

Altruistic Leadership Reduces Knowledge Hiding Behavior: Mediating Role of Workplace Friendship

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Abstract: This paper explores the relationship between altruistic leadership and knowledge hiding in the workplace, with workplace friendship as the moderator. This paper established that altruistic associations help leaders to build trust, cooperation, and ethical behavior from followers. The study investigates the mediating role of altruistic leadership and addresses the focal construct's direct impact on decreasing knowledge hiding. This work underscores the significance of friendships at the workplace as the primary mode through which such changes happen. Using a cross-sectional quantitative research design, data were gathered from 291 participants in private banks. There is also evidence that altruistic leadership minimizes knowledge hiding both directly and indirectly, with organizational friendships promoting transparency within and eliminating rivalry, which is a key cause of knowledge concealment. This paper adds to leadership literature by providing empirical evidence for the positive effects that altruistic leadership has on collaboration and openness in the workplace and the negative effect that it has on knowledge hiding. The implications indicate that organizations should allow their workers to engage in altruistic behaviors and establish workplace friendships so that they foster information sharing and reciprocal working relationships to support the generation and dissemination of knowledge in organizations, particularly in knowledge-intensive industries like the banking industry.

Keywords: Altruistic Leadership, Knowledge-hiding, Workplace Friendship, SEM-PLS

Introduction

Over the recent past, much emphasis has been placed on the leadership style factors that determine the behavior of an organization (Ahmed et al., 2023). Among these, the altruistic leadership style, which is a style where the leaders are more concerned with the welfare of other individuals as compared to their welfare, has been established to enhance a positive organizational climate (Tait, 2023). According to Jaan et al. (2023), altruistic leaders always display self-passion, integrity, and accountability in creating structures that enhance trust, cooperation, and ethical practices. Among the many facets that it seems altruistic leadership could impact, one of the important ones is knowing how the behavior of knowledge-hiding, where employees intentionally hide or lose valuable information from their peers (Abdillah et al., 2022). Whether from competitive work cultures, interpersonal conflict, or depravity of psychological safety, knowledge concealing may affect corporate performance, creativity, and employee happiness in more extensive negative ways (Bari et al., 2019).

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KH is the deliberate suppression or hiding of knowledge when it needs to be made available to others (Connelly et al., [2012](#)). This behavior has many consequences as KH participatory subordinates are already alienated from the network of knowledge exchange, perform creatively blocked, and provoke deviance at the individual level and organizational levels as well (Bai, [2020](#)). KH conduct is not to be confused with a failure to share knowledge, which is more often a conscious choice not to share, usually made out of self-interest and the desire to own your information (He et al., [2021](#)). Sometimes, subordinates without expertise simply do not have the information that they can pass on to leverage. The concept of workplace friendship, in this context, has a critical lessening role to play. Friendships, as one of the most basic concepts of workplace social capital, involve trust, emotional support, and social ties at work that can simplify open communication and reduce competitive tensions that tend to promote information hiding (Langreet, [2024](#)). Leaders who act altruistically set in place a positive environment of support for their employees and enable them to bond over the appreciation they feel within the workplace (He & Wei, [2022](#)). Such a context nurtures the sharing of information, as well as the avoidance of behavior that may undermine community aspirations. They live by altruistic leaders as they promote group peace and focus on each member being in good condition, which indirectly creates bonds that diminish information hiding (Islam & Chaudhary, [2024](#)). Therefore, they play a vital mediating role in the vector of altruistic leadership practices and knowledge-hiding behaviors. In a knowledge-intensive economy where achieving strategic objectives depends on collective effort, the connection between collective efficacy and coordination aligns more closely with reality than in less collaborative paradigms, so exploring this link seems particularly well-timed (Khalid et al., [2018](#)).

This study aims to unravel the dynamics of effective leadership practices by examining how altruistic leadership directly reduces knowledge hiding through the mediating effect of workplace friendship and thus provides insight for organizations wishing to establish a more open, collaborative, and high-performance team. This study fills an important void in the literature by characterizing the under-acknowledged role of workplace friendship within the organizational context that helps leaders catalyze cultures that enable the free flow of information among people and teams, for the collective good of individuals, teams, and organizations. Particularly in the area of banking, workplace cultures must be open and collaborative, and altruistic leadership is imperative in ensuring that such workplace cultures thrive, given that people and information play a central role in ensuring service delivery, suitable innovation design, and client satisfaction (Boz Semerci, [2019](#)). Altruistic supportive behaviors from leaders set an atmosphere of trust and openness, and this could significantly reduce the chances that workers would engage in knowledge-hiding behaviors and activities that could stand as a stumbling block for collective learning and, ultimately, organizational development (Coetzer et al., [2017](#)). Here again, altruistic leadership creates an open and transparent culture where employees share ideas and resources as a win-win rather than a zero-sum (Wang et al., [2024](#)). Moreover, workplace friendship acts as an intermediary factor, reinforcing this environment by promoting tighter connections and increasing the general climate of collaboration and trust (He & Wei, [2022](#)). Such dynamic is even more vital in banking, where cooperation and information sharing aid the ability of both the individual and the firm to evolve, enhancing the ability of the banking system to cope and survive in a competitive setting (Boz Semerci, [2019](#)).

Literature Review

Altruistic Leadership and Knowledge-Hiding Behavior

Knowledge is considered a combination of experience, values, contextual information, and expert insights that offer a basis for evaluating and digesting new events and information (Connelly et al., [2019](#)). In a workplace environment, it covers information, ideas, and expertise earned via learning, education, experience, and skill mastery, all important for executing tasks effectively (Bai, [2020](#)). However, knowledge-hiding (KH) conduct has arisen as a counterproductive phenomenon, hurting the internal flow of knowledge, cooperation, and the production of new ideas within companies, eventually compromising organizational performance (He et al., [2021](#)). Research categorizes KH behavior into three groups (Hernaes et al., [2019](#)). First, reasoned concealment involves persons rationalizing their unwillingness to disclose knowledge or attributing it to other circumstances (Connelly et al., [2012](#)).

Second, playing dumb refers to faking ignorance of the needed knowledge. Third, evasive concealment happens when an individual delivers erroneous or deceptive information. Rationalized concealing can occasionally be non-deceptive if knowledge is secret, although both evasive hiding and acting dumb are kinds of purposeful deceit (Hernaes et al., 2019). This conduct, much like other kinds of counterproductive work behavior, has a deleterious influence on information-sharing cultures and can develop a self-serving attitude, hence creating hurdles to effective knowledge management and collaborative success inside businesses (Xing, 2022). Altruism, in this sense, is defined as the extent to which an individual is willing to engage in voluntary behavior that will benefit others at the expense of his/her self-gains (Tait, 2023). They say this conduct has amplified and become an essential characteristic in the analysis of leadership types, be it real, servant, or transformative (Song et al., 2015). Studies have provided evidence that abusive supervision may enhance instances of knowledgeable concealment and that a leader is a significant factor in forecasting such behavior in subordinates (Feng & Wang, 2019). These findings also support that altruistic leadership plays a significant role in the attitudinal outcomes of subordinates, including job satisfaction (Ahmed et al., 2023). An assessment of the personality of an altruistic boss elicits a comfortable and happy atmosphere that shapes the favorable attitude of subordinates (Pfafftheicher et al., 2021).

Furthermore, it enhances the execution of beneficial behaviors such as creativity since altruistic leadership entails a permissive working environment (Mostafa & Bottomley, 2020). There are two significant advantages of altruistic leadership in minimizing unhealthy conduct (Butt & Ahmad, 2021). First, it increases the pleasant emotional responses that subordinates might have towards knowledge concealing, which may discourage them. Second, subordinates perceive selfless leadership as a special type of socio-emotional resource that fosters high-quality relationships with leaders. This good emotional experience assists in building social capital, increasing the delighter's alliances and friendships that enhance the chances of exchanging information (Zhou & Wu, 2018). Interactions that are characterized by love, humility, patience, understanding, and compassion from a leader who is selfless help subordinates to improve their social capital (He & Wei, 2022). This, in turn, breeds confidence and due respect from the subordinates and the organizations; thereby, a balanced sacrifice is made from the subordinates to leaders and organizations (Wang et al., 2024).

Overall, this environment encourages subordinates to exert considerable effort for the business and discourages self-serving behaviors that can negatively impact the business (Nadeem et al., 2021). Hence, the self-serving theory of leadership argues that the sacrificial activities of a leader may reduce the knowledge-hiding behavior of the subordinates (Abdillah et al., 2022). Closely related to one another, both altruistic leadership and friendship at work modulate the behavior of employees and the results achieved by the company (Ahmed et al., 2023). Pro-social leaders who are characterized by concern for the welfare of those under them create a favorable environment for proper relationships in workplaces (Pfafftheicher et al., 2021). The literature suggests the following hypothesis:

H₁: *Altruistic Leadership has a significant negative impact on Knowledge Hiding.*

Altruistic Leadership and Workplace Friendship

Altruistic leadership and friendship at work are intimately linked, affecting employee behavior and company outcomes (Wang et al., 2024). Altruistic leaders, distinguished by selflessness and a focus on the well-being of their subordinates, establish a welcoming climate that encourages good workplace interactions (Zhou & Wu, 2018). This supportive atmosphere fosters interpersonal trust, which is crucial for developing professional collaborations (Butt et al., 2023). When workers see their leaders as caring and unselfish, they are more likely to engage in pro-social acts, like sharing knowledge and helping one another (Nadeem et al., 2021). The findings of the current literature suggest that professional friendships serve as a mechanism for encouraging information sharing rather than cases of knowledge hiding. When employees are connected, the psychological safety of the network is improved because employees are assured that when they ask for help or offer assistance, they will not suffer negative consequences (Butt & Ahmad, 2021). Moreover, this is also true because altruistic leaders bring into this process a desirable

behavioral example, which, in turn, strengthens the importance of reciprocation among the team members (Song et al., 2015). This review of the literature suggests the hypothesis:

H₂: *Altruistic Leadership has a positive relationship with Workplace friendships*

Workplace Friendship and Knowledge-Hiding Behavior

Knowledge or information withholding can be defined as the process in which employees engage in a practice whereby they lie or give out misleading information in the course of reporting to their colleagues (Connelly et al., 2012). It covers three distinct forms: Three forms of behaviors are regarded as a form of deception, and these include evasive concealing, playing dumb, and reasoned concealment (Connelly et al., 2019). Thus, information concealing is related to information withholding, but it is not the opposite of knowledge sharing (Islam & Chaudhary, 2024). The major distinction is that knowledge may not be shared due to non-intentional factors like unawareness or ignorance, in contrast with intentional knowledge, where one is fully aware and purposely withholds information (Bai, 2020). Furthermore, while information has a proactive character, knowledge is something that is hidden in response to the expectations of others. Some of the significant aspects that can affect the level of knowledge concealed within an organization include interpersonal communications (Fauzi, 2023). For instance, the nature of the LMX connection or the supervisor-subordinate relationship may impede knowledge concealing through a sense of psychological attachment (Jaan et al., 2023). The type of relationship at the workplace that involves mutual consent and the exchange of benefits in a fair manner determines the knowledge concealment practices (Feng & Wang, 2019). Credible communications also promote the culture of trust and reciprocity in a company that, in turn, enhances the interactions and hence the value of workplace friendships (Butt et al., 2023).

Langreet (2024) concluded that, with friendship development, the psychological and emotional needs of the employees are met. When these requirements are met, employees will be more willing to engage in pro-organizational behaviors due to their perceived obligation as members of the organization (Mostafa & Bottomley, 2020). According to Wang et al. (2024), it also encourages people to be liberal in providing information when required instead of resorting to fraudulent activities like shifting, evading, or providing an alibi. Furthermore, it is essentially for professional friendships that they have common norms, which make the friendship deep and equitable; friends help each other in need without expecting to be paid back. This creates a risk-free zone for social exchange and thus encourages reciprocation beliefs (He & Wei, 2022). Therefore, in case of requests for information, especially from friends, the employees are more likely to engage in positive and reciprocal requests rather than indulging in knowledge hiding (Langreet, 2024). Friends trust one another, which cultivates an expectation of future benefits, and employees may also get additional resources from friends to counteract any apparent loss of expertise (Xing, 2022). The literature review suggests the following hypothesis:

H₃: *Workplace friendships negatively impact the Knowledge hiding*

Mediating Impact of Workplace Friendship between Altruistic Leadership and Knowledge-Hiding Behavior

According to Wang et al. (2024), it is proposed that the effect of altruistic leadership on attitudes and behaviors about KH conduct is significantly moderated by the role of workplace friendship. Company-oriented benevolent leaders who are the precondition of selflessness about their subordinates ensure that the work environment is favorable and fosters the development of many interpersonal relationships (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). This increases interpersonal trust in the environment, which is necessary to establish successful professional relationships. Anyone who happens to depend on his or her subordinates will realize that when the leaders appear to be caring and altruistic, employees are likely to cooperate in performing numerous pro-social activities, which include information sharing and mutual assistance to co-workers (Butt et al., 2023).

Studies show that business relationships promote interaction, meaning that there is little chance that some information will be withheld. First of all, people embedded in a network encourage their

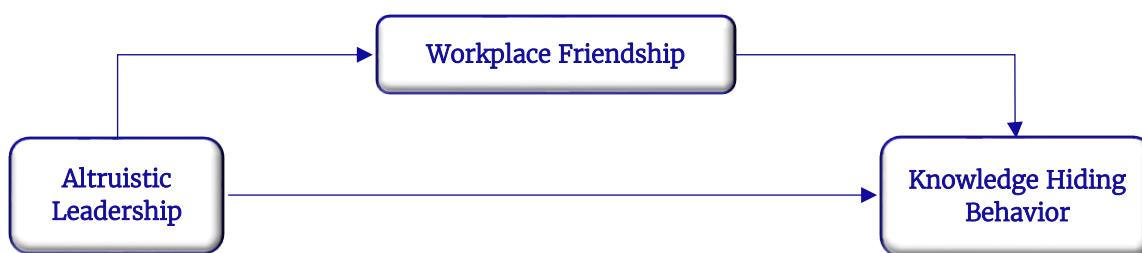
coworkers' well-being by providing them with psychological safety that ensures no punishment for asking or giving assistance (Khalid et al., 2018). Altruistic leaders extend this positive development through helpful behaviors and a mutual aid-based culture across the different teams (Jaan et al., 2023). Another equally pertinent problem of knowledge management is finding ways not to hide knowledge while encouraging the dissemination of new knowledge and experience among team members (Xing, 2022). Other reasons that can make another employee seek help include but are not limited to, seeking assistance from co-employees. It impacts corporate creativity, general employee performance, and the effectiveness of new product teams in a big way (Butt & Ahmad, 2019). Therefore, it has to be concluded that solid friendship at the workplace is the type of relation that obstructs KH and that developing such relationships increases organizational impact and reduces cases of knowledge hiding (Butt & Ahmad, 2021). The following hypothesis is generated after this literature review.

H₄: *Workplace friendships mediate the relationship between Altruistic Leadership and Knowledge-hiding*

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research methodology to evaluate the mediating function of workplace friendship in the link between altruistic leadership and knowledge-hiding behavior (Apuke, 2017). Utilizing purposive sampling, data was gathered using an organized web-based questionnaire from participants satisfying the study's inclusion criteria (Guarte & Barrios, 2006). A purposive sample was selected to ensure participants possessed relevant knowledge and experience in leadership and workplace dynamics (Campbell et al., 2020). A total of 315 replies were initially obtained out of 425 survey questionnaires. After deleting incomplete and invalid replies, a final sample of 291 was maintained for analysis. Data were acquired using an online survey form disseminated via Google Forms (Roopa & Rani, 2012). The questionnaire includes 13 items modified from existing validated measures to examine the notions of altruistic leadership, workplace friendship, and knowledge-hiding conduct. Items were organized on a 5-point Likert scale, assuring consistency and dependability. After data collection, analysis was undertaken using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM was chosen due to its applicability for complicated models, particularly in exploratory research, and when the sample size does not fulfill the standards for covariance-based SEM (Sarstedt et al., 2022). PLS-SEM allows for investigating both the direct association between altruistic leadership and knowledge concealment and the mediation function of workplace friendship (Hair et al., 2019). The validity and reliability of the measurement model were examined using factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) (Aguirre-Urreta et al., 2013). Path coefficients and significance levels were evaluated to assess direct correlations and the mediation effect (Hair et al., 2011). The bootstrapping approach was used to analyze the statistical significance of the mediation path (Hair et al., 2017). All participants were told about the goal of the study, and agreement was acquired before data collection. The privacy and confidentiality of participants' replies were ensured. This technique offered a rigorous foundation for assessing the hypothesized correlations and mediation effects in this investigation (Hair et al., 2018).

Measurement Instrument/Scale

Altruistic Leadership was examined using four questions that rated leaders' compassionate conduct and good effect on team dynamics (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Workplace Friendship was examined using five questions adapted from Nielsen et al. (2000) that represented the degree of mutual assistance, trust, and collegial connections inside the workplace. Knowledge-hiding behavior was examined by four questions (on 5 point scale from Strongly Disagree, coded as 1, to Strongly Agree, coded as 5) evaluating participants' inclinations to withhold or obfuscate knowledge in a professional environment (Connelly et al., 2012). Each of these scales was carefully selected based on earlier validation in academic literature, assuring construct validity and reliability.

Table 1

Scale Development

Variable/Construct	No of Items	Adapted from
Altruistic Leadership	4	Barbuto and Wheeler (2006)
Workplace Friendship	5	Nielsen et al. (2000)
Knowledge-hiding behavior	4	Connelly et al. (2012)

Statistical Analysis

Response Rate

A total of 425 responses were initially gathered. After eliminating incomplete and invalid responses, a final sample of 291 was retained for analysis.

Table 2

Response Rate

Description	Circulated	%
Total Disseminated Questionnaires	425	100%
Received Questionnaires	315	74%
Finalized Sample	291	68%

Demographic Analysis

The demographic analysis of the research sample indicated a substantial presence of male respondents, accounting for 78% of the total, while females comprised the remaining 22%. Age distribution suggests that the bulk of participants (48%) fell within the 36–40 years age range, followed by 24% in the 31–35 years group. A lower percentage, 21%, are aged 40 and older, while just 7% of responses are between the 25–30 age brackets. In terms of organizational rank, a large number of participants (36%) assume OG3 duties, while OG2 and OG1 jobs are represented by 21% and 18%, respectively. Lower percentages of persons have higher positions, with 14% in the AM2 category and 11% in the AM1 category. This demographic mix highlights a workforce that is predominantly mid-career and male-dominated, with a considerable concentration in mid-level organizational jobs.

Table 3

Respondent Demographics

Characteristics	Percentage
Gender	
Male	78%
Female	22%
Age Group	
25–30 years	7%
31–35 years	48%
36–40 years	24%
40 years and above	21%

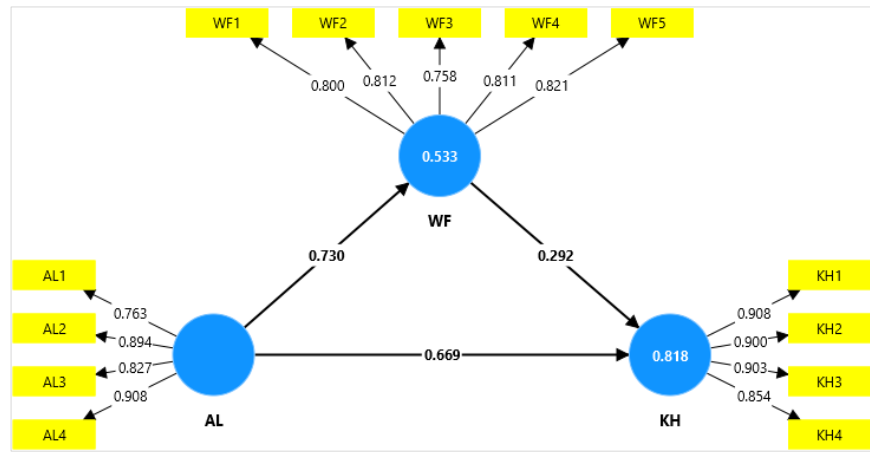
Organizational Position	
OG3	36%
OG2	21%
OG1	18%
AM2	14%
AM1	11%

SEM-PLS Structural and Measurement Model

Acronyms: WF: Workplace friendship, AL: Altruistic leadership, KH: knowledge hiding

Figure 2

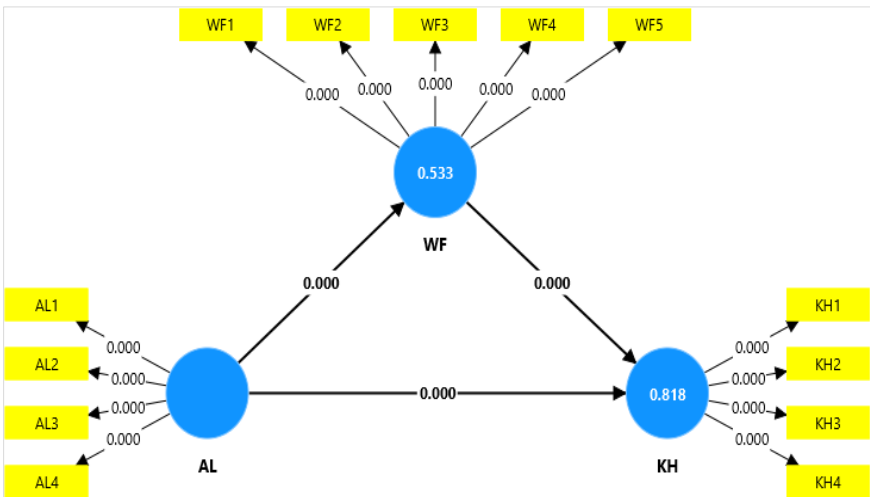
Measurement Model



Acronyms: WF: Workplace friendship, AL: Altruistic leadership, KH: knowledge hiding

Figure 3

Structural Model



Construct Reliability & Validity

The reliability and validity indicators for the constructs in the study reveal good internal consistency and construct validity (Alarcón et al., 2015). Altruistic Leadership (AL); Cronbach's Alpha: 0.871, showing a high level of internal consistency (Bujang et al., 2018). Composite dependability (rho_a and rho_c): Values of 0.885 and 0.912, respectively, transcend the usually recognized criterion of 0.70, demonstrating strong dependability (Alarcón et al., 2015). Average variation Extracted (AVE): 0.723, exhibiting good convergent validity by capturing over 50% of the variation (Cheung & Wang, 2017). Knowledge Hiding (KH);

Cronbach's Alpha: 0.914, denoting strong internal consistency (Bujang et al., 2018). Composite reliability (rho_a and rho_c): 0.915 and 0.939, respectively, further demonstrating construct dependability (Cheung et al., 2024). AVE: 0.795, suggesting good convergent validity (Cheung & Wang, 2017). Workplace Friendship (WF); Cronbach's Alpha: 0.863, which demonstrates strong internal consistency (Bujang et al., 2018). Composite Reliability (rho_a and rho_c): 0.882 and 0.899, both of which are over the minimal requirement (Ahmad et al., 2016). AVE: 0.641, exhibiting satisfactory convergent validity (Cheung & Wang, 2017). Overall, the results demonstrate that the measurement scales for all components are both trustworthy and valid for use in structural equation modeling.

Table 4

Construct Reliability & Validity

Constructs	Items	FL	VIF	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Altruistic Leadership	AL1	0.763	1.660	0.871	0.885	0.912	0.723
	AL2	0.894	3.033				
	AL3	0.827	1.999				
	AL4	0.908	3.322				
Workplace Friendship	WF1	0.800	1.930	0.863	0.882	0.899	0.641
	WF2	0.812	1.834				
	WF3	0.758	1.896				
	WF4	0.811	2.903				
	WF5	0.821	2.977				
Knowledge Hiding	KH1	0.908	3.563	0.914	0.915	0.939	0.795
	KH2	0.900	3.064				
	KH3	0.903	3.319				
	KH4	0.854	2.356				

Acronyms: WF: Workplace friendship, AL: Altruistic leadership, KH: knowledge hiding

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity, assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, examines the extent to which constructs in a model are different from one another (Dirglatmo, 2023). According to this criterion, a concept should have a better correlation with its own indicators than with indicators of other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This is tested by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct to the inter-construct correlations. Refer to Table No. 5, Altruistic Leadership (AL), Knowledge Hiding (KH), and Workplace Friendship (WF) demonstrate appropriate discriminant validity under the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The numbers on the diagonal (0.850 for AL, 0.892 for KH, and 0.801 for WF) indicate the square root of each construct's AVE and are greater than any off-diagonal correlations (e.g., the maximum inter-construct correlation between KH and AL is 0.882). This suggests that each construct has more variance with its own indicators than with any other construct, meeting the Fornell-Larcker criterion and proving discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 5

Fornell-Larcker criterion

	AL	KH	WF
AL	0.850		
KH	0.882	0.892	
WF	0.730	0.780	0.801

Hypothesis Testing

The table provides insights into the relationships between Altruistic Leadership (AL), Knowledge Hiding (KH), and Workplace Friendship (WF) based on structural equation modeling results (Ringle et al., 2023).

Table 6

Hypothesis Testing

Relationships	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value	β	Results
AL -> KH	0.882	0.883	0.017	50.562	0.000	0.669	Accepted
AL -> WF	0.730	0.732	0.028	25.622	0.000	0.730	Accepted
WF -> KH	0.292	0.292	0.047	6.185	0.000	0.292	Accepted
AL -> WF -> KH	0.213	0.213	0.035	6.111	0.000	0.213	Accepted

Results and Discussion

AL → KH: The direct influence of Altruistic Leadership on Knowledge Hiding indicates a strong, significant negative association ($\beta = 0.669$), with a high T statistic (50.562) and a p-value of 0.000, showing this link is statistically significant and accepted. This shows that a rise in altruistic leadership is related to a considerable reduction in knowledge-hiding conduct, consistent with the findings by He and Wei (2022).

AL → WF: Altruistic Leadership strongly impacts Workplace Friendship with a high path coefficient ($\beta = 0.730$) and a T statistic of 25.622, with a p-value of 0.000. This means that selfless leadership efficiently creates friendship in the workplace, which is also statistically significant, confirming the results of Wang et al. (2024).

WF → KH: Workplace Friendship has a modest, statistically significant influence on Knowledge concealing ($\beta = 0.292$) with a T statistic of 6.185 and a p-value of 0.000, demonstrating that higher workplace friendship correlates to less knowledge concealing, aligning with the results by Butt et al. (2023).

AL → WF → KH: This indirect path (mediating impact of WF) between Altruistic Leadership and Knowledge Hiding is likewise significant ($\beta = 0.213$), with a T statistic of 6.111 and a p-value of 0.000. This implies that workplace friendship partially mediates the association between altruistic leadership and knowledge concealing, further emphasizing that altruistic leadership indirectly lowers knowledge hiding by promoting workplace friendships (Song et al., 2015). All results are statistically significant, demonstrating that altruistic leadership efficiently lowers knowledge concealing, both directly and indirectly, via professional connections.

Conclusion

So, based on the findings, the present study highlights altruistic leadership as an important antecedent in the reduction of knowledge hiding within organizations. Selfless leaders promote effective rapport that builds workplace-friendly relationships and good emotional rapport that enhances knowledge exchange among employees. The results suggest that AL not only negatively impacts information concealing directly but also restricts information concealing from the third-party lens through the establishment of professional friendship as a mediator, which enhances trust and openness to other team members. This approach stresses the benefits of care and pro-social leadership behaviors to foster corporations and information sharing. By encouraging those specific behaviors, firms may foster an organizational culture in which knowledge is not being concealed and where cooperation and productivity are valued, which shall, over time, prove beneficial to the organization.

Theoretical & Practical Implications

The positive implications arising from this study offer several practical suggestions for organizations to transform the nature of work environments. Also, initial training must inspire leaders to work with

empathy to increase goodwill among the employees. Second, it is easier to reduce knowledge hiding if the employees have friendship opportunities in the workplace to boost positive attitudes in the workplace. Finally, by nurturing both workplace friendships and empathetic leadership, organizations can effectively reduce the tendency for knowledge concealment at any level within the company. The theoretical analysis of the study provides a continuation of research in the fields of corporate behavior and psychology. First, the present study has examined how workplace friendship impacts hiding information behavior. Second, the existence of selfless leadership has also been proven to minimize knowledge concealment behavior. Thirdly, the existence of friendship among employees helps lessen the knowledge concealment behavior.

Limitations & Future Research Direction

There are several shortcomings to this study. First of all, the study employed a sample of private banks that afford restricted exposure to data collection. Hence, it is crucial to include data from government banks to make the conclusions more general. The sample size was 291, which is appropriate for SEM-PLS, so it is proposed that future research employ other statistical software to check whether it reveals any divergence in the results. It is proposed that this study employs different leadership styles as well to see if it aids in reducing information-hiding practices. Moreover, the present theoretical framework encompassed solely workplace friendship and altruistic leadership. Other predictors of knowledge hiding can be used in future studies. The Workplace friendship scale utilized only the friendship prevalence dimension from the original scale by (Nielsen et al., [2000](#)). The other dimension, namely the friendship opportunity dimension, can be utilized in future research to measure friendship more comprehensively. The rationale for integrating purposive sampling is the availability of restricted time. Future research is encouraged to conduct time series analysis by accompanying the data at different points in time and evaluating whether there is any variance in the results. Furthermore, it is also proposed that research be undertaken in other sectors of the economy to evaluate if the knowledge-hiding actions are prevalent in other sectors. Further, it will also be interesting to incorporate the moderating effect, like gender and pay scale of the supervisor, to see if it upsets these correlations.

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Appendix

Annexure I

No.	Item Description
Altruistic Leadership	Adapted from (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006)
AL1	My Manager puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.
AL2	My Manager does everything he/she can to serve me.
AL3	My Manager sacrifices his/her own interests to meet my needs.
AL4	My Manager goes above and beyond the call of duty to meet my needs.
Knowledge Hiding	Adapted from (Connelly et al., 2012)
KH1	I agreed to help my coworker but never really intended to.
KH2	I pretended that I did not know the information.
KH3	I said that I did not know even though I did.
KH4	I tried to hide innovative solutions and achievements.
Workplace Friendship Function	Adapted from (Nielsen et al., 2000)
WF1	I have formed strong friendships at work.
WF2	I socialize with coworkers outside of the workplace.
WF3	I can confide in people at work.
WF4	I feel I can trust many coworkers a great deal.
WF5	Being able to see my coworkers is one reason why I look forward to my job.