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Effect of Personality Characteristics on Workplace Ostracism: Role of Employee Popularity and Emotional Intelligence-An Evidence from Telecomm Industry of Pakistan

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A B S T R A C T

Humans' interpersonal interactions in daily lives lay a great impact on their mental and physical health. The phenomenon known as ostracism. As per the previous researches, ostracism ramifies depression, anxiety, anger, frustration, and turnover; ultimately adding to the dissatisfaction level. We aim to hone these negative affinities by introducing the variables (charisma, political skill, and extraversion) as a counteractive measure to alleviate the downturns branching out. The moderation effect of emotional intelligence and mediation of employee popularity is expected to enhance the relationship even further.

Purpose: To find counteractive measures to hone the phenomenon called ostracism and signify the need to minimize ostracism at work along with all the negatives behaviors associated.

Methodology: A 34 item questionnaire was rolled out in the top 5 telecommunication companies of Pakistan and data collected was analyzed using SPSS and SMART PLS

Results / Findings: Charisma has a direct negative correlation with workplace ostracism and employee popularity partially mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and charisma. Political skills and charisma don't have a significant negative correlation with workplace ostracism but employee popularity completely mediate the relationship between political skills and WPO, and charisma and WPO. However, emotional intelligence didn't have a significant moderation relationship with workplace ostracism.

Key words: Workplace Ostracism, WPO, extraversion, Charisma, Emotional Intelligence

1. INTRODUCTION

Social settings are hard to understand as there are human emotions involved which are unpredictable. As we speak of social interactions at work, there are various behaviors that ramify; some are positive and some are negative in nature. The positive

ones usually result in enhanced productivity and genial workplace environment. To further strengthen any organizational climate, it's just as indispensable to induce the positive behaviors as rooting out the negative ones. Interpersonal mistreatment is one type of negative practice that branches out of social interaction. Interpersonal treatment can be defined as being unjust in the treatment of fellow individual to the point to put them under emotionally agonizing circumstances. Workplace ostracism is a form of interpersonal mistreatment, which means to exclude people from social gatherings and deeming them unattended. This practice has detrimental effects on the organizational culture since the victims of ostracism aren't motivated enough to add to the productivity of an organization and are likely to show indifference and turnover intentions.

Getting a different treatment in terms of being unattended or left out can be a distressing thing for anyone who likes being cherished; which is a normal thing to expect for a human being since we are all social animals. Ostracism is said to disconfirm these expectations and creates a room for negative reactions, that ultimately poisons all sorts of relationships at work and degrades the potential of developing new ones (Milner, Myers, & O'Byrne, 2015). As per the previous researches, it is not of much of a surprise to impose ostracism on someone and having them being prone to get agonized with cognitive dysfunction, plummeted psychological imbalance and distress, indulge in self-defeating endeavors, and develop the feelings of animosity against others. The prevalence of these detrimental effects in the workplace has been subjected to dire importance to improve the organizational culture (Yang & Treadway, 2016)

Social interactions cannot be ignored at work and are thus inexorable in nature. As the minimizations of work teams is skyrocketing in today's knowledge-based economy, the importance of workplace relationships has gained considerable popularity and importance. Though social relationships and linkages are likely to depreciate in interpersonal mistreatment (or ostracism) projecting damaging repercussions for employees working in an organization. Majority of the previous researches have viewed these mistreatments from the lens of the perpetrator but as the literature is opening up to more possibilities the researchers have initiated the investigation of the characteristics of the victim to dissuade those mistreatments by developing counteractive mechanisms

(Reio & Ghosh, 2009).

As per the researchers, it is widely acknowledged that the various interpersonal mistreatment constructs should be thoroughly scrutinized for the conceptual and empirical individuality of these crucial measures (Aquino & Thau, 2009). In light of our ongoing study, workplace ostracism is the phenomenon under examination (a ramification of workplace interpersonal mistreatment) which can be defined as being, excluded, disregarded, isolated or being turned down (in terms of denying the presence) by individuals at a workplace For example, avoiding contact or communication with someone or not hanging around the same as others do (Berry, Ferris, & Brown, 2008).

1.1. Background

Talking in retrospect, ostracism is an old concept. It dates back to ancient Greece where ostracism was known as the process by which any citizen of the state including political and influential leaders, could be barred from the city-state for 10 years. The citizens used scraps of clay " ostraca " to cast their votes to nominate people for exile for 10 years; these individuals were mostly people who were considered a danger for their self-governing rule (Williams, 2010). Despite the fact that ostracism has been around since ancient times, the social scientist were the ones to give it the academic recognition it deserved.

According to research the trauma the brain faces after physical pain is quite similar to that of an individual who has been ostracized as social non-acceptance and rejection triggers similar brain activation (Forgas & Williams, 2003). Ostracism is a detrimental phenomenon which impacts individuals in a very harmful manner as it leaves them blaming themselves for having done something wrong or being incomplete or having unattractive attributes. (Williams, 2001).

Ostracism has some well-defined characteristics which differentiate it from being confused with bullying or harassment which generally fall under the head of either physical and verbal abuse, or point out to its distinctive essence and consequences (Williams & Nida, 2011). Firstly, to define ostracism, acts of exclusion and elimination are usually referred to. That simply means that ostracism is defined as the lack or absence of positive behavior and mindfulness and not the presence of negative attitude and

unwelcome conduct (Rajchert & Winiewski, 2016). Hence the reason why ostracism results in reduce social interaction as compared to other forms of social misconduct and maltreatment like assault and bullying, which are interactional. Secondly, ostracism is very confusing and dubious mostly as compared to other forms of social mistreatment because the intrinsic reasons behind doing it vary a lot and that makes it hard to determine it.

1.2. Problem Statement

Social interactions are inexorable in nature when it comes to a working environment where interpersonal linkages among different employees exist for mutual motives and professional survival. The same observation has increased the need to scrutinize the behaviors ramifying out of the social interaction at work. These social interactions sometimes also result in interpersonal mistreatment where negative feelings are associated that reduce employee morale. Workplace ostracism, a ramification of interpersonal treatment, reduces social interaction, self-esteem, commitment, and increases feelings of anxiety, depression, and turnover intentions. Therefore, it is important to address the need to minimize ostracism to maintain a healthy working environment for the employees and carve out counteractive measures for those who fall prey to ostracism. As discussed in the previous researches how various negatives outcomes are associated with exclusion at work like anxiety, depression, turnover intentions, aggression, and frustration etc. Different researchers have shed considerable light on how and why each outcome should be studied in great detail but how control to all of them by providing different inputs is still questionable.

1.3. Gap Analysis

There are considerable number of diverse theories and researches available that denote the importance of workplace mistreatment which further ramifies to phenomenon like ostracism (Cullen, Fan, & Liu, 2012) but the growing literature needs the counter measures to hone these mistreatments (Quade, Greenbaum, & Petrenko, 2013). Also, the existing relationships from various constructs can also be strengthen by studying the mediating and moderating roles of different variables as suggested by various studies since there is comparatively less literature available on how to reduce ostracism in

working environment than different negative ramifications (Cullen, Fan, & Liu, 2012). Moreover, the relationships that have been previously studied can be further strengthened by introducing new moderators (emotional intelligence in current study) to constructs that have been studied before in different contexts. As per the literature, the output varies from variable to variable as nature and proposition of each variable is different and how various linkages work.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The present study aims to gather all the variables from previous researches that prevented interpersonal mistreatment (ostracism in this study) while introducing new variables to further strengthen the limited scope of existing literature. The relationship between employee popularity and ostracism has been studied before, but the introduction of emotional intelligence as a moderator is expected to enhance the relationship even further. Charisma and extraversion are expected to be new addition to the present body of literature, typically in the construct applied by the study, that will provide an enhanced working model of how something as malignant as ostracism can be dissuaded.

In practical context, this study would help us in understanding why and how certain people respond to mistreatment and how do those people different in their traits; which apparently helm their reflex to a certain situation. The results are expected to provide a working model or a direction to help the victims ameliorate their social linkages and stay adrift from being victimized by ostracism.

1.5. Research Questions

a. Are personality characteristics correlated with workplace ostracism

b. Does employee popularity mediate the relationship between political skill and workplace ostracism

c. Considering the references from the literature, does employee popularity mediate the relationship between charisma and workplace ostracism

d. Does employee popularity mediate the relationship between extraversion and workplace ostracism

e. In light of the literature and theoretical linkages how does emotional intelligence moderate the relationship between employee popularity and workplace ostracism

1.6. Research Objectives

To examine the effect of personality characteristics on workplace ostracism

a. To scrutinize the mediating effect of employee popularity between political skills and workplace ostracism

b. To inspect the mediating effect of employee popularity between charisma and workplace ostracism

c. To analyze the mediating effect of employee popularity between extraversion and workplace ostracism

d. To examine moderating effect of emotional intelligence between employee popularity and workplace ostracism

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Extraversion

Psychologists established extraversion-introversion, among other famous traits, as one of the Big Five dimensions along which personalities tend to differ (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Extraversion-introversion refers to the extent to which a person is outgoing as opposed to being held-in-reserve (McCrae & Costa, 1990). Sociability, outgoingness, and being assertive are the key features of extraversion. As compared to introverts, extraverts are more engaging socially interactive (McCrae & Costa, 1990) and seek and appeal more social attention (Lee & Paunonen, 2002). Extraverted individuals are comparatively more talkative and spend more time in social interaction compared to introverted people who prefer to avoid social interaction in general by all means possible (John & Srivastava, 1999; Paunonen & Ashton, 2001). Shipilov, Labianca, Kalnysh, and Kalnysh (2014) discussed how more extraverted individuals prefer initiating social interactions and voluntarily enter situations that are social in nature, both of which scenarios facilitate the formation of new relationships. While we know a lot about the behavioral, psychological, and physiological correlation of extraversion and associated attributes (Botwin & Buss, 1989; Depue & Collins, 1999; Nettle, 2005), we understand quite less about how individual variances originate in this dimension and why are people at different levels in the extraversion quotient?

H₁: *Extraversion is correlated to workplace ostracism*

2.1.1. Extraversion and Popularity

Researchers have extensively studied why some people have more popularity than others. This has led to greater evidence pointing to the fact that extraversion is generally associated with popularity. But now the question arises that why extraverted people tend to be popular. There has been support found for the connection between popularity and extraversion in work on online profiles and self-perceptions (Paunonen, 2003). So, it can be stated that extraverted behavior might be related to more sizeable networks. Therefore, all else being equal, extraversion helps people to be more likely to begin a friendship with any given person. Extraversion also affects networks via social homophily which refers to one's tendency to associate and relate to people who seem similar to oneself. For over half a century, psychologists have delved into questioning whether resemblance leads to attraction (Montoya, Horton, & Kirchner, 2008) and whether more similarity between individuals and their friends, peers, and colleagues leads to a greater sense of happiness perceived (Seder & Oishi, 2009).

Among the Big Five characteristic dimensions, extraversion is the one trait that is most often associated with popularity amongst people (Ciarrochi & Heaven, 2009).

2.2. Political Skill

The capability to understand others in an effective manner at work, and to use this information to influence others so that their own and their organization's objectives are further enhanced by their actions, is defined as political skill. Therefore, the difference in individuals' political skills also creates dissimilarities on each individual's skill to influence others to achieve workplace results. To assist these claims, social and enterprising careers are more likely to be chosen by politically skilled individuals (Kaplan, 2008) and are more triumphant in settings that allow them to practice interpersonal influence (Blickle et al., 2008). They can also easily build alliances, networks, friendships, and coalitions (Ferris, Treadway, Perrewé, Brouer, Douglas, & Lux, 2007). It was proposed by Scott and Judge in 2009 that a main location inside an organization's communication network results in regular interactions with others, which leads to acceptance of central employees by a lot of people in their workplace. They,

therefore, are more likely to improve their network position and expand their network by the help of interpersonal influence (Ferris, Frink, & Anthony, 2000), that further leads to regular interaction with others. Substantial research has established that employees obtain favorable workplace outcomes which are partially subjective and socially contingent such as career success, promotions, performance and promotability ratings, with the help of political skill (Gentry, Gilmore, Shuffler, & Leslie, 2012; Todd, Harris, Harris, & Wheeler, 2009).

H₂: *Political skill is correlated to workplace ostracism*

2.2.1.   Political Skill and Popularity

A primary aim for most individuals is to gain acceptance by one's social group (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, Twenge, 2005). Popularity in an organization is interpreted as being predominantly welcomed by the peers (Scott & Judge, 2009). Simply put, workplace popularity is the mutual agreement of a person's coworkers regarding the individual's degree of social acceptance at organization or work unit. Social influence theory, as per levy's research, proposes that influence behaviors are mandatory to reach objectives of workplace, due to which, it is suggested by researchers that individuals who have the ability to use influence strategies effectively surrounded by the subtleties of their workplace connections are more likely to be successful. It is proposed by Harris et al that it is not sufficient to only use influence strategies, but individuals need to do it in a socially fitting manner. The skill to accomplish interpersonal influence while keeping a desirable interaction with others is important as social connections can help individuals gain desirable results (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004).

2.3. Charisma

The Greek term "charisma" means "a gift". It has been traditionally used to mention the skill of particular people to exert powerful effect on others, portraying the high personal capabilities and remarkable powers of the spokespersons and making other's believe in that these spokespersons have the ability to attract the attention of large audiences. Listeners are usually able to point out whether a person is a charismatic speaker or not regardless of the difficulty in defining the term with precision. There is a strong link between charisma and persuasion, as mentioned earlier in literature, and it is

the speaker's trait of persuasiveness that helps to detect if the audience views a speaker as charismatic or not.

The term charisma, when first introduced over two millennials ago, was intended to reflect an aura or mystery, and even a hint of the supernatural. It is fascinating as well as impressive that it has managed to retain these aspects, several eras later. Charisma was a historic trait of mainly royalty or religious leaders, who were considered to own godly gifts, which resulted in their followers to attain extraordinary or supernatural accomplishments. The generals were able to lead armies that conquered nations, and the priests were able to persuade acolytes to establish monumental structures that would require the work of generations to perfect. Charisma has become more reasonable in recent times: normally interpreted as a charming quirk, magnetism, or likeability (Beyer, 1999).

H₃: *Charisma is correlated to workplace ostracism*

2.3.1. Charisma and Popularity

The fun loving and extroverted activities that increase popularity are highlighted by charisma. Influence also supports the significance of charisma in rankings of popularity. An individual who performs in a rock band believes that you get more successful when your character is bigger – highlighting charisma's important to popularity. Since extroverted behaviors elevate everyone's moods, people that might want to be only charismatic tend to be not just that. A jolly person may be able to make everyone feel better and conjure up some smiles even on a rainy day when everyone is feelings blue because of the dull weather. 'Genuine and open' are how others perceive the majority of popular people, and the variable authenticity conceptualizes this characteristic. The demonstration of an 'honest' and 'truthful' persona is indeed an esteemed attribute. Clothing too portrays authenticity. Well-dressed individuals reflect a sense of self care, a poised and careful manner as well as radiating confidence, channeling all this into the energy they give off into their surroundings.

2.4. Employee Popularity

The phenomenon of popularity has been closely linked with positive consequences in both organizations and various other social settings. In organizations, the

popularity of an employee is directly proportional to his/her job satisfaction and their individual production and performance (Bass, 1962; Hollander, 1965). Moreover, employee popularity is also a positive factor that predicts the production levels and cohesion of any given work group (Lodahl & Porter, 1961). According to the 1998's self-evaluation maintenance model created by Tesser, Millar and Moore, individuals are more inclined to wallow in the mirrored splendor of others. Having close ties with the popular people at work in turn helps individuals in increasing their own self-appraisal. Hence, as suggested by the social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), people are always searching for ways to commence a chain of productive interactions so that they can formulate close ties with the popular employees of their organization, with the assumption that these popular employees will in turn feel obliged or grateful and will find different ways to compensate this good treatment which may include sharing the advantages of their popularity.

Other than the formal relationships and work ties, such as those advised by the organizational hierarchy, informal relationships are very abundant in the workplace (Bowler & Brass, 2006; Labianca & Chung, 2006). Some people naturally become friends while others become enemies (Bowler & Brass, 2006; Labianca & Brass, 2006; Lyons & Scott, 2012).

H_4: *Employee popularity mediates the relationship between extraversion and workplace ostracism*

H_5: *Employee popularity mediates the relationship between political skill and workplace ostracism*

H_6: *Employee popularity mediates the relationship between charisma and workplace ostracism*

2.4.1. Employee Popularity and Ostracism

In their 2009 study, Scott and Judge were able to find evidences that proved their first strategy to be true. Their first strategy supported the direct and important link between popularity and interpersonal organizational citizenship behavior. However factual data that supports the second strategy is not very clear. For example, it was discovered by the study of Mitchell and Liden (1982) that superiors in a work environment would give popular employees less extreme punishments as compared to the

unpopular employees.

Moreover, a significantly negative relationship came under observation by Scott and Judge between popularity and interpersonal counterproductive workplace behaviors toward the target employee when a sample of working college students was taken into account. Though Scott and Judge failed to replicate the research in another study that was conducted in a hospital. The discord and inconsistency in the findings is not yet clear but a factor that may have contributed in the uncertainty is the nature of the scale used. A clearly defined and narrow construct is like likely to improve the prediction and understanding of workplace mistreatment (Ferris, Brown, et al., 2008; Martin & Hine, 2005).

2.5. Emotional Intelligence

Before the year 1990, the term emotional intelligence wasn't so well defined. Emotional Intelligence has now been well-defined with a certain set of carefully chosen words that convey a deep meaning and understanding and read out as "using social intelligence with the ability to manage and understand one's own emotions and the emotions of others to ultimately add to the intelligent quotient of self and use the gathered information later for discriminating between right and wrong". Employees that have a high level of emotional intelligence have proven themselves to be better at dealing with the implications that arise from them being subjected to workplace ostracism (Zhang & Shi, 2017). Its common for individuals to go through a variety of feelings when they face ostracism, these emotions includes anger, anguish, pain, depression, anxiety or irritation etc. (Zhang & Shi, 2017). When being a target for work place ostracism, individuals who have a higher emotional intelligence tend to focus on more important stuff like why they feel the way that they do instead of acting out irrationally on these emotions (Zhang & Shi, 2017). An emotionally intelligent individual will not jump to conclusions immediately or just act out irrationally. He/she will try to look at the situation from different perspectives to gain clarity and only then he/she will decide upon the right course of action they should take regarding the situation or they will figure out a way to not deal with the kind of feelings they are having in a healthy and mature manner (Zhang & Shi, 2017). Thus, all of this supports the idea that high levels of emotional

intelligence have a positive and strong relationship with lower levels of distress as far as work place ostracism is concerned (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

The first time the term "social intelligence" was used was by Robert Thorndike in 1920. He used this term to explain the ability of understanding and managing other individuals. In the 1940s, David Wechsler defined intelligence as the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, think rationally, and deal effectively with his (or her) environment. Later, 1943, he came up with the concept that to anticipate one's success, non-intellective traits were integral. During this time, more and more researchers started to learn and inquire about the importance of emotional intelligence in various areas

H_7: *Emotional Intelligence moderates the relationship between employee popularity and workplace ostracism*

2.5.1. Moderating Role of Emotional Intelligence

As noted before, people who have a high level of emotional intelligence tend to face low levels of stress and emotions as a consequence of work place ostracism (Salovey and Mayer,1990). This in turn might mean that Emotional intelligence is the key for individuals to avoid negative emotions that are created as a consequence of ostracism in work place. Consequently, this also implies that individuals who have a high emotional intelligence are more capable of controlling their emotional outburst to perceptions of ostracism in their organizations as compared to their colleagues who have a low emotional intelligence. Some primary discoveries have stated that a lower EI is usually linked to involvement in self-destructive behaviors like deviant behavior which is again associated with workplace ostracism (Brackett, Mayer, 2003) though there is no denying the fact that the employee aware of managing their social standing and interpersonal relationships are likely to achieve success at work. If that's the case then individuals who have a good control on their emotions may choose to just subdue their emotions of workplace ostracism if they feel like that that's in their personal interest.
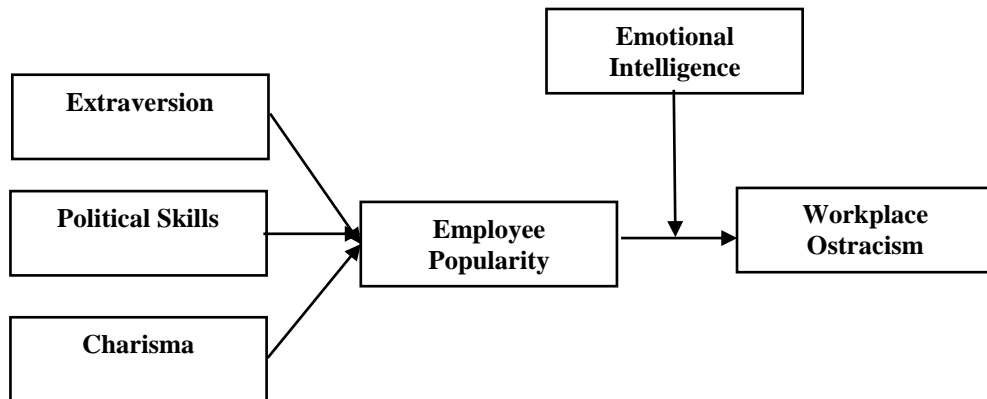
Theoretical Framework

Figure 1.1

Underlying Theory – (Social Influence Theory)

Levy, Collins, and Nail, in 1998, provided an extensive framework to understand why and how certain individuals avoid interpersonal mistreatment at the workplace. The theory which they proposed was called social influence theory. This theory suggests that individuals with influential skills and behaviors use these in order to achieve exceptional improvements in the workplace like promotions, favorable appraisals and compensations. Outcomes at the workplace are most likely to be based on subjective evaluation as frequent interpersonal interactions are a requirement of most, if not all, corporate cultures (Ferris, Perrewé, Anthony, & Gilmore, 2000.) It is easy to avoid negative consequences of a decision or opinion by being skillful at using interpersonal influence for your own benefit. This is because the general nature of a workplace is social and there is subjectivity involved in decision making done at the body of work. When one co-worker decides to harm another person, interpersonal mistreatment takes place. Consequently, individuals use social influence to avoid such occurrences.

Kelman in (1958), proposed the central theme of the social influence theory to be that an individual's beliefs and attitudes and the behavior resulting from these are affected by references to others' behaviors through three processes. The processes are compliance, identification and internalization. He proceeded to explain that social influence changes a person's attitude and actions: their general persona. These changes

may come about at different "levels." These levels occur differently due to the differentials in the processes in which individuals enable themselves to accept the social influences. These processes of influence are primarily described by Kelman (1958).

All the processes can depend upon the three general determinants of influence. (i) relative significance of the predicted outcome, (ii) influencing factor's comparative strength, and (iii) the prepotency of the induced response (as Kelman proposed in 1958). On the other hand, the determinants for each process differ qualitatively. Hence, there are distinctive sets of antecedent conditions for each process and as an output, each process leads to a distinctive set of consequent conditions. Hence it can be said that each process contains a set of distinctive precedent conditions as well as each process results in certain consequences.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Type

This type of research is known as cross sectional research which studies the population or a subset at one point in time. Which means that the data is collected just once and results that came out are based solely upon that data; which is unlike the longitudinal research where data is collected again and again from time to time and results are then based upon the analysis of perceived fluctuations. It is also a quantitative research. Which means that the results were substantiated by the use of stats and figures.

3.2. Unit of Analysis

In this study, we have focused on the employees working in telecom sector of Pakistan's twin cities Islamabad and Rawalpindi. In order to cover more ground and reach out to maximum number of individuals, no focus is drawn mainly towards any specific level, gender, or group, and all individuals onboard in the selected organizations were employed for data collection to study their characteristics, behaviors, and responses to carefully structured questions.

3.3. Population and Sample Size

The population targeted for this research is from the telecom companies working in the twin cities of Pakistan i.e Rawalpindi and Islamabad. As per the stats studied from

sources like pakistaneconomist.com and statista.com the below mentioned telcos in Table 3.1 came out as the most heavily employed ones with bifurcation mentioned in front of each. Since all of these companies have their headquarters situated in Islamabad, almost 60% of their headcount resides in Islamabad. The bifurcation explains the total number of employees and the number of employees situated in Islamabad to further narrow down the population from who the date would be collected.

Sr.No.	Telco	Total No.of Employees	No of Employees in Islamabad
1	PTCL	18000	10800
2	Mobilink	2000	1200
3	Ufone	2000	1200
4	Zong	2000	1200
5	Telenor	1900	1140
		25900	**15,540**

As suggested by Uma Sekaran (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), the sample size for a known population can be taken from the table attached in Annexure A. Since the population falls somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000 we will be taking the sample size of 376. The table for reference can be found in the Annexure A at the end of the thesis..

3.4. Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. It is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are picked based upon the evident accessibility, convenient, and nearness (Milner, Myers, & O'Byrne, 2015). The studies ideally require testing the whole population but sometimes it is too large and subjects are not readily available. Therefore, convenience sampling, the most common among all the techniques, is fast, inexpensive, and a reliable measure to adopt.

3.5. Data Collection Technique

Questionnaires adopted from various previous researches relevant to our research were used for data collection where relevant items from each questionnaire were selected. It is the fastest known way to collect data from a large audience (Ferris, Brown, et al., 2008); especially the use of Google forms has made it even more convenient to collect the responses after floating the questionnaire in the desired organization, and getting the

responses recorded in an excel sheet for further analysis. The questionnaire items along with references can be found attached in the Annexure A.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The data analysis section includes all the steps taken to quantify the responses collected from the targeted organizations and population; ultimately sating our sample size to better support the findings. The responses collected through the Google form was extracted and assigned the numerical values as per the likert scale (1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree etc). The same data was then transported to SPSS software.

4.1. SPSS

The SPSS software was used to analyze the values of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, and correlation. To be begin with, descriptive stats were analyzed that manifest the data set representative of targeted population. Given below is the table comprising of the values. Short initials were assigned to the variables like EI for emotional intelligence, CH for charisma, PO for employee popularity, PS for political skills, OS for workplace ostracism, and EI for emotional intelligence.

4.1.1. Descriptive Stats

Mean is the most widely used measure of central tendency. The value is sensitive to both super large and small variations in data. Median is the middle value. Mode is the most repeated value. Standard deviation measures the spread of set of various observations. Standard deviations greater than 1 are considered good with high variance. In this research case, on average the value is 1.30 which shows good standard deviation. Skewness explains how symmetrical the distribution of the data is. Kurtosis explain whether the distribution is peaked or not. The values of both skewness and kurtosis should fall between +2 and -2 to ensure the normality of data (Hair et al., 2017, p. 61). As per the descriptive stats given below in Table 4.1, our data is normal since all the values fall right between the established standards.

Table 4.1

Items	N		Mean	Median	Mode	Skewness	Std. Error of Skewness	Kurtosis	Std. Error of Kurtosis
	Valid	Missing							
EI1	376	0	2.7872	2.0000	2.00	0.519	0.126	-0.941	0.251
EI2	376	0	2.4628	2.0000	2.00	0.565	0.126	-0.889	0.251
EI3	376	0	2.4309	2.0000	2.00	0.524	0.126	-0.811	0.251
EI4	376	0	2.3989	2.0000	1.00	0.589	0.126	-0.784	0.251
EI5	376	0	2.4707	2.0000	2.00	0.589	0.126	-0.769	0.251
EX1	376	0	2.4521	2.0000	2.00	0.600	0.126	-0.393	0.251
EX2	376	0	2.2793	2.0000	2.00	0.690	0.126	-0.280	0.251
EX3	376	0	2.4441	2.0000	2.00	0.585	0.126	-0.621	0.251
EX4	376	0	2.5452	2.0000	2.00	0.492	0.126	-0.732	0.251
OS1	376	0	3.4441	4.0000	4.00	-0.629	0.126	-0.660	0.251
OS2	376	0	3.3670	4.0000	4.00	-0.341	0.126	-0.984	0.251
OS3	376	0	3.5612	4.0000	5.00	-0.598	0.126	-0.978	0.251
OS4	376	0	3.6383	4.0000	5.00	-0.684	0.126	-0.898	0.251
OS5	376	0	3.5080	4.0000	4.00	-0.621	0.126	-0.824	0.251
OS6	376	0	3.5505	4.0000	4.00[a]	-0.622	0.126	-0.879	0.251
OS7	376	0	3.5239	4.0000	4.00	-0.638	0.126	-0.827	0.251
OS8	376	0	3.4202	4.0000	5.00	-0.444	0.126	-0.938	0.251
OS9	376	0	3.8032	4.0000	5.00	-0.839	0.126	-0.510	0.251
PS1	376	0	2.4574	2.0000	2.00	0.577	0.126	-0.604	0.251
PS2	376	0	2.4335	2.0000	2.00	0.577	0.126	-0.531	0.251
PS3	376	0	2.3590	2.0000	2.00	0.616	0.126	-0.490	0.251
PS4	376	0	2.4309	2.0000	1.00	0.560	0.126	-0.850	0.251
PO1	376	0	2.4734	2.0000	2.00	0.468	0.126	-0.714	0.251
PO2	376	0	2.4681	2.0000	2.00	0.665	0.126	-0.406	0.251
PO3	376	0	2.4388	2.0000	1.00	0.461	0.126	-0.818	0.251
PO4	376	0	2.5346	2.0000	2.00	0.484	0.126	-0.611	0.251
PO5	376	0	2.4814	2.0000	2.00	0.478	0.126	-0.917	0.251
CH1	376	0	2.5665	2.0000	2.00	0.435	0.126	-0.884	0.251
CH2	376	0	2.4761	2.0000	2.00	0.568	0.126	-0.678	0.251
CH3	376	0	2.3324	2.0000	2.00	0.780	0.126	-0.223	0.251
CH4	376	0	2.6117	2.0000	2.00	0.336	0.126	-0.894	0.251
CH5	376	0	2.5638	2.0000	2.00	0.456	0.126	-0.880	0.251

4.1.2. Correlation

A correlation analysis denotes the associations among different variables. As per the stats given below in Table 4.2, EI has a strong downhill (negative) relationship with ostracism (-0.7). Extraversion also has a strong downhill (negative) relationship with ostracism (-0.7). Political skill and Charisma both have another strong downhill (negative) relationships with ostracism (-0.7). Charisma, extraversion, and political skills, all have a strong uphill (positive) relationship with employee popularity (0.7) (Hair et al.,

2017, p. 61).

Table- 4.2

Items		EI	EX	OS	PS	PO	CH
EI **(Emotional** **Intelligence)**	**Pearson Correlation**	1	.771**	-.789**	.735**	.738**	.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	376	376	376	376	376	376
EX **(Extraversion)**	**Pearson Correlation**	.771**	1	-.737**	.733**	.754**	.790**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	376	376	376	376	376	376
OS **(Ostracism)**	**Pearson Correlation**	-.789**	-.737**	1	-.704**	-.751**	-.791**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	376	376	376	376	376	376
PS **(Political Skills)**	**Pearson Correlation**	.735**	.733**	-.704**	1	.769**	.747**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	376	376	376	376	376	376
PO **(Popularity)**	**Pearson Correlation**	.738**	.754**	-.751**	.769**	1	.806**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	376	376	376	376	376	376
CH **(Charisma)**	**Pearson Correlation**	.757**	.790**	-.791**	.747**	.806**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	376	376	376	376	376	376

4.2. SMART PLS

Smart PLS is considered a milestone in latent variable modeling and calculation of complex relationships involving various mediators and moderators. The CSV data file was extracted from the SPSS and was run as a new project in Smart PLS for further analysis. The screenshot of the model is given below in the structural model results. The PLS algorithm gave the respective values of factor loadings.

4.2.1. SMART PLS (Structural Model Results)

The values given between the variables and the items are called factor loadings. The values arising between the variables show the significance of their relationships. Also, the moderating effect variable is visible that is denoting the effect of EI on OS; where PO is acting as an independent variable (mediator as per out model). Fig 4.1 shows all the relationships and the associated values computed by the PLS algorithm. It's one of the most convenient things about Smart PLS that it's always a matter of single click to see your data computation within seconds. The same PLS algorithm also computes R square, F square, Construct reliability and validity, Discriminant validity, Collinearity Statistics, Model fit, and model selection criteria.

The factor loading values of all variables are greater than 0.7 hence the items are valid. Initially, there were 2 more items PS5 and EX5, which were dropped because of really low factor loading values. The exclusion of these items refined our analysis a great deal. The value distribution table can be found below in Smart PLS Measurement Results (Table 4.3). As per the standards, the values of factor loadings should be greater than 0.7 (Killingsworth, Xue, & Liu, 2016)
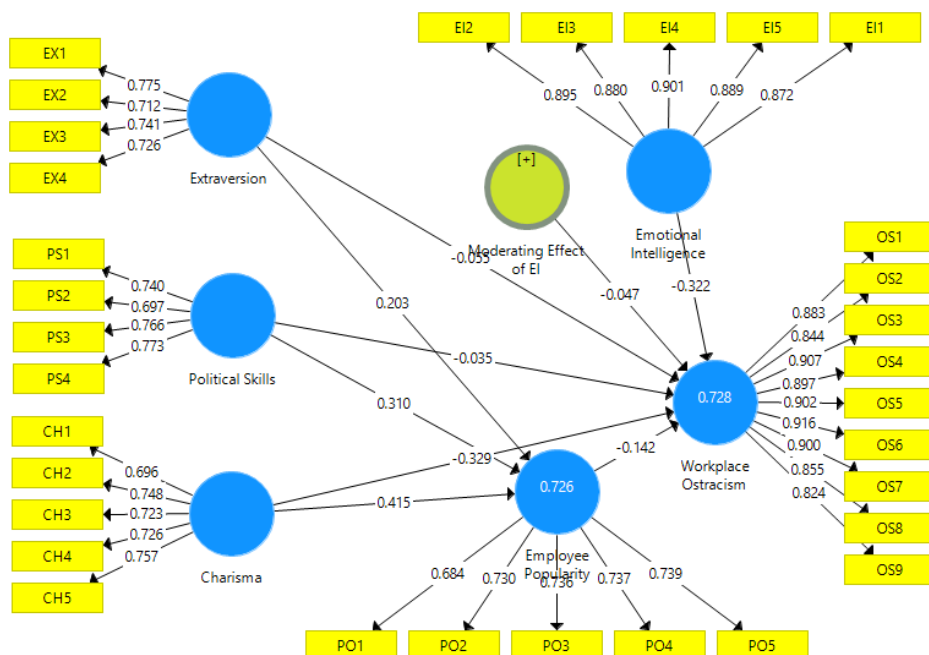

Figure 4.1

4.2.2. SMART PLS (Measurement Results)

By using PLS Algorithm, construct validity and reliability was checked and the computed tables are given below.

Table 4.3.			
Variables	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**Composite Reliability**	**Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
Workplace Ostracism	0.964	0.91	0.776
Emotional Intelligence	0.933	0.92	0.788
Charisma	0.781	0.851	0.533
Employee Popularity	0.775	0.847	0.526
Political Skills	0.732	0.833	0.555
Extraversion	0.723	0.828	0.546

Even though the factor loading values of PS2, CH1, PO1, are less than 0.7, the AVE is coming out to be greater than 0.5; deeming the items reliable and valid for the analysis. As mentioned in the table, the value of Cronbach Alpha for all the variables is greater than 0.7. The SMART PLS turn the inaccurate values red by default. The original screenshot of this analysis can be found in Annexure B.

Collinearity statistics (VIF) were also studied to see whether there was any repetition in the collected data. As per the table given below Table 4.4, all values are coming below 5 which states that there was none or minimum repetition in the responses (Killingsworth, Xue, & Liu, 2016). The screenshot of analysis can be found in Annexure B. The PLS functionality turns the erroneous figures red to highlight the problem areas.

Variables	Employee Popularity	Workplace Ostracism
Charisma	3.147	3.931
Emotional Intelligence		3.196
Employee Popularity		3.718
Extraversion	3.039	3.532
Political Skills	2.606	3.113

The measurement results are concerned with the direct effect of independent variables, mediators, and moderators, on the dependent variable. Hence why there are no values given in the Table 4.4 against employee popularity and emotional intelligence in

second column since there is no direct effect of emotional intelligence on employee popularity but it was expected to act as a moderator. In order to have further refined insights on both direct and indirect effects, bootstrapping is run to see the final results and it finally concludes the whole research process as to how and why a hypothesis should be rejected or accepted.

4.2.2.1. Bootstrapping

Bootstrapping is a non-parametric procedure that allows testing of the statistical significance of various results. The bootstrapping was run to check the significance of all the relationships. It's of usual notice that even if the variables are correlated, sometimes the relationships tend to be insignificant (because of P values and T values) and the hypothesis are rejected. This is where we get to see the bigger picture of our construct and study how different relationships actually work before we report the results.

Table 4.5:			
Variables (Relationships)	**Path Coefficient**	**T Values**	**P Values**
Charisma->Employee Popularity	0.415	8.236	0
Charisma->WPO	-0.329	4.23	0
Emotional Intelligence->WPO	-0.322	3.893	0
Employee Popularity->WPO	-0.142	2.34	0.02
Extraversion-.Employees popularity	0.203	3.847	0
Extraversion->WPO	-0.055	1.093	0.275
Moderating Effect of EI->WPO	-0.047	1.337	0.182
Political Skills->Employee Popularity	0.31	5.949	0
Politicl Skills->WPO	-0.035	0.588	0.557

The bootstrapping results given above in Table 4.5 show the path coefficients (direct effects), T values, and P values. As per the calculations, extraversion has a negative direct effect on workplace ostracism (-0.055 path coefficient) but the T value is less than 1.96 and P value is greater than 0.05. Hence the relationship is coming out insignificant which is rejecting our H1. Despite there being a negative correlation as per the anticipation, the relationship is insignificant to prove the hypothesis. The standard says that P value should be less 0.05 and T values should be greater than 1.96

(Killingsworth, Xue, & Liu, 2016)

The same observation goes for political skills having a negative direct effect on workplace ostracism (-0.035 path coefficient). The T value is again less than 1.96 and P value is greater than 0.05. Hence H2 is also rejected.

However, charisma shows a very strong direct (negative) relationship with workplace ostracism and the P and T values are at par with the standard values. Our H3 is accepted as a direct negative relationship can be seen between charisma and workplace ostracism and the P value is less than 0.05 and T value is greater than 1.96.

Charisma, political skills, and extraversion show a great positive relationship with employee popularity (path coefficients of 0.415, 0.31, and 0.203). All these personality traits were expected to enhance the employee popularity and results speak positively for the anticipation. Also, the employee popularity is showing a direct negative relationship with workplace ostracism (P value less than 0.05 and T value greater than 1.96). Employee popularity being a mediator required the computation of indirect effects to see the level of mediation.

Moderating effect of emotional intelligence was also computed using the bootstrapping. In smart pls, a separate tab is present which allows to study the effect of moderator (EI in our case) on dependent variable (workplace ostracism in our case). While computing, employee popularity (the mediator) was marked as an independent variable. As per the table given above, there is indeed a direct negative effect of emotional intelligence on workplace ostracism as expected, but the P value is greater than 0.05 and T value is less than 1.96. With these observations, our H7 is also rejected.

It's also of usual notice, that deleting the items in any variable with low factor loadings usually refine the result but there should be minimum of 3 items in each variable. Sometimes, deleting the items can alter the results to such an extent that our total modal results are altered vehemently, and new relationships develop; the hypothesis that were being rejected before might get accepted and show enhanced significance. However, only 2 items were dropped in this construct because of low factor loadings.

4.2.2.1.1.   Mediation Effects with Bootstrapping

To study the mediation effects with bootstrapping, we study indirect effects. The

computed Table 4.6 with respective T and P values. The original screenshot can be found attached in Annexure B.

Table 4.6:			
Variables (Relationships)	**Path Coefficient**	**T Values**	**P Values**
Charisma->WPO	-0.059	2.238	0.026
Extraversion->WPO	-0.029	1.967	0.05
Politicl Skills->WPO	-0.044	2.11	0.035

As per the stats given above, all the independent variables (charisma, extraversion, and political skills) show negative direct relationship with workplace ostracism. The mediation between charisma and workplace ostracism is partial mediation as the charisma has already shown direct negative relationship with workplace ostracism and the relationship has proved to be significant. In this relationship, employee popularity (mediator) has shown direct negative relationship with workplace ostracism with significant values. While for political skills and extraversion, a complete mediation trend can be seen as the direct negative relationship of political skills and extraversion with workplace ostracism wasn't significant. However, with employee popularity acting as a mediator, the relationship becomes significant with P values less than 0.05 and T values greater than 1.96. Hence there are 2 cases of complete mediation and 1 of partial mediation. As per the analysis, H_4, H_5, and H6 are accepted.

5. CONCLUSION

As per the analysis, it has been proved that personality characteristics (charisma, political skills, and extraversion) can aid in honing workplace ostracism. The results showed that the personality characteristics help in reaching the desired level of popularity which in turn dissuade the likeability of being ostracized. However, factors like emotional intelligence do help an individual in maintaining the level of popularity and further avoiding ostracism, but the relationship is not as significant (or it proved to be otherwise in this research). Also, the trait charisma, showing a strong direct negative relationship with ostracism, is something that should be worked on by the employees to avoid workplace ostracism as it directly leads to the escape route from ostracism. While

political skills and extraversion are also the traits that indirectly lead to the same route, the factor of popularity is the bridge that holds them together.

In order to avoid interpersonal treatment at work, the individuals could be advised to take formal training on personal and professional development. This could help them polish the desired characteristics and the likelihood of getting ostracized is reduced. Moreover, idolizing the right people (possessing the desired personality characteristics) should be reached up for educational dialogues to learn more about their experiences. Working under a mentor or a life coach is another way to go forward.

6. DISCUSSION

The variables discussed in the research were inspired by the previous work on pointing out the problems associated with interpersonal mistreatment and the negative ramifications that branch out. As discussed before in this research how social interactions cannot be ignored at work and are thus inexorable in nature. As the minimizations of work teams is skyrocketing in today's knowledge-based economy, the importance of workplace relationships has gained considerable popularity and importance. The researchers are now more concerned towards how to maintain a genial environment at work and root out the perils that create inconvenient silos in both operational and personal capacity. Since it's been observed that technical employees tend to be more aloof hence it was an interesting endeavor to study the telecom sector that comprises mostly of technical individuals. Also in the same sector, it was expected to find the evidence of ostracism comparatively more than in other sectors and it proved to be so.

The results of this research show how employee suffering from ostracism are the ones that usually lack personality characteristics necessary to maintain the desired level of popularity. Strong mediation results of employee popularity state the need to have a social standing that makes one's existence deem visible enough to avoid exclusion (workplace ostracism). The direct negative relation of charisma on workplace ostracism shows that individuals who don't work on their personal wellbeing and don't carry themselves confidently are likely to get excluded from social gatherings at work. As per the results, number of people who were not falling prey to ostracism were the ones who

possess at least one of the unique characteristics under study (political skills, extraversion, and charisma). Even though the direct relationship between political skills and workplace ostracism, and Extraversion and workplace ostracism is not significant, there exists a negative correlation as expected. Employee who are politically sound and extroverted are less likely to fall prey to ostracism but as per the results, the evidence isn't significant to call it an axiom as the quantitative analysis rejected the hypothesis. The same results came up in relationship between extraversion and workplace ostracism. It is understandable that more outgoing people, also known as extroverts, are usually more acceptable by the groups and the negative correlation supports this fact. However, the observation might not hold true for all the cases as some extroverts might still be excluded because of personal grudges or rifts among the group of individuals. Emotionally intelligent individuals despite having profound understanding of their own and other people's emotions, could still be excluded because of various other reasons; there is always room for human error in different estimations particularly the ones that involve human emotions. The potential of that error creates possibility that even emotionally intelligent people are likely to face ostracism at some instances.

6.1. Theoretical Implications

Our study has some theoretical implications based upon the social influence theory that explains how people try to avoid interpersonal mistreatment at work by utilizing their traits and aim for rewards and promotions. However, the study reveals that only popular employees tend to be the ones that don't fall prey to ostracism because they possess characteristics like charisma, extraversion, and political skills. Even though there was no significant direct effect of extraversion and political skills on workplace ostracism, but employee popularity shows complete mediation between political skills and workplace ostracism, and extraversion and ostracism. Also, there was an evidence of partial mediation between charisma and workplace ostracism. Using these relationships, the negative ramifications of workplace ostracism can be honed to enhance productivity and employee retention.

6.2. Practical Implications

Organizational work setting is like an emotional maze for congenitally

susceptible individuals. It is of usual notice to witness interpersonal mistreatment in different stratums of workplaces. Those who are direly affected by these malpractices, usually project their frustrations in their output and the productivity is direly tapered. It is indispensable for the employees working in different organizations to carve their way out of this emotional plague and take precautionary measures to sustain their mental stability. Though it may seem too abstract to train people to possess the personality characteristics meant to hone ostracism, but the awareness could have deep subliminal impact on the opinions; as very wise people say 'see yourself doing it right, and you will do it right'. As pointed earlier in the literature review section, how different organizations have reported the malpractices (ostracism) in their environments and how it has led to burnout and turnover intentions, it is important for the people to understand how ostracism can lead to job switching behaviors and mental stress ultimately leading to turnover. All in all, our research reveals that popular employees are less likely to fall prey to ostracism hence more personality characteristics should be studied in organizational setting that can aid in reducing ostracism.

6.3. Future Recommendations

Since there are very few researches on how to hone interpersonal mistreatment (workplace ostracism in this research) a heap of other variables can be explored as an Independent variable to study the direct and indirect effects on workplace ostracism. For instance, we chose extraversion of the big five personality modal. Future researchers are advised to use openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism in the same construct. Moreover, the same construct can be applied in different sectors with different mediators like employee image, positive gossip (Feinberg, Willer, & Schultz, 2014), and subliminal impression. Since we used emotional intelligence as a moderator and the relationship came out insignificant, moderators like power distance (Cullen, Fan, & Liu, 2012) and psychological stability can be used.

Also, the sample size can be further increased as per the population to enhance generalizability of the results. The questionnaire used was designed in a way to encourage the employees to rathe themselves on popularity which might have given biased responses. Future researchers are advised to find a way around generating

responses that involves the assessment of popularity quotient by an impartial individual.

6.4. Limitations

The current study has its very first limitation as our inability to examine different sources of ostracism explicitly (like colleagues, customers, consultants, and close friends at work, supervisor, and almost any individual at work) as we will be taking data conveniently from everyone we can reach. Since our aim is to simply highlight any form of ostracism detected in an organization, this study doesn't focus solely on any particular dimension. Previously, researchers have impressed upon beginning from justifying the source from where a certain action originates. It can further explained by an example, where an employee holds a certain perception of fairness about the supervisor and the workplace. Now, the main source that compels an employee to feel a certain way, should be known to target the matter incisively (Rupp, Cropanzano, 2002). Hence, an important future direction for research is to disentangle these source effects. Even though it is evident that popular employees would face minimum ostracism from multiple sources, the magnitude of this linkage could vary.

Another limitation could be that employees would be asked to rate themselves on the popularity scale which could elicit biased responses as the people might want to render themselves as popular ones even if it's not true. Moreover, the construct applied to this study is being tested on telecom sector and replication of the same in other industries could result in different outcomes as the size of organization and cultural aspects vary.

Also, the sample size could always be strengthen to improve the generalizability of the research and conducting the same research in the different sectors could come up with diverse results since the nature of individuals vary as per their occupations as well the culture formed in different work settings by amalgamation of personalities from different backgrounds, races, and ethnic groups.

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Appendex/Annexture-A

Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Al...	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted ...
Charisma_	0.781	0.782	0.851	0.533
Emotional Intel...	0.933	0.933	0.949	0.788
Employee Pop...	0.775	0.776	0.847	0.526
Extraversion	0.723	0.723	0.828	0.546
Political Skills_	0.732	0.735	0.833	0.555
Workplace Ostr...	0.964	0.965	0.969	0.776

Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

Outer VIF Values | Inner VIF Values — Copy to Clipboard: Excel Format | R Format

	Charisma_	Emotional Inte...	Employee Pop...	Extraversion	Political Skills_	Workplace Ost...
Charisma_			3.147			3.931
Emotional Intel...						3.196
Employee Pop...						3.718
Extraversion			3.039			3.532
Political Skills_			2.606			3.113
Workplace Ostr...						

Path Coefficients

Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Va... | Confidence Intervals | Confidence Intervals Bias C... | Samples — Copy to Clipboard: Excel Format | R Format

	Original Sampl...	Sample Mean (...	Standard Devia...	T Statistics (|O...	P Values
Charisma_ -> Employee Popularity	0.415	0.411	0.050	8.236	0.000
Charisma_ -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.329	-0.327	0.078	4.230	0.000
Emotional Intelligence -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.322	-0.324	0.083	3.893	0.000
Employee Popularity -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.142	-0.143	0.061	2.340	0.020
Extraversion -> Employee Popularity	0.203	0.206	0.053	3.847	0.000
Extraversion -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.055	-0.056	0.051	1.093	0.275
Moderating Effect of EI -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.047	-0.049	0.035	1.337	0.182
Political Skills_ -> Employee Popularity	0.310	0.311	0.052	5.949	0.000
Political Skills_ -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.035	-0.033	0.060	0.588	0.557

Total Indirect Effects

Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Va... | Confidence Intervals | Confidence Intervals Bias C... | Samples — Copy to Clipboard: Excel Format | R Format

	Original Sampl...	Sample Mean (...	Standard Devia...	T Statistics (|O...	P Values
Charisma_ -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.059	-0.059	0.026	2.238	0.026
Political Skills_ -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.044	-0.045	0.021	2.110	0.035
Extraversion -> Workplace Ostracism	-0.029	-0.029	0.015	1.967	0.050
Charisma_ -> Employee Popularity					
Emotional Intelligence -> Workplace Ostracism					
Employee Popularity -> Workplace Ostracism					
Extraversion -> Employee Popularity					
Moderating Effect of EI -> Workplace Ostracism					
Political Skills_ -> Employee Popularity					

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384