

## **Predictive roles of workplace spirituality on employee silence and social alienation among NYSC corps members of Northern Nigeria origin in Delta State, Nigeria.**

**Augusta Onyebuchi Ojobu<sup>1</sup> Leonard Nnaemekka Ezeh<sup>2</sup>**

**& Chiamaka Joe-Akunne**

**<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Delta, Delta, Nigeria**

**<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra**

### **Abstract**

The problem of social alienation in the workplace and the resultant behaviour of employee silence prompted this study. The study examined the predictive roles of workplace spirituality on employee silence and social alienation dimensions among National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members of Northern Nigeria origin working in Delta State of Nigeria. The respondents were 63 Northern NYSC workers in the Southern parts of Nigeria (38 males, 25 females) whose ages ranged from 19 to 30 years with a mean age of 24 and a standard deviation of 1.40. Participants were selected through the convenience sampling method, while the sample was determined using Gpower sampling formulae under 0.6 effect size and .05 alpha for one predictor case. Employee Silence Scale (ESS), Workplace Spirituality Scale (WSS), and Work Alienation Scale (WAS) were instruments used for data collection. Analysis revealed that workplace spirituality negatively and significantly predicted employee silence at  $\beta = -0.29$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ) and also was significant for all factors of social alienation at  $\beta = -0.47$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ). Only the meaninglessness dimension was significant at  $\beta = -0.45$ ,  $p < .004$  ( $n = 63$ ), although, both powerlessness and self-estrangement dimensions had negative correlations with workplace spirituality; they did not reach significant proportions. The negative and significant predictive influence recorded indicates inverse impacts which imply that as workplace spirituality increases employee silence and meaninglessness social alienation reduces; and helping to reduce their negative impact on employees in the workplace. It is recommended that organizations promote a spiritual climate to foster and increase goodwill, consideration for others, collaboration and helping behaviour in the organization. These will engender organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Workplace Spirituality, Employee Silence, Powerlessness, Self-estrangement, NYSC Corps Members of Northern Nigeria origin.

## 1. Introduction

The 21<sup>st</sup>-century employee will probably spend a third of his/her life's time at work (Lehman & DuFrene, 2015). This has made life in the workplace to have increasingly attracted a myriad of interests from psychologists, management practitioners and researchers, especially, on issues that affect work (Tamunomiebi & John-Eke, 2020), employees (Cooke & Parry, 2022), environment (Rugulies, 2019) and organizational productivity (Hanaysha & Majid, 2018). In recent years, there has been a greater emphasis on employee factors because employees are critical determinants of both job and organizational outcomes (Anitha, 2014; Karatepe et al., 2019; Nduati & Wanyoike, 2022; Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). One topical organisational issue influencing employees' attitudes is the growing culture of employee silence (British Academy of Management [BAM], 2019).

Employee silence is premised on a cost-benefit analysis of speaking up which is exhibited through conscious or unconscious withholding of potentially important information, suggestion, feedback, criticism or concerns from organizational members who might have the prerogative to act upon them for the fear of envisaged negative consequences (John & Manikandan, 2019; Morsch et al., 2020). Employee silence is not just speaking up; it also denies fellow employees and the organization employee voluntary goodwill (Moradi et al., 2019). This makes it a serious issue in organizational management, being harmful (Beheshtifar et al., 2012) and costly (Benevene, 2020) to both the organisation and the employees themselves. Loss of employee voice may lead to an occurrence of preventable disasters which can ruin lives and properties. It can also negatively impact organizational integrity, productivity, profit, and effectiveness (Najafi, 2017).

In other circumstances, employee silence may equally affect employees' mental health (Morsch et al., 2020). Silence behaviour in the workplace as a negative antecedent in the organization is hinged on the connections among workers, and workers versus management, in line with the norm of reciprocity and social connections propounded by Putnam (1995) – Social Capital Theory. Workplace literature (Sherer, 2022; Tarsipan, 2016) consistently stated that social connections and reciprocity may be determined by the organizational climate, and that a culture of silence may thrive on them. Certain prevailing climates in the workplace such

as injustice (Sookoo, 2014) and abuse (Harlos & Knoll, 2021) may structurally pattern members' susceptibility to silent behaviours and loss of voice, especially, where they should have talked or reacted. Thus, it largely depends on employees' social interaction and connectedness with the organization (Benevene, 2020).

More so, the causes of employee silence are of concern to stakeholders (Deniz, et. al.2013). The reason is that most employees, without trusted and approachable channels of communication for suggestions, redress, or opinion sharing, resort to silence, especially, when they believe that they have been unfairly treated by their organization (BAM, 2019). Khan et al. (2021) linked employee silence to workplace bullying and emotional exhaustion and suggested that fear and complaints without redress plunge employees into silent moods. In this instance, the consequences of employee silence may be a bigger problem, not just for the organization, but for the entire human society (Prouska, & Psychogios, 2018). Taking into account the grievous consequences associated with employee silence or loss of voice, this study is interested in understanding its nature and antecedents

Alienation, whether social or otherwise, may be structural, induced, or maybe as a result of individual perception (Vrendenburgh, 2022). Such experiences may activate feelings of powerlessness and meaninglessness (Cetinkaya & Karayel, 2019) in the employee. Vanderstukken and Caniels (2021) argued that employees with greater autonomy are more likely to be socially alienated in the workplace. The findings of these authors revealed a negative relationship between autonomy and work alienation. Prolonged silence and alienation may be a precursor to more serious organizational harm and self-harm such as problematic alcohol drinking, drug abuse, mental illness and, even, suicidal attempts (Muttar et al., 2019). Perhaps, employees experiencing disconnection or estrangement may be unable to help themselves except by the goodwill of other members of the organization which may be expressed in the form of workplace spirituality (Iqbal et al., 2020).

Workplace spirituality has been defined by Pourkiani and Sayadi (2019) as an employee's effort to develop a strong connection with co-workers, whilst seeking to make out meaning and value from the work system. According to Vasconcelos (2019), this effort includes a

willingness to assist fellow workers in some aspects, giving a listening ear and showing concern for fellow workers' job and personal problems in the workplace. The findings of the authors reveal that workplace spirituality aims to have a positive effect on co-workers in a way that helps them achieve their goals and those of their organizations. Studies have shown that workplace spirituality implicates employee engagement and employee attitude in the workplace (Hafeez et al., 2022; Haldorai et al., 2020; Iqbal et al., 2021).

Workplace spirituality can positively impact employee engagement as seen in Iqbal et al.'s (2021) study: the authors found that spirituality at the workplace and employee engagement relationship was positive and significant. While Iqbal et al.'s study provided an understanding that spiritual climate can positively influence engagement behaviour in the workplace, in relation to the current study, their study did not indicate whether the direction of this job engagement behaviour is positive or negative. This also created gaps in the literature considering that the current model is focused on employee silence which connotes negative engagement behaviour.

Still focusing on the relationship of workplace spirituality with employee engagement behaviour, Hafeez et al. (2022) using Stern and Dietz's model found that organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) was predicted by various dimensions of workplace spirituality which encourage corporate sustainability. Although Hafeez et al.'s findings on OCB are an indication of a positive influence of workplace spirituality in promoting positive affect in the workplace as well as beneficial attitudes, it did not provide any linkage between workplace spirituality and employees' negative effects and attitudes in the workplace like in the present study. This provides a gap as the current study is interested in understanding if workplace spirituality can reduce the prevalence of certain negative attitudes and antecedents in the workplace, such as employee silence and social alienation dimensions.

The negative influence of workplace spirituality on employees' attitudes and negative engagement was however established in Haldorai et al.'s, (2020) findings. Haldorai et al found that workplace spirituality mediated the relationship between ethical climate and workplace deviant behaviour, and by so doing reduced associated negative attitudes and antecedents in the

workplace which can disconnect employees from their job tasks. Although Haldorai et al.'s study differs in design from the current study, it offers insight that if workplace spirituality is enthroned by managers and employers, it can negatively influence employee silence and its possible instigator - social alienation. The moderating ability of workplace spirituality on negative organizational antecedents and attitudes further boosts its possible influence on employee silence.

The above provided empirical evidence on the negative influence of workplace spirituality on negative employee attitudes/engagement behaviour as in line with the positions of Putnam's (1995) Social Capital Theory which sees employees' interaction in the workplace as reciprocal favour. Thus, a work spirituality climate has the potential to heal organizational members' disconnection, while improving social networks with reciprocity acting upon the acquired social capital rendered through positive affect.

In consideration of the current study and the assumptions of Social Capital Theory, there are observable gaps in literature, especially, regarding the dearth of literature providing empirical evidence on the predictive relationship of workplace spirituality with employee negative attitudes and organizational deviance, such as employee silence. Regarding the population of the current study, literature is scanty on the vulnerability of non-resident workers, and in this case, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members of Northern Nigeria origin, in understanding alienation problems in the workplace. This creates further gaps in the literature requiring empirical examination to ascertain job attitudes among this population. Also, there is a paucity of empirical evidence which have linked the relationship between workplace spirituality to workplace deviance instigators as modelled in the present model which explores the relationship between workplace spirituality, social alienation, and employee silence among NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin serving in the Southern parts of Nigeria.

It is hoped that studying the relationship between workplace spirituality, social alienation and employee silence will help to understand how social disconnection and estrangement at work may predict employee's silent behaviour, especially, among non-indigenous workers in a given location such as NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin in Southern parts of Nigeria. The

study further explores the possibility that workplace spirituality may help employees connect better to fellow workers and the environment, and by so doing encourage them to speak up or take proactive actions if they have opinions to air in their organizations.

## **2. Workplace Spirituality and Employee Silence**

Khan et al. (2021) linked employee silence to workplace bullying and emotional exhaustion, and found that fear and complaints without redress usually plunge employees into silent moods. However, Khan et al.'s (2021) study did not highlight factors which may reduce the incidence in the workplace. This creates an obvious gap in the literature which this work attempts to fill. Prouska and Psychogios (2018) highlighted the societal consequences of employee silence outside the workplace without investigating organizational factors which may be helpful in reducing the incidence. Thus, Prouska and Psychogios' (2018) study left gaps in organizational factors which ameliorate the negative impacts of employee silence on employees and organizational outcomes. Again, studies such as Sookoo (2014), Fard & Karimi (2015), and Lam & Xu (2019) which focused on the effects of organizational injustice, job satisfaction and power distance respectively only focused on negative relational factors, but did not explore positive relational factors such as workplace spirituality, and this created empirical gaps in the literature.

In another study, Vanderstukken and Caniëls (2021), identified the consequences of social alienation but their study did not highlight factors which may reduce such negative consequences. Thus, their study created gaps in the literature as their study does not apply to the current study which structurally differs from Vanderstukken and Caniëls' study due to differences in the objective, design and nature of the respondents. For instance; Vanderstukken and Caniëls' study focused on determinants of work alienation, whereas the current study argues that social alienation is a predictor of employee silence. In design, Vanderstukken and Caniëls' study is a hierarchical two-wave survey involving subordinates and supervisors, while the current model is a non-hierarchical study involving only Northern Nigerian origin of NYSC workers living and working in southern Nigeria. Although Vanderstukken and Caniëls (2021) utilized the hierarchical levels to decipher the level of autonomy which correlated with alienation levels among employees, the current study

argues that the status of employees' ethnic origin may instigate feelings of alienation leading to loss of motivation, pro-activity and eventual silence behaviours.

### **Workplace Spirituality and Social Alienation**

Margaretha et al. (2021) explored workplace spirituality, employee engagement, and professional commitment in a study of lecturers from Indonesian universities. The study aimed to explore the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee engagement of lecturers in Indonesia, and professional commitment as a mediator. In the method, the respondents of the study were 322 lecturers from state and private universities in Indonesia. The validity, reliability, simple regression, and path analysis were used to analyze the data. The results of the study showed that workplace spirituality had a direct effect on employee engagement, with the  $\beta$  value of 0.836, and the R-square of 70%, while professional commitment had a mediating effect on the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee engagement, with the  $\beta$  value of 0.162 and the R-square of 72.3%. The results indicated that the implementation of workplace spirituality and employee engagement is important for universities to improve the performance of their lecturers.

Iqbal et al. (2021) explored the impact of workplace spirituality on employee attitudes and engagements. The study was premised on the relationship of workplace spirituality with organizational outcomes as an important aspect that needs to be studied. While recognizing that workplace spirituality is an abstract concept, this quantitative study explored the relationship between spirituality at the workplace with employee attitude and engagement. Workplace spirituality has been measured through a combination of individual and organizational type variables while employee attitude was measured through five prevalent variables. Two variables were used to measure employee engagement. This research proved a positive association between spirituality at the workplace and employee attitude and engagement. PLS-SEM was used to test the developed research model and hypotheses on the collected data from 250 valid respondents.

Also, Holdorai et al. (2020) carried out a study on workplace spirituality as a mediator between ethical climate and workplace deviant behaviour. Their study investigated

workplace spirituality as a mediator between organizational justice/ethical climate and workplace deviant behaviour/organizational citizenship behaviour. Data for the study was collected from 641 Indian employees employed at the economy to luxury hotels. Workplace spirituality mediated organizational justice-organizational citizenship behaviour link and ethical climate-workplace deviant behaviour link. Findings reported implications which can help hospitality professionals in creating an ethical work environment that embraces justice and spirituality for the well-being of employees, the organization, and the community at large. Hospitality managers can cultivate workplace spirituality by adopting a humanistic work environment. Hotel employers can give their employees the freedom to bring their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual attributes to the workplace so that employees can realize the meaning and purpose of their work, and their full potentials as individuals. The results can also aid hospitality professionals in formulating new policies by embracing spiritually sensitive services.

Social exchange underpins the projected relationships of this study because human interaction has consequences, even in the workplace. Social Exchange Theory is based on the premise that human behaviour or social interaction is an exchange of activity, tangible and intangible, particularly of rewards and costs; and Blau (1964) emphasized that the purpose of this exchange is to maximize benefits and minimize costs. Thus, friendly behaviour towards co-workers most likely influences workers more positively than an unfriendly or transactional type of behaviour.

### **3. Methods**

#### **Participants**

Participants selected in the study were 63 (38 males, 25 females) NYSC members from Northern regional parts of Nigeria. They were Corps members carrying out their primary assignment in several governmental organizations within the Southern parts of Nigeria, and Delta State to be precise. The selection criterion for the final participants is entirely by chance. This is so because the focus of the study is only on the Corps members of Northern region origin in Nigeria, posted to Delta State for their National Service. The sampling method used was a non-probability convenience sampling method, due to the proximity of researchers and the sample of interest.



The age of the participants ranged from 19-30 years with a mean age of 24 years and a standard deviation of 1.40. Inclusion criteria include any NYSC member of Northern Nigeria origin serving in Delta State, Nigeria. Excluded from the survey were Corps members from any other parts of Nigeria.

The minimum sample size required for the study was 55 participants. This is based on the minimum sample size requirement as calculated by the Gpower model version 3.1 with the following criteria:  $\alpha = 0.5$ , power = 0.6, effect size = 0.15 (medium effect), 1 predictor variable.

### **Instruments for Data Collection**

Data for the study was collected using three questionnaires as follows: Employee Silence Scale (ESS) by Adamska and Jurek (2017). This is a 12-item Likert rating scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with Cronbach Alpha of .80; Workplace Spirituality Scale (WSS) developed by Petchsawang and Duchon (2009) – a 22 item Likert rating scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree with a Cronbach Alpha of .85; and Work Alienation Scale (WAS) developed by Mottaz (1981) – a 21 item Likert rating scale. WAS tested three dimensions of Alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, and self-estrangement with Cronbach Alpha of .92, .79 and .88 respectively.

### **Procedure**

**Pilot Test** - Participants for the pilot test were 20 NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin serving in Delta State. The sample for the pilot test shared homogeneous characteristics with the population of the main sample of the study who were also NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin drawn from Ika North-East, and Ika South Local Government Areas of Delta State. The homogeneity of participants from the main study and that of the pilot study helped to reduce bias rate, and ensure true scores for validity and reliability purposes. During the survey, the researcher provided instructions to the participants on how to respond to the instrument, and also provided a note of introduction, the aim, and the objective of the study. At

the completion of the survey which lasted 10 days, the researcher coded only valid responses that were used for analysis.

**Main Study** - For the main study, the researcher continued with the survey and sampled 63 Northern Nigeria NYSC members. During the survey, the researcher provided instructions to the participants on how to respond to the instrument, and also provided a note of introduction, the aim and objective of the study. After the survey which lasted 60 days, the researcher collated all responses and utilized the data therein for statistical analysis. Data from the survey indicated that 72 questionnaires were filled, 63 (85.7%) were valid, and 9 (14.3%) were invalid. Data obtained from the survey were coded and analyzed using SPSS statistical tool. The statistical output was reported as a result.

### **Design and Statistics**

The design of the study is a correlational design measuring the extent of the relationship between the variables of this study and if there will be any significant influence of one variable on others. According to Memon *et al.*, (2019), correlational design can be utilized to ascertain the predictive relationship among the variables of the study, and also to ascertain if this relationship can be moderated in the presence of other variables. For the data analysis, mean and standard deviation were used for analysing continuous data, and frequencies and percentages for categorical data. Also, standard linear multiple regressions were used to measure the correlation between/relative contributions to the variables of interest workplace spirituality, employee silence and social alienation dimensions (powerlessness, meaninglessness and self-estrangement).

### **RESULT**

The result from data analysis was presented using relevant statistical tables as highlighted below.

#### **Table 1**

*Mean and standard deviation for employee silence, workplace spirituality, work alienation, powerlessness, meaninglessness, and self-estrangement*

	Employee silence	Workplace spirituality	Social alienation	Powerlessness	Meaninglessnes s	Self-estrangem ent
Mean	35.0886	65.4430	56.8481	20.3797	21.5696	18.4304
Std. Deviation	8.60410	12.18527	8.49900	4.49873	3.95709	3.20930
Max	57.00	86.00	76.00	28.00	28.00	26.00
Min	13.00	42.00	37.00	9.00	9.00	11.00
N	63	63	63	63	63	63

Table 1 reveals high level of employee silence, social alienation and workplace spirituality with mean scores of  $M = 35.1$ ,  $M = 56.8$ , and  $M = 65.4$  ( $n = 63$ ) respectively for all participants. The dimensions of social alienation equally showed high mean scores at  $M = 20.4$ ,  $21.6$  and  $18.4$  ( $n = 63$ ) respectively. The correlation between variables of interest was conducted using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient. Prior to conducting the correlation, normality analysis for the normal distribution of the data was conducted and the results are shown below.

### Table 2

*Assumption check for normality test for sample distribution (Shapiro-Wilk)*

	Employee silence	Workplace spirituality	Social alienation	Powerlessness	Meaninglessness	Self-estrangem ent
Shapiro-wilk w	0.994	0.965	0.974	0.978	0.987	0.970
Shapiro-wilk p	0.983	0.128	0.110	0.082	0.071	0.060

Data in Table 2 reveals that using the Shapiro-Wilk for the assumption check for sample distribution, the test of normality or even distribution of the participants was confirmed as the

probability range for Shapiro Wilik is greater than 0.05 at  $p = 0.98, 0.13, 0.11, 0.08, 0.07$  and  $0.06$  respectively for employee silence, workplace spirituality, social alienation, powerlessness, meaninglessness and self-estrangement. The  $p$ -value is greater than  $0.05$  significance for 63 participants. Hence, sample for the study is normal and evenly distributed.

**Table 3**

*Correlation matrix between employee silence and workplace spirituality and social alienation and dimensions of social alienation (Powerlessness, Meaninglessness and Self-estrangement)*

	Employee Silence	Workplace Spirituality	Social Alienation	SA-Powerlessne ss	SA-meaningl essness	SA-Self Estrangement
Employee Silence	-					
Pearson's r	-					
p-value	-					
Workplace Spirituality		-				
Pearson's r	-0.810***	-				
p-value	<.001					
Social Alienation			-			
Pearson's r	0.858***	-0.682***	-			
p-value	<.001	<.001				
SA-Powerlessness				-		
Pearson's r	0.481	-0.449***	0.438***	-		
p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001			
SA-Meaninglessness					-	
Pearson's r	0.671***	-0.500***	0.618***	0.640***	-	
p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001		
SA- Self-estrangement						-
Pearson's r	0.083	-0.013	0.142	0.097	-0.059	-
p-value	0.467	0.909	0.210	0.397	0.606	
N	63	63	63	63	63	

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 3 displays the correlation matrix between employee silence and workplace spirituality, social alienation, and dimension of social alienation (Powerlessness, Meaninglessness and Self-estrangement), indicating mixed correlation result. Whereas employee silence correlated negatively and significantly with workplace spirituality at  $r = -0.81$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ), the relationship between employee silence and social alienation was positive and significant at  $r = 0.86$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ). However, only Powerlessness =  $0.48$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ) and Meaninglessness =  $0.67$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ) recorded significant and positive correlation with employee silence. Furthermore, the relationship between social alienation and workplace spirituality was equally significant at  $r = -0.68$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ).

Regression analysis was carried out to ascertain if observed correlations reached predictive values.

**Table 4**

*Regression coefficients showing predictive estimates of workplace spirituality (predictor)–on employee silence, social alienation dimensions of social alienation (SA-Powerlessness, SA-Meaninglessness and SA-Self-estrangement)*

Outcome variable	Estimate	SE	T	P
Employee silence	-0.2874	-0.0452	-6.360	< .001
Social Alienation	-0.4714	0.0720	6.550	< .001
SA-Powerlessness	-0.0846	0.1231	-0.687	0.494
SA-Meaninglessness	-0.4528	0.1512	2.995	0.004
SA-Self-Estrangement	-0.0743	0.1273	0.584	0.561

Predictor: Workplace spirituality

Table 4 reveals the beta weight predictive estimates of the predictor on the outcome variables. Data shows that workplace spirituality negatively and significantly predicted employee silence at  $\beta = -0.29$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ) which means that the more the prevalence of workplace spirituality

among NYSC workers, the less the prevalence of employee silence. This is because of its negative and significant predictor effects. Also, the predictor estimate was significant and negative for all factors of social alienation at  $\beta = -0.47$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $n = 63$ ), but across the three individual dimensions, only meaningfulness dimension was significant at  $\beta = -0.45$ ,  $p < .004$  ( $n = 63$ ); although, both powerlessness and self-estrangement dimensions had negative correlations with workplace spirituality, their predictive estimate did not reach significant proportions.

**Table 5**

*Collinearity statistics and tolerance level among independent predictors*

Predictor	VIF
Workplace Spirituality	2.01
Social Alienation	2.48
SA-Powerlessness	1.83
SA-Meaninglessness	2.37
SA-Self-Estrangement	1.11

The collinearity output in Table 12 is indicative that the values of variance inflation factor (VIF) is small and not exceeding 4.00 with the tolerance level less than 1 for all variables. Thus, the collinearity result implies that there is no multicollinearity among independent variables (predictors), and that each independent variable can predict the outcome variable independently without relationship with other predictors.

#### **4. Discussion**

The current study examined the predictive roles of workplace spirituality on employee silence and dimensions of social alienation among the NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin serving in Delta State, Nigeria. The study examined 4 hypotheses, 2 were confirmed (1 & 3), the rest 2 were not confirmed (2 & 4). The finding on each of the hypotheses is discussed below.

In hypothesis one, the study examined the predictive role of workplace spirituality on employee silence; it found negative and significant predictive coefficients on employee silence among NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin serving in Delta State, Nigeria. The negative and significant predictive influence found implies that the more employees display workplace spirituality, the fewer employees display a loss of voice. This finding is indicative of an inverse but proportionate predictive relationship between the predictor and the criterion variables.

The study also explored the predictive roles of workplace spirituality on social alienation dimensions. Findings reveal that hypothesis 2 which sought predictive roles of workplace spirituality on the powerlessness form of social alienation was not confirmed; the significant predictive role of workplace spirituality did not reach significant proportions on the outcome variable, powerlessness alienation. The finding implies that a significant predictive relationship was not found among NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin serving in Delta State, Nigeria. The finding is indicative that most participants did not feel alienated because of feelings of powerlessness, or not being in a position of power.

However, exploring the relative contributions of workplace spirituality on the meaninglessness dimension of social alienation as examined in hypothesis 3, findings indicate that when members of an organization who are unable to find meaning in work, or identify goals for which their employment or work serves them, they have a greater chance of being or feeling alienated. This feeling of alienation was negatively predicted by workplace spirituality. Thus, the meaninglessness social alienation dimension as stated in hypothesis 3 was negatively and significantly confirmed

In hypothesis 4, the statement that workplace spirituality will predict self-estrangement was not confirmed; although, the findings had strong negation in the literature. For example, Vrendenburgh (2022) and Vanderstukken and Caniels (2021) found that lack of power (powerlessness), and finding self within the wrong group at work, or incompatibility of the self (self-estrangement) were the leading cause of social alienation in the workplace with a reciprocal negative outcome such as employee silence. This negation in literature may be

explained in the light of peculiarities of the participants, their perceptual idiosyncrasies and workplace climate.

Employee silence can endanger the organization as well as its employees. Social alienation in the workplace is one of the leading causes of employee silence. By perceptual idiosyncrasies toward the workplace, the organization and interaction with members, meaningfulness is the commonest factor that is predicted by workplace spirituality among NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin serving in Delta State, Nigeria. The negative predictive role is an indication that workplace spirituality is inversely related to the outcome variables, and can reduce employee silence and meaningfulness alienation among NYSC members of Northern Nigeria origin serving in Delta State, Nigeria. Thus, workplace spirituality can effectively be used to whittle down the growth of employee silence and can also discourage the perceptual feelings of meaningfulness type of alienation. With workplace spirituality, there is a possibility of survival for employees endangered by silence and alienation climate.

## **5. Conclusion**

Employee silence is real in organization, and it comes at a huge cost. Although it may not be entirely mitigated in the organization; it implies that understanding organizational factors and circumstances that make employees more susceptible to it is one of the best ways of managing it through organizational policies. One of the factors that could orchestrate employee silence is social alienation. Social alienation is a perceptual problem in the organization; its dimensions can be determined and activated in accordance with employee individual differences and alignment with the prevailing organizational climate being experienced by such employees. The situation creates unique perceptual work environment which can influence employees' silence behaviour. Further, findings reveal workplace spirituality as an important employee factor in modern day organization as it regulates and invigorates engagement behaviour, and reduces negative employee behaviour such as employee silence and social alienation.



## References

- Adamska, K., & Jurek, P. (2017). Adaptation of the Four Forms of Employee Silence Scale in a Polish sample. *Current Issues in Personality Psychology*, 5(4), 303–312.
- Alfuqaha, O. A., Shunnar, O. F., Khalil, R. A., Alhalaiqa, F. N., Thaher, Y. A., & Al Amad, T. Z. (2023). Work alienation influences nurses' readiness for professional development and willingness to learn: A cross-sectional correlation study. *PLOS ONE*, 18(5), e0284963. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0284963>
- Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. *International journal of productivity and performance management*, 63(3), 308-323.
- Beheshtifar, M., Borhani, H., & Moghadam, M. N. (2012). The destructive role of employee silence in organizational success. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 2(11), 275.
- Benevene, P. (2020). Managing silence in workplaces. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 32(1), 94-95. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JWL-02-2020-157>
- Bousquet, C. Work and social alienation. *Philos Stud* 180, 133–158 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-022-01880-9>
- Bloomfield, J., & Fisher, M. J. (2019). Quantitative research design. *Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association*, 22(2), 27-30.
- British Academy of Management (2019). Employees who are treated rudely get their revenge with the silent treatment, research shows (2019, September 4) retrieved 30 June 2022 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-09-employeesrudely-revenge-silent-treatment.html>

- Cetinkaya, A. S., & Karayel, S. (2019). The effects of organisational silence on work alienation in service enterprises. *International Journal of Economics and Business Research*, 18(4), 480-498.
- Cooke, F. L., Dickmann, M., & Parry, E. (2022). Building sustainable societies through human-centred human resource management: Emerging issues and research opportunities. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(1), 1-15.
- Fard, P. G., & Karimi, F. (2015). The Relationship between Organizational Trust and Organizational Silence with Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment of the Employees of the University. *International Education Studies*, 8(11), 219-227.
- Hafeez, M., Yasin, I. M., Zawawi, D., Qureshi, N. A., Hussain, S. T., & Arif, M. (2022). A Review of the Role of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Enhancing Corporate Sustainability: An Underpinning Role of Stern and Dietz's Value Model. *SAGE Open*, 12(2), 21582440221099530.
- Haldorai, K., Kim, W. G., Chang, H. S., & Li, J. J. (2020). Workplace spirituality as a mediator between ethical climate and workplace deviant behaviour. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 86, 102372.
- Hanaysha, J. R., & Majid, M. (2018). Employee motivation and its role in improving productivity and organizational commitment at higher education institutions. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business*, 6(1), 17-28.
- Harlos, K., & Knoll, M. (2021). Employee silence and workplace bullying. *Pathways of job-related negative behaviour*, 201-229.
- Iqbal, H., Riaz, K., Khan, K., & Hussainy, S. K. (2021). Impact of workplace spirituality on employee attitudes and engagements. *Pakistan Business Review*, 23(1), 92-114.

- Iqbal, M., Adawiyah, W. R., Suroso, A., & Wihuda, F. (2020). Exploring the impact of workplace spirituality on nurse work engagement: an empirical study on Indonesian government hospitals. *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*, 36(3), 351-369. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOES-03-2019-0061>
- John, S. P., & Manikandan, K. (2019). Employee Silence: A Meta-Analytic Review. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 7(1), 355-366. DIP: 18.01.040/20190701 DOI: 10.25215/0701 .040
- Karatepe, O. M., Yavas, U., Babakus, E., & Deitz, G. D. (2018). The effects of organizational and personal resources on stress, engagement, and job outcomes. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 74, 147-161.
- Khan, K., Nazir, T., & Shafi, K. (2021). Could Workplace Bullying and Emotional Exhaustion be Reasons for Employee Silence? *Journal of Workplace Behavior*, 2(2), 35-51. Retrieved from <https://www.charisma-jwb.com/index.php/jwb/article/view/72>
- Lam, L. W., & Xu, A. J. (2019). Power imbalance and employee silence: The role of abusive leadership, power distance orientation, and perceived organizational politics. *Applied Psychology*, 68(3), 513-546.
- Lehman, C. M., & DuFrene, D. D. (2015). *BCOM7*. Cengage learning.
- Margaretha, M., Saragih, S., Parayow, B. and Zaniarti, S. (2021). Workplace Spirituality employee engagement and professional commitment: A study of Lecturers from Indonesian Universities. *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 19(2): 346-356.
- Marx, K. (2019). Alienation and social classes. In *Social stratification* (pp. 87-91). Routledge.
- Memon, M.A., Hwa, C.J., Ramayah, T and Ting, H. (2009). Moderation Analysis Issues and Guidelines DOI: 10.47263/JAPEM.3 (1) 01

- Moradi, E., Safania, A. M., & Poorsoltani Zarandi, H. (2019). The causal relationship between organizational silences with organizational citizenship behaviour: the mediating role of organizational identity. *Journal of Psychological Achievements*, 26(1), 131-150.
- Morsch, J., van Dijk, D., & Kodden, B. (2020). The impact of perceived psychological contract breach, abusive supervision, and silence on employee well-being. *Journal of Applied Business and Economics*, 22(2).
- Mottaz, C. J. (1981). Some Determinants of work alienation. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 22(4), 515–529. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.1981.tb00678.x
- Muttar, A. K., Keir, M. Y. A., Mahdi, O. R., & Nassar, I. A. (2019). Antecedents and Consequences of Work Alienation—A Critical. *Journal of Statistics Applications & Probability*, 8(3), 279-288.
- Najafi, H. (2017). The impact of organizational silence on organizational performance (Case study: Nurses of Mazandaran Bo-Ali-Sina hospital). *Iranian Journal of Nursing Research*, 12(5), 45-52.
- Nduati, M. M., & Wanyoike, R. (2022). Employee performance management practices and organizational effectiveness. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 3(10), 361-378. [https://iajournals.org/articles/iajhrba\\_v3\\_i10\\_361\\_378.pdf](https://iajournals.org/articles/iajhrba_v3_i10_361_378.pdf)
- Osborne, S. & Hammoud, S.H. (2017). Effective Employee Engagement in the Workplace. *International Journal of Applied Management and Technology*, 16(1), 50-67.

- Petchsawang, P., & Duchon, D. (2009). Measuring workplace spirituality in an Asian context. *Human Resource Development International*, 12(4), 459-468
- Pourkiani, M., & Sayadi, S. (2019). Recognizing and describing the desirable model of workplace spirituality, customer relationship management and quality of work life. *Revista Inclusiones*, 113-125.
- Prouska, R., & Psychogios, A. (2018). Do not say a word! Conceptualizing employee silence in a long-term crisis context. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(5), 885-914.
- Putnam, R. D. (1995). *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital*. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1): 65–78. doi:10.1353/jod.1995.0002. S2CID 154350113
- Rugulies, R. (2019). What is a psychosocial work environment? *Scandinavian Journal of Work, environment & Health*, 45(1), 1-6.
- Sherer, J. S. (2022). *Organizational Commitment as a Mediator between Organizational Climate and Employee Silence* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).
- Sookoo, N. (2014) Perceptions of Injustice and Alienation Dynamics Within The Workplace. *Journal of the Department of Behavioural Sciences*, 3(1), 81-99.
- Tamunomiebi, M. D., & John-Eke, E. C. (2020). Workplace Diversity: Emerging Issues in Contemporary. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(2), 255-265.
- Tarsipan, M. A. B. (2016). The relationship between leader-member exchange and job satisfaction: The mediating role of work alienation. *International Business Management*, 10(17), 3956-3963.

The jamovi project (2021). jamovi. (Version 1.6) [Computer Software]. Retrieved from <https://www.jamovi.org>.

Vanderstukken, A. &Caniëls, M.C.J. (2021). Predictors of work alienation: differences between hierarchical levels", *Career Development International*, 26(5), 640-656. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-01-2021-0013>

Vasconcelos, A.F. (2018). Workplace spirituality: empirical evidence revisited, *Management Research Review*, 41 (7), 789-821. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-07-2017-0232>

Vredenburgh, K. (2022). Freedom at work: understanding, alienation, and the AI-driven workplace. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 1-15.

Yamane, T. (1977). *Sampling techniques*(3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) John Wiley & Sons