

# Muted Potential: The Workplace Impacts of Perceived Introversion Mistreatment

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**Abstract:** Personality-based mistreatment concerning introversion is an understudied topic in the field of organizational behavior. In this study, we explored McCord & Joseph's (2020) framework on negative responses to introversion and the novel concept of Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM). Specifically, this study examined whether PIM impacts the work outcome of job performance, with Person-Job Fit (PJF) as a mediating factor that may explain the relationship between the two variables. A quantitative methodology was employed wherein data was collected through an online survey from Gen Z employees in Metro Manila. The results of the analysis revealed that PIM has a direct effect on PJF and the Task and Contextual Performance subdimensions of job performance. Additionally, PJF demonstrated a moderate correlation with the Contextual Performance subdimension. However, no statistically significant relationship was found between the Counterproductive Work Performance sub-dimension and all other variables. The hypothesis that PJF has a mediating effect between PIM and work performance was also not supported. These findings highlight the complex interplay between perceived mistreatment, job fit, and performance outcomes, offering valuable insights for future research and workplace interventions.

**Key Words:** Introversion; Workplace Mistreatment; Organizational Behavior; Human Resources; Humanistic Management

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In social settings, introversion and extraversion are often used to categorize personality (Hvidsten, 2016). While these labels can help people understand themselves and others, they also reinforce expectations that create stereotypes and unconscious biases or “mental shortcuts” (McCormick, 2015). One widely held misconception is that extraverted individuals make better leaders; a notion challenged by recent research (Grant et al., 2010; Järvinen, 2020).

In organizations, diverse personality types are essential to team effectiveness (Akmal, 2015). However, the “extrovert ideal” remains a persistent workplace norm (Cain, 2012; Woodward, 2014), putting introverts at

a disadvantage in environments that reward dominance and self-promotion (Ancowitz, 2009). While extraversion is associated with proactivity and charisma (Gordon, 2016), introversion is seen as a weakness to overcome (Woodward, 2014). These biases can lead to undervaluing introverts' contributions, despite evidence that qualities such as analytical thinking, reflectiveness, and careful decision-making can be valuable in many professional contexts (Blevins, 2016; Ishfaq et al., 2020).

When such assumptions influence workplace interactions and decisions, they can result in mistreatment that negatively affects performance and well-being (McCormick, 2015; McCord, 2020). Over time, introverts may feel their work is devalued, which could harm collaboration, motivation, and fit within the

organization.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

The broader research on workplace bias and mistreatment has covered areas such as gender (Heilman, 2012), race (Bielby, 2000), and age (Finkelstein et al., 2014). Beyond these well-documented topics, personality traits—especially along the introversion–extraversion spectrum—have increasingly attracted attention. Susan Cain (2012) highlights how many workplaces favor extraverted personalities (the so-called “extrovert ideal”), leaving introverted employees more likely to be disrespected, perceived as less competent, and overlooked for advancement (Herbert et al., 2023).

Building on this, McCord (2017; McCord & Joseph, 2020; 2021) introduced the concept of Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM), which describes how perceived unfair treatment linked to introversion can reduce job performance through mechanisms such as exhaustion and reciprocity. However, despite establishing theoretical foundations, PIM remains relatively new and has not been widely studied outside Western contexts.

Further, we propose that other potential mediating mechanisms remain unexamined in the current literature. Given the theorized extrovert ideal, the Person-Environment (PE) Fit theory offers a useful lens to understand how alignment between personal characteristics (e.g., values, abilities) and workplace expectations shapes outcomes. This alignment can drive satisfaction and performance, while misalignment leads to strain and underperformance (Van Vianen, 2018).

Specifically, when introverted employees feel they are unfairly judged or excluded because of their personality, they may begin to perceive that their traits no longer match the demands or expectations of their role. This diminished Person-Job Fit can weaken their sense of competence and belonging, reducing motivation and engagement. For example, Lu et al. (2022) found that when employees experience repeated mistreatment, it significantly undermines perceived fit and leads to lower daily performance. Thus, perceived mistreatment under the extrovert ideal could mediate the relationship between introversion bias and job performance by eroding employees’ perception of fit, which, in turn, affects their overall performance.

Given these points, our study will answer the following research questions:

1. Do employees in the Philippines feel they are treated unfairly due to their introversion, and does this perceived mistreatment affect their job performance?
2. Does the person-job fit explain the negative impact of perceived mistreatment on the job performance of introverted employees?

### 1.3 Research Objectives

The research aims to explore the effects of workplace biases and mistreatments, specifically on introverts and their employee performances. Hence, our primary objectives are the following:

1. To determine the prevalence of PIM and study the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment and Job Performance among employees in the Philippines.
2. To determine if Person-Job Fit has significance in mediating the independent and dependent variables.

## 2. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK, DESIGN, AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Conceptual Framework

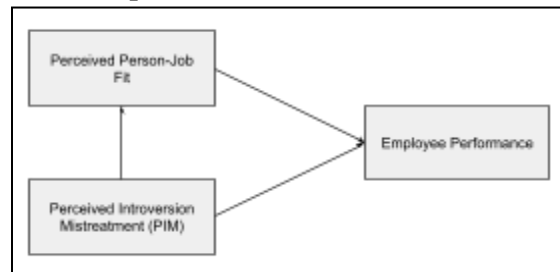


Fig. 1. Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and its outcomes.

This study’s conceptual framework is rooted in McCord & Joseph’s Negative responses to introversion with a focus on the target perspective. The independent variable is the Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM), the mediating variable is Perceived Person-Job Fit, and the dependent variable is employee performance. This framework hypothesizes that when introverted individuals feel their personality traits are misunderstood or devalued in the workplace (perceived introversion mistreatment), it negatively impacts their sense of fit with their job (perceived person-job fit), which in turn affects their self-rated work performance. Additionally, this model will examine and validate the direct relationship between Perceived Introversion

Mistreatment (PIM) and employee performance, as explored by McCord (2021). The study aims to determine whether McCord's findings, based on a Western perspective, are applicable in the Philippine context.

Quantitative data will be collected through surveys to measure each of the variables. Overall, this framework seeks to determine the correlation between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and each of the work outcomes.

## 2.2 Operational framework

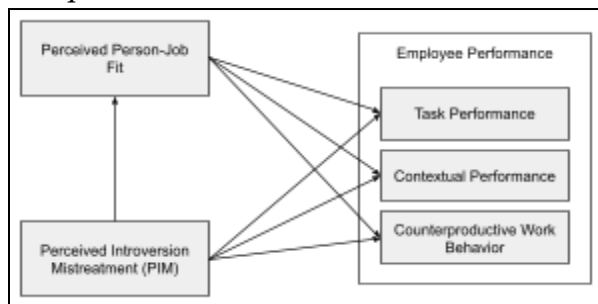


Fig. 2. Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and its outcomes with subscales.

In the operational framework corresponding to the above conceptual framework, the Employee Performance variable outcome is broken down into three (3) different dimensions, namely, (1) Task Performance, (2) Contextual Performance, and (3) Counterproductive Work Behavior.

Therefore, the hypotheses are as follows:

- Hypothesis 1: Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) is negatively correlated to Employee Performance
  - H1a: Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) is negatively correlated to Task Performance
  - H1b: Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) is negatively correlated to Contextual Performance
  - H1c: Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) is positively correlated to Counterproductive Work Behavior
- Hypothesis 2: Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) is negatively correlated to Perceived Person-Job Fit
- Hypothesis 3: Perceived Person-Job Fit is positively correlated to Employee Performance

- H3a: Perceived Person-Job Fit is positively correlated to Task Performance
- H3b: Perceived Person-Job Fit is positively correlated to Contextual Performance
- H3c: Perceived Person-Job Fit is negatively correlated to Counterproductive Work Behavior
- Hypothesis 4: Perceived Person-Job Fit mediates the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Employee Performance
  - H4a: Perceived Person-Job Fit mediates the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Task Performance
  - H4b: Perceived Person-Job Fit mediates the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Contextual Performance
  - H4c: Perceived Person-Job Fit mediates the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Counterproductive Work Behavior

## 2.3 Methodology

This research employs a quantitative methodology to investigate the impact of perceived introversion mistreatment (PIM) on Employee Performance with Perceived Person-Job Fit as a mediating factor. Participants were recruited via online platforms, including LinkedIn, Facebook groups related to employment and education, and through university alumni networks. Using **purposive sampling**, respondents were selected based on the following criteria:

- 20 to 27 years old
- Identify as introverted
- Currently employed in a company within Metro Manila
- With their current company for at least six months
- Hold an entry to associate level position

**Introversion-Extraversion** traits of the respondents were screened using the Extraversion subscale under the Big Five Personality Assessment (B5T) in order for the researchers to focus on individuals who exhibit introverted traits, which are central to understanding how PIM affects job performance. This ensures that the study accurately reflects the experiences of introverts, as their reactions to PIM may differ from those of extraverts.

**Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM)** was measured using the 10-item PIM scale proposed by

McCord (2021), which effectively captures the nuances of how introverted employees perceive mistreatment in the workplace. Participants will respond to each item on a seven (7) point Likert scale regarding their feelings on the mistreatment related to their introversion qualities.

**Person-Job Fit** was measured using the “Person–Job Fit Scale (PJFS)” developed by Chuang et al. (2015) under the Perceived Person-Environment Fit Scale (PPEFS), which assesses how an individual perceives his/her alignment to his/her job.

**Performance** was measured using Ramos-Villagrasa et al.’s (2019) “Individual Work Performance Questionnaire,” which is a self-report scale that allows respondents to assess their job performance in three dimensions: (1) task performance, (2) contextual performance, and (3) counterproductive work behavior.

The decision to rely on self-report measures was based on the confidential and subjective nature of perceived mistreatment and job fit—constructs that are not easily observable by external raters. However, B5T screening ensured that only genuinely introverted individuals were included in the sample.

After data collection, the researchers conducted the following analyses via Jamovi:

- **Reliability test** to assess and validate the scales using Cronbach's alpha
- **Correlation matrix** to determine the nature of the relationships between variables
- **Linear regression** to predict how the variables affect each other
- **Mediation analysis** to assess whether Person-Job Fit (PJF) mediates the effect of Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) on workplace performance

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers collected 88 survey responses and screened participants using the Extraversion subscale of the Big Five Personality Assessment (B5T). Respondents with average scores below the midpoint of 2.5 were classified as introverts, resulting in a total of 59 introverted individuals.

#### 3.1 Reliability Test

Table 1. Reliability Test

Variable & Dimensions	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Extraversion Subscale of Big Five Personality	0.714

Assessment (B5T)	
Perceived Introversion Mistreatment	0.947
Person-Job Fit	0.793
Work Performance	0.906
Work Performance - Task Performance	0.915
Work Performance - Contextual Performance	0.875
Work Performance - Counterproductive Work Performance	0.797

The reliability test above assesses the internal consistency of our measurement scales using Cronbach's alpha. Extraversion Subscale (0.714) and Person-Job Fit (0.793) show acceptable reliability (>0.7), while Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (0.947) and Work Performance (0.906) demonstrate excellent reliability. The work Performance subscales also showed strong reliability with Task Performance at 0.915, Contextual Performance at 0.875, and Counterproductive Work Performance at 0.797.

These strong alpha values validate that the items within each scale consistently measure the same construct and are interrelated. For our study, this indicates that participants responded consistently across items within each measure, which is crucial for accurately testing our hypotheses about the relationships between PIM, PJF, and work performance outcomes. The high reliability of the PIM scale (0.947) means that the questions showed strong patterns of consistent responses among the participants. Since PIM is a relatively new concept, this strong reliability is important because it shows that Filipino participants consistently understood and responded to the questions in similar ways. Thus, it assures that our measurement of PIM is accurate and our findings about how PIM affects workplace outcomes for introverted employees can be trusted.

#### 3.2 Correlation Matrix

Table 2. Correlation Matrix

	PIM	PJF	WP-TP	WP-CP	WP-CWP
PIM	—				
PJF	-0.621***	—			
WP-TP	-0.549***	0.326*	—		
WP-CP	-0.420***	0.405***	0.761***	—	
WP-CWP	0.205	-0.219	-0.241	-0.186	—

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

According to the results of the correlation matrix, the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Employee Performance was validated through the effects of several sub-dimensions, including Task Performance and Contextual

Performance. PIM revealed a moderate negative correlation with Task Performance ( $r = -0.549, p < 0.001$ ) and Contextual Performance ( $r = -0.420, p < 0.001$ ), proving hypotheses 1a and 1b, respectively. Additionally, a weak positive correlation was shown between Counterproductive Work Behavior and PIM, which partially supports the hypothesis but remains statistically insignificant. As mistreatment increases, work performance also gets worse. Hypothesis 2, which proposed that Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) is negatively correlated with Perceived Person-Job Fit (PJF), was supported by a strong negative correlation between PJF and PIM ( $r = -0.621$  and  $p < 0.001$ ). Individuals who experienced mistreatment also felt incompetent in their jobs. For hypothesis 3, wherein Perceived Person-Job Fit (PJF) is positively correlated to Employee Performance, the correlation of Task Performance and PJF resulted in a weak relationship ( $r = 0.326$  and  $p < 0.012$ ), debunking hypothesis 3a. However, PJF revealed positive correlations to Contextual Performance ( $r = 0.405, p = 0.001$ ), proving hypothesis 3b. The relationship between Counterproductive Work Behavior and PJF resulted in a weak negative correlation ( $r = -0.219, p = 0.095$ ). PJF is positively connected to performance, meaning employees who feel that they are a good fit for their jobs also perform better. Overall, results indicate that higher levels of perceived mistreatment reduce job fit and performance outcomes, while strong person-job fit results in improved employee performance.

### 3.3 Linear Regression

Following the correlation matrix, linear regression analyses were conducted for variables that have moderate to significant relationships with each other; hence, some sub-dimensions under the work performance variable are not included in this section.

Table 3. Linear Regression (Perceived Introversion Mistreatment & Work Performance - Task Performance)  
Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Overall Model Test			
				F	df1	df2	p
1	0.549	0.302	0.290	24.7	1	57	< .001

Model Coefficients - WP-TP-Ave

Predictor	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		t	p	Stand. Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper				Lower	Upper
Intercept	4.675	0.2168	4.241	5.109	21.56	< .001			

PIM-Ave -0.304 0.0612 -0.426 -0.181 -4.97 < .001 -0.549 -0.771 -0.328

The above linear regression examines the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Task Performance (WP-TP), a subdimension under Work Performance. The correlation coefficient of -0.549 indicates a moderate to strong negative relationship between the two variables. The overall model is statistically significant ( $F = 24.7, p = <.001$ ), with PIM explaining 30.2% of the variance in task performance. These findings underscore the necessity for organizations to address perceived mistreatment to maintain employee productivity.

Table 4. Linear Regression (Perceived Introversion Mistreatment & Work Performance - Conceptual Performance)  
Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Overall Model Test			
				F	df1	df2	p
1	0.420	0.177	0.162	12.2	1	57	< .001

Model Coefficients - WP-CP-Ave

Predictor	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		t	p	Stand. Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper				Lower	Upper
Intercept	4.100	0.2458	3.608	4.592	16.68	< .001			
PIM-Ave	-0.243	0.0694	-0.381	-0.104	-3.50	< .001	-0.420	-0.661	-0.180

Similarly, PIM also reduces another sub-dimension under Work Performance, particularly Contextual Performance (WP-CP). The correlation coefficient ( $R = -0.420$ ) reveals a moderate negative relationship, with PIM explaining 17.7% of the variance in contextual performance. The model has an F value of 12.2 and a p value of less than 0.001, indicating statistical significance. Hence, it emphasizes that employees who perceive higher levels of mistreatment are less likely to engage in discretionary efforts.

Table 5. Linear Regression (Perceived Introversion Mistreatment & Person-Job Fit)  
Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Overall Model Test			
				F	df1	df2	p
1	0.621	0.385	0.374	35.7	1	57	< .001

Model Coefficients - PJF-Ave

Predictor	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		t	p	Stand. Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper				Lower	Upper
Intercept	5.759	0.2631	5.232	6.286	21.89	< .001			
PIM-Ave	-0.444	0.0742	-0.592	-0.295	-5.98	< .001	-0.621	-0.829	-0.415

The relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Person-Job Fit (PJF) is strongly supported as well. The above table shows a correlation coefficient of -0.621, which indicates a robust negative relationship, with PIM explaining 38.5% of the variance in PJF. The model is also highly significant ( $F = 35.7, p = <.001$ ), underscoring the critical role of tackling perceived mistreatment to enhance employees' sense of alignment with their roles.

Table 6. Linear Regression (Person-Job Fit & Work Performance - Contextual Performance)  
Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Overall Model Test			
				F	df1	df2	p
1	0.405	0.164	0.149	11.2	1	57	0.001

Model Coefficients - WP-CP-Ave

Predictor	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		t	p	Stand. Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper				Lower	Upper
Intercept	1.904	0.4359	1.032	2.777	4.37	< .001			
PJF-Ave	0.327	0.0978	0.131	0.522	3.34	0.001	0.405	0.162	0.647

Lastly, the above analysis supports Person-Job Fit (PJF)'s positive influence on Contextual Performance (WP-CP). The correlation coefficient ( $R = 0.405$ ) indicates a moderate relationship, with PJF explaining 16.4% of the variance in contextual performance. The F value of 11.2 and p value of 0.001 reveal statistical significance, reinforcing the importance of cultivating alignment between employees' traits and their job roles to encourage discretionary effort.

### 3.4 Mediation Analysis

A mediation analysis was conducted in order to examine whether Perceived Person-Job Fit (PJF) mediates the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and work performance dimensions. However, only Contextual Performance (CP) was included in the analysis because Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWP) showed no significant correlation with either PIM or PJF, and Task

Performance (TP) was only significantly correlated with PIM, not with PJF.

Hence, this implies that the following hypotheses are automatically rejected:

- H4a: Perceived Person-Job Fit mediates the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Task Performance
- H4c: Perceived Person-Job Fit mediates the relationship between Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) and Counterproductive Work Behavior

Table 7. Mediation Analysis  
Indirect and Total Effects

Type	Effect	Estimate	SE	95% C.I. (a)		$\beta$	z	p
				Lower	Upper			
Indirect	PIM $\Rightarrow$ PJF $\Rightarrow$ WP-CP	-0.0838	0.0546	-0.1908	0.02325	-0.145	-1.53	0.125
Component	PIM $\Rightarrow$ PJF	-0.4437	0.0730	-0.5868	-0.30069	-0.621	-6.08	< .001
	PJF $\Rightarrow$ WP-CP	0.1888	0.1191	-0.0446	0.42224	0.234	1.59	0.113
Direct	PIM $\Rightarrow$ WP-CP	-0.1588	0.0851	-0.3256	0.00811	-0.275	-1.86	0.062
Total	PIM $\Rightarrow$ WP-CP	-0.2426	0.0687	-0.3773	-0.10780	-0.420	-3.53	< .001

The results indicate that PJF does not significantly mediate the relationship between PIM and CP, as the indirect effect is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.125$ ), and the confidence interval (-0.1908 to 0.02325) includes zero. While PIM strongly reduces PJF ( $p < .001$ ), the effect of PJF on CP is positive but not significant ( $p = 0.113$ ). Additionally, the direct effect of PIM on CP is negative but weak and marginally non-significant ( $p = 0.062$ ). However, the total effect of PIM on CP is significant ( $p < .001$ ), confirming that PIM has an overall negative impact on contextual performance.

As such, Hypothesis 4b is also rejected as PJF does not play a meaningful mediating role in the relationship between PIM and contextual performance. This indicates that PJF does not significantly mediate the relationship between PIM and contextual performance. However, both the direct and total effects of PIM on contextual performance were significant, suggesting that PIM still has a meaningful negative impact on work outcomes.

While PIM significantly reduces PJF and several dimensions of work performance, results indicate that the hypothesized mediating role of PJF was not supported. Its limited sample size, which reduced the statistical influence and increased the risk of type 2 errors in the mediation testing, may be the reason behind this. Moreover, reliance on self-report measures

may have introduced bias in common methods and potentially inflated interconnectedness between variables while obscuring more nuanced indirect effects. Despite the methodological constraints, other mechanisms, including psychological safety, belongingness, or organizational support, may directly have an explanation for the connection between mistreatment and performance outcomes. Future research may apply mixed-method approaches and adopt longitudinal designs to expand and support the findings further.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The study explores the impact of Perceived Introversion Mistreatment (PIM) on Employee Performance, while Perceived Person Job Fit (PJF) acts as a potential mediating factor. While McCord and Joseph (2020) established the initial theoretical framework for PIM, the present study extends their work by empirically testing these concepts within a non-Western context. Their original framework, which remained largely conceptual, was applied to the experiences of Gen Z employees in Metro Manila. And, with the study introducing PJF as a mediating variable, it broadens the scope of previous literature by examining whether PIM could lead individuals to feel less well-suited to their roles, and in turn, negatively affect their performance.

Results reveal that PIM significantly affects PJF and Employee Performance among Gen Z employees in Metro Manila. Corporate employees who perceive mistreatment because of introversion reported lower job fit and poorer task and contextual performance. These findings support the proposition that workplace bias against introverted traits can have tangible effects on how individuals evaluate their role and contribute to organizational goals. However, PJF did not mediate the relationship between PIM and performance. Here, other factors or mechanisms may explain the impact of mistreatment in reducing workplace outcomes, such as feelings of exclusion (Scott et. al., 2014). Although PJF was not supported as a mediator in this study, future research may explore its role as a moderator to determine whether strong job fit might buffer against the negative effects of PIM on workplace outcomes.

Even with these limitations, the research empirically examines PIM in a non-Western context, emphasizing the tangible effects of personality-based

bias on employee behaviors. There's a need for organizations to address and acknowledge introversion-related stereotypes to establish an inclusive workplace environment that supports different personality types. Further exploration of alternative explanatory frameworks and larger samples is vital for the advancement of the area of inquiry and interventions. Future research may cover alternative mediators and moderators, specifically psychological safety, workplace belongingness, or perceived organizational support. By investigating dynamics across different industries and cultures beyond Metro Manila, the generalizability of the findings will be enhanced.

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