WORKPLACE INCIVILITY AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT: A PATHWAY TO ACHIEVING DECENT WORK AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between workplace incivility and organisational commitment in Nigerian organisations, considering demographic variables such as age, gender, married status, and educational level. A cross-sectional design was used to collect data from 435 employees from four public sector organisations. The findings show a complex relationship between workplace behaviours and organisational outcomes. Contrary to previous research, hostility was revealed as a substantial positive predictor of organisational commitment. Privacy invasion, exclusionary behaviour, and gossiping were not significant predictors, although there were gender disparities in gossiping, with males reporting higher levels. Age was a favourable predictor of organisational commitment, but marital status and educational qualifications were negative factors. These findings highlight the significance of cultural and economic circumstances in determining organisational dynamics. The study emphasises the importance of personalised treatments addressing workplace incivility and demographic-specific retention methods. The findings provide complex insights into the links among workplace incivilities, organisational commitment, and demographic variables in the Nigerian context, highlighting the need for further investigation of these dynamics in diverse cultural situations.

Keywords: Workplace incivility, Organisational commitment, Demographic factors, Decent work, Cultural context in Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are founded on the principle of sustainable economic development and decent work, which underscores the necessity of positive and productive work environments (United Nations, 2015). Nevertheless, the widespread issue of workplace incivility is a substantial impediment to the realisation of this vision. This phenomenon is defined as low-intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to injure the target, and it encompasses a variety of disrespectful actions, from subtle slights to overt rudeness (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). While these actions may appear inconsequential when considered in isolation, they can have significant repercussions for individuals and organisations.

In contrast to more severe forms of workplace maltreatment, such as bullying or harassment, incivility frequently exists in a grey area, rendering it insidious and difficult to address. This subtlety does not diminish its impact; rather, the building body of evidence suggests that workplace incivility can significantly undermine organisational commitment, which is a critical element of employee retention, productivity, and overall success (Hershcovis, 2011). Not only does the erosion of this commitment impede individual well-being and career advancement, but it also poses a threat to organisational performance and, by extension, economic development at a broader level.

Given these implications, it is imperative to comprehend the mechanisms by which workplace incivility influences organisational commitment. The motive behind this study is to investigate the precise mechanisms by which incivility influences commitment, with a particular emphasis on the mediating functions of major psychological constructs. Our goal is to provide organizations with valuable insights that can help them cultivate a productive and respectful work environment by exploring this critical link. In the final analysis, our objective is to assist in the development of work environments that not only improve employee satisfaction but also contribute to a more equitable and prosperous future.

Workplace incivility poses significant challenges for both employees and organizations, particularly in resource-constrained economies like Nigeria. For instance, in the Nigerian public sector, incivility can manifest as verbal abuse or exclusionary behaviors, leading to psychological distress and lower job satisfaction among employees (Schilpzand et al., 2016). A case in point is the experience of healthcare workers in Nigeria, who often face high levels of stress and incivility from patients and colleagues, resulting in decreased organizational commitment and increased turnover intentions (Adewale & Adebiyi, 2019).

At the organisational level, incivility can have far-reaching consequences. In Nigeria's manufacturing sector, for example, incivility can lead to decreased productivity and increased operational costs due to absenteeism and turnover (Porath & Pearson, 2013). This not only hampers organisational performance but also undermines sustainable economic growth, a critical goal for developing economies like Nigeria. Despite the established correlation between incivility and negative organisational outcomes, there is a need for more nuanced research on its impact on organisational commitment, especially in culturally diverse contexts where limited resources exacerbate these challenges.

The primary objective of this study is to explore the intricate relationship between workplace incivility and organisational commitment within Nigerian organisations. Specifically, the study seeks to assess how workplace incivility impacts organisational commitment, examine demographic differences in employees' experiences of incivility, and identify key predictors of organisational commitment in the context of incivility. Additionally, it aims to propose actionable strategies that organisations can implement to mitigate the adverse effects of workplace incivility, ultimately enhancing employee commitment and productivity. Through these objectives, the study addresses critical gaps in the literature and provides practical insights for fostering healthier workplace environments in Nigeria.

This study seeks to answer three key research questions: What is the relationship between workplace incivility and organisational commitment among employees in Nigerian organisations? How do demographic factors such as gender, marital status, and education level influence employees' experiences of workplace incivility? Lastly, to what extent does workplace incivility predict organisational commitment? By addressing these questions, the research aims to uncover the dynamics between incivility, employee demographics, and organisational outcomes, providing insights into strategies for improving workplace environments and fostering stronger employee commitment.

This study is significant because it addresses a critical but underexplored issue in the Nigerian workplace: the impact of workplace incivility on organizational commitment. By shedding light on this relationship, the research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, the study's alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 8 underscores its relevance to global efforts to promote decent work and economic growth. For policymakers and organizational leaders, the findings provide actionable insights into designing interventions that reduce incivility and foster a supportive work environment. Additionally, the research highlights cultural and demographic nuances, offering context-specific strategies that resonate with the unique challenges of developing economies. By addressing these gaps, the study not only advances academic discourse but also provides practical solutions for enhancing productivity and sustainability in the workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace Incivility: Definition and Categorization

Workplace incivility is defined as "low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect" (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). This concept encompasses a range of behaviors that are characteristically rude and discourteous, reflecting a lack of regard for others. Incivility can manifest in various forms, which can be broadly categorized into two types: subtle and overt.

Subtle forms of incivility include behaviors such as giving someone a "dirty look," interrupting others during conversations, or failing to acknowledge contributions in group settings. These actions may seem minor but can accumulate over time, leading to a toxic work environment. Conversely, overt forms of incivility are more blatant and include actions like public reprimands, spreading false rumors, or belittling remarks (Firmbee, 2024; Indeed, 2024). Understanding these categories is essential for organizations aiming to mitigate the negative impact of incivility on employee morale and productivity.

Organizational Commitment: Dimensions

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment an employee has to their organization and is crucial for fostering a productive workplace environment. It is typically divided into three dimensions: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

Affective commitment reflects an emotional attachment to the organization, where employees feel a sense of belonging and identification with their workplace. Continuance commitment relates to the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization, often influenced by factors such as job security and benefits. Lastly, normative commitment involves a sense of obligation to remain with the organization due to moral or ethical considerations (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Each dimension plays a vital role in shaping employee behavior and organizational outcomes.

Incivility and Organizational Commitment: Prior Studies

Workplace incivility negatively influences organizational commitment, with higher levels of incivility linked to lower commitment across various sectors (Porath & Erez, 2007; Yao, Wang, & Zhang 2021). Employees facing incivility often feel disengaged and less emotionally invested in their organization, leading to decreased job satisfaction and increased turnover intentions (Foulk, Woolum, & Erez 2016). In a study from The Gambia and Ghana, workplace incivility was found to reduce job satisfaction and increase unproductive work behaviors, highlighting its harmful effects (Sowe & Arslan, 2023). Additionally, incivility can lead to mental health issues, higher stress, and lower job satisfaction, harming employee retention and productivity (Chakraborty, Sharada, & Tripathi 2024; Emmanuel & Das, 2024). Negative experiences also diminish employees' emotional attachment to their organization, further lowering their commitment (Chandra & Tunjungsari, 2024). Addressing workplace incivility is essential for creating a supportive work environment that promotes employee well-being and enhances organizational commitment.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is grounded in two theoretical frameworks: Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model. These theories provide valuable insights into how workplace incivility affects organizational commitment, particularly in the Nigerian context.

Social Exchange Theory (SET)

SET posits that social interactions are based on an exchange process where individuals seek to maximize benefits while minimizing costs (Blau, 1964). In the context of Nigerian workplaces, where strong social bonds and respect are deeply valued, incivility can disrupt these exchanges. When employees experience disrespect or unfair treatment, they may perceive this as a breach of social norms, leading them to withdraw their emotional investment in the organization. This withdrawal can result in diminished organizational commitment, as employees feel less inclined to contribute to an environment they perceive as hostile or unsupportive. For instance, in Nigerian organizations, where collectivism and communal values are prominent, incivility can be particularly damaging. It can erode the sense of community and shared identity that is crucial for fostering a positive work environment. By understanding how SET applies in this

context, we can better grasp why incivility might lead to reduced commitment among Nigerian employees.

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

The JD-R Model emphasizes the balance between job demands and resources available to employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In the Nigerian context, where economic pressures and resource constraints are common, workplace incivility can exacerbate job demands. High levels of incivility can deplete employees' psychological resources, leading to burnout and disengagement. This is particularly relevant in Nigerian organizations, where limited resources might already strain employees' ability to cope with additional stressors like incivility.

By integrating these theories, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how workplace incivility affects organizational commitment in Nigeria. The JD-R Model helps explain why incivility, as an additional demand, can overwhelm employees and reduce their commitment, while SET highlights the importance of maintaining respectful social exchanges in the workplace.

Review of Empirical Literature

Empirical research has consistently documented the pervasive nature of workplace incivility across industries and its detrimental effects on both employee well-being and organizational outcomes. Studies have shown that even subtle acts of rudeness or exclusion can significantly disrupt team dynamics and productivity (Foulk et al., 2016). For example, an employee who is frequently interrupted or ignored during meetings may become disengaged, impacting team collaboration and organizational performance. Research also indicates that higher levels of workplace incivility are associated with increased employee turnover and lower job satisfaction (Yao et al., 2021). These findings are particularly relevant in Nigeria's labor market, where job dissatisfaction often leads to high turnover rates in sectors such as banking and manufacturing.

Cross-cultural studies reveal that while cultural norms may moderate the impact of incivility, their effects are universally detrimental. For instance, Chen, Zhou, Klyuchko, & Smith (2020) found that collectivist cultures, like Nigeria's, may mitigate some effects of incivility through stronger interpersonal bonds. However, Adewale and Adebiyi (2019) demonstrated that workplace incivility in Nigeria still significantly predicts reduced organizational commitment, particularly among younger employees who often expect a more inclusive and supportive work environment. Additionally, targeted interventions, such as civility training programs, have been shown to mitigate the adverse effects of incivility. Johnson, Kaiser, Lee, & Broadfoot (2021) highlighted how such programs can enhance employee morale and commitment by fostering respectful communication and professional conduct. These findings underscore the urgent need for Nigerian organizations to implement strategies that address workplace incivility, not only to improve employee well-being but also to promote organizational stability and sustainable growth.

SDG Alignment

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8) emphasizes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all (UN, 2015). Addressing workplace incivility is crucial for achieving this goal, as incivility undermines the quality of work environments and hinders the creation of decent and productive

workplaces. By mitigating incivility, organizations can foster environments that promote employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment—all key drivers of sustainable economic growth. This study aims to contribute to SDG 8 by identifying pathways to improve workplace culture and productivity through incivility reduction. This aligns with the broader aim of SDG 8, which promotes sustained and inclusive economic growth and decent work, emphasizing that respectful workplace cultures enhance employee engagement and productivity, thereby contributing to economic growth and well-being. This highlights the significant impact of organizational practices on economic development and societal progress.

Existing research has extensively documented the negative effects of workplace incivility on individual and organizational outcomes, yet several key gaps remain. A primary gap is the limited research conducted outside Western contexts, hindering our understanding of how cultural and socio-economic factors influence the experience and impact of incivility in developing countries (Chen et al., 2020). Furthermore, the specific relationship between workplace incivility and organizational commitment—a crucial factor for employee retention and organizational success—requires further investigation. While studies have explored the impact of incivility on related constructs like job satisfaction and productivity, fewer have directly examined its influence on employees' emotional attachment to their organizations. Finally, the role of demographic variables, such as gender, marital status, and education level, in shaping perceptions of incivility remains largely unexplored. Addressing these gaps is essential for developing effective, culturally relevant interventions and policies and for understanding the full impact of incivility on both individuals and organizational commitment.

The foregoing review formed the bases upon which the following hypotheses were tested:

H₁: *Workplace incivility is negatively associated with organisational commitment.*

H₂: *Female employees experience higher levels of workplace incivility compared to male employees.*

H₃: *Workplace incivility significantly predicts organisational commitment, even after controlling for demographic variables.*

METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes a cross-sectional, quantitative approach to investigate the correlation between workplace incivility and organisational commitment within Nigerian organisations. The cross-sectional approach facilitates gathering data at a singular moment, offering a glimpse into the relationships among various variables. This design is especially adept at elucidating correlations and relationships among variables, which is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of workplace incivility and its influence on organisational commitment.

Source of Data and Collection Strategies

The dataset for this investigation was acquired via a structured survey conducted among employees from four public sector organisations in Nigeria. The survey meticulously documented essential variables encompassing workplace incivility, organisational commitment, and demographic factors including gender, marital status, age, education level, and work experience. Workplace incivility was assessed by observing behaviours such as

hostility, invasion of privacy, gossiping, and exclusionary practices. Investigating organisational commitment encompassed a combined affective, continuance, and normative factors. All variables underwent coding and standardisation to guarantee consistency and reliability in the analysis process.

Sampling and Participants

Participants were chosen through a purposive sampling technique to ensure that respondents from key demographic groups (age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, length of service, and management level) were adequately represented. An accidental sampling approach was used within the purposively selected groups to address potential biases, where individuals available and willing to participate were administered questionnaires. A total of 500 questionnaires were disseminated, producing 435 valid responses, thereby achieving a noteworthy 91% response rate.

Measures

Validated instruments were utilised to assess the fundamental constructs. The assessment of workplace incivility was conducted utilising the Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS; Cortina et al., 2001), which was modified to effectively capture behaviours indicative of hostility and exclusion. Participants evaluated their experiences using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating 'Never' and 5 denoting 'Always.' The evaluation of organisational commitment was conducted utilising Meyer and Allen's (1991) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), which examines affective, continuance, and normative dimensions of commitment in a single instrument. Responses were evaluated using a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 representing Strongly Disagree and 7 indicating Strongly Agree.

Efforts were made to generate statistical norms for the two instruments using the local samples. This revealed Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.78 for the four dimensions of workplace incivility (Hostility 0.56; Privacy invasion 0.76; Exclusionary behavior 0.79; and Gossiping 0.85) and 0.87 for organizational commitment, indicating high internal consistency.

Statistical Analysis

The analysis of data was conducted using SPSS software and Datasquirrel AI to evaluate the study's hypotheses. Several statistical methodologies were employed: Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographic data and key variables, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions. Correlation analysis explored the relationships among workplace incivility, organisational commitment, and related variables. ANOVA was applied to examine demographic differences in the experiences of workplace incivility. Statistical significance was determined at a 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$).

Limitations of the method

The cross-sectional design used in this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between workplace incivility and organizational commitment among Nigerian employees. However, it has several limitations. One of the primary drawbacks is its inability to establish causality between variables. Since data is collected at a single point in time, it is challenging to determine whether workplace incivility leads to reduced organizational commitment or if other factors are at play. For instance, it might be that employees with lower commitment levels are more likely to perceive or report incivility. Additionally, cross-sectional studies cannot

capture temporal relationships or changes in these dynamics over time, which could provide more nuanced insights into how incivility affects commitment.

To address these limitations, future research should consider employing longitudinal designs. Longitudinal studies can track changes in workplace incivility and organizational commitment over time, allowing researchers to establish temporal relationships and potential causality between these variables. By measuring both incivility and commitment at multiple points, researchers can better determine if incivility precedes changes in commitment. This approach would also enable the evaluation of interventions aimed at reducing workplace incivility, such as civility training, and assess their effectiveness in improving organizational commitment over time. By transitioning to longitudinal studies, future research can provide more robust insights into the causal dynamics between workplace incivility and organizational commitment, ultimately informing more effective strategies for enhancing workplace environments and fostering stronger employee commitment.

RESULTS

Descriptive Results of the Study Variables

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	228	52.4
	Female	207	47.6
Age	18-30 years (Young)	101	23.2
	31-40 years (Middle Age)	252	57.9
	41-50 years (Older Age)	74	17.0
	51-65 years (Senior)	8	1.8
Marital Status	Single	133	30.6
	Married	297	68.3
	Divorced/Widowed	3	0.7
Educational Qualification	SSCE	49	11.3
	National Diploma	157	36.1
	HND/B.Sc	199	45.7
	Postgraduate	29	6.7
Length of Service	1-5 years	138	31.7
	6-10 years	198	45.5
	11-20 years	91	20.9
	21+ years	8	1.8
Management Level	Contract Staff	59	13.6
	Temporary Staff	209	48.0
	Junior Staff	98	22.5
	Senior Staff	69	15.9

Survey, 2024

The study involved 435 employees with a balanced gender distribution (52.4% male, 47.6% female). Most respondents were in the middle age group (31-40 years, 57.9%), while only 1.8% were in the senior age category (51-65 years). The majority were married (68.3%), and 45.7% held HND/B.Sc. degrees, indicating a well-educated workforce. About 45.5% had 6-10 years of work experience, suggesting a moderately experienced sample. In terms of employment

status, temporary staff made up the largest group (48%), followed by junior staff (22.5%). These demographic insights help contextualize the findings on workplace incivility and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 1: Workplace incivility is negatively associated with organizational commitment

Table 2: Correlation matrix of all variables in the study

Correlations	Hostility	Privacy Invasion	Exclusionary Behavior	Gossiping	Organizational Commitment
Hostility	1				
Privacy Invasion	.553**	1			
Exclusionary Behavior	.338**	.527**	1		
Gossiping	.479**	.370**	.619**	1	
Organizational Commitment	.214**	.150**	-.016	.008	1

Note: p < 0.01
Source: Survey, 2024

The correlation table reveals significant interconnections among workplace incivility dimensions—hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping. Hostility is strongly correlated with privacy invasion (r=0.553, p<0.01) and moderately correlated with exclusionary behavior (r=0.338, p<0.01) and gossiping (r=0.479, p<0.01). Similarly, privacy invasion has strong correlations with exclusionary behavior (r=0.527, p<0.01) and moderate correlations with gossiping (r=0.370, p<0.01). These findings suggest that workplace incivility behaviors tend to co-occur, reflecting a hostile organizational climate where multiple forms of incivility are prevalent. Interestingly, while gossiping and exclusionary behavior are strongly interrelated (r=0.619, p<0.01), neither shows a significant correlation with organizational commitment (p>0.05).

Unexpectedly, hostility and privacy invasion exhibit weak but significant positive correlations with organizational commitment (r=0.214, p<0.01 and r=0.150, p<0.01 respectively), contrary to the anticipated negative association. This indicates that individuals experiencing these behaviors may remain committed to their organizations, potentially due to contextual factors such as cultural norms or economic constraints. In contrast, exclusionary behavior (r=−0.016, p=0.740) and gossiping (r=0.008, p=0.861) have no significant correlation with organizational commitment. These results highlight the complex interplay between workplace incivility and employee outcomes, underscoring the need for further research to unpack cultural or situational factors influencing these relationships.

Hypothesis 2: Female employees experience higher levels of workplace incivility compared to male employees

Table 3: Group Statistics comparing male and female employees on dimensions of incivility

Dimension	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Hostility	Male	228	9.51	3.48	0.230
	Female	207	9.36	2.78	0.193
Privacy Invasion	Male	228	8.83	3.55	0.235
	Female	207	8.92	3.78	0.263
Exclusionary Behavior	Male	228	12.30	4.67	0.309
	Female	207	12.13	4.21	0.293
Gossiping	Male	228	10.66	4.61	0.305
	Female	207	9.68	4.60	0.320

Source: Survey, 2024

The table compares male and female employees on four dimensions of workplace incivility: hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping. The mean scores for hostility and privacy invasion are similar for males (M=9.51, M=8.83M) and females (M=9.36, M=8.92), with no substantial differences in their experiences of these behaviors. Similarly, the mean scores for exclusionary behavior show minimal variation, with males scoring slightly higher (M=12.30) than females (M=12.13). However, gossiping shows a notable difference, with males (M=10.66) reporting higher levels compared to females (M=9.68). The standard deviations indicate similar variability across genders for all dimensions, suggesting that both male and female employees experience incivility at comparable levels, except for gossiping, where males report higher exposure.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test

Dimension	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval
Hostility	0.518	433	0.605	0.156	[-0.435, 0.746]
Privacy Invasion	-0.252	422.22	0.801	-0.089	[-0.782, 0.604]
Exclusionary Behavior	0.416	432.97	0.678	0.177	[-0.660, 1.014]
Gossiping	2.220	429.10	0.027*	0.982	[0.112, 1.851]

Source: Survey, 2024

The table presents the results of independent samples t-tests comparing male and female employees on four dimensions of workplace incivility: hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping. For hostility (t=0.518, p=0.605), privacy invasion (t=−0.252, p=0.801), and exclusionary behavior (t=0.416, p=0.678), there are no significant differences between males and females, as all p-values exceed the 0.05 significance threshold. The 95% confidence intervals for these dimensions include zero, further indicating that the mean differences are not statistically meaningful. This suggests that both genders report comparable experiences of these specific workplace incivility behaviors.

In contrast, gossiping (t=2.220, p=0.027) shows a significant difference, with males reporting higher levels of gossiping than females. The mean difference of 0.982 falls within the 95%

confidence interval [0.112, 1.851], confirming the significance of this finding. This result indicates that males are more likely to report experiencing gossiping in the workplace compared to females. Overall, the findings highlight that while most dimensions of workplace incivility are experienced similarly by both genders, gossiping appears to be a gendered behavior, with males reporting higher exposure.

Hypothesis 3: Workplace incivility significantly predicts organizational commitment, even after controlling for demographic variables

Table 5: Regression Model

Model Summary	R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error of the Estimate
Model 1 (All Predictors)	0.304	0.093	0.076	4.625

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	924.575	8	115.572	5.402	0.000**
Residual	9049.256	423	21.393		
Total	9973.831	431			

Coefficients	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Hostility	0.319	0.094	0.211	3.410	0.001**
Privacy Invasion	0.152	0.082	0.115	1.853	0.065
Exclusionary Behavior	-0.101	0.071	-0.094	-1.423	0.155
Gossiping	-0.117	0.068	-0.113	-1.733	0.084
Age	0.791	0.366	0.114	2.160	0.031*
Marital Status	-1.325	0.521	-0.131	-2.542	0.011*
Educational Qualification	-0.664	0.310	-0.108	-2.142	0.033*

Source: Survey, 2024

The Model Summary table shows that the regression model explains 9.3% of the variance in organizational commitment (R^2=0.093). While this is a modest level of explanatory power, it indicates that the predictors collectively account for some variability in the dependent variable. The adjusted R^2=0.076 suggests that after accounting for the number of predictors in the model, the explained variance remains small but significant. The standard error of the estimate (4.625) provides a measure of the average deviation of observed values from the predicted values, highlighting room for further exploration of additional predictors.

The ANOVA table confirms the overall significance of the regression model ($F_{(8,423)}$ =5.402, p<0.001). This indicates that the combination of predictors, including dimensions of workplace incivility (e.g., hostility, privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, gossiping) and demographic factors (age, marital status, and educational qualification), significantly predicts organizational commitment. The regression sum of squares (924.575) reflects the variation explained by the predictors, while the residual sum of squares (9049.256) represents unexplained variation, indicating that other factors not included in the model contribute substantially to organizational commitment.

The Coefficients table provides insights into the individual predictors. Among the workplace incivility dimensions, hostility is a significant positive predictor of organizational commitment (B=0.319, p=0.001), contrary to the expected negative relationship. Privacy invasion

(p=0.065), exclusionary behavior (p=0.155), and gossiping (p=0.084) do not significantly predict organizational commitment. Regarding demographic variables, age (B=0.791, p=0.031) is positively associated with organizational commitment, while marital status (B=−1.325, p=0.011) and educational qualification (B=−0.664, p=0.033) are negatively associated. These results suggest that while certain aspects of workplace incivility and demographic factors play a role in predicting organizational commitment, the relationships are complex and may be influenced by contextual or cultural factors.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study offer nuanced insights into the relationships among workplace incivility, organizational commitment, and demographic variables in Nigerian organizations. These results not only test the proposed hypotheses but also highlight unique patterns that align or contrast with existing literature, calling for a deeper understanding of cultural and contextual influences.

Workplace Incivility and Organizational Commitment

Contrary to expectations, hostility emerged as a significant positive predictor of organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.211$, $p = 0.001$). This finding contradicts much of the existing literature, which consistently links workplace incivility to diminished organizational commitment (Lim, Cortina, & Magley 2008; Schilpzand et al., 2016). For instance, Schilpzand et al. (2016) argue that hostility erodes employees' affective commitment by fostering a toxic work environment. However, in the Nigerian context, this unexpected positive relationship could be explained by cultural norms that emphasize resilience and endurance in challenging environments (Adewale & Adebiyi, 2019). Employees may remain committed to their organizations despite experiencing hostility due to limited employment opportunities or a sense of obligation influenced by societal expectations.

Several theoretical explanations can further illuminate this unexpected finding. Drawing on Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), employees in Nigerian organizations might derive a sense of pride and self-esteem from their organizational affiliation, even in the face of hostility. Hostility could be interpreted as a challenge to overcome, reinforcing an individual's loyalty to the organization as part of their group identity. Additionally, Psychological Contract Theory (Rousseau, 1989) suggests that employees may perceive their relationship with the organization as transactional. In contexts with limited job alternatives, employees may accept hostility as a trade-off for the benefits they receive, such as job security and income stability, which could explain their continued commitment.

Potential moderators and mediators also warrant exploration. Perceived Organizational Support (POS) may moderate the relationship between hostility and organizational commitment. Employees who feel supported by their organization, despite hostility from colleagues or superiors, may rationalize the incivility as isolated incidents rather than systemic issues, thereby maintaining their commitment. Similarly, resilience could act as a mediator. Employees with high resilience may reinterpret hostility as an opportunity for personal growth or a test of their capabilities, which could positively influence their commitment. This aligns with findings from Chen et al. (2020), who observed that resilience buffers the adverse effects of workplace incivility.

Another potential explanation lies in the Job Embeddedness Theory (Mitchell et al., 2001), which posits that employees remain committed due to the accumulated connections and investments they have in their organization and community. In Nigeria, where familial and community ties often intersect with professional networks, employees may prioritize these connections over the discomfort caused by hostility, leading to continued organizational commitment. Furthermore, Power Distance, a cultural dimension identified by Hofstede (1980), could also influence this dynamic. In high power-distance cultures like Nigeria, hostility from superiors may be perceived as a normative aspect of hierarchical relationships, reducing its perceived severity and impact on commitment.

In contrast, other dimensions of workplace incivility, such as privacy invasion, exclusionary behavior, and gossiping, were not significant predictors of organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.115$, $p = 0.065$; $\beta = -0.094$, $p = 0.155$; $\beta = -0.113$, $p = 0.084$, respectively). These findings align with Chen et al. (2020), who observed that the impact of specific incivility behaviors may be muted in collectivist cultures where interpersonal harmony is valued. Such behaviors might be normalized or overlooked, reducing their perceived effect on organizational commitment.

Gender Differences in Workplace Incivility

The study found no significant gender differences in most dimensions of workplace incivility, including hostility, privacy invasion, and exclusionary behavior. This finding is consistent with the work of Cortina et al. (2017), who argue that workplace incivility is often distributed indiscriminately, affecting both genders equally. However, a notable exception was **gossiping**, where males reported significantly higher levels than females ($\Delta M = 0.982$, $p = 0.027$). This result diverges from traditional assumptions that gossiping is more prevalent among females (Foster, 2004). One possible explanation is that workplace gossiping in male-dominated sectors or hierarchical structures may serve as a coping mechanism or a tool for informal communication and influence (Ellwardt, Labianca, & Wittek 2012).

Demographic Predictors of Organizational Commitment

Among demographic factors, age positively predicted organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.114$, $p = 0.031$), aligning with prior research suggesting that older employees are more likely to exhibit loyalty and attachment to their organizations (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Conversely, marital status ($\beta = -0.131$, $p = 0.011$) and educational qualification ($\beta = -0.108$, $p = 0.033$) negatively predicted organizational commitment. These findings highlight the complex interplay between personal and professional factors. Employees with higher educational qualifications may have greater career mobility and aspirations, reducing their commitment to a single organization (Johnson et al., 2021). Similarly, married employees may experience competing demands between work and family, influencing their organizational attachment (Chen et al., 2020).

Recommendations for Practice and Future Research

Recommendations for Practice

Organizations in Nigeria should adopt specific interventions to address workplace incivility. First, civility training programs could be introduced to educate employees and leaders on respectful communication and its role in fostering a positive workplace culture. For example,

team-building activities and workshops focusing on conflict resolution and emotional intelligence could help mitigate incivility. Second, organizations should implement anonymous feedback systems and grievance redressal mechanisms that allow employees to report incivility without fear of retaliation. Such mechanisms could be particularly useful in hierarchical workplace environments where employees may hesitate to voice concerns. Third, offering employee assistance programs (EAPs) that provide counseling and support services could help employees cope with the psychological impact of incivility and enhance their overall well-being and commitment.

Tailored approaches to address workplace gossiping in the Nigerian Context

Targeted interventions to address gossiping in male-dominated environments can be particularly effective in industries such as oil and gas. In Nigeria's oil and gas sector, companies like Shell Nigeria and Chevron Nigeria often experience informal communication and workplace gossip influencing decision-making and perceptions of colleagues. To tackle this, these companies could introduce structured team-building activities and communication training sessions that promote transparency and discourage reliance on gossip as a source of information. Similarly, in the banking and finance sector, departments such as corporate banking or investment banking in organizations like Access Bank or Zenith Bank could benefit from anonymous feedback systems and employee engagement platforms to help employees voice frustrations constructively, reducing the inclination toward gossip.

In the construction and engineering industry, male-heavy organizations like Julius Berger Nigeria and Setraco often face the challenge of rumors affecting morale and productivity. These companies could organize conflict resolution workshops and mentorship programs that emphasize respectful communication and create a culture of open dialogue. Likewise, in military and paramilitary forces, such as the Nigerian Army or the Nigerian Police Force, gossip can undermine trust and team cohesion. Leadership training programs and peer accountability systems could help instill professionalism, fostering a culture of mutual respect and discouraging the spread of rumors.

The transportation sector, another male-dominated field, also experiences the adverse effects of gossip. Companies like GIG Logistics or Dangote Transport could implement clear communication channels and professional grievance-handling mechanisms to address misunderstandings and conflicts effectively. By providing structured avenues for feedback and encouraging professional communication, these organizations can minimize the escalation of workplace gossip, leading to a healthier and more productive work environment.

Future Research Directions

Future studies should explore similar dynamics in other cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of findings. For instance, comparative research could examine how workplace incivility influences organizational commitment in collectivist versus individualist cultures. Additionally, longitudinal studies are needed to understand the causal relationships between incivility and commitment over time. Researchers could also investigate the role of specific moderators, such as perceived organizational justice or emotional intelligence, in shaping the impact of incivility. Finally, sector-specific studies could provide deeper insights into how industry characteristics influence the prevalence and effects of workplace incivility, offering tailored strategies for intervention.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the growing body of research on workplace incivility by providing context-specific insights into its relationship with organizational commitment in Nigerian organizations. The findings challenge some widely held assumptions in the literature, highlighting the importance of cultural and economic contexts in shaping employee experiences. Future research should explore these dynamics further, incorporating longitudinal designs to better understand the causal pathways and explore the role of organizational culture in mitigating the effects of incivility.

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