

# **Influence of Workplace Incivility on Counterproductive Work Behavior: Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion, Organizational Cynicism and the Moderating Role of Psychological Capital**

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## **Abstract**

Drawing on conservation of resources (COR) theory, this study investigates association of workplace incivility (WI) with counterproductive work behavior (CPWB) of banking employees in Pakistan. In addition, mediating role of emotional exhaustion (EE), organizational cynicism (OCY) and moderating role of psychological capital (Psy-Cap) were also examined. A structured questionnaire was used to obtain data from 215 banking employees of Lahore, Pakistan after applying stratified random sampling. Data was analyzed applying mediation / moderation regression using Hayes Process Macro in SPSS 21. Findings reveal that workplace incivility has significant and positive association with CPWB. While, emotional exhaustion and cynicism partially mediate positive association between WI and CPWB. Moreover, psychological capital in interaction with WI has significant moderating impact and weakens the positive association between WI and CPWB. Study findings are useful for practitioners because our results reveal moderating role of Psy-Cap as coping mechanism on association of WI and CPWB. Management can benefit from the buffering effect of Psy-Cap to help and train employees dealing with uncivil conducts and reduce CPWBs at workplace.

**Keywords:** workplace incivility, counterproductive work behavior, emotional exhaustion, organizational cynicism, psychological capital, banking sector, Pakistan.

## **1. Introduction**

### *1.1 Study Background*

Social science and management literature consistently indicate that unconstructive workplace behaviors have negative outcomes for both organizations and individuals. These mistreatments at work have been researched under various heads in academia like

workplace incivility (WI) and deviance (Raaj & Anju, 2019). Instigating WI is a growing concern and has harmful organizational impacts of uncivil conducts that are above management anticipation (Koon & Pun, 2018). Though incivility literature indicates its detrimental impacts, inside and outside of workplace; yet research is still deficient (Abid et al., 2015). Incivility has not gained high consideration from academia and management in Asian perspective. Particularly in Pakistan context, limited researches are conducted. Incivility research is mainly conducted in Western countries, particularly in America (Lim & Lee, 2011), and deficient in Asian context (Sharma & Singh, 2016; Yeung & Griffin, 2008). WI is persistently perceived a stressor for both organization and employee. Organization can't grow in uncivil surrounding. The higher turn-over intention resulting from uncivil work setting intimidates organizational sustainability and its repute (Alola et al., 2020).

Estimates reveal that 98% employees face incivility, with 50% at least experience it weekly. Financial cost of incivility is approximated \$14,000/ worker /annum. Such alarming figures show its financial impacts for organizations (Schilpzand, et al., 2016; Porath & Pearson, 2013). It is a significant work stressor as uncivil incidents will impact worker's psychological/ emotional health, and lead to mental distress (Wilson & Holmvall, 2013). It has association with negative job results, like emotional exhaustion (EE), distress and stress in organizations (Abubakar et al., 2018). Literature reveals that instigated WI directs to decreased organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and increased TI in organization, hence lowers its business profits and impacts organizational performance. Research is deficient in both its antecedents and mediators; therefore, its mediators are needed to explore its causal mechanism in work setting. Literature Identified emotional exhaustion (EE) as an influential mediator in association between employee and customer incivility (Koon & Pun, 2018).

EE is positively related to incivility. Research findings indicate that exposure to incivility results in enhanced emotional exhaustion and lower job satisfaction (Raaj & Anju, 2019). Employees experience EE when they are unable to handle undue emotional stress due to inadequate emotional resources (Tong et al., 2019). According to Enwereuzor et al. (2017), EE is also a predictor of counterproductive work behavior (CPWB). Undesired outcomes of WI include turn-over, lower performance and emotional exhaustion. These variables have association with other variables such as cynicism (Aljawarneh & Atan, 2018). Organizational cynicism (OCY) is an individual's negative emotions regarding one's organization (Shahzad & Mahmood, 2012). Few scholars consider cynicism is an attitude or personal attribute (Nafei, 2013). Cynics possess negative emotions towards their organization, which results in negative approach. Research proves cynicism and incivility as contributors of unfavorable work-surroundings (Nazir & Ungku, 2016). Cynics' withdrawal/ antisocial behavior is facilitated on account of lack of trust (Ezeh et al., 2018). Cynic behavior is one of key determining factors of CPWB (LasisiOlukayode, et al., 2014). Cynicism will adversely impact performance outcomes in organization. It adversely impacts adaptive/ task performance and enhances CPWB (Tariq & Amir, 2019).

CPWB comprises of diverse range of aggressive / negative behaviors towards co-workers (Abdi & Rouzbahani, 2016). Such Behaviors include conducts like assault and abuse. Their negative organizational effects include high turn-over, loss of property, yield, and work stress. CPWBs are harmful for organization or employees (Penney & Spector, 2005). CPWB is a Behavioral strain that happens in response to hectic work conditions. Researches specifically identify that facing/tolerating incivility is linked with involving in CPWB. Incivility is being evidenced as a stressor at workplace, so employees experiencing it may react by involving in CPWB (Welbourne & Sariol, 2017).

Psy-Cap is a person's psychological capability, which can be managed, enhanced, and assessed to improve performance. It includes individual's psychological sources and is related to an array of advantageous job outcomes and Behaviors (Nolzen, 2018). It is constructive psychological state of human's development which is combination of behavioral and motivational aspects resulting from 4 resources/ elements: resilience, self-efficacy, hope and optimism (Woo & Kim, 2020; Ledesma, 2014). 'Self-efficacy'- is human's self-confidence to expect success in difficult jobs. 'Optimism'-is his/her optimistic prospects about success. 'Resilience'- is his/her capability to achieve and maintain success. 'Hope'- is individual's capability to persist towards an objective (Luthans et al., 2007). Organizations should control CPWB by proper deployment of optimistic Psy-Cap at work setting to enhance employees' performance (Manzoor et al., 2015).

This intra-personal resource is a defensive factor to cope with stressful situations at workplace (Woo & Kim, 2020). Scholars explored Psy-Cap impact on unwanted work behaviors like cynicism (Newman et al., 2014). Yin et al., 2018 found its constructive role in process of emotional regulation. It has moderating impact on association between deep-acting (but not surface acting) and EE. An optimistic individual faces challenging work and stressful circumstances, which reduces cynicism (Alessandri et al., 2018). It is a vital resource of competitive gain for organization and improves performance outcomes (Luthans et al., 2004). CPWBs may prove enormously expensive for companies, directing to considerable monetary losses. Considering these impacts, it is crucial for organizations to understand organizational/ individual circumstances, which cause workers to involve in CPWBs as a reaction to uncivil incidents. However, only limited researches have investigated association of CPWBs with WI (Welbourne & Sariol, 2017). Organizations should control uncivil incidents to avoid associated costs of resulting turn-over (Nazir et al., 2016).

### *1.2 Research Problem, Gaps, Objectives and Contribution*

From literature, it is evident that incivility (WI) and workers' CPWBs contribute towards additional costs for organizations like turn-over and lower yield. But only few research studies on WI examined its impact in Asian context (like Pakistan). Moreover, prior researches mainly used measure scales which were constructed and tested in western context. Therefore, these WI scales should also be tested in Asian context to address employees' uncivil conducts at workplace. This motivated researchers to examine generalizability of prior incivility research findings in Asian countries (like Pakistan). Therefore, this study extends earlier research on WI in banking services of Pakistan.

Furthermore, earlier studies addressed direct association between WI and CPWBs, and only few studies considered their associated factors. Therefore, the study is aimed at proposing and testing integrated model based on COR (conservation of resources) theory. Another objective is to examine association of WI with workers' CPWBs and impacting factors like emotional exhaustion and organizational cynicism in mediating role. Additionally, moderating role of psychological capital will also be tested to control CPWBs. Employees from banking services in Pakistan are chosen as study sample. Because they face excessive work pressure, client dealing and extended work hours. Therefore, they have more risk of being exhausted and indulging in CPWBs if exposed to uncivil conducts by colleagues or clients. So psychological capital is crucial for banking staff as effective coping strategy to deal with uncivil behaviors and control CPWBs. No previous study examined these five constructs in an integrated model in Pakistan context. Hence, study will hopefully fill this gap, and findings will add to existing knowledge. Study is being conducted considering following objectives: First, to develop integrated research model based on COR (conservation of resources) theory and test empirically association among WI, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, psychological capital and CPWBs (in Pakistan context). Second, to examine unfavorable impacts of experienced Incivility at work place on employees' attitudes, psychological/emotional distress and their behavioral aspects in the form of CPWBs. Third, to investigate mediation impact of employees' exhaustion and negative feelings about organization (cynicism) in association with WI and their CPWBs. Finally, to examine moderating role of psychological capital as coping strategy to control/reduce CPWBs in organizations.

Study finding will contribute to existing knowledge (practically and theoretically) as employee experienced WI and its detrimental impact on work behaviors is a growing concern in organizations. Proposed model also highlights mediating factors (EE and cynicism) in this association. Furthermore, Moderating role of Psy-Cap as coping strategy is also proposed to deal with WI and reduce CPWBs. Management can use study findings to address these issues and train employees to cope with uncivil conducts in work-settings.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Formulation**

### *2.1 Workplace Incivility*

It is lower intensity deviance behavior with vague intention to hurt target, and violating work-place norms (Anderson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina, 2008), and is perceived as a sign of work-place deviance (Taylor & Pattie, 2014). Uncivil behaviors comprise of offensive acts, impolite comments, and in general lacking concern for people. It may have several sources in work surrounding (like bosses and colleagues). Research showed its positive association with turn-over intents, mental health, and burn-out (Fida et al., 2018). It is differentiated from different types of deviant behaviors (violence) and includes non-verbal conducts and verbal abuse (Lim et al., 2008). It is exhibited by phone usage in meeting, or paying slight attention to others. These lower-intense acts distinguish it from intense behaviors like aggression and bullying (Itzkovich, 2016). Uncivil conducts also include humiliating comments and discussions, override decisions without logic, insult or yell at

someone, spread rumors, impolite e-mails to colleagues, negative talks about co-workers, and blaming others for personal mistakes (Ewis, 2014).

Generally, it is a type of emotional violence and psychological annoyance which destroys mutual esteem in workplace decorum. Examples most referred include exclusion of specific colleagues from social activity, gossiping, avoiding people, and withhold information (Raaj and Anju, 2019). It is linked with late arrivals, non-attendance, turnover, lower yield, commitment, satisfaction, unfavorable impact on OCB, worker's physical/ psychological health, and CPWBs. Though, uncivil conducts are innately mild, yet in form of non-attendance and decreased performance cost million dollars to companies. It is somewhat challenging for firm on account of its ambiguous nature to devise preventive strategies. These adverse consequences have monetary implication for management as an organization bears cost of employees' discontentment, conflict, and reduced productivity (Abid et al., 2015). It may direct to diverse outcomes and its occurrence can enhance TI or exhaustion (Mahfooz et al., 2017). Empirical research proves its negative impact on employee and organizational results. It is positively linked with deviance and withdrawal at workplace (Chen et al., 2013). Literature frequently linked experienced WI with Behavior and psychological harms to its targets like higher depression, anxiety or withdrawal Behaviors. Such results reinforced it as an extremely adverse relational observable fact in work setting (Tong et al., 2019). In spite of its vital role in workers' life, research on mediators / moderators is still deficient in association of incivility and job outcomes (Jiménez et al., 2015).

### *2.2 Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CPWBs)*

According to Robinson and Bennett, (1995), any behavior which violates organizational norms in a manner that is harmful either for organization, workforce, or for both. Spector et al. (2006) differentiated such behaviors into five types (theft, sabotage, abusing, production deviance, and withdrawal). CPWBs also include different types of aggression and theft (Benjamin & Samso, 2011). These are consequences of contextual/external factors such as surrounding, company culture, or internal factors like personality (Penney et al., 2011). It can be an act of disruption (for company), or alcohol/ drugs (for person). Firms have realized significance of controlling cost of such behavior (LasisiOlukayode, et al., 2014). CPWBs have diverse impact, and initiate with minor misbehavior (theft) and may end with severe offensive acts like harassment, physical/verbal aggression targeting a colleague, or cheating (Szostek, 2018). It can be either CPWB-I in which targets are individuals with antagonistic interpersonal relationships; or CPWB-O, in which target is organization in form of sabotage, theft or withholding effort (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Both forms can put forth considerable negative impacts on firm performance due to resulting financial costs of fraud, stealing, and un-measurable costs of productivity (Beauregard, 2014).

### *2.3 Association of WI with CPWB*

Many scholars investigated association of workplace incivility (WI) with CPWB. Zahoor et al. (2019) study findings on college employees in Pakistan indicated WI significantly predicted CPWB and had positive association with it. Welbourne and Sariol, (2017) study

on employees in U.S concluded that production-deviance Behavior was related to incivility. Zhou et al. (2015) study findings indicated that WI positively predicted negative work-end impact. Penney and Spector, (2005) concluded that incivility was related positively with CPWB. Din et al. (2017) study findings on hospital nurses in Pakistan also indicated positive and significant association of incivility with absenteeism. Mao, et al. (2019) research study concluded that workers' self-experienced incivility showed decreased citizenship Behavior, performance, and higher CPWB for group members. Scisco et al. (2019) study findings on cyber and F2F WI indicated that after uncivil interactions, students involved more significantly in counter Behaviors. While face to face incivility resulted in CPWBs. Only some scholars focused on association of WI with CPWBs. They regarded WI as a stressor and CPWB its ultimate reaction (Zahoor et al., 2019). Finding support from literature, WI has positive association with CPWBs; hence following hypothesis is formulated.

- **H<sub>1</sub>:** Workplace incivility (WI) has positive and significant association with employees' CPWBs.

#### *2.4 Emotional Exhaustion (EE) as Mediator between WI and CPWB*

According to Cortina et al. (2001), EE is decline in emotional state that is caused by WI and leads to varied states of employee's psyche (similar to psychological wellbeing). It is feelings of being exhausted by jobs at work-settings. Due to emotional and psychological exhaustion, workers might exert low effort at job and not ready to facilitate others (Mulki et al., 2006). It is caused by numerous factors and literature indicates situational predictors instead of individual factors (Moore, 2000). Research studies identified key factors (job pressure, increased work-load) linked consistently with EE. It may impact adversely a worker's performance and ultimately organizational efficiency. Fatigued workforce exhibits inferior commitment, O-CB, and performance (Qureshi & Sajjad, 2015). EE is among well accepted constructs of organizational psychologists and a sign of burnout. Its positive/ negative impacts were researched either as outcome or moderating/ mediating variables with personality, job conditions and performance. Its association with incivility was empirically explored only in limited studies (Hur et al., 2016). Banks et al. (2012) concluded that workers who were exhausted emotionally exhibited low commitment, which increased likelihood of CPWB. Emotionally exhausted workers show signs of varied CPWBs, and EE is evident as problematic for organizations. Empirical facts reveal that deviant behavior (DB) is associated with EE (Alola, et al., 2020). Viotti et al. (2018) study findings on healthcare employees confirmed that incivility was positive predictor of exhaustion. Chang et al. (2019) study findings on sports service providers in Taiwan also indicated that WI was associated with EE Cho et al. (2016) study findings on hotel service staff in U.S revealed that WI significantly enhanced EE and led to decline in work performance. Raman et al. (2016) argued that EE can be a major hurdle to handle workplace stress effectively. Coping tactics results in CPWB. An outcome of an emotional response is CPWB with intent to assault situation or/and to handle it indirectly. Hur et al. (2016) study findings revealed that client and co-worker incivility enhanced staff EE.

Akhtar et al. (2017) study findings on organization workers revealed that WI was associated with EE and EE had strong impact on TI (turn-over intention). Alola, et al. (2020) investigated association between WI, TI, JS and mediating impact of EE. Results revealed detrimental effects of WI both for organization and workers. Moreover, WI had positive effect on EE, TI and negative on JS.

Azeem et al. (2019) study findings by obtaining data from 205 employees in Pakistan revealed that WI increased employees' TI, as mistreatment at workplace obstructed their capability to adapt socially and made them emotionally exhausted. Hur et al. (2014) study findings by obtaining data from retail bankers in South- Korea revealed that WI was positive predictor of EE. Bank et al. (2012) study on 113 bankers and their bosses in South-Korea showed that EE led to CPWB by decrease in worker's commitment. Malik et al. (2019) study by obtaining data from textile workers in Pakistan revealed that EE was related significantly to deviance at workplace and fully mediated its association with bullying. Makhdoom et al. (2019) concluded that EE was linked significantly/ positively with CPWB. Finding support from literature, EE has association with WI and CPWBs, and can be considered as mediator, hence following hypothesis is formulated.

- **H<sub>2</sub>:** Emotional exhaustion (EE) mediates positive association of workplace incivility (WI) with CPWBs.

### *2.5 Organizational Cynicism (OCY) as Mediator between WI and CPWB*

Cynicism and DB are two key themes of OB- literature (Shahzad & Mahmood, 2012). Cynicism is described as being pessimistic about people (Nafei, 2013). Considering standpoint of different researches, it is described as: Idiosyncratic way of retaining pessimistic view about an individual's organization where he/she is currently employed (Nair & Kamalanabhan, 2010). Negative behavior about one's organization is resultant from workers' unsatisfactory experiences with many job-related incidents and organizational attributes (Fleming & Spicer, 2003). This subject drew scholars' attention to explore associated attributes and its impacts on organization. Cynics may obstruct progress of their colleagues and entire organization (Ozler & Atalay, 2011). Few impacting factors include: disparity with organization's prospects, stress, lack of communication, voice, recognition, social support, and unequal power distribution (Nafei, 2013). LasisiOlukayode et al. (2014) study found that OCY and CPWB had strong association, indicating any type of cynicism as a threat for companies. Shahzad and Mahmood, (2012) in their study on banking employees of Pakistan concluded significant/positive link between OCY and deviant behavior. Abdi and Rouzbahani, (2016) research study in health sector revealed that increased levels of OCY resulted in increased CPWB.

Few scholars considered it an effective mediator (Ewis, 2014). For example, Khan, (2017) found OCY mediated partially association of CPWB with ostracism. They suggested that employees' cynic actions would direct to negative work behaviors. Ewis (2014) examined OCY as mediator with WI Nazir et al. (2016) research findings on health-care sector (nurses) in Pakistan showed positive co-relation of WI with cynic behaviors. WI and cynicism were identified significant predictors of outcome variable. Among different harmful behaviors originated by the uncivil conducts, cynicism is significant mediator

towards unfavorable outcomes. It is considered a predictor of employee's dissatisfaction in presence of tolerance for WI. Cynic workers react more likely to WI (Abubakar et al., 2018). Finding support from previous studies, OCY has association with WI, CPWBs and can be considered as mediator, so following hypothesis is formulated.

- **H<sub>3</sub>:** Organizational Cynicism (OCY) mediates positive association between workplace incivility (WI) and employees' CPWBs.

#### *2.6 Psychological Capital (PSC) as moderator between WI and CPWB*

Concept of psychological capital (PSC) was provided by Luthans and Youssef (2007) in OB. It is a higher-level OB construct which is empirically and conceptually supported. It is a vital resource available to management, as it is believed beneficial for firms and trainable for workers (Yin et al., 2018). Considering research gap, scholars are focusing on its association with key constructive results like commitment and satisfaction (Megeirhi et al., 2018). It is optimistic state (of a person) related to behaviors, performance and attitudes (Alessandri et al., 2018). It comprises of four constructive psychological resources/capabilities (optimism, hope, efficacy, and resilience), which affect attitudes and performance (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). It is associated positively with development of individuals in work-setting (Amornpipat, 2019). Several researches explored its association with worker attitudes (like retention). Persons with higher Psy-Cap possess optimistic future prospects and have more confidence in their capability to handle different work challenges. These optimistic psychosomatic states encourage them to put forth additional effort and well-perform their task (Newman et al., 2014). It is negatively associated with unwanted Behaviors (like cynicism and anxiety). It has growth potential, which means people can enhance this resource (Ahmad et al., 2019).

It impacts positively on performance results. Several qualitative researches confirmed it reveals a strong association towards constructive behaviors (like performance). Few empirical researches related its link with performance. But its role is above contextual and optimistic Behaviors, and is considered to impact to a point where a person will reveal citizenship Behaviors (Yildiz, 2019). Its negative association was reported with unwanted work behaviors (like CPWB) and positively related to additional role behaviors (like OCBs) at individual/ team level. An assessment for cause of CPWB is essential to know its relation with Psy-Cap. As workers at workplace encounter with stressors and react, which is cause behind their CPWBs. Exclusively, persons with higher Psy-Cap do not face intense negative impacts in case of stressful incidents/ stressors or set-back (Baloch et al., 2016). It has been studied extensively by scholars to control/ reduce CPWBs. Megeirhi et al. (2018) research study on Jordan work teams in hospitality sector indicated team Psy-Cap moderated association of authentic leadership (AL) with WI. They concluded that Current theoretical moves in collective Psy-Cap support to test its potential moderating impact as team Psy-Cap. Woo and Kim, (2020) examined association between compassion competence (CC) with WI and also investigated moderating impact of Psy-cap in Korean context. Data were obtained from 192 respondents (nursing staff) from hospitals. Findings revealed WI had negative association with CC and Psy-Cap had moderating impact on this

association. Nolzen (2018) study findings revealed that Psy-Cap had moderating impact on association between workers' stress and WI.

Manzoor et al. (2015) study on universities' teachers in Pakistan, empirically confirmed that Psy-Cap had strong impact to control/ reduce CPWB. Baloch et al. (2016) study on universities' staff in Pakistan also depicted empirically significant impact of Psy-Cap on CPWB. They concluded that workforce with Psy-Cap displays least CPWB. Psy-Cap not only declines unwanted behaviors, but also develops superior performing employees who exhibit faithfulness and positive OCB in organizations. Finding support from literature, specifically its role in controlling/ reducing CPWB, it is being considered as moderator and following hypothesis formulated:

- **H4:** Employees' psychological capital (PSC) moderates positive association between workplace incivility (WI) and CPWB.

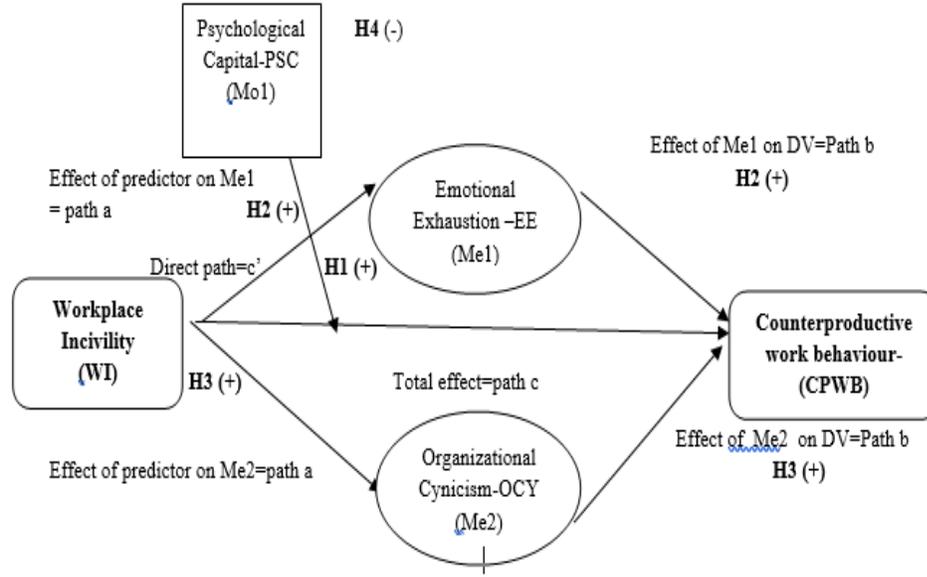
### 3. Conceptual Framework

#### 3.1 COR (Conservation of Resources) Theory

Theoretical model is based on COR theory. It is a valuable framework in understanding resource depletion process (Hobfoll, 1989). Theory hypothesizes that stress arises while individuals lose, or fail to achieve vital resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Humans strive to secure, preserve, and develop vital resources (Abubakar et al., 2018). In case of resource loss, humans face resultant EE and psychological strain occurs as humans feel loss, and lose power to recover resources (Akram et al., 2019). WI can affect its target to exhaust substantial energy as an outcome of problem of task performance in an unfriendly work setting. Over time, such extra exertion may direct to prolong EE (Viotti et al., 2018). EE mainly depletes human's Psy-Cap and makes other employee's resources limited (Hobfoll, 2001; Siegall & McDonald, 2004). Employees, who perceive their working place negatively, are exhausted emotionally and intend to leave. They experience stress when their resources deplete (Akhtar et al., 2017). Employees' psychological resources will be depleted by exposure to WI. Consequently, mistreated workers feel frustrated on losing vital resources and as a reaction will engage in CPWB. While trying to protect and retain, they will exert energy. Such exertion will result in emotional exhaustion due to danger or incidence of resource loss. They will develop negative emotions about employing organization and respond by indulging in negative behaviors. They will also strive to build up and restore resources with constructive psychological resources (Psy-Cap).

#### 3.2 Association among Variables

Figure 1 depicts WI direct and positive impact on CPWB shown as path 'c'. While path 'a' shows positive association of WI with mediators EE and OCY. Path 'b' shows effect of mediators EE and OCY on CPWB. Finally, path 'c' shows total effect of WI on CPWB in presence of mediators. Moreover, PSC will have negative impact on association between WI and CPWB. Model assumes that all effects are significant.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model**

**4. Methodology**

*4.1 Research Design*

Study was conducted applying cross-sectional design and used quantitative technique to examine impact of WI on banking employees’ CPWBs in presence of mediators and moderator. Positivism paradigm was adopted as hypothesis testing involved examining association among variables using quantitative data. Data was obtained through structured instrument applying survey method to get feedback from participants. Sample of 215 respondents from Lahore, Pakistan was obtained applying stratified probability sampling. Questionnaire as primary data collection instrument was adopted from previous scales developed by researchers. As current study involves verification and testing of study hypotheses, therefore quantitative approach was applied. An empirical hypothesis testing methodology is suitable for quantitative research (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013; Ahmed et al., 2019). Data was analyzed using SPSS 21 software. Mediation/ moderation regression applying Hayes process macro was applied to test study hypotheses.

*4.2 Study Population and Sample Size*

This study only considered banking services and study population comprised of all banking employees of Lahore, Pakistan. Sampling unit was banking employee. According to State Bank (of Pakistan) 2016 annual report statistics, number of banking employees is approximately 162,629 (Ahmed et al., 2019). There are twenty-six (26) conventional banks of Pakistan which are sub-categorized into 17 private, 5 public, 4 specialized, and 5 Islamic banks. Scholars differ in opinion for selection of study sample. According to Sekaran

(2000), minimum thirty (30) respondents are required (for each factor) for conducting multivariate analysis. While Hair et al. (2006) suggested confidence level/ interval for sample selection (Ahmed et al., 2019). Frequently cited rule of ten (10) times to calculate sample size is incorrect and using 'Cohen's table' was suggested (hair et al., 2013). This table suggests using at least fifty-two (52) samples and maximum one hundred ten (110) samples with .05 level of significance at 0.1 and 0.2 R<sup>2</sup> to obtain 80% statistical power (Mushtaq et al., 2019). Hence, sample size of 215 was justified for regression analysis.

Sample size consisted of 215 currently employed workers in various banks of Lahore, Pakistan. For this study, combination of sampling techniques (stratified random and convenience) was used according to Khan & Fasih (2014) study in Banks of Pakistan. Applying this method, firstly 'strata' (sub-groups) were identified. Public and private banks of Lahore constituted 'strata' of study population. Banks operating in Lahore were segregated to strata (Muslim commercial bank; Habeeb Bank limited, Askari bank, National bank, Islamic bank, and Allied bank). Then employees from randomly selected bank branches were selected using convenience sampling in second step. Logic behind operating this technique was importance of location (researchers being resident of Lahore) and other constraints (cost and time).

#### *4.3 Measurement Scales*

A structured questionnaire on a 5-point scale was developed from previous researchers scales for purpose of data collection from respondents. Research instrument contained two sections— demographics and measurement scales.

Section I: Comprised of statements inquiring personal information of participants including gender, age, qualification, and working experience.

Section II: comprised of 40 statements on scale of 1 = never to 5 = very often. Measures/ scales were adopted from previous studies and few statements were slightly rephrased. Thirteen WI items were adopted from Martin & Hine, (2005), and Cortina et al. (2001) scales which primarily assessed uncivil behaviors on 4 dimensions (hostility, privacy invasion, gossiping and exclusionary Behavior). Nine CPWB items were adopted from Spector et al. (2006) scale, which assessed CPWB on 5 critical dimensions (abusive, theft, production deviance, sabotage and withdrawal). Six EE items were adopted from Maslach and Jackson (1981), six cynicism items from Wilkerson et al. (2008) and six Psy-Cap items from Luthans et al. (2007).

#### *4.4 Pilot Testing and Data Collection Method*

Instrument reliability was checked through performing pilot testing (of 25 respondents) on study population similar to target population. Data was collected using self-administered survey technique. Researcher approached selected bank branches and after seeking approval from managers, questionnaires were distributed to bank employees explaining them objective of research. This method was adopted to clarify any ambiguity regarding questions. Eight employees were approached from each selected bank branch and data from respondents was collected over two-month period. A total of 215 completely filled questionnaires were received out of 235 (89.5% response rate).

#### 4.5 Data Analysis Methods

Data were analyzed applying statistical tool SPSS 21. Mediation/ moderation regression was conducted through Process Macro SPSS 21 applying bootstrap process proposed by Hayes, (2013) for hypotheses testing.

### 5. Analysis and Results

#### 5.1 Respondents' Profiles

Descriptive statistics revealed that sample size comprised of 215 respondents including 55.8% females and 44.2% males. Age profile revealed that majority of respondents (38.6%) were between 25-35 years bracket, followed by (33.5%) were under 25 years, 18.6% between 36-45 year, 8.4% between 46-55 year and only 0.9% were above 55 years. In terms of qualification, majority of respondents (58.6%) were MS /Master, and 41.4% were BS. In terms of work experience, majority of respondents (46.0%) were between 1-5 years bracket, followed by 26.0% had Less than 1 year experience, 15.8% were between 6-10 years bracket, 18.8% between 11-15 year, and only 3.3% had work experience greater than 15 years.

#### 5.2 Normality Statistics

Normality statistics revealed p-value > 0.05 for all factors, which indicated that data followed normal distribution and were appropriate for further analysis.

#### 5.3 Reliability Analysis

Reliability/ internal consistency of instrument were assessed applying Cronbach's alpha test through SPSS 21. According to Gliem and Gliem (2003) rule, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value > 0.70 is in an acceptable range (Reliability>0.5=poor;>.60=questionable; >.70=acceptable; >.80=good; >.90=excellent). Overall reliability of forty (40) items was good (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.89$ ) indicating high internal consistency. According to Nunnally, (1978), an alpha-value greater than (>) 0.70 of all factors indicated a good construct reliability (Butt, 2020). As shown in table 1, reliability of all factors was greater than .70 (acceptable) and overall, forty items were greater than .80 (good) according to Gliem and Gliem (2003)'s rule.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics**

Components	Cronbach's Alpha	Items	Components	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
WI	.91	13	Org-Cynicism	.71	6
CPWB	.81	9	Psy-Cap	.72	6
EE	.91	6	Overall	.89	40

#### 5.4 Correlation Analysis

Strength of relation and effect size among variables was tested applying Pearson coefficient of correlation ( $r$ ). Table 2 results depicted significant and positive correlation between WI and CPWB ( $r = .591$ ). WI had positive and significant correlation with mediators EE ( $r = .613$ ), OCY ( $r = .646$ ) and moderator Psy-Cap ( $r = .153$ ). Similarly, CPWB

had significant and positive correlation with mediators EE ( $r = .529$ ), OCY ( $r = .517$ ), but negative correlation with moderator Psy-Cap ( $r = -.137$ ). Hence, correlation was highest between WI and OCY and negative between CPWB and Psy-Cap.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1.WI	1				
2.CPWB	.591**	1			
3. EE	.613**	.529**	1		
4. OCY	.646**	.517**	.644**	1	
5.Psy-cap	.153*	-.137*	.114**	.126**	1

Note: \*\*Sig. at  $p < .01$ , \* Sig. at  $p < .05$

### 5.5 Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

For this study data was analyzed by applying statistical tool SPSS 21 version. Table 3 presents overview of variables and Hayes process models applied for regression analysis. Mediation/moderation regression was conducted to test hypotheses applying Hayes process macro version 32 (SPSS 21). Different models are available in this version. Model 4 was selected to test mediating effects of emotional Exhaustion (EE) and organizational cynicism (OCY) between workplace incivility (WI) and counterproductive work behavior (CPWB). While model 1 was selected to test moderating effect of Psy-Cap between incivility (WI) and counterproductive work behavior (CPWB).

**Table 3: Variables and Model Information**

Hayes model	Predictor	Mediator 1	Mediator 2	Moderator	DV	Sample Size
1, 4	WI	EE	OCY	PSC	CPWB	215

### 5.6 Mediation analysis with Emotional Exhaustion and H1, H2 Testing

This section presents variables interactions and mediation regression EE results.

#### 5.6.1 WI, EE and CPWB interactions

Table 4 presents mediation regression results of emotional exhaustion (EE) on relation of incivility (WI) with CPWB. Findings revealed that WI was a (positive and significant) predictor of CPWB,  $B = .469$ ,  $SE = .044$ ,  $p < .05$ , 95%-CI [.382, .555]. Hence,  $H_1$  was accepted. WI contributed 34.9% variance ( $R^2 = .349$ ,  $F(1,213) = 114.317$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Moreover, WI had also positive and significant impact on mediator EE ( $R^2 = .375$ ,  $F(1,213) = 127.958$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). These results supported mediation hypothesis. But WI was significant predictor of CPWB after controlling for EE (mediator),  $B = .339$ ,  $SE = .054$ ,  $p < .05$ , 95%-CI [.233, .444] indicating partial mediation. Approximately, 39.41% variance in CPWB was contributed by WI and EE ( $R^2 = .394$ ,  $F(1,213) = 68.957$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Hence,  $H_2$  mediation hypothesis was supported. These findings revealed that banking employees' experienced

WI was associated positively with their EE and CPWBs. Moreover, their EE partially mediated positive association of WI and CPWB.

**Table 4: WI, EE and CPWB Interactions**

	R <sup>2</sup>	MSE	F	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
WI Effect on CPWB									
Model Summary	.349	.177	114.317				.000		
Constant-CPWB				1.980	.167	11.884	.000	1.652	2.308
WI				.469	.044	10.692	.000	.382	.555
WI Effect on EE									
Model Summary	.375	.279	127.958				.000		
Constant-EE				1.429	.209	6.835	.000	1.017	1.841
WI				.622	.055	11.312	.000	.514	.731
WI, EE effect on CPWB									
Model Summary	.394	.166	68.957				.000		
Constant – CPWB				1.681	.178	9.446	.000	1.330	2.032
WI				.339	.054	6.309	.000	.233	.444
EE				.209	.053	3.963	.000	.105	.313

#### 5.6.2 Mediation Effects with EE

Table 5 presents mediation effects of WI on CPWB in presence of EE. Total effect Beta (c) is sum of direct effect of WI on CPWB (c') and indirect effect (ab) with EE. It can be statistically written as Beta c=.469, SE=.044, t=10.692, p< 0.05). Based on 5,000 bootstraps, 95%-CI [.382, .555] didn't contain 0, indicating it was statistically significant. Results also indicated that direct effect Beta (c') of WI on CPWB, (Beta c'=.339, SE=.054, t=6.309, p < 0.05) and 95%-CI [.233, .444] did not include 0; and was statistically significant. Indirect effects of WI on CPWB through mediating variable EE (Beta ab=.130, SE=.043, p < 0.05) and 95%-CI [.053, .223], did not contain 0 and was significant. But WI in presence of EE (mediator) was significant (p<0.05) indicating partial mediation. Hence, hypothesis H2 was supported. These findings revealed that banking employees' EE had partial mediating impact on positive relation of WI and CPWB.

**Table 5: Mediation Effects (EE)**

	<b>B</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
Direct Effect of WI on CPWB	.339	.054	6.309	.000	.233	.444
Indirect Effect	.130	.043	-	-	.053	.223
Total Effects	.469	.044	10.692	.000	.382	.555

5.7 Mediation analysis with Organizational Cynicism (OCY) and H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>3</sub> Testing

This section presents variables interactions and mediation regression OCY results.

5.7.1 WI, OCY and CPWB Interactions

Table 6 presents mediation regression results of organizational cynicism (OCY) on relation of incivility (WI) with CPWB. Results indicated that WI was a (positive and significant) predictor of CPWB, B=.469, SE=.044, p<.05, 95%-CI [.382, .555]. Hence, H<sub>1</sub> was accepted. WI contributed 34.9% variance (R<sup>2</sup>=.349, F (1,213) =114.317, p<0.05). Moreover, WI had also positive and significant impact on mediator OCY (R<sup>2</sup>=.418, F (1, 213) =152.721, p< 0.05). These results supported mediation hypothesis. But WI was significant predictor of CPWB after controlling for OCY (mediator), B=.350, SE=.055, p<.05, 95%-CI [.239, .461] indicating partial mediation. Approximately, 38% variance in CPWB was contributed by WI and OCY (R<sup>2</sup> =.380, F (1,213) = 65.075, p<.05). Hence, H<sub>3</sub> mediation hypothesis was supported. These findings revealed that banking employees' experienced WI was associated positively with their cynicism (OCY) and CPWBs. Moreover, their OCY partially mediated positive association of WI and CPWB.

**Table 6: WI, OCY, CPWB Interactions**

	R <sup>2</sup>	MSE	F	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
WI Effect on CPWB									
Model Summary	.349	.177	114.317				.000		
Constant - CPWB				1.980	.167	11.884	.000	1.652	2.308
WI				.469	.044	10.692	.000	.382	.555
WI Effect on mediator OCY									
Model Summary	.418	.266	152.721				.000		
Constant -OCY				1.323	.204	6.472	.000	.920	1.728
WI				.665	.054	12.358	.000	.559	.771
WI, OCY effect on CPWB									
Model Summary	.380	.169	65.075				.000		
Constant-CPWB				1.744	.178	9.784	.000	1.393	2.096
WI				.350	.055	6.233	.000	.239	.461
OCY				.178	.055	3.264	.001	.071	.286

### 5.7.2 Mediation Effects with OCY

Table 7 presents mediation effects of WI on CPWB in presence of cynicism (OCY). Total effect Beta (c) is sum of direct effect of WI on CPWB (c') and indirect effect (ab) with OCY. It can be statistically written as Beta c=.469, SE=.044, t=10.692, p<0.05. Based on 5,000 bootstraps, 95%-CI [.382, .555] didn't include zero, indicating it was statistically significant. Results also indicated that direct effect Beta (c') of WI on CPWB, (Beta c'=.350, SE=.056, t=6.233, p<0.05), and 95%-CI [.239, .461] did not contain 0 and was significant. Indirect effects of WI on CPWB through mediating variable OCY (Beta ab=.118, SE=.043, p<0.05), and 95%-CI [.036, .209] did not contain 0 and was significant. But WI in presence of OCY (mediator) remained significant indicating partial mediation. Hence, hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> was also supported. These findings revealed that banking employees' cynicism had partial mediating impact on positive relation of WI and CPWB.

**Table 7: Mediation Effects (OCY)**

	<b>B</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
Direct Effect of WI on CPWB	.350	.056	6.233	.000	.239	.461
Indirect Effect	.118	.043			.036	.209
Total Effect	.469	.044	10.692	.000	.382	.555

*5.8 Moderation Analysis and H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>4</sub> Testing*

H<sub>4</sub> predicted that employees’ psychological capital (PSC) will moderate association between WI and CPWB. To test H<sub>4</sub>, firstly impact of WI on CPWB without moderator PSC was checked conducting linear regression, which was significant (B=.469, SE=.044, p < .05), 95%-CI [.382, .555]. Approximately 34.9% variance was contributed by WI. Hence, H<sub>1</sub> was supported. Table 8 presents analysis results. In second step, to examine WI interaction with moderator psychological capital (PSC), Hayes process moderation through SPSS was applied. Table 8 presents results which indicated Interaction term (WI \* PSC) accounted for significant incremental variance in CPWB, ( $\Delta R^2 = .048$ , SE=.084, F (1, 213)= 18.623, B= -.362,, t= - 4.315, p< .05). Based on 5,000 bootstraps, 95%-CI [-.527, -.197] did not contain 0 and was significant. Results depicted that Psy-Cap moderated significantly association of WI and CPWB. As interaction term (WI \* PSC) had significant and negative effect on CPWB and only accounted for incremental variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .048$ ). In presence of PSC, association of WI with CPWB weakens. Hence, H<sub>4</sub> was also supported. This finding revealed that banking employees’ Psy-Cap is effective coping mechanism to control/ reduce their negative work behaviors on account of uncivil conducts. It weakens positive relation of WI and CPWBs and can be used effectively by management.

**Table 8: WI interaction with moderator (PSC)**

	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
Model Summary	.451		57.704				.000		
Constant-CPWB				-2.412	1.213	-1.989	.0480	- 4.802	-.021
WI-predictor				1.881	.323	5.819	.000	1.243	2.518
PSC-moderator				1.126	.317	3.554	.000	.501	1.750
WI * PSC		.048	18.623	-.362	.084	- 4.315	.000	-.527	-.197

Figure 2 shows moderating effects of Psy-Cap (PSC) between WI and CPWB. The steep line shows that the high level of Psy-Cap weakens positive association between WI and CPWB. Plotted significant (WI \* Psy-Cap) interactions across 3 levels of WI; (at 1 standard deviation above, below and mean level).

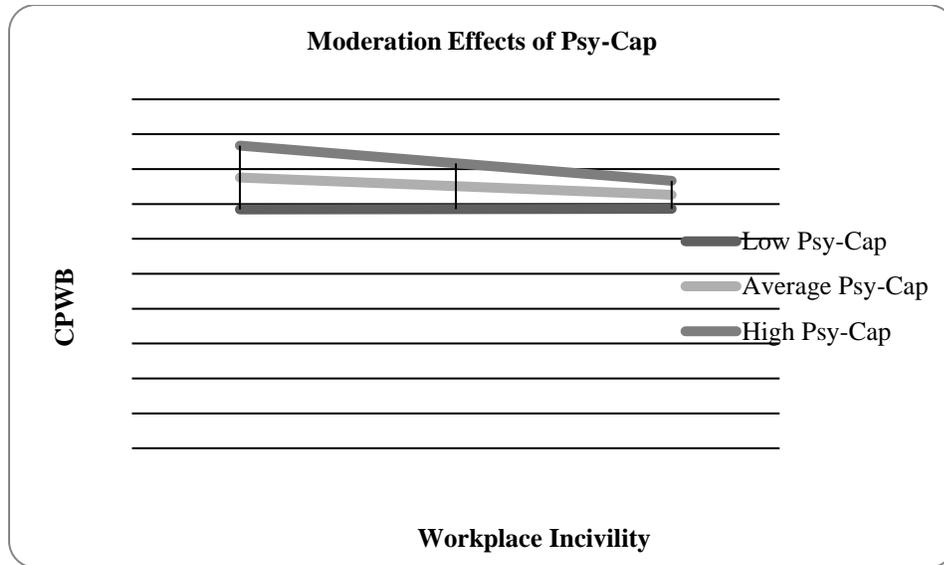


Figure 2: Moderation effects

**6. Discussion, Implications, Limitations and Future Directions**

*6.1 Discussion and Conclusion*

Main objective behind conducting this research was to examine association of workplace incivility (WI) and employees’ CPWBs through mediating role of EE, cynicism and moderating impact of Psy-Cap. Mediation/ moderation regression was conducted to test hypotheses. First hypothesis results revealed significant and positive association of WI with employees’ CPWBs in banking services. This finding is in alignment with Zahoor et al. (2019) and Din et al. (2017) studies in Pakistan context. Second hypothesis tested mediation impact of employees’ EE on association of WI with CPWB. Results showed WI a predictor of EE and had positive and significant association with it. This is in alignment with Chang et al. (2019) and Cho et al. (2016). Results also indicated WI and EE were significant and positive predictors of CPWB. This finds support from Enwereuzor et al. (2017). Moreover, results revealed partial mediating impact of WI with CPWB in presence of EE. This finds some support from Malik et al. (2019). Mediating role of EE in incivility studies is also supported from previous scholars (Alola, et al., 2020; Azeem et al., 2019).

Third hypothesis tested mediation impact of organizational cynicism (OCY) on association between WI and CPWB. Results showed WI a positive and significant predictor of OCY. This finds support from Nazir et al. (2016). Results also showed that WI and OCY were significant and positive predictors of CPWB and OCY partially mediated positive association of WI with CPWBs. This impact of OCY on CPWB finds support from scholars (Tariq & Amir ,2019; Shahzad & Mahmood,2012) in Pakistan context. Partial mediating impact of OCY finds support from Nazir et al. (2016). Fourth hypothesis tested moderating

impact of employees' Psy-Cap (PSC) in association of WI and CPWBs. Findings showed PSC moderated significantly association of WI and CPWB, and in presence of PSC association of WI with CPWB weakened. Correlation values also predicted PSC had negative correlation with CPWB. Moderating role of Psy-Cap is also supported from previous literature (Woo & Kim, 2020; Yin et al., 2018; and Baloch et al., 2016).

Summing up, study findings indicated significant and positive association of WI existed with employees' CPWBs in banking sector of Pakistan. WI was significant and positive predictor of EE, OCY. EE and OCY had significant and positive association with CPWB. Both EE and OCY partially mediated positive relationship between WI and CPWBs. While role of psychological capital was identified as copying mechanism to control CPWBs. Psychological capital in interaction with WI weakened CPWBs association with WI. As concluding remarks, four hypotheses were supported. Results support proposed model foundational base with COR (conservation of resources) theory. This is supported from previous scholars (Azeem et al., 2019). In addition, study findings indicate no difference between western and Asian context on the basis of employees' uncivil Behavior. Findings are aligned with standpoint of scholars who consider WI a general/common phenomenon. They support this argument as it is not dependent upon its target's traits, (like race or gender). But some scholars have different standpoint and consider incivility being selective, often leading to ethnic/racial minorities and women (Abid et al., 2015). Among these scholars, Lim and Lee (2011) argued that definition of WI vary across countries due to differences in cultural and social orientation. Ghosh, (2017), also concluded that WI may be different across cultures/ countries. Behavior considered uncivil in Asia may not be thought uncivil in western context. Likewise, religion, class, regional background and caste in Asian context may impact negatively on workers' perception. Therefore, future research should also consider cultural impacts to investigate these scholars' standpoint.

### *6.2 Practical Implications*

Findings will be helpful for management of banking services in particular and for other service organizations in Pakistan to develop awareness about causal factors of incivility and CPWBs. It is recommended for management to mitigate such stressors at workplace by devising effective strategies. Because these stressors and negative Behaviors indirectly are detrimental for organizational outcomes in form of increased cost of employee turn-over and low productivity due to CPWBs. Findings revealed psychological capital as a vital coping mechanism to deal with uncivil conducts and control CPWBs. It had negative association with CPWBs. As employees' Psy-Cap level may vary, so management can conduct in-house training sessions for emotionally exhausted workers. They can learn in training sessions how to handle effectively mistreatments by co-workers and stressful situations.

### *6.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research*

Few limits inherent in current study require attention of scholars for further research. First, future scholars can use in their model moderators like employee personality traits (agreeableness, neuroticism) and mediators (distributive/ procedural injustice/ emotional labor) which may influence outcomes. Second, for employee's WI assessment, self-

reported measures/scales were used for data collection. This may cause common method variance problem. Future studies should focus on multiple sources (e.g. supervisors, peers) to avoid this problem. Third, we obtained data at one point of time applying cross-sectional design. Future scholars may obtain time lagged data from multiple sources or use longitudinal design for interpreting causal effects of association between WI and CPWBs. Control variables may also be introduced in this study design. Fourth, future studies may use mixed method designs (interviews, focus groups and survey) to interpret WI and CPWBs. Fifth, due to resource constraints this research did not include demographics and cultural impacts. Thus, future scholars may conduct comparative studies on demographic impacts on Western and Asian culture. Finally, in current study Western scales have been adopted due to deficient research in Asian context. As definition of incivility is culturally specific from standpoint of few scholars, therefore future studies should focus on scale development in Asian context.

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