

A Great Dilemma of Workplace Incivility Facing by Faculty Members of Higher Educational Institutes of Pakistan: A Conceptual Paper

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Abstract

This research focuses on full-time faculty members of higher educational institutes in Pakistan, where the dilemma of workplace incivility is present, which requires attention to solve. This research addresses critical issues that have yet to be adequately addressed. It describes how full-time faculty members of Pakistan's higher educational institutes experienced incivility, how it effects and what are the coping strategies for workplace incivility. Incivility research has primarily relied on quantitative methodologies to comprehend incivility encounters. However, using qualitative approaches would supplement the quantitative knowledge and maybe shift the topic of study in new directions. The descriptive phenomenological method effectively portrays the events as seen by the employees. The interview questions will include conversations about an uncivil occurrence and their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour during and after the event. The phenomenological technique, guided by interpretivism and constructionism, will adopted for this study's goal. This strategy assisted in illuminating and comprehending the lived experiences stated by faculty members who took part in this study. 10-20 faculty members from different universities will be taken and given detailed accounts of their encounters with workplace incivility. To explore a critical trend that university administrators must recognize since incivility is on the rise and challenging to combat with current regulations. As a result, this study will identify particular actions that faculty at Pakistani Higher Educational Institutions view as workplace incivility (HEIs) and focuses on the coping strategies as well. This study will use Social Network Theory as a theoretical framework for comprehending and investigating disrespect in Pakistani higher education institutions. The transcripts from the participant's interviews will analyze using a phenomenological method, through Atlas ti, yielding several identified themes.

Keywords: Workplace Incivility, Higher Education Institutions, Mental and Physical Health, Phenomenological Technique, Social Network Theory

Introduction

An organization is a place where individuals work together to achieve a common goal. What people do that can be watched or measured is referred to as behaviour. Behavior is initiated and directed toward a goal that the individual feels, properly or wrongly, is in his best interests. Organizational behaviour is defined as "a branch of research that explores the effects that individuals, groups, and organisational structure have on organizational behaviour, with the goal of using such information to improve organizational performance." The above description includes three major components: first, organizational behaviour is an investigative study of individuals and groups; second, the impact of organizational structure on human behaviour; and third, the application of knowledge to achieve organizational performance (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2019). According to Stephen P Robin, 2014, "organisational behaviour is defined as a systematic study of the activities and attitudes that people display within organisations."

Since workplace bullying at higher education institutions has been a subject of research for many years, researchers have had the opportunity to thoroughly examine what bullying is and how it affects its victims (Hodgins & Mcnamara, 2017; Hollis, 2015; Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). Contrarily, incivility has been cited as a type of workplace harassment that is on the rise and is much harder to control while having an equally detrimental (or more detrimental) impact on the victim (Pearson & Porath, 2005).

In Pakistan, mistreatment such as discrimination, abuse and harassment at the workplaces, including universities, is a prevalent and unreported dilemma. Generally, such mistreatments and uncivil behaviours at workplaces are underreported (Manzoor et al., 2020). In a survey, approximately 35% of females in the workplace were asked to keep quiet regarding mistreatment and harassment (Sethna et al., 2018). In the same report, it was revealed that 52% of the women approached an internal committee to address this uncivil behaviour, and 48% didn't. Undoubtedly, in recent years, the higher education sector in Pakistan has witnessed this workplace mistreatment, ostracism and uncivil behaviour etc. (Fatima et al., 2020). Females and male faculty members also observe the dilemma of these uncivil behaviours (e.g. Bilal et al., 2020). But usually, females are more likely to confront workplace incivility than males (Young et al., 2021).

The intensity of workplace incivility can do a lot of harm to a higher education institution, as will further be discovered. People respond in different ways to workplace incivility. Production deviation is a tactic used by some employees. If the goal of a technique is to "learn control over stressors and its unpleasant emotional reactions," it becomes more dust-hating (Krischer et al., 2010). When an employee's job security is threatened, they may engage in work practises that are harmful to the success of the company or exhibit deviant conduct. For instance, the role of work-family conflicts in the relationship between job insecurity, workplace disrespect, and unproductive employee behaviours.

First, while previous research indicates that incivility occurs at around 20% in the higher education sector (Cortina et al., 2001; Pearson & Porath, 2005; Sprigg et al., 2010), the fact that 18 of the 20 deans interviewed (90%) reported being regularly subjected to acts of incivility indicates that incivility must be increased as a focus area for leadership researchers.

This finding also begs the question of what is happening in particular workplace settings in higher education (such as from the viewpoint of administrative and academic staff members in various levels and roles), as studies based on sector-wide findings blatantly ignore the complexities and bullying rates of some roles in the academy. Additionally, this paper demonstrates that while incivility has been described as encompassing a variety of unfavourable behaviours (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al., 2001), the data revealed that the behaviours that troubled faculty members the most were those that occurred "behind the scenes," such as spreading rumours, making up tales, and purposefully misinterpreting instructions.

This study adds to the direction of future research on incivility toward persons in positions of leadership, but it also highlights the need for additional research. For example, higher education administrators must address the fact that participants saw dealing with potentially aggressive behaviours as part of their job and ignored them in all but the most extreme circumstances.

Therefore, even though earlier research (Balducci et al., 2011; Hallberg & Strandmark, 2006; Hogh et al., 2011; Niedhammer et al., 2006) correctly identified the health consequences of being the victim of criminal acts, this study discovers that these health issues are plaguing significantly more of the higher education workforce in some regions. The result once more highlights the necessity to evaluate bullying (and incivility more generally) from specific sectors inside institutions rather than throughout the industry as a whole.

The research concludes by highlighting a challenging but important issue for higher education policy makers and management by demonstrating the prevalence of incivility, the substantial and sometimes long-lasting consequences it has, and the serious effects it has on the victims' health and well-being. Participants in the study and others who have read the relevant literature have both noted how difficult it would be to prevent incivility with current procedures (Harrington et al., 2015; Keashly & Neuman, 2012). Incivility is on the rise, and what is going on at the dean level should be taken into consideration as a warning for what may be happening in other areas of the academy. However, given the high rates of incivility and mental health concerns in certain areas of the university workplace, these issues must be addressed quickly.

In order to prevent workplace incivility from spiraling out of control and leading to serious, damaging effects that erode workplace culture, organizations must take a proactive approach to managing it. This involves fostering a positive work environment and preventing certain risky dynamics from developing.

Organizations should train managers and staff on relationship management skills in order to deal with workplace aggression and unruly behavior. This is because relationship management skills lead to better handling of these behaviours.

Literature Review

Workplace incivility has been studied extensively. In the last two decades, workplace incivility has become a hot topic. The growing quantity of scholarly publications, monographs, and book chapters on workplace incivility, as well as counselling services, demonstrates this. The

phenomenon of workplace incivility has been studied extensively. Schilpzand et al (2014) conducted a recent qualitative evaluation of the existing data and discovered that workplace incivility is a global phenomenon across cultures and industries.

Incivility, as defined by Andersson and Pearson, includes everything from etiquette violations to professional misbehaviour, as well as widespread civil discontent and moral deterioration (Andersson & Pearson, 2019). As applied to work contexts, incivility refers to seemingly minor acts of unpleasantness that breach core organizational standards of respect (Cortina et al., 2021).

For decades, social science researchers have been concerned about workplace issues such as bullying, violence, and harassment, and workplace violence has been documented in several studies (Jafree, 2017; Shahzad and Malik, 2014; Yasin et al., 2018; Zafar et al., 2013). Many previous studies have looked into workplace harassment (Ali and Kramar, 2015; Aman et al., 2016; Anand et al., 2017; Khan et al., 2017; Wilder, 2018; Zia et al., 2016), workplace violence (Mahmood and Ahmad, 2011; Sadruddin, 2013), and workplace bullying (Lin et al., 2018; Salin, 2003). Even though the impact is significant and the prevalence is growing, study on incivility in Asia has gotten little academic attention, and hence research on it is still scarce. Workplace incivility research in Asia, particularly in Pakistan, is critical for evaluating the sociocultural viewpoint on workplace incivility in Asia.

In the scholarship on workplace incivility, there are three types of incivility: experienced incivility, witnessed incivility and instigated incivility (Pearson & Porath, 2005; Schilpzand et al., 2016; Cortina et al., 2017). Schilpzand et al (2016) have stated that if uncivil supervisory conduct is shown, it is likely that the behaviour is more detrimental than colleague incivility since employees who are the subject of such behaviours rely on their supervisors to provide them with evaluations and incentives. In this case, victims of supervisor incivility may anticipate that their supervisor's uncivil behaviour would spread and result in additional negative occurrences. They go on to say and assert that this is not necessarily true.

Organizational social life is influenced by cultural and environmental factors. For instance, some organizations have toxic rivalry cultures that prevent attachment. The harsh competition, rejection of vulnerability, and contempt for interpersonal relationships are valued by their cultural norms, rituals, and belief systems (Berdahl et al., 2018; Glick et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2018). We have made significant progress over the last 20 years in comprehending workplace disrespect. Incivility is now firmly "on the map" as a real stressor that causes real harm to people and their places of employment, after previously being dismissed as inconsequential. Now that we have a better understanding of the uncivil moment, we can examine its biological and behavioural ramifications for the targeted worker. Like organizational reality, our incivility-response theory is anything from straightforward. But it might be useful in explaining how insults that seem minor sometimes have a big impact, ultimately jeopardising the wellbeing of the workforce (Cortina et al., 2022).

So, the current study prompts the researcher to study the generalizability of prior research results on incivility by investigating the extent to which such unpleasant and disrespectful behaviours exist in the Asian environment, as the majority of mainstream research on workplace incivility has been undertaken in the Western world, notably in the United States.

Western countries are more individualistic than non-western countries, such as those in Asia (Abid et al., 2015). It is now an increasing concern for human resource development specialists because it results in a toxic work atmosphere. In this climate, how can faculty members deliver their best output?(Miner et al., 2017).In this context, particularly in Pakistan, very little research attention has been given. According to the researcher, workplace incivility is similar to an "electric short circuit," as a small electric short circuit can cause a large explosion. Unfortunately, there is a lack of academic research on this critical and hot issue in Pakistan, which must be addressed because workplace incivility is like a small hole in a ship that can sink a large ship. The researcher is interested in identifying the underlying causes of discourteous and impolite behaviour to reduce its occurrence, especially by adopting the qualitative methodology, as very little research explores this phenomenon using phenomenology.

Underlying Theory

Social situations and events are the outcomes of people's actions, and social research should be grounded in this idea. Traditional statistical research techniques are frequently criticized for failing to identify the underlying causes of human social behaviour. Social networks are groups of relationships between people, organisations, and enterprises that include friendship, cooperation, trading, information sharing, and other activities. Any type of links or interactions between people, institutions, or businesses, including friendship, cooperation, trade, information, and communication, are referred to as social connections. The main distinction between traditional research and social network analysis is that the former focuses on actors and their characteristics while the latter concentrates on their interactions.

Social networks have been around since the dawn of humanity. It has always existed, while being largely undetectable, since people began helping others. Theories like Network Theory and the Theory of Social Change have been useful in the development of social network analysis. The idea of social change contends that exchanges of goods, including corporeal items and ethereal goods like acceptance or prestige symbols, underpin social behaviour (Emma, 2013). Many researchers have contributed to the advancement of Theory of Social Change, including (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958). Relationships between network theory and structural analysis have been identified and are being researched in fields such as sociology, social psychology, and anthropology. People are depicted as dots in sociometry to visualise interpersonal connections, and the connections are also represented as the line between the dots. This type of depiction is sometimes referred to as a sociogram (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Moreno and Jennings (1938) were the first to develop modern social network analysis (Moreno & Jennings, 1938). Moreno and Jennings proposed network theory through the study of interpersonal relationships, laying the groundwork for sociometry by visualising interpersonal connections. The study's findings revealed that globally skewed distributions were found, and expectations based on random picks diverged. In the 1940s, Warner focused on social networks. The roots of this work are based on research undertaken by the Western Electric Company at the Hawthorne Factory in the 1920s.

The research revealed that dealing with the employee increased productivity more than changes to the physical and financial environment, that group members dislike competition

inside their own groups, and that they avoid group pressure (Kocel, 2013; Sonnenfeld, 1985). Consequently, the "Bank Cabling Room" study's second phase, which looked at the social impacts, was carried out (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939; Smith, 1986).

The notion of structural cohesion based on network node connectivity has been developed in the research of Moody and White (2003) on social cohesion and social embeddedness, and it has been advocated that social cohesion can be divided into analytically intellectual and relational components (Moody & White, 2003).

Cross et al (2002) conducted a study in a firm where they considered management was not utilising the strategically significant team's talents as effectively as possible (Cross et al., 2002). The first analysis revealed that the team was divided into two subgroups, with a disagreement between them. On this basis, the firm's management assessed the situation and implemented a series of interventions such as setting common goals, improving collaboration, and so on. According to the social network analysis done nine months later, the group was discovered to be an integrated group that exchanges information more efficiently and successfully than previously by combining technical and organisational skills. This study demonstrates how social network analysis is successfully used in corporate governance.

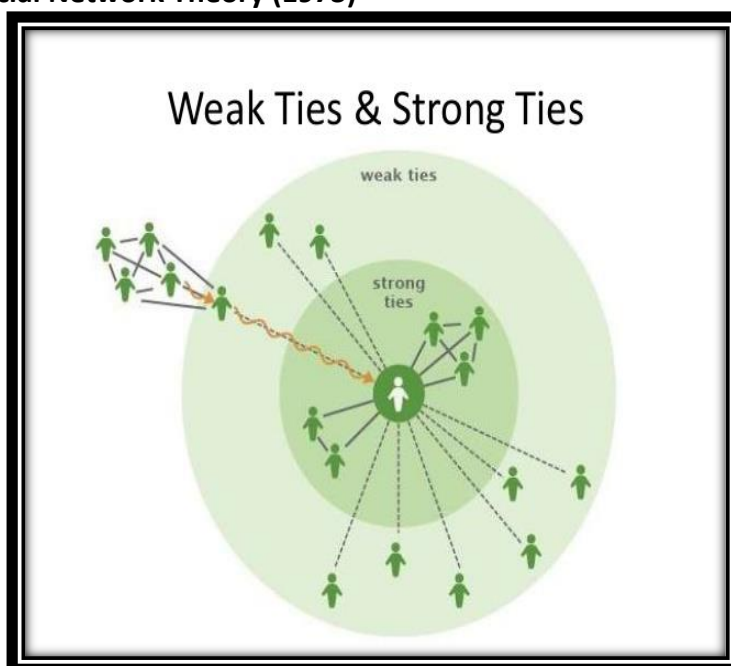
To investigate the locations and impacts of the consumers at risk of loss on the network, Gulpinar (2013) worked on calculating the customer loss in the Turkish telecommunications market by utilising artificial neural networks and social network analysis (Gulpinar, 2013). Important social network nodes were identified for the study, and the players' positions were used to determine the network density, social network centrality, closeness, and betweenness measures. The study's findings support the idea that while individual traits do play a role in determining customer loss, they are not sufficient in and of themselves. A study on cooperation at the design firm was done by Amabile et al. in 2014. The study's findings demonstrated that assistance was sought from the staff members who were most dependable and available rather than the most technically skilled, and that successful collaboration experiences raised morale and job satisfaction.

When seen from the perspective of management science, Social Network Analysis is a method that enables you to examine strategically significant networks within a company, identify unofficial groupings, and interact with significant groups to promote effective collaboration. The ability of managers to focus on informal networks that might be crucial to organisational efficiency is perhaps the most significant advantage of social network analysis (Cross et al., 2002).

It is largely informal relationships within an organisation that characterise and impact it. One significant method for managers to accept what all people of the organisation desire is to influence informal groupings. To do so, they must understand the many types of relationships in the organisation, as well as their interactions, existing groups, leaders, and how they can react (Onal, 2004). SNT identifies structural gaps and social capital in institutions and directs managers' attention to crucial informal networks. It can be used to identify attributes that indicate the informal structure of the organisation (such as groupings inside the business, isolated individuals or groups, and broker employees).

The focus of the current study is on exploring workplace incivility among full-time faculty members of higher educational institutes in Pakistan. Previously, incivility was described as a social network phenomenon (Granovetter, 1983) that affects not only the instigator-target dyad but also onlookers, coworkers, customers/clients, employees' families and friends, units and departments within the business, and the entire organisation (Miner et al., 2018). A social network comprises actors and linkages representing some relationship (or lack thereof) between the players. The idea behind Social Network Theory is that individual behaviours do not occur in a vacuum, unaffected by others or larger social environments, but rather are influenced by them. As a result, conceptualising incivility within such a social network paradigm may allow incivility academics to analyse the complexities of uncivil behaviour, as well as the plethora of factors that influence its elements and individuals involved, resulting in a more thorough picture comprehension of how it works, is essential (Miner et al., 2018).

Granovetter's Social Network Theory (1973)



Methods

This paper's methodology comprises of a library search and an evaluation of prior literature review on the subject of workplace incivility. The library search includes everything from online and offline items to articles, journals, and book chapters. Web of Science, Scopus, Science Direct, and Google Scholar are used to find references. References are primarily obtained from journal articles, book chapters, and full-text documents. Thus, the limits of this article may be attributable to the previously mentioned limited resources from databases.

Conclusion

A theoretical framework that will be useful for further research in this field has been effectively constructed in this paper. Additionally, this study has offered a fresh perspective on workplace studies and helped identify key elements that can enhance workplace culture. Additionally, it was suggested in a recent study to concentrate on qualitative methods because, while investigating this form of mistreatment, quantitative studies are not appropriate for clarity, whereas many studies have concentrated on quantitative approaches

(Fatima et al., 2021). This study suggested a solution to the problem of workplace disrespect among Pakistan's full-time faculty members of higher educational institutions based on the predicament indicated above. Additionally, the theoretical and practical significance of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge already available on rudeness. This study will use Social Network Theory as a theoretical framework for comprehending and investigating disrespect in Pakistani higher education institutions. From a theoretical standpoint, it has been suggested that incivility be investigated in the context of social networks (Miner et al., 2018). By conceptualizing incivility within a social network framework, incivility scholars may be able to take into account the complexities of uncivil conduct as well as the myriad of circumstances and parties involved, providing a thorough understanding of how it functions. Social network theory implies that there are certain times among individuals that don't occur in isolation. Based on these claims, this study will make a substantial contribution to understanding the problem of workplace disrespect in higher education institutions.

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