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Examining the Impact of Social Capital, Workplace Inclusivity, and Role Conflict on Employee Burnout with Psychological Resilience as a Mediator

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ABSTRACT

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This study investigates the impact of social capital, workplace inclusivity, and role conflict on employee burnout, with psychological resilience examined as a mediating variable within the context of organizational behavior. The purpose of the research is to explore how supportive interpersonal networks, inclusive work environments, and conflicting role demands influence employee well-being, and to determine whether psychological resilience serves as a buffer against burnout. Drawing on social capital theory and stress-coping frameworks, the study employed a quantitative approach using a structured survey questionnaire administered to employees across various organizations in Pakistan. A sample of 400 respondents was selected through stratified random sampling. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the data and test the hypothesized relationships. The findings revealed that social capital and workplace inclusivity negatively influenced employee burnout, whereas role conflict had a significant positive effect. Psychological resilience was found to significantly mediate these relationships, particularly reducing the negative impact of role conflict on burnout. This study offers theoretical contributions and practical implications for HR practitioners, organizational leaders, and policymakers seeking to promote employee mental health and sustainable performance outcomes.

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1.0 Introduction

Today's organizations recognize employee well-being as a main business objective and scholars and professionals study the sources of burnout and actions to reduce its impact. Constant exposure to workplace stress makes people feel emotionally spent and loses their drive. These effects damage both personal lives and business outcomes because employees work less effectively and prefer to stay away from work. They also want to leave their current job (Serenko, 2024). The global economy's shifts caused by social unrest and technology combined with population changes have made today's workplace social conditions harder to understand. In this changing work environment examining burnout needs to move beyond workload and time pressure to study its real organizational causes. Scholars see burnout as more than a failure of individual employees because it develops from workplace relationships, organizational design, and work culture. The relationship between these workplace elements and human capacity shows us how to create knowledge that helps both professionals and researchers make better decisions (Khaksar et al., 2023).

Social capital research in organizations has become essential to explain how employees behave and think at work. Social capital exists as the set of work connections, shared ground rules, upheld trust, and social assistance that people in an organization use. Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), and Putnam (1993) originally studied social capital which helps teams in workplaces to exchange information work together efficiently. Employees who recognize strong social networks at work develop deeper connections with teammates and gain trusted support as well as emotional backing (Zhang, 2024). Positive social environments at work protect employees from stress and lower their chance of burnout because they boost helpful teamwork. Employee emotional exhaustion increases when social networks fail to provide proper support because of weak connections. The amount of inclusion people from different groups experience in their workplace shows how much they feel appreciated and accepted in the organizational environment. A business becomes inclusive when it uses both organizational systems and cultural principles to create collaborative settings from diverse parties (Apelehin et al., 2025). Workplace inclusion enhances employees' sense of psychological safety which leads to better mutual respect and equal participation. These positive conditions decrease incidents of marginalization and reduce burnout effects. Employed individuals experience established work stress from occupational health psychology when their role duties clash with each other causing confusing emotions and decreased job pleasure. The condition wears away our mental strength and has long been linked to burnout development (Burrowes et al., 2023).

This research relies on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model to study burnout which states that work-related demands and resource availability create this response. Job collision depletes employee energy at work but social connections and inclusivity boost their mental strength and work commitment. The Conservation of Resources theory helps us understand how people try to keep their valuable resources while showing how losing them causes burnout (Chen et al., 2024). The inner resource of psychological resilience helps people survive job conflicts better and earn more benefits from positive workplace features according to COR theory. Our

research examines how psychological resilience connects between company conditions and burnout development. The mediation approach shows us how work and personal resources work together to affect burnout results (Otto et al., 2021).

The research field has proven single relationships between structural factors and burnout but lacks evidence detailing how they interact while using psychological resilience as a connection point. Studies have mostly studied workplace elements one at a time without considering their simultaneous relationships in real work environments (Oyedeji et al., 2025). Current burnout research provides evidence of how social support shields against burnout yet it devotes fewer studies to the impact of social capital's dimensions on burnout. The field of diversity management studies inclusion while psychologists focus mainly on employee well-being and disregard its influence on psychological climate. Research finds that role conflict has a negative impact across different workplaces yet examines the main resistance strategies employees develop to manage stress while fewer scholars investigate resilience techniques. Research needs to combine organizational factors with a psychological mediator in one complete model because no study has done this so far (Vilarino del Castillo & Lopez-Zafra, 2022).

Organizational transformation and technological adoption in young economy nations lead to significant changes in how people work which create a noticeable gap in research data. Researchers seek to investigate how relations at work impact employee burnout with psychological resilience as the connection between social capital and workplace inclusivity. Our joint analysis reveals how both workplace and personal elements burnout develops while showing how they connect together at work. As scientific research expands across fields the study helps prove that burnout needs to be addressed through social changes in the workplace (McCarthy et al., 2022). The model responds to researchers who say theory-based models must show how work conditions work with personal strengths to prevent burnout.

Today's organizations recognize employee well-being as a main business objective and scholars and professionals study the sources of burnout and actions to reduce its impact. Constant exposure to workplace stress makes people feel emotionally spent and loses their drive. These effects damage both personal lives and business outcomes because employees work less effectively and prefer to stay away from work (Serenko, 2024). They also want to leave their current job. The global business landscape transforms under political changes, developing technologies, and diverse workforce populations producing advanced psychological work environments. Understanding how work burnout develops from organizational dynamics should replace looking at time pressure as its only cause. Scholars see burnout as more than a failure of individual employees because it develops from workplace relationships, organizational design, and work culture. Our multi-dimensional approach to link organizational elements with psychological resilience in workplaces creates knowledge that helps theory development and real-world application (Jin et al., 2025).

Social capital research in organizations has become essential to explain how employees behave and think at work. Social capital exists as the set of work connections, shared ground rules, upheld trust, and social assistance that people in an organization use. Social capital in the workplace was first defined by Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), and Putnam (1993) through their studies. These scholars showed that workplace social capital enhances communication sharing and teamwork efforts (Kida et al., 2024). Employees who recognize strong social networks at work develop deeper connections with teammates and gain trusted support as well as emotional backing. Positive social environments at work protect employees from stress and lower their chance of burnout because they boost helpful teamwork. Employee emotional exhaustion increases when social networks fail to provide proper support because of weak connections. The amount of inclusion people from different groups experience in their workplace shows how much they feel appreciated and accepted in the organizational environment. A business becomes inclusive when it uses both organizational systems and cultural principles to create collaborative settings from diverse parties (Apelehin et al., 2025). Workplace inclusion enhances employees' sense of psychological safety which leads to better mutual respect and equal participation. These positive conditions decrease incidents of marginalization and reduce burnout effects. Employed individuals experience established work stress from occupational health psychology when their role duties clash with each other causing confusing emotions and decreased job pleasure. The condition wears away our mental strength and has long been linked to burnout development (Todaro-Franceschi, 2024).

This research bases itself on the Job Demands-Resources model developed which states burnout emerges when job requirements exceed available resources. Job collision depletes employee energy at work but social connections and inclusivity boost their mental strength and work commitment. The Conservation of Resources theory helps us understand how people try to keep their valuable resources while showing how losing them causes burnout (Chen et al., 2024). The inner resource of psychological resilience helps people survive job conflicts better and earn more benefits from positive workplace features according to COR theory. Our research examines how psychological resilience connects between company conditions and burnout development. The mediation approach shows us how work and personal resources work together to affect burnout results.

Research shows how social capital and inclusiveness change burnout but there is no complete study that examines all these factors together and explains how resilience helps them affect burnout. Studies have mostly studied workplace elements one at a time without considering their simultaneous relationships in real work environments. Current burnout research provides evidence of how social support shields against burnout yet it devotes fewer studies to the impact of social capital's dimensions on burnout. The field of diversity management studies inclusion while psychologists focus mainly on employee well-being and disregard its influence on psychological climate. Research confirms that role conflict leads to burnout in various companies but studies have not fully explained how people cope with workload problems. Research needs to combine organizational factors with a psychological mediator in one complete model because no study has done this so far.

The changes taking place in emerging economy organizations push for research that examines how employees respond to these changes and adopt new technology in their workplace.

This research evaluates how social capital and workplace environment affect employee burnout in organizations with psychological resilience as an intermediary factor. Our joint analysis reveals how both workplace and personal elements burnout develops while showing how they connect together at work. As scientific research expands across fields the study helps prove that burnout needs to be addressed through social changes in the workplace. The model responds to researchers who say theory-based models must show how work conditions work with personal strengths to prevent burnout.

2.0 Literature Review

Today's organizations recognize employee well-being as a main business objective and scholars and professionals study the sources of burnout and actions to reduce its impact. Constant exposure to workplace stress makes people feel emotionally spent and loses their drive. These effects damage both personal lives and business outcomes because employees work less effectively and prefer to stay away from work (Kumar et al., 2021). They also want to leave their current job. Our changing global economy now consists of multiple layers that shape the work environment because social politics, tech change, and varied employee groups make it harder to understand. The present work environment changes demand a deeper study of burnout beyond work duties to its fundamental organizational dynamics. Scholars see burnout as more than a failure of individual employees because it develops from workplace relationships, organizational design, and work culture. Organizations achieve better theory and practice results when you study how social capital social inclusion and role conflict affect employee resilience (Tanner et al., 2022).

Social capital research in organizations has become essential to explain how employees behave and think at work. Social capital exists as the set of work connections, shared ground rules, upheld trust, and social assistance that people in an organization use. Social capital at work arises from Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), and Putnam (1993) by helping colleagues exchange information while working together for common goals. Employees who recognize strong social networks at work develop deeper connections with teammates and gain trusted support as well as emotional backing (Robinson, 2024). Positive social environments at work protect employees from stress and lower their chance of burnout because they boost helpful teamwork. Employee emotional exhaustion increases when social networks fail to provide proper support because of weak connections. The amount of inclusion people from different groups experience in their workplace shows how much they feel appreciated and accepted in the organizational environment (Robinson, 2024).

A business becomes inclusive when it uses both organizational systems and cultural principles to create collaborative settings from diverse parties. Workplace inclusion enhances employees' sense of psychological safety which leads to better mutual respect and equal participation. These positive conditions decrease incidents of marginalization and reduce burnout effects (Wolbring & Lillywhite, 2023). Employed individuals experience established work stress from occupational health psychology when their role duties clash with each other causing confusing emotions and decreased job pleasure. The condition wears away our mental strength

and has long been linked to burnout development.

This investigation relies on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework which claims that employees experience burnout due to unequal job stress and resource levels according to. Job collision depletes employee energy at work but social connections and inclusivity boost their mental strength and work commitment. The Conservation of Resources theory helps us understand how people try to keep their valuable resources while showing how losing them causes burnout (Chen et al., 2024). The inner resource of psychological resilience helps people survive job conflicts better and earn more benefits from positive workplace features according to COR theory. Our research examines how psychological resilience connects between company conditions and burnout development. The mediation approach shows us how work and personal resources work together to affect burnout results (Otto et al., 2021).

Researchers have proved the impact of social capital and inclusivity plus role conflict on burnout yet studies lack evidence combining both elements inside a single theory plus examining psychological resilience as a link between them. Studies have mostly studied workplace elements one at a time without considering their simultaneous relationships in real work environments. Current burnout research provides evidence of how social support shields against burnout yet it devotes fewer studies to the impact of social capital's dimensions on burnout (Bavik et al., 2020). The field of diversity management studies inclusion while psychologists focus mainly on employee well-being and disregard its influence on psychological climate. Research proves that role conflict hurts employees yet scientists know little about how individuals protect themselves from stress. Research needs to combine organizational factors with a psychological mediator in one complete model because no study has done this so far (Vilarino del Castillo & Lopez-Zafra, 2022).

Emerging economies witness clear workplace changes due to changing organizations and technology plus new demographics. Our research determines the effect of social connections at work as well as inclusivity and role conflict on workplace burnout through a psychological resilience analysis. Our joint analysis reveals how both workplace and personal elements burnout develops while showing how they connect together at work (Bu et al., 2024). As scientific research expands across fields the study helps prove that burnout needs to be addressed through social changes in the workplace. The model responds to researchers who say theory-based models must show how work conditions work with personal strengths to prevent burnout.

This analysis benefits students, leaders and government officials. Through this study academics can enhance the JD-R and COR theoretical models through concepts from organizational behavior positive psychology and human resource management. It proves useful when researchers study organizational culture across different societies by testing these links through this research in South Asian business practices (Irfan et al., 2024). Management teams should use these results to support HR experts and executives when they create workplace environments that protect employee mental health and decrease employee departures. Policymakers need this research to help both private and public companies develop stronger mental health workplaces. This research shows how workplace conditions and personal competencies

affect burnout which provides a complete view of how organizations can succeed while caring for their employees.

Our research proposal follows the key findings from the literature review and theoretical grounding. More connections with work colleagues lead to higher job burnout in employees. The social environment of an inclusive workplace makes employees more likely to burn out. When employees face contradictory job requirements they become more burned out at work. Psychological resilience protects employees from becoming burned out at work. H5: Psychological resilience mediates the relationship between social capital and employee burnout. H6: Psychological resilience mediates the relationship between workplace inclusivity and employee burnout. H7: Psychological resilience mediates the relationship between role conflict and employee burnout. Our research objectives will direct the collection of statistical data to show how different workplace elements affect stress at work.

3.0 Methodology

This study provides important knowledge for students, mangers, and officials who make business decisions. Through this study academics can enhance the JD-R and COR theoretical models through concepts from organizational behavior positive psychology and human resource management. It proves useful when researchers study organizational culture across different societies by testing these links through this research in South Asian business practices. Management teams should use these results to support HR experts and executives when they create workplace environments that protect employee mental health and decrease employee departures. Policymakers need this research to help both private and public companies develop stronger mental health workplaces. Our study reveals both workplace standards and personal traits impact burnout making it possible to manage organizational performance while looking after employees.

4.0 Findings and Results

4.1: Reliability Analysis

Table 1 Reliability Analysis

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Social Capital	0.88	0.91	0.68
Workplace Inclusivity	0.91	0.93	0.76
Role Conflict	0.85	0.88	0.64
Psychological Resilience	0.87	0.89	0.66
Employee Burnout	0.90	0.92	0.71

All constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding the 0.70 threshold. The AVE values were all above 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity, meaning the items effectively represented the underlying constructs.

4.2: VIF (Multicollinearity Check)

Table 3 VIF (Multicollinearity Check)

Construct	VIF
Social Capital	1.45
Workplace Inclusivity	1.38
Role Conflict	1.52
Psychological Resilience	1.41

VIF values were all below the threshold of 5, suggesting that multicollinearity among the independent constructs was not a concern, and the structural model was free from redundancy issues among predictors.

4.3: Model Fitness Indices

Table 4 Model Fitness Indices

Fit Index	Value
SRMR	0.053
NFI	0.91

Interpretation: The SRMR value was below 0.08, and the NFI was above 0.90, indicating that the structural model had a good overall fit and adequately represented the observed data.

4.4: Structural Equation Model Path Coefficients

Table 4.5 Structural Equation Model Path Coefficients

Path	Beta value	t- value	р-
Social Capital → Employee Burnout	0.22	3.87	0.000
Workplace Inclusivity → Employee Burnout	0.28	4.02	0.000
Role Conflict → Employee Burnout	0.36	5.13	0.000
Psychological Resilience → Employee Burnout	0.31	4.56	0.000
Social Capital → Psychological Resilience→ Employee Burnout	0.41	6.32	0.000
Workplace Inclusivity → Psychological Resilience → Employee Burnout	0.39	5.78	0.000
Role Conflict → Psychological Resilience → Employee Burnout	0.34	4.94	0.000

The structural model indicated that social capital and workplace inclusivity had significant negative effects on employee burnout, while role conflict had a positive effect. Psychological resilience significantly reduced burnout and was positively predicted by social capital and inclusivity, and negatively by role conflict. All path relationships were statistically significant at the 0.001 level, confirming the hypothesized associations and mediating role of psychological

resilience.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide critical insights into the complex interplay between social capital, workplace inclusivity, role conflict, and employee burnout, with psychological resilience functioning as a key mediating mechanism. The negative relationship between social capital and employee burnout highlights the protective role of strong interpersonal relationships and trust-based networks in buffering employees from stress and emotional exhaustion. This aligns with the theoretical grounding of social capital, where shared norms, trust, and collaboration create a supportive organizational climate that mitigates adverse psychological outcomes. In line with this, the study also revealed a significant positive relationship between social capital and psychological resilience, indicating that when employees are embedded in rich relational environments, they are more likely to develop adaptive coping skills that enable them to withstand stressors.

Similarly, the inverse relationship between workplace inclusivity and burnout reinforces the argument that inclusive work environments where diverse perspectives are valued and individuals feel respected contribute significantly to employee well-being. Inclusivity not only reduced burnout but also positively influenced psychological resilience, suggesting that when employees perceive a sense of belonging and acceptance, they are better equipped psychologically to manage role-related stress. These findings are consistent with contemporary organizational behavior literature that emphasizes the importance of inclusive leadership and psychological safety in fostering employee engagement and retention.

In contrast, the study confirmed a strong positive relationship between role conflict and employee burnout, supporting existing research that underscores the detrimental effects of incompatible job demands and ambiguous responsibilities. Employees experiencing role conflict often face cognitive dissonance, emotional strain, and performance anxiety, all of which contribute to higher levels of burnout. Moreover, the negative effect of role conflict on psychological resilience revealed a critical pathway through which job stress undermines employees' capacity to adapt and recover. This further validates the theoretical proposition that role conflict not only induces stress directly but also impairs the psychological mechanisms needed to deal with it, thereby exacerbating burnout.

Psychological resilience emerged as a crucial mediator in the model, significantly reducing the impact of workplace stressors on burnout. This suggests that resilience acts as a buffer that weakens the adverse effects of low social capital, exclusionary work environments, and role ambiguity. Employees who possess higher levels of resilience can reinterpret stressful experiences, maintain a sense of purpose, and sustain motivation even under pressure. These findings contribute to the expanding body of research that views psychological resilience not merely as a trait but as a dynamic process that can be influenced by organizational conditions and leadership practices. The statistically significant mediating effects confirmed that fostering resilience should be a core focus of organizational development programs.

Collectively, the findings of this study offer a comprehensive understanding of how social

and organizational dynamics contribute to employee burnout, and how psychological resilience can be strategically nurtured to mitigate these effects. Theoretically, the study adds value by integrating social capital theory, inclusivity frameworks, and stress-coping models within a unified empirical framework using advanced PLS-SEM analysis. The study not only confirms several well-established relationships but also introduces novel mediating pathways that highlight the centrality of psychological resilience in workplace mental health strategies.

In conclusion, the results underscore that employee burnout is not merely a function of individual weaknesses but is deeply embedded in the organizational context, shaped by the quality of social relationships, perceptions of inclusivity, and the clarity of role expectations. Organizations that prioritize building social capital and inclusive cultures while minimizing role conflict are better positioned to promote mental well-being and sustainable performance. Furthermore, by investing in resilience-building initiatives—such as training programs, mentorship, and mindfulness interventions—employers can enhance their workforce's capacity to cope with stress and avoid burnout.

The study recommends that managers and HR practitioners place greater emphasis on fostering collaborative work cultures, where social networks are leveraged to promote trust and mutual support. Diversity and inclusivity should go beyond compliance and be embedded into everyday practices, leadership development, and decision-making processes. It is equally important to redesign jobs in a way that reduces ambiguity and conflicting demands, ensuring that employees have clear goals and autonomy over their tasks. Training and development programs should incorporate resilience-building techniques, equipping employees with tools to manage stress, regulate emotions, and maintain productivity under pressure.

From an academic standpoint, this study offers implications for future research by providing a holistic model that connects structural workplace factors with psychological outcomes. It suggests new avenues for exploring how contextual variables such as organizational justice, leadership style, and work-life balance interact with resilience to influence burnout. Practically, these insights can guide evidence-based policymaking, particularly in emerging economies like Pakistan, where organizational stress and mental health are growing concerns. Policymakers can use these findings to advocate for national workplace mental health standards, while organizations can design interventions that address burnout through both structural and psychological lenses. Overall, this study emphasizes that employee well-being must be addressed systemically, not in isolation, and that resilience is both an outcome of positive workplace conditions and a pathway to enduring organizational success.

Samia Noureen: Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework

Danial Babar: Data Analysis, Supervision and Drafting

Aqsa Atta Methodology and Revision

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

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