# The Influence of Workplace Incivility on Innovative Work Behavior: Mediating Effect of Employee Engagement and Moderating Effect of Emotional Intelligence

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## Abstract

*Workplace incivility is a common problem in academic intuitions, leading to deviant behaviours between both academic and non-academic staff members that have a robust significant impact on employees' behaviours towards organizations. Workplace incivility can stifle employee creativity. This study explores how employee engagement mediates this adverse effect and how emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between incivility and engagement. Drawing on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, we propose that incivility depletes employee resources, hindering innovative work behaviour. We hypothesize that high emotional intelligence buffers the negative impact of incivility on engagement, ultimately promoting innovative behaviour. Using data from faculty in Pakistani higher education institutions, we analyze the proposed model with PLS and SPSS software. Our findings confirm that workplace incivility reduces innovative work behaviour, but employee engagement weakens this adverse effect. Additionally, emotional intelligence strengthens the positive influence of engagement on innovative work behaviour. The study concludes with a discussion of implications for theory and practice, including future research directions.*

**Keywords:** Workplace Incivility, Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement, Innovative Work Behavior, COR Theory.

## Introduction

Workplace incivility is a common problem in academic intuitions, leading to deviant behaviours between both academic and non-academic staff members that have a robust significant impact on employees' behaviours towards organizations. Deviant behaviour in the workplace happens when an employee deliberately violates the rules and regulations set forth by the organization (Falola et al., 2023). Workplace Incivility (WPI) is unpleasant for both individuals and organizations. It encompasses rudeness, insulting behaviour, contempt, and disregard. This is a common type of illicit behaviour in the workplace, and a significant proportion of employees indicate that they have encountered similar conduct (Wang & Chen, 2020).

Institutions of higher education should seek strategies for preventing employees from getting physically tired as a consequence of incivility (Parray et al., 2023). Employee engagement as a crucial factor in achieving organizational success in today's ever-changing work environments

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cannot be emphasized enough. Institutions' success is highly dependent on the constant and sustainable changes in their working environment (Oláh et al., 2019). Employee engagement has a twofold impact on both individual workplace fulfillment and performance, as well as overall productivity, innovation, and the organization's financial performance(you're Rehman et al., 2024). Institutions of higher education can tackle workplace incivility by providing educational seminars, courses on alleviating stress, and complimentary professional counselling (Amano et al., 2020). Workplace Incivility (WPI) is a recently developed phenomenon that pertains to adverse behaviour inside an organization (Volkers, 2019). It is signified by a positive attitude toward a job, intense dedication, and full involvement in pursuing a profession. To be more specific, 71% of court employees, 75% of university faculty members, and 79% of law enforcement agency staff noted cases of this nature. In addition, 85 percent of nurses reported that they had been subjected to rude treatment in the workplace. Academics have recently taken an interest in employee engagement as a job structure (Nguyen et al., 2023). When adverse situations happen frequently, workplaces suffer more harm. There are multiple manifestations of adverse reactions. Examples of adverse circumstances in the workplace included bullying, ostracism, incivility, and centralized management actions (Einarsen et al., 2009). In addition, investigators have examined the influence of the organizational environment on employees' emotions and the impact of encouraging work attitudes on employees. The investigators argued that the buildup of a pleasant emotional environment would enhance the level of employees' dedication as well as involvement in their work (Fait et al., 2023).

In the context of academia, the value of innovation has grown significantly as an outcome of the requirement for continuous improvement, flexibility to adapt to modifications, and the advancement of research. Universities serve to produce highly qualified employees, which is necessary to ensure sustainable prosperity and create innovation based on innovation (Rima et al., 2020). Under the context of universities, IWB encompasses a range of initiatives, including research innovation, curriculum development, methodologies for instruction, and administrative task modifications. Implementing innovative work behaviour (IWB) improves learning outcomes and provides ideas for cultivating an environment of innovation among employees in higher education institutions (Budur et al., 2024).

The impact of rude behaviour in the workplace on employee engagement gets even more intricate when considering the potential moderating influence of emotional intelligence (Tawiah et al., 2023). Previous research studies have found a connection between workplace incivility and engagement among staff members, but the impact of emotional intelligence on this relationship is still unclear. Under the structure, as mentioned earlier, this study gains an in-depth understanding of the buffer aspect of emotional intelligence. The study's objectives are derived using these facts. From an Asian standpoint, both academia and management usually overlook the problem of incivility that can be controlled and overcome with the existence of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is an excellent factor in the services industry because it constitutes a strong determinant for improving employee behavioural and organizational outcomes (Ezzi et al., 2023).

Furthermore, researchers have suggested that future partitioners must improve the employees' emotional intelligence within the institutions to improve overall productivity, performance, and profitability (Hoai & Duong, 2023). The study fulfills the scarcity of this research in an Asian context such as Pakistan because the Western country context is different and challenging to adjust to in Asian countries because of social, technological, political, and cultural context (Tran, 2023).

On the other hand, researchers have found that more attention needs to be paid to educational intuitions in workplace incivility (Alias et al., 2022).

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the influence of workplace incivility on innovative work behaviour. The other objectives are to determine the impact of workplace incivility on employee engagement, determine the mediating effect of employee engagement with the relationship between workplace incivility and innovative work behaviour, and determine the moderating impact of emotional intelligence on workplace incivility and employee engagement. Workplace incivility is a significant stressor for organizations and employees (Arshad & Ismail, 2018). This study has explored the fact that workplace incivility increases uncivil and distrustful behaviour among employees. In Pakistan, research has yet to be undertaken. The focus of research on incivility mainly focuses on Western countries, notably America, with little study carried out in Asian surroundings (Butt & Yazdani, 2021).

These study questions and objectives aim to thoroughly grasp the complex relationships between employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and workplace incivility. This comprehension will offer valuable insights for researchers and other practitioners, as well as practical implications for the management and procedures of institutions. Numerous research studies have shown an adverse relationship between employee engagement and workplace incivility.

## Literature Review

Workplace incivility is the term used to describe low-intensity behaviours that go against interpersonal communication and respect standards. Based on several academics, low-intensity behaviour is an uncivil action that is not as harmful as high-intensity behaviour, such as direct violence or aggressive behaviour (Cortina, 2001). These acts are frequently subtle and ambiguous. Uncivil behaviours encompass impoliteness, using insulting language, disregarding or isolating colleagues, or showing indifference to the opinions or emotions of others (Jungert & Holm, 2022). Because of incivility, engaging in unprofessional slander, explicitly or implicitly, and insulting or disturbing colleagues are examples of impolite conduct in the workplace (Mahmood et al., 2023). Workplace incivility has significantly risen, affecting an organization's productivity and efficiency (Abate & Greenberg, 2023). The negative impacts of workplace incivility on employees and organizations have received an extensive interest in organizational sciences (Dhir & Shukla,2019). According to a study, many individuals in various professions have reported experiencing uncivil behaviour at their workplaces (Jiang et al., 2019). It is characterized as a form of workplace misbehaviour that involves disrespectful or impolite behaviour with ambiguous intentions to harm the target, which violates the conventional workplace standards of respect for others (Park & Haun 2018). Workplace Incivility (WPI) creates an unfavourable working atmosphere and negatively impacts the organization's productivity, social standing, and outcomes. Nevertheless, uncivilized behaviour might not invariably be apparent and might not constantly be intentional to inflict harm upon others (Aghayeva & Ślusarczyk, 2019). Research conducted at the interpersonal level is associated with passive human and work-related outcomes and breaches the fundamental standards of mutual respect. Staff morale and productivity can take a nosedive due to these repercussions (Young et al., 2021).

The researcher observed that workplace incivility is highly explored in the USA, Australia, and South Korea compared to other countries such as Singapore (Torkelson et al., 2016). Workplace incivility can lead to diminished job satisfaction, morale, commitment, and employee tension (Mahmood et al., 2023). A decline in team productivity results from a toxic environment that makes it challenging for employees to interact and work jointly. When staff is treated uncivilly at

the workplace, they are inclined to start looking for work elsewhere or leave a more significant number of days off, which may negatively impact worker morale and productivity (Schilpzand et al., 2016).

One of the most common types of misconduct in organizational settings is incivility in the workplace (Irum et al., 2020). This type of misconduct can have substantial negative impacts, such as a downturn in the employees' behaviour regarding corporate citizenship. Instances of exploitation, which include supervisors and staff members, are growing more frequent within organizations (Moon & Morais, 2022). Scholars are paying more attention to employees' adverse workplace behaviours (Mahmood et al., 2023). Employees can be affected by a wide range of detrimental factors, including impolite behaviour, unfair treatment at work, deviance, social undermining, and emotional violence. Workplace incivility is on an upward trend because of the shifting dynamics of the workforce in organizations (Kumar et al., 2023). There have been recent studies on bullying in the workplace within food service companies (Khan et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2023). Incivility is more prevalent in the workplace than high-level animosity, which is a frequent problem (Holm et al., 2023). Despite the research on incivility indicating that it has negative consequences both inside and outside the workplace, there remains a scarcity of studies on this issue. Research showed that workplace incivility has a detrimental impact on employee outcomes, strongly correlated with substantial job performance drops (Mahmood et al., 2023).

Faculty and student performance, motivation, and workplace satisfaction have all been considered to improve with applying IWB. By cultivating a working atmosphere fostering innovation, universities may encourage faculty members to explore novel areas of study, engage across fields of study, and use innovative teaching techniques (Asif et al., 2021). In academia, innovative work behaviour (IWB) has major significance as it has an enormous effect on the individual's academic achievement and the overall success of the educational sector (Buske, 2018). Innovation is recognized as a critical component of national development and growth. Academic institutions foster IWB, including technological innovation, research developments, creative initiatives, community engagement campaigns, and technology transfer, to drive economic advancement and social transformation within national innovation ecosystems (Javed et al., 2019). Students are encouraged to actively engage in their learning path through innovative teaching approaches, intensive learning opportunities, and research-focused activities that empower them for future achievements in their personal and academic pursuits (Mustafa et al., 2022; Rehman et al., 2023).

Employee engagement has become a notable strategy applied by government organizations to engage and encourage their staff members. The relationship between elevated levels of organizational performance and employee engagement justifies the emphasis on this aspect (Rahman & Karim, 2022). It is becoming more important for supervisors and employees who manage human resources (Lee et al., 2023). Organizations seem captivated by "employee engagement" as much as the expert and professional groups that promote it. The results of employee engagement are highly supported by the specific objectives that most companies are seeking for staff members who exhibit high levels of performance, productivity, profitability, employees' well-being, and willingness to engage with their assigned tasks in spontaneous efforts (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). Employees' adverse behaviours will gradually decrease, and their level of engagement in work will improve when they perceive an uplifting atmosphere and get encouragement from the organization (Ahad & Khan, 2020). Supervisors of service organizations can prevent uncivil behaviour between particular staff members through the

vigilant support of ethics, guidelines, and policies that promote controversial connections among the employees at the workplace (Achmadi et al., 2023).

In today's dynamic environment, workers' IWB has become essential for organizations to survive in the competitive marketplace. Nowadays, organizations may sustain progress by using their points of differentiation. To gain a competitive advantage, employees need to demonstrate innovative thinking and originality in their work-related initiatives (Javed et al., 2019). The research productivity, creativeness, and pedagogical effectiveness of creative work behaviour are enhanced (Simpson et al., 2006). Academic institutions' innovative techniques contribute to the nation's development and growth trajectory. University research capacities, staff members, and cultural effects can be exploited to foster innovation-driven economic growth, promote inclusive development, and establish the country as a noteworthy global leader in the knowledge-based economy (Adnan et al., 2023).

The influence of emotions on employees' work attitudes might be evident either through their overt acts or through their underlying perspectives. Employees will interpret emotional tension, for instance, any indication of uncivilized conduct from a supervisor or colleague. Potentially, detrimental emotional performance could lead to a departure from expected behaviour (Fait et al., 2023). Multiple studies have been conducted on the concept of employee engagement in both academic and business disciplines. Still, the current collection of literature needs more clarity on the influences, implementation, and impact of employee engagement on employees working at the workplace (Alias et al., 2022).

Engaging in detrimental emotional displays may lead to behavioural deviance. This is consistent with the Conservation of Resources hypothesis, which suggests that employees make efforts to obtain, retain, and safeguard the particular resources necessary to accomplish their job duties. Additionally, it elucidates the mechanism via which individuals cultivate their capacity to handle stress and their subsequent reactions to work-related pressure. The book has compressed four resource categories: objective, social help, individual traits, and energy resources (Namin et al., 2022). As per the COR hypothesis, individuals who perceive a lack of return on their labour investment may experience pressure from their employers or places of employment. This is due to their belief in the possibility of resource depletion. Adverse emotions cause misconception, leading to decreased employee productivity, a greater probability of intended leave, lower job satisfaction, and diminished innovative thinking. This study examines adverse circumstances' impact on innovative behaviour using the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory in the present research paradigm. Organizations can alter their plans and policies based on the research results, which may assist them in understanding the consequences of these relationships (Schilpzand et al., 2016b).

## Workplace Incivility and Innovative Work Behavior

Uncivil behaviour can diminish the motivation to keep working at work due to discomfort, distress, and negative perceptions of one's place of employment and coworkers. Job dissatisfaction is expected to be a buffer between workplace incivility and deciding to leave a job. In organizations with a significant presence of incivility, both job satisfaction and commitment to the organization decline (Coelho et al., 2021). In addition, the fundamental cause for multiple examples of impolite behaviour may be linked to the uncivil behaviour exhibited by supervisors (Su et al., 2022). Consequently, being in a workplace that promotes workplace incivility can harm employees' innovative work behaviour abilities because it negatively affects their capacity to retain and utilize cognitive abilities (Frare et al., 2022). With the support of empirical evidence

from the existing literature, it is hypothesized that Workplace incivility negatively affects innovative work behaviour.

Workplace incivility has a significant effect on the employees' performance, absenteeism, turnover, satisfaction, innovation, tiredness, productivity, organizational citizenship behaviour, employee engagement, counterproductive behaviour, work-family conflict, stress, and physical health (Schilpzand et al., 2016b). This research provides practical recommendations and strategies for reducing and monitoring workplace incivility in educational institutions. Although these actions may appear insignificant, their collective impact can be negative, resulting in heightened stress levels, diminished job satisfaction, and lower employee engagement (Namin et al., 2022). Conversely, deviant behaviours initiated by supervisors have a more significant effect on the organization's overall performance (Tricahyadinata et al., 2020). The aforementioned adverse consequences led to a decrease in employee engagement, as disengaged and devalued staff members perceived rude behaviour. According to particular research, several aspects may affect the relationship between employee engagement and workplace incivility (Novita et al., 2021). Elements such as a favourable working atmosphere, support from supervisors, and an awareness of fairness within the organization may alleviate the negative impact of incivility on staff members' dedication and engagement (Zaheer et al., 2022).

Employees might encounter adverse psychological consequences if they are confronted with unethical behavioural activities that may exist because of incivility at the workplace. These negative emotions, such as stress, worries, and an overwhelming sense of feeling powerless, may significantly undermine their motivation and engagement in their job. An organization that has an adverse track record for unethical behaviour confronts criticisms from the external community and a damaged image in the marketplace (Waqas et al., 2020). Employee engagement in Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCBs) may be inhibited by unethical behaviour at the workplace. Experiencing instances of unfairness or unethical conduct tends to cause employees to be less inclined to go higher than their assigned job responsibilities, resulting in diminished employee engagement and extra-role behaviours (Waqas et al., 2020).

Additionally, to significantly enhance the job performance of employees who have been subjected to workplace incivility, supervisors must provide their interests with attention, care, support, and emotional support (Afzal et al., 2023; Ansari et al., 2024). Employee training is required, and appropriate ethical behaviours and procedures are facilitated by conducting weekend meetings (Ching et al., 2016). Civility, Respect, and Engagement initiative programs in the workforce are intended to promote respectful and pleasant relationships among employees (Namin et al., 2022b). Negative behaviours and attitudes of teachers are influenced by workplace incivility. Workplace incivility has a beneficial relationship with emotional tiredness, which leads to lower levels of employee engagement among employees (Novita et al., 2021). Based on existing literature, we hypothesized that a negative relationship between workplace incivility and employee engagement has adverse effects.

Researchers have investigated employee engagement as a significant factor in employees' behavioural outcomes, positively correlated with employees' working performance and organizational outcomes (Hasanati & Karima, 2024). Employing innovative work behaviour (IWB) enhances students' overall learning experiences while also assisting teaching staff. Surveys have shown that employing creative teaching methods, such as problem-based learning, flipped educational environments, and interactive education sessions, can improve engagement among students, cultivate critical thinking skills, and improve their academic performance. Engaging in research and innovation initiatives also promotes a thirst for knowledge and an innovative mindset

in learners, providing them with essential abilities to tackle challenges in their academic and professional activities and afterward (Peerzadah et al., 2024). Researchers have explored that employee engagement has a positive relationship with each other and an influential impact on organizational productivity and performance (Hasanati & Karima, 2024).

Furthermore, contemplating the past context of the employment system in China, faculty members in private institutions are more likely to have concerns regarding the lack of reward or compensation for their dedication to resources and the potential risk of losing such resources. Consequently, the hospitality industry is particularly prone to stress-related problems such as anxiety and behavioural disorders. Studies conducted at universities implementing the Conservation of Resources hypothesis suggest that emotional resource services have a positive impact on the association between employee engagement and workplace incivility. Universities must robustly sustain their growth. This article utilized the COR theory to investigate the influence of WPI on work engagement (Tawiah et al., 2023). The third hypothesis of this research is that there is a positive and significant relationship between employee engagement and innovative work behaviour.

Organizations suggest emotional intelligence learning, effective resolution of conflicts, and supportive leadership to develop a respectful work culture and boost employee engagement while lowering incivility. Moreover, the disengagement resulting from incivility can have detrimental effects on the organization's performance, as well as collaboration and teamwork within it (Dhir & Shukla, 2019). This study revealed that the presence of workplace incivility, such as deviant, disrespectful, and rude behaviours in the workplace, negatively affects staff motivation to engage in voluntary activities, which leads to reduced Organizational Citizenship activities (OCBs) and, as a result, diminished degrees of engagement (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Additionally, it seeks to cultivate a climate of elevated emotional intelligence, encourage greater employee engagement, and enhance the overall performance of the organization.

A culture where behaviours of incivility have become less common or addressed more skillfully can be developed by a leader who deliberately encourages and recognizes emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 2008). The effectiveness of emotional intelligence in reducing the adverse consequences of incivility in the workplace can be positively impacted by the existence of a working environment that nurtures mental stability (Emmerling et al., 2023). The high level of employee engagement increases as a consequence of these measurements, which creates a climate that promotes emotional intelligence (Afsar et al., 2021). Organizations must prioritize addressing workplace incivility, emotional intelligence, and employee engagement to create a positive and supportive work environment that fosters happiness among workers and maximizes performance (Miner et al., 2012).

Enhancing employee engagement can be accomplished by implementing tactics that prioritize the development of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills and cultivating an empathetic and respectful work environment. Employees can enhance their ability to handle uncivil behaviours in the workplace by developing coping mechanisms, improving their emotional intelligence skills, and seeking support (Pekkan & Bicer, 2022). This can be achieved through awareness of the adverse effects of workplace incivility and the potential impact of emotional intelligence in such situations. This could revolutionize business operations and reshape the regulatory framework, leading to enhanced workplace conditions and increased employee well-being and efficiency (Parray et al., 2023). Based on the above literature, this research examined emotional intelligence as a moderator between workplace incivility and employee engagement,

and it is hypothesized that emotional intelligence significantly moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and employee engagement.

**Figure 1: Emotional Intelligence**
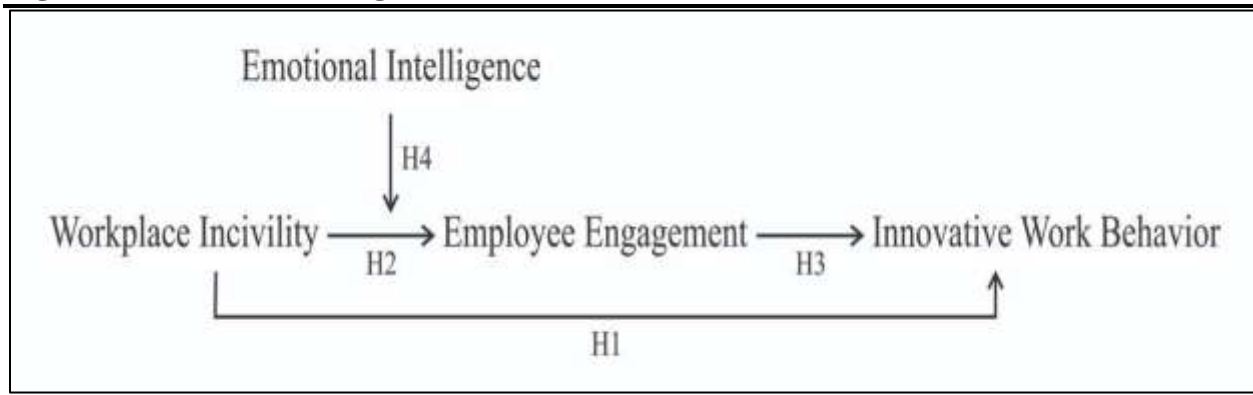


## Methodology

This research examined the influence of workplace incivility on innovative work behavior with the mediator of employee engagement and moderator of emotional intelligence in the educational sectors of Pakistan. This study used a survey approach, utilizing an empirical questionnaire. The structure of the questionnaire and the collection of data were shaped by the hypotheses proved beforehand. A quantitative technique was used and this was subsequently enhanced by a descriptive or inferential analysis of the data (Roby et al., 2003). Questionnaire surveys are a frequently utilized and widely accepted research approach for quickly collecting and analyzing data from a particular population of respondents (Steven et al., 2017).

The objective of this research is to examine how workplace incivility, directly and indirectly, affects innovative work behavior with the mediator of employee engagement and the moderator of emotional intelligence. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure each item in the latent variables (Victor & Cullen, 1988). The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were examined by the pilot study. For the pilot study, academic faculty members were selected. The research refined the survey wording and area of perfection. Then, the redesigned questionnaire was distributed to the selected population.

**Measurement of Variables**

In this study, one independent variable (WPI), one dependent variable (IWB) one mediator (EE), and a moderator (EI) were employed. The scale of innovative work behavior was developed by (Janssen 2000) which is adopted by 9 item scale (Hsiao et al., 2011). The workplace incivility 7 items adopted by (Sakurai, 2011; Saleem et al., 2022). Employee engagement is adopted with a 9 9-item scale by (Albrecht et al., 2018; Schaufeli et al., 2006), and with a 16 16-item scale emotional intelligence is adopted by (Nasir et al., 2023). The items included in the study proved valid due to their alpha value higher than the standard threshold of 0.70.

The data for this research were collected from academic faculty members located in Pakistan. The research will be conducted in 2024. The purpose of this research was communicated to the participants in the starting guidelines of the questionnaire. The convenience sample method was employed for this research because it is easy and for the pilot study, most researchers used the convenience techniques to achieve their research objectives (Samma et al., 2020). The survey was

conducted in Punjab cities such as Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Faisalabad, Sahiwal etc. The online data was collected from the selected population. A rule of thumb was used which required a 410 (41×10) response rate and 70% was accepted for this research study. A total of 653 questionnaires were received which were distributed through email, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and other social media apps. The demographic detail is given below:

**Table 1**: **Sample Characteristics**

| Measures | Items | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | 307 | 47.0 |
| Gender | Female | 346 | 53.0 |
| | 26-35 | 409 | 62.6 |
| | 36-45 | 197 | 30.2 |
| Age | 46-55 | 39 | 6.0 |
| | 55+ | 8 | 1.2 |
| | Public | 303 | 46.4 |
| Sector | Private | 350 | 53.6 |
| | Lecturer | 389 | 59.6 |
| Designation | Assistant Professor | 148 | 22.7 |
| | Associate Professor | 52 | 8.0 |
| | Professor | 64 | 9.8 |

According to the findings, 346 out of the respondents were women, while the remaining 307 respondents were men. The findings indicate that a significant portion of the participants, specifically 409 respondents, were aged between 26 and 35. Furthermore, there were 197 additional participants, making up the second largest demographic, who fell between the age range of 36 to 45. Out of all the responses, 39 participants fell between the ages of 46 and 55, while the remaining 8 participants were 55 years old or older. The findings indicate that the majority of the participants 350 were working in the private sector, whilst the remaining 303 participants were engaged in the public sector. The great majority of the 227 respondents overall claimed to have finished their education up to the master's degree, or sixteen years of study. However, 248 participants held an MPhil degree. Similarly, 156 individuals had a PhD degree, while the other 22 participants had a post-doctoral degree. After selecting the methodology, the collected data is analyzed by using the software of PLS and SPSS.

All the constructed variables are selected from the existing literature. According to Hair et al. (2011), loading values must have a t value of ±1.96 at a significance level of 5% and be equal to or greater than 0.708. As stated by Hair et al. (2017), when deciding whether to maintain or remove an indication, it is crucial to analyze the values of the outer loadings. The optimal range for these values is often between 0.40 and 0.70. Furthermore, it is important to consider their impact on the assessments of CR (composite reliability) and AVE (average variance extracted).

**Table 2: Constructs Factor Loading and Reliability**

| | Latent Variables | Items Retained | Outer Loading | Cronbach Alpha | CR (>0.7) | AVE (>0.5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Workplace Incivility | WP1 | 0.685 | 0.806 | 0.899 | 0.736 |
| | | WP2 | 0.891 | | | |
| | | WP3 | 0.900 | | | |
| 1. | | WP4 | 0.889 | | | |
| | | WP5 | 0.871 | | | |
| | | WP6 | 0.891 | | | |
| | | WP7 | 0.685 | | | |
| 2 | Employee Engagement | EE1 | 0.811 | 0.965 | 0.970 | 0.782 |
| | | EE2 | 0.890 | | | |
| | | EE3 | 0.900 | | | |
| | | EE4 | 0.918 | | | |
| | | EE5 | 0.902 | | | |
| | | EE6 | 0.910 | | | |
| | | EE7 | 0.890 | | | |
| | | EE8 | 0.893 | | | |
| | | EE9 | 0.839 | | | |
| 3 | Emotional Intelligence | EI1 | 0.891 | 0.985 | 0.986 | 0.817 |
| | | EI2 | 0.903 | | | |
| | | EI3 | 0.915 | | | |
| | | EI4 | 0.927 | | | |
| | | EI5 | 0.891 | | | |
| | | EI6 | 0.906 | | | |
| | | EI7 | 0.883 | | | |
| | | EI8 | 0.896 | | | |
| | | EI9 | 0.906 | | | |
| | | EI10 | 0.924 | | | |
| | | EI11 | 0.897 | | | |
| | | E12 | 0.895 | | | |
| | | EI13 | 0.906 | | | |
| | | EI14 | 0.908 | | | |
| | | EI15 | 0.912 | | | |
| | | EE16 | 0.903 | | | |
| 4 | Innovative Work Behaviour | IW1 | 0.910 | 0.977 | 0.980 | 0.842 |
| | | IW2 | 0.933 | | | |
| | | IW3 | 0.923 | | | |
| | | IW4 | 0.916 | | | |
| | | IW5 | 0.895 | | | |
| | | IW6 | 0.923 | | | |
| | | IW7 | 0.929 | | | |
| | | IW8 | 0.917 | | | |
| | | IW9 | 0.913 | | | |

Factor loading parameters are fulfilled by all of the items in the study's structures. The factor loadings of each chosen variable are found to exceed 0.50. The results of the measurement model are presented in table 2 and verified that the factor loadings of the variables fulfill the specified criteria Moreover, the composite reliability values confirm the internal consistency of all constructs because the values higher than the minimum requirement of 0.70 (Backhaus et al., 2021). The evaluation of convergent validity required the estimation of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The findings satisfied the criteria for acceptance requirement of exceeding 0.50. The results shown in Table 2 provide additional confirmation for the mentioned standards. Moreover, the values of Cronbach's alpha perform as a measure of the reliability of the scale that was constructed (Backhaus et al., 2021).

The study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) because of its extensive use in evaluating both direct and indirect interactions of the variables in empirical research. The β values, t values, P values, standard errors, and significant ratios were calculated for hypothesis testing (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

**Table 3: Examination of Relevance and Significance of Structural Paths**

| Direct Paths | B | T-ratio | p-value | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EE→ IWB | 0.557 | 10.477 | 0.000 | Supported |
| WP→EE | -0.124 | 3.253 | 0.001 | Supported |
| WP→IWB | -0.164 | 5.128 | 0.000 | Supported |

The study observed that workplace incivility had a substantial detrimental effect on innovative work behavior, as demonstrated by the regression coefficient (β) of -0.164, a t-value of 5.128, and a p-value of 0.000. In the second hypothesis, the study revealed that workplace rudeness has a negative influence on employee engagement, as seen by the significant results: β=-0.124, t=3.253, and p=0.001. In third hypothesis, demonstrates a statistically significant and positive correlation between employee engagement and creative work behavior. The beta coefficient (β) is 0.557, the t-value is 10.477, and the p-value is 0.000.

Emotional intelligence is believed to have a significant impact on the relationship between workplace incivility and employee engagement. When workplace incivility and emotional intelligence are examined in conjunction, the findings indicate that they have a significant and beneficial impact on employee engagement. The statistical results of β= 0.13, t = 2.878, and p<0.00 provide support for this statement. The β value of 0.13, t value of 2.878 (exceeding the criterion of ±1.96), and p-value of 0.00 (below the threshold of p<0.05) indicate that emotional intelligence functions as a moderator in the relationship between workplace incivility and employee engagement.

**Heterotrait-Monotrait Discriminant Validity Analysis**
These measurements indicate that, irrespective of the particular threshold being applied, it is crucial to make sure the HTMT ratio stays below the designated ranges (i.e., 0.85, 0.90, or 0.95). A value over 1 implies inadequate discriminant validity. The HTMT scores for all structures are displayed in the table below.

**Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Validity Analysis**

| Constructs | EI | EE | IW |
|---|---|---|---|
| Emotional Intelligence | | | |
| Employee Engagement | 0.862 | | |
| Innovative Work Behavior | 0.891 | 0.854 | |
| Workplace Incivility | 0.622 | 0.616 | 0.641 |

The HTMT scores continue to fall below the $HTMT_{0.95}$ threshold. The HTMT ratio technique guarantees that all variables have robust discriminant validity.

## Discussion

This empirical study was intended to examine the influence of workplace incivility on innovative work behavior. The findings of this study have a strong significant influence on employees' behavioral outcomes. The results of this study have a strong positive connection with the existing literature which observed that workplace incivility reduced employee engagement (Touni & Hussien, 2023). This study has examined that there is a negative relationship between workplace incivility and employees' behavioral outcomes that need to emphasize the significance of employee behavior competencies for developing productive work environments (Yao et al., 2022). Also, examined that workplace incivility has a direct negative impact on innovative work behavior (Paul Vincent et al., 2023). Emotional intelligence mitigates the impact of workplace incivility on employee engagement which is favorably associated with employees' behavioral outcomes. As examined emotional intelligence is positively connected with workplace incivility and employee engagement.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, innovative work behavior is considered necessary for employees and contributes a significant role in developing a competitive advantage. Workplace incivility adversely affects employees' behavioral outcomes. Furthermore, such situations hurt employees' work and lead to a decline in the institutions' production, performance, and profitability because workplace incivility may strain the relations of employees with their jobs and reduce employee engagement in this critical situation institutions' emotional intelligence factor can dampen the relationship of the workplace incivility and employee engagement.

### Theoretical and Managerial Implications

This study is based on conservational resource theory and examined that when employees face negative factors at the workplace especially when they receive adverse behavior from their supervisors or coworkers then it does not create a positive impact on employee behavioral outcomes and organizational performance. Those institutions who are having that experience incivility at their workplace, will not have innovative and creative working behaviors among the employees. Also, examined that when organizations implement a strong culture of emotional intelligence among the employees to control negative behavior then institutions' performance and productivity will flourish on a large scale because employees will not be affected negatively.

As explored in this research Pakistan academic institutions need to develop a safe and secure working environment for their employees to eradicate the negative factors from the workplace that would enable the employees to participate actively in their innovative and creative activities.

Pakistan educational institutions need to develop some training sessions and workshops for employees where they employees can learn new tactics and how they can use their emotions more effectively and efficiently to cope with eradicating such incivility from the workplace. Institutions must develop some training programs for the faculty's personal and professional development because all these activities provide mental and physical satisfaction to the employees which automatically enhances the innovative work behaviors that improve institutions' productivity and performance more effectively and efficiently.

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