended that skewness and kurtosis values fall within the ±2 range. Remarkably, the observed skewness and kurtosis values in this study adhered to the specified range, signifying that the data satisfies the assumption of normality.

While it's worth mentioning that both positive and negative skewness and kurtosis values were evident in the results, researchers contend that the presence of such values within the acceptable range doesn't raise concerns. Instead, these values are considered reflective of the inherent characteristics of the constructs under investigation.

Table 1: Normal Distribution of data

Statistics

		Workplace Ostracism	LSE	Anxiety	Emotional exhaustion	Acquiescent silence	Procrastination
N	Valid	580	580	580	580	580	580
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		18.05	24.68	9.09	29.98	14.63	26.44
Std. Error of Mean		0.146	0.272	0.152	0.274	0.096	0.287
Skewness		-0.035	0.004	-0.022	-0.096	0.085	-0.016
Std. Error of Skewness		0.101	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.101
Kurtosis		-0.425	-0.624	-0.54	-0.54	-0.437	-0.495
Std. Error of Kurtosis		0.203	0.203	0.203	0.203	0.203	0.203

4.3 Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity is another presumption made by regression analysis. Homoscedasticity is characterized as a situation where the variability in scores of a single continuous variable remains relatively consistent across all values of another continuous variable (Fidell & Tabachnick, 2001). As stipulated by Hair et al. (2006), it is imperative for the evidence to substantiate the hypothesis of homoscedasticity. In order to validate the veracity of the homoscedasticity assumption, the P-P plot of standardized residuals from the regression analysis was utilized for assessment. See in Appendix A.

4.4 Assumption of Factor Analysis

It is important to meet the assumption of factor analysis prior to conducting regression on data collected. Factor analysis is typically done to see whether the sampling was adequate and the results were appropriate. In social science research, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Barlett's (p-value) test is typically used to assess the applicability of the data and the suitability of the sampling. While Mallery and George (2003) argue that the data should be suitable for the study's variables if the Bartlett sphericity (p) value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the KMO & Bartlett test was used to examine the effectiveness of factor analysis. According to Kaiser (1974), a KMO value greater than 0.5 indicates that sampling is suitable.

Table 2: KMO and Barlett Test

Variables	KMO	Chi Square	Barlett p value
Workplace Ostracism	0.872	2982.32	0
Low Self Esteem	0.89	3000.9	0
Anxiety	0.839	4817.48	0
Emotional Exhaustion	0.838	6122.98	0
Acquiescent Silence	0.637	5635.14	0
Procrastination	0.888	6365.64	0

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

As articulated by Sekaran (2003), descriptive statistics serve the purpose of elucidating the phenomenon under investigation. Within the realm of descriptive statistics, the manipulation of raw data or information is undertaken to render practical significance to the variables under scrutiny. The descriptive statistics include the presentation of mean and standard deviation values for each variable. Notably, a higher mean value coupled with a lower standard deviation indicates a stronger level of agreement among respondents in relation to the posed questions.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Variable Item

Descriptive Statistics					
Variables	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Workplace Ostracism	580	10	26	18.05	3.515
Self Esteem	580	11	39	24.68	6.553
Anxiety	580	1	17	9.09	3.65
Emotional Exhaustion	580	15	44	29.98	6.588
Acquiescent Silence	580	10	20	14.63	2.31
Procrastination	580	11	43	26.44	6.905

4.6 Multicollinearity

According to some academics, the value of multicollinearity must be less than 10, but according to some academics it must be less than 5.0. According to Hair et al. (2006), the values of VIF for all the independent variables are less than 5.0 (VIF 5.0) as shown in table. The VIF for all independent variables is less than 5 therefore the multicollinearity problem does not exist in this study.

Table 4: Multicollinearity of Variable Items

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Workplace Ostracism	1	1
Anxiety	1	1
Self Esteem	1	1.002
Procrastination	1	1
Acquiescent Silence	1	1
Emotional Exhaustion	1	1.01

4.7 Demographics

The respondents were asked about their gender, age, experience and income. We can see that in the following table:

Table 5: Demographic Information of respondents

Items/Variable	Frequency		Percent (%)
Age	18-25 years	346	59.7
	26 – 35 years	216	37.2
	36 – 45 years	0	0
	46 – 50 years	0	0
	50 above	18	3.1
	Total	520	100
Gender	Male	381	65.7
	Female	199	34.3
	Total	580	100
Experience	0-5	440	75.9
	10-Jun	90	15.5
	15-Nov	19	33
	16-20	7	1.2
	21-25	6	1
	25 Above	18	3.1
	Total	580	100
Income	Less than 15,000	177	30.5
	Rs 35,000 to Rs 49,000	196	33.8
	Rs 50,000 to 74,0000	84	14.5
	Rs 75,000 to Rs 99,000	43	7.4
	Rs 100,0000 and above	80	13.8
		580	100

4.8 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Figure 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis
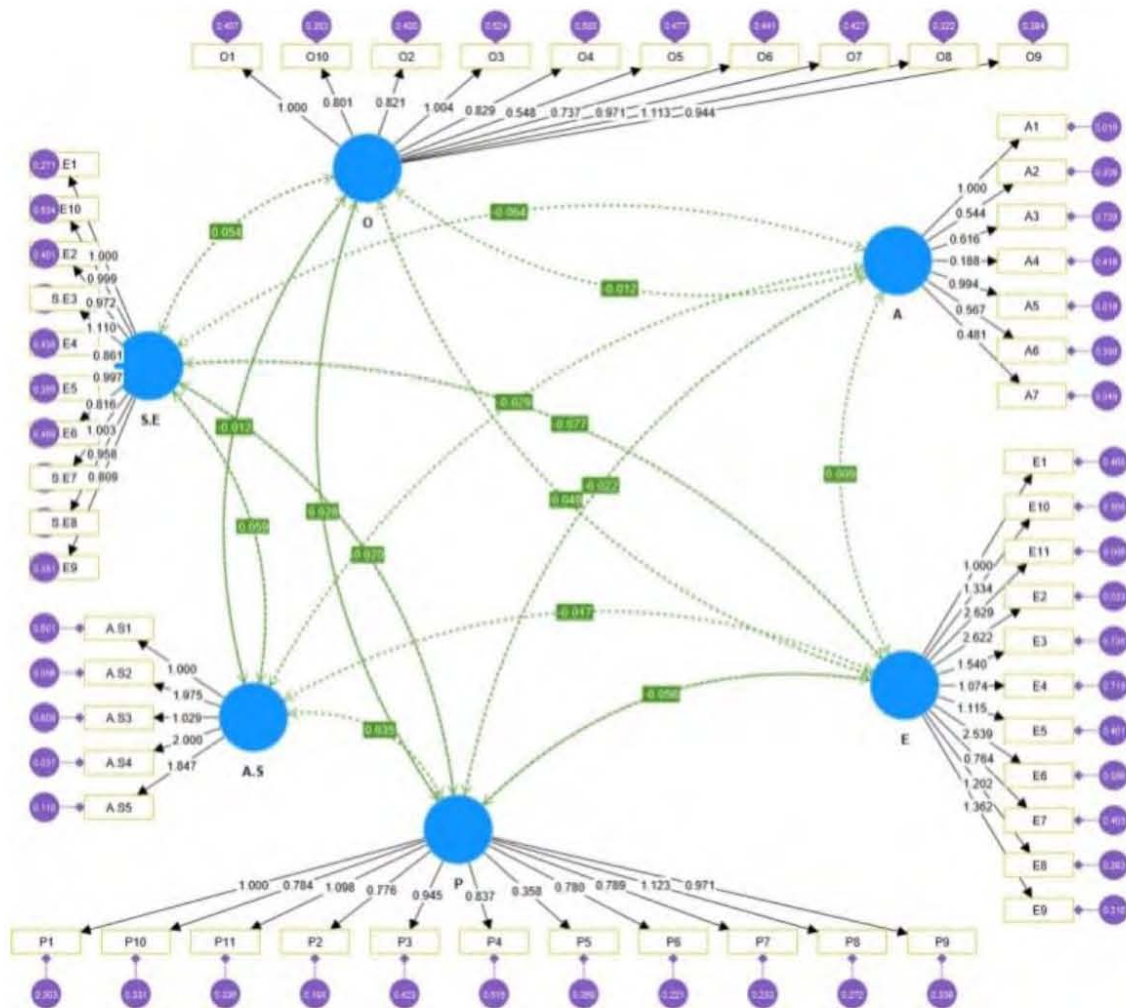
4.9 Reliability and Validity

Table 6: Reliability and Validity of Scale Items

Scale Items	Cronbach Alpha
Anxiety	0.918
Acquiescent Silence	0.924
Emotional Exhaustion	0.904
Workplace Ostracism	0.84
Procrastination	0.943
Self Esteem	0.903

4.10 Convergent Validity

The alignment observed among measurements of the same construct, appraised through multiple methods, is identified as convergent validity, as established by Fisk and Campbell (1959). Verification of convergent validity hinges upon the computation of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. Convergent validity is deemed to be achieved when AVE values surpass the threshold of 0.5, in accordance with Awang (2015) and Hair et al. (2010). In this study, the AVE values for the various constructs ranged from 0.502 to 0.684, signifying the successful establishment of convergent validity across all components.

Table 7: Convergent Validity of Variable Items

Variables	AVE
Anxiety	0.592
Acquiescent Silence	0.684
Emotional Exhaustion	0.531
Workplace Ostracism	0.502
Procrastination	0.61
Self Esteem	0.566

4.11 Construct Validity

According to Saunders et al. (2012), construct validity pertains to "the extent to which the measurement questions accurately reflect the concepts under investigation." When the values of the model fit indices satisfy the predefined threshold level, it signifies the establishment of construct validity (Awang, 2015). The verification of the measuring model's construct validity was predicated on the outcomes of the fitness indicators. As evidenced by the provided table, the RMSEA, NFI, GFI, and CFI values all fell within the specified threshold ranges, further confirming the construct validity of the model.

Table 8: Calculations of overall measurement model

Goodness of Fit Indices				
Goodness of Fit	Acceptable Level	Calculated Measures	Status	Hypotheses
RMR	< 0.05 shows good fit, but acceptable < 0.08	0.04	Acceptable	Accepted
GFI	< 1.000	0.791	Acceptable	Accepted
CFI	> 0.900	0.9	Acceptable	Accepted
RMSEA	Best fit when = 0.05, acceptable when 0.08	0.062	Acceptable	Accepted
DF	Should be positive	1346	Acceptable	Accepted
CMIN/DF	-	3.19	Acceptable	Accepted

4.12 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity encapsulates the unique characteristics of distinct constructs, as outlined by (Fisk & Campbell, 1959). To achieve discriminant validity in this study, redundant items were removed. This involved presenting the square roots of the AVE from each construct and the correlations between the constructs.

4.13 Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

Recent research studies have proposed that neither the cross loading nor the evaluation of formell lacker criterion fully determine the discriminant validity (Ringle, Sarstedt, & Henseler, 2015). Instead the researchers have proposed the HTMT (Henselr et al.,2015) as an alternative for discriminant validity measure. HTMT ratio is calculated on the average of the correlations of indicators across constructs measuring various phenomenon. The values of HTMT must be below 0.85 to decide discriminant validity (Henseler et al.,2015) such as shown below in the table:

Table 9: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio

	A	A.S	E	O	P
A					
A.S	0.827				
E	0.164	0.728			
O	0.08	0.051	0.708		
P	0.043	0.052	0.071	0.781	
S.E	0.07	0.082	0.1	0.074	0.752

4.13 The Structure Model

Figure 4: The Structure Model
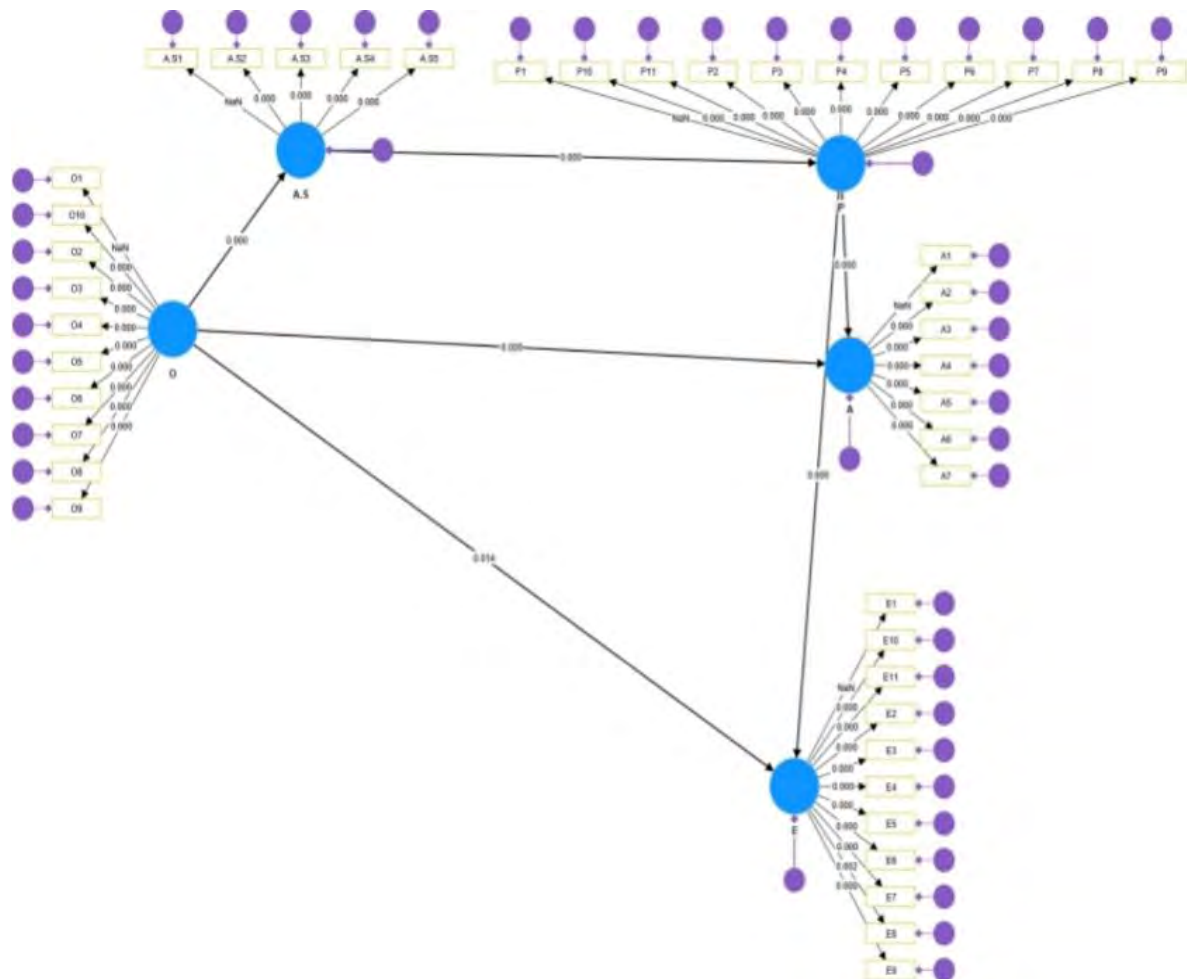
4.14 Direct Relationship between Variable

Table 10 : Direct Effect among Variables

	Beta	M	S.D	T value	P values
O -> A.S	0.485	0.496	0.069	7.014	0
A.S -> P	0.803	0.802	0.104	7.705	0
P -> A	0.459	0.454	0.07	6.58	0
P -> E	0.514	0.514	0.057	9.014	0
O -> A	0.296	0.292	0.079	3.755	0
O -> E	0.148	0.144	0.06	2.48	0.014

Note: O=Workplace Ostracism, A. S=Acquiescent Silence, P=Procrastination, A=Anxiety and E for Emotional Exhaustion

This study also underlined the mediating role of acquiescent silence and procrastination in the relationships between WO and dependent variables anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Argote et al. (2016) claim that there is a positive and significant relationship if t > 2 and p less than 0.05, between the variables.

So, there is significant and positive relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence because their β=0.485, M=0.496, S. D=0.069, t=7.014 and p=0.00, so results show that their p value is less than 0.05 and t is greater than 2 which indicate significant and positive relationship between them.   We can see that there is significant positive relationship between acquiescent silence and procrastination because p value for A.S and P is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 and t value is 7.705 which is greater than 2 , β is 0.803 and M is 0.802 and S.D=0.104   , it means the relationship between A.S and P is significant and positive. The p value for workplace ostracism and anxiety is 0.000 and t value is 3.755, β=0.296 M=0.292 and S. D=0.079, so it indicates that the relationship between them is significant and positive. The relationship between P and A is supported because their p value is 0.000 and t=6.580, S. D= 0.070 , M=0.454 and β=0.459 . The results indicate that the relationship between P and E is significant and positive because their p= 0.000, t=9.014, S.

D=0.057, M=0.514 and β=0.514**. So,** the relationship between procrastination and emotional exhaustion is also significant and positive. Results proposed that there is significant and positive relationship between workplace ostracism and emotional exhaustion because their p=0.014 which is less than 0.05 and t=2.480, β=0.148.M=0.144 and S.D=0.060.

4.15 Indirect Effects among Variables

Table 11: Indirect Effect among Variables

	Beta	M	S.D	T value	P values
O -> A.S -> P -> A	0.11	0.11	0.021	5.228	0
O -> A.S -> P -> E	0.19	0.191	0.027	7.044	0

Note: O=Workplace Ostracism, A.S=Acquiescent Silence, P=Procrastination, A=Anxiety and E for Emotional Exhaustion

The result depicts that there is sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination between workplace ostracism and anxiety and the relationship between them is significant and positive because sβ=0.110, M=0.110, S.D=0.021, p=0.000,t=5.228. So there is indirect effects of workplace ostracism on anxiety through sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination.

There is sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination between workplace ostracism and emotional exhaustion because results show that β=0.190, M=0.191, S.D=0.027, t=7.044 and p=0.000. This shows that results are significant and positive so there is sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination between workplace ostracism and emotional exhaustion.

4.16 Moderated Mediation

The cut-off criteria for p is >0.005 and for t-value is lie between 2-5. The below table demonstrate that the direct relationship between self-esteem and acquiescent silence is significant with ß=0.582, T-value= 2.039 and p-value=0.042 while the total effect of interaction term S.E*O has also positive effect on acquiescent silence with ß=0.172,T-value= 2.097 and p-value=0.043.It is evident that self-esteem strengthen the relationship of workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence. Hence, H9 is supported.

Table 12: Moderation Effect of Low Self Esteem

	Beta	M	S.D	tvalue	p value
S.E -> A.S	0.582	0.579	0.286	2.039	0.042
S.E x O -> A.S	0.172	0.136	0.082	2.097	0.043

Table 13: Summary of Hypotheses

S#	Hypotheses	Result
H1	Workplace Ostracism is positively correlated to acquiescent silence.	Supported
H2	Acquiescent silence is positively correlated to procrastination.	Supported
H3	Procrastination is positively correlated to anxiety.	Supported
H4	Procrastination is positively correlated to emotional exhaustion.	Supported
H5	Acquiescent silence and procrastination sequentially mediate the correlation between workplace ostracism and anxiety.	Supported
H6	Acquiescent silence and procrastination sequentially mediate the correlation between workplace ostracism and emotional exhaustion.	Supported
H7	Workplace ostracism is positively correlated to anxiety.	Supported
H8	Workplace ostracism is positively correlated to emotional exhaustion.	Supported
H9	The relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence is moderated by low self-esteem such that the relationship is stronger at higher level of low self-esteem.	Supported

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the impact of WO on both anxiety and emotional exhaustion, employing a sequential mediation model involving acquiescent silence and procrastination as intermediate steps. Additionally, this study delves into the moderating role played by low self-esteem in the association between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of low self-esteem, emphasizing how it amplifies the connection between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence. Ultimately, this study contributes to a more profound comprehension of the consequences of WO on anxiety and emotional exhaustion, especially within the hospitality industry's context.

The impetus behind this study stems from the concern that workplace ostracism is imposing considerable stress upon employees within the hospitality industry, prompting them to either navigate the situation with emotional resilience or contemplate leaving their respective organizations. Consequently, there emerged a pressing need to determine the role of workplace ostracism in relation to anxiety and emotional exhaustion. This study sought to explore these relationships by introducing a sequential mediation framework, encompassing acquiescent silence and procrastination as intermediary processes leading to adverse outcomes such as anxiety and emotional exhaustion.

In essence, our study endeavors to bridge a critical gap by shedding light on the sequential mediation effects of acquiescent silence and procrastination, providing

valuable insights into how these mechanisms impact individuals who experience workplace ostracism.

5.1.1 Workplace Ostracism and Acquiescent Silence

Individuals who experience workplace ostracism often adopt a coping strategy characterized by silence, which can manifest as passive behavior, such as refraining from speaking up due to the belief that it would be unfavorable and would not form any positive outcomes (Jahanzeb et al., 2020). This disengagement may manifest in the form of withholding opinions or information that could be vital for the organization (Fatima & Jahanzeb, 2018).

According to Jahanzeb et al. (2020), in response to non-retaliatory ostracism, ostracized employees tend to exhibit disengaged behavior in the form of acquiescent silence. The study's findings provide empirical support for a positive and significant relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence, as indicated by a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05) and a t-value of 7.014 (greater than 2). Consequently, the first hypothesis, asserting that workplace ostracism is positively correlated to acquiescent silence, is validated by the data.

5.1.2 Acquiescent Silence and Procrastination

Individuals who refrain from speaking up and exhibit disengaged behavior at work may have experienced harsh criticism, leading them to believe that they must possess exceptional talents to be perceived as valuable. Simultaneously, procrastination tendencies may escalate among those who choose silence as a means to evade tasks due to a fear of speaking (Freund & Krause, 2016; Fatimah et al., 2011; Haghbin et al., 2012).

The study's results corroborate a positive and significant relationship between acquiescent silence and procrastination, as indicated by a p-value of 0.000 (below 0.05) and a t-value of 7.705 (exceeding 2). Consequently, the second hypothesis, postulating a positive correlation between acquiescent silence and procrastination.

5.1.3 Procrastination and Anxiety

Procrastination at work has a history of being linked to a variety of serious psychological problems, such as stress, worry, overthinking, and depression (Klingsieck, 2013). Due to their emotional instability, withdrawing conduct, and psychological problems, ostracized people allegedly postpone important tasks even though they are aware of the consequences (Steel, 2007). Procrastinating before the deadline of work may be a sign of depression or anxiety.The results indicate the that t-value is 6.580 and p-value is 0.000 which claim that hypothesis 3 is accepted and procrastination is positively correlated to anxiety.

5.1.4 Procrastination and Emotional Exhaustion:

According to recent research, people who delay frequently end up feeling bad about it because they are aware that their actions indicate a lack of engagement, which results in emotional exhaustion. The immediate outcome of putting off work is having to complete many duties at the last minute, which leads to insufficient sleep and a host of negative emotions, including emotional exhaustion (Perlman et al., 2010; Brostrom et al., 2017). Hypothesis 4 is accepted because their t value 9.014 and p value is 0.00 so this claim that procrastination has direct and positive correlation to emotional exhaustion.

5.1.5 Workplace Ostracism and Anxiety

Workplace ostracism includes instances where coworkers' advice and criticism are disregarded, such as when a session is started without a particular coworker present or when critical emails are disregarded or ignored or when the employee feel excluded at workplace (De Clercq et al., 2019). Employees who are treated poorly are prone to doubting their own value and worth to their organization (Wan et al., 2016).

According to Berdahl and Anderson (2002), employees' feelings of helplessness brought on by exclusion impact their behavioral and psychological reactions. Their reactivity to threats rises at work, they become less confident, they get anxious, and restrained non-compliant behavior is encouraged (Keltner et al., 2003). The hypothesis 5 is accepted because their p=0.00 and t=3.755 which shows that workplace is direct and positively correlated to anxiety.

5.1.6 Workplace Ostracism and Emotional Exhaustion

Ostracism at work is a stressor that can drain employees' mental health and put them in danger (Heames & Harvey, 2006; Williams & Sommer, 1997). Employees who are neglected suffer emotional exhaustion as well as a lack of support from coworkers and superiors (Dutton & Heapy, 2008; Ashforth & Lee, 1996). According to research by Choi (2019), workplace Ostracism has a direct and positive correlation with employees' emotional exhaustion at work. Therefore, hypothesis 6 is accepted because p=0.014 and t=2.480.

5.1.7 Sequential Mediating Role of Acquiescent Silence and Procrastination with Anxiety and Emotional Exhaustion

According to Fatima and Jahanzeb (2018), workplace ostracism is "the extent to which employees perceive they are ignored or excluded at the workplace." According to Jahanzeb et al. (2020), ostracized employees react to non-retaliatory ostracism over the issue by engaging in disengaged behaviour such as acquiescent silence. People who are reluctant to speak out in meetings and are disengaged at work may have experienced harsh criticism from others and believe that they must possess exceptional talent in order to be useful.Procrastination may increase among those who avoid disagreement by being silent out of fear of speaking (Freund & Krause, 2016; Haghbin et al., 2012; Fatimah et al., 2011). According to Perlman et al. (2010) and Brostrom et al. (2017) , procrastination has a number of detrimental effects on workers, including inadequate sleep,anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Sirois et al. (2018) discovered a relationship between procrastination and people's capacity for emotional control, suggesting that people who delay completing tasks may experience more unpleasant emotions and anxiety symptoms.The results indicate that hypothesis 7 is accepted because their p=0.00 and t=5.228. This shows that there is a significant and positive correlation of workplace ostracism on anxiety through sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination. The hypothesis 8 is also accepted because their p=0.000 and t=7.044. This shows that there is significant and positive correlation of workplace ostracism on emotional exhaustion through sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination.

5.1.8 Role of Low Self Esteem between Acquiescent silence and Procrastination

The study reveals a significant direct relationship between low self-esteem and acquiescent silence, with a regression coefficient (ß) of 0.582, a t-value of 2.039, and a p-value of 0.042. Additionally, the total effect of the interaction term S.E*O also exhibits a positive influence on acquiescent silence, reflected in a coefficient (ß) of 0.172, a t-value of 2.097, and a p-value of 0.043. These findings underscore the role of self-esteem in strengthening the connection between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence. Consequently, it can be inferred that low self-esteem functions as a moderator in the relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

There are various theoretical contributions to recent research. To begin with, we used "belongingness theory" to analyze the connection between workplace ostracism and negative outcomes like anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Our research shows that the link between workplace ostracism as an independent variable and anxiety and emotional exhaustion as a dependent variable sequentially mediated by acquiescent silence and procrastination. This study is the first to examine the relationship between workplace ostracism and negative outcomes like anxiety and emotional exhaustion through sequential mediation using belongingness theory. The findings also support recent research (Choi, 2019; Jahanzeb & Fatima, 2017), which found correlation between WO and emotional exhaustion as well as a connection between them and the association between WO and procrastination (He et al., 2021) and the correlation between WO and acquiescent silence (Jahanzeb et al., 2020), procrastination and anxiety (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984).

In our research, we introduce the concept of low self-esteem as a moderating factor within our theoretical framework. Specifically, low self-esteem functions as a moderator, influencing the link between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence. Importantly, this correlation between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence gains added significance among employees characterized by lower self-esteem levels. Furthermore, our study sheds light on the sequential mediation roles undertaken by acquiescent silence and procrastination within the terms of workplace ostracism, and their subsequent impact on anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Additionally, our research incorporates low self-esteem as a moderator in the association between WO and acquiescent silence.

It's worth highlighting the recent upsurge of interest within the research community in the compelling subject of ostracism. While previous studies have primarily focused on investigating factors that mediate or moderate the association between workplace ostracism and behavioral outcomes, there have been relatively few studies that mediate and moderate the connection between workplace ostracism and emotional exhaustion. Our research findings put forth the notion that acquiescent silence and procrastination may function sequentially as mediators in the correlation between WO and certain adverse consequences like anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, we demonstrate that low self-esteem amplifies the connection between WO and acquiescent silence. Significantly, our study represents a pioneering endeavor to explore the sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination concerning anxiety and emotional exhaustion. It also simultaneously examines the moderating influence of low self-esteem in the relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence.

5.3 Managerial Implications

We suggest several important managerial implications. According to the study, anxiety and emotional exhaustion at work can be significantly influenced by perceptions of workplace ostracism. Therefore, service businesses should implement the necessary measures to lower workplace ostracism. In this scenario, it is imperative for managers to cultivate an environment characterized by openness, transparency, and equitable competition and make sure that all staff members are aware of the negative repercussions of workplace ostracism (Fatima & Jahanzeb, 2018; Zheng et al., 2016; Jahanzeb et al., 2020;). Just as individuals can foster inclusive interpersonal atmospheres through adept leadership, organizations can enhance group cohesion by planning social events (Cote, 2017). However, establishing complaint mechanisms offer assistance and psychological counselling to the ostracized employees is one strategy to potentially minimize the negative impacts of workplace ostracism (Ogbeide et al., 2017).

Introducing mechanisms that offer support and psychological counseling to ostracized employees represents a potential strategy to ameliorate the detrimental ramifications of workplace ostracism (Ogbeide et al., 2017). It has been discovered that those who are less socialized within an organization or who lack good political skills are more susceptible to workplace ostracism (Khalid & Ahmed, 2016). Although workplace ostracism cannot be totally eliminated due to its pervasiveness, there are indirect actions that can be taken to reduce the risk of such situations happening. Managers need to give staff the right training and coaching in this regard to help them develop their political abilities. Critique sessions, behavioral modelling,

videotaped role-playing feedback, and drama-based training are a few possible training techniques (Ferris et al., 2008).

The moderating effects of low self-esteem on the relationships between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence propose that employee with low self-esteem become more silent then show procrastination in their work which ultimately make them anxious and emotionally exhausted. The organization should therefore implement specific training program to improve employees' self-esteem. Management and organization should encourage facilitative measures to aid staff members in successfully engaging in positive behaviour. Employees' self-esteem is undermined and their health is harmed when they experience ostracism at work (Ferris et al., 2008.

Organization may specifically want to create guidelines, rules, and an environment that discourages ostracism. Organization should be aware when adopting any steps because self-esteem might have detrimental effects on individuals

Workplace ostracism causes anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Following measures are highlighted to minimize its impact :

The organization needs to implement warm and engaging employee programme, such group workouts, and team competitions. As a result, coworkers will be able to recognize one another more easily, and the development of friendly relationships will lessen social exclusion.

- Employees' social networks can grow and their communication skills can be improved by job rotation.

- Strengthening a collaborative work environment must take into account by managers to lower the level of exclusion.

- Talking and discussing among coworkers must be encouraged by managers.

- Employees must be heard by managers, who must also be welcoming to them.

- Employees must be praised for their efforts and successes, and managers must remind them of their value to the company.

- To help employees feel more confident, managers might give them more responsibility and opportunities to grow in their roles. Employee empowerment and collaborative decision-making can both boost workers' self-esteem, which will lead to an lessen acquiescent silence and procrastination in employees eventually results in low level of anxiety and emotional exhaustion .

    As acquiescent silence increase anxiety and emotional exhaustion: the subsequent recommendations are given:

- Managers can lessen acquiescent silence by giving workers a feeling of security and trust.

- It is advised that managers prevent the tendency of group-think while taking decisions and make sure all team members' opinion is valued to improve the process of making decisions.

- Adapting to a collaborative leadership style and having a desire to hear what employees want to say.

- Building an appropriate organizational structure that gives employees access to feedback and the bottom up interactions for employees.

- The responses of managers should encourage workers to speak up, express their perspectives, and come up with fresh ideas and solutions.

5.4 Limitations

First, it's important to know that our sample originated from a single country and industry. To bolster the applicability of our results, subsequent research could

replicate our findings and extend the sample to encompass diverse nations and industries.

Secondly, we recognize the potential for the generalizability of our study to be influenced due to the utilization of data collected from employees within a collectivist, high-power distance nation. This aspect could potentially impact the wider relevance of our findings. In a high-power distance culture, speaking is deemed undesirable while remaining silent may allow employees to keep their managers support. To maintain and promote personal harmony, employees in collectivist cultures may express disengaged behavior through covert and indirect mistreatment rather than engaging in retaliatory mechanism in reaction to workplace ostracism (Jahanzeb & Fatima, 2018). Instead of keeping silent, however, ostracized workers in individualistic societies may openly return retaliatory ostracism (Kwon & Farndale, 2020).

Third, this research is cross-sectional. Later researchers may take into consideration longitudinal studies and confirm the causal relationship between workplace ostracism and negative consequences, anxiety and emotional exhaustion as well as its underlying mechanisms.

Fourth, we choose our sample from a variety of hotel industry. Due to the variation in the industries, the research findings might not apply to any other demographic. To broaden the scope of generalization and importance of research findings, the study can be repeated in the future with a larger, more diverse sample.

Fifth, We have used convenient sampling technique for our study . Future research can use different sampling techniques to examine the impact of workplace ostracism on anxiety and emotional exhaustion.

Sixth, the present study provides potential research directions on the mediation pathways between academic procrastination and negative emotions (e.g. multi-item assessment of self-efficacy, physical motivation, and avoidance motivation).

5.5 Conclusion

This research aimed to delve into the impact of workplace ostracism on anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Our findings suggest that workplace ostracism holds a direct relationship with both anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Moreover, this relationship is indirectly influenced by the sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination. Additionally, our study emphasizes the moderating role of low self-esteem, which strengthens the connection between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence.

The study's data was garnered from 580 employees employed within Pakistan's hospitality industry. To scrutinize these relationships, Smart PLS 4 was employed for testing purposes. The outcomes underscore that workplace ostracism is significantly and positively associated with anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that the intermediary roles of acquiescent silence and procrastination sequentially mediate the link between workplace ostracism and adverse outcomes like anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Additionally, low self-esteem emerges as a moderator, amplifying the connection between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence.

This research reveals that ostracism within the workplace sets in motion a non-revengeful response by means of acquiescent silence, which consequently leads to delays in tasks and precipitates anxiety and emotional exhaustion among employees.

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Appendix A

Homoscedasticity and Normal Distribution

Figure 4:Homoscedasticity (P – P Plot for Workplace Ostracism and Anxiety)
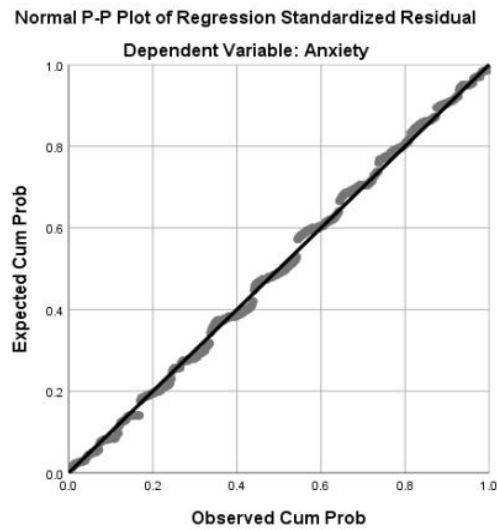

Figure 5:Homoscedasticity (P – P Plot for Workplace Ostracism and Emotional Exhaustion)
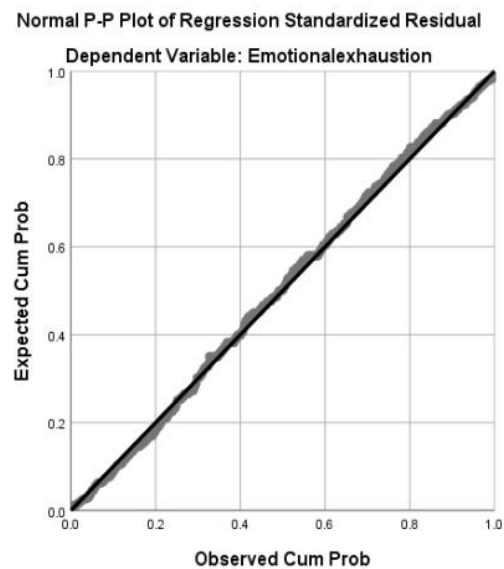
Figure 6: Homoscedasticity (P – P Plot for Workplace Ostracism and Emotional Exhaustion)
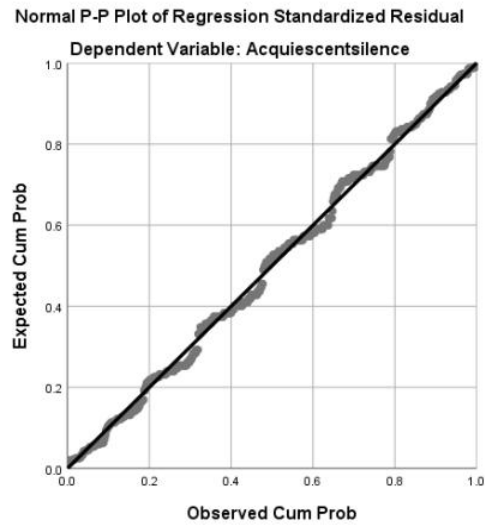

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Acquiescentsilence

Figure 7: Homoscedasticity (P – P Plot for Workplace Ostracism and Acquiescent Silence)

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Acquiescentsilence
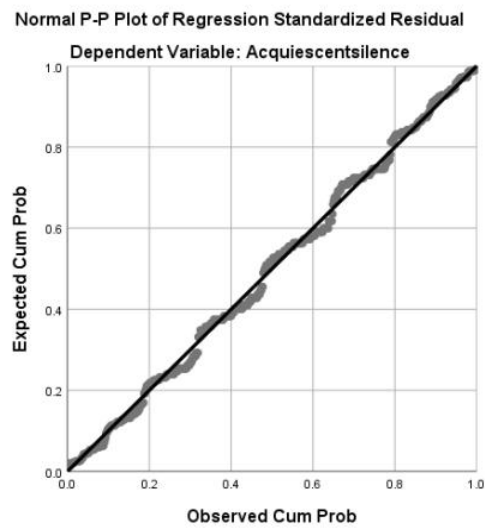
Figure 8 :Homoscedasticity (P – P Plot for Workplace Ostracism and Procrastination)

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Procrastination
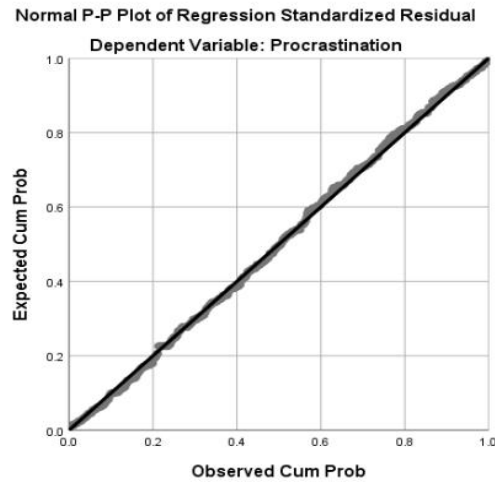
Figure 9: Homoscedasticity (P – P Plot for Workplace Ostracism and Low Self - esteem)

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Selfesteem
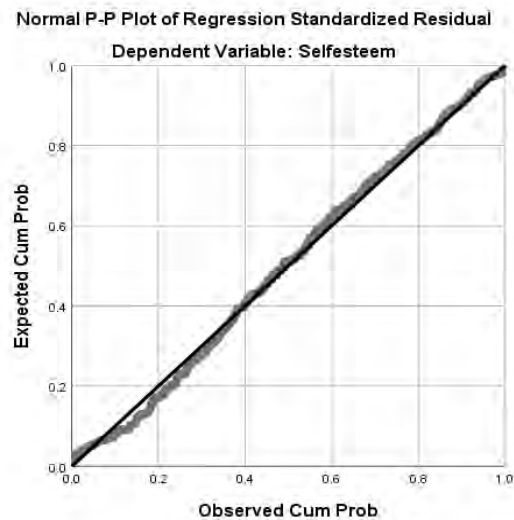
Figure 10: Homoscedasticity (P – P Plot for Workplace Ostracism and Acquiescent Silence)

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Workplaceostracism
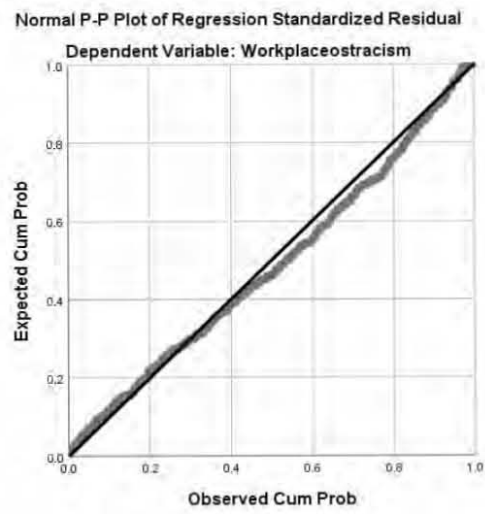
Appendix B

Normal Distribution of Error Terms

Figure 11: Regression/Normal Distribution (Workplace Ostracism and Acquiescent Silence)
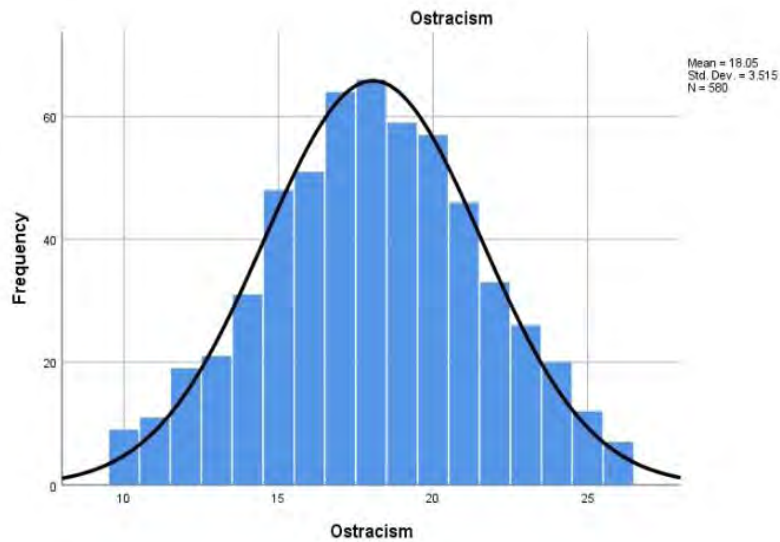
Figure 12: Regression/Normal Distribution (Workplace Ostracism and Low Self Esteem)

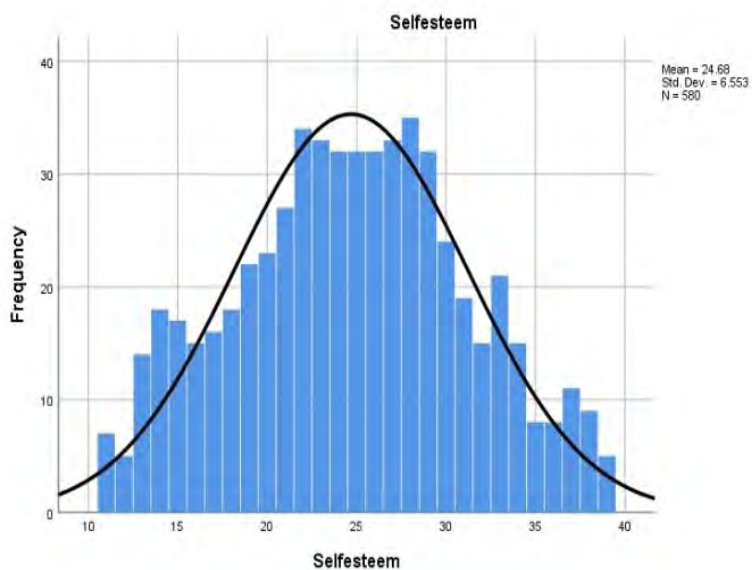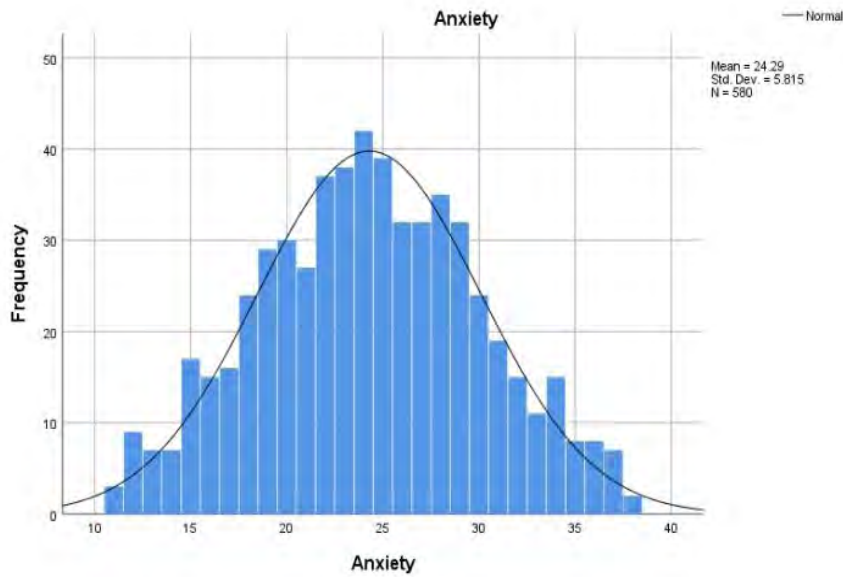**Figure 13: Regression/Normal Distribution (Histogram for Workplace Ostracism and Anxiety)**

Figure 14:Regression/Normal Distribution (Histogram for Workplace Ostracism and Acquiescent Silence)
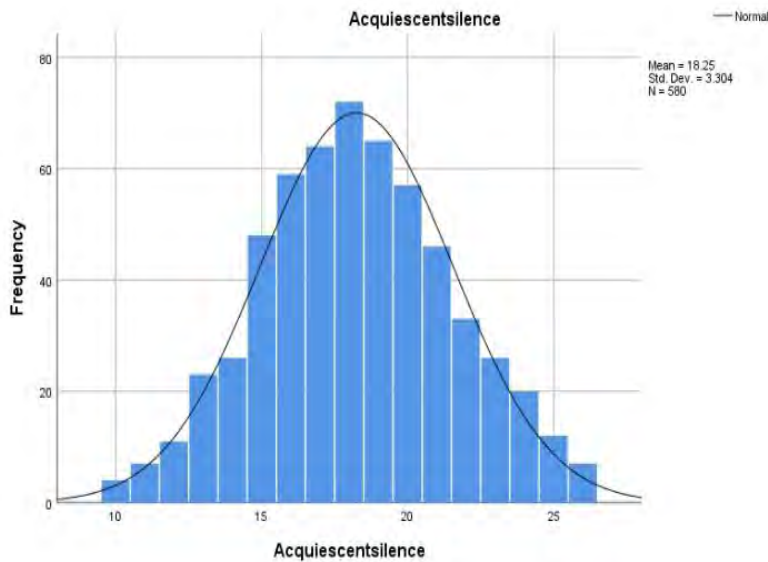
Figure 15: Regression/Normal Distribution (Histogram For Workplace Ostracism and Procrastination)
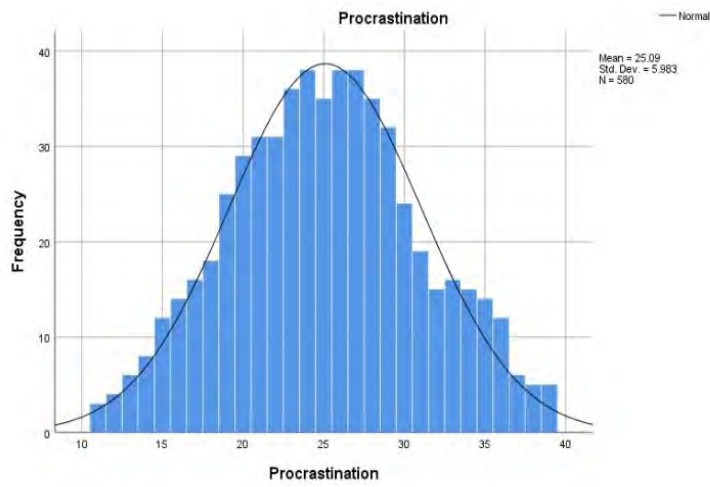
Figure 16:Regression/Normal Distribution (Histogram For Workplace Ostracism and Emotional Exhaustion)
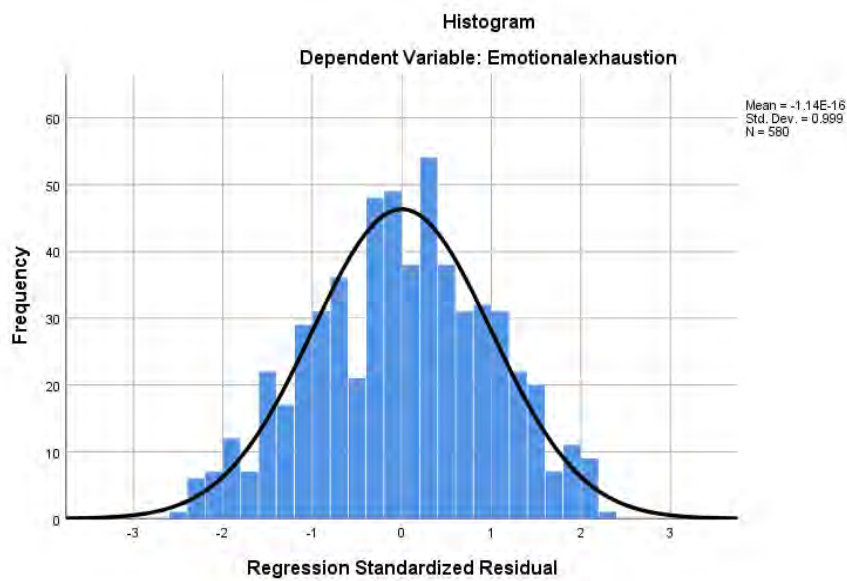
Appendix C

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
O1				.772		
O2				.722		
O3				.730		
O4				.677		
O5				.557		
O6				.666		
O7				.770		
O8				.828		
O9				.773		
O10				.733		
S.E 1			.789			
S.E2			.736			
S.E3			.791			
S.E4			.693			
S.E5			.747			
S.E6			.670			
S.E7			.743			
S.E8			.730			
S.E9			.691			
S.E10			.704			
A1					.927	
A2					.869	
A3					.833	
A4					.496	
A5					.924	
A6					.756	
A7					.855	
E1		.628				
E2		.880				
E3		.655				
E4		.588				
E5		.646				
E6		.876				
E7		.683				
E8		.741				
E9		.754				

E10		.666			
E11		.887			
A.S1					.802
A.S2					.919
A.S3					.805
A.S4					.915
A.S5					.916
P1	.838				
P2	.828				
P3	.804				
P4	.750				
P5	.507				
P6	.822				
P7	.846				
P8	.882				
P9	.831				
P10	.782				
P11	.860				

RESEARCH QUESTIONAIRE

QUAID-I-AZAM UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD

QUAID-I-AZAM SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

Dear Participant,

    I am a researcher in the field of Management Sciences; my area of specialization is Human Resource Management. As a part of my MPhil thesis, I am conducting research on workplace ostracism and its impact on anxiety and emotional exhaustion. I will be grateful if you help me by filling out the following questionnaire. I assure you that your responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for educational purposes. I appreciate your responses that best reflect your experiences in your job. Your responses will be valuable for my research. I thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

Yours truly,
 Muneeba Saeed
Quaid-i- Azam School of Management Sciences,
Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

SECTION-1

Demographic Information

Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Age Group (years)

- ☐ 18-25
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-50
- ☐ 50-Above

Experience (years)

- ☐ 0-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ 21-25
- ☐ 25-Above

Income

- ☐ less than Rs.15,000
- ☐ Rs.35,000 to Rs. 49,000
- ☐ Rs.50,000 to Rs. 74,000
- ☐ Rs.75,000 to Rs. 99,000
- ☐ 100,000 and Above

SECTION-2

❖ *How often according to the following statements others treated you in a certain way in your organization? (1 = Never, 2 = Once in a while, 3= Sometimes, 4 = Fairly often, 5 = Often, 6 = Constantly, 7 = Always)*

Others ignored you at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Others left the area when you entered.	1	2	3	4	5
My greetings have gone unanswered at work.	1	2	3	4	5
I involuntarily sat alone in a crowded lunchroom at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Others avoided me at work.	1	2	3	4	5
I noticed others would not look at me at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Others at work shut me out of the conversation.	1	2	3	4	5
Others refused to talk to me at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Others at work treated me as if I weren't there.	1	2	3	4	5
Others at work did not invite me or ask me if I wanted anything when they went out for a coffee break.	1	2	3	4	5

❖ **According to the following statement how often you feel about your job and organization? (1= never, 2= once a year, 3= twice a year, 4=several times a year, 5= monthly, 6= weekly, 7= daily)**

I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5
At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5

❖ **How often do you feel anxious at your workplace ? (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)**

Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge.	1	2	3	4	5

Not being able to stop or control worrying.	1	2	3	4	5
Worrying too much about different things.	1	2	3	4	5
Trouble relaxing.	1	2	3	4	5
Being so restless that it is hard to sit still.	1	2	3	4	5
Becoming easily annoyed or irritable.	1	2	3	4	5
Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen.	1	2	3	4	5

❖ **According to the following statement, to what extent do you feel emotionally exhausted at your workplace? (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)**

I feel drained in fulfilling my functions in my congregation	1	2	3	4	5
Fatigue and irritation are part of my daily experience.	1	2	3	4	5
I am invaded by sad I cannot explain.	1	2	3	4	5
I am feeling negative or cynical about the people with whom I work.	1	2	3	4	5
I have enthusiasm for my work+.	1	2	3	4	5
My humour has a cynical, biting one.	1	2	3	4	5
I find myself spending less and less time with attenders.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel supported in my work+.	1	2	3	4	5
I find myself frustrated in my attempts to accomplish task important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am less patient with people in my congregation than I used to be.	1	2	3	4	5
I am becoming less flexible in my dealings with attenders.	1	2	3	4	5

❖ **How often do you think you must be silent at your workplace ? (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)**

This employee is unwilling to speak up with suggestions for change because he/she is disengaged.	1	2	3	4	5
This employee passively withholds ideas, based on resignation.	1	2	3	4	5
This employee passively keeps ideas about solutions to problems to him/her self.	1	2	3	4	5

This employee keeps any ideas for improvement to him/her self because he/she has low self efficacy to make a difference.	1	2	3	4	5
This employee withholds ideas about how to improve the work around here, based on being disengaged.	1	2	3	4	5

❖ **According to the following statments to what extent do you delay your work in your organization (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)**

I delay making decisions until it's too late.	1	2	3	4	5
Even after I make a decision I delay acting upon it.	1	2	3	4	5
I waste a lot of time on trivial matters before getting to the final decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
In preparation for some deadlines, I often waste time by doing other things.	1	2	3	4	5
Even jobs that require little else except sitting down and doing them, I find that they seldom get done for days.	1	2	3	4	5
I often find myself performing tasks that I had intended to do days before	1	2	3	4	5
I am continually saying "I'll do it tomorrow	1	2	3	4	5
I generally delay before starting on work I have to do.	1	2	3	4	5
I find myself running out of time.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't get things done on time.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not very good at meeting deadlines.	1	2	3	4	5

Dear Participant, Thank you for your valuable responses.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of workplace ostracism on anxiety and emotional exhaustion through the sequential mediating role of acquiescent silence and procrastination. Low self-esteem acts a moderator for the study. Data was garnered from 580 employees working in hospitality industry. Random sampling technique used to collect the data. Belongingness theory used as a overarching theory to support the proposed model. This study contributes in several managerial and practical implications which encourage adopting strategies to eliminate workplace ostracism such as to strengthen the collaborative work environment, welcoming behaviours from managers, to appreciate the employees ideas and opinions. The findings suggest that workplace ostracism has direct and positive impact on anxiety and emotional exhaustion as well through sequential mediation of acquiescent silence and procrastination and low self-esteem moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence in such a way that high the low self-esteem, stronger the relationship between workplace ostracism and acquiescent silence.

Keywords: *Workplace ostracism, acquiescent silence, procrastination, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, low self-esteem.*