LASUJMS
JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1 - 2026

https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19056873

Effects of Workplace Ostracism on Employees' Engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This research examines the effect of workplace ostracism on employee engagement, with a focus on the manufacturing sector. The study aims to help organizations manage employee relationships effectively. Specifically, it investigates how purposeful and un-purposeful ostracism affect employee engagement. Anchored in Perceived Organizational Support Theory, the study uses Mouka Foam Manufacturing Company in Kaduna as the research site. The population consists of 489 employees, from which a sample size of 215 was determined using Cochran's formula. Of the 215 distributed questionnaires, 175 were completed and used for data analysis. Multiple regression analysis, conducted using SPSS version 21.0, tested two hypotheses. Results show that both purposeful and un-purposeful ostracism positively and significantly affect cognitive and physical engagement, respectively, at Mouka Foam. The study concludes that workplace ostracism has a significant positive relationship with employee engagement and recommends the implementation of policies and procedures to address unprofessional behavior, thereby enhancing employee engagement and performance.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Performance, Workplace Deviant Behaviour, Workplace Ostracism

Introduction

An organisation consists of people who work together and share social relationships among themselves, this is because employees in an organisation spend a substantial part of their personal life and maximum productive time in the workplace. Therefore, maintaining a healthy relationship among organisation members would boost energy and efficiency, while a toxic relationship could naturally breed inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the workplace, thereby affecting employee performance (Ikon, Nzewi & Dimgba, 2022). According to Pardo and Alfonso (2017), an organisation's success or failure is mostly determined by the people and the pattern of relationships that the people share among themselves. Some people stay in their jobs because they appreciate what they do and the way they relate among themselves (Chanana, 2020). However, when the relationship among organisation members is not healthy, the organisation is considered to be at a loss of ground towards meeting its set objectives.

This unhealthy relationship was considered a factor that could lead to the exclusion of certain individuals from the organisational process. This exclusion is the term referred to as ostracism in

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19056873

the workplace (Samo, Kahn, Ali, & Ali, 2019). Workplace ostracism is a type of interpersonal maltreatment that has been found to bring negative consequences on employees' attitudes toward work, such as lower job satisfaction, higher turnover intention, and reduced personal wellbeing, emotional exhaustion and psychological distress. According to Samo *et.al.* (2019), two types of ostracism happen at the workplace: one is purposeful ostracism and the second is unpurposeful ostracism. The former means that a person intentionally ignores someone, and the person is aware of the behaviour, that person is doing this to hurt or target someone and mostly purposeful ostracism at the workplace is a silent treatment (Youngkeun, 2020). The non-purposeful ostracism is when people are not ignoring others intentionally. They are unaware that their behaviour is hurting someone (Talha & Khan, 2020). Workplace ostracism is a malady affecting social integration and inter-relationship between colleagues, which affects employees' psychological and mental health, because when employees share their feelings and emotions, they feel mentally and psychologically relaxed (Paul, Emetomo, Chinwe & Mustapha, 2024).

Cigdem, Goksel, and Birsen, (2017) opined that ostracism has a detrimental effect on the social and mental function of the individual and threatens the sense of belonging that is a fundamental need. It is largely acknowledged that ostracism can harm physical and mental well-being, damage employees' job satisfaction and commitment to work, diminish performance and affect employee engagement (Cigdem, Goksel, & Birsen, 2017). Employees who are engage to their organisation are seen to be willing to form and maintain long-term relationships with their employers and the organisational philosophy and objectives. This point was what forms the concentration of this study. As a result, employee engagement, in line with Kahn (1990) foundational explanation, is the harnessing of organisation members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. (Anoop Ashook & Amish, 2021). Suffice it to say that employee engagement is a strategic approach for driving performance and encouraging organisational success, especially in this 21st century when captains of organisations regard the management of human resources as a powerful source of sustainable organisation success (Ibironke & Kolawole, 2020).

For clarification, this study applies the physical and cognitive engagement in the ongoing process. Employee engagement encompasses behavioural aspects, such as employees passionately investing their physical capabilities to excel in their job (referred to as physical engagement), and cognitive engagement involves comprehending the organisational strategy and enhancing skills to make optimal contributions at work. Upon this fact, it can be substantiated that the road to corporate success can no longer be traversed merely with good products and clever marketing. Now, more than ever, companies must look to their human resources, not just to their goods and services, as a primary means to ensure continued profitability, if not survival. The chauffeur along the road to orgnaisational success will be employees who are very much engage at their daily tasks and responsibilities (Eleonora, 2020).

Employees would then feel ostracized by their organisation when they are ignored during and in important conversations, meetings, social activities or any important decision; this therefor would make their level of engagement with the work plummet (Jahanzab & Fatima, 2017). Therefore,

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JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19056873

this study, in this given context, will endeavour to investigate the effect of workplace ostracism on employees' engagement in the manufacturing firm.

Statement of the Problem

Previous studies indicate that ostracism, either purposeful or non-purposeful, depletes commitment toward organisations (Mao et al., 2017; Newman et al., 2017; De Clercq et al., 2019). However, prior research has ignored the potential role of how workplace ostracism affects employees' behavioural outcomes, such as engagement. In other words, the underlying mechanisms (e.g. purposeful actions or un-purposeful actions) through which workplace ostracism affects work engagement remain largely unexplored. Furthermore, most of this scholarship on workplace ostracism calls for more research on the causal mechanisms from a victim's perspective (Howard et al., 2019; Sharma & Dhar, 2021). Specifically, there is a need to examine the underlying causal mechanisms ostracism to enhance an understanding of the processes through which ostracism affects employees' engagement, as it would help to address workplace ostracism.

Moreover, the majority of the prior studies have been conducted in the developed Western countries and some Eastern countries of the world (Lyu & Zhu, 2019). Therefore, more research is needed in the African work contexts, especially in Nigeria, for a better understanding of the cross-cultural perspectives on workplace ostracism. Though there are few studies in the Nigeria context, the study area and study context leave some gaps to be filled such as (Ikom et. al., 2022) workplace ostracism and employee performance in the south west on logistics firms and (Paul et. al., 2024) ostracism and employee commitment in the banking sector in Lagos State, these studies are all concentrated in the southwest of Nigeria and in the service industry. Consequently, this study attempts to address these gaps by investigating the effects of ostracism on employees' engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna. Moreover, the study draws upon the perceived organisational support (POS) theory. The POS theory posits that it is the degree to which an individual believes that the organisation cares about him/her, values his/her input and provides him/her with help and support.

Objective of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between workplace ostracism and employees' engagement. Consequently, the specific objectives include:

i. Examine the effect of purposeful ostracism on employees' cognitive engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna.
ii. Investigate the effect of un-purposeful ostracism on employees' physical engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna.

Research Hypotheses

The following statement shall be tested in this study

Ho1: There is no significant effect of purposeful ostracism on employees' cognitive engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna.

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H_o2: There is no significant effect of un-purposeful ostracism on employees' physical engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna.

Literature Review

Concept of Ostracism and Workplace Ostracism

Ostracism, as reported by Samo, Khan, Ali, and Ali (2019), is a word that is drawn from the ancient Greek word "ostrakimos", which simply means the practice of removing those with despotic aspirations from the democratic state. According to Bushra, Farhan, Shumaila, Nida and Mehwish (2023), Ostracism is a common experience that occurs among living thing most especially humans and animals. It can be observed in various contexts, such as children excluding certain individuals from their play groups, adults segregating certain persons from their social groups or even among animals like lions and chimpanzees. In the words of Ikom et. al. (2022), Ostracism is practically experienced in every organisation/business, such as university institutions, financial institutions, small-scale businesses and society at large, since it is a social phenomenon. In its original development, ostracize has its original meaning as to exile by the ancient method of ostracism, but in these days relationship it has to do with the general social exclusion of an individual from social and corporate groups when a feeling of non-conformity with the general group is perceived.

However, workplace ostracism, not so different from the societal experience, is a common form of mistreatment that refers to the intentional exclusion or disregard of individuals by their workplace colleagues in situations where inclusion is expected. This behaviour can be seen as a form of "cold violence" within the workplace, attracting significant attention from researchers (Bushra et. al., 2023). Workplace ostracism was also explained to be the 'feeling of being ignored and excluded by others in the workplace'. When an employee observes such behaviours in their surroundings, they search for the cause, and a subconscious self-analysis process starts. Consequently, personal resources, such as willpower, are the first to be depleted (Yang & Treadway, 2018).

Gkorezis and Bellou (2016) assert that workplace ostracism can lead to self-fulfilling prophecies in peer interactions. When employees believe their colleagues do not take them seriously and exclude them from important conversations, they might retaliate by not freely sharing their own knowledge bases. Workplace ostracism may also undermine employees' motivation to meet job requirements. Workplace ostracism reduces the social interaction between colleagues, which affects employees' psychological and mental health, because when employees share their feelings and emotions, they feel mentally and psychologically relaxed (Lane, 2017). Workplace ostracism is a kind of behaviour that can have a detrimental effect on organisations and their members, which has to be curbed in every organisation so as to achieve the set goals and objectives of the organisation.

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Types of Ostracism

Workplace ostracism usually takes place in two major perspectives, though there are diverse forms of ostracism; all these forms of ostracism are categorised under two classes according to Samo et. al. (2019). The classes of workplace ostracism are:

Purposeful Ostracism: This type of ostracism is when the actor is aware of his or her actions or inaction to socially exclude another and does so intentionally. Thus, purposeful ostracism is aimed at hurting the target or helping other actors at the expense of the target. Obviously, purposeful ostracism may create a negative reciprocity norm in workplace interaction. It is not surprising that the target makes "sinister attributions" to an actor's behaviour, especially when the target has never treated the actor in a friendly manner or provided help in the past. In this case, the target will be guided by negative reciprocity belief and tend to believe that it is acceptable to retaliate towards the actor, that is, tit for tat. This, in turn, might cause the target to engage in more interpersonal deviance, such as gossip, rumors and personal attacks on the actor.

Un-purposeful Ostracism: On the other hand, this type of ostracism may actually be more common in the workplace. *Non-purposeful ostracism* occurs "when actors are unaware that they are engaging in behaviours that serve to socially exclude another". Actions include ostracism due to actors being lost in thought or forgetful of others. Non-purposeful workplace ostracism can also cause the rise of "sinister attributions". Being ostracized by others threatens one's need for self-esteem, belongingness, control and meaningful existence. People are particularly sensitive to clues when they are excluded by others. Once feeling excluded by others, employees are more likely to be biased in making more personalized attribution to others' behaviour and believing that others are being malicious to them, even though there is obvious information to provide benign explanations.

Employee Engagement

The idea of employee engagement is becoming a prominent issue for attention, both in the business and academic environments. This is because the need to have engaged workforce or team members is widely realized and sought across these fields (Anoop Ashook & Amish, 2021). According to Anoop et. al. (2021), Kahn was the first to present an explanation of what employee engagement is and how it will positively impact organisational outcomes. In another submission by Ibironke and Kolawole (2020), employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement that an employee puts into seeing their organisation achieve its set goals and values. These positions, therefore, mean that an engaged employee will demonstrate an unexpected behaviour for the benefit of the organisation or their team's success. The basic aspects of employees' engagement are the employees and their own unique feelings of commitment and experience.

Employee engagement is a multifaceted construct that now explains why we have several human behaviours affecting organisational outcomes. An engaged employee extends themselves to meet the organisation's needs, takes initiative, reinforces and supports the organisation's culture and values, stays focused and vigilant, and believes he/she can make a difference (Daiheng & Mingyu, 2019). Thus, it can be said that engagement means the level at which an employee is psychologically as well as physically present when occupying and performing an organisational role. Engaged employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company.

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Thus, employee engagement is a barometer that determines the association of a person with the organisation.

Dimensions of Employees' Engagement

Cognitive Engagement: The cognitive aspect of employee engagement concerns employees' beliefs about the organisation, its leaders and working conditions. Cognitive engagement means that employees are aware of and engaged with the organisation's overall plans and know what they need to achieve the best possible return on their job efforts. Employees must understand their employer's vision and strategies to be fully engaged at this stage. They should also know what they must achieve to contribute as much as possible to the organisation. People who are passionate about their jobs and have more experience are more creative and make more confident decisions (Anoop Ashook & Amish, 2021).

Physical Engagement: The physical aspect of employee engagement concerns the physical energies exerted by individuals to accomplish their roles. Employees who are physically engaged devote their emotional and physical energy to their work. People with a lot of energy have better overall health, which allows them to contribute more to the business. To get the most out of its workforce, a business needs to ensure that its employees are physically and mentally healthy. This has become even more important with the ongoing public health crisis. Many companies don't just offer medical and dental coverage for their employees. Many also offer mental health services to those who need support. A healthy, active workforce is one that is also productive and creative. This does not just apply to industries that place heavy physical demands on their workers, such as construction and engineering; it also applies to other labour-intensive industries, such as education and retail (Anoop Ashook & Amish, 2021).

Ostracism and Employee Engagement

This study is targeted at investigating the relationship between workplace ostracism and employee engagement. Workplace ostracism directly and indirectly affects human behaviour at the workplace (Gaafar & Awad, 2016). Workplace ostracism increases the stress level of an individual and decreases the ability to perform the task related to the job. In a situation of stress, an individual loses the ability to maintain their performance, and also self-regulation is needed to perform his task which he loses because of the stress (Arwot, 2019). The workplace ostracism also enhances the negative emotion of an individual such as mental illness, depression, sadness, jealousy, shame, guilt, and embracement. These all emotions lead an individual towards stress; the stress situation minimizes the self-awareness of an individual a person doesn't know how to react in a present situation (Afsheen, 2015). The workplace ostracism also has a negative impact on employee engagement at the workplace because of ostracism; the communication gap will be increased between employees. Workplace ostracism is also the reason for workplace conflict, the aggressive behaviour of the employee, which makes employees` uncomfortable and they might decrease the interaction with other employees because of the negative environment at the workplace. The workplace ostracism also decreases the overall performance of the employees and organisation because an employee cannot give their best performance if he is part of workplace ostracism or negative workplace environment, which made because of the workplace ostracism (Cigdem, Goksel & Birsen, 2017).

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Workplace ostracism have impact on stress it means that ostracized employees are likely to have experience of stress, anxiety, and depression and they also layout withdrawal behaviour, and have less satisfaction to their jobs, which leads them to less productive and engagement in their jobs because when an employee is ignored in the organisation then he will think that he will not be able to engage himself in his work. Basically, ostracism is an interpersonal stressor, which is often responsible for obdurate reactions and anti-social behaviour (Ikom et. al., 2022). Workplace ostracism decreases employee engagement, which ultimately reduces the service level of employees; it means that when the employee is ostracized, it will have a negative impact on customer satisfaction because the employee will not be able to engage themselves in work. Workplace ostracism has a positive relation to burnout and turnover intentions and is negatively related to job satisfaction, employee engagement and organisational commitment (Bashaer, Sanjay & Sherine, 2016). Employees who find themselves in work engagement tend to identify themselves with their work and have high levels of energy. Workplace ostracism decreases work engagement of employees; it means that there is a negative relationship between workplace ostracism and employee engagement (Eleonora, 2020).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Perceived Organisational Support theory (POS). Perceived Organisational Support Theory was propounded by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa (1986), who defined Perceived Organisational Support (POS) as an employee's perception that the organisation values his or her contribution and cares about the employee's well-being. Gkorezis and Bellou (2016) opined that perceived organisational support refers to the degree to which an individual believes that the organisation cares about him/her, values his/her input and provides him/her with help and support. Perceived organisational support theory is directly linked with three categories of favourable treatment received by employees, such as organisational rewards and favourable job conditions, positive job settings, fairness and supervisor support. In return favorable outcomes are achieved, such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment. All these relations support organisational support theory (Ikom et. al., 2022).

Perceived organisational support theory focuses on the care, support incentives, and working conditions that an employee tends to get for working in that organisation, so employees try to know what they tend to benefit from working in that organisation. Employees who perceive the organisation as caring for their well-being are assumed to be more likely to reciprocate not only in engaging in various forms of pro-social behaviour directed toward the organisation, but also by developing a stronger sense of organisational commitment to increase performance. The theory is relevant because POS represents support from the organisation in the form of organisational justice, equitable rewards, positive work settings, and managerial relations (Sudha & Sowdamini, 2020). All these resources are favourable for the employees. That signals to employees that they are valued and respected members of the organisation. When employees perceive this support, they are expected to have access to essential job resources, and it tends to reduce workplace ostracism behaviour, which will lead to job stress and hamper performance (Sudha & Sowdamini, 2020).

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VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1 - 2026

https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19056873

Empirical Review

Purposeful Ostracism and Cognitive Engagement

Daiheng and Mingyu (2019) carried out a study on Are They Isolating Me? The influence of workplace ostracism on employees' turnover tendency. The objective of the study is to examine whether organisational self-esteem has a mediating role in workplace ostracism and turnover tendency equipment manufacturing enterprise in China. Survey research method was used, 360 electronic questionnaires were distributed, person correlation coefficient was used to judge the correlation between workplace ostracism and turnover tendency. Social identity theory was adopted. The empirical analysis shows that there is a positive correlation between workplace ostracism and turnover tendency; a negative correlation between workplace ostracism and organisational self-esteem; organisational self-esteem was negatively correlated with turnover tendency; organisational self-esteem fully mediated the relationship between workplace ostracism and turnover tendency; mental toughness plays a negative moderating role in workplace ostracism and organisational self-esteem. Implications of these findings are discussed.

Zehra and Afifa (2020) examine ostracism, personality and workplace deviant behaviours in employees of a private organisation. The study aimed to find if ostracism predicts two dimensions of workplace deviance, namely organisational deviance and interpersonal deviance, and to check the moderating role of personality. A correlational research design was used to conduct the study. The sample consisted of 120 employees of a private organisation in Lahore selected through purposive sampling. The Ten Item Personality Inventory and the Interpersonal and Organisational Deviance Scale were used to measure the study variables. Preliminary analysis showed that the current job position was negatively related to ostracism. Ostracism was significantly linked to workplace deviant behaviours. Agreeableness showed a negative relation to ostracism. Emotional stability had a significant negative relation with both ostracism and interpersonal deviance. Using interpersonal and organisational deviance as dependent variables, moderation through hierarchical regression was carried out. Agreeableness, emotional stability and openness to experience moderated the relationship between ostracism and interpersonal deviance. Emotional stability moderated the relationship between ostracism and organisational deviance.

Samo, Kahn, Ali and Ali (2019), conducted a study on impact of workplace ostracism on stress and employee engagement, objective of the study is the impact of workplace ostracism on stress and employee engagement, quantitative research method was used in this research followed by non-probability convenient sampling with the sample size of 330 of employees working in the banking sectors located in Karachi Iran, the instruments for measuring continuous variable was regression, findings shows that there is a significant positive impact of ostracism on stress, on the other hand, it has been found that there is a negative impact of ostracism on employee engagement. Shalini (2016) conducted a study on work deviant behaviour-employee engagement: an empirical investigation of the role of ethical leadership of Indian middle-level managers. The paper studied the relationship between work deviant behaviour and employee engagement, as well as the moderating role of Ethical leadership on the relationship in nonwestern world. 200 middle-level managers were surveyed to study the work deviant-employee engagement relationship and the moderating role of ethical leadership on the stated relationship in private sector organisations of

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the Delhi-NCR region. Means, Standard Deviation and correlation analysis were used. Findings show that work deviant behaviour and ethical leadership were significantly related to employee engagement, and ethical leadership moderated the positive and significant work deviant-employee engagement relationship.

Un-purposeful Ostracism and Physical Engagement

Talha and Khan (2020) explore what leads to ostracism and its consequences, evidence from the departmental stores of Sweden and Pakistan. The study examines the factors that cause ostracism and explores the contextual environmental factors that influence or stop the effects of ostracism in the working environment. Moreover, the study argues for the personal outcomes factors which can be the result of a stressful working culture and additional workload. The study also explores how different working environments, such as employment opportunity and power distance, have a role to play in this scenario. Person Correlation was used, a Pilot Study and a Reliability Cronbach Alpha were carried out. To test the study, the data were collected from the employees and supervisors of the departmental stores in Pakistan and Sweden. The number of respondents for the data was 480 (in total after data screening). As the study had multi structural model, the data was testes with Confirmatory factor analysis and Structural Equation Modelling to measure the effect of different variables on the respondents. The study reveals that the factors have a significant effect on the employees of service industries, resulting in negative effects on the psychological and health factors of employees. It also reveals that when these issues are not resolved, employees often intend to leave the organisation voluntarily, not to be ostracized. Furthermore, the study also discovered insignificant results within the context of employment opportunity due to the spread of the Corona Virus Pandemic (COVID-19). The employees could not be certain about the employment opportunity in the service industry.

Youngkeun (2020) conducted a study on the influence of workplace ostracism on employees' performance: moderating effect of perceived organisational support. Objective of the study: The study developed and tested the relationship between workplace ostracism and job performance. It assumes that the direct link between workplace ostracism and supervisor-rated in-role performance/organisational citizenship behaviour is moderated by perceived organisational support in South Korean businesses. A survey method was utilized and multiple regression analyses with multisource data from 256 Korean employees and their supervisors. Findings: there was a stronger negative relationship between workplace ostracism and supervisor role for employees with low as opposed to those with high levels of perceived organisational support. None of the empirically reviewed studies examined workplace ostracism as it relates to employee performance of manufacturing companies in Northern Nigeria. This is the gap in knowledge that this study seeks to fill.

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19056873

Methodology

The study employed the quantitative research approach, and the survey research design was adopted. The study considered the Mouka Foam, Nigeria, Kaduna State. Mouka Foam, Kaduna, was selected in Kaduna Industrial Estate, Kaduna State, which is located in the Kaduna-South Area of Kaduna State, supposedly the largest commercial and industrial nerve centre in Kaduna State.

According to the Human Resource Department of the company, the target population of the study (Table 1) was four hundred and eighty-nine (489).

Table 1: Number of Staff

S/N	Section	Total Male and Female		Overall Total
		M	F	
1	Account	09	06	15
2	HRM	02	05	07
3	Raw Materials/Stores	20	00	20
4	Production	219	228	447
				489

Source: Human Resource Department Reports (September, 2025)

From this population, a sample size of two hundred and fifteen (215) was determined through the Cochran formula. Thus, the formula is stated below:

$$n = \frac{NZ^2pq}{d^2 (N-1) + Z^2pq}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size

Z = Value for the selected alpha level, e.g. 1.96 for a 95.0% desired confidence level.

P = Degree of variability (0.5)

q = 1-p

d = Degree of accuracy (0.05)

$$n = \frac{489\ (1.96)^2(0.5)\ (0.5)}{(0.05)^2\ (489-1) + (1.96)^2\ (0.5)\ (0.5)} = 215.3 = 215 \text{ respondents}$$

Thus, 215 was arrived at as the sample size for the study.

The study, therefore, made use of multi-stage sampling techniques that comprised a stratified sampling technique and a simple random sampling technique. Stratified sampling was used to

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19056873

group the sample size of the study into strata in order to ascertain the appropriate sample size for the study via the proportionate formula.

Table 2: Proportionate Sample Size of the Study

S/N	Section	Population	Proportionate Sample size	Total Male and Female	
				M	F
1	Account	15	7	05	02
2	HRM	07	03	01	02
3	Raw Material/Stores	20	09	09	00
4	Production	447	196	97	99
		489	215	112	103

Source: Researcher's Computation (September, 2025).

The study thereby employed simple random sampling so as to give the respondents an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study. The study made use of a primary source of data collection through the use of a structured questionnaire, and multiple regressions were employed.

From the two hundred and fifteen questionnaires administered to the participants, only one hundred and eighty-nine (189) were retrieved; however, one hundred and seventy-five (175) of the retrieved questionnaires were well filled and then used for the analysis. This equates to an 81.3 per cent response rate. The copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. Adjusted four Likert scale was employed to get responses from the study respondents. The data collected were analysed using inferential statistics. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 was applied to process the data, and the results obtained thereafter were analysed and discussed at a 5% threshold of significance.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The research instrument was subjected to expert opinion validity. The instrument was subjected to both construct and content validity. For content validity, the questionnaire includes a variety of items/ questions on study variables, and each of the variables was considered to have been covered with the items on the instrument. This study also ensured content validity of the questionnaire by passing through the peer review process. The questionnaire was reviewed by the researcher's supervisors and other senior lecturers in the field of human resource management.

For construct validity, the questionnaire was divided into many sections such that each of the section assessed information for specific objectives in the study. Construct validity was measured

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statistically using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The study employed the KMO sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Sphericity test to determine whether the statements that comprise the research instruments of each variable actually measured what was intended. The result of the Bartlett test of Sphericity at 0.000, which is less than 5%, indicates that there is a highly significant relationship among the variables under study. In this study, the KMO test was greater than 5%, and the Bartlett test of Sphericity result was less than 5%, indicating that the statements that comprised the research instruments of each variable actually measured what was intended. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) greater than 0.5 were used as additional evidence of construct validity of all variables in the research instrument. The result of the KMO and Bartlett test of Sphericity is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Validity Results - Confirmatory Factor Analysis

S/N	Variables	No. of Items	AVE	KMO	Bartlett Test
1	Purposeful Ostracism	5	0.527	0.538	109.836 (0.003)
2	Un-purposeful Ostracism	5	0.519	0.591	116.931 (0.001)
3	Cognitive Engagement	5	0.524	0.522	111.922(0.000)
4	Physical Engagement	5	0.592	0.622	219.723(0.001)

Source: Researcher's Computation (September 2025)

Cronbach's Alpha was used to establish the internal consistency of the research instrument. Since Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient is greater than or equal to 0.7, the items used for the study variables were reliable.

Test of Hypotheses

Results and Discussions

The hypotheses as stated in the study were tested using the multiple regression analysis. The results of the analyses of the tested hypotheses are presented in the following tables.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant effect of purposeful ostracism on employees' cognitive engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna.

Table 4: Summary Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Purposeful Ostracism on Employees' Cognitive Engagement.

Model	*B*	*T*	*Sig.*	*F*(3,242)	R^2	Adj. R^2	F(Sig)
(Constant)	2.216	3.672	.000	79.549	0.614	0.592	0.001
Purposeful Ostracism	.376	3.723	.000				

a. Dependent Variable: Cognitive Engagement

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19056873

b. Predictor: (Constant), Purposeful
Source: Researcher's Field Survey (August, 2025)

Table 4 presents the multiple regression result for the effect of purposeful ostracism on employees' cognitive engagement. The results revealed that purposeful ostracism (β = .376, t = 3.723, p = 0.000) has a positive and significant effect on employees' cognitive engagement. The result signified that purposeful ostracism is a sound predictor of employees' cognitive engagement. The result further revealed that purposeful ostracism of employees' cognitive explained 59.2% of the variation in employee engagement. However, the model did not explain 40.8% of the variation in employee engagement, implying that there are other factors associated with changes in employee engagement that were not mentioned in the employee engagement regression model. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{01}**),** which states that purposeful ostracism has no significant effect on Employee cognitive engagement, is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Two
There is no significant effect of un-purposeful ostracism on employees' physical engagement in Mouka Foam Limited, Kaduna.

Table 5: Summary Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of un-purposeful ostracism on Employee physical engagement

Model	***B***	***T***	***Sig.***	***F*(3,242)**	**R^2**	**Adj. R^2**	**F(Sig)**
(Constant)	1.456	3.223	.000	52.129	0.454	0.447	0.001
Un-purposeful Ostracism	.472	4.420	.001				

a. Dependent Variable: Physical Engagement
b. Predictor: (Constant) Un-purposeful
Source: Researcher's Field Survey (September, 2025)

Table 5 presents the multiple regression results for the effect of un-purposeful ostracism on employee physical engagement. The result revealed that un-purposeful ostracism (β = .472, t = 4.420, p = 0.001) has a positive and significant effect on employee physical engagement. The result indicated that un-purposeful ostracism is a sound predictor of Employee physical engagement. The result further revealed that un-purposeful ostracism accounted for 44.7% of the variation in employee engagement. However, the model did not explain 55.3% of the variation in employee physical engagement, implying that there are other factors associated with changes in employee engagement that were not mentioned in the hypothesis two regression model. Therefore, the null hypothesis two (H_{02}), which states that un-purposeful ostracism has no significant effect on employee physical engagement, is hereby rejected. The tested hypotheses show a significant positive relationship between workplace ostracism and employee engagement. The result indicates that workplace ostracism has a relationship with employee engagement; the hypothesis and level of significance were tested, and it came out positive. This shows that when employees are treated rightly, there will be no tendency for abnormal behaviour in the organisation, but they will be more

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engaged on the job. Therefore, these findings support the study conducted by Shalini (2016), on work deviant behaviour and employee engagement: an empirical investigation of the role of organisational members' behaviour. These results confirm that workplace ostracism relates to employee engagement.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concludes that workplace ostracism has a significant negative impact on employee engagement, as it reduces employees' involvement and productivity. While human nature, character, and behaviour may vary, organizations should establish policies and ethics to manage such behaviours and ensure a positive work environment. To mitigate the negative effects of ostracism, it is recommended that organizations implement zero-tolerance policies, promote these policies through various communication channels, and foster a supportive workplace through collaborative performance evaluations, rewarding positive behaviour, and holding employees accountable for unsupportive actions. Early identification of behaviours that increase ostracism risk is crucial, as is creating a fair work environment with equal management practices and reducing discrimination. Additionally, organizations should invest in social skills training to encourage positive interactions, offer awareness workshops on emotional regulation and workplace relationships, and implement orientation programs, especially for early-career employees. Encouraging staff participation in decision-making can also reduce job alienation and promote engagement, helping organizations attract, retain employees, and improve service delivery, satisfaction, and overall productivity.

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