

**Workplace Ostracism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors
(CWBs): Examining the Mediating Role of Organizational Cynicism
and Moderating Role of Neuroticism**

By

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my great father, beloved mother, my elder brother and sister, teachers and all those friends who have supported me since the beginning of this thesis. I would particularly dedicate this thesis to my supervisor Dr. Sajid Bashir for his guidance and support.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of Workplace Ostracism on Counterproductive Work Behaviors working in different public sector organizations of Pakistan. The study also explored the mediating role of Organizational Cynicism in this particular relationship. The study also tested the moderating role of Neuroticism between the relationship of “Workplace Ostracism and Organizational Cynicism”. Data were collected from 237 individuals through convenience sampling technique.

Workplace ostracism was found to have a positive and significant relationship with counterproductive work behaviors. The mediating role of organizational cynicism between the relationship of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors was found significant by the results. However the moderating role of neuroticism in the relation of workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism yielded non-significant results.

Key words: Workplace Ostracism, Organizational Cynicism, Counterproductive Work Behavior Behaviors, Neuroticism, Public Sector, Conservation of Resources theory.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

The workplace ostracism phenomenon is getting more attention in the eyes of social scientists and also different studies proved that it has a negative impact on organizational performance and also individual performance. In the recent decade many studies have been conducted and it got more attention because of very serious issues caused from it. This all over focus is diverted to this phenomena when Ferris and colleagues (2008A) formally presented the concept of workplace ostracism.

The concept of ostracism was used long time ago in different clans around 500 B.C. and that time ostracism was named as (*ostrakismos*), this phenomena was actually used when people of the tribe decided to ostracize someone normally former political personnel for about 10 years. Basically, ostracism can be defined: being excluded or ignored, the different tribes of the world; modern developed nations; legislative, spiritual, army and educational bodies; casual groups and in close affiliations, in schoolyards and by children, teenagers, and adults (Gruter & Masters, 1986; Williams, 1997; 2001). It means that ostracism is very powerful and ubiquitous phenomena.

Ferris and colleagues defined the Workplace ostracism defined as: the level by which an employee observed that he/she is being excluded or ignored by the other employees (Ferris, Brown, Berry, & Lian, 2008B). Each and every individual has their own psychological needs which they must have to fulfill, but on the other side workplace ostracism slow down the opportunity for social interaction among others in the organization (Wu, Yim, Kwan, & Zhang, 2012). Study of Heaphy and Dutton (2008) stated that the workplace ostracism has enormously

affected the physical health and got more psychological issues of an employee. Zhao, Peng and Sheard (2013) study found that there is a positive association between workplace ostracism with counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs). Whenever an employee feel ostracize he/she will be indulging their behaviors in a negative way and ultimately leads to counterproductive work behaviors and their aim to harm the organization.

Past research shows the trend that employees who are being ostracized their behaviors inclined to negative behaviors, which in result, aggressive behaviors because an employee loses his/her abilities of controlling behaviors (Yang & Treadway, 2016). Study of Baumeister et al. (2005) mentioned that an employee who is being ostracized they don't care about their healthy diet and get into a state of frustration. Counterproductive work behaviors are those behaviors that are intentionally conducted by employees and harm an organization and its members (Spector & Fox, 2002).

In contrast to the above discussion this study proposes that workplace ostracism leads to employee cynical behaviors, that shows negative prospects for their organizations and the ultimate purpose is to harm an organization and resultantly they indulged themselves in negative behaviors such as counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs).

Cynicism is defined by Bedeian as, "an attitude resulting from a critical appraisal of the motives, actions, and values, of one's employing organization" (Bedeian, 2007, p. 11). This study proposes that employees feel the ostracizing behaviors of others in the workplace will lead to cynicism. On the other side there are some negative outcomes of organizational cynicism and few of them are job satisfaction (Eaton, 2000), organizational commitment (Tesluk, Vance, & Mathieu, 1999) and intention to quit (Chiaburu et al., 2013). After all these outcomes of organizational cynicism this study proposes that organizational cynicism will lead to

counterproductive work behaviors. Because if there is cynical behaviors from employees then it will result in negative working attitudes like counterproductive work behaviors.

Higher levels of neuroticism were associated with increased reports of emotional exhaustion (Hills & Norvell, 1991). Neuroticism is a strong cause of such negative emotional outcomes as bad as somatic symptoms (Rosmalen, Neeleman, Gans, & de Jonge, 2007), depression (Clark, Watson, & Mineka, 1994), anxiety disorders (Hettema, Neale, Myers, Prescott, & Kendler, 2006) and anger-motivated aggression (Wilkowski & Robinson, 2008).

Neuroticism is the propensity of involvement in such emotions like anxiety, grief, and rage (Costa & McCrae, 1987). Individuals who are high in neurotic are grouped by some traits that is nervous and moodiness personality, sensitivity towards undesirable stimuli (Nevid & Rathus, 2005). Individuals with neurotic trait indicates anxiety, emotional unpredictability, and poor adjustment with environment. Individuals whose scores is high in neuroticism are more inclined to expose for such undesirable emotions that are nervousness and misery, spontaneous in nature (Schmitz, Kugler, Rollnik, 2003). Relating with the above statements Langelaan and colleagues mentioned that environment of workplace is threatening for those employees who are neurotic in nature (Langelaan et al., 2006). These adverse responses are possibly to boost when there is a situation of conflict like dealing with other employees, this will lead to stress and ultimately result will be lower work engagement (Leung et al., 2011). Individuals have different type of personality type and it will have different impact on the organizational cynicism while experiencing ostracism (Carver, 2005).

Almada et al. (1991) suggested that neuroticism is positively affecting cynicism and consistent with this statement those employees whose score is high in neuroticism feel that their working environment is threatening for them (Langelaan et al., 2006). These adverse responses

are possibly to boost when there is interaction among people and ultimately leads to stress when facing such kind of stressful situation like ostracism at the organization. On the basis of above discussion there is a positive relation between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism and whenever neurotic personality trait taken as a moderator then this relationship will strengthen the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism when there is a high score in neuroticism.

1.2 Literature Gap

Workplace ostracism is ignoring or don't give much attention to employees at organization by another employee or group (Ferris et al., 2016). Workplace ostracism has many outcomes which have been studied in previous literature. Peng and Zeng (2016) tested interpersonal deviance and helping behavior as an outcome of workplace ostracism. Scott and colleagues explored intention to leave as an outcome variable for workplace ostracism (Scott, Tams, Schippers, & Lee, 2015). Chung (2015A) established link among in-role behavior, organization citizenship behaviors (interpersonal) and organization citizenship behaviors (organization) as an outcome for workplace ostracism. Counterproductive work behaviors are those type of behaviors which harmed an organizational members and organization as a whole by any means. As Zhao, Peng and Sheard (2013) stated counterproductive work behaviors negatively affects employees individually as well as organization as a whole because workplace ostracism may trigger negative behaviors as a response. There has been minimal investigations made into the link between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. Thus there is significant space available to discover and to shade light on the mentioned relationship.

As revealed above that workplace ostracism affects individuals and organizations (Zhao, Peng & Sheard, 2013). Various relationships exist of workplace ostracism and organizational outcomes such as positive relation with intention to leave (Scott et al., 2015) and negative relation with organization citizenship behavior (Chung, 2015B). Organizational cynicism is a negative conviction, lack of integrity at organization, and will try to negatively affect an organization (Kalağan, & Aksu, 2010). Thus workplace ostracism may lead to negative organizational behaviors that include cynical behaviors in the organizations. Shahzad and Mahmood (2012) stated that organizational cynicism leads to counterproductive work behaviors. Therefore. Organizational cynicism may act as association between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors.

Neuroticism is generally linked with reaction to such stressful situation negatively (Ormel et al., 2013). There is still question about that how an individual can cope with their feelings when he/she has been ostracized by others and yet they have still connected with those colleagues is yet unexplored (Yang & Treadway, 2016). Very scarce studies has been published on different personality traits especially neuroticism while employees are facing negative phenomena such as workplace ostracism. This study will enhance in understanding how and what levels of workplace ostracism affects an employee outcomes such as organizational cynicism. Big five personality traits can influence the organizational related outcomes (Grijalva & Newman, 2015). In the present study neuroticism is being used as a moderator. As ostracism drives cynical behaviors but the influence of neuroticism may expand the influence of this relation.

1.3 Problem Definition

Many studies have been conducted on the issues and problems related to the workplace environment. But very few studies are available on workplace ostracism. According to Williams (2001) the extent by which a person is excluded or ignored by others is ostracism. Thus, the current study will be helpful in identifying problems related to workplace ostracism in organizations. Along with this issue the focus will also discover any issues related to counterproductive work behaviors. This study will also examine the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. Thus, this study will play vital role in unfolding and observing issues related to the above relationship.

Organizational Cynicism is a mediator in the current study and has not been tested in the specific relationship before. So, the present study will also help to identify and highlight all the problems related to workplace ostracism as well as with counterproductive work behaviors. Neuroticism is the moderator in the current study use between the relationship of workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism will enable us to understand whether it affects the relationship along with other concerns and issues that could create some variance for employees in the organizations. Thus, the study will enable us to completely observe this relationship.

1.4 Research Questions

On the basis of the stated problems, the present study is indented to find answers for some questions, brief summary of the questions are as follows;

Question 1: Does workplace ostracism affect counterproductive work behaviors of employees?

Question 2: Does organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors?

Question 3: Does neuroticism moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism?

1.5 Research Objectives

Objectives of this study is to test and develop an anticipated research model to find out the relationship among workplace ostracism, organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors of employees in the public sector. In addition the neuroticism is added as the possible moderator of the relationship of the mentioned variables in the research model workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism.

1. To check the association between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors through organizational cynicism.
2. To check the organizational cynicism as a mediator between the relationship of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors.
3. To check the neuroticism as a moderator between the relationship of workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism.
4. To test empirically and establish the proposed relationships in Pakistani context.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will help the public sector organizations that why and how their employees feel ostracized and ultimately resulted in counter work behaviors. Not only this, but also the whole mechanism that how employee resulted in negative work behaviors. Employees faced by different behaviors, for instance if they felt ostracized behaviors from other employees, more chances for the declined their affective commitment, job performance and intentions to quit and work engagement (Ferris et al., 2008A). However, there are studies who mentioned that workplace ostracism has negative impact on employees' outcomes (Balliet & Ferris, 2013; Scott,

Restubog, & Zagenczyk, 2013) and there is still question about that how an individual can cope with their feelings when he/she has been ostracized by others and yet they have still connected with those colleagues is yet unexplored (Yang & Treadway, 2016). But this study will explore the whole mechanism by incorporating the moderating role of personality trait neuroticism that whether neurotic employee ended up with negative work outcomes or there is another problem in the mechanism which has to be explored.

Previous studies found that there is positive relationship of workplace ostracism with counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) (Zhao, Peng & Sheard, 2013). This study will help the public sector organizations to identify the complex relationship of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors and it will help timely to identify the behaviors of ostracized employees in an organization and resolve the problem effectively and efficiently to prevent from big losses.

As Andersson defined cynicism is an attitude that can be in the form of despair and aggravation, and also towards an organization, group and person in the form of distrust. (Andersson, 1996). Organizational cynicism is taken as mediator in this study because how ostracized employees resulted in negative outcome behaviors, there would be some mechanism to identify and also to rectify the main problem and will help the organizations to deal with it to increase their employees' performance. Lobnikar and Pagon (2004) identified that there is positive relationship between organizational cynicism and workplace bullying. Consistent with this statement if there are cynical behaviors, there are more chances of negative work outcomes e.g. counterproductive work behaviors.

Neuroticism is the basic personality trait in psychology domain and it is characterized by anxiety, moodiness, fear, envy and frustration (Thompson, 2008). The study suggested that there

is positive relationship of neuroticism, with cynicism (Almada et al., 1991). Whenever there are neurotic employees working in an organization they are more prone to establish cynical behaviors in organizations and lead to poor performance, i.e. firm performance (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002). Previous studies has not been studied the consequences of behaviors regarding workplace ostracism, more specifically negative behaviors (Hitlan & Noel, 2009). So it is proposed that if employee's neurotic scores high then there will more chances of organizational cynicism.

Another significance of this study is that other studies before, mostly published in developing countries and there is lots of room by doing research and investigating further research in Pakistani context of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors to extend the literature of workplace ostracism. And more importantly personality type, i.e. Neuroticism taken as moderator and organizational cynicism as mediator to identify the overall detail mechanism of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors.

1.7 Underpinning Theory

1.7.1 Conservation of Resources (CoR)

Conservation of Resource Theory (COR) was first proposed by (Hobfoll, 1988; 1989) as an integrative stress theory which reflects both environmental and internal processes with relatively equal measures. The main purpose of COR theory is that individuals struggle to obtain, retain, sustain, and foster those things that they value (Hobfoll, 2001). This implies that individuals employ key resources in order to implement the self-regulations, procedures of their social interactions and relationships, and to organize, act, and fit into the greater framework of organizations and culture itself (Hobfoll, 2011).

Conservation of Resource (CoR) theory proposed by Hobfoll (1989, p. 516), it is stated that “(a) the threat of a net loss of resources, (b) the net loss of resources, or (c) a lack of resource gain following the investment of resources. Both perceived and actual losses or lack of gain is envisaged as sufficient for producing stress”. Whenever an organization give opportunities for employees for conservation of their psychological resources, the outcome will be that an employee will deal effectively with work demands and prevent an employee from negative work outcomes (Wright & Hobfoll, 2004). With a view of COR theory suggested that employees whose psychological resource pool is not that good enough, they will protect their resources by decreasing work engagement and decline their performance efforts.

Ostracism diminishes resources of employees, that it will positively influence organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors. Besides this direct effect, individual with neurotic trait are more vulnerable to adverse consequences of workplace ostracism for two reasons. First, Individual with neurotic trait will have a more reaction toward ostracism at workplace to affect individual’s outcomes. Second, neuroticism has been linked to interpersonal rejection sensitivity (Mor & Inbar, 2009) so, neurotic individuals are more likely to perceive ostracism whether it is imagined or real. Hitlan and Noel (2009) found that highly neurotic individuals experienced higher levels of ostracism and were less likely to constrain negative behaviors like organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors.

So, on the basis of the above statements it means that whenever employee facing ostracize behavior, there will be a stressful situation for the employee and he/she needs to recover his/her resources to cope up with the work environment. Consistent with this statement Wu et al. (2012) mentioned that experiencing workplace ostracism is one of the stressful situation for an employee. If the employee is neurotic ultimately he/she will unable to recover

his/her resources effectively and in contrast cynical behaviors takes place and as a result employee negative outcomes: counterproductive work behaviors. This will affect organization very badly.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Problems of Workplace:

There are many problems nowadays in every organization in the round the world that must be addressed and tackle that problem to avoid such negative circumstances to affect overall organization. Some of them are workplace bullying (Einarsen & Cooper, 2003), workplace mobbing (Hansen et al., 2006), workplace incivility (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001), and workplace ostracism (Ferris, Brown, Berry, & Lian, 2008B). Tracy and colleagues defined workplace bullying as it is the nature of such behaviors that can be aggressive communication and behaviors most often (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2006). In recent decade ostracism caught massive attention in the eyes of different research scholars, and it has also a negative impact on employee and organizational performance. The word *ostrakismos* was used in 500 B.C. by Athenians to ostracize someone for 10 years. But when it comes towards organizational aspect, it got more attention when Ferris, Berry, Brown, and Lian (2008A) formally presented the concept of workplace ostracism and also developed the instrument for it.

Ostracism has defined by many research scholars and also named as differently, but meaning and purpose is all the same. Organizational shunning, Social exclusion, Rejection, Linguistic ostracism and last but not the least ostracism are all construct for ostracism. According to Anderson (2009) organizational shunning is the intentional, organized rejection of an individual, that individual in the past was the part of that organization's membership. If someone is put into specific situation in which that individual is being denied from a social circle is social exclusion (Blackhart, Nelson, Knowles, & Baumeister, 2009).

Rejection term has been widely used and its literal meaning mainly referred to refused someone from social connection. It is implied that if an individual form temporary association with another person and on the other side another individual said no (Blackhart, Nelson, Knowles, & Baumeister, 2009). Linguistic ostracism is as when there is a conversation between two people that another could not understand (Dotan-Eliaz, Sommer, & Rubin, 2009).

2.2 Workplace Ostracism:

The rejection or snubbing of a person by another individual or group that hampered person's ability to maintain or establish good relationship with others, favorable reputation at work floor (Hitlan, Clifton, & DeSoto, 2006). Study of Sommer and colleagues mentioned that an individual is ignored or snubbed for any purpose by others (Sommer, Williams, Ciarocco, & Baumeister, 2001). Williams (2001) any act or acts of ignoring or excluding of an individual or group by an individual or group. An individual is excluded or ignored by other employees at workplace (Ferris et al., 2008B).

2.2.1 Consequences of Workplace Ostracism

There are many consequences/outcomes regarded workplace ostracism and it can be divided into to two categories one is organizational perspective and the other is employee perspective. The consequences for both are given in detail.

2.2.1.1 Organizational Perspective

There are many aspects of workplace ostracism that can harm an organization by many ways. Study of O'Reilly and Robinson (2009) mentioned that workplace ostracism is very influential phenomena to decrease contribution to the workplace. There are some other outcomes that could ultimately harm an organization that are taken from the few studies that are: organizational citizenship behavior, workplace deviance (Lee & Allen, 2002), intention to leave (Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter, & Kacmar, 2007), job withdrawals (Ferris et al., 2008B), decreased job performance contributions (Hitlan et al., 2006) and even workplace deviance (Hitlan & Noel, 2009).

2.2.1.2 Employee Perspective

Workplace ostracism with the passage of time declines the possibilities of interaction with the people at the workplace and this would ultimately affect the employees' mental health, attitude and behavior towards work (Ferris, Lian, Brown, & Morrison, 2015; Hitlan & Noel, 2009). Ostracized organizational members may display deteriorated psychological wellbeing (Wu et al., 2012), unfavorable job attitudes (Richman & Leary, 2009), negatively influence physical health (Heaphy & Dutton, 2008), work-family conflict (Grandey et al., 2005), job performance (Cropanzano et al., 2003), and high blood pressure (Schaubroeck & Merritt, 1997). Studies of Williams (1997; 2001) mentioned that ostracism personal stressor which can lead to the mental stress. Grandey and Cropanzani (1999) employees who are facing stress at workplace is strongly linked to such negative outcomes like life distress. Workplace ostracism is positively related to depression, anxiety and also decreased levels of satisfaction (Ferris et al., 2008B; Hitlan et al., 2006).

Adverse experiences like ostracism can be the cause of distress and strain (Taylor, 1991). Different studies have been conducted and provided evidence that ostracized individual shows depressed mood (Leary, 1990; Williams et al., 2002). However, past research has shown that ostracism can be uniquely painful experience; the social pain caused by ostracism has even been linked to physical pain (Eisenberger, 2012; Riva, Wirth, & Williams, 2011).

2.3 Organizational Cynicism

The word cynicism is derived from the word “cynic”, which foundation is from ancient Greek philosophy arise from about 500 B.C., both of them are the way of thinking and the way of life (Metzger, 2004). The cynicism concept is the focus of different disciplines in the parameter of social sciences, such as: political sciences (Schyns & Koop, 2007), and administration (Kasalak & Aksu, 2014). Abraham, (2004) mentioned that there are various types of cynicism that is: social cynicism, employee cynicism, work cynicism, servant cynicism and last but not the least organizational cynicism.

Andersson defined cynicism is an attitude that can be in the form of despair and aggravation, and also towards an organization, group and person in the form of distrust. (Andersson, 1996). Dean, Brandes, and Dharwadkar (1998) defined organizational cynicism that it is a negative conviction, lack of integrity at organization, and will try to negatively affect an organization. Employees shows more cynical behaviors in the current era of the business world, especially in business environments predominant with mistrust and scandals (Twenge, Zhang, & Im, 2004). Davis and Gardner (2004) mentioned that organizational cynicism is characterized by obstruction and despair as well as lack of respect towards the organization and the decisions are made within the organization is a lack of sincerity. Apaydin (2012) stated that organizational

cynicism also develops adverse beliefs and feelings in employees for the organization. Wanous and colleagues mentioned that there is an attitude and negative expectancy associated with cynicism (Wanous, Reichers, & Austin, 2004).

2.3.1 Antecedents of Organizational Cynicism

Violent and aggressive has a positive relationship with organizational cynicism (Lobnikar & Pagon, 2004). Negative outcomes associated with breach of the psychological contract in workplace that is development of organizational cynicism (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). Nash et al. (2007) mentioned that very important and basic component in development of organizational cynicism is when an organization truthfulness and lacks honesty while fulfilling different organizational related tasks. There are many other causes of organizational cynicism when management lacks trust element (Kim et al., 2009), biasness in employee related decisions (Davis & Gardner, 2004), perceived injustice (Thompson, Bailey, Joseph, Worley, & Williams, 1999; FitzGerald, 2002), executives' high compensation policies (Andersson & Bateman, 1997), exhausted from work (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006), fake manifestation (Helm, 2004) and adverse working conditions (Simbula & Guglielmi, 2010).

2.3.2 Issues related to Organizational Cynicism

One factor that leads people to burnout and organizational distance is cynicism (Arabaci, 2010). Cynicism partially leads to the breach of the psychological contract work satisfaction and organizational loyalty (Byrne & Hochwarter, 2007). Organizational cynicism is negatively associated with, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship and organizational identification and positively associated with perception of unfaithfulness and turnover intention (Taylor, 2012).

2.4 Counterproductive Work Behaviors

Counterproductive work behaviors are defined as any intentional organizational behaviors that affects an individual's job performance or weaken organizational effectiveness (Lau, Au, & Ho, 2003). Counterproductive work behaviors are kind of behaviors that are violating the legal interests of an organization (Sackett & DeVore, 2001) and also very dangerous to members or to the organization (Marcus, 2000).

Counterproductive Work Behaviors are categorized into two groups, one is property deviance and the other is production deviance. Property deviance can be defined as the misuse of employer assets which includes property damage and theft. Production deviance includes absenteeism and laziness. Behaviors that deviate an employee when on the job like the use of alcohol and intentionally work slowly (Hollinger & Clark, 1983).

Martinko, Gundlach, and Douglas (2002) proposed that counterproductive work behaviors can be classified into three categories including the (a) personal, (b) organizational, and (c) contextual factors. Personal factor comprises characteristics common among employees engaging in counterproductive work behaviors at work (Boye & Jones, 1997), like demographic characteristics, habits, perceived stress and job satisfaction are all grouped under this category. Organizational factor comprises shared perception of the people attach to specific features of the work setting (Ostroff, 1993), that include organizational characteristics, organization-level anti-theft policy, group influence and supervisory monitoring. Contextual factor refers to the environment that is potentially related to the individual's choice to involve in or desist from committing specific unfair acts (Murphy, 1993).

2.4.1 Antecedents of CWBs

There are many antecedents of counterproductive work behaviors, but in this study few of them are mentioned. There are many studies regarding that what can cause counterproductive behaviors. Organ and Paine (1999) considered that the CWBs among employees can choose from the injustice relationship in an organization. Interpersonal conflict and victim of abusive behavior also have been shown to be related to CWB and also some extent of the workload (Chen & Spector, 1992). Political deviance and personal aggression are the constituents of counterproductive behaviors, behaviors that intended to harm organization or employees (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

2.5 Neuroticism

Neuroticism is the personality trait and also it has linked with some other factors related to human nature and also affect the effectivity of human beings creativity. In contrast Eysenck (1983) give some importance on the relationship of personality and stress. Stress is defined as the reaction of a given person to the objectively measurable stimuli. An individual with high score in neuroticism to that stimuli with high strain and affects severely, but on the other side individual with a low neurotic score will respond to the same stimuli without strain. Neuroticism is the cause of such negative emotional consequences such as anger-motivated aggression (Wilkowski & Robinson, 2008), somatic symptoms (Rosmalen et al., 2007), anxiety disorders (Hettema et al., 2006) and depression (Clark, Watson, & Mineka, 1994).

Other studies mentioned that individuals who are neurotic they will reflect hostility in such stressful situations (McCrae & Costa, 1986). Consistent with this statement Miller and colleagues mentioned that there is sufficient evidence relating hostility and critical self-attitudes

of individuals' health (Miller, Smith, Turner, Guijarro, & Hallet, 1996). On the other side Carver (1989) stated that neuroticism also give birth to other factors such as self-doubt, emotional instability and worry. Study of David and colleagues mentioned that neuroticism is the name of experiencing of more adverse events (David, Green, Martin, & Suls, 1997). Personalities with neurotic traits experienced more stress and can be emotionally reacted to such tensed events (Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995). There is greater brain reactivity to negative stimuli and inductions in an individual whose score is high is neuroticism (Canli, 2004). Lazarus (1998) neuroticism is a personality trait that described an individual who paid more consideration to those occasions that induced such stressful conditions. Consistent with this statement Veroff and colleagues reported that worry, anxiety, and psychosomatic concerns of an individual correlates with unhappiness (Veroff, Feld, & Gurin, 1962).

McCrae and Costa (1991) suggested two types of personalities-processing outlooks. The first is instrumental view and the second is temperamental view. Whereas instrumental view is that an individual is experiencing such negative events very frequently, who are neurotic in nature. Temperamental view, besides, that the neurotic person experiences higher levels of reactivity to such negative happenings and that such reactivity processes are more important factor while understanding neuroticism's related outcome.

Neuroticism contains a foremost aspect of personality (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and it is a chronic tendency to experience such negative feelings and thoughts (John & Srivastava, 1999). Neuroticism has the characteristics of vulnerability, depression, anger-hostility, impulsivity, self-consciousness and anxiety (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Individuals having high scores of

neuroticism can be easily agitated and startled (Clarke, 2004). Study of Eysenck and Eysenck (1991) mentioned that individuals with neurotic trait having guilt and worry.

2.6 Workplace Ostracism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWBs)

The term counterproductive behaviors are sometimes used same to antisocial behavior or deviant. The property deviance, like damaging or acquiring property belonging to the employer; and production deviance regard as violating organizational norms about the quantity and quality of performing work (Hollinger & Clark, 1982).

Quite an evidence is present that counter behaviors in organizations becoming costly and common. Study of Harper (1990), 33% to 75 % of employees have indulged themselves in theft, absenteeism, sabotage, vandalism, embezzlement, and computer fraud. Yang and Treadway (2016) mentioned that workplace ostracism lead to maladaptive behaviors, because it harm individuals' self-regulation processes. Ostracized individuals were less likely to discipline themselves to have a healthy diet, perform a dichotic learning task or persist in spite of frustrations. They also mentioned that failure of self-regulation caused from maladaptive behaviors which are related to ostracism (Baumeister et al., 2005). Individuals who are experiencing ostracism lead to aggressive behaviors, specifically, individuals who have been excluded produced more hostile behaviors toward others (Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001). Fox, Spector, and Miles (2001) said that in organizations employees have been found to indulge themselves in counterproductive work behaviors when they experienced such situations which they perceived as unfair.

So, on the basis of all above discussion this study hypothesizes that:

H₁: *There is a positive association between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs).*

2.7 Mediating role of Organizational Cynicism between Workplace Ostracism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWBs)

There are various factors are attached in organizational cynicism development among employees, factors can be an outcome of employees' emotional responses Cole et al. (2006), perceived injustice (FitzGerald, 2002) disappointment from work and exhaustion (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006). Psychological contract breach affects the belief of an employee and eventually changes in attitude and behavior (Morrison & Robinson, 1997) and prompts organizational cynicism (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). There are more chances that workplace ostracism results in organizational cynicism, because if someone is ostracized then there more possibilities of cynical behaviors.

Previous research has shown the outcomes related to organizational cynicism these are: fewer citizenship behaviors and job dissatisfaction (Hochwarter et al., 2004), distrust (Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003), disillusionment (Pugh et al., 2003), low morale, absenteeism, low job performance and turnover (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Keeping in view previous findings, there are more chances of negative work outcomes, behaviors (counterproductive work behaviors) from cynical behaviors of an employee.

Keeping in view of all the above discussion if an employee feels that he/she is ostracized one way or the other way definitely an employee will come across some cynical behaviors and it will harm the firm and this is not all also produced negative behavioral outcomes as counterproductive work behaviors. As a result the overall firm will suffer. So, on the basis of all above discussion this study hypothesizes that:

H₂: *Organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors (CWBs).*

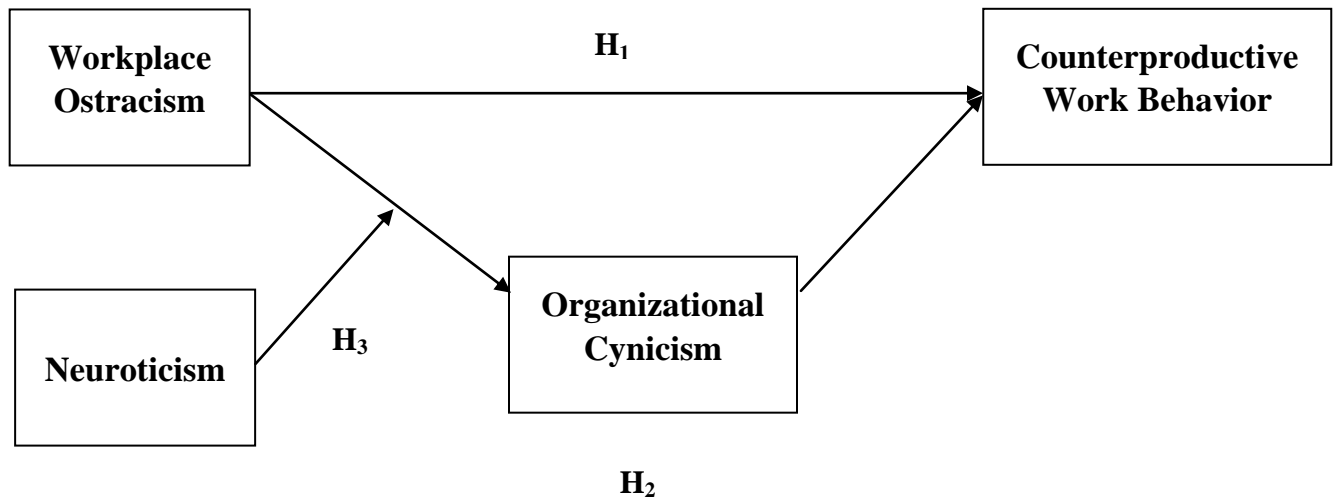
2.8 Interactive impacts of Workplace Ostracism and Neuroticism on Organizational Cynicism

Past research showed that there are some negative outcomes related to neuroticism, including low self-esteem (Watson, Suls, & Haig, 2002), ineffectual coping (Kardum & Krapic, 2001), high stress (Costa & McCrae, 1992), illness (Friedman & Booth-Kewley, 1987), low resilience (Campbell-Sills, Cohan, & Stein, 2006) and eating disorder symptomatology (Vervaeke, Audenaert, & van Heeringen, 2003). Neuroticism is the name of maladjustment, trait with high anxiety and instability of emotions. Individuals with high score in neuroticism are likely to experience adverse emotions such as: depression, anxiety, impulsive and self-conscious (Costa & McCrae, 1987). According to Bolger and Zuckerman (1995) individuals engaged themselves in interpersonal conflicts that lead to draining of emotional resources. Costa et al. (1985) suggested that neuroticism is positively affecting cynicism and consistent with this statement those employees whose score is high in neuroticism feel that their working environment is threatening for them (Langelaan et al., 2006).

On the basis of above discussion there is a positive relation between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism and whenever neurotic personality trait taken as a moderator then this relationship will strengthen the association between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism when there is a high score in neuroticism. In the above discussion this study hypothesize that:

H₃: *Neuroticism moderates the positive relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism such that the positive relationship is strengthened when neuroticism is high and it is weakened when neuroticism is low.*

2.9 Theoretical Framework



This study is going to check the impact of Workplace Ostracism on Counterproductive Work Behaviors: Mediating role of Organizational Cynicism and Moderating role of Neuroticism. This study comprises of three hypotheses which are given below:

H₁: *There is a positive association between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs).*

H₂: *Organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors (CWBs).*

H₃: *Neuroticism moderates the positive relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism such that the positive relationship is strengthened when neuroticism is high and it is weakened when neuroticism is low.*

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The current study investigates the impact of workplace ostracism on counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) of employees in the work setting of Pakistani public sector organizations. It also studies the presence of the possibility of a mechanism, i.e. organizational cynicism through which an employee engages in cynical behaviors after being ostracized and ultimately indulge their selves in counterproductive work behaviors to harm an organization. The study also focuses on the moderating effect of neuroticism that moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism.

3.1.1 Type of Study

This is cross-sectional and quantitative research. Data were gathered in one time frame (November 2016 – December 2016) from employees of public sector organizations via structured questionnaires.

3.1.2 Study Setting

Public sector employees were accessed at their offices to fill the questionnaire at their regular working hours.

3.1.3 Research Interference

There were no such research interference that actually affected the findings of this study.

3.2 Population and Sampling

3.2.1 Population

The current population of interest in this study comprised of the white collar employees from public sector organizations from the Peshawar, Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

3.2.1.1 Why Public Sector?

Public sector has been chosen because politics is everywhere in organizations round the world and not even a single organization in the world is free from politics. In Pakistan where there is already scarce availability of jobs. When an employee is facing workplace ostracism is kind of politics in organizations, he/she can't leave organization because public sector is a permanent job and no one even think about to leave public sector job as compare to private sector job.

3.2.2 Sample and Procedures

The study was actually based on convenience sampling due to time restrictions. Employees were reached through personal contacts. All the questionnaires were self-administered and there were not even one variable that could be filled by supervisor, all the questionnaires were filled by employees.

Questionnaires were distributed with an introductory note that described the aim of the study and its relevance, and also promised that their replies would be held strictly private and would only be used for the current research objectives.

Completed surveys were collected by the researcher himself. The data were collected at one time (November 2016 – December 2016) from public sector employees. No major events

took place during the data collection period. During data collection researcher follow up with the filling up the questionnaires after a week's time from respective offices, besides this act data collection took so much time approximately above one month. At this time 350 questionnaires were distributed and received 267 responses, but only 237 usable, so, the usable response rate was 67.71%.

3.3 Instrumentation

The data were collected through adopted questionnaires from different sources. The nature of the items included in the questionnaire is such that all of them, i.e. Workplace ostracism, neuroticism, organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors have to be filled by the public sector employees. The questionnaires also consist of four demographic variables, which include information regarding the respondent Gender, Age, Qualification and Experience.

3.3.1 Workplace Ostracism

Workplace ostracism measured with ten items, developed by Ferris et al., (2008B). Sample items are “Others ignored you at work” and “Others at work treated you as if you weren’t there”. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. Previously study of (Zhao, He, Sheard, & Wan, 2016) their Cronbach’s coefficient was 0.93 and this study has a Cronbach’s coefficient 0.87.

3.3.2 Organizational Cynicism

Organizational cynicism measured with seven items, developed by Wilkerson, Evans, and Davis (2008). Sample items are “Any efforts to make things better around here are likely to succeed.” and “Suggestions on how to solve problems around here won’t produce much real

change”. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. Previously study of (Bashir & Nasir, 2013) their Cronbach’s coefficient was 0.93 and this study has a Cronbach’s coefficient 0.83.

3.3.3 Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWBs)

Counterproductive Work Behaviors measured with thirteen items, developed by Yang and Diefendorff (2009). Sample items are “Lied about hours worked” and “Stole something belongings to your employer”. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. Previously study of (Yang & Treadway, 2016) their Cronbach’s coefficient was 0.97 and this study has a Cronbach’s coefficient is 0.88.

3.3.4 Neuroticism

Neuroticism measured with eight items, developed by John and Srivastava (1999). Sample items are “I see myself as someone who is depressed” and “I see myself as someone who is relaxed, handles stress well”. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. Previously study of (Leung, Wu, Chen, & Young, 2011) their Cronbach’s coefficient was 0.89 and this study has a Cronbach’s coefficient 0.75.

3.3.5 Control Variables

Before controlling the control variables One-Way ANOVA test was run in this study to check whether there is impact of demographics (age, gender, qualification and experience) on other variable or not. If the results show the significant correlation of demographics with the dependent variable, then the demographics must be controlled during analyses, but if they're non-

significant correlation occurs, there is no need to control it. In this study gender ($p = .132$), age ($p = .372$), qualification ($p = .296$) and experience ($p = .289$) has non-significant correlation with Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWBs). So, on the basis of these values of demographics, none of these variables will be controlled for further statistical analyses later.

The details of control variables are given in tabulated form is given below:

Table: 3.1: One-way ANOVA for Gender on Counterproductive Work Behaviors

ANOVA

Counterproductive Work Behaviors_MEAN

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.145	1	2.145	4.656	.132
Within Groups	108.253	235	.461		
Total	110.398	236			

Table: 3.2: One-way ANOVA for Age on Counterproductive Work Behaviors

ANOVA

Counterproductive Work Behaviors_MEAN

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.471	3	.490	1.049	.372
Within Groups	108.926	233	.467		
Total	110.398	236			

Table: 3.3: One-way ANOVA for Qualification on Counterproductive Work Behaviors

ANOVA

Counterproductive Work Behaviors_MEAN

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.141	2	.571	1.222	.296
Within Groups	109.257	234	.467		
Total	110.398	236			

Table: 3.4: One-way ANOVA for Experience on Counterproductive Work Behaviors

ANOVA

Counterproductive Work Behaviors_MEAN

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.336	4	.584	1.254	.289
Within Groups	108.061	232	.466		
Total	110.398	236			

3.4 Data Analysis Tools

Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to execute all the statistical tests. Preacher and Hayes (2008) mediation and moderation method process was used to carry out the mediation and moderation analyses.

Table 3.5: Variable Names, Sources, No. of Items & Reliabilities

Variable	Source	No. of Items	Reliability
Workplace Ostracism	Ferris, Brown, Berry, and Lian (2008A).	10	0.87
Organizational Cynicism	Wilkerson, Evans and Davis (2008)	06	0.83
Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWBs)	Yang and Diefendorff (2009)	13	0.88
Neuroticism	John and Srivastava (1999)	06	0.75

3.5 Sample Characteristics

Out of 237 respondents male respondents were 194 with 81.9% and female were 43 with 18.1%. While age of respondents was divided into different categories like: age between 20-30 were 57 with 24.1%, 31-40 were 124 with 52.3%, 41-50 were 41 with 17.3% and last but not the least 51 and above respondents were 15 with 6.3%. Now looking to the qualifications of these respondents. Participants have different educational backgrounds like: 48 respondents (20.3%) have a Bachelor degree, 146 respondents (61.6%) have a Master degree, and 43 respondents (18.1%) have a MS degree. While working in different they (the respondents) have some job experience (in years), which is categorized in 5-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25 and 25 years or above. Respondents have 5-10 years of experience were 134 with 56.5%, 11-15 years of experience were 52 with 21.9%, 16-20 years of experience were 27 with 11.4%, 21-25 years of experience were 10 with 4.2%, 26 and above years of experience were 14 with 5.9%. All the tabulated data of all the above mentioned details are given in the tables below:

Table 3.6 Gender

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Male	194	81.9	81.9
Female	43	18.1	100
Total	237	100	

Table 3.7 Age

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
20-30	57	24.1	24.1
31-40	124	52.3	76.4
41-50	41	17.3	93.7
51 and above	15	6.3	100
Total	237	100	

Table 3.8 Qualification

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Bachelor	48	20.3	20.3
Master	146	61.6	81.9
MS	43	18.1	100
Total	237	100	

Table 3.9 Experience (Years)

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
5-10	134	56.5	56.5
11-15	52	21.9	78.5
16-20	27	11.4	89.9
21-25	10	4.2	94.1
26 and above	14	5.9	100
Total	237	100	

CHAPTER 4

Data Analyses and Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1 shows that 2 is the maximum value for Gender, where 1 coded for male and 2 coded for female. The variables used for the current study were measured at 5 point Likert scales from 1 to 5. The independent variable, i.e. Workplace Ostracism has a mean of 2.26 and a standard deviation of 0.700. The dependent variable Counterproductive Work Behaviors have a mean 2.35 of and standard deviation of 0.684. The mediator, Organizational Cynicism has a mean value of 2.67 and a standard deviation of 0.832 whereas the moderator in the study, Neuroticism has a mean value of 2.85 and standard deviation 0.674. All the above mentioned data in paragraph is being tabulated below to give a quick review.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Sample Size	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	237	1	2	-	-
Age	237	1	4	-	-
Qualification	237	2	4	-	-
Experience	237	1	5	-	-
Workplace Ostracism	237	1	4	2.26	0.700
Organizational Cynicism	237	1	4	2.67	0.832
Counterproductive Work Behaviors	237	1	4	2.35	0.684
Neuroticism	237	1	5	2.85	0.674

4.2 Correlation analysis

Table 4.2: Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations

	Variables	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4
1	Workplace Ostracism	2.26	0.700	1			
2	Neuroticism	2.85	0.674	.259	1		
3	Organizational Cynicism	2.67	0.832	.228**	.149	1	
4	Counterproductive Work Behaviors	2.35	0.684	.533**	.242	.231**	1

n= 237, ** p < 0.01

Table 4.2 displays the correlation between the variables of the current study. Workplace Ostracism is significantly positively correlated to Neuroticism, Organizational Cynicism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors with values of ($r=.259$, $p= 0.09$), ($r=.228^{**}$, $p= .000$) and ($r=.533^{**}$, $p= .000$) respectively. Neuroticism is positively correlated with organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors with values of ($r= .149$, $p= 0.10$) and ($r=.242$, $p= 0.15$) respectively. Organizational cynicism is significantly positively correlated to counterproductive work behaviors with values ($r=.231^{**}$, $p= .000$).

4.3 Regression Analysis

Table: 4.3 Mediation of organizational cynicism between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors

Effect of IV on M		Effect of M on DV		Direct effect of IV on DV in presence of M		Total effect of IV on DV		Bootstrap results for indirect effects	
B	t	B	t	B	t	β	t	LL	UL
.27**	3.60	.095	2.05	.50**	9.00	.52**	9.67	.6821	.8515

n= 237, ** P <.01

(IV= Workplace ostracism, M= Organizational cynicism and DV= Counterproductive work behaviours).

Hypothesis 2 of the study predicts organizational cynicism a possible mediator between the relationship of workplace ostracism on counterproductive work behaviours. From Table 4.3, it can be observed that the indirect effect of workplace ostracism on counterproductive work behaviours through organizational cynicism has the upper and lower limits of .8515 and .6821 and zero is not present in the 95% confidence interval, thus we can thus conclude that organizational cynicism mediates the workplace ostracism on counterproductive work behaviours relationship and our second hypothesis is hence accepted. The overall model is also highly significant where F=66.81 and p=.0000.

Getting regression results under the mediation analysis (table 4.3), it was found that workplace ostracism positively predicted counterproductive work behaviors with ($\beta = .52^{**}$, $p = .000$). Hence, hypotheses 1 is proved which is: *There is a positive association between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs).*

Tables: 4.5 Moderation Analysis for Neuroticism between Workplace Ostracism and Organizational Cynicism

Effect of IV on Med		Effect of Mod on Med		Effect of IV × Mod on Med		Bootstrap results for indirect effects	
B	t	B	t	B	t	LL 95 CI	UL 95 CI
-0.08	-0.24	-0.11	-0.44	.11	.96	-.11	.32

n= 237

(IV=Workplace ostracism, Med= Organizational cynicism, Mod= Neuroticism).

Hypothesis 3 of the study predicts that neuroticism moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism; such that if neuroticism is high than the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism would be high. From Table 4.5, it can be observed that interaction term of “workplace ostracism and neuroticism” effect on the relationship of “workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism” has the upper and lower limits of -.11 and .32 and zero is present in the 95% confidence interval, thus we can conclude that neuroticism does not moderate workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism relationship. Hence it fully supports the rejection of 3rd hypothesis.

Hypotheses Results

H1: *There is a positive association between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs). (Accepted)*

H2: *Organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors (CWBs). (Accepted)*

H3: *Neuroticism moderates the positive relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism such that the positive relationship is strengthened when neuroticism is high and it is weakened when neuroticism is low. (Rejected)*

CHAPTER 5

Discussion, Theoretical and Practical implications, Limitations & Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1. Discussion

The purpose of the current chapter is to examine the results of the study, which were reported earlier in the previous Chapter. It will also try to elaborate and explain the results and the relations with previous studies and emphasize on the results which are consistent with other studies and also those results which are not consistent with previous studies.

5.1.1 Discussion On Research Question No 1:

Q: 1: Does workplace ostracism affects counterproductive work behaviors of employees?

For finding the answer to the 1st question,

H₁: *There is a positive association between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs).*

Study of Ferris et al. (2008B) mentioned that workplace ostracism is the common and universal phenomena that occurred in each and every organization. Although ostracism in organizations may be supposed as a mild behavior, its unfavorable role for individuals (Chow et al., 2008) and their social interactions (Wu et al., 2012). Employees are working in organizations and they (employees) have some personality trait that must be different from any other employee working in an organization and also they have different coping mechanisms with different type of stressful situations like of being ostracized by others. By making this statement more authentic study of Williams (2007) has suggested that coping responses differ among individuals.

In this aspect, the study found workplace ostracism to be positively related to task conflict (Chung, 2015). Chung (2015B) mentioned that when individuals are ostracized, they are likely to believe they are misfits and therefore are less likely to engage in positive behaviors such as citizenship behaviors, meanwhile retaining a tendency to engage in workplace deviant behaviors. Workplace ostracism was positively related to service workers' evasive knowledge hiding (Zhao, Xia, He, Sheard, & Wan, 2016). Study of Wu and colleagues found that being ostracized can mitigate employees' citizenship behavior (Wu, Liu, Kwan, & Lee, 2016) and thus in return it will affect organization as a whole by indulging themselves in negative behaviors named as counterproductive work behaviors.

First hypothesis has been accepted in this study consistent with other studies which stated that there is positive relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors (Yang & Treadway, 2016; Zhao, Peng, & Sheard, 2013). Leung et al. (2011) mentioned employees who are being ostracized with not enough psychological resources will try to conserve psychological resources by demonstrating performance and low work engagement. Past studies have concluded that there is positive relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors (Hitlan & Noel 2009; Yan, Zhou, Long, & Ji, 2014).

Employees are the intellectual property of an organization. They provide support to organization with development of strategic plans. Though, intentions of employees can be influenced by workplace ostracism. That is why workplace ostracism has been recognized an essential attention by organizations from many years. Workplace Ostracism played vital role to induce counterproductive work behaviors, which in return interfered progress and benefit for an organization.

For instance, individualistic cultures that focus less on high quality relationships may be less sensitive to workplace ostracism compared to the collectivist ones (Leung et al., 2011). Employees of public sector organization have mentioned that there is much influence of ostracism on us and also mentioned that now a days each and every organization are a political arena and more specifically public sector organizations. Consistent with this statement study of Gkorezis and Bellou (2016) mentioned that the toxic effect of workplace ostracism in collectivistic cultures is likely to be more robust.

5.1.2 Discussion On Research Question No 2:

Question 2: Does organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors?

For finding the answer to the 2nd question,

H₂: *Organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors (CWBs).*

In this study mediation hypothesis has been accepted and that is organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. Organizational cynicism has not been used as a mediator before in a direct relationship of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. In this study the relationship does not describe the relationship of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors unless there is mechanism of organizational cynicism as a mediator. In previous studies, organizational cynicism used as a mediator in different relationships. For instance study of Bashir and Nasir (2013), they also used organizational cynicism as a mediator and they

concluded that: organizational cynicism mediates the relationship between the breach of the psychological contract and union commitment.

In this case Hobfoll (1989) mentioned that there are scarce psychological resources and an employee are dealing with work and stress both simultaneously, because from ostracizing behaviors employee who has been ostracized face stress. Consistent with this statement study of Wu et al. (2012) stated that individual who are facing workplace ostracism, this phenomena will indulge him/her in stressful situations. And this act will deplete the psychological resources and an employee must do their required on the job tasks and also dealing with stress, it is very difficult for employees to deal with both at the same time. On the other hand cynical tendency increases and put forward to organizational cynicism. When an employee goes for organizational cynicism ultimately reach to that phase that harm respective organization and indulged himself/herself in counterproductive work behaviors. In view of this statement study of Shahzad and Mahmood (2012) stated that organizational cynicism leads to counterproductive work behaviors. Hence, this study explains how workplace ostracism impacts the employees' counterproductive work behaviors via the mediating impact of organizational cynicism.

The current study intention is by providing a better know-how of the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors by including organizational cynicism as a mediator. The findings of this study suggests that organizational cynicism partially mediates the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. More importantly this study clarified the role of organizational cynicism as mediator between the relationship of workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. The current study findings highlighted the harmful effects of workplace ostracism. The current study result of

organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors is in congruence with previous result found by Shahzad and Mahmood (2012) that there is positive relationship between organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors.

It was found that there was significant and positive relationship between workplace ostracism, organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors. This study validate that workplace ostracism has a strong positive effect on organizational cynicism. It could be assumed that the tendency of the public sector employees of Pakistan towards cynicism increases as ostracism impact increases. It has been found that there is strong positive association between organizational cynicism and counterproductive work behaviors, which ultimately shows that as the cynical behaviors increase in public sector of employees, counterproductive behaviors also rises. In the extant study, it is revealed that organizational cynicism is a partial mediator in the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. It is evident that workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism influence the public sector employees to reflect counterproductive work behaviors to harm an organization as a whole.

5.1.3 Discussion On Research Question No 3:

Question 3: Does neuroticism moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism?

For finding the answer to the 3rd question,

H₃: *Neuroticism moderates the positive relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism such that the positive relationship is strengthened when neuroticism is high and it is weakened when neuroticism is low.*

Baron and Kenny (1986) mentioned that a variable function as a moderator when it alters the direction and/or strength of the effect of a predictor variable on a criterion variable. This study does not support the third hypothesis of moderation that is neuroticism moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism. Because there are different types of people with different personalities working in a public sector organization of Pakistan and also they have different personality traits as well. Study of Wu et al. (2012) mentioned in their study that individual difference factors are central to most models of workplace ostracism, and in this study neuroticism is taken as a moderator, but it does not work as a moderator in relationship of workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism.

Study of Leung et al. (2011) they have taken neuroticism as moderator between the relationship of workplace ostracism and work engagement, they supported the moderation of neuroticism in the relation the relationship of independent variable and the criterion variable. Neuroticism has been considered as a moderator in the relationship between external locus of control and depression (Horner, 1996).

According to Hofstede (1980) Pakistan is a collectivist culture. In a collectivist culture the role of an individual personality is neutralized by the combined or collective approach of the whole community. Thus neurotic behavior will not be tolerated and the combined effect will not let these behaviors affect the other employees and organization. Hofstede (1980) also mentioned that Pakistan is high power distance society. In high power distance society there are barriers or tall hierarchical levels for employees in organizations. Thus, being a neurotic person individually might not pose a threat due to the space between the levels in organization. Thus, tall hierarchal levels might not have any effects from the personalities working in the organizations.

5.2 Implications and Recommendations

5.2.1 Theoretical implications

There are many theoretical implications of the current study, which are discussed below:

Firstly, the present study introduced *organizational cynicism* as a mediator between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors. Organizational cynicism was tested to see the mechanism of how workplace ostracism affects counterproductive work behaviors of an employee. Previously organizational cynicism was studied for the employees working in the hospitality industry in Pakistan (Bashir & Nasir, 2013), but the current study investigated for the public sector employees. Previous studies have shown that organizational cynicism affect union commitment. In the current study cynicism was taken as the cynical behaviors of public sector employees that shows that whenever employees facing ostracizing behaviors the ultimate outcome will be cynical behaviors towards organizations and will lead to mal-behaviors named as counterproductive work behaviors.

Secondly, the study also tested *neuroticism* as a moderator between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism. Neuroticism was tested to see its effects on cynical attitudes of employees towards public organizations. The result was found insignificant.

Thirdly, the study also provides help to understand the effects of the workplace ostracism and how it enhances counterproductive work behaviors those who are working with public sector organizations in Pakistan. Very scarce and rare researches are available on ostracized employees and extremely little research is available in Pakistani culture. Most of the studies of employees who are being ostracized were conducted in western societies which are individualistic culture.

Fourthly, the study provides support for the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory that an employee who is ostracized by other employees, and that employee will end into a stress and it will ultimately deplete his/her psychological resources. The ultimate task of an employee is to conserve their psychological resources to deal with job tasks, but when this situation comes then it is very difficult to deal simultaneously with stressful situations and day to day job tasks. The result will be in form of cynical behaviors towards an organization and such acts will definitely end up to counterproductive work behaviors.

Finally, the study also describes the importance of culture. As the findings of the study suggested that there are one hypothesis rejected. Previously neuroticism mostly tested in other cultures which is a totally different culture as compare to other, the results are totally different which shows the impact and importance of culture.

Future researchers are advised to investigate the same study using longitudinal study and are also advised to focus on a comparative study of private and public sector organizations to give us more in-depth details that which sector employees are more prone to produce

counterproductive work behaviors from being ostracized from other employees. The researchers should also test other possible moderators such as personality traits *locus of control* (internal and external) both. Researchers should also keep in mind the possible mediator such as *belongingness*.

5.2.2 Practical implications

The present study has certain practical implications which might provide some help for the organizations in Pakistan. It can be noticed that workplace ostracism is a great concern and really small attention is given to this issue. The study provides significant results that workplace ostracism will lead to employee counterproductive work behaviors. There are certain suggestions for organizations. In considering the practical implications of our findings, we note that managers should carefully examine the situations when employees report they are ostracized. By separating the actual behaviors and the perception of it, managers can precisely identify the causes of ostracism in the workplace and develop a customized employee-assistance program to help them cope with it.

In practical terms, our findings show that workplace ostracism is costly for employees and organizations because employees who encounter high levels of workplace ostracism are likely to have high levels of organizational cynicism and are more prone to engage in counterproductive work behaviors. In addition to the general approach to mitigating workplace ostracism, the findings of the study indicate that the importance of individual differences in reacting to workplace ostracism does not play a vital role in the relationship of workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism because of power distance. The employee who has been ostracized are may be the reason that there are high levels of hierarchal levels in organizations, they feel

ostracized because of the employers does not give importance to employee in important meetings and discussions.

An important finding of the current study was that organizational cynicism as a probable cause to counterproductive work behaviors of employees. It was tested earlier with turnover intentions, but in this study was tested with between workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors for the first time. Thus, organizations should create and implement such types of climates in which the employee did something wrong, besides going directly to show ostracized behaviors to target employee, give something very demanding task to fulfill them if the results don't come according to your expectations then set a certain type of penalties systems and accordingly punish him/her. In this case an employee will not feel ostracized does not give birth to cynical behaviors and ultimately not prone to counterproductive work behaviors.

5.3 Limitations

The current study tried to eliminate all the problems, but still there are some limitations that must be avoided in the future.

Firstly, that sampling and data collection was done through cross sectional method due to time and resource constraints. In a cross sectional study data were collected from the respondents at one specific point of time. Thus, the sample size was small and might not represent all the ostracized employees' population of Pakistan, because the sample was not comprehensive and results might change if sample size might increase.

Secondly, the data sampling technique used for the study was convenience sampling due to time and resource constraints. In convenience sampling respondents are chosen who are convenient for the researcher.

Thirdly, the study focused on just public sector organizations for data collection, but it might also affect the results of this study. Because working conditions and support for ostracized employees are different in many sectors such as private sector.

5.4 Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors of employees. It also investigated the mediating role of organizational cynicism between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors of employees. Furtherly, the moderating effect of neuroticism was investigated between the relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism. The current study conducted to represent the ostracized employees working in the work setting of Pakistani public sector organizations with positive relationships between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors of employees. The results of the study showed that organizational cynicism did mediate the positive relationship between workplace ostracism and counterproductive behaviors of employees. The results also showed that neuroticism did not moderate the relationship of workplace ostracism and organizational cynicism. The findings were consistent for workplace ostracism and counterproductive work behaviors with the previous studies. The study found that when an employee is being ostracized will lead to mal-behaviors towards an organization. Therefore, working in an ostracized environment will enhance their counter productivity.

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APPEXDIX I



CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, ISLAMABAD

Department of Management Sciences

Dear Participant,

I am a student of MS (HR) at Capital University of Science & Technology, Islamabad. I am conducting a research on impact of **Workplace Ostracism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors: Examining the Mediating Role of Organizational Cynicism and Moderating Role of Neuroticism**. You can help me by completing the attached questionnaire, you will find it quite interesting. I appreciate your participation in my study and I assure that *your responses will be held confidential* and will only be used for education purposes.

Sincerely,

Ameer Taimur Ali Khan.

S.D.A= strongly disagree, D.A= Disagree, N= Neutral, A= Agree, S.A= Strongly Agree

		S.D.A	D.A	N	A	S.A
Section: A. Workplace Ostracism						
1	Others ignored you at work	1	2	3	4	5
2	Others left the area when you entered.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Your greetings have gone unanswered at work.	1	2	3	4	5
4	You involuntarily sat alone in a crowded lunchroom at work.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Others avoided you at work.	1	2	3	4	5
6	You noticed others would not look at you at work.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Others at work shut you out of the conversation.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Others refused to talk to you at work.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Others at work treated you as if you weren't there.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Others at work did not invite you or ask you if you wanted anything when they went out for a coffee break.	1	2	3	4	5

		S.D.A	D.A	N	A	S.A
Section: B. Organizational Cynicism						
1	Any efforts to make things better around here are likely to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Company management is good at running improvement programs or changing things in our business.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Overall, I expect more success than disappointment in working with this company.	1	2	3	4	5
4	My company pulls its fair share of the weight in its relationship with its employees.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Suggestions on how to solve problems around here won't produce much real change.	1	2	3	4	5
6	My company meets my expectations for quality of work life.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Company management is more interested in its goals and needs than in its employees' welfare.	1	2	3	4	5

		S.D.A	D.A	N	A	S.A
Section: C. Counterproductive Work Behaviors						
1	Lied about hours worked	1	2	3	4	5
2	Stole something belongings to your employer	1	2	3	4	5
3	Took supplies or tools home without permission	1	2	3	4	5
4	Came to work late without permission	1	2	3	4	5
5	Took an additional or a longer break than you were allowed to take	1	2	3	4	5
6	Left work earlier than you were allowed to	1	2	3	4	5
7	Intentionally worked slower than you could have worked	1	2	3	4	5
8	Put little effort into your work	1	2	3	4	5
9	Daydreamed rather than did your work	1	2	3	4	5
10	Worked on a personal matter instead of working for	1	2	3	4	5

	your employer					
11	Surfed on the internet	1	2	3	4	5
12	Wasted your employer's materials supplies	1	2	3	4	5
13	Called in sick when you were not	1	2	3	4	5

		S.D.A	D.A	N	A	S.A
Section: D. Neuroticism						
1	I see myself as someone who is depressed	1	2	3	4	5
2	I see myself as someone who is relaxed, handles stress well	1	2	3	4	5
3	I see myself as someone who can be tense	1	2	3	4	5
4	I see myself as someone who worries a lot	1	2	3	4	5
5	I see myself as someone who is emotionally stable, not easily upset	1	2	3	4	5
6	I see myself as someone who can be moody	1	2	3	4	5
7	I see myself as someone who remains calm in tense situations	1	2	3	4	5
8	I see myself as someone who gets nervous easily	1	2	3	4	5

Section: E. Personal Profile

Please provide following information.

- Gender:** (1) Male (2) Female
- Age:** (1) 20-30 (2) 31-40 (3) 41-50 (4) 51 and above
- Qualification:** (1) Inter (2) Bachelor (3) Master (4) MS (5) Ph.D.
- Experience** (1) 5-10 (2) 11-15 (3) 16-20 (4) 21-25 (5) 26 and above

APPENDIX II

Pattern Matrix^a

	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
WOS1		.433		
WOS2		.534		
WOS3		.518		
WOS4		.409		
WOS5		.741		
WOS6		.597		
WOS7		.815		
WOS8		.734		
WOS9		.837		
WOS10		.572		
OC1			.671	
OC2			.806	
OC3			.726	
OC4			.677	
OC6			.560	
OC7			.600	
CWB1	.518			
CWB2	.446			
CWB3	.514			
CWB4	.683			
CWB5	.721			
CWB6	.557			
CWB7	.577			
CWB8	.620			
CWB9	.555			
CWB10	.592			
CWB11	.674			
CWB12	.663			
CWB13	.573			
N1				.599
N3				.774
N4				.643
N5				.479
N6				.483
N8				.561

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation
Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.