

Examining the Mediating Role of Workplace Incivility between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

Incivility in the workplace is becoming more common and has been linked to higher job stress, depression, and anxiety. Despite the financial and emotional costs that incivility imposes on companies and people, very little study has been done on the many measures that might be employed to mitigate these costs. The purpose of this research is to investigate how workplace incivility affects the relationship between emotional intelligence and commitment to a business. The quantitative methodology was used for the data collection process, which consisted of administering surveys to a certain number of participants. To conduct an analysis of the gathered information, the researcher made use of SPSS as well as Smart PLS SEM. According to the findings of this study, emotional intelligence has a positive and significant relationship with organizational commitment. In addition, the research revealed that incivility in the workplace serves as a mediator, and that in this capacity, emotional intelligence and organizational commitment are significantly related. It was found that emotional intelligence has a connection to job-related outcomes by virtue of the adverse consequences it has on incivility in the workplace. It seems logical to construct anti-incivility programs with the primary goal of fostering the development of abilities related to emotional intelligence. The findings of the present research indicate that emotional intelligence may be a valuable technique for proactively addressing incivility in the workplace.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Organizational Commitment, Workplace incivility, Public Sector Universities

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1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) has the potential to provide enormous benefits to the education industry. These consist of an increase in initiative and organizational innovation, an improvement in physical and mental health (which, as a consequence, leads to fewer sick days and cheaper expenses for healthcare), relationships with colleagues that are better and more rewarding, and greater levels of efficiency and productivity in the office (Munir et al., 2020). This increases the individual's satisfaction and accomplishment. The organization will gain from increased employee involvement and better morale (Juanita, 2022). Additional advantages include happier workers who put in more effort, care more about their job, and encourage world-class performance. According to Alismail et al. (2022), EI may ultimately operate as a component that balances employee performance and satisfaction with the success and revenues of the firm when it is implemented across the board.

Emotional intelligence is believed to be a significant predictor of employment outcomes, such as organisational commitment, when applied in educational institution contexts (Chigeda et al., 2022; Jain & Duggal, 2016). However, there is still a need for further in-depth study to determine whether or not feasible mediating factors account for the links between EI and work-related outcomes. To better grasp the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) and aid managers and practitioners in their attempts to implement EI-related solutions in organizational contexts, it may be helpful to get an understanding of the underlying mediating factors. As an intermediary between organizational culture and organizational commitment, workplace civility may be an issue (Al-Romeedy & Ozbek, 2022).

In the workplace, incivility is defined as "low-intensity aberrant behaviour with ambiguous purpose to harm the target in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect." Behavior that is rude, impolite, and lacking in civility almost often reveals a lack of consideration for other people (King & Piotrowski, 2015). Karim (2021) say that there are three parts to workplace incivility: low intensity, unclear intent, and breaking workplace rules. Many unfavorable results in the workplace are reported by workers who have experienced high levels of incivility, such as lower job satisfaction, more withdrawn behavior, more retaliation against the organization (such as theft), lower productivity, higher rates of turnover and turnover intentions, higher rates of absenteeism, and lower rates of commitment to the organization.

The hypothesis that perceptions of incivility in the workplace can act as a mediator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. As a result of the fact that this idea has not been verified by empirical evidence up to this point, the primary purpose of this investigation is to examine it. The current study adds to previous studies on workplace incivility perceptions, emotional intelligence, and occupational results in the following ways. EI and its links with incivility perceptions and organisational commitment are mostly ignored in the academic literature (Karim et al., 2015). EI and its links with incivility perceptions and organisational commitment are mostly ignored in the academic literature (Karim et al., 2015). Yet, the effects of these connections may be different for each individual. As a result, the primary objective of this

research is to address this information gap by examining the connections between workplace incivility, emotional intelligence, and loyalty to the firm.

Despite the growing body of research on the topic, much of it has concentrated on the effects of incivility in the workplace rather than its root causes. In addition, there is less evidence that mental or emotional states play a substantial role in determining whether or not someone is disrespectful to a professional. The potential impact of workplace incivility as a mediating mechanism has not been thoroughly investigated. The identified gap in the research is of utmost importance as it raises pertinent questions regarding the precise mechanisms by which emotional intelligence influences organizational commitment, and the potential challenges posed by workplace incivility to this association.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Exchange Theory

According to the social exchange theory, incivility in the workplace serves as a mediator by adversely impacting the link between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. According to the theory, people who have a greater emotional intelligence have a better ability to control their feelings, understand those around them, and cultivate constructive connections; as a result, they are less likely to participate in behavior that is disrespectful to others. As a result, decreased levels of rudeness in the workplace lead to increased levels of organizational commitment. This is because workers who experience less rudeness in the workplace perceive a more supportive and courteous work environment, which in turn strengthens their commitment to the organization (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

2.2. Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment

Emotions are a big part of workers' lives, and they have an effect on how dedicated they are to their jobs and how they act on the job. Both of these things affect our psychological assessments of wellness (Gupta & Bharti, 2022). Emotional intelligence is made up of many different skills, such as self-awareness, emotional control, managing relationships, and empathy. The most important functions of the results were increasing employee engagement and improving work satisfaction. Alismail et al. (2022) questioned approximately two hundred workers in order to investigate the connection between emotional intelligence, dedication to one's employment, and overall job happiness. According to the findings of the study, emotional intelligence, levels of employee engagement, and levels of employee happiness are all supportive. Letam (2017) conducted further research to study the connection between emotional intelligence and loyalty to a company. According to the data, there was a strong association between emotional intelligence and the level of worker engagement (Abu-Rumman, 2021).

Ramirez-Asis et al. (2021) conducted research on 98 managers to investigate the link between emotional intelligence, employee motivation, and job satisfaction. He came to the conclusion that emotional intelligence is high and delivers favorable outcomes, actions, and behaviours. Emotional intelligence, as stated by Orhan and Bridan (2021), is a contributing factor to having positive emotions and moods, both of which encourage a

high degree of corporate engagement since workers may have a strong relationship. According to the research, effective managers evolve into more flexible managers who have an appreciation for their organization's existing performance (Saini et al., 2022). According to the findings of Heidari et al. (2019) and his study titled "The influence of emotional intelligence on working settings," emotional intelligence is one of the most critical characteristics that can be used to evaluate success in one's professional life as well as one's personal life.

Sharma (2017) found that participants with high levels of emotional intelligence tended to agree that increased levels of both inter- and intrapersonal harmony were beneficial to organisational success. In their research titled "The link between emotional intelligence and work happiness among school teachers," Akomolafe and Ogunmakin (2014) showed that there is a strong correlation between teachers' emotional intelligence and their degree of job satisfaction. Srinivas and Yasmeen (2017) found a strong, positive correlation between employees' feelings and their level of commitment to their companies.

Regarding the understanding facet of emotional intelligence, emotionally intelligent workers are more likely to be able to anticipate the possible complex emotions that will emerge as a result of this situation (Chigeda et al., 2022). For example, they may be able to anticipate whether or not they will have conflicting feelings of loyalty and betrayal and how anxiety about their own insecurity may lead to feelings of frustration and anger. Employees who have a strong ability to regulate their emotions will have a greater chance of controlling their first emotional response to views of job insecurity than employees who have a poor ability to manage their emotions would. This is true in particular in the event that they regard these responses to be counterproductive. In this instance, the management of felt emotion might result in workers improving their emotional engagement to the business by becoming more enthusiastic about the job that they do (Jain & Duggal, 2016). Alternately, individuals who are skilled in the capacity to regulate their emotions may come to the conclusion that it is in their best advantage to repress their feelings of insecurity and instead focus on increasing their normative commitment to the firm for the whole of their job there (Triroso et al., 2022). Regardless matter whether course of action is taken, the capacity of the individual to keep their emotions in check should remain the primary focus. As a result, Emotional Intelligence will act as a moderator to reduce the impact that feelings of work instability have on emotional commitment. those with poor emotional intelligence will exhibit less affective commitment in reaction to work uncertainty as compared to those with high emotional intelligence (Jufrizen et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2022; Uzunbacak et al., 2022).

2.3. Workplace incivility as a Mediator

High EI people are more likely to help others and to form strong bonds with friends and colleagues. They are also more likely to be likeable and approachable. People who score higher on the EI scale are less prone to misread the emotions of others as hostile or dangerous, and they are better able to de-escalate conflicts when they arise (Loi et al., 2021). Later, Amanullah (2021) provided the first proof that those with low EI are more likely to report a greater rate of incivility from offenders than people with high EI. They

are also more likely to be victims of workplace incivility. This held true despite the fact that those with high EI were more likely to report that victims exhibited a greater incidence of disruptive behavior.

Furthermore, Ricciotti (2016) found that employees with high EI are less likely to be bullied on the job (high-intensity deviant behavior). The reason for this is that people who have a lower ability to recognize, identify, understand, and manage the emotions of others are less likely to accurately understand the emotional context of a situation and find it difficult to adapt to the situation. Individuals who have a lower ability to recognize, identify, understand, and manage their own emotions also have a lower likelihood of accurately understanding the emotional context. In addition, individuals who are unable to understanding the perspectives of others (what other people are thinking and feeling) are more likely to struggle with their social skills and their connections with their peers. Because of this, it may be challenging to empathize with the feelings and experiences of another individual (Lomas et al., 2012). So, people who are targets of rude behaviour have lower levels of emotional intelligence (EI) than people who are not targets. Because of this difference, offenders are more likely to see targets as weak.

Incivility is a significant problem that has to be addressed" in Pakistan's higher educational institutions (Abdi et al., 2023; Hameli & Ordun, 2022). Zaheer et al. (2022) did research on university instructors in Pakistan and identified a strong association between perceptions of incivility in the workplace and organizational commitment. Consequently, researchers should examine the mediating role of incivility in the academic workplace. Researchers are also needed to find effective means of shielding professors from the consequences that might result from incivility. Understanding the relationships among EI, workplace incivility, and organisational commitment in university settings can be useful in developing solutions that will help university management to reduce the adverse implications that incivility in the workplace has on faculty members' performance (Khalid et al., 2022).

Employees with a higher emotional intelligence may be better able to regulate their own emotions, empathize with others, and navigate difficult interpersonal situations in a more productive manner. Therefore, individuals with a higher level of emotional intelligence are less likely to engage in impolite behavior, resulting in a decrease in workplace impoliteness. As a result, a more positive work environment emerges, which fosters greater levels of employee commitment to the organization. In this context, workplace incivility mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment by influencing it. Emotional intelligence indirectly promotes organizational commitment through the establishment of a more supportive and respectful work environment by reducing the negative effects of incivility.

3. Hypothesis of the Study

H1: There is a significant effect of emotional intelligence and Organizational Commitment (Affective, Normative and Continuous)

H2: There is a significant mediating effect of workplace incivility between emotional intelligence and Organizational Commitment (Affective, Normative and Continuous)

4. Methodology

The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey methodology. The data was obtained from female faculty members employed in public sector institutions within the university setting. The participants were selected from the state of Punjab's public universities located in the Sahiwal, Rawalpindi, and Lahore divisions. The methodology employed for data acquisition involved a multistage approach using simple random sampling. A total of 395 participants completed the questionnaire. The sample was chosen by the researcher using the G-power formula. Hussain et al. (2023) scale was adapted and employed to measure the occurrence of incivility in the workplace. The measurement of Organisational Commitment was conducted using a tool provided by (Saraih et al., 2017). The emotional intelligence of female university teachers was assessed using a 10-item scale developed by (Lapalme et al., 2016). The present study employed a structural equation model to examine the interrelationships among the variables under investigation. Various techniques and instruments have been employed in the current investigation to authenticate the gathered data. The current study employed various techniques, including reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to analyse the data. This study employed two distinct analytical tools, namely IBM SPSS and SMART PLS SEM 4.0, to conduct data analysis through structural equation modelling.

4.1. Data Analysis

4.1.1. Demographic Profile

Based on the findings, 53.24% of the participants belonged to the age group of 31-40 years, 49.21% held a master's degree or higher, 61.31% were employed as lecturers, and 49.71% possessed professional experience ranging from 5 to 20 years. Approximately 74.51% of the participants indicated that they were married.

4.1.2. Measurement Model

The reflecting constructions exhibit a construct reliability exceeding 0.70. The values of (Rho A) and C-A presented in Table 1 exceed the acceptability threshold of 0.70 (Ghosh et al., 2013). The identification of AVEs ranging from .515 to .664 across all constructs suggests a strong level of construct reliability and alignment within the measurement models.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

| | Cronbach's Alpha | rho_A | Composite Reliability | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) | VIF |
|----|------------------|-------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------|
| AC | 0.717 | 0.708 | 0.809 | 0.542 | 0.19 |
| CC | 0.809 | 0.811 | 0.867 | 0.567 | 0.11 |
| EI | 0.738 | 0.735 | 0.808 | 0.598 | 0.28 |
| NC | 0.783 | 0.792 | 0.843 | 0.538 | 1.17 |
| WI | 0.809 | 0.819 | 0.857 | 0.535 | 0.55 |

Note: Affective Commitment = AC; Continuous Commitment = CC; Emotional Intelligence = EI; Normative Commitment = NC; Workplace Incivility = WI

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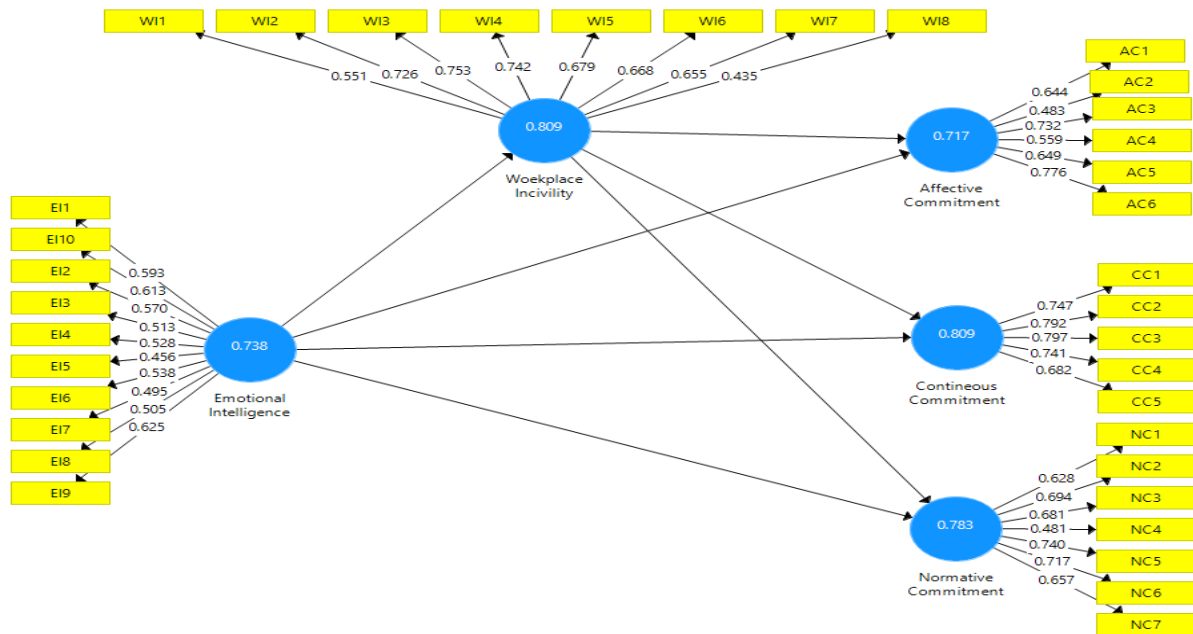


Figure 1: Reliability and validity analysis

The HTMT outcome was listed in Table 2, which is used as a measure of discriminant validity. Results show that values are statistically significant if they fall between 0.47 and 0.85, showing discriminant validity (Farooq et al., 2018).

Table 2: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

| | AC | CC | EI | NC | WI |
|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|
| AC | | | | | |
| CC | 0.29 | | | | |
| EI | 0.639 | 0.595 | | | |
| NC | 0.534 | 0.26 | 0.485 | | |
| WI | 0.389 | 0.328 | 0.407 | 0.551 | |

Note: Affective Commitment = AC; Continuous Commitment = CC; Emotional Intelligence = EI; Normative Commitment = NC; Workplace Incivility = WI

Another measure of finding the discriminant validity is fornel larcker test which also indicated that the data is valid as the number resented in this table are within the threshold.

Table 3: Fornel Larcker

| | AC | CC | EI | NC | WI |
|----|------|------|------|------|------|
| AC | 0.41 | | | | |
| CC | 0.54 | 0.33 | | | |
| EI | 0.38 | 0.39 | 0.43 | | |
| NC | 0.59 | 0.31 | 0.51 | 0.40 | |
| WI | 0.41 | 0.48 | 0.61 | 0.58 | 0.51 |

Note: Affective Commitment = AC; Continuous Commitment = CC; Emotional Intelligence = EI; Normative Commitment = NC; Workplace Incivility = WI

The Structural Model

The researcher conducted an evaluation of the hypothesized structural relationship between variables. The results of our study indicate that emotional intelligence has a significant and favourable impact on effective, continuous, and normative commitment (Beta= 0.372, 0.440, 0.255 P=.000, 0.000, 0.000) among female employees in public universities. This finding supports our first hypothesis (H1), which suggests that a higher level of emotional intelligence is associated with a greater level of commitment. Further, the research results indicated that emotional intelligence has negative and significant effect on workplace incivility (Beta= -0.130, p= 0.000) as high level of emotional intelligence leads towards lower level of workplace incivility. As a direct effect of workplace incivility with affective, normative and continuous commitment results also indicated a negative but significant relationship.

Table 4: Testing of Hypothesis

| | Original Sample (O) | T Statistics (O/STDEV) | P Values | Hypothesis |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Direct Effect | | | | |
| EI -> AC | 0.372 | 8.027 | 0.000 | H1 Accepted |
| EI -> CC | 0.440 | 10.84 | 0.000 | H1 Accepted |
| EI -> NC | 0.255 | 5.631 | 0.000 | H1 Accepted |
| EI -> WI | -0.130 | 2.279 | 0.000 | - |
| WI -> AC | -0.155 | 2.742 | 0.007 | - |
| WI -> CC | -0.126 | 3.211 | 0.002 | - |
| WI -> NC | -0.171 | 1.236 | 0.000 | - |
| Mediation Effect | | | | |
| EI -> WI -> AC | 0.051 | 2.384 | 0.019 | H2 Accepted |
| EI -> WI -> CC | 0.042 | 2.549 | 0.012 | H2 Accepted |
| EI -> WI -> NC | 0.122 | 4.835 | 0.000 | H2 Accepted |

As a mediating effect of workplace incivility, the results further indicated that workplace incivility has a significant effect between emotional intelligence and affective, normative, and continuous commitment (Table 3). The findings clearly indicated that employees having high level of emotional intelligence mitigate the adverse effect of incivility which leads towards high level of commitment. The results indicated that direct and indirect effect of workplace incivility has partially mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and all three level of commitment.

5. Discussion

The primary purpose of this research was to investigate whether or not being viewed as a victim of incivility at work would play a role as a mediator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. The findings of the analyses showed that EI had an inverse relationship with the perceptions of incivility in the workplace, which is consistent with the findings of previous research (Bibi et al., 2014; Carter & Loh, 2017). Additionally contributing evidence to other studies (Zia-Ud-Din et al., 2017), it was shown that perceived incivility in the workplace had a negative relationship with organizational commitment (Opengart et al., 2022). These results confirm the conceptual framework relevance of the EI and perceptions of workplace incivility constructs (Peng et al., 2016; Srivastava & Dey, 2020). The most noteworthy result and contribution of this research was the function of workplace incivility as a key

mediator between EI and organizational commitment of university professors which is in line with previous researches (Hamel & Ordun, 2022; Opengart et al., 2022; Yulianti et al., 2023). In addition to giving further support for earlier studies, this was the most significant finding of the study. In particular, the findings of this research provide some preliminary evidence that, when combined with EI, perceived incivility in the workplace may have the effect that is sought on the work-related attitudes of faculty members (Muring, 2022).

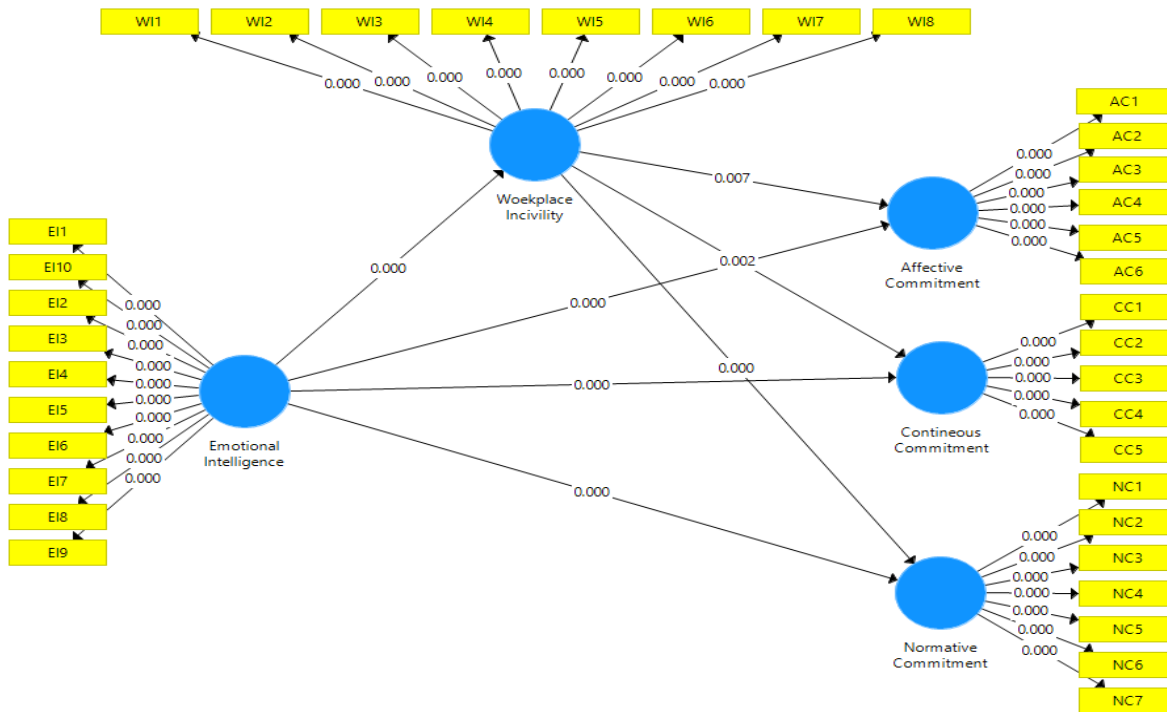


Figure 2: Structural Equational Model Results

The findings of this study construct upon the findings of previous research by providing the first evidence for the role that perceived incivility in the workplace plays as a mediator in the association between emotional intelligence and organisational commitment among a sample of university professors. This research extends the findings of previous studies on the topic. According to the most recent research, EI may aid as a treatment to alleviate the harmful consequences that are brought on by incivility in the workplace (Chen & Wang, 2019; Utama & Tanuwijaya, 2022). Based on these findings, it seems that EI-based treatments may be a more cost-effective alternative to interventions that target incivility un the workplace for the purpose of increasing organisational commitment. This is addressed in terms of the potential managerial repercussions of these outcomes. Given that EI appears to be the core cause of the detrimental effects perceived incivility in the workplace has on outcome variables, increasing EI as a method to address the widespread incidence of incivility in the workplace may be a promising approach given that EI seems to be the core cause of the detrimental effects perceived

incivility in the workplace has on outcome variables (Faeq et al., 2022; Ramirez-Asis et al., 2021).

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence on organizational commitment with the mediating effect of workplace incivility. The findings of current research indicated that there is a significant relationship between observed variables. The results indicated that it is essential for education institutions of higher education to seek for, hire, and continue to employ faculty members who have high EI (Chen & Wang, 2019; Kirk et al., 2009). It would be acceptable to design anti-incivility programme that notably concentrate on the development of EI skills in individuals who are at risk of being victimized (Al-Romeedy & Ozbek, 2022; Faheem et al., 2022; Kirk et al., 2011). Alismail et al. (2022) have shown that EI can be developed. These abilities include self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion. In addition, in order to reduce the number of rude behaviors and increase the number of polite contacts amongst faculty members, it is possible to implement counselling and training programs that teach faculty members how to participate in constructive behaviours while they are on the job.

7. Limitations and future direction

It is possible to acknowledge that this research has certain shortcomings. To begin, since this was a cross-sectional study, it is impossible to determine which way the causal chain goes; instead, this will need to be established using a longitudinal research design. In light of the fact that EI is a process that evolves over time, it is possible that future study may make use of longitudinal research designs in order to investigate the factors that underlie the relationship between EI and incivility in the workplace.

8. Social and Practical Implications

The results of the present research indicate that emotional intelligence may be a valuable technique for proactively addressing incivility in the workplace. This would promote a culture of respect and civility for all workers, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, position, or hierarchical rank. It is the responsibility of every employee in every organisation to educate themselves on the types of behaviours that constitute incivility, the impact those behaviours have on others with whom they work and interact, and the means by which they can become more socially and emotionally intelligent. This responsibility extends to every employee in every organisation. Every worker must take personal responsibility for their own actions and make a commitment to conducting themselves and engaging with coworkers in a way that is professional, courteous, and respectful while on the job.

Ethical Consideration

The authors declare that this submission follows the policies of AJSS as outlined in the Guide for Authors and in the Ethical Statement. Full consent was obtained from the participants prior to the study and all procedures were carried out in accordance with approved ethical standards.

Informed Consent

Respondents were interviewed based on informed consent. A fully informed, considered, and freely given decision about whether or not to participate in the study, without the exercise of any pressure or coercion.

Declaration of Interest Statement

The authors declare that we have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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