STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING RESILIENCE TO REDUCE WORKPLACE LONELINESS

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Abstract

Workplace loneliness reflects a negative feeling that arises when social relationships at work fail to meet employees' emotional needs, which affect both their mental and physical health. Workplace loneliness can hinder organizational development because it has a significant impact on employee well-being and performance. One factor that can reduce employees' loneliness in the workplace is resilience. The higher the level of resilience an individual possesses, the lower the level of workplace loneliness they experience. Social support from coworkers and mindfulness can be considered as effective strategies for enhancing resilience as a means of addressing workplace loneliness. Social support functions as an external (environmental) factor that enhances resilience, whereas mindfulness serves as an internal (individual) factor. Enhancing the effectiveness of social support can be focused on interventions that emphasize support from coworkers. Moreover, the development of mindfulness-based interventions may consider integration with the concept of Geospatial Psychology to help identify environments that are conducive to mindfulness practice. Both social support-based and mindfulness-based interventions can be combined to enhance employee resilience in reducing workplace loneliness.

Keywords: workplace loneliness, resilience, social support, mindfulness, geospatial psychology

1. INTRODUCTION

Loneliness is a global issue that can affect individuals across all age groups and social contexts. The World Health Organization reports that at least one in six people worldwide experience loneliness (WHO, 2025). Loneliness is described as a perceived deficiency in quantity, quality, or type of an individual's relationships with others, which can trigger negative emotions and affect both mental and physical health (Russel & Pang, 2016). In addition to everyday life, loneliness can also be experienced by employees in the workplace, commonly referred to as workplace loneliness. Workplace loneliness reflects a negative feeling that arises when social relationships at work fail to meet employees' emotional needs (Wright et al., 2006). These feelings may occur even when employees are surrounded by their colleagues (Ozcelik & Barsade, 2018). Employees experiencing workplace loneliness may be more likely to withdraw from social interactions at work, stemming from feelings of isolation, neglect, or emotional disconnection from coworkers (Stănescu & Romașcanu, 2024).

Workplace loneliness can hinder organizational development because it has a significant impact on employee well-being and performance. Workplace loneliness negatively affects employee well-being, indicating that loneliness at work can threaten employees' well-being by reducing work engagement and increasing job dissatisfaction (Basit & Nauman, 2023). Employees have also been found to

experience higher levels of stress, difficulties in emotional regulation, and decreased social interaction because of workplace loneliness (Febriani et al., 2023). In addition, workplace loneliness has been shown to be negatively associated with employee performance (Julkipli et al., 2025). Moreover, the higher the level of workplace loneliness experienced by employees, the stronger their intention to leave the organization (Kaymaz et al., 2014).

One factor that can reduce employees' loneliness in the workplace is resilience. Resilience is generally understood as an individual's ability to effectively face and cope with stress or pressure (Connor & Davidson, 2003). Resilience reflects how individuals respond to and manage pressure, difficulties, or challenging situations in an adaptive manner. In the workplace context, resilience refers to an individual's capacity to withstand pressure and the negative effects of work-related stress, such as anxiety, depression, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout (Rees et al., 2015). Previous studies have found a negative relationship between resilience and workplace loneliness (Deniz et al., 2025). These findings indicate that the higher the level of resilience an individual possesses, the lower the level of workplace loneliness they experience. In addition, resilience has been shown to moderate the relationship between workplace loneliness and turnover intention, indicating that individuals with higher resilience are better at coping with the negative effects of workplace loneliness (Sidol & Putrananta, 2025). Resilience has also been found to moderate the relationship between workplace loneliness and psychological well-being by enhancing individuals' ability to cope with loneliness (Pramdhani, 2024).

Based on the preceding review, resilience has been identified as an important resource for reducing workplace loneliness. Therefore, a more in-depth examination of strategically relevant factors is needed to better understand how resilience can be enhanced to address workplace loneliness. The purpose of this study is to identify effective strategies for enhancing resilience to overcome workplace loneliness.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a narrative literature review approach, which emphasizes qualitative interpretation of existing scholarly work (Yam, 2024). This approach was used to examine various previous scholarly articles to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the development of concepts, theories, and findings related to the research topic (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research data were collected from articles with topics relevant to this study, then summarized and critically analyzed without the use of statistical synthesis techniques (Snyder, 2019).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to identify effective strategies for enhancing resilience to overcome workplace loneliness. Based on the literature review, social

support and mindfulness emerge as two key strategies that play a significant role in enhancing employee resilience. Social support functions as an external (environmental) factor that enhances resilience, whereas mindfulness serves as an internal (individual) factor.

3.1   Social Support

One factor that can enhance employee resilience in the workplace is social support. Social support enables individuals to feel valued, cared for, and supported within close and meaningful relationships (Santrock, 2012). In the work environment, social support refers to employees' perceptions of receiving assistance from supervisors and coworkers in dealing with task-related challenges as well as interpersonal relationships at work (Telecan et al., 2024).

Social support is one factor that positively contributes to enhancing resilience in the workplace (Genuba et al., 2021; He et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). A systematic review study found that the greater the social support received by employees, the higher their level of resilience, as reflected in better stress management and improved adaptation to challenging conditions. Support from family has been shown to reduce feelings of loneliness when individuals are coping with personal and work-related difficulties, while support from coworkers can indirectly strengthen resilience by enhancing self-efficacy. A supportive work environment can also improve employee performance (Galanis et al., 2022). Other empirical findings indicated that support from coworkers makes the most significant contribution to resilience, followed by family support, whereas support from supervisors shows no significant effect (Koamesah et al., 2022). These findings reinforce earlier evidence that social support networks among coworkers are a crucial factor in helping employees develop resilience (Soichatun, 2014).

In addition, social support has been shown to directly reduce levels of loneliness. Several previous studies have reported a relationship between social support and loneliness, indicating that the greater the social support individuals receive, the lower their tendency to feel lonely (Gondokusumo dkk., 2023; Pradnyani dkk, 2024; Widarti & Marsidi, 2023). Furthermore, a meta-analysis study found that support from coworkers plays a more important role in reducing loneliness than family support among migrant worker populations (Zhang & Dong, 2022).

Based on the preceding review, social support from coworkers appears to play a significant dual role in both enhancing employee resilience and reducing workplace loneliness. Moreover, support from coworkers has a more substantial effect than support from family members or supervisors. Therefore, prioritizing resilience-enhancement strategies that emphasize support from coworkers can be considered as an important basis for determining appropriate interventions for employees.

3.2   Mindfulness

In situations where employees are unable to obtain sufficient social support in the workplace, self-regulation strategies such as mindfulness can be utilized as an

adaptive approach. Mindfulness refers to full awareness of one's thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment in the present moment (Zhang et al., 2021). Mindfulness can help employees build resilience and emotional balance by focusing attention on the present without judgment, thus fostering self-compassion and self-acceptance, which reduces feelings of isolation (Nashwan et al., 2024). Several meta-analysis studies have found a positive relationship between mindfulness and workplace resilience, indicating that mindfulness-based interventions can be selected to enhance employee resilience (Dou et al., 2025; Michaelsen et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023).

Enhancing the effectiveness of mindfulness can be integrated with the concept of Geospatial Psychology. Geospatial Psychology is an interdisciplinary field that integrates psychological principles with geospatial information technologies to analyze, map, and predict human behavioral phenomena and mental health within spatial and locational contexts on the Earth's surface (Rentfow, 2020; Badan Informasi Geospasial, 2012). From this perspective, Geospatial Psychology can be used to identify supportive environments by analyzing factors such as the availability of green spaces, environmental noise levels, and other spatial characteristics. This approach may help determine locations that are conducive to mindfulness practice, highlighting that the effectiveness of mindfulness is shaped not only by individuals' internal psychological processes but also by the quality of the physical environments in which these processes occur. Although research explicitly examining mindfulness from a Geospatial Psychology perspective remains limited, studies employing similar approaches have been previously conducted, such as research on the geographical distribution of Big Five personality traits in Japan (Yoshino & Oshio, 2021). Furthermore, the development of this line of inquiry from a Geospatial Psychology perspective can be expanded globally through involvement in https://www.osgeo.org/initiatives/geo-for-all/.

4. CONCLUSION

Social support from coworkers and mindfulness can be considered as effective strategies for enhancing resilience as a means of addressing workplace loneliness. Social support functions as an external (environmental) factor that enhances resilience, whereas mindfulness serves as an internal (individual) factor. Enhancing the effectiveness of social support can be focused on interventions that emphasize support from coworkers. Moreover, the development of mindfulness-based interventions may consider integration with the concept of Geospatial Psychology to help identify environments that are conducive to mindfulness practice. Both social

support-based and mindfulness-based interventions can be combined to enhance employee resilience in reducing workplace loneliness.

These findings offer several practical implications relevant to organizational development professionals (ODPs) as well as organizations in general, particularly in designing interventions to enhance resilience and reduce workplace loneliness. First, organizations should develop programs that promote supportive interactions among employees, such as peer support programs, peer mentoring, collaborative teamwork, and interpersonal skills training. Second, organizations may consider facilitating activities in natural environments as integrated interventions that combine social support, mindfulness practices, and a Geospatial Psychology approach. Third, organizations should provide dedicated spaces for mindfulness practice, reflection areas, or internal green spaces as part of strategies to enhance employee resilience.

This study has several limitations, particularly related to the utilization of a narrative review method, which is inherently descriptive and does not follow a fully systematic procedure. While the narrative approach allows for a broad exploration of existing literature, it also involves a degree of subjectivity in the selection and interpretation of studies, which may introduce bias. Future research is therefore encouraged to adopt a more structured and transparent systematic review method, with clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria and well-documented procedures for studies searching and selection. Such an approach would be expected to yield a more comprehensive, reliable, and methodologically robust synthesis of evidence regarding factors that enhance resilience in addressing workplace loneliness.

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