

Being Ignored: Influence of Workplace Ostracism on the Relationship of Social Identity and Social Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

This study stands on pillars of the social exchange theory to develop a theoretical framework of social sustainability with social identity through the mediating role of workplace ostracism. It's an explanatory and cross-sectional study; self-administered questionnaires are used to collect data from employees in textile sector of Pakistan. The deductive approach is applied to analyse hypothesis against the total sample size 414, and serial mediation is examined by applying the Hayes process macro model 4. The findings revealed that the social identity directly enhanced the social sustainability of the textile organizations. However, workplace ostracism undermines the social identity of employee, it arises as an obstacle in the way of social sustainability. The present study has made a valuable contribution to the literature on prosocial behavior and opened the new horizons of social sustainability in research. This study facilitates the top management and HR professionals of textile sectors to design strategies for the sustainability of their workforce.

Key words: Social identity, Social sustainability, Workplace ostracism, Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century is also facing the issues of behavioral change along with environmental change in the 5th Industrial Revolution. Literature highlighted the ethical as well as social issues that are top-ranked in the textile sector of Pakistan. In present decade, one of the extremely top-rated contemporary issue of human resource management is social sustainability that needs attention of researchers. They should propose mechanism and strategies to the industrialists how to focus on the well-being of employees. In (2015), The United Nations has presented the agenda till (2030) of seventeen sustainable developmental goals based on these streams of sustainability. The UNO report on SDG's (Campos-García et al. 2024; Chams & García-Blandón, 2019) emphasize Good health & well-being, gender equality, decent work conditions and economic growth, reduced inequalities, peace, justice and strong institution. Empirical studies are required on these SDGs for the smooth functioning of social sustainability in the organizations (Campos-García et al., 2024). In the turbulent times, and cut-throat competition of

sustainability numerous organizations design and implement strategies to achieve the sustainable development goals.

The omnipresent problem is workplace ostracism of employees which undermines their social identity. It is a cold violence (Wang et al., 2021) and have dexterous effects on the mental health of employee. To meet this purpose social identity can be proven productive in enhancing the self-esteem of employees under the lens of social exchange theory. The social identity of employees is resourceful paradigm to contribute in the achievement of social sustainability. When an employee expresses his belongingness to a particular group, team or department then he shows social connectivity or social bonding (Charness & Chen, 2024). While workplace ostracism is the “social death” of an employee (Mohammad & Nazir, 2023) that undermines his social identity. When an employee is disregarded, excluded or rejected by peers he demoralizes and pessimistic towards organizational goals (Balliet & Ferris, 2013).

This study highlights how the textile sector in Pakistan can achieve social sustainability in organizations. If social identity of employees provides valuable insights into the attainment of social SDGs by minimizing workplace ostracism. This study is explanatory in nature, and deductive approach is used to examine the hypothesis. The self-administered questionnaires are used to collect data from employees in the textile sector of Pakistan. The total sample size is $n = 414$ and simple random sampling technique is used.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability was defined by (S. Sharma & Ruud, 2003) as “a code of ethics for human survival and elevated progress that is required to fulfil collectively both for organizations and its employees”. Social Sustainability is a sustainable human resource management mechanism that designs and formulates strategies for the social connectivity, well-being and welfare of employees (Cachón-Rodríguez et al., 2022). The concept of social sustainability encompasses the processes and practices that generate better social impact on employees, including flexible working hours, lenient working conditions, rewards and appreciation of employees, which in turn contribute to the organization’s future performance (Lämsä et al., 2023).

The other key words used in literature for social sustainability are sustainable HRM, humanization sustainability, sustainable relationships (Cachón-Rodríguez et al., 2022; Ehnert & Harry, 2012; Kumari & Singh, 2023). The Social sustainability is explored by past researchers under the multiple heads such as human health (mental & social), well-being of generations, social well-being & coherence, subjective well-being of employees, (Abid et al., 2020) social infrastructure, social support and social culture of organization (Chams & García-Blandón, 2019; Kokko & Hänninen, 2021; Owojori et al., 2024).

Workplace Ostracism

Employees feel de-moralize when their efforts are unanswered at workplace they experienced stress, anxiety, and depression due to dehumanization (Srivastava & Dhir, 2024). Workplace ostracism is the “cold violence” at workplace (D. Wang et al., 2021; Zhang1 & Jiaying1, 2020). WO is a form of social exploitation that brings negative outcomes in employees such as high turnover rate, decreased employee’s well-being, and mental torment (Ferris et al., 2008; Kaushal et al., 2021). Workplace ostracism produce negative outcomes in behaviors and attitudes of individuals, it includes knowledge hiding, holding exact information, misguidance, and intentionally miscommunication towards others (Dash et al., 2023). Among three immense feedback of workplace ostracism fight, flight, and to be friend social sustainability fit to last one strategy (Gao & Lin, 2023).

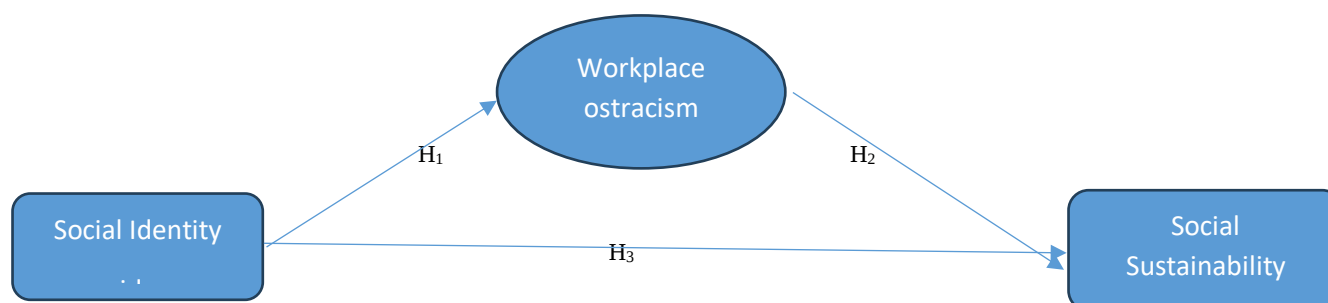
It is desirable to work on the social bonding, and welfare of employees the sustainable HRM practices is a valuable tool of social sustainability. Due to inferior complex initiated by ostracized behavior the feelings of revenge are generated in employees HR managers should focus on employee well-being and psychological safety by taking measures in the organizations (Srivastava & Dhir, 2024) . Due to high ostracism in employees' frequent projects and targets left unanswered their silence engenders disasters in the organizational environment (Mohammad & Nazir, 2023).

Social Identity

Social identity shaped by considering the social interactions of individuals. Social identity shapes the behavior of people (Charness & Chen, 2024). It highlights the sentiments and feelings of individuals effect by behavior of other group members (Kalin & Sambanis, 2018). Social identity covers deep emotions not cool cognitions (Deaux, 2001). In social identity the individual makes social comparison of himself with others within and outside the groups (Abrams, 1990). Social identity has influence on employee's faith, perception, attitude, and behavior (Farivar & Wang, 2022). Social identity also determines the opportunities of professional growth and career advancement of an employee. In social identity the moral support, enthusiastic support heighten the motivation of group members to strive towards success (Abrams, 1990) . When an employee experiences social identity in his workplace; his work devotion, dedication, involvement and learning skills are optimized.

Social identity of employee is mandatory to get recognition and aspirations from his leader. In such way organizations can achieve their targets to socially sustain employees by considering their well-being. However, lack of social identity exaggerates negative feelings that promotes workplace ostracism. By involving in inferior complex employee back out from his actual job duties gradually then quit job in near future. Social identity plays a crucial role in maintaining social relationships in the organization.

Theoretical framework



(Authors own contribution)

The Social identity of employee and workplace ostracism

Social identity refers to an employee's perception of being intentionally tied up with a group or concerned with an organization (Alexander Haslam et al., 2020). Social identity encompasses the affective as well as continuous commitment of an employee to his organization. Countless hidden factors may cause a low social identity, like ostracism, cynicism, negative perception, etc. Ostracism arises when an employees feel disrespected and neglected by others in the organization (Ferris et al., 2008). To fulfil the relationship from both sides' employee and employer the social exchange theory is utilized here (Blau, 1964). when employees are work devoted, serve best skills, and give full potential in their jobs they perceive they should be treated well by the organizations in the form of career ladder, promotion, incentives, recognition and remuneration.

Employees who feel ignored at the workplace lose their social identity and become silent (Sahabuddin et al., 2023). Workplace ostracism is a significant contributor of social identity of employee (Jahanzeb et al., 2021a). The study proposed to investigate the relationship between social identity and workplace ostracism (Ayub et al., 2021). An employee with low social identity experienced reduced job loyalty, work engagement and job commitment which led to increased ostracized behavior (Sahabuddin et al., 2023). The workplace ostracism undermines the efficiency and progress of employee (Jahanzeb et al., 2020). Workplace ostracism is natural hurdle caused by humankind in performing job duties is unavoidable (Zhao et al., 2016).

H₁: The social identity undermines workplace ostracism of employees.

Workplace ostracism and social sustainability

The dimension of “social sustainability” still demanding the attention of researchers (Balaman, 2019). The social sustainability raised when systems, structures, processes and practices are actively participated in the psychological well being, welfare, and mental health of the existing as well as future employees of the organizations (Ramaano, 2022). Social sustainability makes sure the compliance the organizations implement the strategies designed for provision of basic job rights and welfare (Qadri et al., 2024).

Ostracism is liable to bring the negative changes in the behavior it reduces the social interaction and social connectivity of victim employees (Choi, 2020). The belongingness or social networking are keen needs of individuals, but ostracism effects emerged in the form of dissatisfaction, stress and depression (Choi, 2021). It harmfully effects the mental and psychological health of employees that is interconnected with socioemotional and cognitive needs (Mao et al., 2018). The social sustainability encompasses the employee well-being, mental health and equality in the organizations.

Under the context of social exchange theory workplace ostracism is negative behavioural outcome of employee after his productive performance in the organization. When his peers, or leaders do not acknowledge his contribution at the workplace. The social sustainability is reciprocal relationship of employee with the organization where he serves, performs task and contributes in the progress of his organization in lieu of this organization take care about his remuneration, rewards, working conditions, fringe benefits and well-being etc. The workplace ostracism undermines the social sustainability of employees when they realize their efforts are going unanswered, they become annoyed and disappointed. In result they backout from their responsibilities due to negligence of their organizations.

This relationship has not been studied in the past literature and previous empirical studies also proposed this relationship should be explored by future researchers. In the light of this situation, we can propose that there is direct relationship between workplace ostracism and social sustainability.

H₂: Workplace ostracism attenuates the social sustainability of the organizations.

Social Identity and Social Sustainability

The social sustainability fulfils the social needs and environmental requirements of employees within organizations. The standardized needs are social justice, wellness of employees, equal human rights, fair labor practices, flexible working hours, decent work conditions, mental health and well-being of employees (Ramaano, 2022). The psychological well-being highly concerns with emotional and intellectual needs of the individuals (Howard et al., 2020).

Under the ground of social exchange theory, self-defining social identity represents employee and organization as a (we), employee do work for making progress of his organization and he shows affective commitment (Schulte et al., 2020). In return organization will also make arrangements to facilitates its

employees by providing flexible job hours, recreational platforms, incentives and welfare (Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017). In the era of SDGs, social identity can massively contribute in maintaining the well-being and good mental as well as psychological health of employees (Schulte et al., 2020).

A social exchange relationship existed between employees having social identity and the organization. When employees work for the well-being, better performance and development of their organizations, their employers should also take care about social and psychological well being of their employees to develop the long-term relationship. On the based of this phenomena we can proposed the following hypothesis.

H₃: Social identity has direct positive relationship with social sustainability.

The mediating role of workplace ostracism

Social comparison is a widespread practice among all human beings in both personal and professional lives (Ferris et al., 2008). According to (Cheng & Ma, 2022) “Peers are refused to treat you friendly” you are not invited in formal meeting” all the instances of workplace ostracism (Williams, 2007). Due to highlighted feelings of frustration employees ostracised behavior tend to increases he prevents the social interaction with others, loosing interest in his job responsibilities, and become willing to switch his job for better opportunity in result the social identity will dim so there is need to maintain the social sustainability in the organizations. Employees with weak communication skills and political skills are more likely to be ostracized (Zainuddin Rela et al., 2021).

The well-being of employees is compromised when negative moods and sentiments disrupt their work-life balance (Loon et al., 2019) leading to dissatisfaction. The fundamental element of psychological well-being is belongingness which is undermined by workplace ostracism (Howard et al., 2020). Workplace ostracism destroys the social well-being of employee by curtailing social connectivity among them (Mao et al., 2018). Workplace ostracism undermines the quality of relationship among employees and creates negative behavioral outcomes that harmfully affect the social identity of employees (M. Liu et al., 2024b). A decline in social recognition will definitely affect the organization’s social sustainability measures because psychological well-being is compromised.

Employees realize they have been overlooked or neglected by others, and this realization triggers negative feelings that can lead to them reacting adversely or keep silent (Zhao et al., 2016). To overcome and mitigate the monetary loss due to workplace ostracism organizations should take initiatives (Ferris et al, 2015). Firstly, organizations should focus on the social sustainability of their employees by enhancing their social identity through the provision of emotional, cognitive, and cultural resources (Sahabuddin et al., 2023).

H₄: Workplace ostracism mediates the relationship between employee social identity & social sustainability.

Methodology/ Sample/Procedure

It is an explanatory and cross-sectional study, we have used the self administrated questionnaire to collect the data from the employees of textile sector of Pakistan. By using the simple random sampling technique, we have gathered the data of 414 respondents and used the deductive approach to analyse the hypothesis. By following the rule of (Barclay et al., 1995) ten respondents against each item have been taken. The age, gender, organization name and job designation are taken as control variables because they may affect the results of the study.

Measurement

Social Sustainability

To measure the social sustainability scale of 15-items has adapted from the study of Mani et al, (2018). All items are rated on five-point Likert scale from 1 = “strongly disagree”, 2 = “Disagree”, 3 = “Neutral”, 4 = “Agree”, 5 = “strongly agree”. The sample items are “My organization ensures appropriate Labor working conditions” and “My organization ensure health and hygiene”.

Workplace Ostracism

To Measure the workplace ostracism the scale of 10-items of Ferris et al, (2008) has used that is consist of five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 = “never”, 2 = “Sometimes”, 3 = “Often”, 4 = “Constantly”, 5 = “Always”. The sample items are “Your greetings have gone unanswered at work” and “Others avoided you at work”.

Social Identity

To measure the social identity of an employee we used the 5-items instrument (Cheek et al., 2013). The five point Likert scale is used “not at all important” = “1”, “slightly important” = “2”, “Moderately important” = “3”, “important” = “4”, “extremely important” = “5”. The item for understanding “The ways I have of influencing and of affecting others”.

Control variables

The age, gender, organization name and job designation are taken as control variables because they may affect the results of the study.

Descriptive analysis

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6
Age	3.2367	1.18588	1					
Education level	3.4130	.93928	.069	1				
Job Experience	2.8623	1.15939	.149**	.192**	1			
SS	3.3300	.63168	-.043	-.119*	-.022	1		
SI	3.2469	.71296	-.080	-.016	-.044	.604**	1	
WO	3.0930	.72941	-.167**	-.078	-.102*	.444**	.511**	1

The table of descriptive statistics show the mean, standard deviation and correlation values of age, education level, job experience along with Social Identity, Social Sustainability, Workplace ostracism.

Table 2 Factor Loadings, alpha, CR, AVE

Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Social Sustainability		0.795	0.912	0.553
SS1	.678			
SS2	.771			
SS3	.723			
SS4	.732			
SS5	.883			
SS7	.717			
SS8	.704			
SS9	.782			
SS10	.677			
Social identity		0.775	0.862	0.556
SI1	.721			
SI2	.724			
SI3	.715			
SI4	.815			
SI5	.749			
Workplace ostracism		0.818	0.896	0.552
WO1	.739			
WO2	.776			
WO3	.753			
WO4	.659			
WO6	.767			
WO7	.747			
WO8	.756			

The items loadings of all constructs are shown in the table that fulfil the standard criteria of 0.7 however the values upto 0.6 are also acceptable and also taken in this study (Hair et al., 2019). To check the reliability of the instrument we tested the Cronbach's alpha that's minimum acceptable value is 0.07. In our study the cronbach's alpha values of each construct are fulfil the standard criteria. To check the validity of data the composite reliability and average variance explain test is applied in the study.

Table 2 Confirmatory factor analysis

		SS	SI	WO
Chi-square	Absolute fit	89.94	14.383	28.055
CMIN/DF		2.141	4.794	1.55
GFI		0.961	0.986	0.984
RMR		0.056	0.041	0.032
RMSEA		0.053	0.096	0.037
NFI	Incremental fit	0.898	0.948	0.966
RFI		0.866	0.828	0.948
TLI		0.924	0.859	0.981
CFI		0.942	0.958	0.988
AGFI	Parsimony fit	0.938	0.931	0.0492

The confirmatory factor analysis is performed for the measurement model. The table of model goodness of fit represent the values of absolute, incremental and parsimony fit indices that meet the benchmark criteria. The threshold values of GFI > 0.95, RMR < 0.05, RMSEA < 0.08, NFI > 0.09, RFI > 0.090, TLI > 0.90, CFI > 0.95, AGFI > 0.90 in our table all the values of fit indices are under the rule.

Common Method Bais

The Harman one-factor test measures the common method bias in three factors of the study. Its threshold value should be below 50%, which demonstrates there is no common method bais in the model (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In our model, we have applied Harman's one-factor test that depict total variance explained is only 23.83%.

Table 3 Path Estimates

	R	R-sq	F	p
SI→WO	0.5114	0.2616	145.9449	0.000
SI→WO→SS	0.6238	0.3892	130.9276	0.000
SI→SS	0.6035	0.3642	236.0199	0.000

At first step, the path of social identity to workplace ostracism is examined and its p value is 0.000 is < 0.05. This indicates that the relationship between SI and WO is significant. It also depicts the significance of our model. The total variation in WO is 26% occurred due to change in social identity. The F value = 145.94, is also acceptable that's why model of first path is significant.

At the second step the path of social identity, workplace ostracism and outcome variable social sustainability is analyzed. The value of adjusted R square = 0.389, which denotes 38% change is occurred in social sustainability due to unit change in social identity and workplace ostracism. The F = 130.927, and p value = 0.00 < 0.05 also significant in this model. So ultimately second model is also significant. At the third step the social identity and social sustainability are analyzed through the value of R square =

0.3642 it means 36% change has occurred in social sustainability due to unit change in social identity. The $F = 236.019$, $P \text{ value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ predict the model is significant.

Table 4 Mediation Analysis

Path	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Path a						
SI→WO	0.8372	0.0693	12.0808	.0000	0.7010	0.9734
Path b & c						
SI→SS	0.9931	0.0874	11.3566	.0000	0.8212	0.9650
WO→SS	0.2189	0.0534	4.0975	.0001	0.1139	0.3239
Path c'						
SI→SS	1.1764	0.0766	15.3629	.0000	1.0258	1.3269

The value of beta coefficient is = 0.8372, $t \text{ value} = 12.08 > 1.96$ that is acceptable. The $p \text{ value}$ is $0.00 < 0.05$ that depict social identity significantly effect the workplace ostracism. In these cases our H_1 is accepted that social identity undermines the workplace ostracism. The lower limit confidence interval value is 0.7010 and upper limit confidence interval value is 0.9734 ($LLCI = 0.7010$ and $ULCI = 0.9734$) the zero does not lies between these values it concluded that the effect is significant.

H_1 : The social identity of employee undermines the workplace ostracism.

The path b between mediator workplace ostracism and social sustainability shows beta value = 0.2189, $t = 4.0975$, and $p \text{ value} = 0.0001$ that is less than 0.05. it shows there is significant relationship between workplace ostracism and social sustainability. There is no absolute zero between values of $LLCI = 0.1139$ and $ULCI = 0.3239$ at the 95% confidence interval level. Its also the evidence of the significant relationship between WO and SS. In this case we accept our H_2 ,

H_2 : workplace ostracism attenuates the social sustainability of employees.

The direct effect of social identity on social sustainability (coefficient value = 0.993), the $t \text{ value} = 11.3566$ that is greater then 1.96, $p \text{ value}$ 0.000 that is significant. The effect of SI on SS is also significant because the $LLCI = 0.8212$ and $ULCI = 0.9650$, there is no absolute zero between these values so is concluded there is significant relation between these constructs. Here we accept our H^3

H_3 : Social identity has a direct positive relationship with social sustainability.

When indirect effect is significant of social identity on social sustainability then it is confirmed the partial mediation works.

Table 5 Indirect, Direct & Total effects

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Indirect effect SI→WO→SS					
0.1833	0.0579	*	*	0.0746	0.3000

Direct effect SI→SS

.9931	.0874	11.3566	.0000	.8212	0.9650
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Total Effects SI→SS

1.1764	.0766	15.3629	.0000	1.0258	1.3269
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The indirect effect of SI on SS is 0.1833 with a bootstrap sample size of 5000. The LLCI with a 95% confidence interval value is 0.0746 and the ULCI is 0.3000 with the absence of zero between these values.

The direct effect of SI on SS is 0.9931, with t value = 11.3566 that is > 1.96, P value 0.000 < 0.05. the LLCI = 0.8212 and ULCI = 0.9650 demonstrates the positive relationship between both constructs. On the other hand, the total effect of SI on SS is 1.176 with the t value = 15.362 > 1.96, P = 0.000 demonstrates that in all paths SI effect SS. The LLCI = 1.0258 and ULCI = 1.3269 also report social identity directly, indirectly and aggregately effect the social sustainability. Due to all presence of all significant paths it is concluded the partial mediation exist in the regression model. The path a*b*c are positive that means here is complimentary mediation has existed. On the based on this above discussion, we can accept our H₄

H₄: workplace ostracism mediates the relationship between employee social identity & social sustainability.

DISCUSSION

Drawing on the social exchange theory, we developed a model of social identity and social sustainability with the mediating role of workplace ostracism. In Hypothesis 1, we proposed that the social identity reduces Workplace ostracism. The results indicated a significant negative relationship between both constructs, and we accepted our H1. High workplace ostracism undermines the social identity of an employee within a group, team or a department. Similarly, if social identity of employees is high, then their workplace ostracism tend to decline. With strong social connectivity, and belongingness, the feelings of frustration are dropped. In the social exchange relationship when ostracism of an employee is high then reciprocally it reduces his social identity of an employee.

From the reflections of the literature, it is declared that the ostracism destroy the self-identification of an employee within his group (Dahl et al., 2019). The workplace ostracism has negative relationship with need to belongingness (Kwan et al., 2022). Previous findings are also concluded negative relationship between workplace ostracism and leader member exchange (Ji et al., 2024). Another past study stated that workplace ostracism adversely affects the in-role job performance (Choi, 2020). Previous research predominately focused high resilience in employees attenuated the workplace ostracism (Ayub et al., 2021). Literature confirms that strong belongingness stimulates the employee to exclude the negative thoughts associated with frustration and annoyance (Kwan et al., 2022). The past researchers also reported that when organizational identification is high it undermines the workplace ostracism (Sahabuddin et al., 2023). Our findings are consistent with previous studies so current study confirms the previous findings of literature.

In hypothesis 2, it is stated that workplace ostracism negatively attentuates social sustainability. Our results are significant and it is acknowledged that when an employee feels highly ostracized, he contributes less in the assigned tasks. He does not perform well enough to meet the deadlines for allocated assignments. The ostracized employees are not socially connected with others, so their chances of quitting jobs are high. Under the lens of social exchange theory, when organization do not pay attention of flexible working hours, lenient working conditions, and well-being of employees then negative social response

they will gain in the form of workplace ostracism. So workplace ostracism disturb the social sustainability of the organizations.

In the previous findings workplace ostracism was not directly measured with multidimensional construct social sustainability; however, under different heads it is examined with ostracism. The previous literature disclosed directional and non-directional relationships of workplace ostracism with employee mental health, psychological well-being, and employee silence. The past research revealed a negative relationship of workplace ostracism with employee well-being and psychological well-being (Fatima, Bilal, Imran, & Sarwar, 2023; Jang & Chen, 2022). Another study partially supported our findings, workplace ostracism adversely affects the mental health and job productivity of employees (Koay & Lai, 2023). Another study confirmed that workplace ostracism has a substantial detrimental effect on employee productivity through high emotional exhaustion (Ibrahim & Olaleye, 2024). On the ground of social exchange theory one previous research also concluded that workplace ostracism negatively affects the employees working lives (Xu et al., 2020).

In hypothesis 3, we proposed there is significant positive relationship between social identity and social sustainability. Under the grounds of social exchange theory our results declared that there is positive significant relationship between these constructs. When employee develops his belongingness with his group, his social network enhances. His interaction with group members increases, they socially and ethically support each other to make progress at their current workplace.

From the shadow of literature, it is confirmed that social identity and social sustainability have not been directly examined in the past studies. However, these constructs are investigated in nearby words, or replace with those constructs that are slightly similar to them. One study concluded thriving at work (do work hard for self-recognition) is positively related with subjective well-being of employees (Abid et al., 2020). The results of another study declared Humanization sustainability is depended on the social norms and citizenship behavior of the employees (Luís & Silva, 2022). The previous study also confirmed ingroup identity of employee is developed through the social support of the organization that ensures the sustainability (Becker et al., 2021).

In current study the hypothesis 4, stated that “ the workplace ostracism mediates the relationship between social identity and social sustainability”. Our results are significant workplace ostracism undermines the relationship of both constructs. Although their direct relation is positively significant in H₁ but workplace ostracism becomes hurdle in achieving social sustainability by attenuating the social identity of employee in the textile organizations of Pakistan. The workplace ostracism reduces the initial effect of social identity on the social sustainability.

Our findings are consistent with the previous findings, workplace ostracism is negatively related with employee initiative behavior, and organizational identity. It has also negative relationship with work well-being (Cheng & Ma, 2022). Another study concluded workplace ostracism is negatively related with knowledge hiding and social capital of employee (Fatima et al., 2023). Workplace ostracism negatively effect the employee voice through the intervening role of work alienation (Deniz & Çimen, 2024). The findings of current study confirm the previous findings of workplace ostracism with progressive work behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes employee’s social identity directly contributes in maintaining social sustainable workforce in the textile organizations of Pakistan. It enhances the social sustainability at organizational level through social relationship and belongingness of employees. On the other hand, high workplace ostracism undermines the social identity of employees that ultimately reduces the social sustainability of

the organizations. The partial mediating effect of workplace ostracism is worked between social identity and social sustainability. However, if policy makers and HR executives execute appropriate strategies then workplace ostracism of employees can be curtailed that make strengthen their social identity, it plays a progressive role in social sustainability.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Conventionally, this research is helpful for international regulatory bodies who developed the standards for all organizations and make its compulsory to follow the practices of social sustainability. This study also provide help to government, In the context of eastern culture, our government should fix measures and set the parameters of flexible working hours, basic remuneration and incentives attached with job roles. The organizations should control workplace ostracism of employees by giving them respect, dignity and honor which they deserve. To many official tasks and assignments are gone unanswered by the ostracized employees. Their silent behavior is responsible of big disaster happened in the organizations.

This study provides guidance to HR professionals and executives to design the policies to make sure the compliance of social sustainability. Our study is helpful to employees of textile sector they should develop social relationships and connectivity within the organizations to progressively contribute in implementing social sustainable practices in the textile organizations.

Future Avenues

The current study covers the aspects of social identity of employee, its contribution to bring the social sustainability in the textile organizations of Pakistan. Other researchers should also work on personal identity, group identity, organizational identity and etc to evaluate the measures of social sustainability.

This study open new insights for future researchers to explore the new areas of social sustainability. Investigate the ways of promoting well-being of employees under the umbrella of social sustainability.

In this study we have taken only one factor workplace ostracism as an obstacle in the way of social sustainability. However, upcoming authors can also diagnose other factors that become hurdles of social sustainability. Such as silent behavior, deviant behavior, etc.

Limitations of the study

The current study is cross-sectional in nature the future researchers should conduct the longitudinal studies by taking time lags. Results of longitudinal studies are considered more authentic due to approaching respondents in stipulated time intervals.

The recent study control some demographic variables such as gender, work experience while as further work is needed on these factors to actually access and evaluate the social sustainability of the organizations. Such as role of gender, work experience, and job designation can also influence the employee sustainability in the organizations.

The scope of the current study is upto textile sector of Pakistan while as practical implications of social sustainable practices are immensely required in every organizational sector. So upcoming researchers should also emphasize on well-being of employees in other industrial sectors.

In this study the data is collected only from employees. The role of top management and organizational policies is not considered. Other factors are also ignored as their contribution is seem necessary in the execution of social sustainable practices.

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