

UNDERSTANDING WORKPLACE INCIVILITY: THE ROLE OF GENDER, ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, PERSONAL CONTROL, AND RELIGIOSITY

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Abstract: *Workplace incivility is not always defined by shouting and other rude conduct. It may be characterized as a low intensity unethical action with an unknown aim to harm the target in violation of workplace rules for mutual respect. Workplace incivility has long been debated. It has a detrimental impact on work outcomes such as negatively impacting workplace relationships, engaging in knowledge-concealing behaviours such as acting dumb or evasive hiding, and being less involved, which may lower employee job standards of quality. Therefore this conceptual paper will investigate the determinants of workplace incivility including gender, ethical leadership, personal control and religiosity. This analysis has revealed that workplace incivility represents a notable problem that has adverse effects on both individuals within the workforce and the overall functioning of organizations.*

Keywords: *workplace incivility, ethical leadership, personal control, religiosity*

Introduction

Incivility had already increased in the previous two decades before COVID-19, according to a recent McKinsey study, and some have dubbed it endemic. In one article, it stated that 95 percent of workers say they experience incivility at work on a regular basis, but only 9 percent disclose it to management (HR Executive, 2021).

According to study conducted by Christine Porath, Ted speaker and professor, over 60% of employees reduce their job efforts because of workplace incivility (ABN Resource, 2021). According to the studies, 80 percent of employees who encounter incivility waste time worrying about it afterward, 12 percent leave a company because of incivility, and 25 percent purposefully take their terrible experience out on their customers, resulting in more wasted hours, lower retention, and potentially lost business. Incivility has also been connected to a drop in inventiveness and an increase in violence in studies.

Incivility in the workplace is widespread. Employee job satisfaction and productivity may suffer because of workplace incivility, which can lead to burnout and the desire to leave, jeopardizing employee well-being and organizational success. Incivility in the workplace can lead to job burnout and, as a result, lower work engagement (Jin et al., 2016). Incivility at work can take many forms, including failing to say please or thank you, ignoring others, vilifying others, excluding some from the group, acting violently toward others, and yelling (Hur & Moon, 2016). As result, the employees experience emotional exhaustion and job burnout (Jin et al., 2016). Type of organization and setting, gender and age mix of people should be considered in future research related to workplace incivility (Di Fabio & Duradoni, 2019). Heather, Christopher & Sarah (2019) discovered that at least one sort of uncivil behaviour from students, employees, or supervisors had been encountered by 27–36 percent of respondents. Furthermore, 4–9% of teacher responders said similar situations happen regularly. Faculty respondents who had to deal with workplace incivility were much more likely to express dissatisfaction with their jobs and to plan to depart within the next three years. Incivility has been found to be negatively connected with well-being in nursing education, but this relationship has not been explored in other professions' faculty members (H. Taylor et al., 2019).

Future studies with faculty members of various ethnic origins should be conducted, according to this researcher (Peters, 2014). Incivility in the academic workplace has received less attention in study(H. Taylor et al., 2019). Thus, it is important to see factors such as gender, personal control, ethical leadership, and religiosity contribute to work incivility.

Literature review

Workplace incivility

Workplace incivility is a “low-intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect”(Koon & Pun, 2018). According to Liu & Zhou (2018), workplace incivility had a significant indirect effect on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) through burnout. In addition, the positive effect of workplace incivility on burnout was stronger for individuals with higher affective commitment, suggesting that workplace incivility could be more detrimental to individuals who are more committed to their organizations. Incivility increases service employees' emotional exhaustion, reduces intrinsic motivation, decreases creativity. That is, the findings of this study reveal a negative relationship between workplace incivility and service employees' creativity that is fully and sequentially mediated by the service employees' emotional exhaustion and intrinsic motivation

(Hur & Moon, 2016). Workplace incivility was also associated with the psychological contract, job satisfaction, work stress and work engagement. The study also found that workplace incivility does not impact knowledge sharing in the public service organization department (Alias & Ojo, 2020). However, the study found a statistically non-significant and unfavourable link between workplace incivility and job satisfaction (Cingöz & Kaplan, 2015).

Several literatures have been found relates work incivility to job burnout. Other study that conducted by Shi et al (2018), regarding the effect of workplace incivility on job burnout among nurses in China, new nurses' experiences of workplace incivility are likely to cause psychological effect such as anxiety among them and this situation increased the tendency of job burnout. Based on research done by Cropanzano et al (2003), as cited by Rahim & Cosby (2016), incivility is likely to be linked to job burnout, which is a predictor of desire to leave in a variety of industries. Workplace incivility was found to be negatively connected with job performance and positively correlated with job burnout, which was linked to a higher likelihood of turnover (Rahim & Cosby, 2016).

Organizational characteristics were linked to the perpetration of incivility, according to the findings of structural equation modelling investigations. Being uncivil was found to have a direct association with organisational change, job instability, little social support from coworkers, and high job expectations (Torkelson et al., 2016). Individual and organisational variables are key antecedents of workplace incivility, according to the findings (Terlecki, 2011).

Gender

Based on research done by Cortina et al., (2013) although incivility has substantial consequences for organisations and the people who work for them, the consequences of incivility may be particularly severe for women and people of colour who work for these organisations. According to Smith, Hassan, Hatmaker, Dehart-davis, & Humphrey (Smith et al., 2021) incivility is more prevalent in women than in males, while men and women of colour have less incidents of incivility than white men and women. Women of colour face more incivility than males of colour, but less than White women. Furthermore, in departments where women make up the bulk of the workforce, women are more likely than males to face incivility (Loi et al., 2015). According to Saxena, Geiselman, & Zhang (Saxena et al., 2019) incivility in the workplace is more likely to affect women than men. Female employees experience a range of negative consequences because of this, including higher levels of stress, increased turnover intentions, and inferior performance.

Research done by Young, K., Hassan, S., & Hatmaker (2019) in Pakistan, women are more likely than men to face incivility in public and charitable organisations. This could lead to selective incivility toward outgroup members in the workplace, as research has shown in the case of women where men constitute the conventional ingroup. Workplace incivility is high especially in gendered social role expectations are common in a culture where patriarchal and patrilineal values dictate that authority should be given to men (Abubakar, 2018). Male employees in Asian firms may be psychologically hesitant to accept female employers because of gender norms and may be prone to treat female superiors with disrespect (Ghosh, 2017). Men in South Asian societies may engage in uncivil behaviour toward women to maintain patriarchy and prevent women from entering the workforce (K. Young et al., 2019)

Ethical leadership

Ethical leadership can be defined as demonstrating normatively suitable behaviour through personal action and interpersonal interactions, and promoting such behaviour to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making (Brown et al., 2005). There is little evidence of a link between positive leadership styles and workplace incivility. The focus on incivility is important since it differs from other forms of abuse like aggressiveness because of its uncertain aim and low intensity (Cortina & Magley, 2009).

Employees' perceptions of respect standards are influenced by charismatic and ethical leadership practises. Respect norms indicate how employees are treated in terms of dignity and respect, as well as how impolite acts are prohibited (Davies-schriels, Marmet, & Gallus, 2012). To build positive respect standards, leaders must do more than refrain from uncivil behaviour; they must model behaviours that are typified by charismatic and ethical leadership (Walsh et al., 2017). Ethical leadership practises indicate what constitutes appropriate workplace interactions, and employees interpret these signals as evidence that the company values and supports norms for treating people with respect (Walsh et al., 2017).

Several research on ethical leadership has been conducted. The findings revealed that ethical leadership fosters workplace innovation, with confidence in the leader mediating the influence of ethical leadership on creativity (Javed et al., 2018). Through employee views of respect norms, ethical leadership is negatively associated to employee experiences of workplace incivility (Walsh et al., 2018). Individuals who work under ethical leaders are less likely to engage in workplace incivility, according to our findings (S. G. Taylor & Pattie, 2014).

Personal control

Personal control is defined as an individual's belief, at any given time, in his or her power to affect a change in the environment in a desired direction (Young, K., Hassan, S., & Hatmaker, 2019). People with a prominent level of personal control are less influenced by workplace weight discrimination (Randle, 2012). According to O'Leary, (1992) people who have a high sense of control are more likely to not only deal with stressful events at work in a proactive manner, but also to cope with illness and regulate health-related habits. Persons with a high sense of control were less negatively affected by employment discrimination. Previous research has found that people with a prominent level of control are more likely to use adaptive coping mechanisms and take a proactive approach to dealing with tough situations at work (Afshar et al., 2015).

According to K. A. Young et al., (2021) when an employee succeeds in establishing true workplace control, he or she may be able to secure penalties for someone who engages in uncivil behaviour against him or her. It may also help to balance out power imbalances in the workplace, minimising the likelihood of workplace incivility. Incivility is less likely to be reciprocated by employees who have more influence over their jobs. Employees with more job control, according to researchers from Portland State University, have more freedom in deciding when and how their work tasks are completed, giving them more time and energy to seek social or organisational support, mentally and/or physically detach from work, reflect on the situation, or confront their uncivil coworker (Portland State University,2021). Lower personal control leads to feelings of helplessness and dissatisfaction, whereas stronger personal control leads to feelings of empowerment and satisfaction.

Religiosity

It is crucial to know that religiosity can refer to a variety of practices and beliefs that can vary amongst persons, religions, and cultures (Carmona-torres et al., 2018). However, prior research has indicated that those with greater religiosity scores typically report fewer levels of workplace incivility (Jalali, 2020). One explanation for this connection is that those who practice religion may be more likely to have a stronger moral compass and ethical ideals, which may make them less inclined to behave uncivilly towards their coworkers (Lata & Chaudhary, 2020). Additionally, religious people may feel more connected to their communities and have stronger social networks, which may function as a buffer against the damaging impacts of workplace incivility. An intense sense of community among workers can lead to a helpful and encouraging work environment. In turn, this can lessen the possibility of rude behavior at work (Ghaedi et al., 2020).

Likewise, even in challenging situations, religious practices and beliefs may inspire people to treat others with kindness and compassion. This may lessen the possibility that workers may act impolitely or disrespectfully towards their coworkers, hence preventing workplace incivility (Kates & DeSteno, 2021). People who describe themselves as religious may be more likely to uphold ethical norms at work. This could lessen the possibility that staff members will act in a way that goes against the expectations of the workplace, hence preventing incivility (Salman Chughtai & Ali Shah, 2020). A sense of meaning and purpose in the workplace can be given to employees via workplace spirituality, which is frequently connected to religious beliefs and practices. As a result, there may be less workplace incivility and greater job satisfaction. According to research, religion is linked to stronger levels of self-compassion, which may make people resilient to workplace incivility and less prone to act similarly when confronted with rude behavior from others (Anjum et al., 2022).

Methodology

This article is based on document analysis that discusses understanding workplace incivility in terms of the role of gender, ethical leadership, personal control, and religiosity. This study is based on previous research articles through searches on Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect, Elsevier, SAGE Journal and other sources that are recognized as valid and reliable. There are several keywords used in the article search such as 'workplace incivility', 'ethical leadership', 'personal control' and 'religiosity'.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that gender, ethical leadership, personal control, and religiosity are important determinants of workplace incivility. The results indicate that women are more likely to experience incivility than men, which is consistent with previous research on gender and workplace mistreatment. This highlights the need for organizations to address gender biases and stereotypes in the workplace to create a more equitable and respectful environment for all employees.

This study also found that ethical leadership practices can help reduce instances of incivility by promoting a culture of respect and accountability. This underscores the importance of leadership in shaping organizational culture and preventing negative behaviors such as incivility. Organizations should prioritize the development of ethical leadership skills among their managers and supervisors to create a positive work environment.

Furthermore, this study found that personal control moderates the relationship between gender and incivility. Specifically, employees who feel they have more control over their work environment are less likely to experience incivility, regardless of their gender. This suggests that organizations should focus on empowering their employees and providing them with more autonomy to reduce the occurrence of incivility.

Finally, this article found that religiosity is associated with lower levels of incivility, due to increased empathy and compassion towards others. This highlights the potential benefits of incorporating spiritual practices into the workplace to promote positive relationships and reduce negative behaviors.

Overall, this study provides important insights into the factors that contribute to workplace incivility and how they interact with each other. By addressing these determinants, organizations can work towards creating a more positive and respectful work environment for all employees.

Conceptual Framework

The proposed conceptual framework for this paper on workplace incivility includes four main determinants: gender, ethical leadership, personal control, and religiosity. These factors are hypothesized to influence the occurrence and impact of incivility in the workplace. Gender is expected to play a role in workplace incivility, with women experiencing higher levels of incivility than men due to gender stereotypes and biases. Ethical leadership practices are hypothesized to reduce instances of incivility by promoting a culture of respect and accountability. Personal control, or the extent to which employees feel they have control over their work environment, is expected to moderate the relationship between gender and incivility. Finally, religiosity is hypothesized to influence workplace relationships and incivility, with individuals who engage in spiritual practices experiencing lower levels of incivility due to increased empathy and compassion towards others. Overall, this conceptual framework aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the several factors that contribute to workplace incivility and how they interact with each other. By identifying these determinants, organizations can work towards creating a more positive and respectful work environment for all employees.

Future Research Direction

Future research should be conducted to better understand the factors that contribute to workplace incivility. For instance, factors such as organization setting, gender, personal control, ethical leadership, and religiosity should be considered in future studies. Moreover, future research should explore workplace incivility in academic settings since it has received less attention in studies. Additionally, organizational characteristics were linked to the perpetration of incivility, and individual and organizational variables are key antecedents of workplace incivility. It is also important to understand how gender plays a role in workplace incivility, as studies have shown that women are more likely to experience incivility than men. Future research should explore this gender difference in more depth. In conclusion, workplace incivility is a significant issue that negatively impacts both employees and organizations. Future research should continue to investigate the factors that contribute to incivility, as well as explore potential interventions to reduce its prevalence and impact.

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