

# The Ostracism Effect on Counterproductive Work-Behaviours through the Mediating Role of Defensive-Silence, Emotional-Exhaustion, and Job-Dissatisfaction

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The purpose of the current study is to determine the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviour (CPWB) among banking sector employees in Pakistan. However defensive silence, employee's emotional exhaustion, and the role of job dissatisfaction are also assessed through a sequential mediational approach. For this purpose, data were collected through an adopted construct from 500 employees working in various commercial banks in the district of Bannu, Pakistan. Principle component analysis via SPSS and a serial mediation approach were applied to validate the model through Preacher and Hayes macros. Results indicate that only two paths (emotional exhaustion and job dissatisfaction) depict a significant relationship during single mediation, while double mediation results show significant path association. Finally, the relationship between ostracism and CPWB through triple variables in serial mediation also depicts significant results. The direct relationship between ostracism and CPWB can be better explained by the mediational role of defensive silence, emotional exhaustion, and job dissatisfaction.

**Keywords:** *Workplace ostracism, Counterproductive work behaviours, Defensive silence, Emotional exhaustion, and Job satisfaction.*

## 1. Introduction

The circumstances of social life mean humans face multi-facets of behavior (sweet blessing or bitter curse) from their coworkers (Jahanzeb, Fatima, and Batool, 2016). It's a natural phenomenon that workplace ostracism comes to individuals if supervisors neglect employees from important meetings and occasions of the organisation. Ostracised individuals face unfavorable behaviour from their friends, group members, and other coworkers during working hours (Khan, 2017). For instance, if the organisational employees are not informed of the organisational rules, important occasions, meetings, and other activities of the organisation then employees became ostracised, their performance will decrease and as a result, they will also neglect others in working conditions. Due to ostracised behaviours employees will not participate in the innovation and creativity process. It has also been identified that ostracised employees show emotional exhaustion in the workplace (Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2016). And they face the unfavorable behaviour of the individual (Leary, 2001). Employees can be involved in interpersonal deviances if they are rejected by their friends based on some specific purpose (Gossip, violence, etc). In the current phase of globalisation, workplace ostracism has become the most important area of study for researchers/ academics/ Human resource managers and psychologists. According to Spector (2005), counterproductive work behaviour (CPWB) is an outcome of ostracism, and it is a kind of violent behaviour that seriously affects all the stakeholders of the organisation (customers, clients, coworker, and their supervisors). Previous research work depicts that the fair working environment & Work climate (Dalili-Isni, 2009), Personality variation of an individual (Mount, Ilies and Johnson, 2006), the higher self-involvement through narcissi behaviour (Penney & Spector, 2003), and the workplace ostracism of the employees can influence the (CPWB) of the individuals (Hitlonet *et al*, 2006). Penney and Spector (2005) also determine that counterproductive work behaviour of individuals can be due to interpersonal deviances (Jahanzeb, and Fatima, 2018; Khan., 2017), organisational conflicts (Howard, Cogswell and Smith, 2020), and workplace incivility (Abubakar, Yazdian, and Behraves, 2018).

While studying ostracism behaviour during performing jobs, employees display multi-dimensions attitudes i.e. misbehaviour at the organisation, emotional exhaustion, work dissatisfaction, CWPB, and disruptive actions (Yang and Treadway, 2018; Robinson, 2000; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2016; Khan.,2017; Fatima., 2016; Abubakar *et al.*,2018; Brinsfield, Edwards and Greenberg, 2009; Howard, Cogswell, *et al.*, 2020). Kelloways and Vigoda (2002) findings depict that counterproductive work behaviour leads to affect the financial position of the organisation, reduces productivity, and enhances employee's turnover intentions as well as absenteeism from the organisation.

Previous research studies (Ferris *et al.*, 2008; Hitlan and Noel, 2009; Yang, and Treadway, 2018; Cogswell *et al.*, 2020) determine that counterproductive work behaviour of the organisational employees is enhanced due to workplace ostracism. Leung, Wub, Chena & Younga, (2011) findings state that workplace ostracism decreases the performance of the

employees. The research model proposed by (Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2016; Jahanzeb, and Fatima, 2018) states that because of ostracism employees promote workplace deviances, but these deviances from organisation norms arise through employees' emotional exhaustion (De Clercq, Haq, and Azeem, 2019; Chung, 2018) and their defensive silence behaviour from their job. A similar study conducted by Fatima (2016) states that employee's ostracism leads to CPWB that is spurred by a worker's dissatisfaction with their job (Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018). Furthermore, Zhao, Peng, and Sheard, (2012) state that the role of job dissatisfaction as a mediator is yet to be discovered in the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviours. Previous studies try to link the association between ostracism and CWPB through job satisfaction (Fatima, 2016; Jahanzeb, and Fatima, 2018), emotional exhaustion (Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2019; Chung, 2018), defensive silence (Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2016; Jahanzeb, Fatima, & Malik, 2018; Khalid, Iqbal, and Hashmi, 2020; Chenji, and Sode, 2019) organisation cynicism (Khan, 2017), psychological contract breach and work alienation (Li, and Chen, 2018), and withdrawal from the job (Fatima, Bilal, and Imran, 2019). However, to date, no research study has investigated how employees' perception of ostracism leads to defensive silence and emotional exhaustion, which in turn, influences their intent to engage in interpersonal deviance. Thus, the main purpose of this study is to investigate and determine how ostracism influences CWPB through defensive silence that goes beyond the restriction of information flow in organisations, and how feelings of emotional exhaustion are associated with lower levels of satisfaction among employees through the serial mediation process.

## 2. Literature Review

According to Williams (2001), workplace ostracism is a conceptual phenomenon of feelings about the organisation that individuals show in a situation if they are being ignored by the other individuals and group members in the organisation. Professor of psychological sciences Kelly (2009) suggested that workplace ostracism of an employee influence negatively the psychological state of employees in the organisation. According to Bennett and Robinson (2003) employees of the organisation show their interpersonal deviance with others to represent their anger while in the phase of ostracism. Dunlop and Lee (2004) as well as Bennett and Robinson (2000) also suggested that the workplace deviance of employees not only negatively affects the individuals and organisational effectiveness, but also damages the overall business performances of the organisation and societies. Wright and Cropanzano (1998) stated that workplace ostracism uses as a stressor that arouses emotional exhaustion of the employees due to cognitive, psychological, and emotional threats. While the findings of (Ferris *et al.*, 2008; Thau, Aquino, and Poortvliet, 2007; Peterson, 2002) stated that when there is a lack of interactions among organisational employees or restraint from specific places, then they feel ostracism in such working conditions.

## 2.1 Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CPWB)

According to Spector and Fox (2005), work behaviours (CPWB) are the acts to harm or try to harm the individuals, clients, suppliers, customers, and organisation by themselves (Fatima, 2016). Isni and Shafie (2009) stated that counterproductive work behaviours are due to an unethical work climate. While (Mount, Ilies, and Johnson, 2006) determine that the personality traits of employees lead to (CPWB). In contrast (Penney and Spector, 2003) mention that narcissism is the main factor of counterproductive work behaviour (CPWB).

Counterproductive work behaviour is employee behaviour that goes against the legitimate interests of employees as well as the organisation. In most cases, the behaviours of the employees go against the legal benefits and interests of other peers are known as counterproductive work behaviours (Fatima, 2016; Khan, 2019;). It's the tendency of counterproductive work behaviours (CPWB) to damage or try to damage individuals and organisations. Sackett and DeVore (2001) defined (CPWB) that these are the harmful acts of the individual that violate the legal interests of the organisation and its customers, suppliers, etc. Counterproductive work behaviours (CPWB) affect both the organisations and individuals, in the form of anger (physical and verbal), sabotage, theft, and removal of employees. CPWB is any intentional unacceptable behaviour that has the potential to have negative consequences to an organisation and its employees within the organisation. The study of (Hitlan and Noel, 2006; Yang and Treadway, 2018; Cogswell et al., 2020; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018;) states that workplace ostracism of the individual has a positive relationship with counterproductive work behaviour. Similar results were evident by (Fatima, 2016) in the telecom sector of Pakistan, while the results of (Ullah, 2019) also confirm that ostracism leads to CWPB in the primary education sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The result from previous studies (Yang and Treadway, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2020; Chen, and Li, 2020; Howard *et al.*, 2020; Ullah, 2019; Cogswell *et al.*, 2020; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018) make evident that ostracism in any organisation leads to the creation of CPWB among employees.

Based on the findings of previous researchers it is hypothesized that;

**H1:** Ostracism exerts a positive impact on employees' intentions for counterproductive work behaviours (CPWB).

## 2.2 Defensive Silence

Morrison and Milliken (2000) suggested that organisational silence is the collective attribute of individuals in negating the behaviour of others and lower level of participation in organisational meetings. Huang, *et al* (2005) proposed that the silence of employees during official meetings, lower level of representation for ideas/suggestions in projects, and lack of collective voice of employees are the major attributes of organisational silence. Danish, Ramzan, and Ahmad (2013) Ng, and Feldman (2012) also interpret that employee silence in

an organisation can lead to higher costs and lower levels of commitment. It has also been constructed that a high level of employee silence can decrease organisational effectiveness and normative commitment (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). Dedahanov *et al* (2015) also proposed that employee silence reduces the motivational level of employees and lowers their affection and affiliation with the organisation. Nikolaou *et al* (2011) determined that employee silent behaviour reduces his/her values in the eyes of peers, co-workers, the organisation's top-level, reduced level of trust by organisation, and coworkers. Whiteside and Barclay (2013) state that employee silence is used as a mediator in the interconnection between proper communication and organisational commitment. On the other hand, (Ullah., 2019; Chehraghi *et al.*, 2016; Farid and Karimi, 2015; Nikolaou *et al.*, 2011) findings depict that employee silence acts as a mediator in connecting the relationship between psychological factors and organisational outcomes.

Being human, individuals need social connectedness with peers/family members, that promote success, survival, or even safety, but ostracism threatens this relationship (Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2016; Cogswell *et al.*, 2020; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018). Hence ostracism leads to promote stress, anxiety (Wu *et al.*, 2012; De Clercq *et al.*, 2019), and mental health problems (Chung, 2018; Ferris *et al.*, 2008; Chen and Li., 2020). Thus, employees tend to cope with ostracism behaviour through either defensive silence (Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2016; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2018) or enhanced emotional exhaustion (Ullah, 2019; De Clercq *et al.*, 2019; Chen and Li., 2020). The study of (Nicholls and Polman, 2007; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2016; Van Dyne *et al.*, 2003; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2018) stressed that employees try to deal with ostracism with defensive silence. Defensive silence is a form of keeping information within oneself because of the fear of job loss (Van Dyne *et al.*, 2003; Khalid *et al.*, 2020; Chenji and Sode, 2019). Based on the arguments of the above researchers it is proposed that;

**H2:** Ostracism exerts a direct and positive impact on employee's defensive silence.

### 2.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, (2001) determine that family and personal issues are the main sources in nonworking conditions for the creation of emotional exhaustion. The research findings of (Mulki *et al.*, 2006; Van Jaarsveld, Walker, and Skarlicki, 2010) suggest that emotional exhaustion enhances interpersonal conflicts and decreases the self-efficacy of the employees in an organisation. Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) make evident the same results about the relationship of emotional exhaustion with efficacy and interpersonal conflicts. Linden, Keijsers, Eling, and Schaijk (2005) determine that emotional exhaustion can lead to gossip and interpersonal conflicts in individuals. Employees find this active inhibition, a great source of strain as it wastes psychological, emotional resources, and ultimately is infused with emotional exhaustion. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) present the theory of the transactional model of stress and coping. Based on this model emotional exhaustion and defensive silence are two main sources that mediate the relationship between workplace ostracism and

interpersonal conflicts of organisational employees (Jahanzeb et al., 2016; Howard *et al.*, 2020; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2019). Limited researchers have tried to investigate the relationship between employees' ostracism and CPWB through mediation analysis. For instance, (Fatima 2016; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018) link the impact of employee ostracism with CPWB through job satisfaction. Khan (2017) connects the relationship between ostracism and CPWB through the moderating role of narcissism and the mediating effect of cynicism. On the other hand, Li, & Chen (2018) correlate CPWB with employees' psychological contract breach through work alienation as well as employee cynicism. Fatima et al (2016) & Jahanzeb and Fatima (2018) conduct their study to link the relationship between workplace ostracism and interpersonal deviances through the sequential mediational role of employees' defensive silence and emotional exhaustion. Their results indicate that ostracised individuals exhibit defensive silence to safeguard them from negative psychological sources, however, if the situation became grave then employees react in the form of emotional exhaustion. Similar results were shown by Khan (2019) in the banking sector of Pakistan. Based upon the findings of previous research the following hypotheses are formed;

**H3:** Employees' emotional exhaustion is positively associated with the CPWB attitude of employees.

**H4:** Emotional Exhaustion mediates the relationship between employee's workplace ostracism and CPWB.

## 2.4 Job Dissatisfaction

Job satisfaction is termed as evaluating one's experience at the workplace (Kulas *et al.*, 2007). In most of the studies, job satisfaction is correlated with several variables i.e. ostracism (Fatima, 2016), emotional exhaustion (Prajogo, 2019; Jahanzeb and Fatima., 2018), CWPB (Ullah, 2019; Yang, and Treadway, 2018 Fatima, 2016), defensive silence (Ullah, 2019; *Khalid et al.*, 2020). However limited research studies investigate the concept of employees' job dissatisfaction. De Castro, Gee, & Takeuchi, (2008) state that job dissatisfaction is the phase of mind where employees felt a threat to their psychological and physical wellbeing. Job dissatisfaction is associate with anxiety (Jurado et al., 2005), anger (Fitzgerald, Haythornthwaite, Suchday, and Ewart, 2003), psychological health (Piko, 2006), issues related to health complaints (Svensen, Arnetz, Ursin, & Eriksen, 2007) and work stress (Locker, 1996). Previous studies (Ullah, 2019; Fatima, 2016; Jahanzeb and Fatima., 2018) indicate that job dissatisfaction is one of the major causes related to ostracism. It is a general phenomenon that employees facing unfavorable organisational culture, irritating behaviour from peers, and lack of leaders to solve the psychological issues diffuses their motivation level and reduces one's affiliation with organisations. In such cases, employees pose a negative attitude at the workplace and promote counterproductive work behaviour, which ultimately affects the organisation's vision and goal to achieve its targets.

**H5:** Job dissatisfaction mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and CPWB.

## **2.5 Serial Mediation of Defensive silence, emotional exhaustion and job dissatisfaction between ostracism and CPWB**

Whenever employees are socially excluded from the decision-making process, they perceive that their suggestion does not carry any meaning for the organisation's wellbeing, which ultimately affects their status quo (Jahanzeb et al., 2016). Such kinds of organisational culture are perceived by employees negatively and they became reluctant to speak or raise their voice in meetings, as it involves various kinds of risk (perceived efficacy, victimisation, low level of voice safety, etc). In such a scenario mostly employees become the silent observer and portray a self-protection policy (Morrison, 2011; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2018; Ullah, 2019; Liu, Zhu, & Yang, 2010). Although the work setup required to promote knowledge sharing, employee's safety as well as belongingness concerns reluctant employees to exhibit defensive silence (Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2018), which ultimately enhances the disengagement approach (Pinder and Harlos, 2001). Most of the time the social exclusion of employees from the organisation's important and official meetings spur psychological and social distress, which ultimately lead to emotional exhaustion in the form of "rude behaviour, higher absenteeism, lower level of commitment, and accomplishment as well as abusive behaviour with co-workers" (Knoll & Dick, 2013; Ullah, 2019). The result from the study of Ullah (2019) states that ostracism promotes CPWB among the teachers of primary and secondary education institutions. But the relationship between these two attributes is passed through 3 different phases i.e. in the initial stage employees try to operate on a defensive silence strategy to safeguard themselves from psychological distress, but if the negligence of employees continuous for a long period, the employee's defensive strategy is converted into the reaction in the form of emotional exhaustion. At this stage, more than 90% of employees become dissatisfied with their organisation, peers, co-workers, and principals, which ultimately fosters a feeling of CPWB attitude among them. Similar findings were quoted by (Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2019; Chung, 2018; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2018; Khalid, Iqbal, and Hashmi, 2020; Chenji, and Sode, 2019) and their findings depict that ostracism leads to Defensive silences, passes through the exhaustion stage, and promotes interpersonal deviances. While the work of (Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2019; Chung, 2018; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2018) depicts that employees' job dissatisfaction is the main attribute that affects the strength of workplace ostracism and CPWB.

Based on the previous work it is stated that:

**H6:** Defensive silence and emotional exhaustion serially mediate the effect of ostracism and CPWB.

**H7:** Defensive silence and job dissatisfaction sequentially mediate the effect of ostracism and CPWB.

**H8:** Emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction sequentially mediate the effect of ostracism and counterproductive work behaviours.

**H9:** Defensive silence, emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction sequentially mediate the effect of ostracism and CPWB.

### **3 Research Methodology**

The present research study is based on the support of the positivism paradigm approach. It also works on the philosophy of deductive reasoning. Based upon the deductive reasoning researchers deduct hypotheses and finally, the explanatory research design is applied, which investigates the cause and effects relationship based on the research hypothesis through self-administered questionnaires. The population of the research work is the employees of banking sectors of District Peshawar KP province Pakistan. First of all different strata were designed to obtain appropriate responses from different kinds of banks. And in the final stage based on stratified random sampling 500 employees are selected randomly. During our research work, 500 personal administered questionnaires were distributed in selected banks of Peshawar. In the first phase, 300 filled questionnaires were received, and after a one-week reminder, 134 more questionnaires were received. The response rate for the received questionnaires was 86.66%. After thorough analysis 24 questionnaires were removed because of missing values.

Workplace ostracism is measured using the 10-items workplace ostracism scale adopted from Ferris, Brown, Berry, and Lian (2008) and ranged from 1= strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Defensive silence was measured by Van Dyne et al. (2003). Comprising six items ranged from 1 = very dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied. Emotional exhaustion was measured through a 7-items emotional exhaustion scale, which was developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). The items were anchored at a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

Job dissatisfaction measurement was developed by Taylor and Bowers (1974) and comprises six items that were used. And the response was recorded on 5 points Likert scale, where 1 denoting very dissatisfied, and 5 stated a very satisfying response. The CPWB scale developed by Bennet and Robinson (2000) consisted of two sections including 'organisational deviance' and 'interpersonal deviance' respectively was used. The first section consisted of 12 items and the second consisted of 7 items. The items were anchored at a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. While ostracism was analysed through the adopted construct of (Ferris, Brown, Berry, and Lien, 2008).

## 4 Results

This study reported the results of the descriptive analysis for various variables presented in Table 1, and it depicts the findings of descriptive statistics, with reliability through Cronbach alpha, and exploratory factor analysis. According to the values of Cronbach alpha, the highest reliability belongs to job dissatisfaction ( $JDS_{\alpha} = .842$ ), while the lowest level belongs to Defensive silence ( $DS_{\alpha} = .741$ ). According to (Ishaq and Hussain.,2016) the minimum threshold level for the reliability of the construct is (0.60 or higher).

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability**

Variable	Q	F-L	KMO	Mean	S-D	A
<b>Ostracism</b>	OST-1	0.676	0.811  <b>BTS</b> <b>(p&lt;0.001)</b>	3.771	.54131	.822
	OST_2	0.711				
	OST_3	0.701				
	OST_4	0.723				
	OST_5	0.734				
	OST_6	0.701				
	OST_7	0.667				
	OST_8	0.801				
	OST_9	0.718				
	OST_10	0.733				
	OST_11	0.712				
<b>Defensive Silence</b>	DS_1	0.732	0.842  <b>BTS</b> <b>(p&lt;0.001)</b>	3.7722	.78032	.787
	DS_2	0.766				
	DS_3	0.788				
	DS_4	0.742				
	DS_5	0.711				
<b>Emotional exhaustion</b>	EE-1	0.744	0.901  <b>BTS</b> <b>(p&lt;0.001)</b>	3.6211	.66750	.832
	EE_2	0.812				
	EE_3	0.788				
	EE_4	0.822				
	EE_5	0.808				
	EE_6	0.831				
	EE_7	0.709				
	EE_8	0.755				
	EE_9	0.722				

	EE_10	0.698				
<b>Job dissatisfaction</b>	JDS_1	0.722	0.839  <b>BTS</b> <b>(p&lt;0.001)</b>	3.7343	.76881	.841
	JDS_2	0.756				
	JDS_3	0.733				
	JDS_4	0.816				
	JDS_5	0.806				
	JDS_6	0.808				
	JDS_7	0.744				
<b>Counterproductive work behaviour</b>	CPWB_1	0.722	0.856  <b>BTS</b> <b>(p&lt;0.001)</b>	3.7801	.53689	.801
	CPWB_2	0.754				
	CPWB_3	0.733				
	CPWB_4	0.677				
	CPWB_5	0.801				
	CPWB_6	0.769				
	CPWB_7	0.755				
	CPWB_8	0.743				
	CPWB_9	0.719				

**BTS**= Barlett's Test of Sphericity, **F-L**= Factor Loading, **SD**= Standard Deviation, **DS**= Defensive Silence, **EE**= Emotional Exhaustion, **OST**= Ostracism, **JDS**= Job Dissatisfaction, **CPWB**= Counter-Productive Work Behaviour

In the next stage factor loading of each item is measured by applying the statistical procedure through exploratory factor analysis. For retaining any factor in the construct, it is recommended (Catell, 1966) that its loading must be higher than (0.30). In our case factor loading of almost every item from various construct denotes that it is an acceptable range. The highest factor loading belongs to (EE-3) while the lowest factor loading is associated with (OST\_7). Finally, the Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) test of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) was also applied to assess the construct validities. According to the researchers, the value of BTS between (0.5 and 1.0) depicts the appropriateness of the test for factor loading and further statistical analysis. The descriptive statistics in the form of mean and standard deviation are also presented in table (1).

**Table 2. Correlation analysis**

	OST	DFS	EE	JDS	CPWB	VIF	Tolerance
OST	1	.416**	.447**	.327**	.313**	0.44	2.88
DFS		1	.363**	.348**	.424**	0.37	2.79
EE			1	.433**	.410**	0.29	2.54
JDS				1	.366**	0.36	2.48
CPWB					1	0.20	2.76

DS= Defensive Silence, EE= Emotional Exhaustion, OST= Ostracism, JDS= Job Dissatisfaction, CPWB= Counter-Productive Work Behaviour

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table (2) depicts information about correlation values among the variables and the table also indicates multi co-linearity through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance in line with Saif, Khan, Shaheen, and Bangash (2020). Researcher (Neter et al., 1983) states that if the correlation between variables ranged between (0.2-0.4), the presence of multi co-linearity became lower. In the current study, the highest correlation exists between OST & EE ( $r=.447$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Furthermore, the values of VIF and tolerance are also below the threshold level indicating no issues of multicollinearity.

**Table 3: Mediation through Preacher and Hayes Statistical Procedure**

Counter Work Productive Behaviour (CWPB) n=404						
Model Summary						
R	R-Square	SE	F	Df1	Df2	P
.78	.522	.309	302.49	1.00	402.00	.000
Path						
Path	Coefficient	P-value	ULCI	LLCI		
Path c (IV--DV)(C1) OST->CPWB	0.781	.000	.721	.568		
Path a ( IV --MV )						
IV->M1 (a1) OST->DS	0.422	.000	.687	.541		
IV->M2 (a2) OST ->EE	0.319	.000	.427	.219		
IV->M3 (a3) OST ->JDS	0.245	.000	.308	.149		
Path b ( M DV )						
M1->DV(b1)DS ->CPWB	-0.061	.039	.098	-.140		
M2->DV(b2) EE->CPWB	0.284	.000	.392	.122		
M3->DV (b3)J.DS->CPWB	0.199	.000	.215	.162		
Path d ( M M )						
M1->M2d21 (D.S->E.E)	0.565	.000	.619	.438		
M1->M3d31 (D.S->J.DS)	0.457	.000	.535	.354		
M2->M3d32 (E.E->J.DS)	0.167	.000	.267	.033		

Direct- Indirect and Total Effect			
	Effect	95% ULCI	95% LLCI
Total	0.909	.922	.744
Direct	0.439	.640	.322
Indirect (Total)	0.351	.433	.269
Ind 1:(OST ->DS ->CPWB)	-0.056	.007	-.140
Ind 2: (OST -> DS -> EE -> CPWB )	0.166	.233	.107
Ind 3: (OST -> DS -> JDS -> CPWB )	0.059	.111	.032
Ind 4: (OST -> DS -> EE -> JDS -> CPWB)	0.036	.058	.009
Ind 5: (OST -> EE -> CPWB)	0.088	.136	.049
Ind 6: (OST -> EE -> JDS -> CPWB)	0.021	.037	.005
Ind 7:(OST -> JDS -> CPWB)	0.038	.055	.019

DS= Defensive Silence, EE= Emotional Exhaustion, OST= Ostracism, JDS= Job Dissatisfaction, CPWB= Counter Productive Work Behaviour; ULCI= Upper Level Confidence Interval; LLCI= Lower Level Confidence Interval; M1= Mediator 1; M2= Mediator 2; M3= Mediator 3; IV= Independent Variable; DV= Dependent variable;

Table (3) denotes information between ostracism and CPWB through different mediators via serial mediation. According to the table, the overall model is a good fit with reasonable explanatory values of relationship ( $R^2=522\%$  with standard Error of 0.309) indicating a higher significance level ( $p<0.05$ ). The total direct effect of OST to CPWB is denoted by (C1) and it was found to be significant (effect =.781  $p<0.05$ , LLCI= 0.586 and ULCI=0.721) supporting hypothesis 1. As well as the total direct effect (C1') without the effect of mediators was also found to be significant and the results are (effect=.439  $p<0.05$ ; {LLCI=0.322; ULCI=0.640}). The direct effect of paths C and C' are also denoted in figure (1).

The direct relationship between emotional exhaustion and CPWB depicts that the path relationship is denoted by (M2) and results indicate that the beta coefficient is lower than the significance level and the CI level does not consist of zero (0,283;  $p<0.005$  as {ULCI=0.392; LLCI=0.122}). Hence hypothesis 2 is also accepted. Results for single mediation as well as serial mediations are also presented in table (3).

According to the information, the direct path between OST and CPWB is significant, while path (a) between OST and EE is also significant as (0) does not cross the upper and lower level of the Confidence interval. Path (b) states the relationship between EE and CPWB also shows significant strength of the relationship. Finally, the indirect path between OST and CPWB through EE states that (Beta=.088; ULCI=.136 and LLCI= 0.049), which confirms the direct mediation. Hence hypothesis H3 for single mediation is also accepted.

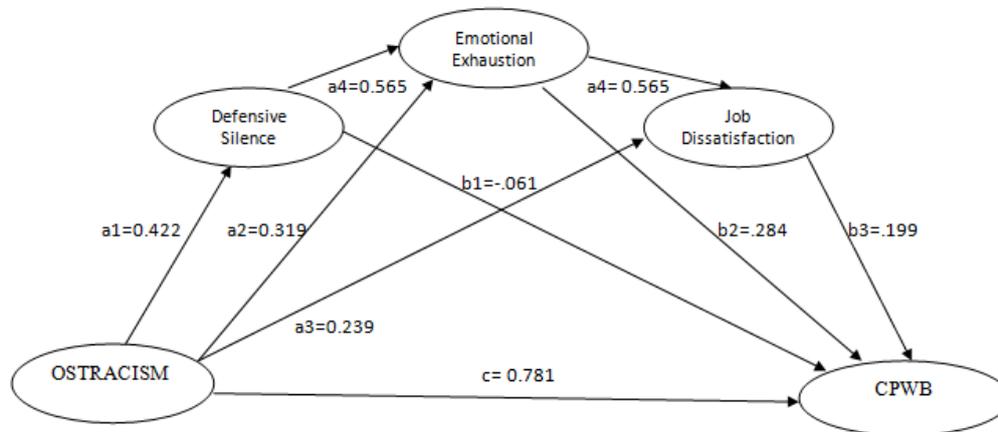
According to the information, the direct path between OST and CPWB is significant, while path (a) between OST and job dissatisfaction is also significant as (0) does not cross the Upper and lower level of the Confidence interval. Path (b) states the relationship between JDS and

CPWB also shows significant strength of the relationship. Finally, the indirect path between OST and CPWB through job dissatisfaction states that (Beta=0.038; ULCI=.055 and LLCI= 0.019), which confirms the direct mediation. Hence hypothesis **H5** for the single mediational role of JDS between ostracism and CPWB is also accepted.

In the next step, the relationship between ostracism and CPWB is investigated through a double mediational role. In this regard, the first model of double mediation indicates the path (C) between OST and CPWB is significant, while the impact of OST on DS (Beta=0.422; ULCI=.689 and LLCI= 0.541), and DS impact on EE (Beta=0.565; ULCI=.609 and LLCI= 0.438) is also significant. The indirect path is denoted by C' in figure (3) also states that the relationship through (Ind-2) is significant (Beta=0.166; ULCI=.223 and LLCI= 0.107). Hence hypothesis **H6** is also accepted.

The second double mediational equation investigates the association between ostracism and CPWB through (Preacher and Hayes., 2012; Saif & Ullah., 2018) procedure. In this regard, the first model of double mediation indicates the path (C) between OST and CPWB is significant, while the impact of OST on EE (Beta=0.319; ULCI=.427 and LLCI= 0.219), and EE impact on JDS (Beta=0.167; ULCI=.267 and LLCI= 0.331) is also significant. The indirect path is denoted by C' in figure (2) also states that the relationship through (Ind-6) is significant (Beta=0.021; ULCI=.037 and LLCI= 0.005). Hence hypothesis **H8** is also accepted.

Finally, the relationship between ostracism and CPWB through the triple mediation process is investigated by extending the existing model of Preacher and Hayes (2012). The direct relationship between OST and CPWB is significant, while the direct path between OST and defensive Silence (Beta=0.422; ULCI=.689 and LLCI= 0.541), defensive silence impact on EE (Beta=0.565; ULCI=.609 and LLCI= 0.438), EE effect of job dissatisfaction (Beta=0.167; ULCI=.264 and LLCI= 0.031), while the impact of job dissatisfaction on CPWB is (Beta=0.199; ULCI=0.215 and LLCI= 0.162) are significant. The indirect effect of OST on CPWB through three different mediators is denoted by (ind\_5) having values of (Beta=0.036; ULCI=.058 and LLCI= 0.0091). The indirect path depicts that the overall model is significant. Hence hypothesis (**H9**) is also accepted.



## Results and Discussion

Results from the current study evidence that the ostracism effect on CPWB confirms the significant mediating role of Emotional Exhaustion ( $\beta=.095$ ;  $P<0.005$ ) and one's dissatisfaction ( $\beta=.033$ ;  $P<0.005$ ) from their job through single mediation analysis in a Pakistan work context. The findings are in line with the findings of (Ullah., 2019; Fatima, 2016; Hilton & Noel.,2006; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; De Clercq *et al*, 2019; Chung, 2018; Jahanzeb *et al.*,2018; Khalid, Iqbal, and Hashmi, 2020; Chenji, and Sode, 2019). However, the impact of ostracism on CPWB through defensive silence ( $\beta=.069$ ;  $P>0.005$ ), is not significant via a single mediational path. It is a natural tendency that due to globalisation employees face multidimensional problems from the outer side of the organisation. At the same time due to rapid competition with other firms and contentious improvements in one's ability became the core job for employees to sustain their position in the organisation. In such a tough environment if employees become ignored by peers and others in the organisation, that enhances the psychological distress and infuses the feelings of dissatisfaction from their job. This results in lower productivity, demotivated employees, and lower levels of organisational loyalty. The current study confirms the relationship between employee's ostracism behaviour and CPWB through three different mediators in the work context of Pakistan. Due to ostracism negative feelings about employees as well as the organisation arise and become a serious threat for the organisation.

It is a known fact that employees are the assets of any organisation. They became an integral part of the development of the organisation. But if the employees are involved in counterproductive work behaviours then the development of the organisation will become a nightmare. From the last decade, interpersonal deviances and counterproductive work behaviours of the individuals become an important area for researchers in the field of educational institutions, corporate culture, and job placement organisations (Yang and Treadway, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2020; Chen, and Li, 2020; Howard *et al.*,2020; Ullah,2019; Cogswell *et al.*, 2020; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; Ullah., 2019; Chehraghi *et al.*,2016; Farid and Karimi, 2015; Nikolaou *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, earlier researchers also suggested that workplace elimination is related to the low level of respect in the workplace e.g. organisation

misconducts (Weitz, 2004; Foldes, 2006; Larkin, and Pierce, 2015), disruptive behaviour (Greenberg, 1997; Arvan *et al.*, 2020), and irritation in the working environment. Ferris (2008) determined that workplace ostracism may cause a lower level of job satisfaction and a higher level of anger, depression (Petsnik, and Vorauer.,2020), absenteeism (Glazer, Farley, and Rahman, 2021), and turnover rate (Anasori, Bayighomog, De Vita, and Altinay, (2021).

In the current study, the researcher conceptualised that ostracism and counterproductive work behaviours are related by using defensive silence, emotional exhaustion, and job dissatisfaction as serial mediating variables. Findings for double mediations indicate that the indirect path between ostracism and CPWB through defensive silence and emotional exhaustion depict the highest coefficient ( $\beta=.166$ ;  $P<0.005$ ) in comparison to (OST  $\rightarrow$  DS  $\rightarrow$  JDS  $\rightarrow$  CPWB;  $\beta=.059$ ;  $P<0.005$ ) and (OST  $\rightarrow$  EE  $\rightarrow$  JDS  $\rightarrow$  CPWB;  $\beta=.021$ ;  $P<0.005$ ). Earlier the study of (Ullah., 2019; Ullah and Khan., 2018) also confirms the similar relationship between OST and CPWB through double mediation. While the findings of Jahanzeb and Fatima, (2018) indicate the employees' Ostracism behaviour passes through defensive silence and EE, which ultimately enhances employees' interpersonal deviances. Although it is not an easy task to withhold information and innovative ideas with oneself during the ostracism phase, and it needs a lot of energy as well as psychological power for such kind of avoidant behaviour. In most cases, employees could not bear the psychological pressure in the form of emotional abuse (Petsnik, and Vorauer., 2020) and exhaust their emotions which ultimately cultivates the beginnings of interpersonal deviances and CPWB (Grandy *et al.*, 2004; Ullah and Saif, 2018; Ullah., 2019; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2019; Chung, 2018; Jahanzeb *et al.*, 2018; Khalid, Iqbal, and Hashmi, 2020; Chenji, and Sode, 2019). The findings of (Zhao, Peng, and Sheard, 2013; Petsnik, and Vorauer.,2020; Glazer, Farley, and Rahman, 2021) determine that workplace OST and counterproductive work behaviours of employees became the most dangerous phenomena for the organisation. Findings of (Yang and Treadway, 2018; De Clercq *et al.*, 2020; Chen, and Li, 2020; Howard *et al.*,2020; Ullah,2019; Cogswell *et al.*, 2020; Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2018; Hitlan& Noel, 2006) also confirm the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviours on the other hand (Petsnik, and Vorauer.,2020), absenteeism (Glazer *et al.*, 2021; Anasori *et al.*, 2021; Williams's 1997, 2001) results determine that workplace ostracism use as a stressor for the individuals that enhance psychological distress. Kish-Gephart *et al.*, (2009) suggested that silence is a behavioural outcome of the individual for withdrawal and resignation from a job, due to which most employees are involved in workplace deviance.

## 6 Implications

The findings and results of this empirical study provide some practical suggestions for the banking sector of KP. Workplace ostracism reduces the positive environment and gathering among employees, infuses the feeling of dissatisfaction and emotional abuse that directs employees to deviate from their organisation, and promotes counterproductive work



behaviours. The results of the current study suggest that the executives and managers of the banking sector should try to strictly reduce the factors associated with workplace ostracism at the prior step of its happening. Managers and top-level administrators must promote group goal behaviour and combined tasks may be assigned to employees, to promote group collective efficacy.

Our findings suggest that managers of the banking sector need to develop an openness to voice procedures to control employee's emotional exhaustion, interpersonal deviances, as well as to enhance job satisfaction, positive attitudes, and behaviours that became the catalyst for increased efficiency and effectiveness of organisations. If the organisational managers and executives provide appropriate platforms and mechanisms for feedback of the employees, it will dramatically reduce counterwork behaviours, negative consequences and will foster feelings of loyalty, respect, and appreciation.

## **7 Limitation and Future Direction**

In the current study, the data is collected from a small sample of banking employees through adopted constructs during a single stance hence the results cannot be justified in the overall population. Therefore future researchers may get the data from an appropriate number of employees from commercial and Islamic and state-level banking employees at a specific interval of time. In the current study, the triple serial mediation model is validated, however, future research may try to validate a similar model through single and double mediation to verify which model best suits the data. Future researchers may add (cynicism) features of burnout to compare its effect with the emotional exhaustion (current) model. The future researcher may add a leader's personality to determine what fosters ostracism or control ostracism behaviour among followers. Further studies may investigate the role of justice and organisation culture as a possible moderator to validate the current research model through a moderated mediation approach.

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