

Examining Knowledge Hiding and Abusive Supervision: Mediating Role of Job Strain and Moderating Effects of Prosocial Motivation

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Abstract

The major aim of this research is to examine how employees' action of knowledge hiding is impacted by abusive supervision. The current study also investigates the roles of job strain as a mediator between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. Prosocial motivation is taken as a moderator between job strain and knowledge hiding. Data were collected from the managers and middle-line employees of the banking industry in major cities of Pakistan. Data was collected with the help of an adopted questionnaire at three-time lags. Researchers collected 280 responses by employing purposive sampling. Multiple regression technique was used for the sake of data analysis. This study acclaimed that when employees work under high task pressure environment and observe their bosses as abusive; they got stressed and faced job strain, which positively affects their KH behavior. However, employees with high level of prosocial motivation are capable of managing such strain and are not likely to engage in knowledge hiding behavior because, being prosaically motivated, they want to assist others..The outcomes indicated that abusive supervision has significant positive relation with knowledge hiding, mediation of job strain between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding was also proved by results, and moderation of prosocial motivation was also significantly proved. The research model was supported by transactional theory of stress. Organizations should implement abusive behaviors control programs that prioritize ethically effective communication, and emotional intelligence to mitigate instance of abusive supervision. It is important for managers to makeup the workload in reducing stress which can in turn lead to knowledge hiding behaviors.

Keywords: Abusive supervision, Knowledge hiding, Job strain, Pro-social motivation, Transactional theory of stress

Introduction

The banking sector is most demanding and intense pressure environment, facing challenges of high competition and volatility (Jena & Meena, 2022). Unfortunately, these elements can foster abusive supervision, resulting in bad outcomes for both people and companies (Balducci et al., 2021). Businesses must enhance their information-making and information-holding structure in order to get achievable advantages. Knowledge sharing at work promotes creativity, innovation, and overall organizational success (Rubbab et al., 2022). According to Lu and Zhou (2025) People hold onto their knowledge for social and political advantages as well. However, despite the fact that companies and other organizations invest considerable efforts to build the processes of knowledge transfer into the work places, there are situations when knowledge is not transferred because workers are not willing to do so. Previous studies found that 76% Canadian and 60% US workers involved in knowledge hiding (Zhang & Min, 2022) However, Tierney and Tepper (2007) reported that "the mass of research on leadership has mostly focused more on its positive aspects and there is need to conduct research on destructive side," which means that, unethical leader behavior (negative leadership) can be damaging for the subordinates (Almeida et al., 2022). Therefore, this study focuses on abusive supervision (negative leadership) because the literature on abusive

supervision and KH behaviors requests more exploration. Abusive supervision is “employees’ perceptions of the extent to which their supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, excluding physical contact (Arshad et al., 2025). During the past 15 to 20 years, researchers have examined in great depth the detrimental sequel of administrators' arrogances and behaviours, such as bodily aggressiveness, mental abuse or malevolence, and bullying (Lyubkyh et al., 2022). Studies indicate that abusive supervision is more common in the banking industry than in other sectors. This tendency is influenced by elements such as heavy workloads, strict target dates, and workplace stress. According to (Khan et al., 2020) the most important factor predicting fatigue in banking workers was harsh monitoring.(Agarwal & Avey, 2020), found that staffs who fronted more offensive supervision from their supervisors were less gratified with their effort, felt not so much obligated to their association, and had advanced outlooks for their performance. The majority of research has examined the effects of abusive behaviour and hierarchical factors associated with abusive supervision; however, relatively few studies have examined the traits of abusive boss behaviour that may be the cause of their abusive behaviour. There is a clear correlation between abusive command and detrimental mental outcomes, such as decreased self-belief and ineffectiveness (Anand & Dalmasso, 2020; Estes, Awais, & Sher, 2017). In a similar vein, (Ashforth, 1997; Tipper, 2000) identified distinguishing characteristics such as shifting objectives, increased levels of enthusiastic fatigue, managerial commitment, and decreased degrees of job contentment. These relationships help workers develop the affectivity and mindfulness necessary to deal with unreasonable and unjustifiable situations, which might impact their abilities and confidence (Jha & Jha, 2015; Lyubkyh et al., 2022)

According to the traditional definition of stress provided by (Ganster & Rosen, 2013), stress arises when a person believes that they are unable to meet the ultimatum of an outside condition (Cohen et al., 2024; Ganster & Rosen, 2013). According to the World Health Organization, occupational pressure is a global issue that affects both companies and countries (Agarwal & Avey, 2020). Twenty percent of a company's payroll goes toward addressing issues related to stress (Naru & Rehman, 2020). It has been shown that employees who report high levels of strain incur nearly fifty percent more in fitness-care expenses than other employees (Goetzel et al., 2023). Prosocial inspiration is a crucial indicator of information concealment, as numerous research has recently demonstrated (Černe, 2014; Černe et al., 2015). However, little is known about the affiliation between helping inspiration and information concealment (Ganster & Rosen, 2013; Grant, 2007). Understanding the outcomes and yields of this interaction is crucial. Prosocial drive should have a major role in predicting knowledge concealing because it protects and promotes the prosperity of others (Batson, 1987). According to (Batson, 2010; Evans et al., 2015) it alludes to a desire to assist others. Researchers are discussing the concepts of prosocial motivation as put forth by (Grant, 2007) and going into detail on how crucial prosocial motivation is in helping employees with the stress of their jobs, which arises from abusive leadership. Workers with strong prosocial motivation are better able to manage stress and conceal less information.

Regardless of the emphasis placed on knowledge management systems within organizations, employees’ knowledge hiding behaviors obstruct organizational learning, collaboration, and innovation, especially in high-pressure environments such as banking. While abusive supervision has been recognized as a major psychological precursor to numerous adverse employee reactions, its particular contribution to knowledge hiding behavior, especially concerning the psychological factors that mediate and moderate this effect, remains unclear. Most of the work on abusive supervision has focused on its general effects, meaning that there is a gap in understanding the processes that link abusive supervision to knowledge hiding, including how individual differences like prosocial motivation may either dampen or amplify these effects. Due to its rigid hierarchical structures and its emphasis on internal knowledge sharing, the performance-driven culture of the banking industry serves as a primary example where these dynamics are particularly salient. Although knowledge hiding and abusive supervision have been individually studied in depth, the intersection of these two constructs remains underexplored. Further research is needed to bridge this gap and provide a more nuanced understanding of how these variables interact. In order to close this gap, the current study uses the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) to define abusive supervision as a stressor within the workplace. It looks at the impact of this stressor on employee behavior via job strain (mediator), and examines the role of prosocial motivation (moderator) in shaping the strength of this impact. The study seeks to strengthen the theoretical understanding of knowledge hiding as well as provide evidence-based insights for the organizational policies aimed at reducing the incidence of abusive supervision and knowledge hiding in the organization.

Literature Review

Underpinning Theory

The Transactional Theory of Stress, proposed by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984, suggests that stress is a result of an individual evaluating a given situation as surpassing their coping resources. This involves two pivotal stages: in primary appraisal, individuals decide whether the situation is harmful or poses a potential threat, and in secondary appraisal, they evaluate how effectively they can deal with the situation using existing resources. For the purposes of this research, abusive supervision is viewed as the stressor (IV). Employees perceive such supervisory behaviors as attacks on their psychological safety, which initiates the primary appraisal process. This emotional and cognitive strain results in the perception of threat, which prompts knowledge hiding as a means of self-defense (DV).

Job strain (mediator) describes the experience of this stressor's impact more psychologically. Abusive supervision increases strain by inducing feelings of powerlessness, reduced personal agency, and emotional burnout. These strain symptoms distract employees' effort from constructive organizational activities like knowledge sharing to knowledge hiding as a coping strategy or self-preservation. However, responses are not uniform across all individuals. The secondary appraisal process includes looking into coping resources like prosocial motivation (moderator) the intention to help and support others. Employees with high prosocial motivation are more likely to reframe the situation or invoke some altruistic internalized rationale to counterbalance the effects of abusive supervision, thereby increasing the likelihood of not engaging in knowledge hiding. Thus, prosocial motivation acts as a buffer permitting employees to maintain cooperative behaviors even when faced with supervisory stress. This model synthesizes the Transactional Theory of Stress by locating abusive supervision as the stressor, job strain as the behavioral outcome mechanism through which stress influences behavior, and prosocial motivation as a personal coping resource that moderates the relationship. This is especially applicable in the high-stakes banking industry where rigid hierarchies and relentless competitive pressure provide greater opportunities for abusive supervision, requiring a strong positive coping response and motivating tendencies to sustain knowledge sharing.

Abusive Supervision and Knowledge Hiding

According to Wang and Noe (2010), the term "knowledge" refers to a combination of experiencing framework, values, contextual information, and records. Essentially, this is characterized in this observational understanding as the data, ideas, and consequently the expertise applicable to the specified work finished by colleagues. In agreement with (Khoreva & Wechtler, 2020; Sabri, Saghir, & Awais, 2024), information concealing is the deliberate attempt to withhold information that someone has requested. It occurs once a worker gets an appeal for clarification but purposefully withholds or obscures the information (Černe, 2014). due to errors, mishaps, or ignorance, as well as situations in which they essentially did not request knowledge. Three dimensions of KH have been proposed by literature: playing dumb, evasive, and rationalized (Bari et al., 2020; Mahmud et al., 2021; Rubbab et al., 2022) playing dumb (where an individual pretends, they lack relevant information); evasive hiding (where staff members attempt to conceal data while simultaneously stating that records will be available); and rationalized concealment (where staff members offer an accurate clarification for why facts will not be available) (Wu et al., 2024)). However, because these actions impede organizational achievement, research has recently concentrated on figuring out what causes KH (Anand & Dalmasso, 2020; Rubbab et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021).

According to Xiao and Cooke (2019), there may be a connection between the motivations for maintaining information confidentiality and organizational policies, reward systems, leadership style, organizational structure, and cultural elements. A person's decision to reveal or withhold information is influenced by the interpersonal relationships they have built and the behaviours of people they encounter at work. According to (Anand & Dalmasso, 2020), there is a dearth of existing literature on the experience of employees engaging in information concealing behaviour that is affected by dysfunctional leadership. In light of this, we contend that one of the contextual elements influencing employees' tendency to conceal knowledge is offensive administration. (Khan et al., 2020) defined it as "the degree to which their boss involves in antagonistic vocal and non-vocal activities, except physical contact." This type of supervisory harassment may cause the victimized employee to become defensive, leading them to conceal. We use the transactional model of stress and coping (Hobfoll et al., 2018) as our conceptual framework to support the aforementioned premise. We want to know how employees' propensity to withhold important information from the company is influenced by the aggressive behaviour of their managers.

Increasing number of studies show the impact of abusive supervision at workplace; namely, costs to businesses and their employees (Khan et al., 2020). Jha and Jha (2015) indicated that organizations which practice and support submissive supervision level risk experiencing worsening of organizational performance, employees' turnover and the level of job satisfaction among workers. Until now, a lot of research has focused on the ways to mitigate the emotional effects of abusive supervision without striving to prevent them; or to put it another way, managing the situation in a reactive manner rather than proactive (Bari et al., 2020; Rubbab et al., 2024; Tepper et al., 2008). Duffy (2016) argues that abusive supervisors display unfavorable and aggressive behaviors, therefore, they are pessimistic. Anand and Dalmasso (2020); Lyubkyh et al. (2022); and Wu et al. (2024); also explain that such leaders reduce voice behavior, job happiness and number/quality of information sharing. Ahmad et al. (2021a) argue that leaders also hold the ability to change the attitudes and behaviors of those reporting to them for worse or better. Thus, in situations where personnel are unveil to abusive supervision at workplace, they do not typically resist; rather, they tend to engage in avoidance coping mechanisms (Khan et al., 2020) to self-protect with regards to resource loss (Whitman et al. , 2014). With regard to the impact of stressors at work, people try to prevent or minimize the loss or the risk of loss carrying out activities to protect the resources that are important for them (Islam et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2024). Those who suffer abusive supervision or any other poor supervisory conduct at the workplace experience stress that reduces their personal resources. In this respect, they strive to preserve their KH personal resources by performing KH behaviors as a way of coping. While supporting these claims and the literature mentioned above, this analysis proposes.

H1: Abusive Supervision has significant positively effect on knowledge hiding

Abusive Supervision and Job Strain

Job pressure is expected to be high at all times (McCarthy et al., 2019) and may have severe effects on employees and businesses, such as decreased job satisfaction , improved fatigue from excitement. Because of the demands of their procedures and prolonged periods of severe pressure, managers are especially vulnerable (Brett & Stroh, 2003). According to Naru and Rehman (2020), stress is experienced if a person feels that the demands of a given context are beyond his or her capacity in handling them (Harris & Kacmar, 2005; Naru & Rehman, 2020). Workplace stress has been recognized by the World Health Organization as a widespread epidemic that is affecting organizations and countries globally (Agarwal & Avey, 2020). About 20% of total income of the companies is spent in addressing the issues related to stress (Naru & Rehman, 2020). The wellness associated expenses of the workforces who reported higher strain level have been noted to be up to 50 percent higher than those of other employees (Goetzel et al., 2023). Indeed, it has been found that a huge percentage of the working population suffers from different types of job pressure (Agarwal & Avey, 2020). Chi and Liang (2013) has pointed out that employment-related aggression from managers has the potential of causing long-lasting stress, burnout, and declines in workplace satisfaction. Workers who experience abuse by their supervisors are likely to act uncooperative and secretive by withholding information and ideas, thereby limiting creativity (Khoreva & Wechtler, 2020). The aggressive form of supervision may reduce the employees' motivation, increase the rates of absenteeism and turnovers, affecting the organizational performance (Mahmud et al., 2021). Apart from depression, as was demonstrated by (Harris & Kacmar, 2005; Mackey et al., 2015) abusive supervision is also positively associated with various indicators of mental strain, such as burnout identified by (Lyubkyh et al., 2022), depression and somatic complaints. Hobfoll et al., (2018); Khan et al. (2020); and Zhu et al. (2017) affirm that abusive supervision is positively associated with work stress.

H2: Abusive Supervision has significant positive effect on Job Strain.

Job Strain and Knowledge Hiding

McCarthy et al. (2019) established that pressure from the work environment is expected by characters to learn fine points of how to self-apply stress abstractions, which in turn results in pressure responses. Based on the findings and the victorious hypotheses, it is feasible to use the value-based approach of pressure of (Obbarius et al., 2021), and turn pressure to the management focus pressure as an individual decision. Workplace anxiety is therefore defined by concerns voiced in circles by observers with a view of benchmarking the tangible and psychological responses of the workforce. Occupation stress enhances the degree of pressure, or pressure that hinders an individual from handling process concerns. According to Lazarus, such inclination arises when people realize that they are unable to manage the demands of the undertaking or with the threats to success. Several factors influence movement pressure such as courtesy at the place of business and unmannerly behavior of coworkers, and results into a higher level of man or lady depressive mood, turnover expectation, low morale phase, observed

embarrassment and negatively affects participative leadership. In a paper by (Klima, 2014) the authors noted that abuse at the place of work contributes to one's perceived weight. The growing body of literature has established that job strain results in knowledge hiding in organizations. As much as there are few studies done showing correlation between job strain and knowledge hiding, this study will seek to establish it. Past studies have provided rather conclusive evidence and have shown that job strain leads to decreased levels of work performance among employees. Intense amounts of social control are viewed as a protective mechanism against pressures and stresses, including situations when social abuse and the threatening environment influence fatigue (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002; Driscoll et al., 1994; Kickul & Posig, 2001). Stressed people have low levels of emotional coping capacity due to constant pressure and negative emotions. Concealing it might be done by those who are physically and emotionally worn out in order to protect what little knowledge they still have and reduce their workload.

H3: Job Strain has significant positive effect on knowledge hiding.

Mediation of Job Strain between Abusive Supervision and Knowledge Hiding

As previously mentioned, we acknowledge that workplace exclusion places more procedural pressure on those who have a stronger sense of commitment to their profession since these representatives feel a connection to their work or enjoy financial benefits and are obligated to maintain this procedure. However, those factors could be considered essential to improve alienation and information hiding affiliation. Taking everything into account, it is critical to identify the extensive effects of working environment pressure across all kinds of concealing information (sly, betting imbecilic, think). Finally, we argue that the effects of harsh administration on family member conflict are somewhat mitigated by fictitious feelings and tiredness constructions. Because we know that various approaches (outside the scope of this investigation) can be effective, researchers recommend halfway intercession rather than complete involvement. Our theory is based on the stress model proposed by (Obbarius et al., 2021). It explains how abusive supervisory behavior contributes to knowledge concealing and how job pressures act as a mediating factor in the connection between aggressive administration and knowledge concealment.

H4: Job Strain mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding.

Moderating Role of Prosocial Motivation

In professional environments where individual dependencies and commitments are apparent, prosocial inspiration is a particularly relevant topic. Workers with increasingly basic levels of prosocial inspiration will undoubtedly respond positively to requests for assistance and be able to sort through partners' needs (Grant & Sumanth, 2009). Prior research has found that prosocial motivation is linked to three types of consequences on any given occasion: proactive practices, other noteworthy outcomes of laborers (such as execution), and proper citizenship conducts and prosocial rehearsals. We develop our framework on the basis of stress model proposed by (McCarthy et al., 2019). We explain how knowledge concealment increases as a result of abusive supervision from supervisors, and how job strains and PM (prosocial motivation) play a mediating role in the context of abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. When prosocial motivation is high, the relationship between job strain and knowledge hiding weakens.

Additionally, we discover the motivating interactions between agent outcomes, namely turnover objectives, turnover, and task performance, and boss observed strain. These findings demonstrate work-basis functioning generally (Sen et al., 2024) and are crucial for individuals as well as organizations. Thirdly, we perform a similar process and consider the surrounding conditions where supervisors will definitely give clear weight to ace social behaviors around labor power. In particular, we recall the extent to which directors' apparent sentiments toward their audience referred to as understood supporter models affect the amount of information they convey during expert social adjustment rehearsals. Review therefore relaxes earlier work with the understanding that, in certain circumstances, primary impression of stress may also yield beneficial outcomes. Because of their professional requirements, administrators are particularly vulnerable and frequently labor under extreme pressure for extended periods of time (Brett & Stroh, 2003). Our framework builds upon (Obbarius et al., 2021) stress model, explaining how knowledge concealment escalates as a result of supervisor abuse and how job strains act as a moderating factor in the context of harsh leadership and information concealment. When prosocial motivation is high, the relationship between job strain and knowledge hiding becomes weaker.

H5: Prosocial Motivation moderates the relationship between Job Strain and Knowledge Hiding.

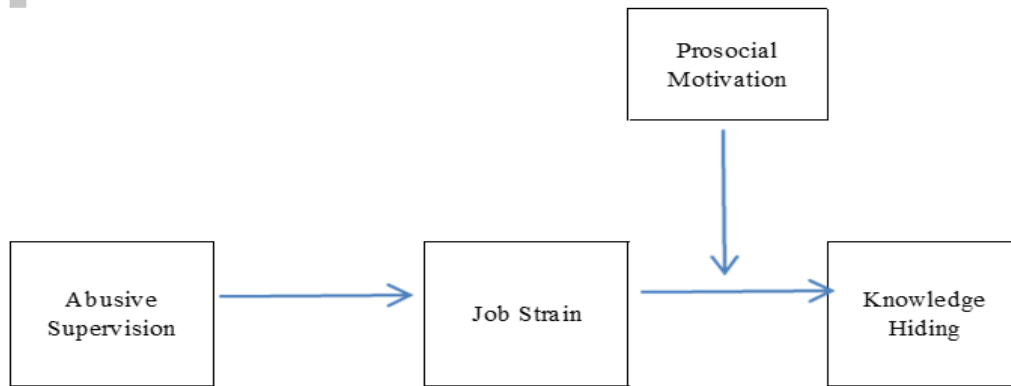


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Research Design

Population and Sampling Design

Middle-level employees from ABL, HBL, Faysal Bank, Askari Bank, Summit Bank, and JS Bank were surveyed through a structured, time-lagged survey to collect primary data for this study. The employees covered in this survey were located in twin cities of Pakistan, Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The study utilized purposive sampling, a subtype of non-probability sampling. This approach was used deliberately to ensure that respondents selected had sufficient knowledge and experience to provide insights into the dynamics of abusive supervision, job strain, prosocial motivation, and knowledge hiding. Purposive sampling is particularly useful in behavioral and organizational studies where the focus is on a specific population who are most likely to experience the phenomena being studied (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). In this research, middle-level employees were the focus because these individuals are often the most important intermediaries between top-level management and frontline employees, making them more vulnerable to supervisory behaviors and crucial to knowledge sharing (Palinkas et al., 2015). This position provides them with a blend of hierarchical and peer interaction pressures that are relevant to the study's variables.

Data gathering occurred in three phases to reduce common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). During the first phase, measurements for the independent variable, abusive supervision, and the mediator, job strain, were collected. In the second phase, data for the moderator, prosocial motivation, was collected. Finally, in the third phase, participants completed the questionnaire for the dependent variable, knowledge hiding. This time-lagged approach improves the internal validity of the study and enables capture of mediation and moderation effects with greater precision, enhancing the accuracy of temporal assessments (MacKinnon et al., 2007). Sample size in this study was finalized as per recommendations by Hair et al. (2019), who advised a minimum of 10 participants per estimated parameter in structural equation modeling (SEM), and other scholars (Kline, 2015) who provided a range of 200-300 as optimal for SEM studies. Accordingly, purposively sampled mid-level employees serve to ensure robust statistical power and generalizability within the scope of the study.

Measuring Instruments

The constructs were measured using standard scales for the survey (Appendix 1). The responses on all scales were assessed using five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Abusive supervision was measured using Tepper Bennet (2000). Knowledge hiding (KH) was assessed using scale proposed by Connelly et al. (2012). Grant's (2008) prosocial motivation scale was used to measure prosocial motivation. It included four items. job strain was measured by scale that was developed Fuller et al. (2003). It also included four items.

Results

Demographics Characteristics

This study included four different demographic groups. The table below provides an explanation of each

demographic variable's summary. They were also accounted for in the regression analysis.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of the participants

Characteristics	Frequency	(%)
Gender		
Male	173	61.8
Female	107	38.2
Age		
26 to 33 years	131	46.8
34 to 41 years	93	33.2
42 to 49 years	34	12.1
50 and above	22	7.9
Education		
Intermediate	121	43.2
Bachelors	91	32.5
Masters	51	18.2
MPhil/PhD and others	17	6.1
Experience		
1 to 5 years	119	42.5
6 to 10 years	78	27.9
11 to 15 years	38	13.6
15 and above	45	16.1

Scales Reliabilities and Correlation Analysis

Reliability analysis is conducted in order to determine internal consistency of the scale. The results are mentioned in following table.

Table 4.2: Reliabilities and Correlation

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1.AbusiveSupervision	.809	56.68	6.81	1			
2.Knowledge Hiding	.843	45.74	6.68	.509**	1		
3. Job Strain	.787	13.64	3.53	.391**	.125 *	1	
4.ProsocialMotivation	.844	14.08	2.75	.448**	.390**	.228**	1

N=280, **p<0.01.

All of the model's variable and instrument reliability were included in the reliability analysis result. The Cronbach alpha reliability of the abusive supervision scale was 0.809, that of knowledge concealment at 0.843, job strain at 0.787, and prosocial motivation at 0.844. The correlation results between the variables examined in the current research, including prosocial motivation (PM), job strain (JS), knowledge hiding (KH), and abusive supervision (AS), are displayed in the above table. Knowledge concealment and abusive supervision had a substantial positive correlation (.509**). Prosocial motivation was at.448** and job pressure was at.391**. There exists a positive correlation between job strain and both knowledge concealing (.125*) and prosocial motivation (.228**). Prosocial drive and knowledge concealing have a substantial positive correlation (.390**). According to the proposed model, all variables have positive correlations with one another at 0.01 levels.

Regression Analysis

Table 4.4: Regression table

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta Coefficient	R square	F	P-Value
H1	AS →KH	0.624	0.259	97.243	0.000

H2	AS \rightarrow JS	0.735	0.153	50.293	0.000
H3	JS \rightarrow KH	0.082	0.160	4.433	0.03

The regression analysis results show that abusive supervision carries significant impact on knowledge hiding. The dependent variable knowledge hiding was regressed on predictor variable abusive supervision to test the H1. Similarly, the impact of AS was verified on JS to test H2 As significantly predict JS with, F (50.293), p below 0.000 which shows that AS creates significant impact on JS with beta (0.735), R-square (0.153) which predicts 15.3% change in JS. The impact of JS on KH was also performed to test H3, JS significantly predict KH with, F (4.433), p below 0.03 which shows that JS creates significant impact on KH with beta (0.082). Moreover, R square (0.160) which predicts 16% change in KH.

Mediation Analysis

Table 4.4: Mediation Table

Hypotheses	Relationships	β	SE	T	P
H1	A S \rightarrow K H	0.624	0.048	7.07	0.000
H2	A S \rightarrow J S	0.531	0.039	5.587	0.000
H3	J S \rightarrow K H	0.457	0.076	3.868	0.019
H4	A S \rightarrow J S \rightarrow KH	0.381	0.049	5.548	0.000

The mediation analysis results applying the Baron and Kenny technique are displayed in the above table. First phase involves step-by-step mediation to assess the direct impact of abusive supervision (IV). The findings show a significant association where $p < .000$ at a beta value of .624. The influence of abusive supervision is examined in the second stage, where it is found to have a substantial link with the mediating variable job strain (beta value of .531 at $p < .000$). In the third phase, the impact of job strain (M) was examined on the dependent variable, knowledge concealment, and the results showed a non-significant beta value of .457 at $p < .019$. The final step's controlling mediator results demonstrate that, with a p value of .0000, the influence of abusive supervision is still considerable. This finding indicates that the association between abusive supervision and knowledge concealment is significantly mediated by job strain.

Moderation Analysis

The findings of the multiple moderation regression analysis are displayed in the above table. The impact of demographic factors was discussed in the first stage. The effects of harsh supervision, job strain, and prosocial motivation were regressed in the second step. The results of the regression analysis indicate a substantial relationship between knowledge concealing and prosocial motivation. The findings indicate that there is a considerable shift in R2 in the third stage following the integration of interaction terms such prosocial motivation and job strain*. Regression analysis results show that prosocial motivation significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge hiding and job strain. These findings support the hypothesis that prosocial motivation moderates the relationship between JS and KH in a way that makes the relationship between JS and KH weaker as prosocial motivation increases.

Table 4.5: Moderation Analysis

Predictors	Knowledge hiding		
	β	R ²	ΔR^2
Step 1			
Control Variables		.00	
Step 2			
AS	.66***		
JS	.30***		
PM	.30***	.15	.15**
Step 3			
JS*PM	.13***	.25	.09***s

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$,

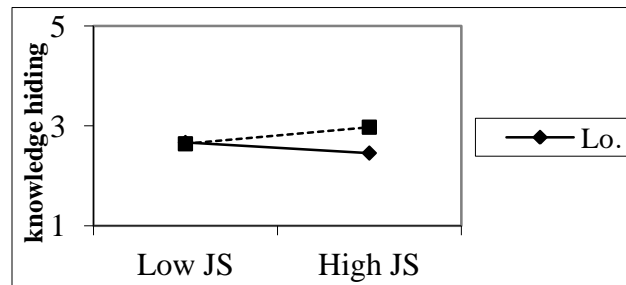


Figure: Moderation Graph

Discussion

Knowledge is a key component of organizational effectiveness and gaining a competitive edge in the competitive and dynamic corporate climate of today (Wang & Noe, 2010). This study examines how people's behaviours related to concealing knowledge are affected by abusive supervision, using the stress theory developed by (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This study also examined how prosocial motivation, acting as a moderator, bridges the gap between job strain and knowledge hiding.

The results of the regression analysis verify H1, that abusive supervision has a direct influence on knowledge concealment. The findings also show a favourable correlation between knowledge concealing and abusive supervision. The impact is supported by (Grant, 2007) theory of social learning. According to this theory, each person learns from their surroundings and experiences through behaviours, perceptions, and interactions with others. When individual segments are likely to hunt for authentic solutions and make genuine decisions at work, social collective learning replicates the authenticities from beginning to end. Although they are aware of how to manipulate situations and have demonstrated their dedication to the organization and hard work, their supervisors are primarily concerned with their authority and position, and they constantly strive to stand out. According to (Aryee et al., 2007), abusive behaviour is defined as behaviour that is detrimental to individuals and to the organization as a whole.

The regression result of H2 also clearly indicates the relationship between job strain and harsh supervision. Notably, the abusive monitoring raised stress for the worker and therefore is detrimental. Zimmerman and Darnold (2009) put forward an expectancy theory, which supports these domino effects. In accordance with this theory, performance is the product of several factors such as expectations towards the particular behaviour and the consequences that the performer is likely to endure because of the behaviour in question. Employees are stressed or depressed at work when there is abusive control for the following reasons: Kickul and Posig (2001) stated that abusive supervision is the ill-behaviours and negative treatment of superior toward the subordinate, and subordinate's negative attitude and immoral acts often result in anxiety, emotional stress, and depression for the subordinates. From the paper by Agarwal and Avey (2020), it is clear that abusive supervision equals job pressure; if a leader is abusive, employee gets ruined and stressed; if the employees do not find the working environment conducive, they will not perform the actions implication knowledge properly and; if the business environment is inadequate, this therefore implies that the level of job strain is high.

To considering the fact that manpower is the most important factor of competitive advantage, an improved working environment for employees ensures increased staff productivity. Another reason for granting good working conditions for employees is to equip them to deal with global challenges. As per the regression analysis results, job strain brings about effects with information hiding, which supports the hypothesis H3 that job strain has a positive connection with knowledge hiding. These findings are in support of Reactance theory that was developed by Jack Brehm in 1966. Other past studies have also revealed that when people working in organizational environment felt that their power is being undermined than they became annoyed (Bartunek et al., 2008; Xiao & Cooke, 2019). Culture is another factor that also contributes to the system of knowledge management where it has got an important role to play. Tight and loose cultures Gelfand et al (2012) was the first who try to classify cultures by the degree of adherence to the set standards. Whenever people are grouped together in form of teams, cultural norms, ethics and cultural differences impact organizational behaviour. As (Cox et al., 1991) said it. It established confidence in people for the purpose of coming up with prompt decisions (Afifi & Weiner, 2004). In order to improve the levels of trust, support and confidence in management employees try to control and actively spread knowledge. Another appreciated way of knowledge sharing is to bring more confidence, trust and the loyalty of the employee to the association (Ahmad et al., 2021; McCarthy et al., 2019;

McCrory et al., 2013)

In the present context the findings say that the employees are abused for their hostile conducts and the employees get tired and get bored and develop stress, this stress ultimately cause knowledge hiding; In the present organizational working conditions the banking sector employees are facing immense pressure to achieve the targets that are assigned to them, that is why the employees are accustomed to perform their official duties under pressure and this pressure or strain cause knowledge hiding (Pradhan & Jena, 2018). Furthermore, in the context of the organization's banking sector, making policies for the rights of employees somehow empowers the employees by providing them self-confidence about the organizations performance so that they try to avoid any misconduct and unethical ways. In connection to this, organizations should retain knowledge in the organization via knowledge system since it is a major weapon to counteract its rivals and gain sustainable competitive edge.

Based on regression breakdown results, abusive supervision has an impact on job strain and job strain has a positive impact on knowledge hiding where hypothesis proves that positive relationship among job strain and knowledge hiding (H4) therefore is accepted. Podsakoff et al. (2007), transactional theory of stress relates with the current findings by mentioning that coping actions are directly tied to the mental state of stress. Prior literature reveals that most who focus on work related stress in employees are primarily interested with how it impacts employees (Ganster & Rosen, 2013). The moderation of job strain between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding was test in regression analysis with Preacher and Hayes method. By analyzing the outcomes of regression evaluation, it is potential to conclude that job strain forms a connection between abusive supervision and information concealment in accordance with the findings, the abusing behavior of a supervisor generates stress among the employees and that stress leads the employees to information concealing. With such findings, we were consequently capable of inferring that job strain mediates between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. The exacting nature of leaders puts stress in the employee, stress reduces morale, interest and productivity and that stress makes the employees to conceal knowledge because the middle line employees of the banking sector organizations are already stressed due to targets pressure and that stress affect the performance but that strain results into Information secrecy because information is power in the existing trade world Organization should ensure and develop culture to acquire and maintain knowledge in order to address these issues and achieve the set organizational objectives.

The regression results suggest that prosocial motivation moderates the connection between job strain and information concealment (H5). The recent outcomes are supported by Hobfoll et al. (2018), Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which was introduced in 1989 to expand the prevailing anxiety research. COR theory, sometimes known as stress theory, elaborates on how people are constantly compelled to maintain current resources while also pursuing new means. According to this idea, people experience stress for a variety of reasons, including the fear of losing resources, actual loss, and failure to attain additional resources. People attempt to maintain these resources in order to obtain authority, and they engage in bad behaviours such as knowledge concealment. There are also more circumstances that lead people to conceal knowledge, such as harsh behaviour by their supervisor. Abusive supervision occurs when an individual believes that their supervisor is engaging in offensive and immoral behaviour. To address the issues that employees confront as a result of abusive employer behaviour and to minimize anxiety or tension, the COR theory stated that supportive network is a powerful instrument for combating tension and bringing individuals out of such tight environments. PM is the desire to benefit everybody else or drive an effort to fix other people's problems (Hall et al., 2007). Prosaically motivated personnel are constantly willing to help others (Grant, 2007). Employees with high prosocial drive are constantly willing to assist others and can deal under stressful conditions. Earlier studies have demonstrated that PM is strongly negatively linked with knowledge concealment (Wu et al., 2024).

The current investigation concentrates on the aspects why workforce of banking sector organisations violate knowledge at workplace, in what way the AS creates pressure and that pressure escort to knowledge hiding and also highlights the significance of "helping motivation", and similarly describes how "highly prosaically motivated people ready to help others and also have capabilities of competing pressure" reduces the effect of AS on KH. To improve worker competence and productivity while also creating a positive working environment, firms should develop a mechanism for reporting any misconduct or wrongdoings and giving security to their employees (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). To tackle global problems, firms should design their own methods for creating and maintaining knowledge, as knowledge is a key source of competitive advantage.

Implications

Practical Implication

This work adds significant value in the literature of KH. First, we add to the KH by analyzing the spectacles that underpin individuals' knowledge-hiding traits. According to Černe (2014), KH is an unproductive behavior that hinders creativity and creates a cycle of distrust among coworkers who refuse to share knowledge. On the basis of this conception, Previous literary text has investigated the backgrounds of information concealment as a retort to hostile behavior from their subordinate or the impression of information ownership (Bari et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2024). However, less research has looked into KH as a surviving behavior. To address the gap, we conceptualize KH as a preventive coping technique for subordinates facing a potential harm to themselves or their jobs. Firstly, Organizations should build a culture of psychological safety where employees feel comfortable sharing knowledge without fear of exploitation or negative consequences. Implement recognition and reward systems to encourage employees to share knowledge as a valuable resource for organizational growth. Secondly, Management should Implement monitoring mechanisms e.g., employee feedback systems to identify and address abusive supervisory practices early. In high-pressure environments like banking, where stress is prevalent, prosocial motivation can act as a protective factor. Banks should: Promote team-building activities to enhance interpersonal relationships. Encourage a shared sense of purpose to motivate employees to prioritize collective goals over individual stress responses. Encourage Open Communication: Establish trust-based communication channels to counteract knowledge hiding, which may arise from strained relationships caused by abusive supervision. Fostering Empathy and Collaboration: Conduct training that promotes prosocial behaviors, such as teamwork and mutual respect, which can mitigate the impact of job strain on knowledge hiding.

Theoretical Implications

First, the present work examines the moderating role of PM in the JS and the KH relationship. PM can be defined as an action whereby an individual attends to and seeks the welfare of the other members in the society rather than caring for him. Prosocial motivation ensures that the person is ever willing and ready to help the other and thus worker with high prosocial motivation is able to comprehend the feelings of the other workers in the organizations, and are also able to recognize factors such as stress and emotional strain that may hinder worker's performance. Employees' prosocial motivation helps them manage the factors that decrease creativity and any form of the organization as a whole.

In the current study, the private sector firms especially the banking firms have to establish efficient management systems where a code of ethics is properly formulated and implemented to deter any misdeed or unlawful actions within the firm. This is important for enhancing the performance of the employee in the banking industry because the banking sector has central role to the monetary progress of a country. Another emerging theme of this research study is passion toward commitment to abusive supervision that results in job pressure. Each of the abusive supervisory behaviours contribute to the nature of the workplace; thus, the employee undergoes mental stress and cannot perform the given responsibilities and complete the intended tasks.

Such behaviours promote negativity in organisation and reduce productivity, performance and employee self-efficacy while at work. In line with the principle of knowledge protection, this experiment shows that. In other words, how those abusive behaviours cause stress among the employees and finally, how they veil knowledge. This paper has implications to the theory of knowledge hiding by demonstrating that there are other reasons why employees hide information besides abuse; knowledge workers and spend much time with knowledge, and they say it is their own instrument of authority and therefore, they have the reasons to protect it. Last but not the least, this research links a function of job pressure with moderation of prosocial motivation in relation to abusive supervision and knowledge concealment. It is the duty of a Muslim which tell us that we should be just in everything we do and wherever we do it. Besides, it is our duty, as Muslims, to stop any hostile and illegal deals and behaviours to evade misbehaviour and provide healthy environment for everyone and without prejudice.

Limitations and Future Directions

In spite of its theoretical and practical significance, this work has certain restrictions. For starters, during data collecting, the researcher failed to include other relevant factors such as household troubles, economic issues, and fitness concerns. Researchers could investigate additional aspects in order to better widen the scope of the concept. Second, this study examined the theory for practical outcomes using restricted data and a specific sector. Additionally, researchers will primarily gather responses from other private sectors, such as the telecom sector,

for the reason that private sector organizations set high goalmouths for their workers, and staffs must work harder to meet these goals, that's why private organization workers are facing additional stress. Third, the current study more strengthens the generalization of findings from the particular geographic area such as Pakistani banking industry. Due to distinct cultural differences, data could be collected from questionnaire that was developed on western setting. Fourth, the current study research examines abusive supervision as a single antecedent of knowledge hiding.

In future research studies, there will be an investigation of other similarities between abusive supervision and knowledge concealment, and the interaction of abusive supervision with job demands and resources. Future studies will focus on other moderators in relation to job stress and knowledge concealing. Thus, despite the identified limitations, the present study has benefits for the development of the literature on knowledge concealment, its connection with abusive supervision, and for the utilization of the Lazarus and Folkman stress theories. Analysing the data, it is still possible to identify that even when setting procedures and making numerous efforts to regulate information flow between employees, administrative aggressive measures can actually let the workers down and increase pressure at the workplace. On the other hand, prosocial incentive as a moderator can be measure used to minimise the impacts of abusive supervision such as job strain. This paper also establishes that having prosocial motivation assists in managing stress and reduces knowledge concealing. Future research will involve exploring other moderators in relation to job stress and knowledge concealing.

Conclusion

This study created a mediating moderated model to investigate the motivations behind information concealment behaviour. Results demonstrate that one of the main sources of workplace stress that encourages this kind of behaviour is abusive supervision. Additionally, we looked at the border circumstances that make people more inclined to withhold information that is asked. As foreseen, the outcomes demonstrate that toxic leadership has a favourable influence on an individual's perception of job pressure, but this relationship declines for those with high prosocial drive. Additionally, because individuals experience a great deal of stress at work, companies may be more vulnerable to the detrimental impacts of hostile supervision. Additionally, this study offers a number of avenues for managers and researchers to focus more on knowledge hiding behaviour related with people attitudes regarding their organization.

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