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## **Unraveling Workplace Dynamics: An Investigation into the Relationship of Workplace Hazing, Mobile Cyber-loafing, and Workplace Ostracism Using Situational Strength Theory**

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**Abstract:** Cyber-loafing is increasing, and researchers are eager to uncover its antecedents and consequences. This research study aims to explore the antecedents of cyber-loafing and this research paper delves into a unique context, examining the relationships among workplace hazing, cyber-loafing activities, and workplace ostracism in the nursing profession. By synthesizing existing literature, conducting empirical analysis, and drawing insights from nursing practice, drawing upon situational strength theory, this paper contributes to the existing literature on organizational behavior by elucidating the nuanced connections between workplace hazing, cyber-loafing, and workplace ostracism which is holistically discussed in this paper. Data were gathered from 383

registered nurses employed across various Pakistan's public and private sector hospitals. The partial least squares process macro technique was employed to scrutinize and assess hypothesized relationships, with the analysis conducted using SmartPLS 4 software. This approach served as a robust method for evaluating and confirming the proposed relationships within the research framework. The findings show a significant positive relationship between workplace hazing and cyber-loafing, whereas, workplace ostracism has a mediating effect on the said relationship. This study underscores the significance of comprehending hazing and its implications for nurses. The research findings emphasize the necessity of cultivating a supportive work environment and implementing employee-centric organizational policies and practices. These measures signal the importance of addressing mobile cyber-loafing, which, when left unchecked, can lead to detrimental consequences. By prioritizing these aspects, organizations can enhance patient care quality and uphold the dignity of the nursing profession, recognizing its profound importance in healthcare. This research proffers a novel nexus among workplace hazing, cyber-loafing, and workplace ostracism. This study enhances the comprehensive theoretical framework surrounding workplace hazing and mobile cyber-loafing, adds noteworthy contributions to the literature in this domain, and provides theoretical and methodological validation.

**Keywords:** Workplace Hazing; Mobile Cyber-Loafing, Workplace Ostracism, Nursing Profession, Patient Care.

**Introduction:**

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Two years ago, the researcher of this study accompanied her mother to a public hospital where she underwent a cholecystectomy procedure due to significant health issues she was experiencing. Following the successful surgery, medical professionals relocated the patient to a designated room, where she was subsequently attended to by nursing staff. In the evening hours, my mother requested assistance, which prompted me to promptly proceed to the nurses' station and request their presence. Despite receiving multiple reminders, it took a significant amount of time for one individual to eventually address her. It was observed that the individuals in question displayed a preoccupation with their mobile devices, thereby exhibiting a lack of attentiveness towards the needs of the patient. This occurrence has prompted the researcher to engage in introspection regarding the motivations behind individuals in a profession of great significance and integrity resorting to the use of smartphones in such a manner. The occurrence in question catalyzed the inquisitiveness to delve into the fundamental elements that contribute to this particular conduct.

Upon conducting a comprehensive literature review, the researcher of this study fortuitously encountered the notion of cyber-loafing, thereby arousing my intellectual curiosity. In recent years, scholars have extensively explored various rationales behind the phenomenon of cyber-loafing. The scholarly pursuit in this area of study persists, as researchers endeavour to discover further precursors of cyber-loafing and identify the variables that contribute to this phenomenon (El Din & Baddar, 2019). The operating dynamics of businesses have been significantly transformed by the technological revolution in the past twenty years. The proliferation of

e-commerce and the emergence and progression of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, alongside web-based platforms such as Wikipedia and YouTube, have brought about transformative shifts. As a result, organisations have been compelled to adopt digitalization and prioritise internet accessibility within the workplace as an imperative measure to adjust to the dynamic external environment (Lim & Chen, 2012).

The implementation of this significant alteration has yielded several adverse outcomes within the workplace, manifesting as time mismanagement through the practise of cyber-loafing. This phenomenon has subsequently evolved into the contemporary manifestation of mobile cyber-loafing. Existing literature indicates an increased prevalence of cyber-loafing at the workplace as the predominant form of time mismanagement among employees (Martin et al., 2010; Mercado et al., 2017 and Batabyal & Bhal, 2020). The term "cyber-loafing" is commonly used to describe the situation in which employees make use of the resources provided by their organisation for personal purposes and involve in non-work related activities. These activities may include actively using social media platforms, shopping online, watching videos, searching for jobs, and participating in other activities unrelated to their work responsibilities. "Cyber-loafing," "Cyberslacking," and occasionally "goldbricking" are the additional terms used for cyber-loafing (Canaan Messarra et al., 2011; Lim, 2002; Lim & Chen, 2012; Sao et al., 2020).

The portent generally denoted as 'cyber-loafing' has transformed with the emergence of mobile cyber-loafing, wherein employees use their

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smartphones and the internet for activities unrelated to their work tasks. This trend raises significant concerns, particularly in terms of time theft and the potential for deviant work behaviors among employees (Batabyal & Bhal, 2020). However, existing literature predominantly centered on cyber-loafing, and rapid technological advancements led to a noteworthy surge in the use of personal smartphones with internet connectivity. The term "mobile cyber-loafing," or "M-Loafing," specifically denotes the act of using smartphones to partake in cyber-loafing behavior (Sheikh et al., 2015). This evolution in the landscape of workplace distractions underscores the imperative for an updated understanding of the challenges posed by modern technology in organizational settings. Additionally, Jamaluddin et al. (2015) have underlined that employees have become habitual in using personal data-enabled devices for non-work related activities during working hours at the workplace. In addition, the authors of the meta-analysis, Mercado et al. (2017), agreed with the occurrence of personal data-enabled devices in this context and thus referred it as "cyber-loafing" in a comprehensive label.

Interestingly, workplace hazing has also been observed as an antecedent in the investigation of the factors contributing to cyber-loafing. The phenomenon of workplace hazing is intricately linked to the process of socialisation experienced by newcomers upon their entry into an organisation. The treatment that these individuals receive during this period of integration has become a prominent topic of investigation among researchers. In their study, Thomas and Meglich (2019) emphasised the potential for future research to examine the responses to

hazing and subsequent behavioural patterns as consequential effects of hazing. The mistreatment experienced by individuals in the workplace can lead to retaliatory behaviors as a consequence of aggressive treatment (Ezeh et al., 2018; Rai & Agarwal, 2018; Raza et al., 2019).

In this research study, the phenomenon of workplace hazing is being investigated within the nursing profession. Moreover, various scholarly investigations also emphasized the role of workplace ostracism as a mediator (Williams, 2007). Ostracism has historical origins that can be traced back to ancient times. The practice of ostracism, known as 'ostrakismos,' emerged around 500 B.C. In the context of ancient tribal societies, it was customary to employ ostracism as a means of punishment, whereby individuals would be excluded or ignored for a prolonged duration (Gruter & Masters, 1986; Sommer et al., 2001; Williams, 2007). Workplace ostracism is a form of passive workplace violence where an individual perceives being disregarded or excluded by others (Ferris et al., 2008).

The occurrence of workplace hazing has been found to result in counterproductive behaviour among employees. Mischel's (1973, 1977) Situational Strength Theory posits that individuals' behaviour is influenced by the specific circumstances they encounter. In the present context, it is advocated that individuals who experience grander preliminary harm are more likely to involve in ostracism, which subsequently leads to the manifestation of cyber-loafing behaviour. The nursing profession holds significant importance within the healthcare sector, thus necessitating an examination of factors that influence the

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provision of patient care. Engaging in cyber-loafing behaviour, specifically the use of organizational or personal data-enabled communication devices such as smartphones and tablets, while providing nursing care to patients is a notable concern within the healthcare sector. There have been numerous reports highlighting the disadvantages linked with the utilisation of the Internet for personal use, specifically to time inefficiency and decreased productivity. In the contemporary digital age, a plethora of applications has been devised to cater to diverse medical specialties. Additionally, the advent of personal communication devices has empowered nurses to access the internet. The advantages encompass the ability to obtain medical references and patient information, the possibility of documentation, patient education, and consultation. Regrettably, workplace hazing and cyber-loafing behaviors present potential challenges.

Existing literature confirms that workplace hazing embraces instigation rituals or abusive behaviors directed at newcomers, while as far as cyber-loafing is concerned it involves employees in online non-work-related activities. The main objective of this research study is to investigate the relationship between workplace hazing, cyber-loafing, and the mediating role of workplace ostracism in the nursing profession.

### **Literature Review and Hypotheses Development:**

#### **Workplace Hazing and Cyber-loafing**

The commencement stage of the newly recruited individuals is a pivotal period in an employee's life cycle when they join the organization. The

process of newcomer onboarding necessitates the accommodation of newly hired personnel into an organization, wherein they are introduced to the company's culture, policies, and their respective responsibilities (Albrecht et al., 2015). The concept comprises two fundamental components: the integration of new employees into the organisation and for existing employees it fosters a sense of belonging and unity (Mawritz et al., 2022). The commencement stage holds significant importance in molding an employee's encounter and plays a role in fostering a favorable organisational culture (Allen & Shanock, 2013). The role of the organization's approach to the socialisation process is considered crucial in influencing employee retention, commitment, performance, and engagement (Albrecht et al., 2015; Allen & Shanock, 2013; Bauer et al., 2007). The phenomenon of workplace hazing is closely intertwined with the process of adapting new individuals to the professional environment. This phenomenon pertains to the adherence to derogatory requests that individuals who are new to an organisation may confront during their induction (Mawritz et al., 2022). The treatment that individuals undergo in such circumstances has also attracted significant attention and examination from scholars. According to Hazingprevention.org (2021), hazing can be broadly characterised as engaging in activities that intentionally lead to harassment, embarrassment, and ridicule, thereby posing emotional and sometimes physical harm to individuals within a particular group or team.

Based on the Situational Strength Theory proposed by Mischel (1973, 1977), it can be argued that individuals who encounter interpersonal



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mistreatment within the workplace are more likely to engage in cyber-loafing. Moreover, this observation implies that individuals modify their conduct in response to the circumstances they confront. Within this particular framework, it can be observed that individuals who encounter higher levels of harm during the initial stages of their tenure are more prone to encountering ostracism, which subsequently leads to their engagement in cyber-loafing. Existing literature indicates that hazing mostly occurs in deeply embedded hierarchical culture and organisational structure, such as sports (Johnson & Chin, 2016; Waldron, 2015), the military (Kim et al., 2019), educational institutions, particularly colleges and schools (Allan et al., 2019; McCreary & Schutts, 2019), and. It is imperious to conduct a comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon across multiple industries, encompassing healthcare, hospitality, banking, engineering occupations, retail enterprises, and related domains.

Hazing victims frequently experience a wide range of demands, which can involve enduring challenges or humiliation, as well as encountering social exclusion from their peers within the group. According to Thomas and Meglich (2019), individuals who experience hazing often participate in activities as a member or constituent of a particular group that exceed their regular responsibilities. The topic of hazing in the hospitality industry was examined by Zong and Tsaur (2023), who conducted a study to investigate the effects of hazing on affective commitment. Therefore, the development of a conceptual framework and a validated measurement tool for workplace hazing enables scholars and professionals to assess the prevalence of hazing in different organisations, comprehend its effects on

new employees and their work environments, and investigate the factors that may influence its frequency (Mawritz et al., 2022). Workplace hazing, its conceptualization and measurement developed by Mawritz et al. (2022), has been the subject of limited research studies. Consequently, within the management literature, there is a scarcity of research on this particular relationship. Fortunately, the relationship in question can be effectively elucidated through situational strength theory. Thus, it is postulated that the following hypothesis can be formulated: H1: The occurrence of workplace hazing is positively associated with cyber-loafing.

### **The Mediating Role of Workplace Ostracism between Nurse Hazing and Cyber-loafing**

Existing literature indicates that individuals who face ostracism at the workplace are more disposed to exhibiting negative behaviors (Yang & Treadway, 2018). The aforementioned inclination stems from the employees' capacity to effectively handle hostile behaviors, which has an impact on their emotional welfare and could consequently lead to their engagement in harmful deviant behaviors within the organisation (Baumeister et al., 2005; Williams & Nida, 2011; Wu et al., 2012; Yang & Treadway, 2018). Within the realm of organisations, this phenomenon exhibits distinctions from harassment, yet can be considered more covert in nature (Waldeck et al., 2015). It involves the purposeful exclusion of a fellow member, marked by behaviors such as disregarding, impeding communication, and excluding them from involvement in any organisational endeavours, with the deliberate objective of isolating them.

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The consequences of workplace ostracism extend beyond mere discomfort and can pose a threat to a fundamental human requirement, often resulting in more significant effects than physical pain (Chung & Kim, 2017; Robinson et al., 2013; Waldeck et al., 2015; Williams & Nida, 2011). Various research studies have underlined the thoughtful psychological implications encountered by employees who undergo ostracism. The consequences encompass amplified levels of job-related stress, a predominant feeling of sadness, and emotional fatigue during working hours (Liu & Xia, 2016). It is crucial to acknowledge that the aforementioned negative consequences have the potential to result in retaliatory actions from the employees who are impacted (Ferris et al., 2019; Leung et al., 2011; Liu & Xia, 2016; Wu et al., 2012; Zhao et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2016). These findings highlight the importance of addressing workplace ostracism to promote the well-being of employees and maintain organizational harmony.

The phenomenon of workplace ostracism possesses the capacity to undermine individuals' fundamental requirement for peer support, potentially resulting in more significant harm than physical pain (Chung & Kim, 2017; Robinson et al., 2013; Waldeck et al., 2015; Williams & Nida, 2011). Several research studies have confirmed the substantial impact that ostracism has on employees. These studies have revealed that individuals experiencing ostracism at the workplace are more prone to suffering various psychological consequences (Zhao et al., 2016). These consequences include heightened levels of work-related stress, a depressed mood during working hours, and emotional exhaustion. The

aforementioned studies (Ferris et al., 2019; Leung et al., 2011; Liu & Xia, 2016; Wu et al., 2012; Zhao et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2016) have demonstrated that these adverse consequences have the potential to instigate retaliatory actions among employees.

**H2:** Workplace ostracism mediates the relationship between workplace hazing and cyber-loafing.

### **Situational Strength Theory**

The term 'Situational strength' in traditional literature denotes the overarching notion that specific situations possess the capacity to impact and guide human behaviour (Adler & Weiss, 1988; Mischel, 1977; Stagner, 1977; Weiss & Adler, 1984). According to Mischel (1977), the strength of a situation can be determined by its ability to elicit a unanimous interpretation of specific events, establish consistent expectations regarding the most suitable response pattern, offer sufficient motivation for the execution of that response pattern, and necessitate skills that are universally controlled. Hence, drawing from theoretical perspectives, it can be posited that a correlation exists between powerful situational factors and the propensity for engaging in negative behaviors. Specifically, nurses who encounter hazing practises are more prone to experiencing social exclusion, which subsequently leads to the manifestation of cyber-loafing tendencies.

### **Methodology:**

#### *Approach*

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Battaglia et al. (2008) elucidated in their research study that the research design functions as a strategic framework or systematic methodology employed by researchers to investigate their research inquiries. Hence, the selection of suitable methodologies is crucial for the execution of a research endeavor. The data collection from nurses was conducted using a cross-sectional research design by the researchers. In the cross-sectional research study, the collection of data from participants at a specific point in time to investigate hypothesized relationships. Cross-sectional designs are particularly valuable when hypotheses are derived from robust and well-established theories (Madrid & Patterson, 2020). Furthermore, it can be argued that they exhibit a considerable level of efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

To date, there has been a lack of research conducted on this particular relationship. Therefore, the deductive approach is employed to investigate the connection between these variables, wherein the theoretical foundation is derived from the situational strength theory. Thomas and Meglich (2019) provide ample evidence to support the notion that specific situations can influence and contribute to the development of certain behaviors. Therefore, the first and foremost objective was to accomplish relevant statistical data for analysis. To gather accurate and reliable data, the sample was drawn from the population of registered nurses working in public and private hospitals in Pakistan. Questionnaires were distributed among the participants. The participants were asked to provide suitable responses to workplace hazing and cyber-loafing

Furthermore, to build a connection among the study variables, the positivist approach has been selected within this particular context to effectively address and align the objectives of this research study. Moreover, it is worth noting that a considerable number of scholars in the respective discipline have utilized the positivist methodology to gain a deeper understanding of human behaviors, social phenomena, and the systematic gathering of quantitative data (Gilbert, 1992). Bougie and Sekaran (2019) delineated the fundamental elements of research design that hold significant significance. In this context, the utilization of probability-based random sampling techniques is employed for sample selection.

There is a dearth of existing models in the literature that have explored this particular association. Consequently, this study aims to elucidate the relationship using a positivist approach. The role of workplace ostracism as a mediator has received limited attention in previous research. In a recent study conducted by Koay (2018), the author explored the positive and significant influence of workplace ostracism on cyber-loafing. In a separate study conducted by Koay and Lai (2023), similar findings were obtained, further supporting the notion that there exists a significant and positive association between employee ostracism and engagement in cyber-loafing.

#### **Measurement and Scale:**

##### *Workplace Hazing:*

This multidimensional construct utilizes a 5-point Likert scale, which was

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developed by Mawritz et al. (2022). It comprises 15 items that span from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). Questions which were asked from respondents were like

### ***Cyber-loafing:***

Since the development of Cyber-loafing scale, it has undergone development and modifications by several researchers. The scale utilized in this research study was originally created by Lim (2002) , comprising 11 items. Subsequently, Lim and Teo (2005) made further adjustments. In Blanchard and Henle (2008), categorized cyber-loafing into major and minor activities. The scale employed in this research study was developed by Van Doorn (2011), who expanded upon Lim's 2002 scale by dividing it into two categories: cyber-loafing activities and behaviors. This multidimensional 5-point Likert Scale encompasses 24 items, with 12 items related to cyber-loafing activities and 12 related to behaviors, spanning from 'Almost never' (1) to 'Almost always' (5).

Van Doorn (2011) categorized the cyber-loafing activities in social, informational, virtual emotional and designed questions accordingly which are later being modified according to this research study. Questions which were asked from respondents were like, 'I use organizational internet to maintain social network', 'I engage myself in cyber-loafing to search for social support', 'I usually use my internet to extend social network'.

**Workplace Ostracism:**

Validated scale of workplace ostracism developed by Ferris et al. (2008) is used in this research study. A unidimensional 5-point Likert scale comprises 10 items, with response options ranging from 'Never' (1) to 'Always' (5).

**Participants and Sample:**

The sample for this research study consisted of 380 registered nurses who were selected from government and private hospitals throughout Pakistan. The analysis specifically concentrated on a subgroup of highly skilled and fully qualified nurses, as they represent a dependable resource for evaluating the "standard of care" and "patient satisfaction." The construction of this framework was based on the existing dataset that includes the precise count of nurses currently engaged in professional practice within Pakistan. For this research study, a simple random sampling methodology was employed. According to data from the Pakistan Nursing Council (2023), the number of registered nurses employed in various public and private hospitals in Pakistan is 103,777. The sample of 380 was selected using the methodology outlined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

**Analysis and Results**

To collect the data from the nurses, a well-structured questionnaire was distributed among 400 registered nurses employed in both public and private hospitals in Pakistan. The study sample was obtained from the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Fortuitously, the response rate



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was almost 95%, as evidenced by the return of 383 questionnaires. Subsequently, after the complete scrutiny, 383 valid responses were used for analysis. Interestingly, a distinct gender imbalance was observed, as almost 85% of responses were received from females belonging to an age group of 25-30 years. Furthermore, a significant proportion, 64% obtained a diploma in nursing, and a few obtained 4 years bachelor's degree. Concerning job tenure, most of the nurses possess on average 3.5 years of job experience specifically within the pertinent hospital environment.

In their research study, Hayes et al. (2017) conducted a comprehensive analysis comparing the utilisation of structural equation modelling (SEM) and PROCESS macro. The authors emphasised the potential issues arising from measurement errors, which may raise concerns regarding the validity of the findings generated by employing the PROCESS tool. Advocacy may be expressed for the adoption of a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) software that effectively incorporates both measurement and structural models. While this perspective can be justified, it is crucial to provide clarification regarding the underlying intent. The research study offered valuable insights for researchers interested in exploring the complexities of effect mechanisms and their variations. Its objective was to clarify the differences in functionality and outcomes between the PROCESS macro and SEM. Furthermore, comparable outcomes were observed for both of these methodologies. The PROCESS software effectively carries out these tasks in the background, generating outcomes that would typically require significant time and programming proficiency to achieve.

The present research study utilises the SmartPLS process macro technique for data analysis. Research studies are scarce on process macro in comparison to structural equation modeling (SEM) (Hayes et al., 2017). Hence, this research endeavor aims to contribute methodological validation to the existing literature. Table 1, shows the composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) of the constructs.

**Table 1**

**Convergent and Discriminant Validity**

Constructs	CA	CR	AVE			
WH	0.934	0.967	0.511	0.199		
CL	0.898	0.846	0.505	0.142	0.176	
WO	0.736	0.787	0.551	0.116	0.156	0.117

WH=workplace hazing, CB=cyber-loafing, WO=workplace ostracism, , CA= Cronbach's alpha, CR=Composite reliability, AVE= Average Variance Extracted

The main objective of this research study is to evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity of three fundamental constructs, namely Workplace Hazing (WH), Cyber-loafing (CL), and Workplace Ostracism (WO). The assessment of convergent validity, which examines the internal consistency of measurement within each construct, demonstrates encouraging findings. All three constructs demonstrate high Composite Reliability (CR) values, which surpass the accepted threshold of 0.70 (Wasko & Faraj, 2005), thereby indicating robust internal consistency.

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Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values of the observed variables, which indicate the extent to which the underlying constructs explain the variance, exceed the recommended threshold of 0.50. This finding indicates that the measured variables within the constructs of WH, CL, and WO exhibit a satisfactory level of association, thereby confirming their convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**Table 2**

<b>Direct/Indirect Effect</b>	
Constructs	Path coefficients
Workplace Hazing -> Cyber-loafing	0.111
Workplace Hazing -> Workplace Ostracism	0.390
The Workplace Ostracism -> Cyber-loafing	-0.014

findings of the study provide valuable insights into the interconnections between Workplace Hazing (WH), Cyber-loafing (CL), and Workplace Ostracism (WO). The observed path coefficient of 0.111 indicates a statistically significant positive association between Workplace Hazing and Cyber-loafing. Concerning the variable of Workplace Hazing, it can be observed that there exists a positive correlation with Cyber-loafing, whereby a one-unit increase in Workplace Hazing is associated with a corresponding increase of approximately 0.111 units in Cyber-loafing. The observed positive direct effect suggests a correlation between higher levels of Workplace Hazing and an increase in Cyber-loafing behaviour among employees. The findings of the research study provide support for hypothesis H1. The observed path coefficient of 0.390 suggests a

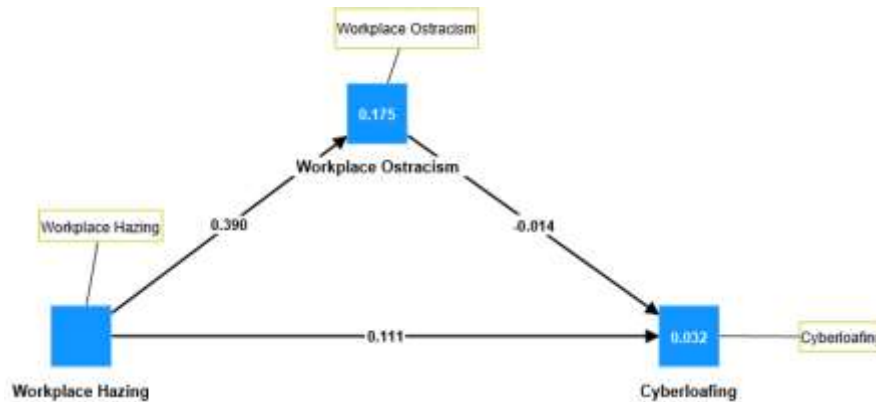
statistically significant positive association between Workplace Hazing and Workplace Ostracism. From a practical standpoint, it can be observed that there exists a positive relationship between Workplace Hazing and Workplace Ostracism, whereby a one-unit increase in Workplace Hazing corresponds to a 0.390-unit increase in Workplace Ostracism. This implies that an increase in Workplace Hazing is associated with a corresponding increase in Workplace Ostracism within the organisational context. The H2 hypothesis is further substantiated by the finding that ostracism serves as a mediator in the association between workplace hazing and cyber-loafing.

**Table 3**

Constructs	Beta	T statistics	P values
Workplace Hazing -> Cyber-loafing	0.111	3.265	0.001
Workplace Hazing -> Workplace Ostracism	0.390	8.831	0.000
Workplace Ostracism -> Cyber-loafing	-0.014	2.596	0.000

The observed path coefficient of -0.014 indicates a statistically significant negative association between Workplace Ostracism and Cyber-loafing. A positive correlation was observed between Workplace Ostracism and Cyber-loafing, indicating that an increase in Workplace Ostracism is associated with a slight decrease of -0.014 units in Cyber-loafing. The observed negative direct effect indicates that an increase in Workplace Ostracism is associated with a slight decrease in Cyber-loafing

behaviour.



The findings of this study emphasise the intricate relationship between workplace variables and employee conduct, underscoring the significance of addressing Workplace Hazing as a potential catalyst for adverse organisational behaviors. Additionally, interventions aimed at mitigating Cyber-loafing through the targeting of Workplace Ostracism have shown some effectiveness, albeit with certain limitations.

### Theoretical contributions

The current research study's findings make a valuable contribution to the existing knowledge regarding workplace hazing and mobile cyber-loafing in multiple aspects. This research study is an attempt to address the existing research gaps by examining the nuanced relationship between workplace hazing, mobile cyber-loafing, and workplace ostracism. By incorporating the situational strength theory proposed by Mischel (1973, 1977), a distinctive connection is established. Based on the available literature, there is a scarcity of scholarly work that examines the phenomenon of workplace hazing within the context of organisational

dynamics. This research is a contribution to the existing literature by addressing relatively unexplored areas. Furthermore, scholars are actively interested in identifying new and unique factors that contribute to the phenomenon of cyber-loafing. Numerous scholarly investigations have been conducted to explore the antecedents of cyber-loafing. However, there are still gaps in the existing research, particularly in the area of investigating cyber-loafing as a behavioural outcome stemming from mistreatment by supervisors (Raza et al., 2019). The findings of this study demonstrate a clear correspondence between individuals' attitudes and behaviors and how they are treated within their professional environment (Koay & Lai, 2023; Lim & Chen, 2012; Raza et al., 2023).

Prior research has yielded valuable insights regarding the correlation between aggressive workplace treatment and subsequent retaliatory behaviors exhibited by victims. The subsequent retaliatory measures have been observed to negatively affect the performance of employees, leading to occurrences of time banditry and reductions in both productivity and production. Based on the aforementioned discoveries, it is apparent that there exists a significant requirement for additional scholarly investigation focused on the exploration of employee deviant behaviors resulting from mistreatment within the professional environment. To provide a comprehensive analysis of this matter, it is recommended that future research endeavours adopt a more inclusive approach by examining a wider range of negative reactions. Additionally, it is advised that these endeavours prioritise the development of more rigorous research designs to enhance our understanding of workplace mistreatment and facilitate

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effective interventions (Agarwal & Avey, 2020; Kluemper et al., 2019; Naseer et al., 2018; Rahman & Muldoon, 2020). The research study makes a valuable contribution to the existing literature by addressing and strengthening areas that have previously been overlooked or underexplored. The results of this research study confirm that workplace mistreatment serves as a significant precursor to the occurrence of cyber-loafing.

This study highlights the importance of recognising the complex nature of cyber-loafing behavior to successfully address deviant behaviour within organisations. This accentuates the prominence of articulating inclusive policies regarding the use of the Internet on desktops and smartphones at the workplace. In addition, the prevalence of low-cost smartphones with data-enabled smartphones gave rise to the prevalence of cyber-loafing activities within the contemporary workplace environment. Moreover, it is crucial for organisations that aim to sustain a productive and concentrated workforce to acknowledge and tackle these intricacies.

### **Managerial implications**

This paper examines the managerial implications associated with workplace hazing and mobile cyber-loafing among nurses. The analysis highlights four key implications that managers should consider when addressing these issues. Initially, organizations must implement a zero-tolerance policy regarding workplace hazing that effectively communicates the complete unacceptability of such conduct within the healthcare institution. Furthermore, the promotion of an inclusive culture

serves to deter detrimental behaviors and cultivate a deep-seated feeling of belonging within the nursing profession. Furthermore, the implementation of anonymous reporting mechanisms serves to empower nurses by providing them with a means to report incidents without apprehension of potential reprisals. Additionally, the implementation of regular monitoring and evaluation practices in the workplace can effectively identify patterns and trends in workplace dynamics and behaviors, thus enabling timely intervention measures. Therefore, through the application of these managerial implications, healthcare organizations can endeavor to establish a work environment that is secure, respectful, and conducive to productivity for nurses, thereby augmenting the overall quality of patient care.

#### **Limitations and recommendations for future research**

Similar to a multitude of other research investigations, this particular study possesses inherent limitations that offer potential avenues for subsequent scholars to explore. One primary constraint of this research study pertains to the utilisation of the survey method. While the methodology section has already elucidated specific theoretical and empirical justifications for this approach, it is crucial to acknowledge the inherent possibility of error.

Moreover, it is pertinent to note that this method has the prospective to strengthen the relationships. Additionally, to mitigate this constraint, future scholars may consider employing alternative methodologies, such



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as conducting interviews or employing mixed methods, in their research endeavors.

This study emphasizes explicitly the healthcare sector in Pakistan and investigates the experiences of registered nurses employed in both public and private sector hospitals. It is imperative to note that the findings of this research study can be easily applicable to other sectors or cultural contexts for better generalizability. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct additional research that encompasses a wide array of industries and cultures to enhance the practical implications and validate the findings. This research study has the potential to be replicated by future researchers in diverse cultural contexts.

Furthermore, an additional constraint emerges from the utilisation of a cross-sectional research design in this study. The design of our research study is based on established theories and aligned with the confirmatory approach of our research (Iqbal et al., 2020; Madrid & Patterson, 2020). The examination of the relationships in question prompts inquiries regarding the establishment of causality. To overcome this constraint, it is recommended that future scholars gather data at various intervals, thus enabling a longitudinal investigation of the proposed theoretical framework. This methodology would not only elucidate the causal dynamics among the relationships but also serve to authenticate the findings of our research.

The present research study incorporates boundary conditions, which establish the validity of the hypothesis exclusively in cases where

workplace mistreatment of individuals' faces leads to specific outcomes. The present research study employs the Situational Strength Theory, which posits that specific situations possess the capacity to intensify or weaken the causal relationships between variables (Meyer et al., 2010). To examine the relationship further, future researchers may consider excluding boundary conditions. Additionally, it is recommended that new antecedents of cyber-loafing be explored. Moreover, the concept of fear of missing out (FoMo) has the potential to be investigated as either independent, mediating, or moderating variables in future research endeavours.

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