
Disruption of Employee Commitment via Workplace Ostracism in Non-Western World: Does Employees' Emotional Intelligence Matter?

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Abstract

The present study investigated the role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment. Three hundred and eighty-four (384) employees of Nnamdi Azikiwe University participated in the study. They were selected from different departments in the university. The selected participants comprised 208 males and 176 females whose age ranged from 30 to 56 years, with a mean of 41.21 and a standard deviation of 6.30. The Organizational Commitment Scale (Allen and Meyer, 1990), Workplace Ostracism Scale (Ferris et al., 2013), and Schutte Self-Report Emotional Questionnaire (Schutte, 1998) were used for data collection. Correlational research design and hierarchical linear regression were adopted as the research design and statistical analysis of the data. The results showed that workplace ostracism positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment at $r = .21$, $p < .01$. Emotional intelligence positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment at $r = .42$, $p < .01$. Interestingly, emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment at $\beta = -.01$, $p < .05$. Based on the findings, it was recommended that organizations implement emotional intelligence training programs, develop inclusive policies, train leaders to recognize address ostracism, and further research the dynamics between employees' commitment across diverse contexts.

Keywords: disruption, commitment, ostracism, emotional intelligence

Introduction

An organization is a dynamic entity that emerges when two or more individuals come together to form a collective unity, sharing a common purpose and goal. This entity can be likened to a living being, experiencing a range of emotions and challenges, from hardship and sorrow to joy and vision. Just as human beings can fall or even die, an organization can also experience decline or eventual demise (Onyia, 2019). A leading organization is grappling with a troubling decline in employee engagement and loyalty. Recent internal surveys and exit interviews have uncovered a growing emotional disconnect among staff members. Employees are increasingly reluctant to speak positively about their workplace to

outsiders, and fewer feel personally invested in the company's challenges. The once-prevalent sense of belonging to a "work family" has significantly eroded. Despite this, many employees continue their tenure not out of genuine commitment, but due to fears about job security and a perceived lack of alternatives in the job market. Sustaining productivity and cultivating a committed workforce poses challenges for today's organizations. Hence, it is important to understand the concept of commitment and its feasible outcome (Dixit & Bhati, 2012)

Hence, Employee commitment is said to be the degree of individuals' dedication and devotion to an organization they are affiliated to (Nwokoro et al., 2017). Studying employees' commitment is an important undertaking since the concept is deemed to be directly related to the strength or stability of a company's workforce. The concept of commitment to work has long been a subject of theoretical and philosophical inquiry in economic and sociological literature (Phan et al., 2019). Classical thinkers such as Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Henry Moore viewed work as a distinctively human activity that elevates individuals above mere animals (Yeoman, 2020). However, this perspective is complicated by the reality that for many, labor represents a form of "torture or continuous distress" due to the necessity of working for survival. In such cases, human labor may resemble that of an animal following instinct or a person of low social status performing menial tasks (Veltman, 2019). Moreover, they are factors that can contribute to a decrease in employee commitment, according to some recent studies, among which are: lack of organizational support (Caesens et al., 2014), poor leadership and supervision (Heyns & Rothmann, 2018), job security (Fischmann et al., 2019), work-life conflict, lack of career development, unfair treatment, and organizational politics (Jiang, 2023). Nevertheless, workplace ostracism is a factor that has been neglected by most researchers. According to Zhao, et al., (2020), it has been realized that workplace ostracism could pose detrimental effects on employees' commitment.

Workplace ostracism is defined as the feeling of being ignored or excluded by others in the workplace regardless of demographic diversity (Kaya et al., 2017). This could have significant consequences on the organisation and the employees (Howard et al., 2020). Ostracism could take various forms, including verbal and non-verbal behaviour (Ishrad et al,

2021). Whether intentional or unconscious, ostracism is a form of punishment, leading the ostracized victims to feel pain and feel threatened. From the victim's perspective, workplace ostracisms are associated with reduced organizational identification and organizational commitment (Ferris et al., 2017), turnover intentions (Fiset et al., 2017), deviant behaviour in workplace and psychological distress (Yaakobi & Williams, 2016). Gkorezis and Bellou (2016) defined ostracism as "to be voted out". This concept has been neglected for some time now. It is only in recent years that ostracism has begun to receive academic attention from researchers (Williams, 2007). When an employee is ostracized, it is posited to have severe impact on his attitude formation and final behavior (Gkorezis & Bellou, 2016). It is believed that when an employee is ostracized at work, it impacts their psychological well-being (Park & Ono, 2017) which ultimately impacts their engagement towards the work. Despite its prevalence, organizational psychologists have largely overlooked ostracism, thus the need for further research is paramount and should always be welcomed. It is observed that employees who are being ostracized are still committed to their work. Despite the importance of understanding the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment, there is a significant gap in literature regarding the role of emotional intelligence in employees that are being ostracized as they are still committed.

Emotional intelligence is the ability of an individual to recognize, understand and manage his own emotions as well as recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others (Goleman, 2021). However, the extent to which emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment remains unclear. The concept of emotional intelligence has been extensively studied in the context of organizational behaviour, with research highlighting its positive correlation with employee performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Additionally, emotional intelligence has been linked to increased job engagement, organizational citizenship behaviour, and overall job performance (Adhiyasa & Satrya 2021). In the context of workplace ostracism, emotional intelligence may play a crucial role in determining an individual's ability to cope with negative effects of exclusion. Employees with high emotional intelligence may be better equipped to recognize and manage their emotions, reducing the negative impact of workplace ostracism on their job satisfaction and

commitment. Conversely, employees with low emotional intelligence may be susceptible to the negative effect of workplace ostracism, leading to decreased job satisfaction and commitment. However, the specific mechanisms by which emotional intelligence influences the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment are not well understood. More research is needed to explore the potential mediating and moderating roles of emotional intelligence in this context (Jahanzeb & Fatima, 2018). The theoretical framework adopted provides a suiting link on the concepts under investigation.

Social exchange theory is a theoretical framework developed by Homans (1958). It provides an understanding. The theory posits that social behaviour is the result of an exchange process, where individuals seek to maximize benefits and minimize costs in their social interaction. In the context of this study, this theory is applied to explain how workplace ostracism, emotional intelligence and employee commitment interact. The current study asserts that employees develop commitment to their organisation based on perceived balance of benefits and costs associated with their employment relationship. The rationale behind this is that when employees feel they are receiving fair treatment, support, and reward from their organisation, they are more likely to reciprocate with increased commitment. Additionally, the study contends that workplace ostracism disrupts the balance of the exchange relationship, potentially leading to decreased employee commitment. When employees experience ostracism, they may perceive a lack of social support and value from their organisation and colleagues, which can negatively impact their willingness to remain committed to their organisation.

Emotional intelligence enters this framework as a moderating factor, potentially altering the strength or the direction of the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment. Employees with high emotional intelligence possess the ability to perceive, understand, use, and manage emotions effectively. In other words, emotional intelligence can be viewed as a personal resource that influence the behaviour of employees in social exchanges within the workplace. Emotional intelligent employees may be better equipped to navigate the challenges posed by workplace ostracism. They are more adept at recognizing the underlying causes of ostracism, managing their emotional responses to exclusion, and finding alternative ways to establish positive social exchanges within the

organisation. Moreover, emotional intelligence may enable employees to maintain a more balanced perspective on their overall exchange relationship with the organization, even in the face of ostracism. They may be better able to weigh the costs of ostracism against other benefits of their employment, potentially mitigating the negative impact on their commitment.

Employee commitment refers to the level of devotion employees feel towards their organization, encompassing loyalty, attachment, and effective response (Akintayo, 2010; Nwankwo et al., 2007). It's a psychological bond that reduces turnover and guides individuals toward crucial actions (Reetta, 2018). Employees are an organization's core resource, influencing success or failure, and their performance significantly impacts organizational success (Keter et al., 2019). Research defines employee commitment as organizational devotion, loyalty, and attachment (Akintayo, 2010; Nwankwo et al., 2007). Employee commitment is a psychological state influencing performance and turnover (Reetta, 2018), and organizational success hinges on employee performance (Keter et al., 2019). Essentially, employee commitment involves devotion, loyalty, and attachment to the organization, driving performance and determining outcomes.

To achieve success, employers and managers need effective strategies to motivate their employees. In today's competitive business environment, human factors are very significant for enterprises to gain sustainable competitive advantage (Kaplan & Kaplan, 2018). Employee commitment is an important part of driving organization performance as committed employees are satisfied, and willing to go an extra mile to ensure timely delivery on the organization's objectives (Hanchen, 2022). According to Men and Robinson (2018), research evidence on employees' commitment gathered more than two decades ago, showed that employers are sometimes baffled when their highly rated employees underperform, and others resign and leave the organization.

Workplace ostracism is a universal phenomenon which causes social pain to an individual (Ferris et al., 2008). Blackhart et al., (2009) define the term ostracism as, "the experience of being deliberately denied social contact by others from whom one might expect such contact". Thus, it is an individual's perception of being excluded or ignored by other people

around him (Ferris et al., 2008). Williams and Nida (2017) reported workplace ostracism as one of the most hurtful experiences in a human's life. Studies indicate that ostracism triggers equivalent neural pain responses as physical harm. Workplace ostracism can take up different forms (Kelly, 2013). An individual can feel ostracized when people around him simply ignore his greetings, people ignoring lunch breaks, offering a cold shoulder, not inviting for social gathering in office, etc. Williams (2007) clearly indicated in his study that an ostracized individual, when ignored by his colleagues or seniors at work starts believing himself as an outsider to the organization which ultimately threatens his sense of belongingness. This is in accordance with social identity perspective which posits that an individual's intentions and behaviors are guided by the perception and identification of themselves with others (Tajfel, 1978).

According to Williams (2007), ostracism causes social pain to an individual and is potential of threatening four basic needs of human. First, it threatens an individual's self-esteem, which makes him feel as if he has done something wrong because of which people around are ignoring him. Next in line, their need of belongingness is in danger as an ostracized employee feels as if he is eliminated from the group to which he belongs. Third, they lose their sense of control because the trauma which they encounter due to non-responsiveness of others makes them lose their control certain times. Fourth, when an individual is ostracized his sense of meaningful existence is impacted negatively which traumatizes the individual. Also, workplace ostracism has been defined as "the extent to which an individual perceives that he or she is ignored or excluded by others in workplace" (Wessermann, 2012). Emotional intelligence has been a topic of interest in psychology and organizational behaviour over past few decades. Recent research has continued to refine and expand humans' understanding of this concept. Miso et al. (2018) defines emotional intelligence as "the ability to perceive, use, understand and manage emotions".

Emotional intelligence involves monitoring and managing emotions in organizational settings to guide thought and action (Shiner, 2021). This definition underscores the practical application of emotional intelligence in a professional environment, suggesting its importance in organizational behaviour and performance. Brackett et al. (2024) proposes a nuanced definition, describing emotional intelligence as "the capacity to recognize,

understand, label, express, and regulate emotions in oneself and others". This definition breaks emotional intelligence into specific skills that can be developed and improved.

Previous research seems to suggest that workplace ostracism is directly correlated with employee commitment. For example, Noor and Abbas (2024) discovered that Workplace ostracism had a negative relationship with affective commitment. Jaison and Matthew (2024) revealed that there was a positive relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational commitment. Similarly, Ametepe et al. (2023) reported that workplace ostracism showed a significant negative relationship with organizational commitment.

Perception of social exclusion at work hinders employees' ability to seek help from colleagues for task completion. Sometime this communication gap which is created due to ostracism deteriorates the work performance (Seibert et al., 2011). When employees are ostracized at workplace, they have the tendency to develop negative emotions like worrying, upsetting, etc. which is believed to diminish his performance at work (McCarthy et al., 2022). Thus, they indulge themselves in minimizing their efforts towards the organization. Further, if it continues the ostracized employee starts considering him as a low-value employee. This marks the beginning where he feels as if his personal ego or self-respect is threatened at work and reduces his self- confidence manifold.

Despite its prevalence, organizational psychologists have largely overlooked ostracism, thus the need for further research is paramount. Therefore, it is to test these relationships in the hope of providing support for the theoretical link as originally conceptualised. The current study proposes this hypothesis:

H1: workplace ostracism would significantly correlate with employee commitment.

Previous research seems to suggest that emotional intelligence directly correlated with employee commitment. For example, Samuel (2024) conducted research and confirmed a significant effect of emotional intelligence on employee commitment within the construction company of Port Harcourt. Specifically, emotional intelligence was found to exert substantial influence on employee commitment levels. Oyoru and Ambali (2022) discovered that employee commitment positively and significantly mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance in the food and

beverage industry in Nigeria. In the same vein, Shafiq and Rana reported that there was a significant relationship of emotional intelligence to Organisational commitment. Emotional intelligence also displayed significant positive relationship with three components of organizational commitment which are denoted by affective, continuance and normative commitment. Emotional intelligence reflected a reasonable power of predictability towards the organisational commitment of teachers.

Employees with high emotional intelligence may be better equipped to recognize and manage their emotions, reducing the negative impact of workplace ostracism on their job satisfaction and commitment. Conversely, employees with low emotional intelligence may be susceptible to the negative effect of workplace ostracism, leading to decreased job satisfaction and commitment. However, the specific mechanisms by which emotional intelligence influences the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment are not well understood. More research is needed to explore the potential mediating and moderating roles of emotional intelligence in this context (Jahanzeb & Fatima, 2018). Based on the theoretical links presented, the following hypotheses was developed.

H2: Emotional intelligence would significantly correlate with employee commitment.

H3: Emotional intelligence would moderate the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment.

Method

Ethical Consideration

Researchers conducted all investigation procedures in the study involving human participants following ethical standard of the Nnamdi Azikiwe University institutional Board for Ethical Review and national research committee and the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. We obtained participant informed consent.

Design

The study was survey research which adopted correlational research design. Hierarchical Linear regression was used as the statistics for the data analysis; SPSS version 2023 was used to manage raw data.

Participants

Three hundred and eighty-four (384) employees of Nnamdi Azikiwe University participated in the study; they were selected from different departments in the university. Other participants did not return vividly filled copies of their questionnaires. The participants comprised two hundred and eight (208) and of one hundred and seventy-six (176).

Sample

The participants were selected using convenience sampling techniques. Information about participants' demographics such as age and occupation were obtained using the questionnaire. 81% were Christians, 5.2%, Muslims and 13.2% traditional worshippers. 62.5% were married, 23.2% were single and 14.3% were divorced. Also, about their educational qualification, 60.7% had PhD, MSc holders were 32.8%, and BSc holders were 6.5%.

Measures

The participants were asked for their consent, which they granted their consent and were asked to complete the Allen and Meyer Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1980), Workplace Ostracism Scale (Ferris et al, 2008) and Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (Schutte, 1998).

Organisational Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990) Organisational Commitment Scale was developed by Alien and Meyer (1990). The scale can be administered by researchers, HR professionals, or organisational psychologists. This scale 62 measures organizational commitment across three components namely: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. It uses a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= slightly disagree, 4= neither agree nor disagree, 5= slightly agree, 6= agree, 7= strongly agree). It typically consists of 24 items, with 8 items per component. Scores for each component are calculated separately by averaging the

responses to the 8 items in that component, after accounting for any reverse-scored items. Some of the items includes I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation, I feel a sense of belonging to my organisation, I feel I have very few options to leave my organisation now etc. Higher scores indicate higher levels of commitment in each dimension. The developers of the scale report a high internal consistency alpha score of 0.87. A pilot study was conducted with 51 participants' data responses, and a Cronbach's alpha score of .82 was obtained.

The Workplace Ostracism Scale (Ferris et al, 2008)

The Workplace Ostracism Scale was developed by Ferris et al., (2008), it measures perceived workplace ostracism using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = never, 2 = once in a while, 3 = sometimes, 4 = fairly often, 5 = often, 6 = constantly, 7 = always). It can be administered by researchers, HR professionals, or organizational psychologists. The scale consists of 10 items, the total score is calculated by summing up the responses to all 10 items, resulting in a possible range of 10 to 70. Higher scores indicate higher levels of perceived workplace ostracism. Some items of the scale include others who ignore me at work, others left the area where I entered, others avoided me at work etc. The developers of the scale report a high internal consistency alpha score of 0.92 and validity of 0.8. A pilot study was conducted with 57 participants' data responses and a Cronbach's alpha score of .70 was obtained 63.

The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (Schutte, 1998)

The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) was developed by Schutte (1998) assesses emotional intelligence using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). It can be administered by researchers, psychologists, or trained professionals. The test consists of 33 items. The total score is calculated by summing up the responses to all 33 items after accounting for reverse scored items, resulting in a possible range of 33 to 165. Higher scores indicate higher levels of emotional intelligence. I know when to speak about my personal problem to others, other people find it easy to confide in me, I expect good things to happen, I arrange events others enjoy. I know why my emotions change etc. The developers of the

scale report a high internal consistency alpha score of 0.90. A pilot study was conducted with 50 participants' data responses and a Cronbach's alpha score of .77 was obtained.

Data Collection Procedure

Copies of questionnaire measuring the construction under investigation were distributed by the researchers with the aid of work colleagues, the researchers were able to make themselves friendly with the participants and they were assured that the exercise was strictly for academic purposes and that the information they released was to be treated with utmost confidentiality. Participants were sampled using convenient sampling techniques. The copies of the responded questionnaire were collected back from the participants after they were filled. Four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaires were distributed. At the end of administration of the questionnaire, three hundred and ninety (390) questionnaires were returned.

Data Analysis

The returned questionnaires were cross-checked after collection from the participant, three hundred and eighty-four (384) questionnaires were found to be properly responded to, thus were used for data analysis. Hierarchical Linear regression was used as the statistics for the data analysis; SPSS version 2023 was used to manage raw data.

Result

The result depicts correlation coefficients table, moderated regression analysis table and summary of the findings.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations and Correlation Coefficients of the study variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Employee commitment	24.15	4.42	1				
Age	41.21	6.30	.02	1			
Gender	1.46	.50	.24**	-.27**	1		
Workplace ostracism	32.15	6.50	.21**	.22**	-.18**	1	
Emotional intelligence	117.82	10.78	.42**	.28**	-.07	.01	1

Note, ** = $p < .01$, * = $p < .05$.

The result in Table 1 revealed that demographic variables such as age did not significantly correlate with the employees' commitment at $r = .02, p > .05$. However, gender positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment ($r = .28, p < .05$). This means that gender may play a role in influence employees' commitment to work. Furthermore, workplace ostracism and emotional intelligence positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment at $r = .21, p < .01$ and $.42, p < .01$, respectively. Thus, the first and second hypothesis of the study were accepted. Consequent upon this effect, a perceived increase of workplace ostracism (which reflect a perceived exclusionary behaviour from workplace environment) and emotional intelligence (ability to control ones' emotion positively and influence that of others) may influence some degree of employees' commitment to an organisation. In the case, employees with high level of emotional intelligence may exercise some level of commitment to their work and organisation, even in the present of adversaries and ostracise behaviour from the management.

Table 2: Moderated regression analysis for the interaction between emotional intelligence, workplace ostracism, and employee commitment.

Predictors	R ²	df1(df2)	F	Effect	Std Error	T	LLCI	ULCI
Model 1	.34	5(378)	38.62**					
Age				-.05	.03	-1.52	-.11	.01
Gender				2.39**	.39	6.09	-1.62	3.17
Workplace ostracism (A)				.19**	.02	6.34	.13	.24
Emotional intelligence (B)				.21**	.02	11.10	.17	.24
A x B				-.01*	.00	-3.17	-.02	.01

Note, ** = $p < .01$, * = $p < .05$; these represent the significant values of the test; R² = R square.

The result of the moderated regression analysis using process macro showed that in the model, age and gender were included as covariates to control for the extraneous factors and the adjusted R² for the model was .34. This was statistically significant at $F(5,378) = 38.68, p < .01$. Furthermore, workplace ostracism positively and significantly predicted employees'

commitment, $\beta = .19$, $p < .01$. This means that despite the degree of workplace ostracism, employees may develop resilience to stay committed to their job. Although other factors may play a subtle role in this regard, emotional intelligence positively and significantly predicted employees' commitment ($\beta = .21$, $p < .05$). In other words, emotional intelligence negatively and significantly moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and employees' commitment ($\beta = -.01$, $p < .05$). Hence, the hypothesis of study three was further accepted. This means that there is an inverse relationship between emotional intelligence, workplace ostracism and employees' commitment. Notably, as emotional intelligence increases employees' commitment further increase even with the experience of workplace ostracism.

Based on the findings above, the following summary is made:

1. Workplace ostracism positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment at $r = .21$, $p < .01$.
2. Emotional intelligence positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment at $r = .42$, $p < .01$.
3. Emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment ($\beta = -.01$, $p < .05$).

Discussion

The study examined disruption of employee commitment via workplace ostracism: Does emotional intelligence matter? Hypothesis 1 which stated that there would be a significant relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment was accepted. The results of the analysis showed that workplace ostracism positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment. This is to say that as workplace ostracism increases, employees' commitment also increases. Employees, despite being ostracized, tends to remain committed to work because of different benefit they derived from their organizations. This finding is in line with Jaison and Matthew (2024) who reported that there was a positive relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational commitment. Theoretically, this is proven by the social exchange theory by Homans (1958), which propose that individuals enter and remain in a relationship with the expectation of receiving rewards that outweighs the cost of participation.

Hypothesis 2 which stated that there would be a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and employee commitment was accepted. The results of the analysis showed that emotional intelligence positively and significantly correlated with employees' commitment. This portrays the fact that employees remain committed to the organization because of their ability to understand and recognize their emotions as well as others. This is supported by previous studies such as Samuel (2024) who reported that emotional intelligence correlated with employees' commitment level. Additionally, Shafiq and Rana (2016) found out in their research that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and employee commitment. Consequently, employees who are high in emotional intelligence tend to cope better with daily demands and pressures in workplace thereby increasing their commitment to their organizations. This assertion is supported by Bar-On (1988) model of Emotional/Social intelligence which proposes that emotional/social intelligence equips individuals with social skills and facilitators that determines how effectively they understand others, related with them and deals with daily demands.

Hypothesis 3, which stated that emotional intelligence will moderate the relations between workplace ostracism and employee commitment was also accepted. This implies that as emotional intelligence increases employees' commitment further increases with the experience of workplace ostracism and emotionally intelligent employees may be able to reframe ostracism using their emotional skills to handle conflicts that bring ostracism and yet till committed to their duty. Theoretically, this finding is supported by Homans (1958) of social exchange theory which emphasized that employees with high emotional intelligence may be better able to maintain a positive exchange balance either by mitigating the perceived cost of ostracism or by maximizing other benefits within their work environment. Similarly, Oyoru and Ambali (2022) reported that Employees commitment and significantly mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance. This indirectly supports the study's findings.

Strengths, Implications and Limitations

This study has both practical and theoretical implications: Practical implication: it brings about a strong influence in implementing qualitative emotional intelligence programs which

could equip employees with the skills to navigate social situations including ostracism, which will bring about a more resilient workforce which continually brings about a highly maintained commitment to their environment. Additionally, it could bring about a shift in recruitment and selection processes companies might consider incorporating emotional intelligence assessment particularly for duties that require a strong interpersonal skill which could equip workers with resilience and bring about a higher commitment level. Consequently, from the policy perspective organizations may develop or revise workplace rules addressing workplace ostracism. By creating these policies, it would equip employees with the acceptable behaviors needed in the organizations and consequences inclusive when they perceive to be ostracized co-employees.

The study's limited sample, consisting only of staff from Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Nigeria, significantly restricts the generalizability of its findings.

For researchers, it's recommended to build upon this study by addressing its limitations in future research designs. This includes broadening the sample to include diverse industries and geographical locations, employing longitudinal designs to establish causality, and incorporating objective measures alongside self-reports to enhance the validity of findings.

It's recommended to explore potential cultural factors that might influence the relationships between emotional intelligence, workplace ostracism, and employee commitment. Cross-cultural studies could reveal important nuances in how these dynamics play out in different contexts, leading to more culturally sensitive recommendations for global organizations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal mediating role in the intricate relationship between workplace ostracism and employee commitment. Research findings highlight how individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to recognize and manage their responses to ostracism, maintain perspective, develop coping strategies, and nurture positive relationships despite challenging social environments. This resilience helps maintain their sense of belonging and value within the organization, mitigating the negative impact of ostracism on commitment. The implications are significant for both organizations and individuals, suggesting that investing in emotional intelligence

development could be a valuable strategy to enhance employee commitment and create more inclusive work environments. While further research is needed to explore specific mechanisms and interventions, recognizing the importance of emotional intelligence in this context can lead to more resilient employees, stronger interpersonal dynamics, and a more committed workforce, even in the face of social challenges like ostracism.

Declarations

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

Funding information

There is no funding for this research project.

Conflict of interest

We declare no competing interests.

Publisher's note

The academic opinions contained in this paper are those of the author and does not reflect that of his academic institution.

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