*Research Article*

# Workplace Ostracism: Impact on Psychological Distress, Counter-productive Work Behavior, and Turnover Intention

*İşyerinde Dışlanma: Psikolojik Sıkıntı, Üretim Karşıtı İş Davranışı ve İşten Ayrılma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisi*

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*Abstract*

*Intense competition and diverse customer expectations are raising concerns about organizational effectiveness. Workplace ostracism, which is on the rise, poses a significant threat to organizational effectiveness and needs to be addressed. Ostracism leads to negative workplace experiences and psychological distress, which can result in turnover intention and counterproductive work behavior. These behaviors cause significant losses, both directly and indirectly, in terms of results. This study aims to examine the impact of workplace ostracism on psychological distress, turnover intention, and counter-productive work behaviors, and how these consequences threaten organizational effectiveness. A theoretical and field study based on survey data was conducted, analyzing 329 surveys collected from two 5-star and three 3-star hotels operating in Rize. Regression analyses and hypothesis tests were performed to assess the data. According to the analysis results, workplace ostracism had a positive and significant effect on psychological distress (ß=227, p<0.05). Furthermore, the analyses that controlled for the effect of workplace ostracism showed that psychological distress had a significant and positive effect on counterproductive work behavior (ß=.695, p<0.05) and turnover intention (ß=.562, p<0.05). This study is expected to make significant contributions to the literature and help managers establish effective management practices in the workplace.*

*Keywords: Workplace Ostracism, Psychological distress, Counter-productive work behavior, Turnover intention, Accommodation industry*

*Öz*

*Yoğun rekabet ve farklı müşteri beklentileri, örgütsel etkinlikle ilgili endişeleri arttırmaktadır. Artmakta olan işyerinde dışlanma, örgütsel etkililik için önemli bir tehdit oluşturmaktadır ve ele alınması gerekmektedir. İşyerinde Dışlanma, işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışı ile sonuçlanabilecek olumsuz işyeri deneyimlerine ve psikolojik sıkıntıya yol açmaktadır. Bu davranışlar, sonuçlar açısından hem doğrudan hem de dolaylı olarak önemli örgütsel kayıplara neden olmaktadır. Bu kapsamda çalışmada, işyerinde dışlanmanın*

*psikolojik sıkıntı, işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışları üzerindeki etkisini ve bu sonuçların örgütsel etkinliği nasıl tehdit ettiğinin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Rize'de faaliyet gösteren iki adet 5 yıldızlı ve üç adet 3 yıldızlı otelden toplanan 329 anket analiz edilerek, anket verilerine dayalı teorik ve saha çalışması yürütülmüştür. Verileri değerlendirmek için regresyon analizleri ve hipotez testleri yapılmıştır. Analiz sonuçlarına göre işyerinde dışlanmanın psikolojik sıkıntı üzerinde pozitif ve anlamlı bir etkisi vardır (ß=227, p<0.05). Ayrıca işyerinde dışlanmanın etkisi kontrol altına alınmışken yapılan analizler, psikolojik sıkıntının üretim karşıtı iş davranışları (ß=,695, p<0,05) ve işten ayrılma niyeti (ß=,562, p<0,05) üzerindeki etkisi de anlamlı ve pozitif yönlü olduğunu göstermiştir. Çalışmanın literatüre ve işyerinde etkin bir yönetim pratiği ortaya koymada yöneticilere önemli katkılarının olacağı değerlendirilmektedir.*

***Anahtar Kelimeler****: İşyerinde dışlanma, Psikolojik sıkıntı, Üretim Karşıtı İş davranışı, İşten ayrılma niyeti, Konaklama Sektörü*

## 1.Introduction

Today, businesses operate in challenging market conditions due to diversified customer expectations and increasing competition. In such an uncertainty-intensive industrial environment, issues such as effective and efficient use of resources, organizational effectiveness, and team/group dynamism play an essential role in businesses' survival by keeping their competitive advantage. In the organizational environment where various social and sensitive dynamics are built and coordinated, employee relations involving collective effort and synergy play a decisive role in achieving the goals of the organization. In particular, workplace ostracism (WPO) has recently emerged as a phenomenon that jeopardizes the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization by damaging human relations and social bonds in the organizational environment (Wang, et al., 2022; Choi, 2019). The results of the studies conducted on 262 employees in the USA and ten thousand employees in China have determined that the employees experience Workplace ostracism at a very high rate (Fox & Stallworth,2005; Wu, Liu & Hui, 2010). Workplace ostracism refers to being "ignored, rejected, neglected, or excluded" by other employees with whom the individual has social interaction (Ferris et al., 2008; Kwan et al., 2018). This situation refers to several negative workplace experiences ranging from not paying attention to the thoughts or suggestions of the employees, not including them in a certain meeting or event, not receiving their greetings, or ignoring themselves on important issues. It causes significant weaknesses within the structure knitted like a chain within the framework of social relations networks such as the organization. Indeed, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. The ostracism of the employee in an environment where he/she needs to create value by establishing social bonds will cause anxiety and problems in many issues such as belonging, search for meaning, and self-esteem (Williams, 2007). This contradictory and complex situation will threaten the emotional, intellectual, and behavioral health and life of the employee. This negative situation experienced by the employee, who is the social building block and the most strategic resource of the organization, triggers many negative workplace experiences for both the individual and the organization. Considering the effects of WPO on the organization and the individual; Wo seems to cause a decrease in the level of employee well-being (Howard et al.; 2020), self-esteem (Peng & Zeng, 2017), organizational identification (Wu, Liu, Kwan & Lee, 2016), performance and extra-role behavior (Huertas-Valdivia, Braojos, & Lloréens-Montes, 2019; Ferris et al., 2015). Also WPO cause an increase in the level of psychological distress (Wu et al., 2012; Choi, 2019) and work-family conflict (Thompson et al., 2020). Many workplaces suffer from these negative consequences that can jeopardize the effectiveness of the organization and its sustainable management process. However, there is a limited number of studies in the existing literature on WPO. To understand the concept and reveal its effect, the consequences of specific variables should be studied (Liu & Xia, 2016).

Workplace ostracism (WPO) significantly affects employees' mental health by preventing the fulfillment of some psychological needs (Heaphy & Dutton, 2008). WPO can cause psychological distress as an interpersonal stressor (Wu et al., 2012; Choi, 2019). Psychological distress (PD) is a condition that leads to negative experiences in all kinds of interactions with both the inner and outer world. This includes job tension, depression, emotional exhaustion, and worsens mental health and well-being (Wu et al., 2012; Anasori et al., 2020). WPO leads to many negative outcomes that threaten the efficiency and sustainability of the organization, such as PD, turnover intention, and Counter-productive Work Behavior (CWB) (Tsuno et al., 2018; Mackey, Perrewé, & McAllister, 2017; Hameed Khan, Chudhery & Ding, 2017). The high level of experience of PD by common antecedents such as WPO causes

employees to develop a coping strategy to compensate for the lack of negative conditions at work in their psychological resources. Within the framework of both the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), employees are encouraged to act at a high level of turnover intention by aiming to seek a new job or change their job, where better resources and conditions are offered to them. In addition, employees adopt CWB behaviors in a way that harms the organization and employees to cope with the negative situation caused by PD. It is an important issue to examine the relationship with WPO, an important antecedent of PD in the workplace environment, and turnover intention and CWB, the consequences of PD that pose a threat to organizational effectiveness. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between WPO, PD, turnover intention, and CWB. To achieve this goal, a survey was conducted on 329 service sector employees, and important results were obtained. The study makes important contributions in three aspects. First, the study contributes to the emerging literature by examining the relationship between WPO and PD empirically in the field. Secondly, it has been empirically demonstrated that the increase in PD experienced by the employee increases two important negative workplace experiences (turnover intention and CWB). Finally, the awareness of decision-makers about WPO and PD, which is experienced on a very large scale, was increased and suggestions were shared. After careful evaluation of all the research findings, it is expected that the study will make a significant contribution to the existing literature as well as to managers seeking to improve management practices in the workplace. The insights gained from this study have the potential to inform decision-making and lead to the implementation of effective management strategies that can enhance productivity and employee satisfaction.

## 2.Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

### 2.1. Workplace Ostracism and Consequences

According to Ferris et al. (2008), Workplace Ostracism (WPO) refers to the act of "ignoring or excluding" an employee in the workplace. Robinson et al. (2013:206) define it as the display of certain activities that prevent an individual or group from engaging as a member of the organization. From a behavioral perspective, workplace ostracism (WPO) refers to frequent exposure to behaviors such as not responding to an employee's greeting, being left out of a lunch invitation, or not being invited to a colleague's birthday party. Compared to other forms of workplace mistreatment, such as bullying, social undermining, and incivility, WPO specifically restricts an individual's social interactions and scope of actions, with a more passive character (Gamian-Wilk & Madeja-Bien, 2021:6).

Certain situations within organizational culture facilitate the development of workplace ostracism (WPO). Robinson et al. (2013) emphasize that the interaction between individuals or groups is highly interrelated when it comes to achieving organizational goals. In other words, situations with low task interdependence create a favorable environment for the development of WPO. Additionally, it is suggested that WPO is more likely to occur in organizations that permit open conflict instead of adopting an approach that discourages cooperation in such situations. In addition to these situations, the extremely busy and stressful work environment, as well as the limited communication among employees in a wide area, are among the antecedents of WPO (Gamian-Wilk & Madeja-Bien, 2021).

The presence of WPO triggers negative results in the organization. When employees are exposed to WPO, their performance and organizational citizenship behavior decrease. Instead of focusing on the goals of the organization with all their might, they become distracted and less productive (Chung, 2015; Wu, Liu, Kwan & Lee, 2016). The decrease in employee self-esteem and weak social interaction at work can cause a lower display of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) by employees (Peng & Zeng, 2017; Ferris, Lian, Brown, & Morrison, 2015; Zhang, Ye & Ferreira-Meyers, 2017). This situation also reduces the organizational identification of the employees (Wu, Liu, Kwan & Lee, 2016). In today's industrial environment, where the concerns of organizations regarding efficiency and productivity are increasing, the work performance of employees with WPO is decreasing (Jahanzeb, Fatima, Javed, & Giles, 2020; De Clercq, Haq & Azeem, 2019; Choi, 2020). Working with WPO initially leads to a decrease in the employee's self-esteem and perception of organizational support, which in turn reduces their motivation to fulfill their roles and even hinders their extra-role performance (Wu et al., 2011; Leung, Wu, Chen & Young, 2011; Ferris et al., 2015; Huertas-Valdivia, Braojos, &Lloréens-Montes,

2019). This also causes employees to violate workplace rules and norms, leading to the exhibition of deviant behaviors that can harm the organization (Howard, Cogswell & Smith, 2020; Shafique, Qammar, Kalyar, Ahmad & Mushtaq, 2020).

On an individual level, WPO also has negative effects. Firstly, increased WPO negatively impacts employee wellbeing (Howard et al., 2020; Jang & Chen, 2022). Some studies conducted within the scope of employee wellbeing show that psychological distress is a major issue. WPO significantly increases the levels of psychological distress in individuals (Choi, 2019).  It  also has a negative impact on the family lives of employees. Employees who experience an increase in WPO are more likely to report an increase in work-family conflict and family emotional exhaustion (Liu, Kwan, Lee & Hui, 2013; Thompson, Carlson, Kacmar, & Vogel, 2020).

As can be seen, WPO has a wide range of negative effects on both the organization and the employee. This situation leads to inefficiency and reduced productivity within the organization. Additionally, the decrease in job satisfaction and overall quality of life for the employee hinders sustainable management practices. These aspects make WPO a topic that should be emphasized by both academicians and top managers.

## 2.2. Workplace Ostracism and Psychological Distress

Workplace ostracism (WPO) can cause many negative situations for both individuals and organizations (O'Reilly et al., 2015). The relationship between negative outcomes and WPO can be explained in the context of Needs-based Theories and Conservation of Resources Theory. Needs-based Theories emphasize the importance of social bonds in an individual's interaction with the environment (O'Reilly, Robinson, Berdahl, & Banki, 2015). The bond between individuals is as important as their physical needs. The Conservation of Resources Theory highlights that people can be attached to different resources, such as physical or social ties, due to their perceived importance (Hobfoll, 1989; 2002).  The absence of this connection or the experience of a loss in this resource leads to negative mood experiences such as distress, depression, or meaninglessness in the individual. In addition, the individual develops a defensive mechanism towards the depletion of their remaining resources by preserving them in a reserved manner (Wu et al., 2012 ; Leung et al., 2011). Not meeting psychological needs through social connections is important, which negatively affects the individual's mental and physical health and many other aspects of their interactions. In this situation, the individual becomes stressed and emotionally exhausted, especially since they cannot replace lost resources with new ones (Hobfoll,1989). Especially when social resources are not met, the individual experiences even more stress among these resources (Williams, 2001). Individuals experience anger, negative mood, anxiety, depression, and lower psychological health along with WPO ( Chow et al., 2008; Gonsalkorale & Williams, 2007; Ferris et al., 2008). When we examine the effects of WPO on an individual more extensively, it increases the individual's psychological distress. Psychological distress is a state that affects the mental health of the family-work-individual's inner world, such as job tension, depression, and emotional exhaustion, and worsens it (Wu, Yim,Kwan & Zhang, 2012; Anasori et al., 2020).  Individuals with high psychological distress experience a depressed mood and constantly experience negative affectivity (Mao et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2012). According to Özçelik Kaynak and Öztuna (2020), healthcare professionals who work in an intense and stressful environment should have good psychological well-being. However, WPO negatively affects this situation. Wu and colleagues (2012) examined the relationship between psychological distress and WPO in employees whose primary duties were social interactions and empirically demonstrated the presence of a positive effect. Choi (2019) examined the relationship between WPO and psychological distress (job tension, emotional exhaustion, depressed mood at work) in 226 Koreans. The study revealed that a significant portion of employees experienced WPO, which increased their levels of psychological distress.

## 2.3. Psychological Distress and Turnover Intention

Retaining strategic human resources is a critical issue for organizations. The tendency of an employee to leave the organization due to some negative situations experienced by the employee within the organization is defined as turnover intention (Price, 2001). Turnover intention is an important antecedent for an employee to carry out the act of leaving the job (Bigliardi et al., 2005). Factors that contribute to employee turnover intention include low job satisfaction, organizational commitment (Harrison et al.,

2006; Riketta, 2008; Balouch & Hassan, 2014; Memon, Salleh & Baharom, 2016; Kurniawaty, Ramly & Ramlawati, 2019), work engagement (Kim & Hyun, 2017; Memon, Salleh & Baharom, 2016; Xiong & Wen, 2020), Self-efficacy (De Simone, Planta & Cicotto, 2018; Chami-Malaeb, 2022). Additionally, high levels of job stress (Jung et al., 2012; Yang, Ju, & Lee, 2016; Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016), Negative affectivity (Bouckenooghe, Raja & Butt, 2013; Bouckenooghe, Raja, Butt, Abbas & Bilgrami, 2017) and psychological distress (Bentley et al.,2021) experienced by employees also affect the formation of turnover intention.

Turnover intention can cause many negative consequences for organizations, both directly and indirectly. One of the most pressing issues is how to select a new employee to fill the position after the current, trained workforce has left the organization. Factors such as their education, integration into the organization, and alignment with the organizational culture must all be taken into account (Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh & Callan, 2014). Additionally, it reduces organizational performance and effectiveness, which are among the most critical elements for organizations (Biswas, 2010).

Psychological distress (PD) causes a decrease in the individual's resources and long-term emotional exhaustion ( Anasori et al., 2021; Hartavi & Çelikay Söyler, 2022). Individuals who are exposed to WPO within the organization may experience a decrease in their commitment to the organization and their job-related belonging (Turkoglu & Dalgic, 2019) and satisfaction with Psychological distress. Consistent with the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2011; Hobfoll et al., 2018), individuals may look for new job opportunities and may act on this tendency more frequently (Lyu & Zhu, 2019)) in order to obtain missing resources and restore emotional balance. In this case, PD increases employee turnover intentions. According to Akdemir and Işık's (2017) extensive study conducted within the scope of a socio-psychological analysis on the service sector, it is stated that there is a significant effect between PD and turnover intention. Bentley et al. (2021) obtained striking results by examining the results of the psychosocial climate on individuals within an organization across 22 sectors and 867 employees. The study empirically revealed the effect of increasing PD on turnover intention. This result is further supported by a study conducted on 3142 public employees (Tsuno et al., 2018; Bentley et al., 2021).

## 2.4. Psychological Distress and CWB

Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) refers to negative behavior that harms the organization and its stakeholders on a large scale, from customers to employees (Spector & Fox, 2005;2006). The employee displays negative work behaviors that may harm the organization or its employees in the context of counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (Fox & Spector, 1999). According to Spector et al. (2006), within the scope of CWB, an individual will develop five different behaviors: "sabotage, production deviance, abuse, theft, and withdrawal". CWB can trigger poor employee performance and lead to many negative workplace experiences (O'Reilly & Robinson, 2009, Wu et al., 2011, Wu et al., 2012; Thakur & Sharma, 2019; Sambung, 2019). In the formation of the CWB, important variables such as organizational justice (Colquitt et al., 2013; Holtz & Harold, 2013) job dissatisfaction (Hershcovis et al., 2007), negative affectivity (Penney & Spector, 2005), Psychological Distress (Hameed, Khan, Chudhery & Ding, 2017) are listed as antecedent. CWB exposure of the employee in the organization causes results such as incivility, workplace violence, sexual harassment, poor performance, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal behaviors (Atwater & Elkins, 2009).

According to Miller and Rosse (2002), when an individual experiences dissatisfaction in the work environment, they may propose alternative solutions to cope with the situation. Work-related stress factors, such as WPO, can lead to negative psychological distress, which can cause a decrease in the employee's emotional and psychological resources, disengagement from work, and withdrawal behaviors (Hsieh & Karatepe, 2019; Park & Min, 2020; Anasori vd , 2020). This situation can also be explained by the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping. According to this theory, individuals scan their environment for sources of stress and engage in alternative ways and behaviors to combat stressors (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, 1988). Within the realm of theory, individuals can apply various coping strategies, ranging from quitting to counterproductive work behavior (CWB), as a means of dealing with stress. It is commonly believed that CWB is an ineffective strategy that individuals develop in their struggle with stress (Cullen & Sackett, 2003;Bowling & Eschleman, 2010). In this context, an

employee's personal distress experienced in the workplace can cause a lack of necessary resources to perform his or her job well. This can lead to counterproductive work behavior (CWB) as a coping mechanism developed by the individual (Fox, Spector & Miles, 2001;Mackey, Perrewé & McAllister, 2017; Hameed, Khan, Chudhery & Ding, 2017; Taşkıran et al., 2022). Hameed et al. (2017) empirically demonstrated the effect between PD and CWB in their study on 328 bank employees.

After evaluating all of the accumulated literature, the following hypotheses were developed.

*H1:Workplace ostracism relates positively to psychological distress*

*H2:Psychological distress relates positively to CWB*

*H3:Psychological distress relates positively to Turnover Intention*

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Research Model

In the research, a conceptual model including workplace ostracism, psychological stress, counterproductive work behavior, and turnover intention has been proposed to determine the effect of workplace ostracism on employees. The proposed model is shown in Figure 1.
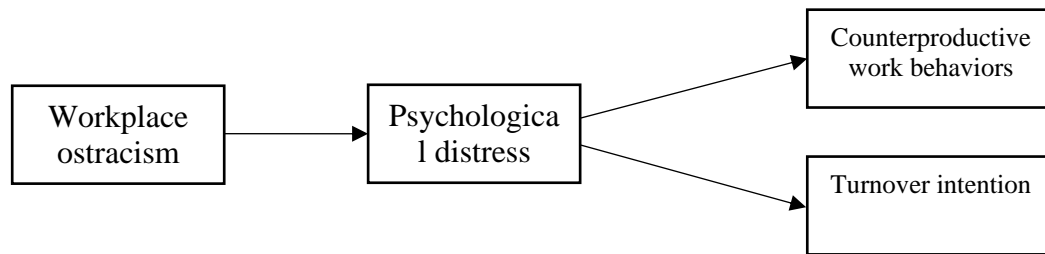


**Figure 1. Research Model**

### 3.2. Population and Sample

Firstly, the necessary ethical permissions were obtained from the Ethics Committee of the World Peace University (WPU-ETK-2023-01) to conduct the research. The study was carried out among employees of 3-5 star hotels in Rize. The province of Rize has three 5-star hotels and eight 3-star hotels with a Ministry of Culture and Tourism Operation Certificate. To conduct the research, an email was sent to relevant hotels requesting permission. Positive feedback was received from two 5-star and three 3-star hotels. The questionnaires were then sent electronically to the relevant units of the hotels that provided affirmative feedback. In an email sent to business managers, they were asked to report the number of employees to determine the universe. However, some hotel managers refused to divulge this information, making it impossible to obtain reliable information about the population. Regarding sampling, Şencan and Fidan (2020) stated that using 5 times the total number of scales used in the study is sufficient, while 10 times is considered acceptable. In contrast, Sürücü et.al. (2023) suggests that 250 samples will suffice. Based on this approach, the study considers 329 survey responses to be adequate.

The first page of the questionnaire included the purpose of the research and instructions for filling it out, while the following page included demographic questions and statements about the scales. The research obtained 351 questionnaires. Upon examination, 22 questionnaires were excluded from the study as they were considered to have been filled out frivolously (all statements were marked with the same option or too many statements were left blank). Therefore, the study was conducted with 329 valid questionnaires.

There were 148 male and 181 female participants. Among them, 56 were under 30 years old, 153 were between 31-40 years old, 108 were between 41-50 years old, and 12 were 51 years old and over. In terms of education level, 41 participants had a high school education or below, 58 had an associate degree, 203 had an undergraduate degree, and 27 had a postgraduate degree. Regarding work experience, 46 participants had worked in hotel businesses for less than 1 year, 148 participants had worked between 1 and 5 years, 65 participants had worked between 6 and 10 years, and 70 participants had worked in hotel businesses for 11 years or more.

### 3.3. Measurement Tools

Standardized scales available in the literature were utilized to measure the variables in this study. These widely-used scales have also been employed in recent research (Singh, & Srivastava, 2021; Anasori, Bayighomog, De Vita, & Altinay, 2021).

*Workplace Ostracism:* A 10-item scale developed by Ferris et al.'s (2008) was used to determine workplace ostracism perception in participants. The statements in the scale were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale from "never" (1) to "always" (5). Sample items in the scale are "Others at work treat you as if you weren't there." and "Others at work not invite you or ask you if you want anything when they went out for a coffee".

*Psychological Distress:* A 10-item Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL-10) was used to measure psychological distress in the participants. This list was adapted by Kleppang and Hagquist (2016) to measure the psychological distress of employees. Participants were asked to report the statements in the scale on a 5-point scale between "Never" (1) and "Extremely" (5). Sample items in the scale are "Difficulty in falling asleep or staying asleep" and "Feeling hopeless about future".

*Counterproductive Work Behaviors:* The 5-item scale used by Jung and Yoon (2012) in their study on hotels was used to determine counterproductive work behaviors in the participants. The statements in the scale were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale between "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly disagree" (5). High scores indicate high counterproductive work behaviors. Sample items in the scale are "came to work late without permission" and "refused to help a coworker".

*Turnover Intention:* A 3-item scale used in the study of Anasori, Bayighomog, De Vita, & Altinay (2021) for hotels was used to determine the turnover intention in the participants. The statements in the scale were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale between "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly disagree" (5). Sample items in the scale are "As soon as I can find a better job, I will leave this hotel" and "I am actively looking for a job at another hotel".

### 4. Findings

To determine which analysis methods would be applied in the research, the data distribution was first determined. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Normal Distribution**

| Variables | Skewness | Kurtosis | Distribution |
|---|---|---|---|
| Workplace Ostracism | -0,624 | 1,229 | Normal |
| Psychological Distress | -0,948 | 0,540 | Normal |
| Counterproductive Work Behaviors | -0,657 | -1,311 | Normal |
| Turnover Intention | 0,098 | -0,509 | Normal |

George and Mallery (2010) state that the data have a normal distribution when the values of skewness and kurtosis are between -2 and +2, while Sürücü, Şeşen and Maslakçı (2023) argue that these values should be between -1.5 and +1.5. When examining the kurtosis and skewness values of workplace ostracism [-0.624, 1.229], psychological distress [-0.948, 0.540], counterproductive work behaviors [-0.657, -1,311], and turnover intention [0.098, -0.509], which are among the variables included in the research, the data show a normal distribution. Therefore, parametric tests were used for the analyses.

To test the reliability of the scales, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is an indicator of internal consistency, was taken into account. Reliability test results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Reliability Analysis**

| Measurement Tools | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alfa |
|---|---|---|
| Workplace Ostracism | 10 | 0,821 |
| Psychological Distress | 10 | 0,857 |
| Counterproductive Work Behaviors | 5 | 0,746 |
| Turnover Intention | 3 | 0,751 |

Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. If the alpha coefficient is between $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$, the internal consistency of the scale is considered acceptable. If it is between $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$, the scale is considered to have high internal consistency (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020; Sürücü, Şeşen, & Maslakci, 2023). Accordingly, it can be said that the scales used in the research have high internal consistency. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to establish the construct validity of the scales. The analysis revealed that the workplace ostracism (CMIN/DF=2.949, GFI=0.970, AGFI=0.940, NFI=0.958, CFI=0.971, RMSEA=0.61), psychological distress (CMIN/DF=2.403, GFI=0.971, AGFI=0.949, NFI=0.987, CFI= 0.981, RMSEA=0.52), and counterproductive work behaviors (CMIN/DF=2.757, GFI=0.994, AGFI=0.968, NFI=0.988, CFI= 0.992, RMSEA=0.58) scales showed good fit indices and construct validity.

Before conducting hypothesis testing, correlations between variables were checked. The resulting correlation values are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results**

| Variables | Mean | Sd. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Workplace Ostracism | 2,52 | 0,724 | 1 | | | |
| 2. Psychological Distress | 3,20 | 0,804 | 0,615** | 1 | | |
| 3. Counterproductive Work Behaviors | 2,69 | 0,866 | 0,439** | 0,513** | 1 | |
| 4. Turnover Intention | 3,46 | 0,715 | 0,328** | 0,420** | 0,256** | 1 |

** The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results of the correlation analysis show that workplace ostracism has a positive relationship with psychological distress (r=0.615, **p<0.05), counterproductive work behaviors (r=0.439, **p<0.05), and turnover intention (r=0.328, **p<0.05). Additionally, psychological distress has a positive and significant relationship with counterproductive work behaviors (r=0.513, **p<0.05) and turnover intention (r=0.420, **p<0.05).

After performing correlation analysis, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to test the research hypotheses. The results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Regression Analysis Results**

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ß | Std. Error | | |
| WPO→ PD | 0,227 | 0,061 | 2,078 | 0,039 |
| PD → CWB | 0,695 | 0,035 | 19,777 | <0,001 |
| PD → TI | 0,562 | 0,174 | 18,964 | <0,001 |

*WPO: Workplace Ostracism, PD: Psychological Distress, CWB: Counterproductive Work Behaviors, TI: Turnover Intention*

According to the results of hierarchical regression analysis, workplace ostracism has a positive and significant effect on psychological distress (ß=227, p<0.05). Furthermore, analyses conducted while controlling for the effect of workplace ostracism showed that psychological distress has a significant and positive effect on counterproductive work behaviors (ß=0.695, p<0.05) and turnover intention (ß=0.562, p<0.05). To determine whether there was a multicollinearity problem in the research, we checked the VIF values. According to Allison (1999), the VIF value should be 2.5 or less, while Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) suggest that a value below 4 indicates no multicollinearity problem. The obtained VIF values ranged from 1.013 to 1.987, indicating no multicollinearity problem in the study according to both explanations.

Upon evaluating all the findings obtained, it was found that Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2, and Hypothesis 3 in the research were supported.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Organizations face difficult competition and diverse customer expectations, which raise concerns about efficiency and productivity. In this process, the physical and mental health of human resources, one of the most strategic resources, directly affects organizational results. Workplace ostracism and psychological distress levels have recently been experienced on a large scale by employees. The consequences of these experiences, such as turnover intention and counterproductive work behaviors, are discussed in detail.

Workplace ostracism (WPO) can have many negative effects on both the organization and the individual. One of these effects is psychological distress (PD). Employees who experience high levels of WPO are unable to form the social bonds and acquire the resources they need, both psychologically and sociologically. This is due to an organizational environment where they are ostracised from social processes by other employees, and where their thoughts and suggestions are ignored. Social bonds are at least as important as physical needs, and are vital in a system such as an organization, where the structure is based on social ties. An employee who cannot meet their social and psychological needs due to the negative environment created by WPO will experience stress (Williams, 2001; Hobfoll,1989). This situation can trigger negative experiences, such as job tension and depression, which can affect both the individual experiencing them and those with whom they interact. This is commonly referred to as psychological distress (Wu, Yim, Kwan & Zhang, 2012; Anasori et al., 2020). WPO can cause employees to feel sad, experience negative emotions, and have a low mood. Research has found that WPO negatively affects PD and that many employees exhibit high levels of WPO (Choi, 2019; Wu et al., 2012). The study examined the relationship between WPO and PD, and found that WPO predicts PD by approximately 23% (ß=227, p<0.05). This indicates that employees who experience WPO are more likely to experience PD. These results are consistent with previous studies.

Employees who experience PD lose their loyalty to the organization and job satisfaction within the framework of high stress, negative mood and burnout (Anasori et al., 2020; Turkoglu & Dalgic, 2019). During this process, employees apply various coping strategies to deal with the pressure caused by decreased psychological and social resources that cannot be replaced. One of these strategies is to exhibit counterproductive work behavior (CWB) towards the organization and other employees. This behavior can include methods such as "sabotage, production deviance, abuse, theft, and withdrawal" (Spector et al., 2006). Experiencing a high level of PD increases counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Research has demonstrated that PD is an important antecedent to CWB (Hameed, Khan, Chudhery, & Ding, 2017). Studies examining the PD-CWB relationship have shown a significant effect (Hameed et al., 2017). Specifically, PD was found to predict CWB at a level of approximately 70% (ß=.695, p<0.05) in the study. The high rate obtained in this study supports previous research that suggests that PD is a significant predictor of CWB. The second coping strategy identified was turnover intention. Employees may choose to leave their stressful and dissatisfying work environment as a solution to dealing with PD and its negative impact. It is natural for employees to seek a better balance between their diminishing resources and personal lives. Some studies in the literature suggest a relationship between PD and turnover intention. In the study, it was determined that PD had a significant impact on turnover intention (ß=562, p<0.05), accounting for 56% of the observed variance. This result supports previous studies and

reveals the criticality of PD. PD is so critical that it can cause the most strategic resource of the enterprise to leave the organization.

In the study, especially by controlling the effect of WPO on PD, the negative and stressful organizational climate that increases with WPO triggering PD increases the display of negative work behaviors such as turnover intention and CWB, which threaten efficiency and productivity. Considering the inevitable situation where WPO is experienced at very high levels and PD is affected by this situation, it would be appropriate for managers to take some measures quickly in terms of managerial efficiency. It is important for managers to consider the following:

- Especially in jobs with high task interdependence, where social ties and support are important, steps should be taken to develop these social ties. Developing employees' loyalty and group affiliations can be achieved through various human resources practices. For example, special days and important events in employees' private lives should be shared among the members of the group and the organization, and celebrated within the framework of an event. To increase solidarity among employees, the human resources performance management approach should be applied. This approach emphasizes that the success of the group is more important than the success of the individual.
- The HR department should test human resources both by observation and by rational methods at various times and determine their perceptions of WPO and PD. In this way, the HR department can develop a strategy to prevent negative workplace experiences such as turnover intention and CWB at an early stage.
- To foster information sharing and solidarity in the workplace, it's important to establish an environment that supports these values. This can be achieved by creating a common area, such as a canteen or rest room.
- Effective diversity management can promote group acceptance and solidarity by adopting diversity in human resources and increasing awareness of differences.
- By developing and continuously expressing a norm that embraces differences within the scope of organizational culture, it is possible to normalize the experience of ostracism for both newcomers and existing employees.
- To ensure the continuity of group solidarity, it is important to inform middle and lower-level managers, and if possible, all employees about effective conflict management tactics.
- Experience of WPO and PD at the employee level can be prevented through individual training. This training can include topics such as respect in the workplace, anger management, and effective communication techniques.

As seen, the workplace experience of WPO and PD has negative impacts on CWB and turnover intention. Therefore, managers should consider the measures mentioned above to demonstrate effective management practices.

Although the study has been carried out with great care, it has some limitations due to time and resource constraints. First of all, the study has a sample that is oriented towards the tourism sector. In this sector, the effect between variables was found to be quite high due to the service sector's high need for social solidarity and the high task interdependence in business processes. Additionally, living conditions in Rize, the geography of the sample, make it necessary to establish social ties as a social practice. Therefore, future studies may examine the research model in other sectors and cultures. The second limitation is that the study was conducted as a cross-sectional study. In this method, the perceptions of the employees during the research period have a more dominant effect on the results. To obtain generalizable results, it would be appropriate to adopt longitudinal studies in future research.

The study is expected to make significant contributions to the literature and practice by empirically examining developing concepts such as WPO and PD in the field. It will also shed light on the negative effects of turnover intention and CWB in the organization and provide suggestions for their mitigation.

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# Workplace Ostracism: Impact on Psychological Distress, Counter-productive Work Behavior, and Turnover Intention

*İşyerinde Dışlanma: Psikolojik Sıkıntı, Üretim Karşıtı İş Davranışı ve İşten Ayrılma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisi*

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**Genişletilmiş Özet**

## Giriş

Belirsizlik yoğun endüstri ortamında işletmeler için kaynaklarının etkin ve verimli kullanılması, örgütsel etkinlik ve takım/grup dinamizmi gibi hususlar rekabet avantajını elinde bulundurarak hayatta kalması için önemli bir rol üstlenmektedir. Çeşitli sosyal ve hassas dinamiklerin inşa ve koordine edildiği örgüt ortamında kollektif çaba ve sinerji içeren çalışan ilişkileri örgütün hedeflerine ulaşmasında belirleyici rol üstlenir. Özellikle işyerinde dışlanma (workplace ostrasicm) son dönemde örgüt ortamındaki insan ilişkilerine zarar vererek örgütün etkinlik ve verimliliğini tehlikeye atan bir fenomen olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır (Wang, vd., 2022; Choi, 2019). Öyle ki ABD'de 262 ve Çin'de on bin çalışan üzerinde yapılan çalışmaların sonuçları, çalışanların oldukça yüksek oranda işyerinde dışlanma deneyimlediklerini tespit etmiştir (Fox & Stallworth, 2005; Wu, Liu & Hui, 2010). İşyerinde dışlanma çalışanın sosyal etkileşim içerisinde bulunduğu kesim tarafından göz ardı edilmesi, dışlanması ve reddedilmesidir (Ferris vd., 2008; Kwan vd., 2018). Bu durum çalışanın düşünce veya önerisinin önemsenmemesi, belirli toplantı veya etkinlik içerisine dahil edilmemesi, selamının alınmamasından önemli konularda kendinin göz ardı edilmesine kadar varan bir takım olumsuz işyeri deneyimlerini ifade eder. Örgüt gibi sosyal ilişkiler ağı çerçevesinde bir zincir gibi örülmüş yapı içerisinde önemli zayıflıklara sebebiyet vermektedir. Çalışanın sosyal bağlar kurarak değer üretmesi gerektiği bir ortamda dışlanması, onun ait olma, anlam arayışı ve özgüven gibi pek çok konuda kaygı ve sorunların oluşmasına neden olacaktır (Williams, 2007). Bu çelişkili ve karmaşık durum çalışanın duygusal, düşünsel ve davranışsal sağlığını ve yaşam düzenini tehdit edecektir. Örgütün sosyal yapı taşı ve en stratejik kaynağı olan çalışanın deneyimlediği bu olumsuz durum hem birey hem de örgüt için pek çok olumsuz işyeri deneyimini tetiklemektedir. İşyerinde dışlanma örgüte ve bireye etkileri göz önüne alındığında çalışanın iyi oluş hali (Howard vd., 2020), psikolojik sıkıntı (Wu vd., 2012; Choi, 2019), iş-aile çatışması (Thompson vd., 2020), özgüven (Peng & Zeng, 2017), örgütsel aidiyet (Wu, Liu, Kwan & Lee, 2016), performans ve extra rol davranışı (Huertas-Valdivia, Braojos,& Lloréens-Montes, 2019; Ferris vd., 2015) gibi pek çok durumda düşüşe neden olduğu görülmektedir. Bu pek çok işyeri olumsuz sonucu örgütün etkinliğini ve sürdürülebilir yönetim sürecini tehlikeye sokmaktadır. İşyerinde dışlanmaya yönelik birikmiş literatürde çalışmaların sınırlı sayıda olduğu ve kavramın anlaşılması ve etkisinin ortaya koyulması adına spesifik değişkenler özelinde sonuçlarının çalışılması gerektiği

vurgulanmaktadır (Liu & Xia, 2016). Bu yönüyle işyerinde dışlanma durumu üzerinde önemle durulması gereken bir konudur.

İşyerinde dışlanma çalışanın bir takım psikolojik ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasını engellediği için çalışanların akıl sağlığını önemli ölçüde etkilemektedir (Heaphy & Dutton, 2008). Özellikle çalışanın psikolojik sıkıntı yaşamasına neden olmaktadır (Wu vd., 2012; Choi, 2019). Psikolojik sıkıntı çalışanın depresyon, duygusal tükenme ve iş baskısı gibi iç ve dış dünya ile kuruduğu her türlü etkileşimde onu olumsuz bir deneyime iten, akıl sağlığını ve iyi oluş halini kötüleştiren bir durumdur (Wu vd., 2012; Anasori vd., 2020). Ayrıca işyerinden ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışları gibi örgütün verimlilik ve sürdürülebilirliğini tehdit eden pek çok olumsuz sonuca sebebiyet vermektedir (Tsuno vd.,2018; Mackey, Perrewé, & McAllister, 2017; Hameed Khan, Chudhery & Ding, 2017). Bu yönleriyle işyeri ortamında başta psikolojik sıkıntının önemli bir öncülü olarak işyerinde dışlanma, psikolojik sıkıntının örgütsel etkinliğe tehdit oluşturan işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışları gibi çıktıları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi önem arz eden bir konudur. Bu kapsamda çalışmada işyerinde dışlanma, psikolojik sıkıntı, işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaca uygun olarak 329 çalışan üzerinde çalışma yürütülmüş ve önemli sonuçlar elde edilmiştir. Çalışma 3 hususta önemli katkılar sunmaktadır. İlk olarak çalışma işyerinde dışlanma ve psikolojik sıkıntı arasındaki ilişkiyi sahada ampirik olarak incelemesi yönüyle gelişmekte olan literatüre katkıda bulunmaktadır. İkinci olarak çalışanın deneyimlediği psikolojik sıkıntıdaki artışın, iki önemli işyeri olumsuz deneyimini arttırdığı yine ampirik olarak ortaya koyulmuştur. Son olarak oldukça geniş ölçekte deneyimlenen işyerinde dışlanma ve onun doğal sonucu olan psikolojik dışlanmaya yönelik karar vericilerin farkındalığın arttırılması ve çözüm önerileri sunulmuştur. Tüm bunlar toplu bir şekilde değerlendirildiğinde çalışmanın literatüre ve işyerinde etkin bir yönetim pratiği ortaya koymada yöneticilere önemli katkılarının olacağı değerlendirilmektedir.

**Yöntem:** Araştırmada işyerinde dışlanmanın çalışanlar üzerindeki etkisini tespit etmek için, işyerinde dışlanma, psikolojik sıkıntı, işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışını içeren kavramsal bir model önerilmiştir. Araştırma Rize'deki 3-5 yıldızlı otel çalışanları üzerinden yapılmıştır. Olumlu geri dönüş sağlayan otellerin ilgili birimlerine anketler elektronik ortamda gönderilmiştir. Anketlerin ilk sayfasında araştırmanın amacı ve anket doldurma talimatı yer alırken diğer sayfadan itibaren demografik sorular ve ölçeklere ait ifadelere yer verilmiştir. Araştırmada 329 geçerli anket elde edilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler üzerinde regresyon analizleri ve hipotez testleri yürütülmüştür.

**Sonuç ve Öneriler:**

Çalışmanın ana amacına uygun olarak yürütülen analiz sonuçlarına göre işyerinde dışlanmanın psikolojik sıkıntı üzerindeki etkisi pozitif yönlü ve anlamlıdır (ß=227, p<0,05). Ayrıca işyerinde dışlanmanın etkisi kontrol altına alınmışken yapılan analizler psikolojik sıkıntı, üretim karşıtı iş davranışları (ß=,695, p<0,05) ve işten ayrılma niyeti (ß=,562, p<0,05) üzerindeki etkisinin de anlamlı ve pozitif yönlü olduğunu göstermiştir. Çalışmada işyerinde dışlanmanın psikolojik sıkıntı üzerindeki etkisinin kontrol edilmesi, işyerinde dışlanmanın psikolojik sıkıntıyı tetiklemesi ile artan olumsuz ve stres yoğun örgüt ikliminin etkinlik ve verimliliği tehdit eden işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı işyeri davranışları gibi olumsuz iş davranışlarının sergilenmesini arttırmaktadır. İşyerinde dışlanmanın oldukça yüksek seviyelerde deneyimlendiği ve psikolojik sıkıntının bu durumdan etkilendiği kaçınılmaz durum göz önüne alınırsa, yönetimsel etkinlik açısından yöneticilerin birtakım önlemleri hızlıca alması yerinde olacaktır. Yöneticilerin şu hususları gözetmesi önemlidir:

- Özellikle sosyal bağ ve destek algısının gerekli olduğu görevler arası bağlılığın yüksek işlerde işyerinde dışlanmanın daha yüksek etkisi gözetilerek, sosyal bağların gelişmesi adına adımlar atılmalıdır. Çalışanların bağlılık ve grup aidiyetleri çeşitli insan kaynakları uygulamaları ile geliştirilmelidir. Örneğin bazı özel günler ve çalışanın özel hayatında deneyimlediği önemli olaylar grup ve örgüt üyeleri arasında paylaşılarak bir etkinlik çerçevesinde kutlanmalıdır. Çalışanlar arası dayanışmayı arttırmak adına grup başarısının birey başarısından daha önemli olduğuna vurgu yapan insan kaynakları performans yönetim anlayışı uygulanmalıdır.
- İK departmanı çeşitli zamanlarda çalışanları gerek gözleyerek gerek rasyonel yöntemlerle sınamalı ve işyerinde dışlanma ve psikolojik sıkıntı düzeylerine yönelik algılarını tespit

etmelidir. Bu şekilde işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışı gibi olumsuz işyeri deneyimini daha başlangıç aşamasında önlemek için bir strateji geliştirebilir.

- Ortak kullanım alanı yaratılarak (kantin, çay ocağı veya dinlenme odası gibi…) örgüt ortamında bilgi paylaşımı ve dayanışmayı destekleyen bir ortam kurulmalıdır.
- İnsan kaynağında çeşitlilik benimsenerek, etkin bir farklılıkların yönetimi çerçevesinde yükselen farklılık algısı ile beraber grup kabul ve dayanışmasının arttırılması sağlanabilir.
- Örgüt kültürü kapsamında farklılıkları kucaklayan bir normun geliştirilmesi ve sürekli dile getirilmesi ile beraber gerek yeni başlayan gerek işyerinde dışlanma deneyimleyen çalışanların normalleşmesi sağlanabilir.
- Orta ve alt düzey yöneticilere ve imkan dahilinde tüm çalışanlara etkin çatışma yönetimi taktikleri hakkında bilgi verilerek grup dayanışmasının devamlılığı sağlanabilir.
- İşyerinde saygı, öfke kontrol ve etkili iletişim teknikleri gibi bireysel ölçüde birtakım eğitimlerle çalışanlar düzeyinde işyerinde dışlanma ve psikolojik sıkıntı deneyimlenmesi engellenebilir.

Çalışma önemli ölçüde titizlik içerisinde yürütülse de zaman ve kaynak kıtlığı gözetilerek birtakım kısıtlara sahiptir. Öncelikle çalışma turizm sektörü odaklı bir örnekleme sahiptir. Bu sektörde sosyal dayanışma ihtiyacı yüksek hizmet sektörü olması ve iş süreçlerinde görevleri arası bağlılığın yüksek olması nedeniyle değişkenler arası etki oldukça yüksek çıkmıştır. Yine örneklemin ait olduğu coğrafya olan Rize'de yaşam koşulları toplumsal pratik olarak sosyal bağlar tesis etmeyi bir zorunluluk olarak görmektedir. Dolayısıyla gelecek çalışmalar diğer sektör ve kültürlerde araştırma modelini inceleyebilirler. İkinci bir kısıt ise; çalışma kesitsel bir çalışma olarak yürütülmüştür. Genellenebilir sonuçların elde edilmesi adına gelecek çalışmalarda boylamsal çalışmaların benimsenmesi yerinde olacaktır.

Çalışmanın özellikle gelişmekte olan işyerinde dışlanma ve psikolojik sıkıntı gibi kavramların ampirik düzeyde sahada incelenmesi ve örgütte işten ayrılma niyeti ve üretim karşıtı iş davranışları gibi nedenli olumsuz sonuçları tetiklediği ve çözümü yönünde öneriler sunması yönüyle literatüre ve uygulamaya önemli katkılar sunacağı değerlendirilmektedir.