

DEVELOPMENT OF HELPLESSNESS SCALE ON THE WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

Nearly one-third of your life is devoted to your job. Your employee's satisfaction and fulfilment at work will naturally show in his whole personality and personal growth. The benefits of a pleasant workplace extend far beyond increased output and contentment on the part of workers. But if the of workplace is toxic, the employee may feel helpless, stress, anxiety etc. these feelings lead to depression and also affect the working of employee. Helplessness is one of the major issue at workplace. To environment determine the helplessness, we required the tools to measure it. The current investigation was undertaken to examine the phenomenon of helplessness within the workplace environment. At first, a pool of 8 items were originated for interview of major professions (Doctors/ paramedical staff / health professionals, Lawyers, Engineers, Teachers, Architects, Bankers) in Pakistan. By the help of interviews, a pool of 81 items were created first that undergoes the expert PHD SCHOLAR'S examination, from the 81 items 37 were modified and 8 items were deleted. By the expert's evaluation, a pool of 58 items were added. So the total pool of items was now 131. When all 131 items were testified by the 5 PHD Scholar (Expert Evaluation), the next step was to generate the Google form. The pilot study was done with 131 items to the 107 professionals of workplace. Further, field administration of these items was done above 467 participants by using Google Form. The 91 items were conducted on 467 respondents. The data was examined by using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and reliability test. Hence, at the end 41 items were reliable to use. While preceding literature also aligned that appropriate number of items are at least 4 to 6 required for conceptual dimensions. The full scale reliability was .959. It shows high reliability.



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INTRODUCTION

Workers are under more pressure than ever before in today's workplace, which is defined by rapid technological breakthroughs, globalization, liberalization, worker diversity, and increased national and worldwide rivalry. Employees may develop severe work stress, learned helplessness in a volatile, unpredictable, complex, and ambiguous workplace, when they endure. Individuals must actively take control of their careers in today's fast changing and increasingly competitive labor environment. However, other employees believe that, despite their desire to change jobs, they lack the psychological problems. Stress is a severe workplace issue that affects organizations all around the country on a daily basis. We know it's widespread and has an influence on employees, but what causes it and how it affects them may be less obvious (Balakrishnan, 1990).

The first is called personal helplessness and it emerges when people believe that they lack the capabilities they need. A number of skills to perform a certain activity Feeling of personal impotence arising from. A reduction in the perception of self-efficacy may also be characterized as a result of exposure to unpredictable events. This second form of sentiment, known as universal helplessness, is related with expectations of future control, as people do not think that a reaction will lead to a successful job. This is the result of the experience that the individual's behavior is not contingent and the consequence of the apprenticed task of helplessness training. Since this training job did not have a contingency, no future contingency would be anticipated (Schepman & Richmond, 2003).

Helplessness is the conviction that nobody can solve a poor situation (such as being diagnosed with an illness). Therefore, helplessness is in many respects a belief that the circumstances or outcome cannot be managed. Helplessness is learned like every thought (Seligman 1975). The learned impotence resembles a certain control locus (i.e. believing that the results are attributable to destiny, luck, or opportunity). Helplessness conventions may be either universal or individual (i.e. nobody can) (i.e., there is nothing that I can do). Every sort of confidence in helplessness is linked to motivational, behavioral and emotional impairments (Smelser & Baltes, 2001).



Helplessness on workplace is also one of the cause that is effecting the mental health of the workers. So to identify the problems we need tools to determine the issues of psychological problems.so for the identification of helplessness on work place, I have conduct a research and develop a scale for the employees in Urdu. It is critical to comprehend the influence of learned helplessness on employee engagement at work. Employees' levels of work involvement are significantly influenced when they feel helpless; therefore, it is critical for managers and supervisors to recognize the problem of learned helplessness. HR professionals should concentrate on developing approaches that try to change negative employee attitudes. Edipositions to do so, and as a result, they are stuck in an unfavorable workplace (being locked-in). They feel helpless at workplace (Balakrishnan, 1990).

Some issues that we face on the workplace are politics on workplace: Office politics occurs in almost every company. Individuals partake in these actions to enhance their standing and fulfill their personal objectives, occasionally to the detriment of others. It's a common occurrence in the job. Workplace politics, in it's down to human interactions and relationships. There's no reason to be concerned about workplace politics most basic form, is simply about the contrasts between people at work; differences in beliefs, conflicts of interests, and so on are all common manifestations of office politics. A boil is achieved. The term "workplace politics" refers to the practice of influencing decisions in an organization for the betterment of the business or its workers via the use of influence and social networks. Without thinking about the bigger picture, an individual's influence could advance their own goals at the expense of the business. Access to material goods or intangible benefits such as status or pseudo-authority that impacts others' conduct are examples of personal advantages. Conversely, organizational politics has the potential to increase productivity, strengthen connections between coworkers, hasten transformation, and reap rewards for all parties involved. Individuals and groups can get involved in office politics, which can be a lot of fun (STANDS4 LLC, 2021).

We are all unique people with our own set of experiences and traits, and this variety is what makes us unique. An inclusive culture that values and makes use of every employee's skills is what an inclusive workplace strives for. Realizing that every single individual is special and different is what it means. Even organizations who claim to be major proponents of diversity



lack statistics to back up their statements. There are a lot of problems that a person face on workplace are lack of communication , less time to get job work done , issues to deal with the colleagues moodiness and lack of interest to do work as a group , staff hierarchy , pay issues , salary issues , transportation issue , understanding issues , technical issues , management issues , staff attitudes , dealing with the change and to deal with negative actions that decrease your morale , staying motivating all the time and to be creative every time is also an issue , mental health issues like anxiety , depression , panic , helplessness , hopelessness , stress etc. To deal with difficult clients, finding the solution of every problem, learning new skills that are required for job. Policy making issues, power, and money interrupt work, non-merit selection by taking bribery. Gender discrimination, harassment issue. Abusing, bullying, unethical demands for clothing etc. (Trommater, 2016).

Toxic bosses are, unsurprisingly, the leading source of job discontent. Half of employees have quit their jobs to avoid a nasty boss. Anyone who has worked for a poor boss understands how stressful and unsatisfying their job can be. However, it may increase your risk of serious depression and may lead to your own bullying conduct. To deal with the unfaithful colleagues is also a cause of serious mental disturbance. They can speak wrong against you, they can speak lie. This could be one reason leading to toxic employers' employees' increased sadness and decreased job satisfaction, but we still don't know exactly how workplace bullying affects their mental health (Gregoire, 2017).

Also, keep in mind that if your timeframe is too ambitious, your team could have to put in extra hours and work overtime, which will drive up the total cost. If workers have unrealistic expectations, they may suffer from stress-related illnesses and miss time at work. If workers have unrealistic expectations, they may suffer from stress-related illnesses and miss time at work. The other members of your team will already be under a lot of pressure to meet their objectives, and now they have to do it without you (Half 2021).

Misuse of business time is one of the most regularly cited "poor behaviors" in the workplace. Employees engage in this behavior when, for instance, they show up late to work, take longer or extra breaks, cheat on their time sheets, or use business time to do personal errands. These negative habits have the potential to spread fast to other employees. It can also breed resentment

among coworkers, which has a negative impact on morale and productivity. In many businesses, inappropriate computer use is another widespread unethical practice. This can include things like internet shopping, social media, and news reading. The most common causes for slacking off at work are a lack of challenge, being overworked, discontent with the job, and boredom. This can cost company thousands of dollars in missed time, have a negative influence on employee happiness, and expose private commercial information to security and liability threats (Roubler, 2017).

These are some of the factors that are faced by the employees and officers. From these factors, hopelessness, helplessness can be formed. Jobs with little control, impact, learning and development are subject to the risk of learning impaired. If so, depression among the workforce will become over-represented. Between. So the attempted suicides will be overrepresented. (That's right not that everybody learns helplessness in these occupations or that everyone learns helplessness. Helplessness is followed by depression. Not all helplessness, or that "helplessness depression" is causing all attempted suicides. (Lennerlof, 2020).

Learned helplessness is a pattern of behavior, involving an ill-fit reaction defined by challenge avoidance, a negative effects and the failure of obstacle-solving solutions. In order to have acquired helplessness, three components are required: contingency, cognition and behavior (Hiroto & Seligman, 1975).

Research objectives:

- A) To the development of scale on helplessness on the workplace for the workers.

1. Review of Literature

The discovery that exposure to unpredictable outcomes can impede future learning has led to the belief that feeling in control is a prerequisite for good learning. This research casts doubt on this widely held belief. It demonstrates that the impact of exposure to the prevalence of rewards influences uncontrollable events. Although the former technique increases the contingency, the latter strategy reduces it. Between actions and the rewards that come with them, the current study implies that the latter technique will be more effective in generating revenue. And potentially involve greater average rewards, the present study implies that the latter technique will be more effective in generating revenue. New concepts (Teodorescu & Erev, 2014)

Moreover, streamlining is typically followed by socialization strategies, by which recruits to corrupt units are led to take continued immoral actions and their associated stream lining (Anand et al. 2004).

The reformulation indicates that people, once inevitable, blame a reason for their helplessness and impotence. The reason may be steady or unstable, globally or internationally. The attribution picked impacts whether future defaults, helplessness are chronic or acute, wide or limited and whether defaults reduce autonomy, the potential of self-efficacy may be reduced. This reformulation of human happiness analyzes the implications for the learned helplessness model of depression (Abramson et al. 1978).

Depression varies depending on the type of impairment, though. The spectrum of depressive symptoms depends on the generality and stability of impotence, and the way the individual explains or characterizes his or her experience, depends on any impact on self-estimation (internally vs. externally). This proposed paradigm defines, and provides the way for, at least one depression — that originates from the helplessness that have been learned (Ackerman, 2019).

A phenomenon that results in persons failing to use any control alternatives accessible afterwards when exposed to unmanageable stimuli repeatedly. In essence, people are told that they lack behavioral control over environmental occurrences, so undermining their desire for making adjustments or trying to change situations. This was initially documented in 1967 by American psychologists J. Bruce Overmier (1938) and Martin E. P. Seligman (1942) following experiments in which non-human animals were repeatedly shocked electrically and then failed to learn to avoid them in a different device. In the 1970s, Seligman applied the concept to human clinical depression from non-human animal research and offered to explain how depression was or was vulnerable to. This idea shows that persons who are repeatedly exposed to stressful conditions outside their control are not able to make decisions or to engage in deliberate conduct successfully. Post-traumatic stress disease was observed to be robustly in keeping with the idea (Miller et al.1975).

Learned Helplessness (Overmier & Seligman 1967) introduced the notion of learning helplessness when they experimented with dogs. It was found that because of dogs' constant exposure to unavoidable electric shocks, even though the environment had altered, they ceased



trying to flee. Seligman et al (1967) explain that when a person learns that the results are outside of his control of his or her resources, he thinks that he or she has learnt helplessness. The term learning disability can be described. It was revealed that a generalization of the learning process takes place when someone feels helpless (Yadav & Goyal, 2016).

In the 1970s, when theory of attribution gained importance, learning theory of impotence was revised to contain more specific information about cognitive processes. Abrahamson, Seligman, and Teasdale in particular incorporated a tendency for human beings to wonder "why" when something happens and recognized that their responses often can lead to precise and predictable event responses. According to the theory that a person currently proposes, a result is only inevitable for learning impunity. How the expectation of non-contingency is less significant, yet because of the fact that the outcome is unconditional, the prediction is more significant While causal characteristics of the no contingent outcome become increasing when it comes to anticipating the kind of the future deficits. This theory adjustment was more powerful for behavior prediction (Peterson et al. 1993).

In humans the concept of self-efficacy, the belief of the individual in his inner capacity for achieving goals is related to the acquired helplessness. The learned theory of default argues that a real or perceived absence of control over an event might occur from clinical depression and mental illness (Seligman, 1975).

2. Materials and Methods

In this section the process of development of helplessness on workplace for the professionals has been described and the steps which were taken to develop the helplessness on the workplace scale. Following steps were gone through for the development of helplessness on the workplace scale for professionals.

This section was proposed for the following goals:

- To the development of helplessness on workplace scale for the workers.
- To establish the scale that can measure the characteristics of helplessness in workers.

2.1 Generation of the item pool

The first step was to identify the causes and kinds of helplessness on the workplace, for this 8 open ended questions were generated to interview the employees. An unstructured interview was

composed of open ended questions in Urdu about the helplessness on the workplace. The interview was completely unstructured and was of open ended questions. This help to identify the dimensions of all the problems that can cause helplessness on workplace. The interview was taken from both men and women of the respective professionals that have been mentioned. The 8 items and the interview help to develop the variables for the scale and further help in the development of pool items. The interviews were conducted on the Population for the professionals including *Bankers, Architects, Teachers, Healthcare professionals/ doctors, Engineers, Lawyers.*

At first, item pool was generated according to the data which was taken by the interviews from 6 major professions of Pakistan. No literature was available that is specifically define the problems that cause helplessness on the workplace. So no model/ theory is used or followed for the development of these pool of items. Items were than themed into 5 dimensions that explain helplessness on workplace. All the items were generated in Urdu. An unstructured interview was composed of open ended questions in Urdu about the helplessness on the workplace.

There are 5 dimensions initiated entitled as:

- i. Politics existing on the workplace.
- ii. Problems on the workplace.
- iii. A vicious boss or colleagues.
- iv. Unrealistic Deadlines pressurizing you on the workplace.
- v. A rotten, unethical culture that prevails on the workplace

2.2 Evaluation of Items by Experts

The subsequent phase after item development was the methodical process of content evaluation of items by specialists. The generated items content was approved by the specialists who had expertise in scale development and concerned subject matter. Five experts were selected for evaluation. The experts had in detail knowledge about the topic and inclusive information about the questions in study. There were five PhD in Psychology and related fields experts. They were requested to assess items. The correctness of content and ambiguity of items were evaluated. On the bases of expert's evaluation, the items were changed, added or removed. The panel of experts confirmed 131 items. Format of response was also confirmed as well. The format of the scale

To verify the test-retest reliability of the items, data was input into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 25 (SPSS-25) for correlation analysis. Exploratory factor analysis was used to identify underlying components. The Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted on data including 91 items to assess the validity of factors and the relevance of the items within the scale. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to validate the findings of exploratory factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-25), whereas confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 26.

3. Results and Discussion

The statistical analysis employed in research are providing the detailed description of the results. While, this part has been divided in to three phases of statistical analysis under study. We conducted all statistical analyses and determined the significance level using the Windows versions of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 25) and AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures, version 26). For the examination of the complete data, 01 were used.

Table 4.1: Correlation of different variables taken from samples

Serial #	Correlation	Serial #	Correlation
1	.678**	47	.649**
2	.680**	48	.758**
3	.658**	49	.602**
4	.651**	50	.647**
5	.675**	51	.724**
6	.649**	52	.692**
7	.758**	53	.601**
8	.684**	54	.655**
9	.601**	55	.689**
10	.723**	56	.652**



11	.661**	57	.632**
12	.664**	58	.673**
13	.759**	59	.627**
14	.676**	60	.689**
15	.615**	61	.625**
17	.697**	62	.688**
18	.670**	63	.679**
19	.658**	64	.695**
20	.706**	65	.697**
21	.673**	66	.682**
22	.622**	67	.686**
23	.678**	68	.699**
24	.680**	69	.689**
25	.658**	70	.689**
26	.655**	71	.675**
27	.634**	72	.687**
28	.698**	73	.636**
29	.610**	74	.601**
30	.653**	75	.650**
31	.702**	76	.624**
32	.693**	77	.692**
33	.665**	78	.625**
34	.696**	79	.714**
35	.675**	80	.653**

36	.625**	81	.692**
37	.688**	82	.693**
38	.679**	83	.665**
39	.695**	84	.611**
40	.754**	85	.675**
41	.682**	86	.653**
42	.686**	87	.622**
43	.612**	88	.693**
44	.689**	89	.665**
45	.625**	90	.696**
46	.688**	91	.675**

The data presented in the table revealed a noteworthy correlation at a significance level of 0.01. The items have a correlation in between 0.601 to 0.759.

3.1 Factor Analysis

Table 4.2: Measuring Sample Adequacy

KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
	Chi Square	DF	Significance
.952	28370.315	3828	.000

Table 4.2 Shows the KMO value of .952 that measures sample adequacy of 62 items. The analysis indicated that the sample size was sufficient for conducting factor analysis. Bartlett's test demonstrates a high level of significance at $p < .001$. The results of the table indicate a high level of sample adequacy.

Table 4.3: Factor Loading

F-I	F-I	F-II	F-III	F-IV	F-V
2(.511)	38(.548)	77(.520)	92(.578)	71(.687)	65(.526)
5(.539)	40(.537)	86(.551)	93(.609)	72(.594)	108(.583)

15(.637)	41(.640)	89(.532)	94(.579)	73(.562)	
16(.612)	43(.506)	90(.534)	95(.659)	74(.635)	
17(.590)	44(.559)	103(.510)	96(.583)	75(.562)	
18(.520)	46(.611)	105(.555)	97(.639)		
19(.595)	47(.617)	119(.632)	98(.670)		
22(.609)	48(.530)	120(.618)	99(.578)		
25(.566)	49(.614)	121(.588)	100(.597)		
27(.622)	50(.586)	122(.539)	101(.673)		
31(.572)	54(.500)	123(.582)	102(.565)		
32(.594)	56(.502)	124(.517)			
33(.634)		125(.627)			
34(.577)		127(.571)			
35(.557)		128(.541)			
37(.564)		131(.636)			

Table 4.3 shows factor loading of 5 factors structure. In Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), five components were established. Five absolute values of suppression. The factor loading values vary from 0.500 to 0.687. There are 62 items left out of 91 of pilot study.

Table 4.4: Summarization of Model Fit from Confirmatory Factor Analysis (N=340)

p-Value	DF	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	RMR
.000	2.203	.858	.906	.051	.38

The Confirmatory factor analysis was done to confirm the results of EFA. The model fit indicates the CFI value of .906 that was in the accepted limit. The model fit other indices shows CMIN/DF (2.203), GFI (.858), RMSEA (.051) and RMR (.038) are close to the significant level of the cut-off for scale significance. For computing the significant CFI, 21 problematic items deleted after running EFA whereas 12 covariance and 4 regression weights were executed. The 41 item final scale was developed. The final figure was as below.

observe the abundance of "we tried it and it didn't work" or "we already asked once, and they said no." Similar to elephants, we might develop a feeling of powerlessness at work after experiencing a string of disappointments and rejection. Our actions have no bearing on the result, we discover (Yadav & Goyal, 2016).

In humans the concept of self-efficacy, the belief of the individual in his inner capacity for achieving goals is related to the acquired helplessness. The learned theory of default argues that a real or perceived absence of control over an event might occur from clinical depression and mental illness (Seligman, 1975).

Individuals with occurrences that are perceived as uncontrolled have many symptoms that endanger their bodily and mental health. You have tension, you often have emotional disruption which shows passivity or aggressiveness, and cognitive tasks such as problem resolution (Roth, 1980) (Wortman, Camille et al. 1975) can also be difficult to do. The report: They are less likely to alter bad behavior patterns and cause them to forget nutrition, exercise and medical care, for example they do not want to take medicines properly, do not eat on a regular manner and do not take care of them (Henry, 2005).

This research was undertaken to establish a dependable metric for assessing feelings of helplessness within the workplace environment.

The concept of different aspects of helplessness within the workplace context has not been thoroughly explored in the environment of Pakistan. There is no specific assessment tool or scale available to measure the level of helplessness on workplace. The general helplessness scale was not measuring the helplessness specifically on jobs, workplaces, institutions and organizations. Because of this there is a need to develop a standardized measure according to workplace environment. The scale was considered more reliable in local language for easy understanding of helplessness of the workforce. The main objective of the study was the development of scale of helplessness on the workplace.

For this aim, first of all item pool was generated. In first step, 81 items were confirmed as the initial item pool. The next step after item generation was the systematic procedure of the content validation of items by experts. The generated items content was approved by the specialists who had expertise in scale development and concerned subject matter. The panel of experts

confirmed 131 items. The pilot study utilized the evaluated 131 items based on the expert's scale. The inter-item correlation was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the items. Items with a correlation of 0.6 or higher were retained, while the others were eliminated. Out of the 131 items validated by experts, 40 were removed due to a correlation coefficient falling below 0.6. The correlation between the items ranged from 0.601 to 0.759. Schober (2018) indicates that a correlation between 0.60 and 0.89 falls within the moderate to strong range for establishing significant correlation. Following the pilot study, 91 items were utilized for factor analysis and subsequent field administration.

KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was employed to assess sample adequacy. The KMO value for 91 items was .952, indicating sample adequacy as per Pallant (2013). A KMO value of 0.6 or higher is considered acceptable for asserting sample adequacy. The scale was developed based on workplace dimensions of helplessness, which have been extracted into five factors. The EFA factors were established at a fixed value of 5 based on these criteria. The five factors were adjusted to a suppression value of 0.50 absolute. The range of factor loading values was from 0.500 to 0.687. A fixed value of 0.4 or higher can be consider a high loading according to (Raam 2019). Further, the field administration reduced items and confirmed items after exploratory factor analysis.

To back up the findings of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was also conducted. The CFA was applied to the 62 items across 5 criteria. In the first run, the model fit had a CFI value of .789, which was outside of the permitted range. A CFI of .900 or above is considered acceptable (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The modification indices were taken into account in order to deal with this problem. The regression weights and covariance were examined. In order to get a CFI of .906, which is within the acceptable range, 21 problematic items were removed and 12 covariance and 4 regression weights were used. A total of 41 items remained on the scale after the deletion of 21 entries. The values of CMIN/DF (2.203), GFI (.858), REMSEA (.051) and RMR (.038) were also close to the significant of the scale. There were 21 problematic items identified by confirmatory factor analysis that were deleted. Hence, at the end 41 items were reliable to use. While preceding literature also aligned that appropriate number of items are at least 4 to 6 required for conceptual dimensions. The full

scale reliability was .959. It shows high reliability. Previously literature specified that the value of Cronach's alpha coefficient 0.70 or above is acceptable (Abraham & Barker, 2014).

5 Conclusion

A dependable assessment of helplessness in the workplace has been established. Feelings of helplessness in the workplace are a significant contributor to depression among employees. Helplessness arises from various factors that are often overlooked. The challenges encountered in the workplace are adversely affecting our emotional well-being, behavior, and family dynamics. Working in an organization is a significant phase for all individuals. The workplace is an environment where individuals dedicate approximately one-third of their lifetime.

The career plays an important role to bring change in our behaviors, thinking patterns, emotions, maturity level, skills, financial state etc. the present study provides insight about the various problems faced by the individuals who were working in organizations. This scale will be helpful to explore the helplessness on workplace.

Recommendations

The topic was sensitive in nature as it explores the helplessness on workplace faced by the people who were doing jobs. The results of the present study cannot be generalized to whole Pakistani professions as the data was small and was in a Google form. In future, comparative research can be done on helplessness on workplace and the helplessness of the people who are working from home /doing online work. The scale can be used for validation purpose. In future, it can be translated to other languages.

The present study can help the clinician in making counseling plan for the management of helplessness on workplace. This study will be beneficial for organizational settings including businessman, workers, clinical settings, policy makers and the researchers. This study will provide findings specifically for Pakistani society as it is developed in Urdu. Eventually the assessment of helplessness will help to design management plans.

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