Impact of Openness to Experience on Burnout: The Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing

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Abstract: *Openness to experience is one of the important personality traits that negatively affect burnout. It reduces burnout among employees. Knowledge sharing positively affects employees' feelings within the organization settings, and it lowers their psychological fatigue. knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between openness to experience and burnout. A time-lagged study was conducted, and the data were collected using 39 39-item questionnaires from 420 employees of multinational organizations in three different time intervals. Data were tested using SPSS. For H1, β value was -0.47 at 0.000 significant level. H2 was also supported with β value of 0.61 at a p-value of 0.000; H3 was also supported at β value of -0.43 and P value of 0.000. Knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between openness to experience and burnout with an indirect effect of 0.29. Hence, all hypotheses were supported.*

Key Words: Openness to Experience, Personality, Burnout, Knowledge Sharing, Psychological Fatigue

Introduction

Burnout is a emotional syndrome characterized by three symptoms: emotional weariness, depersonalization, and decreasing individual achievement. An extended exposure to a stressful work environment causes an adverse emotional reaction to one's employment (Maslach & Jackson, 1984; Maslach et al., 2001). As well as indicating poor employee wellbeing, burnout is linked to employee attitudes, health, and behavior. (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Maslach, 2003). Even though most burnout research focuses on environmental factors, individual differences are likely to show an essential character in its development (Maslach et al., 2001). Previous meta-analyses have focused on the relationship between personality and burnout. Unfortunately, the research on burnout was limited in scope.

According to García-Carmona et al. (2019), burnout symptoms affect approximately 30-40% of teachers and can have profound effects. Burnout has been linked to decreased motivation, poor work performance, and excellent sickness rates in teachers (Maslach, 2003; Maslach & Leiter, 2016; Swider & Zimmerman, 2010). Additionally, teacher performance influences students' motivation and performance (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Klusmann et al., 2021; Klusmann et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2015). The identification of burnout-related characteristics can assist researchers in determining starting points for treatments, reducing its prevalence, and mitigating its negative implications for instructors and pupils. Research indicates that many teachers experience burnout due to the high psychological demands of their jobs (Fernet et al., 2012; Redín & Erro-Garcés, 2020).

The evidence clearly shows that personality qualities, particularly openness, harm employee burnout (Anvari et al., 2009). In Roberts (2009)'s view, personality traits are characterized by patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that indicate an individual's propensity to respond positively under specific circumstances. The incorporation of personality traits into teaching has long been a topic of interest among researchers. A lot of attention has been paid to the relationship between personality traits and work performance, such as teachers' quality of instruction (Klassen & Tze, 2014; Roloff et al., 2022b).

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Conversely, the emphasis has been on recruiting and selecting individuals who exhibit favorable entry qualities (Klassen et al., 2014; Roloff et al., 2022a). The five-factor model is the most commonly used model for describing and specifying personality traits (McCrae, 2011; McCrae & John, 1992).

One of the five-factor personality model's essential aspects is openness to new experiences, which assesses one's interest in aesthetics, feelings, ideas, values, and behaviors (McCrae & John, 1992). Teachers more open-minded about their surroundings are more likely to see workplace challenges, such as difficult students, as opportunities for personal development(Zimmerman & Dibenedetto, 2008). Openness to experience is associated with an active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attention to inner sentiments, a liking for variety, intellectual curiosity, originality, and judgmental independence(McCrae & Costa Jr, 1997). In individuals with high levels of openness, their inner and outer worlds are curious, more open to new ideas and unconventional ideals, and more sensitive to positive and negative emotions (McCrae & Costa Jr, 1997). As well as intellectual curiosity, creativity, flexible thinking, and culture, highly open people are more likely to seek learning opportunities (Barrick & Mount, 1991b) and be willing to participate in these experiences.

According to research, people with openness as a personality trait believe in knowledge sharing. As a result of knowledge sharing, employees see learning opportunities, seek career advancement due to enhanced Knowledge, and seek to align their personal objectives with the objectives of the organization(Anvari et al., 2011). Knowledge sharing is critical for firms to improve skills and competencies, enhance value, and maintain competitive advantages (Grant, 1996). According to Nonaka et al. (1996), To promote innovation, it is imperative that ideas and concepts be shared to transform into products and services. Therefore, the transfer of information from one unit or person to another is of significant importance to firm performance (Argote et al., 2000). Interdisciplinary work groups are formed by companies to handle complicated tasks at work in response to these requirements (Grant, 1996). However, sharing Knowledge and experience is problematic since it entails conflicts of interest among the individuals engaged (Von Krogh, 1998), as demonstrated by the prominent example of open-source initiatives. Other elements influence the decision to reveal or conceal Knowledge, such as the specific case of a social dilemma. Social Previous research has focused on individual elements as precursors to information sharing. Osterloh and Frost (2000) emphasize the relevance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for knowledge sharing. Furthermore, highly open people exhibit intellectual curiosity, creativity, flexible thinking, and culture (Dingman, 1990), which leads to more favorable attitudes toward learning new things and a greater desire to participate in learning experiences(Barrick & Mount, 1991a).

Cabrera et al. (2006) stated that openness to experience predicts knowledge sharing since curiosity and uniqueness play a role in seeking out the insights of others.

As a result, open individuals will likely gain more incredible experience. According to Constant (1996), those with higher levels of experience are more likely to provide meaningful advice, whereas those with lower levels of competence are less likely to contribute (Wasko & Faraj, 2000; Wasko & Faraj, 2005). People with a high level of openness are more willing to contribute and learn. Knowledge can provide a uniqueness, scarcity, causal ambiguity, and difficulty of replicating or substituting it differentiates it from competitors (Nanda & Bartlett, 1994).

The resource-based view (Wernerfelt, 1984) and conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989) explain the theoretical foundations of the current study. Personality, being a resource, sharing Knowledge, and the shared Knowledge reduces employee burnout. Conservation of resource theory explains that the person with the openness trait of personality is likely to possess more psychological resources and show low burnout.

Literature Review

Openness to Experience and Burnout

Employee burnout is a negative emotional response characterized by emotional weariness and low personal achievement resulting from a demanding job and high stress levels in the workplace (Magnano et al., 2015). Yuan et al. (2023) stated that employee burnout is strongly influenced by poor levels of employee wellbeing, with P.T.sP.T.s playing a significant part in its growth. The role of personality traits

on job performance is analyzed, bearing in mind the significance of individual variances. For example, the role of beginning with openness to experiences in the results of work is especially embraced.

Brijova et al. (2022) focus on the agents that contribute to burnout syndrome in public administration managers and, through this, clarify how personality dispositions are involved and promote burnout. Kvesko et al. (2015), consequently, by studying the connection between openness to experiences and burnout among managers, we can lay the foundation for many significant impacts this subject matter would have on an array of working professions.

Besides, Akbari et al. (2023) investigate the relation between nursing staff's personality characteristics and job burnout and explain that nurses with openness to experiences may be more vulnerable to burnout under the working conditions of hospital environments. As part of the understanding of the intricate connection between personality traits and the topic in particular occupational contexts, this study helps that (Alarcon et al., 2009). The combination of the statistical results of these studies provides a reasonable basis for the argument that there is more data to the theory that openness to experience has a strong linkage to lower levels of burnout, showing the possibility of the role of openness in lowering burnout levels in various professions.

H1: *Negative relationship between openness to experience and burnout*

Openness to Experience and Knowledge Sharing

Literature is an invaluable source of information for testing a hypothesis linking openness to experience and knowledge sharing; the former is one of the personality traits determining the degree of a person's willingness to share Knowledge. Research works such as Taheri et al. (2019) confirm the dependence between personality traits, including openness to experience and workplace knowledge behavior. The study underlined that individuals highly receptive to new experiences prefer knowledge-sharing activities, contributing to organizational learning and innovation. Also, the research performed by Lampropoulos et al. (2022) investigates the importance of personality traits, among which openness, in such virtual communities. The study indicates that the information-sharing behaviors of participants who scored highly in the openness dimensions are more pronounced than those of others. It can be referred to as a combined result of information interflow and community engagement.

From all this data synthesized, it becomes clear that a consistent body representing the relationship between openness to experience and Knowledge sharing as a positive one supports some verdicts. Individuals with bigger segments of their personality "openness" are believed to prefer to participate in knowledge-sharing acts, which will result in improved collaboration, learning, and innovation both within organizations and virtual communities.

H2: *Positive relationship between openness to experience and knowledge sharing*

Knowledge Sharing and Burnout

In turn, knowledge sharing fosters social relationships between the workforces; supplementation of social bonds is seen to increase overall wellbeing (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Scientific literature authors argue that social support plays a role in moderating the impact of job stressors thereby decreasing the chance for burnout (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). Knowledge sharers are shielded from burnout by the stronger tiers of support that are in place at their organizations. Knowledge sharing can also increase the level of employee involvement and so can improve their level of satisfaction in their job and sense of meaning (Kahn, 1990). When employees perceive their contribution is valued and their knowledge is used, the personal fulfillment is attained, which in turn is inversely proportional to burnout level (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). Thus, knowledge sharing enhances the work collaboration and teamwork, which are fundamental for building a healthy organizational culture (Edmondson, 1999). Interdependent settings promote information sharing and, more importantly, the sharing of support and fostered camaraderie two factors that directly alleviate social isolation and stressor which are known to cause burnout (Tepper et al., 2006). Based on the findings of the study, the hypothesis that postgraduate knowledge sharing is inversely related to the levels of burnout observed is supported. Knowledge sharing exercises help minimize factors that have a direct correlation with burnout, including decreasing social support, diminishing participation,

increasing conflict, and increasing role confusion. More future studies should aim at understanding how knowledge sharing mediates burnout and looking at the moderating effects of organizational culture on these processes. Such information can help in designing the strategies that will be helpful to addressing burn out and enhance the health and wellbeing of workforce in different organizations.

H3: *Negative relationships between knowledge sharing and burnout*

Knowledge Sharing as a Mediator

The literature already exists to test the incidence of an inverse association between knowledge-sharing and burnout, offering insights about knowledge-sharing behaviors and individuals' psychological well-being and burnout levels.

Researchers like Shaukat et al. (2023) focus on the role of people's personality traits, like being open or curious in information sharing among academicians, and how those behaviors could impact the knowledge-creation process. The research in question reveals that the dimension of openness to experience positively affects knowledge sharing, implying that the people engaged in knowledge-sharing activities might be getting benefits like spreading information and joint efforts.

What makes openness in the studies an even more vital role is the knowledge-sharing characteristics that play the role between openness and innovative work and elaboration (Zuhri, 2023). Thus, structural codes of knowledge-sharing behavior are essential in the creative work environment, which involves sharing information, ideas, and assistance.

By consolidating the results of these studies, it is clear that an increasing amount of data supports the idea of an inverse correlation between information sharing and burnout. Participating in activities involving sharing information can reduce burnout by encouraging cooperation and innovation and fostering a supportive organizational culture. Existing literature offers insights into the impact of knowledge-sharing practices on individuals' well-being and degrees of burnout, supporting the investigation of the hypothesis of a negative link between knowledge-sharing and burnout.

Research that, for instance, Shaukat et al. (2023) and conversation analysis aim to uncover how personality factors, namely openness to experience, impact academics' information-sharing behavior. This study depicts the catalytic role of openness to experience in the knowledge-sharing process; it assists people involved in knowledge-sharing activities by exercising the benefits of information-sharing and cooperation. Besides, the work (Zuhdi & Etikariena, 2022) studies that information-sharing behavior is the mediator variable between openness to experience and the innovative work behavior of students. The results indicate that telling others about their own Knowledge substantially affects innovative action in the work process, stipulating that institutions need to develop information and idea exchange within the organization significantly.

Furthermore, the research also examines the effect of personality traits on innovativeness by analyzing the role of information sharing in leadership transformation. This research analyzes personality characteristics, knowledge sharing, and innovation from the standpoint that knowledge sharing facilitates creativity, an essential factor in business success. Publishing the outcomes of such studies confirms that the amount of proof that low communication leads to elevated burnout is increasing. Participating in activities that involve sharing information can reduce burnout by encouraging collaboration and innovation and fostering a supportive culture inside the organization.

H4: *Knowledge sharing mediates between openness to experience and burnout*

Figure 1
Theoretical Framework
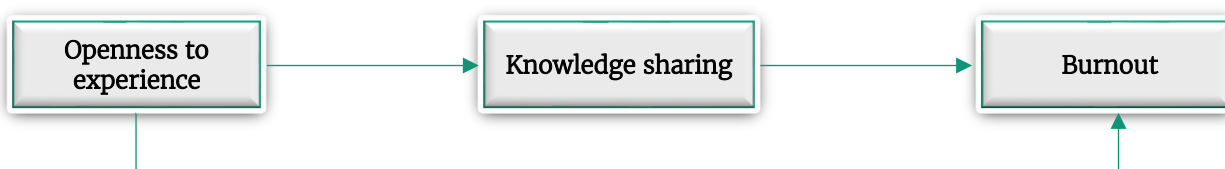
Material and Methods

Research Design

The current study utilized a quantitative research design. This study aimed to add to the current body of Knowledge on openness to experience, Knowledge-sharing behavior, and burnout. The researchers aimed to investigate the hypothesis that establishes the cause-and-effect link between the independent variable (openness to experience) and the mediating variable (knowledge-sharing behavior) about the dependent variable (burnout). The study is categorized as causal because the researcher's main objective is to explain the differences in dependent variables, specifically burnout. These differences are examined regarding the independent variable of openness to experience and the mediating variable of knowledge-sharing behavior. The current study was conducted in a natural setting, specifically in non-contrived conditions. The research was a field study, with individual employees as the unit of analysis. This study utilized a time-lagged design to minimize the possible impact of standard method bias and reverse causality. The variable that was manipulated, openness to experience, was assessed during the first time point. In contrast, the factor that mediates the relationship, knowledge-sharing behavior, was assessed during the second time point. At time 3, the dependent variable, burnout, was measured. The factors in the study were assessed using self-reported measures provided by the participants.

The study focused on personnel in various multinational companies in Pakistan.

Sample Design and Size

Adopting a non-probability sampling approach was required due to limitations in both time and availability to reach the desired population. Information was collected from the individuals who could provide it quickly. According to the Rule of 10, it is considered sufficient to have a sample size of 10 participants per item in the instrument being used (Arrindell & Van Der Ende, 1986; Velicer & Fava, 1998). The questionnaire employed a total of 39 items, comprising 10 items on openness to experience derived from the Big Five Inventory (BFI), seven items on the Knowledge sharing behavior scale suggested by Chennamaneni (2006), 22 items on burnout from (Maslach et al., 1997). Following the recommendation that recommends a minimum sample size of 10 times the number of variables, the sample size for this study was calculated to be 390. Nevertheless, the evaluated mediated model included a marginally larger sample size of 420.

Measures and Reliabilities

The data for this research investigation were collected through a self-report questionnaire. The rationale for selecting self-reporting as the preferable approach to measuring the variables being examined was its perceived suitability. Each item was assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. No omission of an item was reported in any of the questionnaires.

Table 1

Reliability coefficients of all variables

Variables	No. of total items	Cornbach's Alpha
Openness to experience	10	0.83
Knowledge Sharing Behavior	07	0.91
Burnout	22	0.86

Openness to Experience

The measurement of Openness to Experience utilized ten items selected from the Big Five Inventory (BFI), a psychometric tool that has demonstrated reliability and validity (John, 1991). Each item was evaluated using a 5-point scale ranging from highly atypical to extremely typical. The Openness to Experience scale had a coefficient alpha reliability estimate of 0.83. To minimize the potential influence of demand effects, participants were instructed to complete the BFI questionnaire in full before continuing with the remaining parts of the study.

Knowledge Sharing Behavior

The assessment of knowledge-sharing behavior was conducted using a 7-item scale, as recommended by Chennamaneni (2006). Sample items include "I shared factual knowledge (know-what) from work with my co-workers ."Cronbach alpha was found to be 0.91.

Burnout

In order to assess burnout, the researchers utilized a 22-item scale developed by (Maslach et al., 1997). This scale consisted of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, which measures the extent to which emotional resources are depleted; depersonalization, which assesses negative and cynical attitudes and feelings towards clients; and personal accomplishment, which evaluates one's tendency to negatively evaluate their work with clients and exhibit reduced enthusiasm towards their job. The scale's Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.86.

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations

Table 2 presents the calculated mean and standard deviation values for each variable in the current investigation. The mean value for openness to experience is 3.12, with a standard deviation of 1.59. Similarly, the mean value for knowledge-sharing behavior is 3.02, with a standard deviation of 1.45. Lastly, the mean value of burnout is 3.29, with a standard deviation of 1.31. Additionally, this table summarizes the degree of association between all variables included in the study. Results indicate that all correlations are within the cutoff score.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations

	Mean	SD	OE	KSB	BO
OE	3.12	1.59		0.65	−.59**
KSB	3.02	1.45	0.65		−.48**
BO	3.29	1.31	−.59**	−.48**	

Direct Effect Model

Table 3

Standardized direct path coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized Regression Weights	S.ES.E.	P	Supported
H1	OE→BO	−0.47	.07	.000	Yes
H2	OE→KSB	0.61	.06	.000	Yes
H3	KSB→BO	−.43	.05	.000	Yes

Mediation Model Results

Table 4 shows a partial mediating effect of knowledge-sharing behavior on the relationship between openness and experience with burnout.

Table 4

Results of Mediation Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Hypothesized relation	Total effects	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Supported
H4	OE→KSB→BO	.50	.21	.29	Yes

In order to test the model, four hypotheses were developed and verified. H1 was supported. It has a negative effect with a coefficient of -0.47 at 0.00 p value. H2 was also supported by the results with a coefficient of 0.61 at a value of 0.00. H3 was also supported with a coefficient of -0.43 at a value of 0.00. H4 was supported with an indirect effect of 0.29. Hence, knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between openness to experience and burnout.

Discussion

Openness to experience is a positive personality trait that affects and helps employees lower workplace burnout. Employees with such personality traits share Knowledge and help others learn and grow. Employees with high openness are adaptable and flexible in their thinking and approach. They consider all challenges with positivity and open-mindedness, which dissolves all the stressors and lowers burnout. People with such personality traits welcome innovative and problem-solving ideas, and they are always in search of new ideas and take new challenges as opportunities. They are always proactive and curious about a greater sense of fulfillment and achievement; hence, they engage in their work, and their burnout lowers. Such personalities are creative and resilient, helping to lower burnout. Further, individuals with such personality types help facilitate communication among the staff members. Such activities result in a learning environment and enhance job satisfaction, which results in lowering burnout. Open people within the organization share their ideas and knowledge with others and help promote cooperative and learning work environments.

Conclusion

Openness to experience is one of five personality traits that negatively affect burnout. Organizations can improve their image by making their employees feel comfortable learning and excelling in their careers. Open people help organizations improve their image through knowledge sharing and idea generation. An organization's employees take on all challenges and stressors positively due to its supportive and cooperative culture.

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