Unraveling the relationship between workplace dignity and employees’ tacit knowledge sharing: the role of proactive motivation

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Abstract
Purpose – Drawing on social exchange theory (SET) and proactive motivation model, this study aims to examine the relationship between workplace dignity and employees’ tacit knowledge sharing (TKS) and assess the mediating role of psychological safety and organizational identification in this relationship.

Design/methodology/approach – Data are collected in the three waves from 307 first-line supervisors and professionals of high- and medium-high-tech manufacturing organizations of Pakistan. Partial least squares structural equation modelling technique is applied using SmartPLS 4 software to test hypothesized relationships.

Findings – Results reveal that workplace dignity is directly and positively related to TKS and psychological safety and organizational identification mediate this relationship.

Practical implications – This study highlights the importance of workplace dignity as a vital determinant of TKS. Findings of this research underscore the need for enactment of humanistic and employee-oriented organizational policies and practices that signal workplace dignity which can result in increased psychological safety and enhanced organizational identification leading towards higher TKS.

Originality/value – This research proffers novel understanding of the nexus between an embryonic socio-emotional element of workplace context, namely, workplace dignity and TKS. This study not only advances knowledge management literature from dignity perspective but also contributes to SET and proactive motivation model.

Keywords Psychological safety, Tacit knowledge sharing, Workplace dignity, Pakistan, Organizational identification

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Knowledge is a premier source of organizational performance, sustainable success and competitive advantage in a knowledge-based dynamic, volatile and competitive business environment (Del Giudice and Maggioni, 2014; Rezaei et al., 2021; Yin et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2022). Consistent with knowledge-based view (KBV) of the firm (Grant, 1996), prior research has widely recognized the indispensable role of effective knowledge management in enhancing intellectual capital, fostering innovation and improving organizational performance and competitiveness (Ali et al., 2019; Iqbal, 2021; Mahdi et al., 2019; Youssef et al., 2017). This stream of research indicates that the mere presence of knowledge in an organization is futile unless it is shared within the organization to foster mutual learning (Kim and Park, 2020), improve team performance and creativity (Liu et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2016) and enhance employees’ competency to generate and implement novel ideas (Wang et al., 2021).
Knowledge sharing refers to “a social interaction culture, involving the exchange of employee knowledge, experiences, and skills through the whole department or organization” (Lin, 2007, p. 315). At individual level, knowledge sharing has been frequently studied with respect to two prominent categories: explicit knowledge sharing (EKS) and tacit knowledge sharing (TKS) (Wang et al., 2021). EKS refers to the exchange of formalized information and knowledge that is generally available in codified form such as written documents and reports (Hau et al., 2013). On the other hand, TKS is defined as the exchange of an intuitive and unarticulated knowledge (Hau and Evangelista, 2007) that lies in the form of personal skills, knowhow, experience and expertise (Hau et al., 2013; Lei et al., 2019). Although both EKS and TKS are vital for innovation and organizational performance (Wang et al., 2016), TKS has been the prime focus of knowledge management scholarship for several reasons. For instance, as compared to EKS, TKS is more strongly related to employee innovative behaviours (Wang et al., 2021). Moreover, TKS plays a crucial role in organizational proficiency and survival through enhanced intellectual capital (Wang et al., 2016) and innovation capabilities (Ganguly et al., 2019). Hence, TKS is strategically more important for organizations’ existence, effectiveness and competitiveness in marketplace (Gupta et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2016). In addition, tacit knowledge is more personal and intangible in nature (Cyr and Choo, 2010) and sharing of such knowledge mainly occurs between peers or co-workers in the workplace (Enwereuzor, 2021; Lin, 2007). Hence, sharing of tacit knowledge can threaten knowledge holder’s position in the organization (Manaf et al., 2020) and invite conflict of interest (Lei et al., 2019). Therefore, individuals often show reluctance to share their tacit knowledge with their peers in the organization (Enwereuzor et al., 2022; Yin et al., 2020). Hence, TKS requires extra-role efforts (Bol et al., 2018) and voluntary, self-sacrificial and proactive engagement (Gupta et al., 2021; Qian et al., 2020) suggesting that stimulating TKS is a challenging affair (Tang and Martins, 2021). Based on preceding arguments, it is essential and meaningful to identify determinant of TKS and the influencing mechanisms.

Earlier research investigating antecedents of knowledge sharing in general and TKS in particular has primarily focused on socio-human drivers such as organizational policies and practices (Abbasi et al., 2021; Jia et al., 2019; Rezaei et al., 2021), organizational climate (Liu et al., 2021) and leadership behaviours (Qian et al., 2020; Yin et al., 2020). This line of research has provided valuable insights regarding determinants of knowledge sharing particularly TKS. Tacit knowledge is more personal, and its sharing is beyond the scope of formal job responsibilities of an employee (Karriker and Williams, 2009). Hence, employees cannot be coerced to engage in such an extra-role, voluntary and self-sacrificial behaviour (Gupta et al., 2021; Yin et al., 2020). Moreover, sharing of tacit knowledge is risky and can jeopardize one’s social standing in the organization. Therefore, recent research suggests that tacit knowledge can be best shared based on socio-emotional considerations (Gupta et al., 2021). Extant research has identified several socio-emotional elements such as interactional justice (Niehoff and Moorman, 1993), respect (Carmeli et al., 2015) and workplace democracy (Rezaei et al., 2021). In spite of the evidence that such socio-emotional factors can positively shape extra-role and citizenship behaviours (Ng and Lucianetti, 2016; Ng et al., 2021), limited attention has been given to how such socio-emotional elements can contribute to TKS (Enwereuzor et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2021; Rezaei et al., 2021).

Our study aims to address this scarcity in extant research and intends to make several theoretical and practical contributions. More specifically, this study has two main objectives. Firstly, our research aims to extend socio-emotional perspective on TKS by introducing workplace dignity as a novel socio-emotional antecedent of TKS. Workplace dignity, which portrays bright-side aspects of an organization (Ahmed et al., 2022), is defined as “the self-recognized and other-recognized worth acquired from engaging in work activity” (Lucas, 2017, p. 2549). The notion of workplace dignity is rooted in humanistic management (Bai, 2017) which underscores the need to treat employees as ends rather than means (Pirson, 2017) and scholars have called for investigating the outcomes of workplace dignity (Ahmed et al., 2021;
Thomas and Lucas, 2019). Given that knowledge workers are more concerned about their respect, self-worth and well-being (Salas-Vallina et al., 2018), we believe that workplace dignity can potentially stimulate desirable behaviours in a knowledge-oriented work context. Thus, considering that TKS has been given limited attention from socio-emotional perspective, we draw upon social exchange theory (SET) (Blau, 1964) and make a maiden attempt to provide an understanding how workplace dignity, as an important and novel socio-emotional workplace element, is related to TKS.

Secondly, while drawing upon proactive motivation model (Parker et al., 2010), we aim to advance workplace dignity and tacit knowledge management literature by investigating two motivational routes through which workplace dignity can promote TKS. Parker et al.’s (2010) proactive motivation model proposes that situational factors can influence employees’ engagement in self-initiated and proactive behaviours through three motivational mechanisms that include “can do”, “reason to” and “energized to” mechanisms. In present study, we focus on two motivational states, namely, “can do” and “reason to” motivational states and operationalize these motivational mechanisms as psychological safety (“can do” motivation) and organizational identification (“reason to” motivation) and examine their potential role in translating the impact of workplace dignity on employees’ TKS. By identifying and investigating these two mechanisms simultaneously, we provide a comprehensive and fine-grained understanding of the processes through which workplace dignity can not only stimulate TKS but also add empirical evidence to proactive motivation model. In sum, building upon SET (Blau, 1964) and proactive motivation model (Parker et al., 2010), this investigation is aimed at addressing the following research questions:

RQ1. Is workplace dignity related to TKS?

RQ2. Do psychological safety and organizational identification mediate the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS?

2. Literature review

2.1 Tacit knowledge sharing

Knowledge can be defined as a fluid mix of intuition, insights, information, ideas, expertise, experience and skills (Davenport and Prusak, 1998; Rezaei et al., 2021). Based on KBV of the firm (Grant, 1996), knowledge has been recognized as a vital source of sustainable organizational performance and competitiveness (Gupta et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). However, KBV suggests that the mere availability of knowledge in an organization cannot guarantee organizational proficiency, until its effective management is ensured (Iqbal, 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). Knowledge sharing is the core and fundamental aspect of effective and successful knowledge management (Chen et al., 2018; Rezaei et al., 2021). From behavioural perspective, knowledge sharing can be defined as a conscious action (Ipe, 2003) that is directed at exchange of information, ideas, experience and skills with others in the organization (Gagné et al., 2019). At individual level, knowledge sharing is frequently categorized into EKS and TKS (Wang et al., 2021). As discussed in earlier section, EKS is characterized by mutual exchange of codified information and systematic knowledge that are generally available in the organization in the form of documents and reports, working procedures and organizational rules (Lei et al., 2019; Lu et al., 2006). On the contrary, TKS refers to the exchange of mental models, insights, ideas, skills, experience, expertise and competencies (Lin, 2007; Obrenovic et al., 2022). Given the purpose of this research, the current study points to Lin’s (2007) conceptualization and focuses on TKS as sharing of tacit knowledge between co-workers or peers in the workplace.

Both EKS and TKS are critical drivers of organizational intellectual capital, innovation and performance (Wang et al., 2016). Even though identifying and investigating antecedents of the EKS and TKS is important, the current study intends to focus on TKS for at least three
reasons. Firstly, prior empirical evidence suggests that TKS is strongly related to team cohesion (Mesmer-Magnus and DeChurch, 2009) and performance (Wang et al., 2016) and especially valuable for organizational development and survival (Borges et al., 2018; Hernaus et al., 2018) as it contributes to organizational innovation capability (Ganguly et al., 2019), productivity (Reychav and Weisberg, 2009) and competitiveness (Wang and Noe, 2010). Secondly, when examined together, TKS is more strongly related to employees’ abilities to produce and execute innovative ideas (Wang et al., 2021). Thirdly, tacit knowledge mainly rooted in employees’ minds in the form of ideas, skills, experience and expertise and it is challenging to bring this knowledge into codified or tangible form (Bol et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2013). Therefore, sharing of such knowledge with others in the organization needs a lot of time and effort (Hau et al., 2013) and thus requires employees to demonstrate self-sacrificial, voluntary and proactive behaviour (Zhang et al., 2022). Hence, it is challenging for organizations to motivate employees to exhibit such an extra-role behaviour through formal organizational policies and practices. Therefore, it is meaningful and crucial to identify and investigate socio-emotional drivers of TKS (Enwereuzor et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2021).

2.2 Workplace dignity

Given that tacit knowledge is more personal in nature and can be best shared based on socio-emotional considerations, scholars have begun identifying and examining socio-emotional antecedents of TKS (Enwereuzor et al., 2022; Enwereuzor, 2021; Gupta et al., 2021). The current study is proposed to extend this line of research by introducing workplace dignity as a novel socio-emotional determinant of TKS. The roots of workplace dignity can be traced back to the work of Hodson (2001) who defined dignity as “the ability to establish a sense of self-worth and self-respect, and to appreciate the respect of others” (p. 3). However, it is only recently that workplace dignity has been introduced in management scholarship and particularly brought into the discourse of humanistic management (Bal, 2017; Pirson, 2019). The humanistic management paradigm advocates that organizations and managers should treat employees as ends rather than means and thus underscores the need for protection and promotion of workplace dignity (Bal, 2017; Lucas, 2017; Pirson, 2019; Zawadzki, 2018). Earlier research concerning workplace dignity is primarily qualitative in nature and has mainly focused on conceptual issues and determinants of workplace dignity based on ethnographic data (Baker and Lucas, 2017; Hodson, 2001; Sayer, 2007). In spite of the existence of such a plethora of qualitative evidence, concrete and precise definition of workplace dignity and its conceptual clarity and empirical measurement was lacking. This issue has been recently addressed by some dignity scholars (Tiwari and Sharma, 2019; Thomas and Lucas, 2019).

Workplace dignity has been broadly defined as “the self and others’ acknowledged worth acquired from engaging in work activity” (Lucas, 2017, p. 2549). Building upon this broad definition, Thomas and Lucas (2019) have provided clarity regarding the construct of workplace dignity with reliable and validated measure. They conceptualize workplace dignity with five characteristics, namely, “respectful interaction, recognition of competence and contribution, equality, inherent value, and general feelings of workplace dignity” (p. 83). Based on these characteristics, workplace dignity has been maintained as a theoretically and empirically distinct construct from other related socio-emotional constructs including but not limited to organizational respect, decent work and organization-based self-esteem (Ahmed et al., 2021; Bal, 2017; Duffy et al., 2017; Thomas and Lucas, 2019). For instance, organizational respect mainly focuses on one’s self-worth that stems only from giving respect within a work group or organization (Ramarajan et al., 2008). On the contrary, workplace dignity entails self-worth that not only limited to demonstration of respect by others but also emanates from recognition of one’s competence and contributions and expression of inherent value and equality at work (Thomas and Lucas, 2019). Similarly,
workplace dignity is different from decent work in that the later serves as a mean by which the former is upheld or maintained (Ahmed et al., 2022; Duffy et al., 2017; Scott-Campbell and Williams, 2020). Likewise, workplace dignity is distinct from organization-based self-esteem in that the latter is an outcome of the former (Ahmed et al., 2021). In line with these arguments, the distinctiveness of workplace dignity from other socio-emotional constructs makes it a promising area of future research particularly concerning exploration of its potential influence on extra-role and voluntary behaviours such as TKS.

3. Theoretical background and hypotheses development

3.1 Social exchange theory and relationship between workplace dignity and tacit knowledge sharing

SET is mainly rooted in norms of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and proposes that positive treatments given by an exchange partner to the other are reciprocated by the latter in the same way (Blau, 1964). SET emphasizes social exchange relationship that is characterized by positive experiences and socio-emotional elements such as feelings of respect, satisfaction, trust, obligation and mutual benefits (Konovsky and Pugh, 1994; Rupp and Mallory, 2015; Turnley and Feldman, 1999). In an organizational context, this social exchange relationship when it is developed overtime between employees, prompt them to demonstrate attitudes and behaviours that reap mutual benefits (Croppanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Konovsky and Pugh, 1994; Mitchell et al., 2012). Similarly, a positive social exchange process when occurs between employees and their organization invoke employees to move beyond transactional obligations and demonstrate extra-role and discretionary behaviours that generate benefits for the organization (Jia et al., 2019).

Based on the rules of reciprocity and consistent with the preceding arguments, SET can provide a solid theoretical foundation to explain the direct relationship between workplace dignity and TKS. Workplace dignity is characterized by equality, respectful interaction, feelings of being valued and recognition of one’s competence and contribution (Thomas and Lucas, 2019). Prior research suggests that such work characteristics are the reflection of positive treatment from colleagues and organization in terms of respect, care and trust (Luo, 2007). These positive treatments augment employees’ perception of self-esteem and meaningful existence and thus stimulate positive social exchange process (Jnaneswar and Ranjit, 2020; Dayan et al., 2009) whereby employees are inclined to reciprocate with self-sacrificial, voluntary and extra-role behaviours (Bartel et al., 2012). Consistent with this reasoning, prior empirical evidence indicates that respect, care, well-being and fairness exhibited by work environment nurture positive social exchange process that make employees feel obligated to reciprocate such supportive treatments with discretionary and extra-role behaviours such as organizational citizenship behaviour (Eva et al., 2020), innovative behaviour (Jnaneswar and Ranjit, 2020) and knowledge sharing (Jia et al., 2019), particularly TKS (Gupta et al., 2021). Aligned with preceding arguments based on SET (Blau, 1964) and prior empirical evidence, we expect a direct and positive relationship between workplace dignity and TKS. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. Workplace dignity is positively related to TKS.

3.2 Proactive motivation model and the mediating role of motivational states

Existing research has explicitly recognized knowledge sharing particularly TKS as a self-initiated (Gagné, 2009) and proactive behaviour (Bal et al., 2011) and engagement in such behaviours requires employees to demonstrate high level of proactive motivation (Qian et al., 2020). Hence, the current study draws upon Parker et al.’s (2010) proactive motivation model to explain the mechanisms through which workplace dignity can drive TKS. Proactive motivation model proposes that a “proactive action is motivated, conscious, and goal directed” (Parker et al., 2010, p. 830) and workplace situational factors can drive
proactive actions through three motivational processes, namely, “can do”, “reason to” and “energized to” motivation (Cai et al., 2019). The current study focuses on two motivational states, namely, “can do” and “reason to” motivation. “Can do” motivation implies an individual’s ability to cope with risks and/or costs associated with proactive actions (Aspinwall, 2005). “Reason to motivation” reflects an individual’s internal drive to engage in a proactive behaviour (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002). In present research, we operationalize psychological safety and organizational identification as “can do” and “reason to” motivation, respectively, and propose that they can mediate the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS. The reasons to choose these motivational states and their potential mediating role are explained in following sections.

3.2.1 “Can do” motivation and mediating role of psychological safety. Parker et al. (2010) argue that “can do” motivation includes three aspects, namely, “self-efficacy perceptions (Can I do it?), control appraisal and attributions (How feasible is it?) and the perceived costs of action (How risky is it?)” (p. 834). Earlier research has largely focused on self-efficacy perceptions (e.g. general self-efficacy or role-breadth self-efficacy) and control appraisal (e.g. control beliefs) aspects of “can do” motivation to explain the nexus between contextual factors and employee proactivity (Chen et al., 2017; Hong et al., 2016; Ng et al., 2021; Zhang and Inness, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021). The present research focuses on perceived costs of action for being relevant to “can do” motivation (Parker et al., 2010). In the context of TKS, this focus is important for at least two reasons. Firstly, tacit knowledge reflects an individual’s competitive ability in terms of experience, expertise and skills (Liu et al., 2021) and sharing of such knowledge with others can jeopardize his/her social standing and superiority within the team or group (Kim et al., 2017; Rivera et al., 2021). Secondly, even though sharing of failures, mistakes and bad experiences lead to improvement and reduction in errors; however, an individual may feel insecure within team or work group or face embracement and even rejection from colleagues while sharing his/her failures or mistakes (Yin et al., 2020; Yang, 2010). Given such interpersonal risks and costs associated with TKS, the current study considers psychological safety as “can do” motivational mechanism linking workplace dignity and TKS.

According to Brown and Leigh (1996), psychological safety refers to as an employee’s “sense of being able to show and employ one’s self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status or career” (p. 708). More specifically, psychological safety reflects an individual’s sense of safety that he/she will not be resented, rejected or turned down for expressing ideas, making mistakes, speaking up with different opinions and taking proactive actions (Edmondson and Lei, 2014; Edmondson, 1999). The perceived costs of action aspect of “can do” motivation imply that individuals calculate perceived costs prior to engaging in proactive behaviour. Hence, psychological safety indicates a belief that engaging in a risky behaviour will not lead to personal harm. Put simply, the perception of psychological safety at workplace is a reflection of risk-taking motivation on the part of employees and their ability to exhibit proactive behaviours such as TKS without any fear of negative consequences. In line with these arguments and consistent with recent proactivity research (Cai et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021), conceptualization of psychological safety as “can do” motivation within Parker et al.’s (2010) framework of proactive motivation seems logical, and it is meaningful to investigate its role as a link pin between workplace dignity and TKS.

Existing research reveals that workplace environment plays a critical role in shaping perceptions of psychological safety among employees (Guchait et al., 2019). To this end, we draw upon social information processing (SIP) theory (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978) to explain the role of workplace dignity in shaping perceptions of psychological safety and its subsequent influence on TKS. SIP theory posits that social cues originated from significant others (e.g. supervisors and colleagues) in the workplace can shape employees’ perception regarding workplace environment and subsequently influence their behaviours.
Consistent with the proposition of SIP theory, we argue that workplace dignity can promote feeling of psychological safety for several reasons. For instance, workplace dignity is characterized by respectful interactions. These respectful interactions at work can foster positive social relationships among employees and between employees and supervisors and thus make employees feel psychologically safe (Carmeli and Gittell, 2009). Similarly, when employees’ competence is recognized and contributions are appreciated by significant others at work, they feel confident and secure in using their abilities and skills. Likewise, the perceptions of equality and recognition of employees’ inherent value and dignity promote interpersonal trust which makes employees feel safe at work (Huang et al., 2022). Collectively, these characteristics of workplace dignity reflect high-quality relationships among employees and between managers and employees which augment perception of psychological safety among employees (Carmeli et al., 2009; Rivera et al., 2021).

TKS involves sharing of novel ideas and opinions which entails interpersonal risks in terms of rejection, retaliation and embracement (Gupta et al., 2021; Obrenovic et al., 2022). Because of such possible negative consequences associated with TKS, employees show reluctance to share their tacit knowledge when they feel that the workplace environment is not secure (Liu et al., 2021). Similarly, TKS implies upgrading other colleagues and helping them equipped with skills, novel ideas and competencies (Liu et al., 2021; Obrenovic et al., 2020). Hence, TKS creates competitors within the team and may thus threaten competitive edge of the knowledge holder (Yin et al., 2020). Therefore, such cost associated with TKS may cause employees to be reluctant and hesitant to share their tacit knowledge (Liu et al., 2021; Rivera et al., 2021). Conversely, based on SIP (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978), when employees receive social cues of psychological safety in workplace environment, they are motivated to share their ideas, opinions and suggestions without any fear of criticism and rejection (Ma et al., 2021). Likewise, in a psychologically secure and safe work environment, employees can believe that sharing of tacit knowledge will not create competitors at work; instead TKS will help their colleagues to better perform collective tasks and improve team or group performance (Edmondson, 1999; Qian et al., 2020; Kessel et al., 2012). Consistent with these arguments, existing research has documented mounting empirical evidence concerning the positive relationship between psychological safety and knowledge sharing particularly TKS (Liu et al., 2021; Qian et al., 2020; Yin et al., 2020). Hence, based on the propositions of SIP (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978) and preceding discussion and empirical evidence, we expect that workplace dignity will enhance employees’ perception of psychological safety which will in turn promote TKS. Consequently, we propose the following hypotheses:

- **H2.** Workplace dignity is positively related to psychological safety.
- **H3.** Psychological safety is positively related to TKS.
- **H4.** Psychological safety mediates the positive relationship between workplace dignity and TKS.
Knippenberg and Van Schie, 2000) and individuals tend to identify themselves with the characteristics and qualities of the social group they belong to (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

Based on the propositions of SIT, extant literature suggests that workplace environment that increases organizational attractiveness and enhance self-worth of employees can develop their organizational identification (Farooq et al., 2017). For instance, organizational practices and policies and leadership behaviours that focus on needs and growth and development of employees can make them feel valued organizational members enhance self-worth and self-esteem of employees and thus enhance their organizational identification (Chughtai, 2016; Traeger and Alfes, 2019). In a similar vein, workplace dignity can foster employees’ organizational identification in several ways. For instance, workplace experience that is characterized by respectful relationships, dignity, employee well-being and care and recognition of their competence and contributions may prompt employees feel that they are valued by their organization thus fostering their emotional bond with the organization and enhancing their sense of organizational membership (Cheung and Law, 2008; Farooq et al., 2017; Fuller et al., 2006).

Organizational identification involves very core definition of entities (Mael and Ashforth, 1992). Recent meta-analytical evidence reveals that organizational identification strongly contributes to positive attitudinal, behavioural and performance outcomes such as affective commitment, job satisfaction, work involvement and in-role and extra-role performance (Lee et al., 2015). Consistent with this empirical evidence, organizational identification may be related to voluntary and self-sacrificial behaviours such as TKS for several reasons. For instance, employees who have heightened level of organizational identification perceive their work meaningful and are more likely to consider organizational problems as their own and strive for achievement of organizational goals (Carmeli et al., 2011; Tse et al., 2012). Moreover, employees who are high in organizational identification prioritize organizational interests above their own and modify their attitudes and behaviours to generate benefits for the organization (Zhao et al., 2019). In line with this logic, prior studies have documented empirical evidence that employees, who recognize their organizational identity, have stronger emotional connection with their organization and greater tendency to exhibit self-sacrificial and voluntary behaviours such as sharing of tacit knowledge like skills, expertise and ideas (Yao et al., 2020).

The preceding discussion based on SIT and existing empirical evidence point to the positive effects of workplace dignity on organizational identification which will in turn augment TKS. Therefore, the following hypotheses are suggested:

\[ H5. \text{ Workpllace dignity is positively related to organizational identification.} \]

\[ H6. \text{ Organizational identification is positively related to TKS.} \]

\[ H7. \text{ Organizational identification mediates the positive relationship between workplace dignity and TKS.} \]

4. Methods

4.1 Participants and procedures

To test the proposed relationships (Figure 1), we targeted employees of high- and medium-high-tech manufacturing organizations located in Rawalpindi and Lahore regions of Pakistan. We mainly focused on high- and medium-high-tech manufacturing organizations operating in aerospace, electronics and heavy electrical and mechanical equipment manufacturing industries that emphasize the importance of TKS among organizational members. These organizations are highly concentrated in Rawalpindi and Lahore regions. Rawalpindi region is characterized by aerospace and heavy electrical and mechanical equipment manufacturing both in public and private sectors. On the hand, Lahore region is home to manufacturing of electronics, electrical and IT related products and communication
equipment in private sector. Based on data available at official websites of concerned professional associations and relevant organizations, we short-listed 32 large sized organizations located in targeted regions. The choice of large-sized organizations is helpful in selecting heterogeneous sample across several departments. Collection of survey responses through formal channels is almost difficult in developing context such as Pakistan (Shujahat et al., 2017). Hence, the first author of this study used his professional network and personal connections to access and obtain permission from human resource and administration department heads of short-listed organizations. In total, 12 organizations granted us informal permission with the condition to not disclose identity of the organization and maintain confidentiality of the respondents. Consistent with our research purpose, we used purposive sampling technique to target first-line supervisors and professionals mainly from research and development, product designing, engineering, accounting and finance and information technology departments. Creativity and innovation are at the heart of these departments in high- and medium-high-tech manufacturing organizations. Hence, sharing of tacit knowledge among employees working in these departments is vital for organizational proficiency. To minimize the risk of common method bias (CMB), we used time-lagged survey design and collected responses from participants across three time periods each one month apart. At each time point, printed questionnaires were distributed along with a brief note explaining purpose of the survey and assuring confidentiality of the respondents. At Time-1, we collected demographic information and response on workplace dignity. At Time-2, responses on psychological safety and organizational identification were collected. Finally, at Time-3, response on TKS was obtained. We placed unique identification code on each questionnaire to ensure confidentiality of the respondents and match the responses collected in three waves. In total, 332 employees returned three sets of filled surveys out of 454 distributed at T1 showing a response rate of 73.12%. After discarding questionnaires containing missing information, 307 matched surveys were retained for further analysis. Demographic characteristics of the final sample are indicated in Table 1.

4.2 Measures
In current study, we used well-established and frequently verified measurement instruments to ensure reliability and validity of the study. Constructs’ items were measured with five-point scales anchored at 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. Operational definitions of study constructs and their measurement items are presented in Table 2.
4.2.1 Workplace dignity. Workplace dignity was assessed with 14-item scale developed by Thomas and Lucas (2019) which has been validated in recent research (Ahmed et al., 2022). This scale is consistent of five dimensions:

1. respectful interaction (three items);
2. competence and contribution (three items);
3. equality (two items);
4. inherent value (three items); and
5. general dignity (three items).

Sample items included “People at work communicate with me respectfully” (respectful interaction), “People at work recognize my competence” (competence and contribution), “I feel just as valued as others in the organization” (equality), “At work, I am valued as a human being”, (inherent value) and “My workplace is a source of dignity for me” (general dignity).

4.2.2 Psychological safety. Consistent with prior research (Yin et al., 2020), five items were borrowed from psychological safety scale developed by Edmondson (1999). Sample item included “It is safe to take a risk in this organization.”

4.2.3 Organizational identification. Organizational identification was measured with six-item scale developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992). Sample item included “When someone criticizes my organization, it feels like a personal insult.”

4.2.4 Tacit knowledge sharing. We used Lin’s (2007) four-item scale to measure TKS. This scale has been widely used in earlier studies (Enwereuzor, 2021). Sample item included “I share my job experience with my co-workers” and “I share my ideas about jobs with my co-workers.”

4.2.5 Control variables. Prior empirical investigations examining antecedent of knowledge sharing suggest that employees’ level education, age, gender and job tenure have the potential to influence employees’ knowledge sharing behaviour (Lin, 2007; Yin et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2022). Therefore, these characteristics were considered as control variables in
this study to capture the true effect of workplace dignity and underlying mechanisms on employee TKS.

4.2.6 Common method bias. Previous research suggests that self-report measurement of employee behaviours and performance-related outcomes may be prone to CMB which can inflate relationships between study variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Hence, as recommended by prior research (Podsakoff et al., 2012), several procedural and statistical methods were used to reduce the threat of CMB and examine its existence in the data.
Concerning procedural remedy, we used multi-wave survey design to collect data at three time periods as discussed earlier. Such a time-lagged survey design can prevent the respondents from deducing cause and effect relationship between the variables. Moreover, at each point of time, we guaranteed anonymity of the participants and assured the use of responses for research purpose only. Regarding statistical methods, two tests were conducted to detect presence of CMB. Firstly, Harman’s single-factor test was carried out (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). The results indicated that total variance explained by one factor was 26.23% which was much below the threshold of 50% and suggested that the data is not contaminated by CMB. Secondly, variance inflation factors (VIFs) were calculated to check the issue of multicollinearity. As indicated in Table 2, VIF values ranged between 1.103 and 2.211 which suggest no presence of multicollinearity problem (Hair et al., 2019).

4.3 Analytical strategy

Data for the present study were collected from 307 employees across 12 organizations. Hence, before choosing appropriate data analysis technique, we needed to examine the nested structure of the data to determine the total variance explained by organizational membership. Hence, we calculated interclass correlation coefficients (ICC1) for all the study variables from a one-way random effects ANOVA using McGraw and Wong’s (1996). The ICC1 values were found 0.083, 0.029, 0.028 and 0.027 for workplace dignity, organizational identification, psychological safety and TKS, respectively. These ICC1 values are considerably lower than the widely used threshold of 0.12 (James, 1982) and suggest that the nested structure of the data does not substantially influence participants’ responses. Hence, the use of multi-level modelling is not warranted to analyze the data (Bliese, 2000; LeBreton and Senter, 2008).

We applied partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) technique using SmartPLS 4 (version 4.0.8.2) software to test the hypothesized relationships (Ringle et al., 2022). The reason to choose PLS-SEM is twofold. Firstly, PLS-SEM is a variance-based prediction-oriented data analysis technique that is primarily aimed at explaining the variance in target construct (Hair et al., 2019) and more appropriate when a study aims at investigating novel relationships based on well-established theories (Ringle et al., 2020). Hence, given the focus of our research on investigating the novel relationship between workplace dignity and TKS and examining the role of theory-driven motivational mediation mechanisms, the use of PLS-SEM seems appropriate for data analysis in this study (Iqbal, 2021). Secondly, the use of PLS-SEM data analysis technique has augmented in knowledge management research in recent years because of several benefits such as the ability to handle sample sizes and non-normal data and analysis of complex relationships between study variables. PLS-SEM analysis comprises two stages of analysis: assessing measurement model and evaluating structural model (Chin, 2010). The analysis was conducted, and subsequent results reported following recent guidelines and recommendations (Hair et al., 2019; Ringle et al., 2020), particularly proposed in recent knowledge management research (Cepeda-Carrion et al., 2018).

5. Results

5.1 Assessment of measurement model

In PLS-SEM analysis, assessment of measurement or outer model is the first stage which is conducted to confirm reliability and validity of constructs included in the research model. Reliability of a construct is typically examined by means of indicator reliability and internal consistency reliability (Ringle et al., 2020). Factor loadings of a construct exceeding the value of 0.60 establish indicator reliability (Chin, 2010) and Cronbach’s α and composite reliability (CR) above the value of 0.70 indicates internal consistency reliability of the
To this end, we initially ran PLS algorithm with all 29 items. Three items (PS1, PS3, OI2) having values below 0.60 were removed in three iterations. Table 3 exhibits that factor loadings of all the remaining items are above 0.60 which confirm adequate indicator reliability. Likewise, Cronbach’s $\alpha$ and CR values exceed the minimum threshold value of 0.70 indicating constructs’ internal consistency reliability (Hair et al., 2019).

Validity of a construct is evaluated through convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity of a construct is typically examined by means of average variance extracted (AVE) with a cutoff value of 0.50. Table 3 indicates that AVE values of all the constructs are above the minimum recommended value of 0.50. Similarly, discriminant validity is established when square root of AVE value of each construct is higher than its correlation with the other latent constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table 4 reflects that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3</th>
<th>Results of measurement model assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construct</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indicator</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful interaction</td>
<td>RI1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RI2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RI3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence and contribution</td>
<td>CC1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>EQ1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EQ2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherent value</td>
<td>IV1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General dignity</td>
<td>GD1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GD2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace dignity</td>
<td>RI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological safety</td>
<td>PS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PS4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PS5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational identification</td>
<td>OI1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OI3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OI4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OI5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OI6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacit knowledge sharing</td>
<td>TKS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TKS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TKS3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TKS4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
<th>Descriptive statistics, correlations and discriminant validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construct</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Organizational identification</td>
<td>4.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Psychological safety</td>
<td>3.721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tacit knowledge sharing</td>
<td>4.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Workplace dignity</td>
<td>4.171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Italic elements in diagonal are square root of AVE
square root of AVE value of each construct is higher than its correlation with the other latent constructs, thus establishing discriminant validity. To further validate the distinctiveness among study construct, we conducted complete confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS (v. 23) software. As demonstrated in Table 5, four factors: workplace dignity, organizational identification, psychological safety and TKS were included as the hypothesized model to test whether the variables are distinct constructs. Table 4 indicates that the hypothesized model showed best fit and this four-factor model is superior to other alternative models. Based on all these results, we conclude that the constructs are reliable and valid, and the measurement model is appropriate for structural path analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

5.2 Evaluation of structural model and hypotheses testing

Evaluation of structural or inner model mainly involves examining explanatory power of the research model and testing structural relationships between study constructs and their statistical significance (Hair et al., 2019). However, prior to evaluation of structural model, it is important to examine multicollinearity among indicators of constructs which is observed by means of variation inflation factors (VIF). VIF values above 3.3 may bias path coefficients leading towards incorrect conclusions. Table 3 indicates that VIF values fall in the range of 1.103 and 2.211 which establish that our structural model is not contaminated by multicollinearity. Consequently, we assessed explanatory power of our research model which is evaluated in terms of values of coefficient of determination ($R^2$) of endogenous constructs. Figure 2 demonstrates $R^2$ values of 0.191, 0.330 and 0.321 for psychological safety, organizational identification and TKS, respectively. These $R^2$ values are above the minimum acceptable value of 0.10 (Falk and Miller, 1992). In addition, a closer look at $R^2$ values indicate that workplace dignity explains more variance in organizational identification ($R^2 = 0.330$) as compared to psychological safety ($R^2 = 0.191$). Moreover, according to the criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2019), $R^2$ value of target construct (i.e. TKS) exceeds the minimum threshold value of 0.25 which indicates that our research model has satisfactory explanatory power.

To test our hypotheses, we evaluated strength of structural relationships and their significance by using bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 bootstrap samples to generated bias-corrected confidence intervals and p-values as recommended by Streukens and Leroi-Werelds (2016). We first examined path coefficients and their significance. Figure 2 illustrates path coefficients/directs effects. Table 6 shows that workplace dignity is positively related to TKS ($b = 0.250$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, $H1$ is supported. Table 6 further indicates that workplace dignity is positively related to psychological safety ($b = 0.437$, $p < 0.01$) and psychological safety is positively related to TKS ($b = 0.115$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, $H2$ and $H3$ are supported. Table 6 also shows that workplace dignity is positively related to organizational identification ($b = 0.574$, $p < 0.01$) and organizational identification is positively related to TKS ($b = 0.321$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, $H5$ and $H6$ are accepted. Collectively, acceptance of $H2$, $H3$, $H5$ and $H6$ provide initial support for potential mediating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
<th>Results of confirmatory factor analysis</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>$\chi^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four factors: WPD, OI, PS, TKS</td>
<td>214.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three factors: WPD, OI + PS, TKS</td>
<td>263.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two factors: WPD, PS + OI + TKS</td>
<td>357.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two factors: WPD + OI, PS + TKS</td>
<td>386.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One factor: WPD + OI + PS + TKS</td>
<td>485.493</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** WPD = workplace dignity; OI = organizational identification; PS = psychological safety; TKS = tacit knowledge sharing; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.
role of psychological safety and organizational identification in the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS. We then analyzed mediation/indirect effects with confidence intervals that exclude zero in accordance with the guidelines suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008) and Nitzl et al. (2018). The results of mediation model (indirect effects) are reflected in Table 6 which reveal that the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS is mediated by psychological safety ($b = 0.050$, 95% CI = [0.002, 0.095]) and organizational identification ($b = 0.185$, 95% CI = [0.092, 0.285]). These results support $H4$ and $H7$. A deeper analysis of results of hypotheses testing indicates that as compared to psychological safety ($b = 0.115$), organizational identification serves as stronger mediation mechanism between workplace dignity and TKS.

6. Discussion and implications

Given the rising importance of workplace socio-emotional elements in employees' shaping knowledge sharing behaviour (Enwereuzor et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2021), the current study aimed at examining the direct and indirect relationship between workplace dignity and TKS. Drawing on SET (Blau, 1964) and proactive motivation model (Parker et al., 2010),
this study proposed a research model to investigate the direct relationship between workplace dignity and TKS and assess the mediating role of psychological safety and organizational identification in this relationship. The data were gathered from 307 first-line supervisors and professionals of high- and medium-high-tech manufacturing organizations located in Lahore and Rawalpindi regions of Pakistan and analyzed using PLS-SEM technique through SmartPLS 4 software. The results indicate that workplace dignity is directly and positively related to TKS. The results also reveal that the positive relationship between workplace dignity and TKS is mediated by psychological safety and organizational identification. Findings of this research entail crucial theoretical and practical implications that are discussed in following sections.

6.1 Theoretical implications

The findings of present study contribute to workplace dignity theory and knowledge management literature in at least three ways. Firstly, the recent knowledge management scholarship has emphasized the crucial role of socio-emotional perspective of workplace in shaping employees’ knowledge sharing behaviour (Rezaei et al., 2021). The present study advances this line of research by identifying workplace dignity as a novel socio-emotional workplace element and making a maiden attempt to examine its relationship with TKS. In doing so, the present research not only adds to incipient empirical evidence concerning the linkage between socio-emotional workplace elements and knowledge sharing but also addressed the calls to investigate the behavioural outcomes of workplace dignity (Ahmed et al., 2022; Thomas and Lucas, 2019). Consistent with our expectation, the findings indicate that workplace dignity is directly and positively related to TKS. Workplace dignity is mainly manifested in respectful interactions, recognition of one’s competence and contributions, feelings of being valued and equality at work (Thomas and Lucas, 2019; Tiwari and Sharma, 2019). Findings of current research corroborate the earlier empirical evidence which suggests that perception of fairness, equality and well-being and feelings of respect and being valued at work augment employees’ tendency to move beyond transactional obligations and exhibit extra-role and self-sacrificial behaviours (Eva et al., 2020; Jnaneswar and Ranjit, 2020) such as knowledge sharing (Jia et al., 2019; Gupta et al., 2021). In this way, the present investigation contributes to SET (Blau, 1964) by validating its core proposition which suggests that positive treatments perceived by employees at workplace prompt them to reciprocate with desirable behaviours.

Secondly, empirical research explaining relationship between workplace dignity and employee behaviours such as knowledge sharing is in infancy. Therefore, it is necessary to identify and examine the mechanisms through which the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS can take place. Based on this research consideration and recognizing that TKS is a proactive and extra-role behaviour, the current study has drawn upon proactive motivation model (Parker et al., 2010) and examined “can do” and “reason to” motivational mechanisms through which workplace dignity is indirectly related TKS. To this end, based on SIP (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978) and SIT (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), our research investigated and validated the important role of psychological safety and organizational identification as “can do” and “reason to” motivation, respectively. Findings of our research suggest that workplace dignity plays a critical role in promoting the feelings of psychological safety which in turn enhance employees’ ability to handle risks and costs associated with TKS. This evidence is in congruence with the basic premise of SIP (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978) and substantiate the prior empirical evidence which suggests that a work environment that signals respect, care, well-being and recognition for contributions makes employees feel valued members of the organization or work group and thus enhance perception of safety at work (Carmeli and Gittell, 2009; Carmeli et al., 2009; Huang et al., 2022), enabling them to engage in risky behaviours (Chughtai, 2016) such as TKS (Qian et al., 2020; Yin et al., 2020). Similarly, the findings of present study validate the core
propositions of SIT (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and compliment prior empirical evidence which suggest that employees who feel respect and self-worth at work are emotionally connected to their organization (Faroq et al., 2017) and they are motivated to exhibit extra-role and proactive behaviours (Ng et al., 2021) such as TKS that benefit the organization (Zhang et al., 2022). Collectively, these research findings not only contribute to proactive motivation model (Parker et al., 2010) but also substantiate the pertinence of SIP (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978) and SIT (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) in explaining the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS through dual mediation paths, namely, psychological safety and organizational identification.

Thirdly, the results of this study indicate that workplace dignity explains more variance in organizational identification as compared to psychological safety. Moreover, a comparison of both mediation mechanisms indicates that as compared to psychological safety, organizational identification is stronger mediation path between workplace dignity and TKS. These results have two possible explanations. Firstly, respect and care are among the most important social cues that employees receive from their work environment (Rogers and Ashforth, 2017). These social cues are more salient in stimulating social identification process (Fuller et al., 2006) that prompt employees to exhibit extra-role and citizenship behaviours such as interpersonal helping (Faroq et al., 2017) and TKS (Zhang et al., 2022). Secondly, unlike organizational identification, perceptions of psychological safety cannot be easily mobilized towards proactive behaviours. This is based on the reasoning that in organizations operating in cultures characterized by higher levels of power distance and uncertainty avoidance such as Pakistan, engaging in interpersonal risk-taking behaviours leads to more social costs (Newman et al., 2017). Hence, employees of organizations operating in such cultures may require signals coming from broader range of sources to feel higher level of psychological safety to exhibit proactive behaviours (Frazier et al., 2017). There are several contextual factors that can interact with workplace dignity to augment perceptions of psychological safety. To this end, prior studies suggest that leadership is more prevalent in signalling cues of psychological safety (Thomas and Gupta, 2021; Yin et al., 2020) because of their potential control over organizational resources and stronger role in shaping workplace environment (Edmondson and Lei, 2014). Hence, based on motivational-fit rationale (Chen and Kanfer, 2006), it is possible that leadership behaviours that send signals consistent with workplace dignity can accentuate the relationship between workplace dignity and psychological safety to improve TKS. Hence, findings of this investigation offer room for further research to unearth contextual role of leadership in the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS.

6.2 Practical implications

Perceptions of workplace dignity reflect positive experience at work (Matheson et al., 2021). Consistent with this notion and based on growing socio-emotional considerations concerning knowledge sharing behaviour, the current research underscores workplace dignity as a crucial determinant of TKS and offers several implications for policy making and managerial practices. From policy perspective, organizations should declare workplace dignity as an important element of human resource policy and core value of organizational culture. This attempt by an organization will make its employees feel that the organization is concerned about employee well-being and care and their dignity will not be compromised by organizational decisions. Resultantly, employees will feel obligated to reciprocate these favourable treatments with extra-role, self-sacrificial, voluntary and proactive behaviours leading towards sustainable organizational performance in a competitive business environment.

Moreover, workplace dignity implies the need for an alternate management paradigm which has recently been popularized as humanistic management (Matheson et al., 2021; Pirson, 2019) that treats employees as an end rather a mean to an end (Ahmed et al., 2021).
Zawadzki, 2018). Hence, from the perspective of managerial practices, organizations should design human resource management (HRM) practices that are mainly oriented towards employees and signal employee security and well-being, job quality such as use of teams, participation in decision-making, opportunity for voice and procedural justice. Such HRM practices and organizational climate have the potential to shape perceptions among employees that they are valued members of the organization and strengthen their dignity perceptions (Bal, 2017; Guest et al., 2017).

In addition, this research uncovers the role of psychological safety and organizational identification in stimulating TKS. However, the results show that in comparison with psychological safety, organizational identification is more strongly related to TKS. Based on this finding, it is suggested for managers to engender respectful and caring environment and foster mutual trust at workplace to make organizational identity more attractive and make employees feel more enthusiastic to share their tacit knowledge. As regards psychological safety, leadership plays a vital role in shaping employee experience of workplace climate because of their control over organizational resources. Therefore, organizations should enact leadership development programmes to train employees at managerial positions to exhibit leadership behaviours that provide social cues of employee care and respect, concern for employee needs, equality and fairness in managerial decisions, openness in communication with employees and recognition and appreciation of their competence and contribution. These leadership characteristics while interacting with workplace dignity can make psychological safety a prominent feature of workplace environment and make employees feel comfortable to demonstrate proactive behaviours such as TKS.

7. Limitations and recommendation for future research

In spite of its novel theoretical contributions and crucial practical implications, the current study is subjected to some limitations as is the case with other empirical investigations in knowledge management research. Firstly, this study used self-report measure of TKS. Therefore, results of this research need to be interpreted with caution. Although self-report ratings of TKS have been frequently used in prior research (Enwereuzor, 2021), we considered both procedural remedies and statistical methods to minimize and assess the threat of CMB. To this end, we collected responses at three time periods four weeks apart to create psychological separation and reduce respondents’ ability to infer links between study variables. Regarding statistical methods, we conducted Harman’s single-factor test and also analyzed VIF values. The results revealed that finding of our study is not contaminated by CMB. However, future research may replicate this study by using supervisors or peers’ rating of TKS to further eliminate the threat of CMB.

Secondly, this study sampled first-line supervisors and professionals of organizations operating in high- and medium-high-tech manufacturing industries of Pakistan. Hence, findings of this investigation cannot be fully generalized to other work and cultural contexts. For instance, importance of workplace dignity may be perceived differently by employees of knowledge-intensive service sector organizations. Hence, it would be interesting to collect data from organizations of service industries such as banking and hospitality to understand how workplace dignity can contribute to TKS in such knowledge-intensive service organizations. Similarly, future scholars are urged to use a cross-industry and cross-cultural sample and conduct a comparative investigation to produce more sound understanding of the nexus between workplace dignity and TKS and generate fine-grained practical implications.

Thirdly, mainly building upon proactive motivation model (Parker et al., 2010), this research focused on psychological safety and organizational identification and validated their role in translating the influence of workplace dignity on TKS. Given that the currently study has made an initial attempt to investigate the linkage between workplace dignity and TKS, it is
necessary to identify and investigate additional mediating mechanisms to further explain the nature of relationship between workplace dignity and TKS. To this end, future studies can investigate the potential role of affective commitment, perceived insider status and positive mood. Finally, this study has not considered boundary conditions under which the relationship between workplace dignity and TKS can be strengthened. We argue that HRM practices and leadership behaviours can shape employees’ perception of workplace socio-emotional elements such as workplace dignity. Hence, it is recommended for future scholars to investigate how HRM practices and leadership behaviours can interact with workplace dignity to influence TKS.

References


Further reading


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