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AIMS : Sale travail et stress : rôle médiateur de la rupture psychologique du contrat et du déséquilibre effort-récompense sur la relation entre le sale travail et les résultats du stress

ABSTRAIT
Le sale boulot (DW) signifie effectuer des tâches que les gens trouvent désagréables, embarrassantes ou douteuses et souvent assumer des rôles peu glamour, prendre des décisions indésirables ou effectuer des tâches qui pourraient potentiellement nuire aux autres. Si le DW peut être nécessaire au bon fonctionnement d'une organisation, ces tâches peuvent être préjudiciables à la santé des employés entraînant ainsi des problèmes liés au stress. Des études antérieures se sont concentrées sur l'aspect général du bien-être et du stress général associé au sale boulot. Cependant, les résultats spécifiques du stress comme l'épuisement professionnel (BOT) et le silence déviant (DVS) et les facteurs de perception comme la rupture psychologique du contrat (PCB) et le déséquilibre effort-récompense (ERI) parmi les cols blancs n'ont reçu que peu d'attention. S'appuyant sur la théorie de l'identité sociale, cette recherche étudie comment le sale travail contribue à ces résultats spécifiques liés au stress parmi les professions de col blanc en validant un modèle qui intègre les PCB et l'ERI comme doubles mécanismes d'intervention. Un plan de recherche par enquête quantitative a été utilisé pour collecter des données auprès de 419 professionnels pakistanais employés par diverses organisations dans le cadre d'une étude transversale. Nos résultats ont montré que les PCB et l'ERI sont des médiateurs importants entre la relation entre le DW et les résultats du stress (BOT et DVS) chez les employés des professions de col blanc. Nous avons notamment constaté que dans le cadre du sale boulot, la théorie de l'identité sociale provoque du stress.
Mots clés:
Sale travail, déséquilibre effort-récompense, épuisement professionnel, silence déviant, rupture de contrat psychologique

Dirty Work and Stress: Mediating Role of Psychological Contract Breach and Effort-Reward Imbalance on the Relationship between Dirty work and Stress Outcomes

ABSTRACT

Dirty work (DW) means doing tasks that people find unpleasant, embarrassing, or questionable and often taking on unglamorous roles, making undesirable decisions, or performing tasks that could potentially harm others. While DW may be necessary for the smooth operation of an organization, these tasks can be detrimental to employees' health thus leading to problems related to stress. Previous studies have focused on the overall well-being aspect and general stress associated with dirty work. However, specific stress outcomes like burnout (BOT) and deviant silence (DVS) and perceptional drivers like psychological contract breach (PCB) and effort-reward imbalance (ERI) among white-collar employees have received scant attention. Drawing from the social identity theory, this research investigates how dirty work contributes to these specific stress-related outcomes among white-collar professions by validating a model that incorporates PCB and ERI as dual intervening mechanisms. A quantitative survey research design was used to collect data from 419 Pakistani professionals employed by a variety of organizations in a cross-sectional study. Our results showed PCB and ERI as significant mediators between the relationship of DW and stress outcomes (BOT and DVS) in employees in white-collar professions. Notably, we found that in the framework of dirty work, social identity theory causes stress.

Keywords:

Dirty Work, Effort-Reward Imbalance, Burnout, Deviant Silence, Psychological Contract Breach

INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic and rapidly evolving work landscape, regardless of their industry or role, employees often find themselves grappling with tasks that are considered unpleasant, morally ambiguous, or socially stigmatized. An investment banker being told that they are "just a greedy parasite on society" or called a "corporate criminal" due to their association with the financial industry; a car salesperson is called a "sleazy liar" or accused of ripping people off; a doctor being told that they are "just in it for the money" or being accused of causing harm due to medical malpractice. Welcome to the world of dirty work – a lesser-explored terrain that permeates every corner of our rapidly evolving society, where stigma lurks in the shadows. This stigmatization towards individuals can manifest as subtle attitudes or biases towards their work, which can still have detrimental effects on their mental health and well-being.

The concept of "dirty work" in occupational study goes beyond the usual boundaries of legality and ethics. It includes duties that, although ethical and legal, are burdened with social, psychological, or moral stigma. The enlarged perspective, initially proposed by Hughes (1951), argues that every profession involves some type of "dirty work," either because of the fundamental characteristics of the duties, the circumstances in which they are carried out, or the societal reactions they provoke. This comprehension expands the range of "dirty work" to encompass a diverse array of professional tasks that may be seen as belittling, undesired, or degrading within different cultural or social settings, going beyond just ethical or legal violations.

Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) developed a comprehensive paradigm that expands on Hughes's original ideas. This framework classifies dirty work into three distinct dimensions: physical, social, and moral taint. Physical taint refers to jobs involving actual physical dirt or

danger, social taint to occupations looked down upon due to their servile nature or association with stigmatized groups, and moral taint to professions involving activities that transgress societal moral standards. This theory tasks ~~that~~ are stigmatized due to their physical circumstances, affiliations with marginalized groups, or deviations from dominant social moral standards. The framework highlights that the perception of taint is greatly affected by society values and norms, which naturally differ among various cultures and change over time. For example, in Bangladesh, nursing is stigmatized due to traditional gender roles and societal expectations, causing immense stress leading to avoidance of direct patient care tasks, which are crucial to the profession (Hadley et al., 2007). In contrast, in Western contexts like the United States, nursing is respected, and the stigma associated with direct care is minimal (American Nurses Association, 2021).

Bouwmeester et al. (2022) have contributed to the ongoing academic discussion by introducing the concept of psychological taint, specifically in the context of knowledge-intensive occupations such as management consulting. Within these particular circumstances, the perception of the job being "dirty" does not stem from its ethical or legal status, but rather from the significant cognitive demands and constraints inherent to these positions. This might result in possible stigmatization. This viewpoint emphasizes that tasks can be considered "dirty" because they have a negative impact on individuals' mental well-being, regardless of whether they are morally or legally acceptable and It is vital to comprehend that a variety of occupations may include doing dirty work including white-collar work. Therefore, the idea that "dirty work" is only associated with immoral or illegal acts is an oversimplification that overlooks the intricate relationship between the type of job, cultural attitudes, and the self-perception of those involved in such activity. Tasks that are inherently ethical and legal can also be labelled as "dirty" if they elicit

social disapproval, undermine personal integrity,) or entail substantial psychological hardships (Bouwmeester et al., 2022) or sacrifices of their work-life balance (Noury et al., 2017). Recognizing the broader range of "dirty work" is crucial for understanding the unique experiences of professionals in different disciplines and comprehending the complex connections between occupational duties, cultural standards, and personal identity. In other words, "dirty work" refers to a wide range of duties that may be ethical and legal, but are often seen as socially, psychologically, or morally tainted due to cultural views, the nature of the jobs themselves, or the circumstances in which they are carried out . This comprehensive perspective questions the limited connection between "dirty work" and unethical or illegal actions and emphasizes the necessity for a more detailed and rigorous examination of the concept in occupational research. It highlights the complex nature of professional roles and their impact on society.

The majority of research examining different antecedents of dirty work shows that employees who do such work show emotional weariness, burnout, and work dissatisfaction (Sharma et al.,2022). Furthermore, the researchers discovered that dirty work is associated with increased turnover intentions and lower job performance. These findings suggest that dirty work can be extremely stressful and have a negative impact on employee's well-being and job outcomes. Another recent study by Zhang et al., (2020) discovered that employees who do dirty work are more stressed than those who do not. "Dirty work" refers to any task that carries negative connotations due to its association with moral, physical, or social concerns (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999; Zhang et al., 2021; Hughes, 1958; Lai et al., 2013; Schaubroeck et al., 2018).

Even though tainted occupations are necessary for society to function, those who engage in these activities frequently experience stigma because of the taint connected to their work

(Hughes,1951). Engaging in a dirty job might negatively affect one's professional identity, particularly if it presents moral conundrums or conflicts with one's values. In other words, when confronted with situations wherein one or a few of one's social identities are compromised, people may feel threatened (Holmes et al.,2016).

Furthermore, the stigma attached to dirty work might impact negatively workers' identities thus leading to undesirable effects like higher levels of turnover, workplace deviance, and negative job attitudes, as well as increased stress and lower self-esteem (Baran et al., 2012). This can ultimately lead to decreased well-being and poor workplace conduct (Kriener et al., 2006). According to Good and Sanchez (2010), social identity threat is consistent with Social Identity Theory (SIT) and can lead to increased aggression and decreased supportive behavior. The findings show that the negative implications of doing dirty work can have serious consequences for both employees and businesses. Therefore, companies must recognize the potential negative effects of dirty work and implement strategies to mitigate these effects, such as providing support and resources to employees who engage in these activities (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). This way, businesses may foster an encouraging workplace that supports healthy behavior and employee wellness.

It is essential to recognize the contributions of employees who perform dirty work, often with stress. This impact of work on individuals' psychological health including well-being cannot be overstated; despite earlier studies highlighting the general stress linked to dirty jobs (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), there is still much to be learned about the complex mechanisms underlying this effect. Although most research has focused on the well-being aspect of dirty work like research by Bickermeier et al., (2015) and De-Cuyper & Witte (2021); it is imperative to broaden our understanding and delve deeper into this topic.

The present study builds upon the existing literature on dirty work (Tracy &Scott, 2006; Ashforth et al., 2007; Dick, 2005; Simpson, R., & Simpson, A.L., 2018; Drew et al., 2007; Grandy, 2008; Tyler, 2011; De Cuyper and De Witte, 2021; Hughes, 1951; Ashforth & Kreiner,1999; Zhang et al., 2020) and seeks to investigate the perceptions of employees toward dirty work (Soralet al., 2022; Jensen and Sandström, 2016; Workman, 2022). Much remains to be discovered regarding the antecedents and mechanisms embroiled in dirty work and its impact on stress outcomes, despite the growing interest in understanding the drivers of stress outcomes at work (Batista and Codo, 2018). While prior research has focused on antecedents such as job insecurity, job demands, lack of control, social support, and values mismatch to explain stress outcomes such as job burnout and deviant silence (Al-Homayan, 2013; Maslach and Leiter,2016) there has been limited examination of the perceptional drivers(psychological contract breach and effort-reward imbalance) resulting in stress or strain.

Drawing from the Social Identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel and Turner, 1979) we offer a model to assess the impact of dirty work on employee stress outcomes, in which breach of psychological contract and imbalance of effort and reward serve as dual intervening mechanisms. Dirty work is prevalent in both white-collar and blue-collar occupations (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2016; Tsai, 2012; Saari et al., 2021; Hämmig, 2014; Huang et al., 2022) and is a key antecedent of stress outcomes (Simpson, R., & Simpson, A.L.2018); because, as per the theory of social identity, identity-threatening dirty work can foster degenerative resources, such as effort-reward imbalance (Notelaers et al.,2019) and psychological contract breach. Given the harmful effects of dirty work-induced stress on employees' well-being, we investigate how dirty work leads to deviant silence and job burnout stress through the mediation of psychological contract breach and effort-reward imbalance.

This study aims to contribute in three ways: Firstly, a new theoretical model has been developed to explore the intervening mechanisms like psychological contract breach and effort-reward imbalance caused by the perception of dirty work, as well as their impact on employees' stress and strain experiences and outcomes. Our research has primarily focused on the impacts of burnout and deviant silence in the paradigm of "dirty work" as it is known to lead to psychological exhaustion impacting employee health. As a result of psychological contract breaches and effort-reward imbalances, employees frequently exhibit negative work attitudes, a sense of unfairness and decreased motivation, absenteeism, withdrawal behaviors, and deviant work behavior, which can be detrimental to organizations.

Secondly, the study adds to the current literature by incorporating the function of social identity theory within the framework of dirty work through mechanisms like psychological contract breakdown and effort-reward imbalance. By exploring these mechanisms, the research illuminates how the stigma and identity threats associated with dirty work, as conceptualized by social identity theory, can lead to psychological contract breaches and create imbalances between efforts and rewards. This approach not only enriches our understanding of the psychological impacts of dirty work but also highlights the critical role of social identity in mediating these effects. In doing so, the study bridges a vital gap in the literature, offering a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between dirty work, social identity, and psychological outcomes in the workplace.

Thirdly, this paper makes a case for entitativity from a new angle that hasn't been looked at in other studies. Usually, the idea of entitativity is thought to make life less stressful by giving people more social resources (Ashforth et al., 2014). However, our research suggests that when individuals engage in work deemed dirty, they have higher expectations of validation and

approval, which leads to a higher level of negative responses.

Insert figure 1

THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS

Dirty Work, Psychological Contract Breach, and Effort Reward Imbalance

The occupational taint, according to Ashforth and Kreiner (2007), makes it likely that dirty workers will be disappointed when seeking validation from outsiders. Still, if people don't look for validation at work, an important sense of self could stay unhinged. The lack of validation caused by stigma produces "entitativity," which creates an "us versus them" situation (Ashforth & Kreiner, 2014). Individuals rely on their organizations for self-awareness, support, meaning, validation, approval, and purpose, resulting in a psychological contract between the individual and the organization (Swannet al., 2012; Benjamin et al.,2012).

This strong identification with work might help individuals cope with work pressure by making stressful scenarios appear less threatening based on the social support provided by colleagues and organizations (Haslam et al., 2004; Haslam et al.,2005). Nonetheless, managers in tainted professions are under intense pressure to deal with the job's complexity, which may prevent them from fulfilling the psychological contract established by workers in dirty jobs (Ashforth & Kreiner, 2013). We argue, based on the notion that the need for validation attached to dirty work is essential, that greater entitativity leads to a stronger psychological contract, resulting in decreased stress, but the complex demands of tainted occupations may prevent managers from meeting employees' expectations, resulting in a psychological contract breach (PCB).

H1a: Dirty work is significantly and positively associated with Psychological-contract

breach.

Stigmatization has a profound effect on how people are perceived, transforming them from whole and normal people into tainted and discounted ones (Goffman,1963). According to Oshana (2006), something is deemed tainted when it is contaminated, stained, fouled, polluted, or ruined with regard to an essential characteristic, as opposed to merely superficially altered. This suggests that the negative associations with corresponding stigma can have far-reaching effects on how individuals are perceived and treated. Recent research has investigated how occupational stigma affects workers and the jobs they do. The way people think about their jobs or their perceptions can help people make better decisions about employees and their work, which can have a positive impact (Huang and Huang, 2022; Grandy and Mavin, 2017).

Studies by Kreiner and Mihelici (2020) and Zhang et al., (2021), on the other hand, have found that employees who think their jobs are stigmatized suffer from several problems including higher occupational and organizational dis-identification, lower job satisfaction, increased deviant behaviors, and a higher intention to quit. People who perform "tainted" work are prone to perceive a reward deficiency and an effort-reward imbalance, according to Ashforth and Kreiner (1999). This implies that the negative social stigma associated with these occupations may contribute to a lack of recognition and appreciation, resulting in a perception of imbalance between efforts and rewards. The research discovered that healthcare workers experienced an imbalance between effort and reward along with issues related to stress (Geetal.,2021). Hence, we hypothesize that dirty work is positively associated with effort-reward imbalance. In other words, individuals in stigmatized and "dirty" occupations are more likely to perceive a lack of recognition and appreciation, leading to a perception of an effort-reward imbalance. Such a perception can have a negative impact on employees and their organizations,

emphasizing the importance of addressing occupational stigma and ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all employees.

H1b: Dirty work is positively and significantly associated with effort-reward imbalance.

Psychological Contract Breach and Stress Outcomes (Burnout and Deviant Silence)

Several empirical researchers have found that psychological contract breach (PCB) has a negative impact on mental health and can lead to employee burnout. (Chambel &Oliveira-Cruz, 2010; Conway & Briner, 2002a, 2002 b; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 2020; Zhong, 2023). This breach of psychological contract may result in burnout because it creates a sense of unfairness and imbalance in the employment relationship, which can be a major contributor to stress for workers (Innstrand,2022). Burnout is caused by a person's work-related inefficacy, fatigue, and exhaustion (Kristensen et al., 2005). When employees experience a psychological contract breach, their employment relationship expectations are not met, resulting in a perception of unfairness, decreased job satisfaction, and increased stress and exhaustion.

Consequently, employees may become disengaged and cynical about their work, which are essential characteristics of burnout (Gabriel and Aguinis, 2022; Demerouti and Bakker, 2011). Numerous empirical studies have demonstrated a correlation between psychological contract breach and burnout (e.g., Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Liu et al., 2022). Considering the detrimental impacts of burnout, there is an increasing demand for preventive interventions that improve the quality of life for employees and minimize business loss (Awaetal.,2010; Klingbyle et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2022). Overall, a psychological contract breach can create a sense of imbalance in the employment relationship, which can result in negative emotions and eventually lead to burnout. Therefore, the following is proposed

H2a: Psychological contract breach significantly and positively affects burnout.

Deviant silence, a form of harmful deviant behavior, has a significant impact on the

workplace. Employees who engage in deviant silence do so to influence their supervisors or coworkers to make poor decisions (Beheshtfaretal.,2012). This behavior falls under the broader category of destructive deviant behaviors, which include actions like theft, workplace animosity, and sabotage (Ahmad & Omar, 2014). Therefore, it becomes crucial to understand the factors that contribute to employees' silence to mitigate its negative effects on organizational outcomes(Murtaza et al., 2021). One important factor that can lead to deviant silence is the perceived occupational stigma. When employees feel stigmatized due to the nature of their work and do not receive support from the organization, it can result in a breach of the psychological contract(Ashforth & Kreiner, 2014). This breach, in turn, increases the likelihood of resorting to negative stress-reduction strategies as a means of coping (Siddiqi et al., 2016). Employees who perceive unfair treatment may express their discontent and animosity through undesirable deviant behavior. This, in the long run, can lead to decreased productivity, reduced commitment, increased turnover, and absenteeism, all of which incur financial costs for businesses (Ahmad & Omar,2014). Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H2b: Psychological contract breach significantly and positively impacts Deviant silence

Effort Reward Imbalance and Stress Outcomes (Burnout and Deviant Silence)

The well-known effort-reward imbalance (ERI) model is used to explain work-related stress and its detrimental impacts on employee outcomes such as burnout, work-family conflict, and self-rated health(Van-Aahcheletal, 2005; Siegrist and Li,2016). Montano and Peter (2021) found that most people see the ERI model as having detrimental effects on both employees and organizations. Recent research demonstrates a direct correlation between effort-reward mismatch and job-related burnout (Murtaza et al., 2021). Employees may experience emotional exhaustion if they perceive that their efforts are not adequately rewarded (Rosenbloom, 2022). A study conducted by Guo et al., (2022) on the influence of effort-reward imbalance on job burnout.

They used a survey of educators (2000+) with measures like burnout, effort-reward imbalance, and positive psychological capital, including future time perspective. The data reveal a substantial association between effort-reward imbalance and burnout among preschool teachers, among other factors. Effort-reward imbalance is particularly pertinent concerning stigmatized jobs, as these jobs frequently carry a negative social stigma and are despised or ostracized by society (Simpson et al., 2012; Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). There can be an absence of recognition and appreciation for dirty work because of the negative social stigma that comes with it. This gives the impression of an effort-reward imbalance (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). Hence, it is believed that employees who conduct dirty work are more likely to suffer an effort-reward imbalance, which raises the chance of negative stress effects such as burnout. Consequently, we propose

H3a: Effort reward imbalance positively and significantly impacts burnout.

Due to the effort-reward imbalance, the employment contract is a source of stress (Siegrist,1996). As a result of this imbalance, employees may suffer negative emotions and psycho-physiological pressure (Mo et al., 2020; Rajacich et al., 2013). Individuals with stigmatized occupations are more prone to think that they are not getting paid enough for their efforts, creating a sense of imbalance (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). Long-term effects of an effort-reward imbalance on employee health include the development of cardiovascular illnesses and increased levels of depression and anxiety (Diekmann et al., 2020; Seigrist and Li, 2016; Eddy et al., 2018; Gilbert-Ouimet et al.,2013). Employees with an imbalance between effort-reward are prone to emotional weariness(Bakker et al., 2000; Tain et al., 2021) and deviant behavior at work (Bachok et al.,2022). While organizational silence and voice are widely observed as deviant behavior, there is little empirical evidence of deviant silence in organizations

(Murtaza et al.,2021). Therefore, our proposed hypothesis suggests that when employees perceive an unfair balance in effort and rewards, they are significantly more inclined to participate in deviant silence, which can have negative consequences for the organization. To better understand this link and how it affects organizational behavior, more research is required.

H3b: Effort-reward imbalance has a positive and significant impact on deviant silence

Dirty Work, Burnout, and Deviant Silence

To examine the correlation between dirty work (DW) and stress-related consequences such as burnout and deviant silence, it is crucial to initially analyze the current research and theoretical frameworks in the field of occupational psychology. Dirty work refers to jobs that are being polluted in terms of their physical, social, or moral aspects. The association of taint and stigmatization has been correlated with many adverse psychological consequences in employees (Kriener et al.,2006). Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) have thoroughly examined the notion of stigmatization in the context of dirty work and its psychological consequences.   According to their suggestion, the negative perception attached to this type of employment might result in heightened emotional weariness, which is a crucial component of burnout. This aligns with the definition of burnout, as proposed by Maslach et al.,(2001), encompasses a state characterized by emotional weariness, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment. We propose based on the notion that the emotional strain of handling stigmatized jobs results in elevated levels of emotional tiredness, which is a key element of burnout (Mastracci, 2021; Sharma,2022; Baran, 2012).

H4a: There exists a direct and positive relationship between dirty work and employee

burnout.

The notion of employee silence, as examined by Milliken, et al., (2003), holds particular significance within the framework of DW. Employee silence is characterized as a form of non-

communicative behavior in which employees refrain from expressing their thoughts or concerns owing to apprehension of adverse outcomes or a feeling of hopelessness and this behavior can be particularly noticeable in stressful work situations, where workers may experience a sense of being sidelined or lacking support(Murtaza et al., 2021). Given this knowledge, we hypothesize on the idea that the distinct stressors and challenges linked to DW, such as managing duties considered socially or morally intricate, result in heightened inclinations towards deviant behavior, and deviant silence being less researched (Ahmad & Omar, 2014).   This type of deviant silence, which involves intentionally refraining from communication, might occur when employees are dealing with the intricacies and potential conflicts (Murtaza et al., 2021). Hence, it is proposed that

> *H4b: There is a direct and positive relationship between dirty work and the occurrence of*
> *deviant silence*

Psychological Contract Breach as a Mediator

Using Social Identity theory as a foundation, it can be assumed that the Dirty work paradigm, with all its demands and pressures on employees, increases workplace stress via diverse intervening methods like psychological contract breach. People who work in stigmatized professions may encounter discrimination or unfavorable attitudes from others, which can cause them to feel ashamed, guilty, or embarrassed about their jobs. This may interfere with their ability to feel valuable and find fulfillment and self-worth in their profession (Hadley, 2007). As per Social identity theory, people have the need to acquire approval and validation (Tajfel,1979), and people "count on organizations to supply them with self-knowledge, support, meaning, validation, approval, and purpose," so group participation in this regard necessitates some degree of depersonalization and collective centralization. Employeesturntotheirorganizationto counter this external non-validation (Swann, 2012) utilizing the concept of entitativity (Ashforth & Kreiner,

2014). This is a dynamic between the individual and the group. This entitativity establishes a robust psychological bond with the in-group.

Theoretically, this bond serves as a coping mechanism for job-related stress by allowing people to perceive stressful circumstances as less threatening (Akbar and Aisyawati, 2021). On one end of this relationship, the manager represents the organization, and on the other end, the employee seeks validation and significance for his/her work. As the first point of contact in any profession, including for dirty work employees (who seek validation and approval), managers face more difficulty than managers in non-dirty jobs (Ashford & Kreiner, 2007). First, they must perform regular management duties (training, performance evaluation, etc.) in addition to facing the additional difficulties of working in a stigmatized field and coping with stigma (Ashforthetal.,2007). In addition to the challenges posed by the taint and the contaminated components of the job, supervisors face additional obstacles when supervising employees who are performing the tainted work. This complexity could involve both "making sense" and "giving sense" (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). Lastly, a few managers indicated that managing multiple stakeholders with varying perspectives and responses to job-related stigmatization posed a significant challenge in their role(Ashforth & Kreiner, 2007). Under these conditions, managers may fall behind in providing the necessary validation (Ashforth et al.,2017), creating a void that results in unmet needs for identity validation and a breach. As mentioned earlier, entitativity is known to reduce stress levels. But, when it comes to doing dirty work, a strong psychological bond raises expectations. This PC is breached if the organization fails to provide validation and support despite the pressures and demands of dirty work. A psychological contract is a powerful tool for influencing behavior within an organization. When individuals perceive a violation of their psychological contract, they experience negative emotions and thus might dwell on deviant

behavior like deviant silence (Murtaza et al., 2021; Ahmad & Omar, 2014) along with showing disengaged and cynical behavior about their work which is essential characteristics of burnout (Gabriel and Aguinis, 2021; Demerouti and Bakker, 2011). Psychological contract breach has negative repercussions for both employees and the organization, such as burnout and deviant silence, among others (Morsch et al., 2020). Given the importance of these results, we propose that

> *H5a: Psychological contract breach mediates the relationship between dirty work and*
>
> *burn-out*
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> *H5b: Psychological contract breach mediates the relationship between dirty work and*
>
> *deviant silence.*

Effort Reward Imbalance as a Mediator

Social identity theory argues that employees invest resources in in-group (Tajfel,1979)as, it offers different benefits like crucial support networks from coworkers or the organization and collective identity and recognition (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999; Choi& Hogg, 2020). Furthermore, it is argued that employees who feel a strong sense of belonging at work are better able to deal with stress in the workplace (Haslam et al.,2004).

In the dirty work paradigm, when employees invest resources in the in-group they anticipate reward in the form of social support, significance, validation, approval, and purpose (Hadley,2007). As stated earlier, managers in dirty work professions face greater challenges compared to those in non-dirty jobs, and consequently, managers may struggle to provide the necessary validation, and support leading to unmet needs(Ashforth et al., 2017). This imbalance between the input and perceived benefits of work can result in an effort-reward imbalance (Siegrist, 1996). This inconsistency may lead to negative stress outcomes as it makes the effort put into the job discrepant from the received reward (Alvarado, 2021) and hurts not only the

organization but also the workers themselves (Devonish, 2018). Arguably, individuals may experience a sense of unfairness or undervaluation or view themselves as less desirable (Van Laar, et al.,2019).

Due to the significance of the present study, two important stress outcomes were selected: burnout and deviant silence. Firstly, many authors have seen that the imbalance caused by effort-reward imbalance (ERI) leads to negative outcomes, such as high levels of emotional exhaustion, which is a crucial element of burnout (Bakker et al., 2000; Tian et al., 2021). Secondly, an effort-reward imbalance can generate a sense of injustice, leading to anger, resentment, and cynicism toward work, coworkers, and the organization, which can contribute to the development of deviant behavior. Deviant silence has been less studied than other deviant behaviors (Murtaza et al., 2021), despite its potential significance in contributing to negative outcomes for organizations and employees.

H6a: Effort-rewardimbalancemediatestherelationshipbetweendirtyworkandburnout

H6b: Effort reward imbalance mediates the relationship between dirty work and deviant silence.

METHODS

White-collar employees from multiple organizations In Pakistan gave information for the study. Pakistan exhibits a wide array of industries, encompassing sectors such as finance, healthcare, manufacturing, and telecommunications. The aggregation of data from various organizations within these sectors provides valuable insights into the extent and characteristics of morally ambiguous or socially stigmatized labor within diverse settings. It facilitates a thorough examination of the matter (Klein, et al.,1994). Various industries may exhibit distinct issues and intricacies concerning unethical conduct. By adopting a non-restrictive approach to research, encompassing other industries, a more comprehensive spectrum of challenges and behaviors can be examined. This methodology facilitated a more comprehensive comprehension of the diverse

manifestations of dirty work within different sectors. The decision to use white-collar employees from multiple organizations in Pakistan and employ a non-probability convenience sampling technique was driven by practicality and feasibility. This approach allowed for easy access to participants, saving time and cost in data collection. After obtaining the participants' consent to take part in the study, they were given questionnaires. The use of questionnaires facilitated standardized data collection, ensuring consistency. Using multiple organizations reduces common method bias too. The study utilized 419 of the 550 given questionnaires, for a response rate of 76.18 percent; 237 females (56.56%) and 182 males (43.44%) provided valid responses. The majority of the respondents belonged to the age group 20-30 (55.4%); the highest number of respondents 118 (28.2%) were graduates, and the least were Ph.D. 13 (3.1%); the maximum number of respondents 157 (37.5%) had work experience of 6-10years with least 22 (5.3%) having work span of less than 1year.

Measures

Since English is the business language of Pakistan, it was used to do the survey. On a seven-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree, all measures were evaluated (7). The following instruments were utilized in the study:

Dirty work: Dirty work was measured with a ten-item scale (Harvey, 2001). The measure included items like"I am viewed negatively by mainstream society."(α0.938)

Effort reward imbalance: Effort reward imbalance was measured with a scale having ten items; created by Segrist et al., (2004) and included the item "I receive the respect I deserve from my superior or a respective relevant person." (α 0.942)

*Burnout***:** Burnout data was captured with the "Copenhagen Burnout Inventory" (Kristensen, 2005), which included a seven-item scale. Example items from the questionnaire included, "Do you feel worn-out at the end of the working day?" (α 0.923)

Deviant silence: The five-item scale developed by Brinsfield (2012) was used to gather data about this deviant behavior and included items like "I made fun of someone at work." (**α** 0.895)

Psychological contract Breach: Employees involved in dirty work were examined for breach of psychological contracts using a nine-item scale developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). The scale's example item was "I feel deceived by my organization."(**α**0.933)

Overview of the analysis

This section of our study meticulously presents the empirical findings, starting with a detailed statistical overview in Table 1, which includes means, standard deviations, and correlations essential for understanding the data landscape. To ensure methodological rigor, we have addressed the potential for common method bias using Harman's single-factor method, with our analysis indicating minimal bias concerns, a critical aspect of validating our study's robustness.In advancing our analytical precision, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed to verify the measurement model's suitability. The results demonstrate a favorable model fit. Further ensuring the reliability and validity of our constructs, we present Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values in Table 2, all surpassing the benchmark standards. This is complemented by the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method's findings in Table 3, affirming the discriminant validity of our constructs.

The core of our results lies in the hypothesis testing conducted via IBM Amos 27. Here, we used a robust bootstrap procedure with an optimal subsample size to examine the intricate relationships between dirty work (DW), psychological contract breach (PCB), effort-reward imbalance (ERI), burnout (BOT), and deviant silence (DVS). The findings, delineating both direct and indirect effects with statistical substantiation, are presented in Tables 4 and 5, and visually in Figure 2.

Finally, the study quantifies the explanatory power of our model through R square values. These findings, indicating the variance explained by predictor constructs in the model for PCB, ERI, BOT, and DVS provide insightful implications for the theoretical framework and practical applications, demonstrating the model's efficacy in capturing key dynamics within the realm of dirty work. Table 1 displays the mean, standard deviation, and correlation.

Insert table 1

Common Method Bias

The current study also looked at the likelihood of common method bias using Harman's single-factor method. The research showed that using a single component to get the variance was less than 50% or 17.086%. This means that this study doesn't have a big common technique bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The measurement model exhibited an excellent fit to the data, as reflected by key fit indices. The approach continues with an assessment of the validity and reliability of each measurement concept. The values need to be more than 0.7 to indicate composite reliability as shown in Table 2 (Hairet al., 2010). An AVE greater than 0.5 indicates convergent validity.

Table2

HTMT

HTMT, a novel technique for measuring discriminant validity, was also employed in the current investigation. HTMT outputs must be less than 0.85, hence there is no discriminant

validity issue in this study (Henseler et al., 2015) (see Table 3).

Table 3

Hypotheses testing

IBM Amos 27 was used to test hypotheses. To obtain hypothesis results, the bootstrap process was performed with the recommended subsample size of 5,000. H1a and H1b hypotheses recognized the strong positive association between DW and PCB and DW and ERI (Beta = 0.626 and 0.609, respectively). H2a and H2b validated the direct effect of PCB==>BOT and PCB ==> DVS (beta= 0.283 and 0.322, respectively) (see Table 4) with a significant positive relationship. Both H3a and H3b demonstrated a positive and statistically significant connection between ERI ==> BOT and ERI ==> DVS (beta = 0.269 and 0.239, respectively). H5a and H5b posited a direct effect of DW on BOT and DVS (beta 0.273 and 0.261). Both hypotheses are supported with significant results (see Table 4 and Illustration 2) All hypotheses showed highly significant results (p < .001), with moderate effect sizes, indicating robust support for the proposed relationships. The confidence intervals and T-values further reinforce these findings.   ------------------------------

Table 4 and Figure2

Hypotheses testing indirect effect

Table 5 provides a breakdown of mediation effects. According to the results, H5a and H5b have an effect that is both statistically significant and positive mediation (indirect effect = 0.177 and 0.202,respectively).These hypotheses H6a and H6b have also identified the mediation effect (see table5). These findings show that there are partial mediation effects for both PCB and

ERI in the associations between DW and the BOT and DVS results with indirect effect of 0.164 and 0.145 respectively. These mediation hypotheses have strong support, as indicated by the significance levels and confidence intervals (table 5).

Table 5

Quality criteria

R square is "the fraction of a construct's variance that can be accounted for by its predictor-constructs," as described by the literature (Hair, 2010). Values of R^2 between 0.25 and 0.50are considered indicative of little impact, whereas values between 0.50 and 0.75 are interpreted as indicative of moderate to large effects for endogenous constructs. Our model predicts R^2 values of 0.392 for PCB, 0.371 for ERI, 0.471 for BOT and 0.469 for DVS.

DISCUSSION

The study was conducted to investigate the underlying mechanisms by which perceived occupational stigma affects white-collar workers in multiple organizations in Pakistan. Based on the SIT theory, a paradigm was developed to examine the vital effect of dirty work upon different stress outcomes, with mediators being psychological contract breach and effort-reward imbalance. Our study's findings provided substantial support for the hypotheses, indicating that dirty work is positively associated with psychological contract breach and effort-reward imbalance among employees. In addition, the mediation effect of these variables had a substantial influence on burnout and deviant silence, two stress related outcomes experienced by employees performing dirty work.

Theoretical Implications

      The following section outlines four theoretical implications that arise from the analysis of our findings. Hughes first used the term "dirty work" in 1951. Since then, many social scientists have looked into it, including Dick (2005), Ashforth and Kreiner (1999, 2014), Ashforth et al., (2007), Baran et al., (2012), Drew et al., (2007), Grandy (2008), Tracy and Scott (2006), Tyler (2011), De-Cuyper and De-Witte (2022), and Zhang et al., (2021). A work identity develops because people spend so much time at work and take part in activities linked to their jobs which is a person's self-concept based on their work experiences; may include organizational, occupational, and other identities. These identities are significant for organizations because they influence the roles people assume at work and the behaviors associated with them (Van Bavel et al., 2020). Also, having a solid professional identity can boost morale and lead to greater success in the workplace (Pearson et al., 2012). According to studies on self-perception and social validation, an individual's sense of self usually develops by the roles and responsibilities they play in a given setting (Mason-Schrock,1996; Choi and Hogg, 2020; Mael et al., 2001).

      People doing tainted work who seek this validation are typically dissatisfied because their work is stigmatized and does not receive approval from others; they feel their identity is threatened, which causes stress. They turn to their organization to remedy the situation. This eventually produces "entitativity" and a strong psychological connection with the organization. Possessing a strong psychological contract and entitativity should, in an ideal scenario, assist individuals in managing work-related stress by making "stressful situations" appear less threatening (Haslam et al., 2004). According to several studies (Choi and Hogg, 2020; Haslam et al., 2005), this bond should also give social support provided by colleagues and organizations.

Our research, however, showed that managers often struggle to deal with the difficulties of tainted jobs, which is why this strong desire for validation by the employees usually goes unhinged. In other words, staff members anticipate receiving this "validation" from their employer, and when managers don't, staff members feel under-appreciated and betrayed; resulting in effort-reward imbalance and PCB. This PCB and ERI result in extreme stress. These outcomes, behavioral in nature, such as deviant silence; and health-related, such as burnout are harmful to both organizations and their employees. The mechanisms of psychological contract breach and effort-reward imbalance allow us to conclude that entitativity is a stressor if workers are required to perform dirty tasks.

Second, because the Social Identity theory has been extensively used to describe the powerful phenomenon of in-grouping, which can serve as a source of relief from stressful situations and can aid in reducing stress in difficult situations, we apply it to our arguments in a special way. On the contrary, our data suggested that SIT, in the setting of dirty work, functions like a special phenomenon to generate stress outcomes that have both health (burnout) and behavior-related consequences (deviant silence). While the SIT has frequently been used to reduce stress in social situations (Haslam et al., 2005), our findings demonstrate that it can lead to negative outcomes such as burnout and deviant silence when the context of dirty work is in place. It appears that the SIT plays a more complex role under certain conditions, and its effects should be considered.

Thirdly, previous research on dirty work has primarily examined the antecedents of its effects, particularly stigma coping strategies, as well as the general effects of stress (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; DeCuyper & DeWitte, 2021). However, the complex mechanisms involved in this relationship remain poorly understood. Our research strives to advance the theoretical

development of the link of dirty work with stress, which has lacked conceptual grounding ; specifically, our research sheds light on the mechanisms of ERI and PCB as strong "predictors" of stress outcomes (burnout and deviant silence)amongwhite-collarworkersperformingdirtywork.

Fourthly, the effort-reward imbalance is associated with negative impacts like reduced levelofmotivation,lowerjobsatisfaction,andquitintentions(Kinman,2016),perceivedsenseofinjustic eandunfairnessleadingtonegativeemotions,andinjustice(Eddyetal.,2016;andburnout(Rosenbloom, 2022;Clinchamps et al., 2021).   Similarly, when a psychological contract is broken,itcanhavedifferentsortnegativeeffects,suchasdecreasedsatisfactionwiththejobleadingtolow ercommitment and, productivity, increased intent to quit resulting in a turnover, decreased motivation,loyalty,anddedicationtotheorganization'sobjectivesduetodecreasedorganizationalcom mitment,decreased trust in the organization affecting employee morale and motivation, and decreased job performance. In addition, it may generate detrimental feelings like resentment, disappointment, and hatred toward the employer (Schaufeli and Enzman, 2020; Chambel and Cruz, 2010). All these outcomes are predominantly negative for the organization, but increased negative emotions also have a significant negative impact on the well-being of employees. It may lead to retaliation as deviant silence and cause severe stress as burnout. Burnout and deviant silence are regarded as the least studied outcomes of PCB and ERI in relation to dirty work; therefore, they were specifically chosen to examine the impact on both the organization and the employee. These two characteristics were found to be significantly prevalent among employees performing dirty work, indicating that these employees continue to persevere, struggling within yet keeping these struggles hidden.

Practical implication

First, this study offers insights into the effects of dirty work on employees' stress levels and how psychological contract breach and effort-reward imbalance mediate these effects, it

could be of use to experts in subjects like organizational behavior, psychology, and sociology. Second, professionals and practitioners working in industries where dirty work is common, like healthcare, sanitation, and law enforcement, may be interested in the study's findings. These people could use the research's findings to create workplace policies and procedures that lessen the negative impact of dirty work on workers' general well-being.

Finally, policymakers and regulators may find the study's findings useful in developing labor laws and regulations that safeguard workers who do dirty work. Organizations can greatly benefit from addressing psychological contract breaches and effort-reward imbalances because these problems scan affect both employees and organizations. By ensuring clear communication and transparency about expectations and obligations, offering enough rewards and recognition for workers' efforts, and addressing any perceived breaches of the psychological contract in a timely and respectful manner, it is possible to create a more positive and supportive work environment. Increased employee motivation, engagement, and performance can result from this, creating a more positive work environment that is advantageous to both workers and the company.

FUTURE DIRECTION AND LIMITATIONS

In terms of future direction, a compelling theoretical perspective for investigation is the "job demands and resources"(JD-R) model. The JD-R hypothesis states that workers' productivity and satisfaction at work are affected by both the work itself and the psychological and emotional demands of their jobs, as well as by the resources they receive from their coworkers and managers. According to this hypothesis, workers are more likely to be invested and motivated when they have access to a wealth of supportive workplace tools, but stress and burnout can set in when their workload becomes too great. The study's use of JD-R theory may

provide an alternative perspective on the relationships among stress, dirty work, PCB, and ERI that contrast with social identity theory. This information could also be used to direct interventions and strategies meant to improve the health of employees and the effectiveness of businesses.

Secondly, our study found that most participants were employed in white-collar professions. According to the conservation of resources theory, participating in dirty work is expected to "drain employees' cognitive resources, leading to strain. "It is interesting to consider how employees in white-collar professions, which are typically associated with greater resources, would cope with this strain. According to the Conservation of Resources Theory, experiencing or perceiving source depletion can cause stress and a decline in well-being. Workplace strain arises from events that threaten an individual's ability to maintain or acquire the necessary resources to handle job-related challenges. This theory also argues that people whose physical and mental resources are inadequate would view work-related tasks and events as stressors, increasing their levels of stress and anxiety (Hobfoll, 2001).

It is imperative to explore the substantial influence of socioeconomic and cultural dynamics that are not illegal or unethical in nature on "self-taint" and tension among white-collar professionals in Pakistan. This phenomenon extends beyond the frequently emphasized ethical quandaries and encompasses the consequences of extended work hours, pervasive nepotism, and the subsequent neglect of familial obligations—aspects that, although not illegal or unethical, nonetheless have a profound effect on mental well-being. Extended work hours, which are frequently anticipated in professional environments as a result of competitive work cultures and economic pressures, disrupt the equilibrium between work and personal life and necessitate substantial personal concessions. This imbalance is not solely a consequence of professional

pressures; rather, it is profoundly embedded in the socio-cultural norms and expectations regarding achievement and dedication in Pakistan. Research has indicated that these types of work environments substantially amplify stress levels and may result in chronic mental health complications (Fazal et al., 2022)

Furthermore, nepotism, although it may not explicitly violate ethical or legal norms, affects professionals by establishing conditions in which merit-based systems are dominated by familial or social affiliations. Perceiving their work environment as unjust can cause people to feel inadequate and frustrated, leading to a sense of self-taint and reduced job satisfaction (Vveinhardt & Bendaraviciene, 2022). Moreover, the cultural norm in Pakistan that places professional achievement above personal fulfillment can have profound repercussions on familial and social connections, exacerbating the deterioration of mental well-being. Individuals experience heightened stress as a result of neglecting their family in service of their careers, which exacerbates emotions of remorse and self-doubt (Ahmad & Koncsol, 2022)

As a result, it is critical to address these socioeconomic and cultural factors in order to mitigate their detrimental effects on the mental health of professionals. It is imperative for organizations and policymakers to take into account these dimensions during the development of workplace policies that aim to cultivate healthier work environments and advance mental well-being.

With regards to limitations, our findings may be limited in their applicability to other situations because the data we collected were only from employees of Pakistani enterprises. Future studies could investigate gathering data from different contexts, such as international workplaces, to increase the conclusive generalizability. Longitudinal study .

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, this study has offered a useful understanding of the complex relationship between dirty work, the breakdown of psychological contracts, the imbalance between effort and reward, and their impact on employee stress in a diverse organizational setting in Pakistan. The results emphasize the strong connections between dirty work and the psychological contract breach, as well as effort-reward imbalance among white-collar workers. These factors ultimately lead to increased levels of stress, specifically in the form of burnout and deviant silence. The study highlights the intricate role of the Social Identity Theory in this specific situation and emphasizes the significance of addressing these concerns within the workplace to enhance both the well-being of employees and the effectiveness of the business. Professionals in domains such as organizational behavior, psychology, and sociology can apply the practical consequences of this research. Additionally, industry practitioners and legislators can utilize these results to create working conditions that are more supportive and fairer. Subsequent investigations should examine other theoretical frameworks and expand the range of data gathering to improve the applicability of these results. In summary, this study enhances our comprehension of the difficulties encountered by those involved in unpleasant tasks and emphasizes the importance of addressing these problems in order to promote healthier work environments.

TABLE 1 MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND CORRELATION

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
						Pearson Correlation								
1. Gender	1.570	0.496	1.000											
2. Marital Status	1.450	0.498	.186**	1.000										
3. Age	1.570	0.710	-.106*	-.543**	1.000									
4. Education	2.600	1.331	-.266**	0.034	0.033	1.000								
5. OccupationSector	5.110	1.892	-0.016	-0.052	.140**	-.124*	1.000							
6. JobPosition	1.050	0.228	-0.021	-0.006	-0.001	-0.046	-0.053	1.000						
7. Job Experience	2.870	1.003	-.159**	-.524**	.716**	-0.076	.100*	-0.043	1.000					
8. DW	4.891	1.227	-.102*	0.008	-0.016	0.089	-0.037	0.067	-0.078	1.000				
9. ERI	4.896	1.267	0.000	0.022	0.002	0.022	-0.044	0.000	-0.031	.542**	1.000			
10. PCB	4.923	1.253	-0.068	-0.015	0.023	0.011	-0.005	0.005	-0.017	.551**	.538**	1.000		
11. BOT	4.947	1.282	-0.052	0.050	0.004	0.061	-0.053	0.034	-0.019	.526**	.524**	.528**	1.000	
12. DVS	4.907	1.284	-0.010	-0.010	0.058	0.060	-0.007	0.040	0.029	.509**	.498**	.525**	.506**	1.000

TABLE 2 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ANALYSIS

Construct	CR >0.7	AVE >0.5	MSV
Dirty work	0.938	0.603	0.348
Effort-reward imbalance	0.942	0.621	0.332
Psychologicalcontractbreach	0.933	0.608	0.348
Burnout	0.923	0.63	0.323
Deviantsilence	0.896	0.632	0.329

TABLE 3 DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY ANALYSIS (HTMT)

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1. Dirty work					
2. Effort-reward imbalance	0.576				
3. Psychological contract breach	0.592	0.574			
4. Burnout	0.565	0.561	0.569		
5. Deviant silence	0.555	0.541	0.576	0.556	

TABLE 4 HYPOTHESES TESTING THE DIRECT EFFECT

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Std. Beta	Std. Error	Lower Bounds	Upper Bounds	T Values	P Values	R² Values
H1a	DW ➔PCB	0.626	0.046	0.53	0.709	13.609	***	0.392
H1b	DW ➔ERI	0.609	0.046	0.515	0.696	13.239	***	0.371
H2a	PCB ➔BOT	0.283	0.053	0.188	0.398	5.340	***	0.471
H2b	PCB ➔DVS	0.322	0.052	0.228	0.431	6.192	***	0.469
H3a	ERI ➔BOT	0.269	0.05	0.18	0.378	5.380	***	-
H3b	ERI ➔DVS	0.239	0.048	0.153	0.345	4.979	***	-
H4a	DW ➔BOT	0.273	0.052	0.182	0.387	5.250	***	-
H4b	DW ➔DVS	0.261	0.049	0.175	0.371	5.327	***	-

TABLE 5 HYPOTHESES TESTING INDIRECT EFFECT

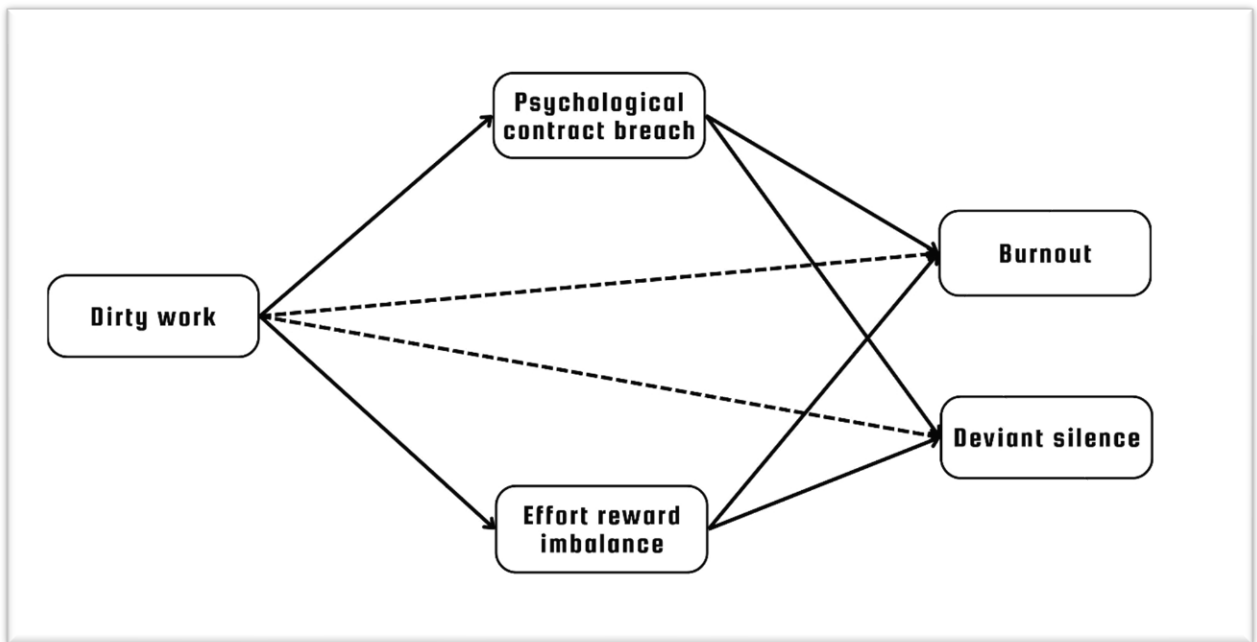| Hypothesis	Relationships	Indirect Effect	Confidence interval Lower bound	Upper bound	P Values	Conclusion
H5a	DW --> PCB --> BOT	0.177	0.145	0.279	0.001	Partial Mediation
H5b	DW --> PCB --> DVS	0.202	0.165	0.301	0.001	Partial Mediation
H6a	DW --> ERI --> BOT	0.164	0.131	0.259	0.000	Partial Mediation
H6b	DW --> ERI --> DVS	0.145	0.108	0.223	0.000	Partial Mediation

FIGURE 1 CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH MODEL

FIGURE 2 STRUCTURAL MODEL (DIRECT EFFECT)
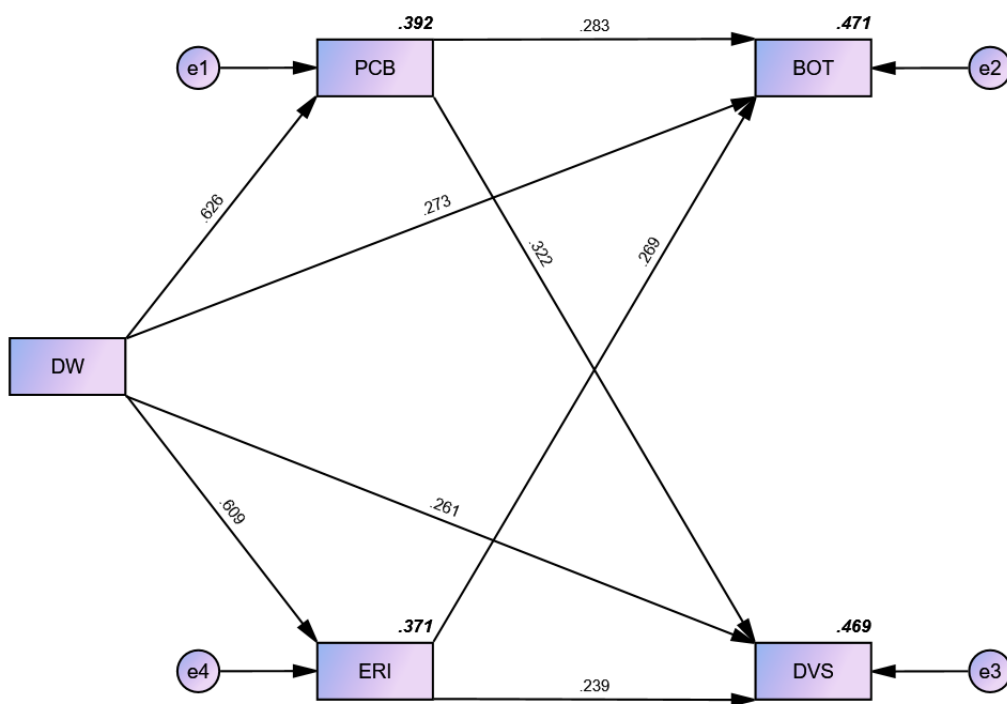
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