

DOES SALARY BUFFER WORKPLACE ADVERSITY? EXAMINING WORKPLACE OSTRACISM, HARASSMENT, AND EMPLOYEE LIFE SATISFACTION

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Abstract

Workers spend 40 hours a week or more of their lives at work. It can be said that employees communicate more with their coworkers than with their loved ones. And sometimes, this relationship can turn into a true friendship, when employees find the right balance between personal and professional, friendship in the workplace can increase employee happiness, engagement, and work-life satisfaction. However, in organizational practices there are still many forms of violence that occur within the organization. Workplace violence in this study is emphasized in the form of workplace ostracism and workplace harassment which can have a negative effect on employee work-life satisfaction. This study examines the effect of workplace ostracism and workplace harassment on employee life satisfaction moderated by salary. The sample in this study was 140 female employees from Central Java and DIY. The results show that workplace ostracism does not have a negative effect on employee life satisfaction in female employees in Central Java and DIY, while workplace harassment has a negative and significant effect on employee life satisfaction in female employees in Central Java and DIY. For salary cannot moderate the influence of workplace ostracism and workplace harassment on employee life satisfaction. The software used to process data in this study is SPSS with multiple regression analysis.

Keywords : Salary; workplace ostracism; workplace harassment; employee life satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

Workers spend as much as 40 hours each week or even more, in their lives at work. It can be said that more employees communicate with their colleagues than with their loved ones. And sometimes, these relationships can turn into true friendships when employees find the right balance between personal and professional. Friendships in the workplace can increase employees' happiness, engagement, and work life satisfaction (Larasati & Prajogo, 2022; Rasool et al., 2021).

However, in organizational practice, there are still many forms of violence that occur in it. Workplace violence in this study is emphasized in the forms of workplace ostracism (exclusion) (Choi, 2021; Li et al., 2021; Mohammad & Nazir, 2023) and workplace harassment (workplace harassment) (Österman & Boström, 2022; Park, 2021; Worke et al., 2023). Data in the field shows that in 2023, in the Annual Record of Komnas Perempuan, violence against women was found in both the personal, public, and state realms. In the public sphere, in which there were 115 cases of workplace violence, violence in the public sphere

was sexual violence with female victims. It is also strengthened by the annual report from the National Commission on Anti-Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan), which states that there were 321 cases of violence against Indonesian migrant women workers (PPMI) throughout 2023. Of these, the majority or as many as 43% are cases of economic violence, such as unpaid salaries, low wages, and forced labor. Then as many as 27% are cases of psychological violence, such as bullying, verbal harassment, and threats that have an impact on mental health to trigger depression, anxiety, and trauma. There are also 20% cases in the form of physical violence, such as beatings, persecution, and torture, which cause physical injury and ongoing trauma. According to (Taneja et al., 2020), there are cases that are not reported due to the social stigma inherent in the victim, as well as to maintain the rights, equality, and dignity of the victim in the social context. (Taneja et al., 2020), also explained that of the 321 respondents, 62% stated that they experienced jokes or comments that were sexually suggestive, 45% felt inappropriate gazes or views, and 52% felt touching, hugging, etc. Undesirable: 24% felt inappropriate physical contact, 28% experienced sexually explicit emails or messages, 45% experienced repeated or inappropriate exit invitations, 34% felt sexual cues, indecent sexual exposure, inappropriate body appearance, 8% felt requests or pressures to have sex/other sexual acts.

In previous research, forms of violence in the workplace have negative impacts on the organization, such as decreased employee productivity, employee performance, innovative work behaviors, employee attachment to the organization, and even employee satisfaction (Gou et al., 2022; Kurum & Erdemli, 2022; Rasool et al., 2020; Singh & Srivastava, 2021; Touni & Hussien, 2023; Zhou et al., 2020). Employee life satisfaction is an individual's evaluation of the extent of his or her overall living conditions, as well as an indication of an individual's acceptance of his or her living conditions and the extent to which their desires are fulfilled (Larasati & Prajogo, 2022). The spillover theory also describes how the work environment affects employees (Erdogan et al., 2012; Hart, 1999; Rode, 2004). The condition of the work environment has a direct impact on the life satisfaction of a worker. In poor work environment conditions, this will have an impact on a decrease in job satisfaction and cause a decrease in job satisfaction. However, if the conditions of the work environment are positive, then employee life satisfaction will be improved, but this theory is not supported by research conducted by (Larasati & Prajogo, 2022) with respondents of private employees working in Indonesia. In the study, it was explained that the toxic workplace environment does not have a negative and insignificant effect on employee life satisfaction. The unsupported results of this study give rise to the suspicion that employees are able to separate their work life and personal lives, so that employees' work life satisfaction is not disturbed by poor work environment conditions. This is in line with the Compensation Theory which explains that when one area of life is unsatisfactory, individuals will seek life satisfaction in another, so the effect is much greater life satisfaction (Pasupuleti et al., 2009). These other areas include community outside the office, activities outside the office environment, supportive families, large earnings earned in the organization, and other achievements that can be achieved. These good things cover the discomfort that employees feel at work.

Salary is one of the most important factors in determining the quality of life and welfare of employees. Salary is a return for work or services that have been done by employees (Anhar et al., 2021). A high salary can meet the needs of life and will also affect employee life satisfaction (Astuti & Rianto, 2022). In Indonesia, there is a salary gap received by employees. This gap can occur due to gender differences between male and female workers, between races and ethnicities, as well as salary gaps between work sectors,

especially with the minimum wage in each different region. Thus, in this study, salary plays a role as a moderation variable. The hypothesis that can be built from this presentation is

H1: workplace ostracism has a negative and significant effect on employee life satisfaction

H2: workplace harassment has a negative and significant effect on employee life satisfaction.

H3: Salary moderates the effect of workplace ostracism on employee life satisfaction

H4: Salary moderates the effect of workplace harassment on employee life satisfaction

So based on the above explanation, the title of this study is, " Does salary buffer workplace adversity? Examining workplace ostracism, harassment, and employee life satisfaction"

2. METHOD

The population in this study is female employees. The sample selection in this study was carried out by purposive sampling technique, which is sampling based on certain criteria to meet the research objectives. The respondent criteria are female employees working in the Central Java and DIY regions, aged more than 18 years, with the consideration that 18 years old is the age that has entered the working age requirement in accordance with the provisions of labor regulations and a minimum working period of 1 (one) year. The total sample obtained in this study is 140. The data source was obtained by the researcher from primary data. The survey approach was used to collect quantitative data containing indicators representing each variable with a choice of answers based on a 5-point Likert Scale with answer information 1 representing a strongly disagreeing answer, up to 5 representing a strongly agreeing answer. The questionnaire was distributed online using the google form facility as well as a validity and reliability test. For hypothesis testing, classical assumption test analysis and multiple regression were used using SPSS software.

Table 1
Indicator table

No.	Variable	Indicator	Question Items
	<i>Workplace ostracism</i>	1. Not responding to greetings 2. Keeping your distance in friendship (Rasool et al., 2019)	a. My boss/co-worker/subordinate didn't answer my greeting when I met him b. My boss/co-worker/subordinate tries to keep my distance from me at work
	<i>Workplace harassment</i>	1. Talking dirty jokes 2. Talk about sexual life (Anjum & Ming, 2018)	a. My boss/co-worker/subordinate often tries to share dirty jokes with me b. My boss/co-worker/subordinate often tries to talk about my personal and sexual life

<i>Employee life satisfaction</i>	1. Careers 2. Well-being 3. Self-satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985)	a. In many ways my life is close to my ideals. b. My living conditions are very good. c. I am satisfied with my life. d. So far I've gotten the important things I want in life. e. If I could live my life, I would hardly change anything.
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3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

a. Hasil penelitian

Validity and Reliability

The validity test was conducted to ensure that the questionnaire used in this study was accurate and appropriate for collecting relevant data. Validity was assessed using the Pearson product-moment correlation. A questionnaire item was considered valid when the probability or significance value (p-value) was less than 0.05. A low p-value indicates a statistically significant correlation between the score of each individual item and the total questionnaire score, suggesting that the item appropriately measures the intended construct. The results of the validity test in this study indicated that all questionnaire items were valid. The reliability of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. An instrument was considered reliable when its Cronbach's alpha coefficient was greater than 0.60. The results showed that the Cronbach's alpha values for all variables were above 0.60, indicating that the research instrument demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency and reliability.

Classical Assumption Tests

Classical assumption tests were conducted as prerequisites for regression analysis to ensure that the resulting regression estimates were accurate, unbiased, and consistent with the underlying statistical assumptions. The assumptions examined in this study included linearity, homoscedasticity, absence of autocorrelation, and normality of residuals. Violations of these assumptions may lead to biased or inefficient regression estimates and consequently reduce the reliability and validity of the regression model. Therefore, classical assumption tests were performed prior to regression analysis to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the analytical results.

Table 2 Classical Assumption tests

Test	Criteria	Analysis Results	Interpretation
Normality	sig > 0,05	0,200	Normally distributed
Multicollinearity	Tolerance > 0,1		No

X1		0,546	multicollinearity
X2		0,546	detected
Z		0998	
Heteroscedasticity			
X1	sig > 0,05	0.176	No
X2		0.435	heteroscedasticity
Z		0.657	detected

Hypothesis Testing

The regression analysis test was used to answer the hypothesis presented in the study. The conclusion if: H_0 is accepted if $\alpha > 0.05$ H_a is accepted if $\alpha < 0.05$ The results of the direct regression analysis test and moderation can be seen in table 3.

Table 3 Hypothesis tests result

Variabel	Criterion	Result	Interpretation
X1 → Y	Nilai β and Sig < 0,005	$\beta = 0,363$ and sig. 0,000	H1 Not supported
X2 → Y	Nilai β and Sig < 0,005	$\beta = -0,766$ and sig. 0,000	H2 Supported
Moderating X1*Z	Nilai β and Sig < 0,005	$\beta = -0.271$ and sig. 0.384	H3 Not supported
Moderating X2*Z	Nilai β and Sig < 0,005	$\beta = 0.195$ and sig. 0.557	H3 Not supported

b. Discussion

Table 3 shows the results of the direct test on hypothesis 1 with a value of $\beta = 0.363$ and P values of 0.000 and it can be said that hypothesis 1 is not supported. Judging from these results, it can be said that ostracism does not have a negative impact on female employees in the DIY and Central Java regions. There is a suspicion such as previous research conducted by (Larasati & Prajogo, 2022) that employees can separate office problems and personal problems outside of work, so that exclusion does not have a negative impact on employee life satisfaction. Employees who feel excluded may seek support from friends, family, or other communities, so that they can expand their social networks outside the workplace environment.

Hypothesis 2 shows a value of $\beta = -0.766$ and P values 0.000, where *workplace harrasment* has a negative and significant effect on *employee life satisfaction*. From these results, it can be concluded that hypothesis 2 is supported. Victims of harassment often feel worthless, incompetent, and unworthy of good treatment. These effects affect the quality of employees' work lives.

Based on the table of moderation regression output results, the coefficient results showed that significant values of $0.384 > 0.05$ and $0.557 > 0.05$ which means that salary does not moderate the effect of *Workplace Ostracism* on

employee life Satisfaction and Salary cannot moderate the effect of Workplace Harassment on employee life satisfaction.

Tabel 4
F-test

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	591.263	5	118.253	27.838	0.000 ^b
	Residual	577.723	136	4.248		
	Total	1168.986	141			

A. Dependent Variable: Employee Life Satisfaction (Y)

B. Predictors: (Constant), X2.Z, Workplace Ostracism (X1), Workplace Harastmen (X2), Gaji (Z), X1.Z

Based on the table above, the results of the ANOVA test indicate a significance value of 0.000, with an F-statistic of 27.838 and an F-table value of 2.67. Since the significance value is less than 0.05 and the F-statistic is greater than the F-table value, the regression model is considered statistically significant and can be used to predict *employee life satisfaction*. In other words, *workplace ostracism*, *workplace harassment*, and salary simultaneously have a significant effect on *employee life satisfaction*.

t-test

The t-test was conducted to analyze the significance of the partial effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The significance level (α) was set at 0.05 (5%).

Hypothesis Formulation:

$H_0: \beta = 0$, meaning that X has no significant effect on Y.

$H_a: \beta \neq 0$, meaning that X has a significant effect on Y.

Decision Criteria:

H_0 is accepted if the p-value (significance) > 0.05 .

H_0 is rejected if the p-value (significance) < 0.05 .

Tabel 5
t-test

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	6.147	1.215		5.061	0.000
	Workplace Ostracism (X1)	0.404	0.122	0.295	3.321	0.001
	Workplace Harastmen (X2)	-0.738	0.137	0.484	5.391	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Life Satisfaction (Y)

The results of the t-test for *workplace ostracism* showed a positive B coefficient of 0.404, indicating that a higher level of *workplace ostracism* is associated with a higher level of *employee life satisfaction*. The t-value of 3.321 and significance value of 0.001 indicate that the effect of *workplace ostracism* on *employee life satisfaction* is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the two variables. However, this finding is contrary to previous studies, which generally reported that *workplace ostracism* has a negative effect on *employee life satisfaction*.

The results of the t-test for *workplace harassment* showed a negative B coefficient of -0.738, indicating that a higher level of *workplace harassment* is associated with a lower level of *employee life satisfaction*. This finding is theoretically reasonable because harassment in the workplace is generally associated with a decline in employees' life satisfaction (Nauman et al., 2019). The t-value of 5.391 and significance value of 0.000 indicate that the effect of *workplace harassment* on *employee life satisfaction* is statistically highly significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected, confirming that *workplace harassment* has a significant negative effect on *employee life satisfaction*.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that workplace ostracism has a significant positive effect on employee life satisfaction. This finding may appear counterintuitive; therefore, further research is needed to better understand the mechanisms underlying this relationship. Other factors may play a role in explaining this result, or the concept of workplace ostracism may be interpreted differently within the context of this study. Workplace harassment has a highly significant negative effect on employee life satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous studies and further strengthens the understanding of the detrimental effects of workplace harassment on employees' life satisfaction. Salary is not able to moderate the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee life satisfaction, nor the relationship between workplace harassment and employee life satisfaction. Future studies may consider adding or replacing the dependent variable with intention to leave or intention to stay. In addition, future researchers may also include or replace the independent variables with other workplace-related factors, such as workplace gossip and workplace affairs.

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