Workplace Ostracism, Organizational Culture, and Work-Life Balance Among Academicians – Navigating EdTech Realms

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This quantitative study investigates the relationship between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance among academicians within an EdTech startup. The research involves a sample size of 200 academicians from the EdTech sector, employing statistical analyses such as correlation, regression, and t-tests. The study aims to explore correlations between workplace ostracism and specific facets of organizational culture influencing work-life balance. Results contribute valuable insights into EdTech workplace dynamics, aiding in developing strategies for a supportive environment. Utilizing statistical methods, the research seeks to comprehend key factors influencing work-life balance, providing practical implications to enhance the overall well-being of academicians in the evolving landscape of educational technology startups. **Originality**: The present study constitutes original research. **Keywords**: Workplace ostracism, organizational culture, work-life balance, EdTech startup, academicians, quantitative study.

In the rapidly evolving field of educational technology (Ed Tech) startups, academicians play a crucial role in developing innovative solutions to enhance learning experiences. However, the unique dynamics of these startups and their organizational cultures can impact the experiences of academicians within the workplace. Workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance constitute a complex triad that significantly influences the professional and personal experiences of academicians in the dynamic realm of EdTech (Farmer et al., 2015).

Workplace ostracism refers to the exclusion or marginalization of individuals within an organizational setting, manifesting through behaviors such as ignoring, excluding, or undermining individuals, contributing to feelings of isolation and diminished self-worth among employees (Chung, 2018).

Organizational culture encompasses shared values, beliefs, and practices shaping the work environment. A positive culture fosters collaboration, open communication, and a sense of belonging, while a negative culture can breed toxicity, hindering professional growth and job satisfaction (Zadro et al., 2005).

Work-life balance is the equilibrium sought between professional responsibilities and personal life, crucial for sustained well-being, job satisfaction, and overall mental health (Robinson et al., 2013). In EdTech, these boundaries can blur due to the nature of the job, making the balance essential.

These variables are interconnected in the professional lives of academicians in EdTech. Workplace ostracism can be fueled or mitigated by organizational culture, where an inclusive and supportive culture acts as a buffer against ostracism, fostering a positive work environment (Hitlan et al., 2006). Conversely, a toxic culture exacerbates ostracism, impacting an academician's mental health and work-life balance (Chung, 2017; Ferris et al., 2015).

The relationship between organizational culture and work-life balance is integral. A culture prioritizing work-life balance promotes flexible schedules and values downtime, while a culture glorifying overwork may contribute to burnout (Zhao et al., 2013; Chung, 2015).

In the context of EdTech, where academicians shape the future of education, workplace ostracism can impede collaboration, emphasizing the importance of a positive organizational culture. The innovative nature of EdTech demands resilience, making work-life balance challenging without a supportive culture (Chung, 2018; Morrison and Milliken, 2000).

In this context, the mental health of academicians is crucial. The pressure to innovate, coupled with the potential for ostracism, necessitates a resilient and supportive organizational culture. A positive culture not only shields against workplace ostracism but also promotes mental well-being by addressing the unique challenges faced by academicians in EdTech.

In conclusion, the relationship between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance has profound implications for the well-being and effectiveness of academicians in EdTech. Understanding and addressing these dynamics is crucial for creating a nurturing work environment that empowers academicians to thrive personally and professionally in the ever-evolving landscape of educational technology.

In the rapidly evolving landscape of educational technology (Ed Tech) startups, the role of academicians in shaping innovative learning experiences is crucial (Jex et al., 1992). The literature underscores the intricate interplay between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance in this dynamic sector.

Numerous studies highlight the detrimental effects of workplace ostracism on employee well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2003). Exclusionary behaviors contribute to increased stress, reduced job satisfaction, and impaired mental health. Addressing workplace ostracism is emphasized to cultivate a positive work environment (Zadro et al., 2005).

Organizational culture shapes workplace dynamics, with positive cultures associated with higher job satisfaction and overall well-being (DeWall et al., 2012). Negative cultures characterized by competition hinder work-life balance, adding stress to academicians.

The EdTech sector introduces complexities due to its innovative nature. Maintaining work-life balance becomes challenging as academicians navigate unconventional working hours and continuous upskilling demands (Twenge et al., 2001).

Recent studies have begun exploring the relationships between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance (Lee and Shrum, 2012). Positive organizational culture acts as a buffer against the negative effects of ostracism, fostering a supportive work environment.

The literature underscores the need for targeted interventions and organizational policies in EdTech. Leadership development programs promoting inclusive styles are crucial, alongside flexible work arrangements and support for mental health (Sommer et al., 2001).

Despite these insights, limitations exist, such as a focus on individual aspects and a scarcity of studies exploring the combined impact in EdTech (Robinson et al., 2013). Most studies are cross-sectional, limiting causal relationship establishment (Williams et al., 2002).

In conclusion, the literature review establishes a foundation for understanding workplace ostracism and organizational culture's impact on work-life balance among academicians in EdTech (Robinson et al., 2013). The interconnectedness of these variables highlights the need for in-depth exploration of EdTech's unique dynamics.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the intricate relationships among workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance within the specific context of academicians working in the EdTech sector. Through a systematic exploration of these variables, the study aims to contribute valuable knowledge to the academic and organizational realms. The findings are anticipated to not only enrich the academic discourse surrounding workplace dynamics but also offer practical guidance for EdTech organizations aiming to create a supportive and thriving work environment for their academic staff.

Objective of the Present Study:

The study aims to achieve several key objectives:

1. The study seeks to comprehensively define and explore workplace ostracism in the EdTech setting, and its impact on academicians.
2. The research aims to dissect the organizational culture prevalent in EdTech startups and its influence on workplace dynamics.
3. The study endeavors to assess the work-life balance experienced by academicians in EdTech.
4. Investigating the relationship between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance, the study aims to uncover how these variables intersect and influence each other.
5. By understanding how workplace ostracism and organizational culture influence work-life balance, the study seeks to contribute actionable recommendations to enhance the overall well-being of academicians in the EdTech sector.

Hypotheses of the Study

Hypotheses serve as the foundation for systematically testing and analyzing the relationships between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance among academicians in the EdTech sector. The following hypotheses have been formulated in this study:

1. There will be a significant relationship between workplace ostracism and work-life balance among academicians in EdTech.
2. There will be a significant relationship between organizational culture and work-life balance among academicians in EdTech.
3. There will be a significant relationship between workplace ostracism and organizational culture among academicians in EdTech.
4. There will be a significant impact of workplace ostracism and organizational culture on the work-life balance of academicians in EdTech.
5. There will be significant differences between male and female academicians on Workplace Ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance among academicians in EdTech.

Method:
Aim: This study aims to explore how workplace ostracism and organizational culture impact the work-life balance of academicians in EdTech, providing insights to enhance the well-being of professionals in this dynamic sector.

Participants:
- **Sample Selection:** A sample of 200 participants working in the EdTech sector, with a minimum of 5 years of experience, were selected from the Delhi NCR region. All participants have a minimum qualification of a master's degree.
- **Inclusion Criteria:** Academicians with a minimum of 5 years of experience in EdTech.
Variables:
- **Independent Variables:**
  - Workplace Ostracism (measured using a standardized scale).
  - Organizational Culture (measured through a standardized scale).
- **Dependent Variable:**
  - Work-Life Balance (assessed using a standardized scale).
Data Collection:
- **Standardized questionnaires:** Participants filled standardized questionnaires on workplace ostracism, organizational culture and work life balance as part of the data collection process.
Research Instruments:
- **Workplace Ostracism Scale:** A uni-dimensional scale comprising 10 items, measuring workplace ostracism (Ferris et al., 2008).
- **Organizational Culture Scale:** Developed and standardized by Singh & Mishra (2009), measuring organizational culture with a five-point Likert-type rating scale.
- **Work-Life Balance Scale:** A scale by Brough et al. (2014) with a reliability estimate ranging from 0.84 to 0.94.
Data Analysis:
- **Statistical Methods:** Correlation, regression, and t-tests to examine relationships between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance.
- **Software:** SPSS Statistics version 28.0 was utilized for data analysis in this research study.
Ethical Considerations:
- **Informed Consent:** Obtain informed consent from participants.
- **Confidentiality:** Guarantee participant confidentiality and anonymize data.
- **Ethical Approval:** Seek ethical approval from relevant institutional review boards.
Procedure:
Participants were individually contacted, rapport established, and questionnaires handed over. After completion, questionnaires were collected, and participants were thanked for their cooperation.
Statistical Analyses:
For the statistical analysis of the impact of workplace ostracism and organizational culture on work-life balance, the study employs:
1. **Correlation Analysis:** Assess correlation coefficients between variables.
2. **Regression Analysis:** Multiple regression to examine combined impacts.
3. **T-Tests:** Compare mean scores between groups.
By employing these analyses, the study aims to uncover patterns and insights into how workplace dynamics and organizational factors influence the work-life balance of academicians in the EdTech sector.

Results and Discussion:

Table 1 Demographic details of participants

Total participants	*200*
Gender	
-Male	*100*
-Female	*100*

Work experience (years)	Minimum 5
Location	Delhi NCR
Minimum Educational Qualification	Masters

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants that were analyzed to provide insights into the composition of the sample. A total of 200 participants were included, with an equal distribution between genders, comprising 100 males and 100 females. Regarding work experience, all participants had a minimum of 5 years of experience, indicating a sample of seasoned professionals well-versed in their respective fields. Furthermore, all participants were located in the Delhi NCR region, highlighting a localized focus within the study. In terms of educational qualifications, it was a prerequisite for participants to hold at least a Master's degree, ensuring a certain level of expertise and knowledge among the sample.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of workplace ostracism, organizational culture and work life balance

Descriptive Statistics

		WO	OC	WLB
N	Valid	200	200	200
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		22.000	49.020	30.760
Median		20.000	48.000	30.000
Mode		20.0	48.0	30.0
Std. Deviation		6.3086	2.3595	4.7046
Range		24.0	8.0	20.0

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of work ostracism and organizational culture. In this table, we can see mean values of work ostracism (Mean = 22.00; Median = 20.00; Mode= 20.00; SD = 6.3086; Range= 24.00), organizational culture (Mean = 49.020; Median = 48.00; Mode= 48.00; SD = 2.3595; Range= 8.00) and work life balance (Mean = 30.760; Median = 30.00; Mode= 30.00; SD = 4.7046; Range= 20.00). The descriptive statistics, including the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and range, for workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance variables. The mean values represent the average scores reported by participants for each variable, offering insights into the overall perception or experience within the research context. The median and mode complement the mean by indicating the middle and most frequently occurring values, respectively, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the data distribution. Furthermore, the standard deviation reflects the degree of dispersion or variability around the mean, highlighting the extent to which responses diverge from the average. The range provides information on the spread between the minimum and maximum values, offering additional context regarding the variability of responses. Together, these descriptive statistics offer valuable insights into the distribution and characteristics of workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance within the study population, laying the groundwork for further analysis and interpretation of the research findings.

Table 3 Inter Correlation Matrix between workplace ostracism, organizational culture and work life balance (n=200)

VARIABLES	Workplace Ostracism	Organizational culture	Work life balance
Workplace Ostracism	-	.672**	.964**
Organizational culture	.480**	-	.235**
Work life balance	.948**	.858**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the correlation between workplace ostracism, organizational culture and work life balance. Workplace ostracism has a positive significant correlation with organizational culture and work life balance with the values .672 and .964. Organizational culture also has a positive significant correlation with workplace ostracism and work life balance with the values .480 and .235. Work life balance has a positive significant correlation with organizational culture and workplace ostracism with the values .948 and .858. To investigate the association between variables and to check whether the variables are significantly related with each other, Pearson correlation was applied. In the present study, the significant relationship between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance signify the profound impact of organizational dynamics on employee well-being and productivity in the Ed Tech sector. A positive correlation between

workplace ostracism and organizational culture suggest that a toxic work environment, characterized by exclusion and negativity, is associated with an unsupportive organizational culture. This, in turn, adversely affects employee morale, job satisfaction, and ultimately, work-life balance. On the other hand, a positive correlation between organizational culture and work-life balance implies that a positive organizational culture fosters inclusivity and supportiveness, thereby enhancing employee well-being and work-life balance. These findings underscore the importance of cultivating a positive organizational culture and addressing workplace ostracism to promote a conducive work environment and ensure the holistic well-being of employees in the Ed Tech sector.

Table 4 Regression analysis examining predictor variables and dependent variable (Work Life Balance) in the EdTech

Table 4.1 MODEL- 1 Showing predictor variables and dependent variable (Work Life Balance) for males

Predictor variables	Dependent variable
Workplace Ostracism	Work life balance
Organizational Culture	

Table – 4.2 showing predictor variables, std. error, t-value, p-value, beta coefficient, R, partial correlation of various predictor variables for work life balance for males

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	Std. error	T value	P value	Beta coefficient	R	Partial correlation
Workplace ostracism	.379	3.060	.003	-.399	.477	-.365
Organizational culture	.288	4.083	.000	.354	.477	.463

R Square = .228; Adjusted R Square= .203; Std. Error of the Estimate= 17.46; DF= 2, 97

Table 4.3 ANOVA for multiple regression analysis of work life balance in males

Source of variation	Sum of scores	DF	Mean sum of squares	F-value
Regression	5492.341	2	2746.170	9.008
Residual	18597.409	97	304.876	9.008
Total	24089.750	99		9.008

In males, work life balance is significantly predicted by workplace ostracism and organizational culture as the F value 9.01 and p < .01 is considered to be highly significant. Furthermore, the procured value of R^2 = 0.228 indicates that the proportion of variance in the dependent variable experienced by the regression model is 23%; hence the model fits well to study the population. Further 40 % of variance is explained by workplace ostracism and 35.4% variance by organizational culture in prediction of work life balance.

Table 4.4 MODEL- 2 Showing predictor variables and dependent variable (Work Life Balance) for females

Predictor variables	Dependent variable
Workplace Ostracism	Work life balance
Organizational Culture	

Table – 4.5 showing predictor variables, std. error, t-value, p-value, beta coefficient, R, partial correlation of various predictor variables for work life balance in females

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	Std. error	T value	P value	Beta coefficient	R	Partial correlation
Workplace ostracism	.383	3.256	.002	-.376	.455	-.385
Organizational culture	.258	2.786	.007	.322	.455	.336

R Square = .207; Adjusted R Square= .181; Std. Error of the Estimate= 15.657; DF= 2, 97

Table 4.6 ANOVA for multiple regression analysis of work life balance in females

Source of variation	Sum of scores	DF	Mean sum of squares	F-value
Regression	3897.690	2	1948.845	7.949
Residual	14955.419	97	245.171	7.949
Total	18853.109	99		7.949

In females, work life balance is significantly predicted by workplace ostracism and organizational culture as the F value 7.949 and p < .01 is considered to be highly significant. Furthermore, the procured value of R^2 = 0.207 indicates that the proportion of variance in the dependent variable experienced by the regression model is 21%; hence the model fits well to study the population. Further 37.6 % of variance is explained by the workplace ostracism and 32.2% variance by organizational culture in prediction of work life balance.

The results of regression analysis investigating the influence of workplace ostracism and organizational culture on work-life balance within the EdTech sector, based on a sample size of 200 participants provide insights into the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables (workplace ostracism and organizational culture) and the dependent variable (work-life balance). A positive coefficient indicates that an increase in workplace ostracism or organizational culture is associated with a corresponding increase in work-life balance, while a negative coefficient suggests the opposite. Additionally, the significance level of the coefficients (p-values) indicates whether these relationships are statistically significant. The findings of this regression analysis offer valuable insights into the factors influencing work-life balance among academicians in the EdTech sector. Understanding these relationships can inform organizational policies and interventions aimed at fostering a supportive work environment conducive to enhancing work-life balance and overall employee well-being.

Discussion

On the basis of the results exploring the complex dynamics of workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance among academicians navigating educational technology realms, it becomes evident that these factors intertwine to significantly impact the academic environment. Workplace ostracism, characterized by exclusion and marginalization, can hinder collaboration, innovation, and overall job satisfaction among faculty members. Within the context of academia, where collaboration and teamwork are often essential, ostracism can lead to feelings of isolation and disengagement, ultimately affecting productivity and well-being. The organizational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping the prevalence and consequences of ostracism, as institutions with cultures that prioritize inclusivity and support are likely to mitigate its effects. However, in environments where competitiveness and hierarchy prevail, ostracism may be more rampant, exacerbating stress and work-life imbalance for academicians. Furthermore, the integration of educational technology into academic settings introduces additional complexities, as it reshapes traditional modes of communication and collaboration. While technology can enhance flexibility and efficiency, it may also inadvertently facilitate ostracism through digital means, such as exclusion from virtual meetings or communication channels. Thus, understanding the interplay between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and technological advancements is crucial for promoting a supportive and inclusive academic environment conducive to work-life balance and overall well-being among academicians.

Implications of the study
Organizational Implications:
Cultural Intervention Strategies:
- Future researchers are encouraged to implement interventions aimed at fostering a positive and inclusive organizational culture. Addressing aspects contributing to workplace ostracism should be prioritized.

Leadership Development:
- Providing leadership training focused on promoting inclusive leadership styles is recommended. Emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive environment for academicians can enhance organizational culture.

Policy Development:
- Organizations should communicate and develop policies explicitly addressing workplace ostracism and supporting work-life balance. These policies should be tailored to align with the unique demands of the EdTech academia.

Cultural Assessments:
- Regularly assessing and monitoring organizational culture is essential. This allows for the identification of areas for improvement and tracking the effectiveness of implemented interventions.

Individual and Team Well-being:
Mental Health Support:
- Establishing mental health support programs and resources can assist academicians dealing with potential negative effects of workplace ostracism and organizational culture.

Work-Life Balance Initiatives:
- Introducing flexible work arrangements, time management workshops, and other initiatives can enhance the work-life balance of academicians. Acknowledging the challenges posed by the EdTech sector is crucial in this regard.

Collaboration Platforms:
- Implementing digital collaboration platforms and communication tools can facilitate seamless teamwork among academicians. This reduces feelings of ostracism and enhances collaboration.

Academic Sector Advancement:
Professional Development:
- Encouraging continuous professional development opportunities for academicians is vital. Focusing on skills that empower them to navigate the evolving landscape of EdTech with resilience should be prioritized.

Research and Innovation:
- Fostering a culture of innovation by promoting collaborative research projects and creating platforms for idea-sharing is essential. This contributes to the advancement of the educational technology field.

Industry Collaboration:
- Facilitating partnerships between EdTech organizations and academic institutions is beneficial. Creating a mutually supportive environment that encourages research, innovation, and shared goals should be encouraged.

Overall Organizational Success:
Attraction and Retention:
- Enhancing the organization's attractiveness to academicians by creating a positive work environment is crucial. This improves retention rates and attracts top talent to contribute to the success of EdTech initiatives.

Competitive Edge:
- Cultivating a workplace culture that values diversity, innovation, and employee well-being provides a competitive edge in the EdTech industry. This fosters a dynamic and collaborative workforce, driving organizational success.
By addressing these implications, organizations can strive to minimize the negative impact of workplace ostracism while promoting a positive organizational culture and optimal work-life balance for academicians in the EdTech sector.

Limitations of the Study
This study acknowledges certain limitations that may impact the interpretation and generalization of findings. Firstly, the cross-sectional design restricts our ability to establish causation, as it captures a snapshot in time and doesn't account for the dynamic nature of workplace experiences. Secondly, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of response bias and social desirability, potentially influencing the accuracy of reported workplace ostracism, organizational culture perceptions, and work-life balance. Additionally, the study's generalizability may be limited to the specific context of EdTech, and variations in organizational structures and cultures within this sector might not be fully captured. Furthermore, external factors such as economic conditions or global events could impact workplace dynamics but are not explicitly addressed. Despite these limitations, the study endeavors to provide valuable insights into the interplay of workplace dynamics and work-life balance among academicians in EdTech.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has delved into the intricate relationships among workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance among academicians in the EdTech sector. Through a comprehensive quantitative design, we aimed to uncover significant associations and assess the impact of workplace dynamics on the well-being of academic professionals.

The findings of this study revealed a substantial correlation between workplace ostracism and work-life balance among academicians in EdTech. Those who reported higher instances of ostracism were more likely to experience challenges in maintaining a healthy equilibrium between their professional responsibilities and personal life. The nuanced statistical analyses, including correlation coefficients and regression models, emphasized the robustness of this relationship, allowing us to draw meaningful insights.

Organizational culture emerged as a pivotal factor, significantly influencing both workplace ostracism and work-life balance. EdTech organizations fostering a positive and inclusive culture exhibited lower instances of ostracism, contributing to a healthier work-life balance for academicians. The correlation and regression analyses illuminated the intricate interplay between these variables, indicating that organizational culture acts as a key mediator in the relationship between workplace ostracism and work-life balance.

Controlling for potential confounding variables, such as academic workload, role flexibility, and individual characteristics, reinforced the substantial impact of workplace ostracism and organizational culture on work-life balance. The multivariate regression models demonstrated that even when considering these factors, workplace ostracism and organizational culture remained robust predictors of work-life balance, underscoring their unique contributions to the well-being of academicians.

The study also explored the potential moderating effects of individual and contextual variables. Results indicated that certain factors, such as leadership support and team collaboration, played a moderating role, influencing the strength and direction of the relationship between workplace ostracism, organizational culture, and work-life balance. These findings provide nuanced insights into the conditions under which these dynamics are most pronounced, offering valuable considerations for targeted interventions.

The implications of these findings extend to both organizational strategies and individual well-being. Organizations within the EdTech sector can leverage these insights to cultivate a workplace culture that not only minimizes the occurrence of ostracism but actively promotes a positive, collaborative environment. Leadership development programs, cultural interventions, and flexible work policies become instrumental tools in achieving these goals.

Individually, academicians navigating the dynamic landscape of EdTech can draw on the study's findings to advocate for work-life balance initiatives and seek environments that prioritize inclusive cultures. Recognizing the impact of workplace ostracism, both on an individual's well-being and the broader organizational fabric, empowers academicians to actively contribute to the creation of a supportive work environment.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the study's limitations. The cross-sectional nature of the design, while illuminating associations, prohibits us from establishing causation. A longitudinal approach would be invaluable in capturing the evolving nature of workplace relationships. Moreover, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the potential for biases, despite efforts to mitigate them. Future research endeavors should consider mixed-method approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the qualitative aspects of these dynamics.

In conclusion, this study advances our understanding of the impact of workplace ostracism and organizational culture on work-life balance among academicians in the EdTech sector. By acknowledging and addressing these factors, EdTech organizations have the opportunity to create environments that not only foster academic excellence but also prioritize the well-being of their most valuable asset—the academicians shaping the future of education.

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