# Repercussions Of Incivility At Workplace: Corroboration From The Prior Studies

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## Abstract

The study endeavors to organize the literature with regard to the repercussions of workplace incivility in which several individual and organizational issues have been examined as its outcome. The incidents related to incivility are spreading in almost all the organizations and exist all over the world which indicates a growing concern as it will affect the employee and organizational wellbeing. This study especially highlights the effects of workplace incivility so that its far-reaching consequences can be avoided. There are various issues can be incurred as a cost to incivility such as increasing withdrawal behaviour, low level of job satisfaction, engagement and commitment etc. This article will also be helpful for academicians, management and HR practitioners in perceiving the destructive role of incivility which will induce them to investigate its practicality in the form of conducting future studies on such issue and also to prevent incivility at workplace through remedial measures.

## Keywords

*Workplace Incivility, Employee & Organizational Wellbeing, Withdrawal Behaviour, Job Satisfaction, Engagement, Commitment*

## Introduction

Workplace incivility, considered as low-intensity deviant acts with no evident intent to harm the target **(Andersson & Pearson, 1999),** is permeating and has grave repercussions that have been theorized about **(Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Bies & Moag, 1986)** and experimentally demonstrated **(Hershcovis, 2011),** and frequently transpires in public settings **(Porath & Pearson, 2010). Cortina et al. (2001)** cite ignoring or making disparaging remarks about an individual as examples of incivility at workplace. Given its rampancy, it has been estimated that approximately 96% of the personnel have experienced or been affected **(Porath & Pearson, 2010),** perceiving observer reactions to incivility as these reactions will probably have a ripple effect on the originator, the target, and the organization; spectators may prevent future abuse and mitigate the devastating impact of incivility for targets if they react drastically towards the instigator or constructively towards the target. On the other hand, if spectators have an adverse approach toward the target or favourably towards the instigator, they may make the situation worse for the target and it will perpetuate incivility in the organization **(Reich & Hershcovis, 2015).** Because workplace incivility is common in an interpersonal setting, it is quite inevitable that other people could witness it. However, uncivil behaviour mostly hits on the desired targets, it is quite feasible that a greater number of employees notice uncivil occurrences than truly undergo them **(Schilpzand et al., 2014).** It is crucial to study this kind of workplace

incivility since the few studies that have looked into it have found that being there when uncivil episodes occur might lead to negativity **(Porath & Erez, 2009; Totterdell, et al., 2012)**, has an adverse impression on performance-related standards (Porath and Erez, 2009), and which brings work withdrawal as a severe consequence **(Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2004)** and emotional exhaustion **(Totterdell et al., 2012).** Our worry about incivility springs from two sources: individual and organisational performance, as well as the setting up of a professional and courteous workplace. The screening of the literature has highlighted a pair of challenges in particular. For initial reasons, there is a general lack of knowledge of rudeness at work throughout the human resource development (HRD) community. While "recent years have seen triggering work on ingenious, nonphysical indications of interpersonal misconduct in the workplace" (**Cortina, 2008**), HRD academics and analysts have made limited endeavours to investigate this subject. This has been reinforced by the fact that there have been few publications on this subject in the field **(Estes & Wang, 2008).** Researchers have shown a correlation between high levels of rudeness and a number of unfavourable consequences. There are various previous and current investigations which have already described or are focusing on unfavourable effects such as low levels of well-being and work satisfaction, as well as intents to leave one's current position and difficulties sleeping etc. Both emotional and physical well-being are significantly impacted when people behave in an impolite or inconsiderate manner **(Lim et.al, 2008; Reio et al., 2009).** Studies have shown time and again that persons who are subjected to incivility in the workplace, from either the perspective of a target or an initiator, have lower levels of job satisfaction **(Reio et al., 2009; Penney & Spector, 2005)**. Even when job stress was taken into account, the researcher **Lim et al. (2008)** discovered that incivility has a negative influence on the overall organisation in the form of lower levels of job satisfaction and mental health. An increasing corpus of studies emphasises the costs of being treated with incivility on both a personal and organisational level, even though it is less severe than other forms of mistreatment **(Harold & Holtz, 2014).** For instance, in a poll of 800 employees from various businesses, according to the study of **Porath and Pearson (2013)**, 48% of victims purposefully dropped their work effort, 38% deliberately decreased the quality of their work, 66% had lower job performance, and 78% had lower levels of commitment. Furthermore, research evidence demonstrates that encountering incivility has a detrimental impact on job satisfaction, psychological well-being, physical health, and turnover decisions **(Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008; Pearson et al., 2000; Pearson et al., 2001).** Additionally, it has been shown that even observing rudeness can lead to less commitment, decreased job satisfaction, burnout, and higher turnover **(Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2007).** **Porath and Erez (2007, 2009)** discovered that experiencing and witnessing rudeness at work has a negative impact on helping behaviour, creativity, and task performance. Low job satisfaction, psychological stress, absenteeism, poor health, an increase in retaliatory aggression, and higher employee turnover are all not the only side-effects of rude behaviour. However, when endured or not properly addressed, there is a risk of harm to organisations due to increased costs of hiring and training employees, an uncomfortable and unproductive work environment, inferior-quality customer service, prospective legal fees for claims made by victims, or even perpetrators of wrongful termination accusations, etc **(Sutton, 2007b; Cortina et al., 2001; Lim & Cortina, 2005; Pearson et al., 2000).** This is crucial for comprehending the impact of workplace rudeness because it is difficult to determine the true motivation behind such actions. Mostly, in line with the idea that rudeness contains ambiguous intent, Andersson and Pearson stated that simply because someone may respond rudely after noticing it, it does not imply that they are doing so with the intention of hurting the person they are responding to; an unpleasant reaction could simply indicate that unfavourable feelings or ideas have been sparked. Likewise, a person who feels like they have been the focus of rudeness may retaliate by being rude back to the offender or by diverting rudeness onto a defenceless individual **(Harold & Holtz, 2014).** This makes it simple for rudeness to propagate throughout an organisation. In spite of the widespread nature of rude behaviour and the significant harm it causes, organizational solutions are, at best, inconsistent. Some managers choose to disregard rude behaviour because they do not want to become embroiled in difficult interpersonal confrontations. Other managers either never hear about the occurrences or, if they do, they downplay the significance of the incidents as so-called private or internal affairs. Some businesses condone or even encourage violent conflict among their staff members as a means of gaining a competitive advantage. Rude words and subtle bad behaviours can have a significant impact on targets, their coworkers, their family and friends, their organisations, and their consumers if they are ignored **(Pearson & Porath, 2005).**

## Objective of the Study

There are several deleterious effects of uncivil behaviour which ultimately influence the individual and organizational performance. It is of much need to study the consequences of workplace incivility, even though it is a low-intensity deviant behaviour but it is becoming a serious concern nowadays in view of its cost and ubiquity. The main purpose of this paper is to understand the concept of workplace incivility and also to review the repercussions of workplace incivility with the help of previous studies.

## Studies showing Consequences of Incivility at Workplace

| S.No. | Title, Author & Year | Objective of the Study | Sector/ Organization | Effects of Incivility |
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| 1. | Work and nonwork outcomes of workplace incivility: Does family support help? **(Lim & Lee, 2011)** | To investigate the connection between incivility, work-to-family conflict and family support. | Different organization from Singapore | Lower satisfaction among co-workers and supervisors, raised unfair treatment, caused depression, increased work-to-family conflict |
| 2. | Models of Workplace Incivility: The Relationships to Instigated Incivility and Negative Outcomes **(Holm et al., 2015)** | To find the negative consequences of workplace incivility. | Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union | Lessen job satisfaction, degraded well-being, decreased stay intentions, caused sleeping problems. |
| 3. | Emotional and Behavioral Responses to Workplace Incivility and the Impact of Hierarchical Status **(Porath & Pearson, 2012)** | To find the emotional and behavioural responses of incivility | Employed MBA students from western universities | Incivility leads to several emotional responses such as anger, fear and sadness. And it also provokes aggression, displacement and withdrawal. |
| 4. | Antecedents and Outcomes of Workplace Incivility: Implications for Human Resource Development Research and Practice **(Reio & Ghosh, 2009)** | To explore the antecedents and outcomes of incivility | Volunteer training course participants from mid-south region of the United States | Age, gender and workplace adaptation predicts workplace incivility. Incivility affects job satisfaction and physical health. |
| 5. | How workplace incivility influences job performance: the role of image outcome expectations **(Jiang et al., 2018)** | To identify the effects of workplace incivility on job performance. | Healthcare Organizations in China | It has been found out that workplace incivility has a negative impact on in-role job performance and innovative job performance. |
| 6. | A model of workplace incivility, job burnout, turnover intentions, | To investigate the relationship between | South-eastern University in United States | Negative influence on job performance and positively associated |

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| and job performance **(Rahim & Cosby, 2016)** | incivility, job burnout, job performance and turnover intention. | | with job burnout, which in turn, turnover intention to increase and vice-versa. |
| 7.   Relationships among workplace incivility, work engagement and job performance **(Wang & Chen, 2020)** | To explore the effects of co-worker incivility and customer incivility on work engagement and job performance. | Hospitality industry in Taiwan | Co-worker incivility is more impactful than customer incivility to reduce work engagement and job performance. |
| 8.   Effects of workplace incivility and empowerment on newly-graduated nurses' organizational commitment **(Smith et al., 2010)** | In part, the study wants to find out the impact of workplace incivility on organizational commitment. | The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) | The nurses who have experienced high level of incivility, their commitment level was low. This shows incivility negatively influences organizational commitment. |
| 9.   Effect of Workplace Incivility on OCB Through Burnout: the Moderating Role of Affective Commitment **(Liu et al., 2018)** | The study aimed to identify the impression of workplace incivility on organizational citizenship behaviour with the mediation and moderation model. | Full-time employees in North America | There is a significant indirect effect of workplace incivility on OCB through burnout. It also suggested that targets of workplace rudeness may experience burnout and have less energy for OCB. |
| 10.   The Impact of Workplace Incivility on Employee Absenteeism and Organization Commitment **(Zia-ud-Din et al., 2017)** | The study mainly yearned to check on the effects of workplace incivility on employee absenteeism and organizational commitment. | Health sector of Pakistan | Incivility and employee absenteeism were found to be positively correlated and there was a negative relationship between workplace incivility and organizational commitment. |
| 11.   The effect of workplace incivility on service employee creativity: the mediating role of emotional exhaustion and intrinsic motivation **(Hur et al., 2016)** | The main purpose of the study to investigate the influence of incivility on employee creativity. | Hotel employees in South Korea | The result of the study demonstrated that co-worker and customer incivility affect employee creativity negatively. |
| 12.   The nexus of workplace incivility and emotional | The aim of the study to analyze the connection | Hotel industry in Nigeria | The outcome of the study is consistent with the previous |

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| | exhaustion in hotel industry **(Alola et al., 2020)** | between workplace incivility, emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction and turnover intention. | | findings, it showed positive association between supervisor & customer incivility and emotional exhaustion. Moreover, it also indicated positive and negative effects of supervisor and customer incivility on turnover intention and job satisfaction respectively. |
| 13. | The Impact of Workplace Incivility on Knowledge Sharing Intention **(Moosakhani et al., 2012)** | To investigate the impact of workplace incivility on intention to share knowledge. | Hospitals in Iran | The study revealed that there is a significant negative impact of workplace incivility (experienced and instigated incivility) on the intention to share knowledge. |
| 14. | Examining the pathway linking workplace incivility and employee well-being: a study among frontline hotel employees in India **(Kuriakose et al., 2022)** | The study tried to ascertain the relationship between workplace incivility and employee well-being. | Frontline hotel employees in India | The study evidenced to support that there are destructive effects of workplace incivility on well-being of the employees. |
| 15. | Effect of workplace incivility on job satisfaction and turnover intentions in India **(Sharma & Singh et al., 2016)** | The main intent behind the study was to examine the relationship between workplace incivility, job satisfaction and turnover intention. | Restaurants in Northern and Western parts of India | Job satisfaction was negatively influenced by Workplace incivility, whereas workplace incivility was positively associated with turnover intention. |
| 16. | Empirical research on the examination of the relationship between perceived workplace incivility and job involvement: the moderating role of collaborative climate **(Tastan & Davoudi, 2015)** | The main purpose is to identify the relationship between workplace incivility and job involvement. | Employees from various industries such as finance, education, manufacturing in Turkey | Job involvement was negatively impacted through experienced workplace incivility with all its dimensions (hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behaviour and gossiping). |
| 17. | Workplace incivility, psychological distress, and the protective effect of co-worker support | To check the association between workplace incivility and the | Postal workers in canada | The outcome of the analysis displayed that the change in the level of burnout, anxiety, depression |

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| **(Geldart et al., 2018)** | measures of workers' wellbeing. | | and hostility among workers were significantly explained through workplace incivility. Conclusively, incivility has an effect over the measures of workers' well-being. |

## Conclusion

After examination of the studies presented above, it is concluded that workplace incivility is a form of negative workplace behaviour which will intoxicate the whole organization and create hurdles in the growth and prosperity of the individual and organization both. Incivility does not only besmirch the company's reputation but also give rise to various pernicious outcomes in long run such as increasing turnover intention, decreasing job satisfaction and job performance, lower the level of organizational commitment, job involvement, employee engagement and so on. To combat with the situation, the top management should ensure proper code of conduct regarding employee behaviour and always be vigilant to such kind of issues. On the part of employees, they should not be stay silent and not to involve in the matters related to these sorts of undesirable behaviour.

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