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Tracing the Effects of Mobbing in Losing the Performance of Sales Force: The Moderating Role of Social Integrity

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of mobbing in losing the performance of sales force along with moderating role of social integrity in the pharmaceutical industry at Pakistan. Precisely, it assesses the influence of mobbing on job involvement, creativity, and efficiency of sales force. This study utilizes quantitative approach to collect data through questionnaire based survey from the sales representatives and used partial least square structure equation modeling to analyze results. The results show that mobbing has negative but significant relationship with the performance, job involvement, creativity and efficiency of sales force. It has also noted that social integrity has moderating effects on the relationship between mobbing and performance. This paper addresses the need to examine the relationship of mobbing, social integrity and the performance of sales force in the eastern culture of Pakistan, which can help in understanding the nature of these variables and the environment where competition among companies and unemployment rate is high.

Keywords: Mobbing, Social Integrity, Performance, Sales Force

Introduction

Mobbing is an activity where a group of employees is collectively exercise negative behavior against a person to pressurize and enforce in an unsecure spot that can cause to heave out of the

organization. It may be a biased character and difficult to understand. Such as, Yildirim and Yildirim (2007) have defined it as unseen and complicated notion that can influence employees' performance. According to Zapf (1999) "mobbing is a severe form of social stressors at work or as psychological aggression that often involves a group of "mobbers" rather than a single person". While, social

integrity is “a process toward reaching higher levels of emulated excellence of character” (Choudhury, 2015), and is the quality of having high-level moral principles, trustable and socially acceptable behavior in an organization. Likewise, employee performance is the set of actions to fulfill the requirements of a job description (Biswas and Varma, 2012). Precisely, it is a function to handle a specific task and comprises standard job description, absenteeism, maintenance of interpersonal relations, withdrawal behavior, substance abuse and other behaviors that maximize hazards in working environment (Murphy, 1989). Therefore, this study is examining whether mobbing has any relationship with the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry (Private Sector) of Pakistan or not? Is social integrity moderating the relationship? Therefore, to achieve these objectives, a need of study conduction was observed to assess the relationship between mobbing and the performance of sales force along with the moderating role of social integrity in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan due to its unstable operations in less developed and war affected areas (eastern culture) to highlight some new dimensions.

Literature Review

Mobbing

Mobbing has been extensively investigating in different countries of the world in various cultural contexts. Such as, Leymanm (1992) has examined mobbing in educational sector through interview based data collection technique and noted that 3.5 percent participants have faced the issues of mobbing, 40 percent have clarified mobbing in the form of group (2-4 members) to hit other, and 1/3 percent were hit by one person. It was concluded that 6.5 percent participant have passed through mobbing in educational institutions. Later on, Celep and Eminoglu (2012) have assessed mobbing among administration and teaching staff, and noted a negative impact on teacher’s efficiency. Similarly, Quine (1999) has conducted a study in the health sectors of England and noted the effects of mobbing on employee’s performance. Demirag and Ciftci (2017) have observed mobbing as a cause of conflicts and disagreements between workers. However, this study has interest to assess the mobbing effects on the performance of sales force.

Social Integrity

The term integrity has originated from Latin word (integritas) that means a state of completeness and can be creating through a series of actions (Banks, 2010). While “the social concept of integrity can be measured as value affecting the social entirety within the meaning attached to goodness as an epistemic precept” (Choudhury, 2015). Social integrity is the persistence of goodness and moral excellence of individuals that is reliable, trustworthy and socially acceptable to other (Choudhury, 2015). Social integrity refers to “adherence to generally accepted principles or standards of goodness or rightness in human conduct” (Barth, 2016). It is the notion of continuity and consistency of actions, values, methods, principles to do right thing for right reason, to develop trust-building and socially acceptable behavior (Grimshaw, McGowan, and McNichol, 2016; Sani,

2016), and includes “family, culture, respect for lived life and knowledge of social life in and out of the institution, be alone and have others around”, and possess the abilities to manage the social flows.

Employees Performance

Employee performance is a key and widely used concept around the world, and researchers have shown progress in clarifying this concept (Campbell, 1993). "The term employee performance signifies individual's work achievement after exerting required effort on the job which is associated through getting a meaningful work, engaged profile, and compassionate colleagues/employers around" (Pradhan and Jena, 2017). However, due to ongoing changes and advancement in the working environment, the concept of performance and its requirement are getting change (Ilgen and Pulakos, 2013). Carmeli (2003) has emphasized that intellectual employees are able to manage their emotions in term of retaining positive mental state that could leads to get improvement in performance. However, here are some relevant dimensions of employees' performance that need to be examining in this study.

Job Involvement

Job involvement and job commitment are the two important factors that have been a part of previous literature (Kanungo, 1982), which possess cognitive and psychological engagement in job (Paullay, 1994). However, the psychological engagement and inner values are the motives of job involvement (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965), and "job involvement is seen as means of aiding productivity and creating work situations in which individual and organizational goals are integrated" (Abdallah, Obeidat, Aqqad, Al Janini, Dahiyat, 2017). Job involvement, self-esteem and attitude in the context of women as managers were assessed and noted that male employees have more involvement in job as compared to female (Cortis and Cassar, 2004), and is considered as a key output factor (Lawler, 1986). Job involvement put greater efforts in work and results in performance that has significant effects on the accomplishment of organizational goals (Brown, 1996; Diefendorff et al., 2002; Brown and Leigh, 1996).

Creativity

The creativity of employees has a value and importance for the achievement and development of an organization, its innovation and market growth (Amabile, 1996). It is the fundamental motive towards achievement in work environment (Amabile, 1996). It is the "creation of valuable and useful new products, services, ideas, procedures or processes by individuals working together in a complex social system" (Jain and Jain, (2017), have competitive skills and rich body of knowledge, greater risk takers, greater interest towards new experiences etc. creativity is the judgement of innovation, worth of something, and the ability to determine new relationship, new ideas and utilizing the effectiveness of existing sources, is the production of novelty and useful solutions for organizational problems (Beheshtifar and Zare, 2013).

Efficiency

Efficiency is the ability of employees to achieve organizational objectives with minimum resources (Stoner, 1996), is a desirable objective of each organization and its lake may create problems for management (Chang, 2013). The lake of efficiency in performance can increase the labor cost and affect the profit margin. Therefore, to create efficiency in performance, organizations may often-using reward system to get inspired towards job. Likewise, investing in the wellbeing's of employees and corporate training may be cause of efficiency in performance. Some time, optimists behavior and

appreciation words may put a good impression and get increase the moral level of employees. Ariza-Montes et al. (2014) have observed that mobbing at workplace can reduce the efficiency of employees.

Relationship between Mobbing, Social Integrity and Performance

A negative linkage has observed between mobbing and performance of employees (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014). Like, Bilgel et al. (2006) have concluded that mobbing has negative influence on the employee's performance as well as their physical health. Another British study has observed 80 percent diminution in performance at the work place (Rayner et al., 2002). Vveinhardt (2010) has assumed that mobbing is the cause of reduction in the productivity of workers and their temper. Due to the reason, companies are trying to handle this problem to avoid reduction in employee's productivity (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014). Rehman et al. (2015) have clarified that mobbing has negative effects on the organizational commitment. Likewise, Sani (2016) has explored the effects of integrity on job performance in Malaysian context. Awaludin, Adam and Mahrani (2016) have examined the effects of integrity on health workers performance in Indonesia. Therefore, several studies have conducted in different context but this study has observed a gap of literature to examine the association between mobbing and the performance (job involvement, creativity and efficiency) of sales force along with the moderating role of social integrity in the pharmaceutical industry (Private Sector) of Pakistan. Therefore, this study has formulated the following framework (Figure.1), where mobbing is independent variable, social integrity is moderating, and performance is dependent variable of the study.

Hypothesis of the Study

- H1. Mobbing has negative effects on the performance of sales force.
- H2. Mobbing has negative effects on the job involvement of sales force.
- H3. Mobbing has negative effects on the job creativity of sales force.
- H4. Mobbing has negative effects on the efficiency of sales force.
- H5. Social integrity has moderating effects on the relationship between mobbing and the performance of sales force.

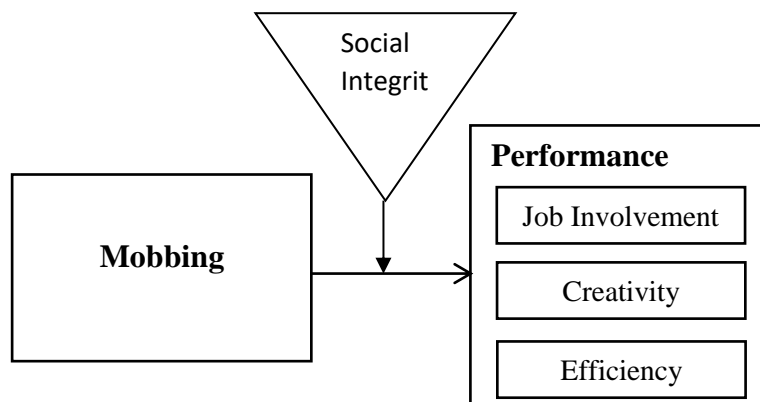


Fig.1: Research Framework

Methodology

This study has distributed 357 questionnaires (based on Krejcie and Morgan table) among the sales representative of pharmaceutical companies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, but only 192 participants provided data. Most of the respondents were under the age of 35 years, where 73.7 percent includes male and 26.3 percent female. In term of age, 32.2 percent belonged to 21-28 years of age group, 28.1 percent to 29-36, 19.7 percent to 37-44, 10.4 percent to 45-52 and 9.3 percent belonged to 53-60 years of age group. In term of education, 38.5 percent possessed bachelor degrees, 44.2 percent master degrees, while 17.1 percent have other levels of education. It was assured to the respondents that the information collected from them will be only for research publication. The study instrument was adopted and adapted from (Vveinhardt and Andriukaitiene, 2015; Yun et al., 2007; McCook, 1999; Rehman et al., 2015; Schlenker, 2008). A pilot study was conducted along with CFA to achieve the objectives of reliability and validity in the study. After data collection, a partial least square structure equation modeling was used to analyze results.

Results

The results of PLS-SEM have ensured the achievement of convergent validity in this study. The results have shown that all the values of factors loading, composite reliability, and AVEs are greater than recommended values. In addition, the values of cross loading and diagonal values in correlation were greater in the concerned rows and columns that verified the achievement of discriminant validity. While in the HTMT approach, all the values were lower than 0.85 ($r < \text{HTMT}0.85$) which further verified the validation of discriminant validity. The satisfactory results of composite reliability, factor loading, AVEs, discriminant validity and HTMT have verified the validation of measurement model and fulfilled the recommended PLS-SEM model evaluation criteria (Ramayah et al., 2017). While in the structural model assessment, a bootstrapping procedure was applied to assess the developed hypotheses. The result of bootstrapping has indicated that mobbing has negative but significant effects on the performance of sales force while social

integrity has moderating effects on the described relationship. Mobbing has also negative but significant relationship with job involvement, creativity and efficiency.

Table 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Composite Reliability and AVEs Values

Construct	Items	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability	AVE
Mobbing	Some time, I am openly threatened verbally	0.901	0.837	0.782
	People constantly bully me	0.920		
	Most often, I am given tasks that undermine my self-respect	0.821		
	My job requires lot of physical efforts	0.915		
	Most often, my work is evaluated incorrectly	0.836		
Social Integrity	My organization standing up for what is socially right	0.761		

	I have no compromise on the social principles	0.792		
	I am conscious to display socially acceptable behavior	0.823	0.856	0.706
	Social integrity is more important in my organization	0.864		
	It is important to tell the truth in my organization	0.836		
	Supervisor motivates me to do well in my work	0.873		
Performance	My job brings positive changes to my performance	0.908	0.891	0.827
	I am able to solve problems immediately	0.914		
	I am happy with in my current job	0.942		
	I feel encouraged to come up with new ways of doing things	0.908		
Job Involvement	I am very much involved personally in my job	0.849		
	Most of my interests are centered on my job	0.813	0.874	0.763
	I have very strong ties with my present job that would be very difficult to break	0.895		
	I engage myself in activities that will directly affect my job	0.872		
	I like to be absorbed in my job most of the time.	0.816		
	I suggest new ways to increase quality	0.804		
	I suggest new ways to achieve goals or objectives	0.916		
Creativity	I come up with practical ideas to improve performance	0.927	0.901	0.724
	I spend considerable time shifting through information that helps to generate new ideas	0.933		
	I often have innovative ideas	0.915		
	I strive for higher quality work than required	0.898		
Efficiency	My quality of work is much higher than average	0.866		
	I provide high-quality service to my organization	0.834	0.862	0.796
	I accurately anticipate organizational needs	0.912		
	My attendance at work is above the norm	0.926		

The results of VIF have ensured the non-existence of multicollinearity among the constructs. The values of R-square show the magnitude of variance in the performance, job involvement, creativity and efficiency of sales force due to mobbing and social integrity while F-square shows effect size. The values of Q-Square have confirmed the existence of path model's predictive relevance and verified the existence of R-square. The satisfactory results of bootstrapping procedure have verified the validation of structural model and fulfilled the recommended PLS-SEM model evaluation criteria (Ramayah et al., 2017).

Construct	Mobbing	Social Integrity	Performance	Job Involvement	Creativity	Efficiency
Mobbing	0.806					
Social Integrity	0.462	0.839				
Performance	0.542	0.463	0.811			
Job Involvement	0.521	0.671	0.441	0.817		
Creativity	0.369	0.346	0.432	0.543	0.907	
Efficiency	0.371	0.425	0.394	0.504	0.464	0.893

Table: 2 Discriminant Validity

Table 3: Results of the Structural Model Analysis (Hypothesis Testing)

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Beta	S.M	Std Dev	T- Value	Decision	VIF	R ²	F ²	Q ²
H1	MB → PR	-0.408	0.687	0.081	5.149	Supported	1.926	0.436	0.370	0.254
H2	MB → JI	-0.181	0.142	0.093	2.362	Supported	1.762	0.304	0.017	0.155
H3	MB → CR	-0.084	0.480	0.096	4.241	Supported	1.501	0.422	0.254	0.357
H4	MB → EF	-0.018	0.079	0.072	2.234	Supported	1.633	0.432	0.258	0.313
H5	MB*SI → EP	0.063	0.269	0.083	3.152	Supported	1.322	0.318	0.234	0.190

Discussion

The results of this study have important marketing implications and contributed to the body of knowledge that mobbing can be minimizing to improve the performance of sales force with the application of social integrity. From the results, it has assumed that mobbing can decrease the level of performance, job involvement, efficiency and creativity of sales force. Because of results, it can be infer that mobbing may be a cause of stress and mental war, which influence the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. It can be said that mobbing at workplace may cause of inflexible environment that can affects the job involvement of sales force. It can be contingent from results that mobbing may be the cause of stress that affects the job involvement of sales force. It can be infer from the results that mobbing at workplace may hurt badly and lack of fairness may cause of decrease in creativity of sales force. It can be said from the results that mobbing may create pressurized work environment that might cause of decline in efficiency. However, it can be conclude that social integrity is the best practice to create flexible working environment. The occurrence of mobbing may take place due to unstructured and non-flexible working environment, unequal distribution of task and assignment of responsibility, racism and language difference, violation of social integrity and job ethics. Therefore, this study appraises marketing professional to effectively monitor the mobbing behavior, providing flexible working environment, equal distribution of working task, defining code of job ethics, special training to avoid the criticism, and using the practices of social integrity to enhance the performance, job involvement, efficiency and creativity of sales force.

The study is parallel to (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014), which has assessed the impacts of mobbing on the employees performance in Slovak Companies. The study has used questionnaires based survey to collect data and noted that mobbing has significant relationship with the employees' performance. This study is same in the context of mobbing and its effects on employees' performance. This study is also in line to (Rehman et al., 2015), which has investigated the effects of mobbing on organizational commitment in educational sector of Pakistan and noted that mobbing has negative but significant effects on organizational commitment. However, the managerial prospective of the study was to assess whether mobbing can influence the performance of sales force and social integrity can moderating this relationship in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Therefore, the results have confirmed that mobbing can influence the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. It has also confirmed that social integrity has moderating role among the defined constructs. Therefore, managers can establish a mobbing free culture in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan to avoid losing performance, job involvement, creativity and efficiency of sales force and can apply the practices of social integrity to create flexible environment. The management and policy makers can introduce prior policies, workshops and training material to control the mobbing behavior at work place, and can provide the training of social integrity for creating flexible working environment. However, the findings of this study are contextually unique to collect data from the sales force of war-affected areas and applied PLS-SEM to analyze the collected data.

Conclusion

The major concern of this study was to assess the relationship of mobbing with the performance of sales force along with moderating role of social integrity in the pharmaceutical industry of the eastern areas of Pakistan which are less developed, where unemployment rate is high and strongly affected due to war. The study has applied positivist approach to collect data through self-administered questionnaires from the sale representatives and analyzed using PLS-SEM to find results. In the light of findings, mobbing has negative but statistically significant relationship with the performance of sales force as well as job involvement, creativity and efficiency while social integrity has moderating effects on the defined relationship. However, all the hypotheses have supported in this study. In addition, it is important for the readers and practitioners to get know that the data has collected from a single state of Pakistan, so they should be careful in generalizing results. To get further explore the relevant knowledge area, it is recommended to examine the mediating role of social integrity in the defined context and can be accomplished in production as well as other services sectors in Pakistan and in other parts of the world.

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