

Impact of Organizational Exploitation on Prohibitive Voice: Moderating Role of Coworker Emotional Support

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Article History:

Submitted: December 11, 2023
Revised: March 19, 2024
Accepted: March 27, 2024
Published online: March 30, 2024

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- The present study intends to expand the research on organizational exploitation as there is a vast opportunity to examine this phenomenon in organizational behavior research. This is an endeavor to examine the impact of organizational exploitation on prohibitive voice behavior by investigating the moderating role of coworker emotional support.

Study Design/Methodology/Approach - Data are collected from health, hospitality, and education using a time-lagged design employing quantitative research design and convenience sampling with a 2-3 weeks' time lag between each wave. Organizational exploitation was tapped at time 1, moderator (time 2), and outcome (Time 3).

Findings- The results indicate that organizational exploitation is positively related to prohibitive voice, and coworker emotional support moderates the relationship between organizational exploitation and prohibitive voice.

Practical Implications - Organizations in the health, hospitality, and education sectors can implement the findings of the present study to encourage voice behaviors for their employees, especially the prohibitive voice because it is more salient in assessing harmful workplace practices.

Study limitations - Firstly, the data was collected using convenience sampling, and the results of the present study cannot be generalized to another population. Secondly, this study did not control constructs similar to organizational exploitation, i.e., organizational cruelty, organizational obstructions, and perceived organizational injustice.

Originality/Novelty - Authors have extensively studied organizational exploitation, and it is to the best of the author's knowledge that previously, the given theoretical framework has not been examined in the existing literature.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Exploitation (POE), Prohibitive Voice (PV), Coworker Emotional Support (CES), Conservation of Resource Theory (COR)

1 | INTRODUCTION

1.1. | Background of the Study

In the renewed era, the voice of employees has become a valuable tool for organizational success and development (Chamberlin et al., 2017, 2018). Through employee voice, organizations not only innovate the

products and services but also successfully adapt the organizational environment through positive and constructive modifications in work-related issues (Liang et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2022). Voice pertains to the voluntary presentation of individuals' views or opinions regarding workplace-related matters to enhance the organization's activities (Morrison, 2011, 2014). Considering advantages for the organization, expressing one's opinions can counterbalance the immoral actions they earlier engaged in; although these actions may have initially benefited the organization, they resulted in negative consequences (Wang et al., 2022). Furthermore, voice conduct entails engaging in appropriate behaviors to enhance activities or refraining from incorrect behaviors to prevent mistakes (Liang et al., 2012).

Instead of accepting a pointless status quo, workers speak up to make changes in their organization (Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014). According to Liang et al. (2012), a prohibitive voice (PV) is defined as “expresses concern about existing or impending factors (i.e., incidents, practices, or behaviors) that are harmful to the organization” (Liang et al., 2012, p. 75), further “PV is lined with “past or future-oriented; points out harmful factors that have negatively affected the status quo or could have a harmful effect in the future” (Liang et al., 2012, p. 75), it “points out factors that are harmful to the organization” (Liang et al., 2012, p. 75) and “calls attention to harmful factors and consequently implicates the failure of those responsible” (Liang et al., 2012, p. 75). At the workplace, PV can identify hazardous work behaviors (Lam et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022). Moreover, personal and contextual factors may impact the PV of employees (Mesdaghinia et al., 2022; Rani et al., 2024). As PV is the expression of concern about the organization, including incidents, work practices, and employee behaviors (Lam et al., 2022), it may help the organizations for the detection of harmful work practices (Lam et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, as research has progressed, it has been separated from other complaint behaviors and is now seen as a positive trait that aids businesses in maintaining and improving their customer base (Ran & Zhou, 2020). Conversely, consumer-prohibitive voice assists businesses in addressing actions that pose a risk to them (Ran & Zhou, 2020). Legocki, Walker, and Kiesler (2020) have examined consumer voice behavior concerning complaints and word-of-mouth in their research. However, in an organizational setting, voice behavior, particularly PV, may have a detrimental psychological impact on the worker (Heydarifard & Krasikova, 2023). In some situations, a PV in organizations is more worthwhile than a promotive voice because a PV prevents organizations from harm (Chen & Trevino, 2022). A prohibitive speaker may face socially negative consequences; therefore, employees must analyze the particular context of their organization before involving in voice behavior to avoid unpleasant consequences (Lee et al., 2024; Liang et al., 2012).

In the current century, protecting individuals from exploitation is the primary concern of scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. Moreover, exploitation from organizations may influence the physical and psychological health of the individual (Moen et al., 2013; Shin et al., 2021). There is a debate about what exploitation is and what organizational exploitation is. According to Wertheimer (1996), it is considered exploitative when the administration, acting on their own and the organization's objectives and interests, demands certain personnel to labor excessively or perform exceptionally degrading activities without providing additional compensation or concrete benefits. Some employment categories have the potential to be exploited, including migrant workers and contract workers in the gig economy (Wilkinson, 2014). In his publication, Scholz (2012) delineates the different levels of employee exploitation prevalent in the

contemporary technological era, which include laboring lengthy hours as a contractor, which exempts them from the safeguards provided by labor laws, experiencing a lack of job stability, enduring independent reductions in advantages or payment by organizations, and facing other unfavorable working circumstances. Workers in various job arrangements may feel more free than full-time employees but also feel more exploited (Huang et al., 2023). Livne-Ofer et al. (2019) argue that organizational behavior should consider potential personal consequences. Because this study also identified specific buffers between employee outcomes and exploitation, he further claimed that exploitation in this study should contribute to employee resources (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). Here, the researchers will further explore the impact of perceived exploitation at work on employee activities by utilizing COR, specifically the resource depletion tenet of this theory.

Research on the relationships of individuals with their coworkers in the current era got much attention, and now it becomes imperative for the organization to pay attention to the relationships between coworkers (Tews et al., 2019). Some studies have found the positive influence of support of coworkers to reduce the adverse outcomes, i.e., turnover intention (Ducharme et al., 2007; Tews et al., 2019), emotional exhaustion (Baeriswyl et al., 2017; Brotheridge, 2001; Ducharme et al., 2007), work-family conflict (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2009), and job burnout (Charoensukmongkol et al., 2016). In contrast, coworker support also helps organizations to produce positive outcomes, i.e., higher job performance (Kim et al., 2017), moral self-efficacy (Xu et al., 2017), voice behavior (Xu et al., 2017), work engagement (Pohl et al., 2022), organizational citizenship behaviors (Pohl et al., 2022), meaningful work (Hur et al., 2024), and innovative work behavior (Hur et al., 2024). In a hostile working environment, i.e. OE emotional support by the coworkers helps the individuals to cover themselves from a negative emotional state (Karatepe, 2012; Xu et al., 2017). Based on this notion, we argue that emotional support from coworkers is a social source that helps individuals enhance their resources to deal with OE and boost the PV.

The literature on organizational behavior pays little attention to organizational exploitation. Given Pakistan's organizational structure, an investigation into this incident is imperative. Despite the empirical investigation conducted by Livne-Ofer et al. (2019) regarding the effects of OE on workers' attitudes toward burnout, intention to leave, psychological disengagement, and organizational commitment, it is evident that there is still a limited discourse regarding the subsequent actions taken by workers who are exploited, especially in the hospitality and healthcare sectors. Because organizations determine an employee's well-being and working conditions, exploited workers are unlikely to oppose company rules or put in less effort. Investigating the process underlying the relationship between extra-role customer service and perceived organizational exploitation is also crucial. Using the COR theory a novel conduit that connects the behavioral effects of POE (Hobfoll, 1989). Accordingly, other studies have suggested looking at the detrimental effects of workplace exploitation on both companies and employees (Huang et al., 2023). A recent study found that academics and decision-makers need to be aware of labor exploitation to prevent it from worsening (Boersma & Nolan, 2022). They suggest addressing this issue as well by developing a workplace protocol. They have indicated that academics integrate their work in an interdisciplinary manner to find effective solutions. Because organizational behavior provides many possibilities to research this phenomenon, the current study aims to add to the body of knowledge surrounding organizational exploitation (OE) (Huang et al., 2023; Li et al., 2022; Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). Thus, this study's objective is to ascertain the employee outcomes (PV).

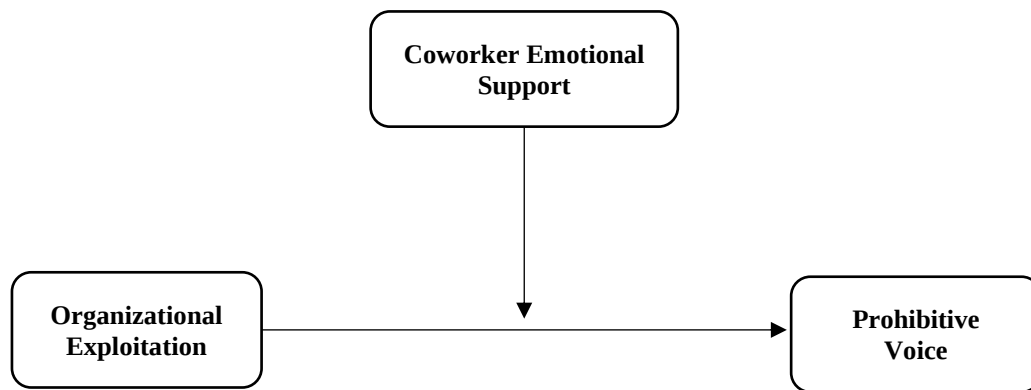
Closing the gap in the corpus of prior research will also involve including coworker emotional support (CES) as contextual help. This study examined the moderating role of CES in the link between perceived organizational exploitation (POE) and PV.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | Theoretical framework

According to the resource acquisition of COR theory, people utilize voice behavior as a buffer to reduce anxiety when acquiring new resources (Hobfoll, 2002). Coping has been examined as a resource investment in the context of organizational behavior (Vinokur & Schul, 2002). Voice behavior is a resource-saving tactic used by people under stress. According to Hobfoll (2001), there are four corollaries of resource investment, i.e., scarcity of resources leads to defensive resource conservation efforts; initial resource losses lead to future resource losses; initial resource gains lead to future resource gains; and individuals with more resources are better able to acquire resources, whereas those with fewer resources suffer more losses. Resources are valuable entities that include a wide range of tangible and intangible objects (Hobfoll, 2002). Social support is one of the most essential tools for managing stress at work and can replace other unavailable resources (Hobfoll, 1989). According to the motivating aspect of COR, individuals endeavor to acquire and hold onto resources from diverse social networks to manage possible losses.

According to COR theory, people are more inclined to acquire and hold onto essential resources when confronted with a real or imagined fear of losing them (Hobfoll, 1989). Due to their inability to support their daily life, workers who run out of resources are more prone to get worn out and sad (Hobfoll, 1989). Employees' resources are depleted and prevented from recuperating from the workplace due to perceived organizational exploitation, which leads to depression at work. Employee benefits are at risk due to a hostile work experience (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). Individuals may be more affected by work resource loss than comparable resource gain. For instance, a specific salary loss will have a more significant effect than a similar gain. In organizational behavior research, resource loss is studied concerning stress and strain (Hobfoll, 2001). Moreover, Hobfoll (1989) further explains that in stressful circumstances like exploitation, employee resources are lost, resulting in alienation from his work. Meanwhile, according to Halbesleben et al. (2014), those with fewer resources are more prone to experience loss spirals when they lose more and more resources. According to the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), people are driven to attempt and acquire additional resources while also trying to conserve the ones they already have. These resources come in various forms that are valuable to people, such as items, circumstances, or states (Hobfoll, 1989).

Figure 1*Theoretical Framework*

2.2 | Perceived Organizational Exploitation (POE)

Since every person has a unique experience with exploitation, it is crucial to consider how each person perceives exploitation. According to Livne-Ofer et al. (2019), exploitation is different from other types of organizational abuse, i.e., exploitation is done on purpose; it is not accidental or inadvertent; it is done by the organization to its employee, not by managers or colleagues; and it involves a series of exchanges, indicating that it is not a singular or isolated incident. Perceptions among employees that they have been intentionally exploited in their organization for the organization's gain (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). In the context of the employee-organization relationship, employees' subjective impression of organizational exploitation (OE) assesses the extent to which an organization intentionally uses its labor for its benefit (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). OE and stress may be associated in many forms, such as inadequate compensation and limited opportunities for professional advancement (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). OE is intended to assist the organization, in contrast to certain negative employee-organization relationships, such as perceived organizational cruelty and organizational obstruction, which may not be advantageous to the organization (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). Third, poor relations between the organization and its employees differ from POE. Other negative employee-organization relationships, like organizational obstruction (Gibney et al., 2011) and psychological contract breach (Zhao et al., 2022), are not defined by the intentions of the mistreatment. One could consider OE, a new form of toxic employee-organization interaction with severe consequences for both sides. Some examples of OE include dangerous working conditions, underpayment, and unreasonable workloads (Wu et al., 2023).

2.3 | Prohibitive Voice (PV)

Work practices, incidents, or employee behavior that are harmful to their organization are described as 'prohibitive voices' by employees (Liang et al., 2012). Concerns over incidents, work procedures, and employee behaviors within the business are expressed in a restrictive voice (Lam et al., 2022). In certain circumstances, an organization's PV is more valuable than its promotive voice since it shields the organization from harm (Kakkar et al., 2016). Occasionally, it could lead to unfavorable consequences by upsetting the peace between coworkers and bosses and creating bad feelings (Chamberlin et al., 2017). Related to employee

voice behavior are felt responsibility, psychological safety, and positive transformation (Chamberlin et al., 2017). Employees consider the unique circumstances of their organizations before engaging in voice behavior to avoid unfavorable outcomes, as PV behavior may face socially undesirable repercussions (Lee et al., 2024; Liang et al., 2012). When a business offers a conducive environment for voice behavior, employees are less likely to experience unfavorable outcomes for raising their voices (Wei et al., 2015). Among these are felt responsibility, positive transformation, and psychological safety; the latter is strongly associated with how workers perceive their level of punishment for raising concerns. As a result, before utilizing voice behavior, employees typically guarantee their psychological safety (Lee et al., 2024). Workers might become more noticeable and well-known or be mistaken for problem solvers. Voice entails expressing worries and downplaying their effects (Dyne et al., 2003). Voice behavior among employees may lead to the prevention of several problems. The PV in the workplace and its relevance to detrimental or unfavorable issues were covered by Liang et al. (2012). Subsequent research has demonstrated the function of PV in many domains, such as management, psychology, and marketing (Wang et al., 2020; Wei et al., 2015).

2.4 | Coworker Emotional Support (CES)

According to Tews and Michel (2019), emotional support is person-centered, based on friendship, and centered on personal care. Coworker support has two primary components: task support and emotional support (Halbesleben et al., 2012; Self et al., 2022). Coworker support includes emotional, instrumental, and social integration support. Feeling a sense of empathy, encouragement, and understanding from colleagues helps alleviate unfair treatment and emotional toll on employees (Shin et al., 2020). The instrumental aspect of coworker support includes practical help in performing tasks that help alleviate work stress and overload (Baeriswyl et al., 2017). A sense of belongingness results from social integration, which mitigates alienation and isolation caused by unfair treatment (Sloan, 2012). Depending on circumstances and life experiences, people have varying values for the same resources. For instance, some people may find that spending time with family is a resource, while others who are in violent relationships may see it as a threat. Coworker support is a resource for the employees as it reduces stress, increases job satisfaction and provide emotional stability (Singh et al., 2019). It also serves as a buffer for resource depletion. Employees can conserve their resources and have better mental health and improved performance and they are more likely to further invest their own resources into their work in the form of time and effort (Halbesleben et al., 2014).

2.5 | Perceived Organizational Exploitation and Prohibitive Voice

OE results in lower levels of job satisfaction among employees. Unfair treatment portrays a negative outlook on the organization and reduces organizational commitment, employee performance, and psychological well-being. On the other hand, it increases turnover intention and counterproductive work behaviors, making the organizational environment unsupportive and hostile (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). Exploited employees feel anger and frustration and show deviant behaviors and retaliation toward the organization (Huang et al., 2023). OE damages the reciprocal relationship between employees and the organization (Fan et al., 2024). Employees are less likely to be involved in discretionary behaviors such as helpfulness, organizational citizenship behavior, flexibility, and positive word of mouth about the organization (Wu et al., 2023). Some recent studies have focused on the adverse outcomes of OE (Fan et al., 2024; Huang et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2023). However, there is a prospect in exiting research to link OE with voice behaviors.

Carson et al. (2023) have examined organizational unfairness in organization-directed voice behavior. They have taken perceived obstruction as a mediator. PV behavior can help in the detection of harmful work practices (Lam et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022). A PV expresses concern about the organization, including incidents, work practices, and employee behaviors (Lam et al., 2022). Some organizations provide a suitable context for voice behavior; in this case, employees face fewer negative consequences when speaking up. Among them felt obligation, constructive change, and psychological safety; the last one is closely related to employees' perception of whether they are punished for speaking up. Therefore, employees ensure their psychological safety before using voice behavior (Lee et al., 2024; Liang et al., 2012). Employees may become more prominent and visible or be misunderstood as fault finders. Organizational scholars have researched the connection between voice and insomnia (Heydarifard & Krasikova, 2023). They have discovered that employees who exhibit a promotive voice at work report feeling more positive at the end of the workday can detach from work more successfully in the evening, and are less likely to experience insomnia at night (Heydarifard & Krasikova, 2023). Previous research also shows that sleep-deprived workers are less likely to utilize promotive voice because they are psychologically exhausted, even though insomnia is not linked to the manifestation of a PV the following day (Heydarifard & Krasikova, 2023; Li et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2020). Employees who control their participation in expensive office behaviors—like talking—may have fewer sleep issues (Chamberlin et al., 2017). According to Goel, Khan, and Dyaram (2024), employees desire privacy and anonymity when adopting a prohibitive voice. Furthermore, Lu and Gursoy (2023) found a positive correlation between some cultural values, such as collectivism, long-term orientation, and uncertainty avoidance—and employee PV behavior. By following the give above argumentation, we hypothesize that:

H1: *Perceived Organizational Exploitation is positively related to Prohibitive Voice.*

2.6 | Moderating Role of Coworker Emotional Support

Coworker emotional support (CES) has two primary aspects, i.e., task and emotional support (Halbesleben et al., 2012; Self et al., 2022). Particular attention has been paid to turnover intention in the study of both. According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), general coworker assistance helps to overcome work-related challenges, workplace pressures, and emotional tiredness. When a person thinks that their coworkers are sympathetic to or paying attention to their difficulties, it is the emotional support feature of coworker support (Beehr et al., 2000). Compared to instrumental support, emotional support from colleagues is associated with a decreased employee turnover rate (Tews et al., 2019). Friendship and personal care are linked to emotional support (Beehr et al., 2000). It is particularly crucial for workers at the entry level. Recovery from difficult experiences is aided by emotional support, particularly for customer service workers (Sonnentag, 2003). CES acts as a buffer for front-line staff subjected to client mistreatment through insults or belittling, which can have negative consequences (Tews et al., 2019). CES has positive influence both on personal wellbeing as well as organizational outcomes (Baeriswyl et al., 2017). It helps in reducing stress, improve job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviors and increases in productivity (Jolly et al., 2021; Karatepe, 2012). It enhances resilience and mental health and reduces psychological distress (Frone et al.,

2020). Moreover, Shin et al. (2020) have examined the positive and negative influences of coworker support. It fosters a positive work environment and effective job outcomes (Singh et al., 2019). However, excessive support can make employees more dependent on others, reduce autonomy, decrease work engagement, and decrease empowerment (Liu et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2020; Tucker et al., 2008). In the case of voice behaviors, coworker support, and positive emotions inculcate promotive voice behaviors, whereas coworker support with negative emotions inhibits both promotive and PV behaviors because of fear of isolation and retaliation (Chen & Trevino, 2022). Coworker support, both instrumental and emotional, helps reduce turnover intention among employees in the hospitality industry (Tews et al., 2019). Past researchers have advised looking into how OE has changed over time (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019). Based on the above discussion, we hypothesize that:

H2: *Coworker Emotional Support moderates the relationship between Perceived Organizational Exploitation and Prohibitive Voice such that this relationship will stronger vs. weaken at higher vs. lower levels of Coworker Emotional Support.*

3 | METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

3.1 | Population

The empirical research type used for the present study uses the quantitative technique to test the proposed hypotheses and look at how the variables relate to one another and their impact on one another (Saunders et al., 2012). A sample of people from the total population was used to collect data. The outcomes of a sample in a quantitative study can be extrapolated to the entire population (Neuman, 2007). This study used the survey method for data collection by asking respondents who had the necessary information. When adopting a survey technique, a questionnaire is used as a data collection tool (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). It includes the respondents' demographic data and a formal set of questions covering every variable on several measurement scales. This study used a time-lagged design as an explanatory method, as recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003; 2012), as a time-lagged design is more suited to test causal linkages and reduce the bias associated with typical methods. Four to five weeks have already been used between the first and second lag in earlier studies. (Bashir & Naseer, 2021). Also, a time lag of seven days was used in a study by Majeed et al. (2020); hence, a time lag of one month was used in this study. The service sector, which includes the healthcare industry (Livne-Ofer et al., 2019), the hospitality industry (Medler-Liraz & Seger-Guttmann, 2018), and educational institutions (Courtois & O'Keefe, 2015), was targeted to promote diversity in terms of jobs and organizations (Hirschi, 2012). Individuals working permanently in these organizations were selected as unit of analysis. Both white-collar and blue-collar workers were targeted to the generalizability of the research. For this investigation, non-probability convenience sampling was employed. A sample of 200 participants was suggested as minimum sample size in by some earlier scholars (Bartlett et al., 2001). Since this was a non-probability convenience sampling, the sample size for this study was formulated using the rule of thumb of five (Memon et al., 2020), which states that $55 \times 5 = 275$ was the appropriate sample size for this study; however, the data for the present study was collected from 308 individuals.

3.2 | Measures

All the scales were adapted from previous studies. These scales were already available in English and, therefore, adopted as they are. English is an official language in Pakistan, and our respondents had graduation as a minimum level of qualification (Chughtai et al., 2022). A 5-point Likert scale, with one denoting "strongly disagree" and five denoting "strongly agree," is used to collect responses for all the variables.

3.1.1 Organizational Exploitation

A 14-item scale, which was designed by Livne-Ofer et al. (2019) to gauge employees' perceptions of being exploited at work, was used in this study. The sample item of the scale is "My organization will continue to take advantage of me as long as I work there."

3.1.2 Prohibitive Voice

Liang (2012) formulated a five-item scale to measure prohibitive voice, which was used in this research. Respondents were requested to rate the statements about prohibitive voice according to their perceptions. The sample items of the scale are "Advise other colleagues against undesirable behaviors that would hamper job performance" and "Colleagues provide data on prohibitive voice to address reporting bias."

3.1.3 Coworker Emotional Support

Using a six-item scale modified by Tews and Michel (2019) from Settoon and Mossholder's (2002) work to measure individuals' perceptions of their coworker's emotional support. Sample items of the scale are "My coworkers show me concern on a personal level" and "My coworkers listen to my issues and concerns."

4 | RESULTS and ANALYSIS

4.1 | Demographic Details

Table 1 shows the participants' demographic profiles, which are according to gender, age, educational qualification, organizational sector, and organizational type.

Table 1

Demographic Statistics

Demographic Profiles	
Gender	Male (63%) Female (37%)
Age	20-30 (51%), 31-40(33.1), 41-50(13%), 51-60 (2.9%)
Educational Qualification	Bachelors (18.2%), Masters (46.4%), M.Phil. (29.6%), PhD (5.8%)
Organizational Sector	Education (52.6%), Health (15.6%), Hospitality (31.8%)
Organization Type	Public sector (32.8%), Semi Govt (15.8%), Private (51.4) %

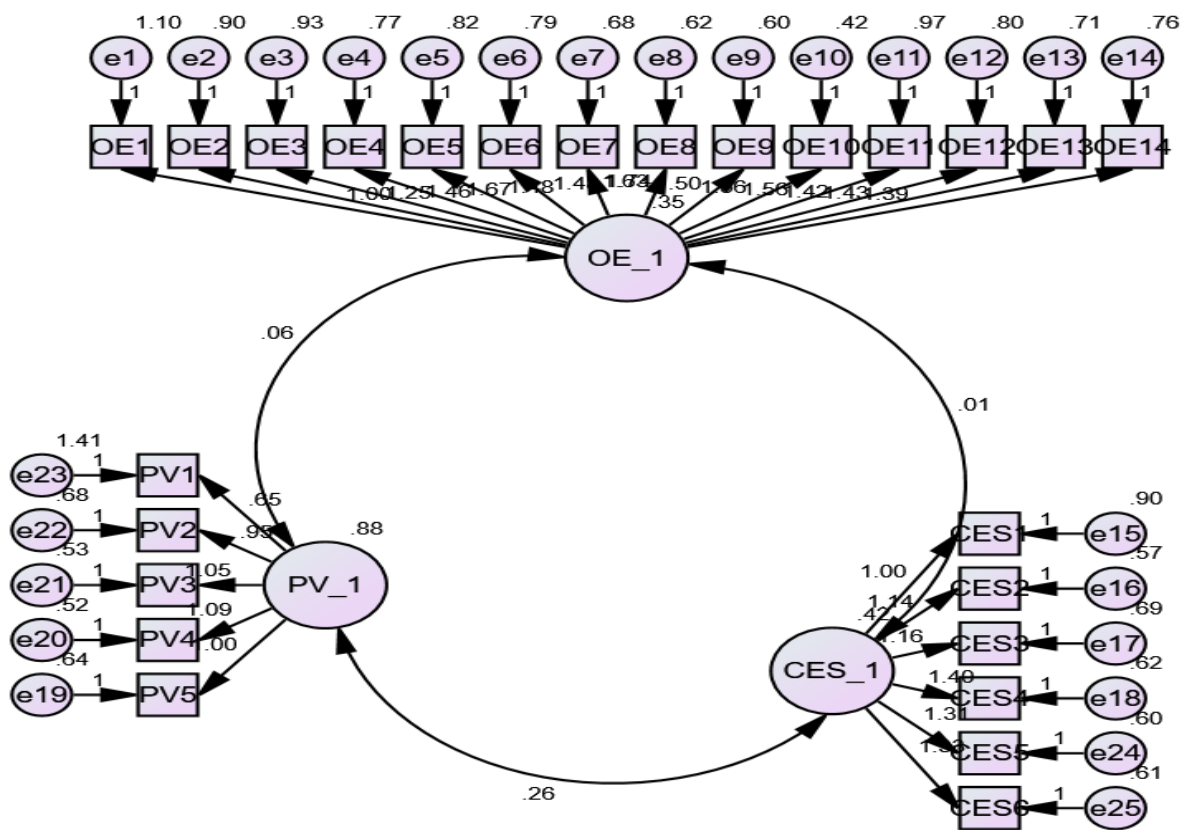
4.2 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Figure 2 represents the confirmatory factor analysis of the data, which was done using AMOS statistical software. The degree of fit between the data and the model is indicated by the Chi-square value 818.267. The lower Chi-square value suggests a better fit. This chi-square is appropriate for a moderate sample size. For the model in question, there were 272 degrees of freedom. The Chi-Square CMIN/Df relative value was 3.008,

which is close to the threshold value 3. and suggests that the model fit is satisfactory. Since the range of CFI values is 0 to 1, the comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.864 is near the threshold value of 0.9, as suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999). The normed fit Index (NFI) values at 0.811 and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) at 0.850 indicate a moderate fit. The root means a square error of approximation of 0.081 also suggests a decent fit.

Figure 2

Confirmatory Factor Analysis



4.3 | Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, Validity and Reliability

The mean, standard deviation, correlations, validity, and reliability values for OE, CES, and PV are shown in Table 2. The reliability values for PV (.79), CES (.85), and POE (.93) are all higher than the reliability threshold of 0.7, as per the recommendation of Hair et al. (2019). We further evaluate the convergent validity of all constructs using the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) method. Values shown in Table 2 reveal that the CR value for POE is .93, for CES is .85, and for PV is .86, which all meet the minimum threshold limit of .700, as suggested by Hair et al. (2019). Furthermore, Table 2 also shows the values of AVE for all constructs, where the AVE value for POE is .53, for CES is .56, and for PV is .57; these all values also meet the threshold limit of .500, as suggested by Hair et al. (2019). Moreover, the correlation between PEO and CES was not significant ($r = .06$, n.s.), but the correlation between PEO and PV was positive

and significant ($r = .12^*$, $p < .05$). While the correlation between CES and PV was negative and significant ($r = -.38^{**}$, $p < .01$).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, Validity and Reliability

	Mean	SD	CR	AVE	POE	CES	PV
POE	3.07	.09	.93	.53	(.93)		
CES	3.20	.86	.85	.56	.06	(.85)	
PV	3.29	.97	.86	.57	.12*	-.38**	(.79)

Note: POE; perceived organizational exploitation, CES; coworker emotional support, PV; prohibitive voice, $^{**}p < .01$, $^*p < .05$, Reliability Statistics are shown in parentheses

4.4 | Moderation Analysis

We test the moderation effect of CES between POE and PV using 5000 bootstrapping sample sizes through PROCESS-macro as suggested by Hayes (2018). In the first step, we test the impact of the predictor variable (POE) on the dependent variable (PV), and we found significant positive results where ($b = .411^{**}$, $p < .01$, LL/UL-CIs = $-.727/-.095$), thus it supports the first hypothesis of this study. In the second step, we test the impact of the moderator variable (CES) on the dependent variable (PV), and we found a negative significant result where ($b = -.734^{***}$, $p < .001$, LL/UL-CIs = $.42/1.047$). In the third step, we test the impact of interaction terms (POE $\times$ CES) on the dependent variable (PV). We found a significant negative result where ($b = -.100^*$, $p < .05$, LL/UL-CIs = $-.195/-.004$); these results show that when there was a higher level of POE, but employees also got higher emotional support from their coworkers it dampens the relationship between POE and PV, which shows the moderation of CES, thus, support the second hypothesis of this study.

Table 3

Moderation Analysis

Predictor	B	SE	P	LLCI	ULCI
POE	.411**	.160	.010	-.727	-.095
CES	-.734***	.159	.000	.421	1.047
POE $\times$ CES	-.100*	.048	.040	-.196	-.004

Note: POE; perceived organizational exploitation, CES; coworker emotional support, PV; prohibitive voice, LL; lower-level, UL; upper level, CI; class interval, $N = 308$, $^*p < .05$ levels, $^{**}p < .01$ level $^{***}p < .001$

5 | DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the impact of OE on PV; it also examined the moderating role of CES using the theoretical lens of COR theory. This study's first hypothesis proposed a negative link between OE and PV, and the study's findings also support These findings further explain that

exploitation by organizations in the workplace has a positive impact on employee voice, which negatively influences not only the physical and psychological health of employees but also the workplace environment. Also, this study's findings align with the results of earlier studies (Fan et al., 2024; Livne-Ofer et al., 2019; Shin et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2023). These studies are also evident with the findings of this study and elaborate that exploitation of workplace leaders leads to several adverse outcomes, i.e., burnout, work-family imbalance, and low job satisfaction (Fan et al., 2024; Livne-Ofer et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2023). The second hypothesis of this study predicted the moderation of CES between the relationship of OE and PV, and this study's results also support this hypothesis. The findings of this study also explain that when the organizations had higher exploitation and higher emotional support of coworkers, it promoted their PV (Chen & Trevino, 2022). These findings are also in line with earlier studies, which explain that the support of coworkers leads to a reduction in adverse outcomes and enhances positive outcomes (Chen & Trevino, 2022; Liu et al., 2022; Self et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2020) the PV is one of them. Further, the moderation of CES also rationalizes the importance of the emotional attachment of coworkers with others, especially in a toxic working environment; this support enables individuals how to cope with the depression and anxiety that occur due to OE (Charoensukmongkol et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2022; Tucker et al., 2008).

5.1 | Theoretical Implications

This study's baseline is based on the COR theory, which states that negative stressors in the workplace lead to resource loss. If someone lacks resources, they will exhaust them and fall into a loss spiral. Several previous studies have examined the relationship between employees' emotions and behaviors and their perceptions of OE, but in this study, we use PV as a criterion factor, which is an addition to the existing research. Consequently, this work adds a unique paradigm to the corpus of existing literature regarding resource conservation. This study uses CES as a moderating factor, a social source that may help individuals as a coping mechanism to deal with the toxic environment of organizations in the form of exploitation and enhance their PV. This study, by using the OE and CES, explains the theoretical lens of COR theory and extends knowledge about resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018), which are necessary for humans to perform specific activities at the workplace.

5.2 | Practical Implications

The study was conducted in Pakistan, a nation that prioritizes hierarchy and collectivism (Yang et al., 2012). Because of this, Pakistani workers might react differently from their counterparts in Western countries and are likely more susceptible to OE. Employers can reduce employee feelings of exploitation by implementing various strategies, such as flexible work schedules, performance-based remuneration, avoiding labor contract loopholes, and not using staff for unilateral benefits. Similarly, organizations can support employee voice practices, which can serve as a cathartic outlet for workers and serve as input for modifications to policies, procedures, and guidelines directed at workers. Fair and open performance reviews are essential since, if workers receive insufficient compensation for their efforts, they may become indignant and lose the incentive to contribute more to the companies.

5.3 | Limitations and Future Research Directions

Furthermore, how perceived OE is understood may vary depending on cultural background. Thus, while limiting the sample to Pakistan may lead to some bias in the results, it does assist in eliminating important

irrelevant variables. Therefore, to further validate the findings' generalizability, future researchers should determine whether the findings hold in diverse cultural contexts even if the sample restriction improves internal validity. Further, other theories might be able to clarify this border condition, even if our results indicate that COR provides a helpful basic explanation of the influence of perceived OE on PV practices. To thoroughly examine employee-organization relationships alongside related constructs, other forms of organizational maltreatment, such as psychological contract violations and organizational obstruction, might be considered independent variables besides OE. This will provide a distinct viewpoint on the effects of OE in contrast to other interactions between employees and the organizations. Future research should also concentrate on alternative jobs, such as outsourcing, short-term contracts, and online platforms like freelancing.

6 | CONCLUSION

By consulting the literature on OE and COR theory, the current study created a theoretical framework for assessing the less-studied concept of OE. Highlighting the border condition of CES creates a moderating framework between OE and employee PV behavior. It presents fresh angles on the literature on OE, promotes further study of this subject in many sectors of the economy, and sheds light on the circumstances under which and how employees in service settings are affected by their perceptions of OE.

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