

Internal and External Causes of Workplace Ostracism-An Empirical Study on the Impact Model of Personality and Organizational Climate

Qingsong Zhu^a, Ya Shu^{b,*}, Deping Feng^c and Ruiting Tan^d

School of Business, Sichuan University, Chengdu 610064, China

^azqs9981@sina.com, ^bnikki_shu@163.com, ^cdpfeng@foxmail.com, ^d574409032@qq.com

*Corresponding author

Keywords: Big five; Workplace Ostracism; Organizational Climate

Abstract. Personal personality and organizational climate are two important factors in the study of workplace ostracism. Based on the philosophical principle of dialectical relationship between internal and external factors, personal personality plays a major role as an internal cause, while organizational climate plays a supporting role as an external cause. In order to explore the relationship between employees' personal personality and workplace ostracism, this paper intends to take organizational climate as a moderating variable to investigate 300 employees in different industries and regions, and construct a research model on the relationship between employees' personal personality and workplace ostracism under the moderating effect of organizational climate. The results show that the extroversion, agreeableness, emotional stability and openness of experience in personal personality are negatively correlated with perceived workplace ostracism, and organizational climate plays a moderating role in employee agreeableness and emotional stability.

1. Introduction

Workplace ostracism is a subjective perception and judgment of employees who are excluded by others or feel neglected in organizational situations^[1-2]. To a certain extent, it has a positive impact on organizational life, but more negative impact, such as stimulating employees' negative emotional state, weakening employees' work engagement and creativity, reducing employees' work performance, etc.^[3]. As a negative behavior of organizational life, workplace ostracism has gradually become a focus of academic research.

The causes of occupational ostracism can be summarized as personal factors and environmental factors^[4-5]. Firstly, although there is no comprehensive theoretical model of personal personality and occupational ostracism in academic circles, it is difficult to fully explain the source and mechanism of individual personality traits. This paper takes the personality characteristics of the excluded as the internal causes of occupational ostracism. Secondly, as an out-of-role behavior, workplace ostracism will affect organizational effectiveness, and members' organizational behavior is also affected by the internal organizational climate and interpersonal relationships^[6]. In this paper, organizational climate is regarded as the external cause of occupational ostracism. From a philosophical point of view, the dialectical relationship between internal and external causes is discussed.^[7] The influence mechanism of occupational ostracism under organizational climate is discussed in depth.

2. Theory Review and Hypothesis Model

2.1 The Internal Cause of Occupational Ostracism-the Impact of Personality

Based on the role identity theory, when employees enter a new organizational environment, their roles will often change accordingly, so that they can interact with the matched roles to determine their own role positioning^[8]. In interpersonal communication, the characteristics based on role understanding and environmental adaptation will lead to workplace ostracism to a certain extent. In

addition, employees with different personality traits have different reactions after being excluded from the workplace. It is significant to incorporate personal personality into the research framework of workplace ostracism^[9]. Five-factor model proposed by Costa & McCrae, which is widely accepted by academia at present, is used to explore the relationship between dimensions and workplace ostracism: extroversion, agreeability, conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness of experience.

Extroversion refers to the amount and intensity of interpersonal interaction between individuals and the outside world. People with low extroversion tend to be silent, refuse to respond to external stimuli, and participate in fewer social activities. They are vulnerable to rejection in the workplace^[10].

Affordability reflects the characteristics of compromise and empathy when individuals get along with others. However, people with low agreeableness tend to show aggression and hostility, and are prone to interpersonal conflicts with others and be excluded^[11].

Emotional stability reflects an individual's ability to regulate his own emotions. According to the victim-driven theory, people with low emotional stability are more likely to create or become disharmonious factors in the team, and more likely to arouse other people's disgust and thus be excluded or punished.

Duty describes the individual's planning, organization and responsibility to the team. Employees' due diligence will affect their aggression and violence^[12], and promote the formation of ostracism.

Experience openness describes the individual's ability to seek new things and appreciate art. Individuals with high openness of experience are more creative, can meet new things with an open mind, have strong speculative ability, and can deeply explore Abstract and complex problems. People with low openness of experience are more difficult to produce good innovation performance, but they are more likely to cause difficulties to the team, thus being rejected by leaders and colleagues. Therefore, the following assumptions are proposed:

H1: There is a negative correlation between employee's Big Five personality and the degree of job rejection.

H1A: Employees' extroversion is negatively correlated with their level of workplace ostracism.

H1B: The employee's agreeability is negatively correlated with the level of workplace ostracism.

H1C: Employees' emotional stability is negatively correlated with workplace ostracism.

H1D: Employee's conscientiousness is negatively correlated with workplace ostracism.

H1E: Employees' experience openness is negatively correlated with their degree of job ostracism.

2.2 The External Cause of Organizational Workplace Ostracism-Organizational Climate

Organizational climate is formed by long-term accumulation of the organization, which has the nature of continuity and can be perceived by employees. The workplace ostracism behavior studied in this paper is the result of long-term and multiple interactions between employers and employees, as well as between employees and leaders in the specific context of the organization. According to literature review, organizational climate can be divided into three dimensions: organizational hierarchy, interpersonal relationship and management style.

In companies with good organizational hierarchy, employees have higher autonomous rights, the company system is relatively perfect, and the procedures are relatively scientific and fair^[13]. When the vulnerable personality is in such an atmosphere, on the one hand, people who engage in exclusive behavior can punish or warn specific objects by means of system and procedure, and they will use the way of workplace ostracism less. On the other hand, in companies with low organizational hierarchy, their work boundaries are blurred, their standardization level is low, and their systems are not perfect. Employees will more use "relationship" to seek resources and help, and more use ostracism to vent discontent^[14].

In companies with good interpersonal atmosphere, the interpersonal relationship between employees tends to be harmonious, harmonious and friendly. When faced with vulnerable types of employees, organizational members are more willing to talk with them in a gentle, cooperative, persuasive and consultative way. Healthy and friendly interpersonal atmosphere can effectively

enhance the emotions among employees, so that they perceive less workplace ostracism^[15]. On the contrary, people don't care about each other when they get along with each other. When the vulnerable types of people appear, they will show more indifference and love to ignore them, and they will feel more intense job ostracism.

In companies with good management style, employees are more accepting of the management style of leaders and perceive less bureaucratic atmosphere. In a supportive leadership atmosphere, employees can generate positive emotions, so potential reprimanders in the workplace are more willing to express their dissatisfaction by active communication^[16]. This style and atmosphere of care and communication can also reduce the perceived level of workplace ostracism by the excluded. Therefore, the following assumptions are proposed:

H2: Organizational climate plays a moderating role in the relationship between employee's Big Five personality and job ostracism.

H2A: Organizational climate plays a moderating role in the relationship between employee extroversion and job ostracism.

H2B: Organizational climate plays a moderating role in the relationship between employee's agreeableness and job ostracism.

H2C: Organizational climate plays a moderating role in the relationship between employee emotional stability and job rejection.

H2D: Organizational climate plays a moderating role in the relationship between employee accountability and job ostracism.

H2E: Organizational climate plays a moderating role in the relationship between employee experience openness and job ostracism.

Specific research models and theoretical assumptions are shown in Fig. 1:

3. Research Technical Route

In this study, 300 employees were surveyed by questionnaires and completed anonymously. A total of 300 questionnaires were sent out, 281 questionnaires were recovered, and 251 questionnaires were deleted. The effective recovery rate was 83.7%.

Table 1 survey

Control variable		Ratio		Ratio		Ratio
Age	<25	36.25%	25~35	52.19%	>35	11.56%
Gender	Male	49.8%	Female	50.2%		
Serving time	<=1	51%	1-3 years	39.44%	>=3	9.56%
Business Types	Private	38.65%	State-owned and institutions	34.66%	Other	26.69%

This study chooses scales with good reliability and validity developed and verified in Chinese context: Big Five Personality Simplification Scale^[17] - CBF-PI-B; Workplace Ostracism Scale^[18] - WEQ; Organizational Climate Questionnaire developed by Chen Weizheng and Li Jinping in 2005^[19].

4. Research results

After screening and sorting out the returned questionnaires, the reverse scoring items in the questionnaires were adjusted, and the data obtained were analyzed with the help of SPSS24.0 software.

4.1 Reliability and validity

SPSS was used to do reliability analysis to test the reliability of the total subscale, and a reliability coefficient method was used to measure the reliability. The Cronbach's coefficients of Big Five Personality Scale, Workplace Ostracism Scale and Organizational Climate Scale were 0.88, 0.92 and 0.84, respectively, which showed that the scale had good reliability. Firstly, KMO and

Bartlett spherical model were used to test the scale. The KMO values of the three scales were 0.788, 0.891 and 0.825, respectively. The sig values of Bartlett spherical model test are all 0.000, which indicates that factor analysis is suitable for further analysis. Then factor analysis was used to validate the construct validity of the scale. Previous factor analysis results showed that the factor load of each item was above 0.5, and the explanatory rates of total variance were 75.303%, 70.361% and 69.480% respectively, which indicated that the three scales had good validity. In the questionnaire survey of this study, all variables were measured in the form of employee self-report. All subjects completed the questionnaire at the same time by self-assessment. To some extent, this survey method will have the problem of homologous deviation. For this reason, through SPSS24.0 principal component analysis, the data show that the largest factor explains 16.754% of the variation, far less than 50%, which can be considered that the homologous problem is not serious.

4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 2 Correlation analysis of research variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 8
1. Big Five	4.259	.509	1						
2. Extroversion	3.898	.808	.751**	1					
3. Agreeableness	4.477	.622	.552**	.337**	1				
4. Conscientiousness	4.469	.840	.535**	.226**	.358**	1			
5. Emotional Stability	4.129	1.042	.618**	.300**	.133*	0.013	1		
6. Openness	4.321	.812	.643**	.497**	0.096	.135*	.258**	1	
7. Workplace ostracism	2.238	.740	- .408**	- .347**	- .195**	-0.022	- .371**	- .295**	1
8. Organizational climate	4.049	.706	.316**	.161*	.223**	.426**	.150*	0.031	- .218** 1

SPSS was used to do bivariate correlation analysis for each variable, and Pearson coefficient was used to measure the correlation between variables.

As can be seen from Table 2, except that the relationship between conscientiousness and workplace ostracism is not significant, there are significant negative correlations between the other four dimensions and workplace ostracism. Therefore, there is a significant negative correlation between Big Five personality level and workplace ostracism ($r = 0.408^{**}$, $P < 0.01$). Hypothesis 1 has been preliminarily verified.

Organizational climate was negatively correlated with workplace ostracism ($r = 0.218^{**}$, $P < 0.01$), and positively correlated with employee Big Five personality evaluation ($r = 0.316^{**}$, $P < 0.001$). Therefore, the H2 part has been preliminarily verified.

4.3 Test of Research Hypothesis

In order to further clarify whether there is causal relationship between variables, the research hypothesis is validated. Firstly, the five dimensions of Big Five personality and workplace ostracism were analyzed by hierarchical regression analysis. The degree of interpretation of regression equation is expressed by R² and adjusted R². The overall regression effect and significance of the model are tested by F value and Sig value of F value. If Sig.F < 0.05, we think that the overall linear regression effect is obvious.

Table 2 Correlation analysis of research variables

Variable	M 1	M 2	M 1	M 2
Step1: control variable			Step2:Independent variable	
educational background	0.155*	0.189**	Extroversion	-0.200**
working seniority	-0.020	-0.032	Agreeableness	-0.122*
Business type	0.057	-0.078	Emotional Stability	-0.265**
			Openness	-0.137**
			R2	0.031
			ΔR2	0.031
			F	2.613*
			ΔF	18.920**

The results of correlation analysis of the variables in Table 4.2 above show that employees'extroversion (beta=-0.199, P < 0.01), agreeableness (beta=-0.122, P < 0.05), emotional stability (beta=-0.266, P < 0.01) and openness of experience (beta=-0.136, P < 0.01) are significantly correlated with workplace ostracism, thus H1A, H1B, H1C, H1E are verified, while employees' conscientiousness and workplace ostracism are verified. The relationship was not significant and H1D was not validated.

Secondly, based on the conclusion of regression analysis, this paper will centralize the three dimensions of extraversion, emotional stability, openness of experience and organizational climate in Big Five personality. Wen Zhonglin ^[20] points out that if both independent variable X and regulatory variable M are continuous variables, the test needs to be completed by measuring steps. In model 1, control variables are added, decentralized variables and adjustment variables are added to model 2, and interaction terms between independent variables and adjustment variables are added to model 3 to test whether several dimensions of organizational climate have moderating effects on the relationship between extroversion, emotional stability, experience openness and workplace ostracism. The test results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 3 Multilayer Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	M1	M2	M3
Step1: control variable			
Business type	0.057	-0.093	-0.1
working seniority	-0.020	-0.037	-0.057
educational background	0.155*	0.227**	0.213**
Step2:Independent variable			
1,Extroversion		-0.186**	-0.201**
2,Agreeableness		-0.094	-0.09
3,Emotional Stability		-0.241**	-0.249**
4,Openness		-0.151**	-0.103*
5,Organizational climate		-0.194**	-0.194**
Step3: interactive itemms			
5×1			0.018
5×2			-0.174**
5×3			0.136*
5×4			0.105
R²	0.031	0.294	0.331
ΔR²	0.031	0.263	0.037
F	2.613*	12.597**	9.818**
ΔF	2.613*	18.047**	3.301*

From the above Table, we can see that the relationship between organizational climate and pleasant interaction, organizational climate and emotional stability and workplace ostracism reached a significant level. Compared with model 2, R2 changed by 0.037, indicating that organizational climate played a moderating role in the relationship between pleasant, emotional

stability and workplace ostracism. H2B and H2C were supported while organizational climate was extroverted. There is no significant moderating effect in the relationship between experience openness and workplace ostracism. Therefore, H2A, H2D and H2E are not supported.

5. Conclusion

Extroversion, agreeableness, emotional stability and experience openness of Big Five personality are significantly negatively correlated with perceived workplace ostracism, while the relationship between employee responsibility and workplace ostracism has not been verified. Organizational climate plays a moderating role in the relationship between employee agreeability, emotional stability and workplace ostracism.

6. Discussion

6.1 Contribution to Theory

1. This paper constructs a comprehensive empirical model of workplace ostracism, explores the internal and external causes of ostracism, and introduces regulatory variables to clarify the situational effects of the process, so as to better understand the theoretical significance of individual personality and organizational climate on workplace ostracism, which responds to Robinson's proposal and enriches the research results in the context of Chinese organizations^[21].

2. This study responds positively to the dynamic organizational environment. From the perspective of individual personality and organizational climate, it is confirmed that in Chinese organizational context, personal personality has a significant negative correlation with perceived job ostracism, and organizational climate has a moderating role in the above relationship, which enriches adaptive organizational research.

6.2 Management Enlightenment

This paper conducts an empirical study on the employees of enterprises in the Chinese context, and the conclusions of the study have certain enlightenment for the employees and managers of enterprises in the era of knowledge economy.

1. Source control to reduce workplace exclusion in organizations.

Grasp the recruitment pass well, take into account the qualifications formed by the nature and content of the job, and also take the personality characteristics of the staff into consideration. Select those individuals with high extroversion, agreeableness, emotional stability and openness of experience, and try to help the organization to create and form a harmonious interpersonal atmosphere, so as to reduce workplace exclusion. Adverse effects, further improve the performance of employees.

2. Focus on the construction of team and organizational atmosphere, and build a harmonious organizational atmosphere.

We should improve the management system of enterprises and shape a good corporate culture. Improve staff's humanistic environment, establish effective prevention and supervision mechanism, consciously diagnose and improve the company's culture and team atmosphere, and encourage an open, caring and helpful corporate culture. Pay attention to organization and team building, pay attention to employees' inner feelings, and listen to employees' voices by setting up feedback mechanism or Tucao wall. In order to reduce feedback, they can effectively reduce their rejection, enhance organizational flexibility and enhance team and individual stickiness to the organization. For example, enterprises can regularly carry out monthly activities on "enriching corporate culture" and opposing "gang culture", and adopt formal or informal gatherings and exchanges to increase the harmonious atmosphere among organizations.

6.3 Limitations of Research

There are some limitations in this study, which need to be further explored in the future.

1. The scope of sample selection is limited. Sample education is generally high, which limits the universality of research conclusions. In the follow-up study, we can further expand the scope of sampling and adopt a more scientific sampling survey method.

2. Workplace exclusion is the subjective feeling of employees, not necessarily malicious. In many specific situations, we may concentrate on our work and ignore our colleagues, while colleagues may feel excluded. Suggestions can be subdivided into situational dimensions or industry factors to explore, and the current factors affecting personal personality characteristics of workplace exclusion, mainly for the exclusion of the individual personality, ignoring the exclusion of the individual personality of the perpetrators. Suggested scholars can be exclusion and exclusion of the individual personality of a comprehensive study.

References

- [1] X.Zhang, Ying.L,D.Zhu. Research on the Mechanism of Workplace Ostracism by Appreciating Colleagues Strategy Based on Similar Attraction Theory[J]. Journal of management,2018,15(09):1319-1326.
- [2] L.Z.Wu, J.Liu,J.Xu. Workplace Ostracism and Employee Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Role of Organizational Identity and Collectivism Tendency. Nankai Management Review.2010,13(3):36-44.
- [3] R.Li. The impact of workplace ostracism on employee's extra-job seizure: the mediating effect of organizational identity and work engagement. Management science, 2010,23(3)
- [4] X.S.Xiao, A Case Study of Employment Ostracism and Coping Strategies [J]. Human Resource Development in China,2011(1):53-57.
- [5] T.Zeng, M.L.Ye. Classification, Measurement and Influencing Factors of Occupational Ostracism [J].In the Business Age,2013(02):94-95.
- [6] W.Yu,Peng.Zhang. The Impact of Organizational Disorder Atmosphere on Employee Ignorance Behavior: The Role of Occupational Ostracism and Organizational Self-esteem[J]. Journal of Central University of Finance and Economics, 2016 (10), 122-128.
- [7] Selected Works of Mao Zedong (Volume 1)[M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991.
- [8] M.Yan, H.W.Tu,J.Li. Definition and structural dimensions of organizational socialization of new employees from the perspective of identity theory[J].Progress in Psychological Science, 201119 (5), 624-632.
- [9] H.B. Wang, M.Yan,H.B.Wu, J.R.Li, X.H.Wang. Malicious retaliation or identity drive? The mechanism of the role socialization of new employees on their workplace ostracism behavior [J]. Journal of Psychology: 1-13 [2018-12-15].
- [10] X.H.Chen,J.Xiong.The impact of workplace ostracism on adaptive performance of knowledge workers: the moderating role of personality traits [J]. Leadership Science, 2017 (32): 44-46.
- [11] Mccrae R. R., Arenberg D., Costa P. T. Declines in divergent thinking with age: Cross-sectional, longitudinal, and cross-sequential analyses.[J]. Psychology & Aging, 1987,2(2):130.
- [12] Graziano W. G., Eisenberg N. Chapter 30 - Agreeableness: A Dimension of Personality[M]. Hogan R, Johnson J, Briggs S. Handbook of Personality Psychology. San Diego: Academic Press, 1997:795-824.
- [13] J.P.Li. Empirical Study on the Impact of Organizational Climate on Employee Job

Involvement and Organizational Commitment [D]. Sichuan University, 2006.

[14] Y.Li, X.Y.Li. The mechanism of the relationship between superiors and subordinates affecting the career growth of middle-level managers - the moderating role of organizational structure and organizational interpersonal climate [J]. *Management Review*, 2015, 27 (6): 120.

[15] J.J.Yan, B.Zuo. Research and evaluation of interpersonal citizenship behavior and its antecedents and outcome variables [J]. *Management Review*, 2010, 22 (5): 69-75.

[16] Wofford J. C., Liska L. Z. Path-goal theories of leadership: A meta-analysis[J]. *Journal of Management*, 1993,19(4):857-876.

[17] M.C. Wang,X.Y. Dai,S.Q.Yao.Preliminary compilation of China Big Five Personality Questionnaire III: Development of a simplified version and reliability and validity test [J]. *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 2011, 19 (4): 454-457.

[18] Ferris D. L, Brown D. J., Berry J W., et al. The development and validation of the Workplace Ostracism Scale.[J]. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 2008,93(6):1348.

[19] W.Z.Chen.,J.P.Li,J.H.Wu.,Study on the impact of organizational climate on employee engagement and organizational commitment [J]. *Management Science*, 2006 (06): 18-23.

[20] Z.L.Wen, J.T.Hou, Zhang L.Zhang et al. Comparison and application of moderating effect and mediating effect. *Journal of Psychology*, 2005, 37(2), 268-274.

[21] Robinson S. L., Reilly J. O., Wang W. Invisible at Work An Integrated Model of Workplace Ostracism[J]. *Journal of Management*, 2013.