THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE INCIVILITY ON END OF WORK NEGATIVE AFFECT: MEDIATING ROLE OF ANGER AND MODERATING EFFECT OF EMOTIONAL STABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This study specifically aims at determining the association between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect by investigating the intervening role of anger and buffering role of emotional stability. The survey was completed by self-administered questionnaire and data was gathered from employees working in four public sector universities of Pakistan. The total sample size of data was 150. Results indicate that workplace incivility positively and significantly influences end of work negative effect. In addition, anger mediates between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect. Whereas emotional stability buffers the impact of workplace incivility on anger in a way that high emotional stability weakens the relationship of workplace incivility and anger. The implications of these findings are also discussed.

KEYWORDS: Workplace Incivility, End Of Work Negative Effect, Anger, Emotional Stability, Social Learning.

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, p. 457). Workplace incivility happens quite often at work; in a nationwide survey, 10% of respondents reported to have witnessed workplace incivility on a daily basis (Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2005), and 98% of all workers that were sampled by Porath, Pearson, and colleagues had experienced workplace incivility at work (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Because of its high prevalence, workplace incivility has drawn many researchers' attention and a number of studies have uncovered its impact on targets. For example, workplace incivility was found to be associated with reduced satisfaction with the job, supervisor, and coworkers (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Lim & Lee, 2011), lower intention to stay (Griffin, 2010), and decreased mental and physical health (Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008). A recent study has identified the association of workplace incivility on End-of-Work Negative Affects and found that WI is positively related with EWNA (Zhou, Yan, Che, & Meier, 2015).

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But the mechanism through which work place incivility affects end-of-work negative affect is missing in the literature. So there is a need that we identify this missing mechanism between the associations of these variables. In the current study, we examined targets' one of short-term emotional reactions i.e. anger to workplace incivility experience with a daily workplace life. We identify that lack of a fair procedure for promotion can be considered as one of a major cause of anger at the workplace.

In addition, moderating effect of emotional stability (a personality trait) is also examined. On the one hand, although workplace incivility has been considered as an important workplace stressor (Penney & Spector, 2005) and has been linked to various negative outcomes, it has been mostly treated as a chronic stressor (Almeida, 2005). In most studies, how frequently targets have experienced a set of rude behaviors over a relatively long period of time was the focus. For example, Cortina et al. (2001) examined impact of frequency of workplace incivility experience over the prior 5 years, and the same approach has been taken by other researchers (e.g., Lim & Lee, 2011). However, given the reported daily and weekly frequency of workplace incivility (Pearson et al., 2005; Pearson & Porath, 2002; Porath & Pearson, 2013), it is reasonable to believe that targets' workplace incivility experience varies across days. How this variation of daily workplace incivility experience influences targets, especially targets' short-term reactions remains unknown from past studies. However, the recent study of Zhou, et al., 2015 has attempted to find the impact of work place incivility on one of short term reaction i.e. end-of-work negative affect but the mechanism is still missing in the literature. Moreover, given that incivility is a mild form of workplace mistreatment, it is unclear whether it can lead to short-term emotional reactions. Therefore, we believe that a within-person daily work life can help us explore effects of daily workplace incivility experience on targets' short-term reactions. We chose anger as mediating mechanism between the association of workplace incivility and end-of-work negative effect. On the other hand, studies that examined potential moderators of relationships of workplace incivility with its outcomes are limited (Sakurai & Jex, 2012). It has been suggested that individual differences might influence people's emotional re-actions to experience conflicts (Ilies, Johnson, Judge, & Keeney, 2011). Thus examining whether individual differences buffer or exacerbate effects of workplace incivility seems important in that it will extend our understanding on patterns on targets' reactions. However, only a few individual difference variables have been examined as moderators, and they were largely studied in isolation. By including individual difference variable in the current study, we may explore moderating effects of emotional stability on the association of workplace incivility and anger.

To sum up, our study contributes to the current literature in two ways. First, our study for the first time examined the mediating mechanism between workplace incivility and end-of-work negative affect. This could add to previous studies focusing on chronic experiences of workplace incivility (e.g., Cortina et al., 2001; Lim & Lee, 2011) or single incidents (Bunk & Magley, 2013; Porath & Pearson, 2012) and daily workplace incivility experience (Zhou et al., 2015). Second, we examined the moderating effects of one of personality traits i.e. emotional stability on the association of workplace incivility and anger.
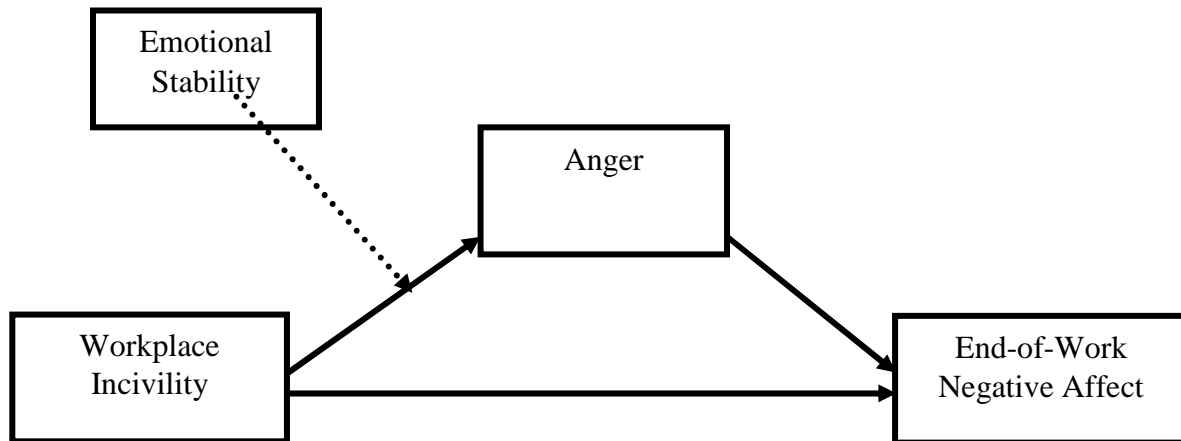
CONCEPTUAL MODEL

LITERATURE REVIEW

WORKPLACE INCIVILITY

Many employees see themselves as target of incivility at work regularly (e.g., Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Pearson & Porath, 2009). Uncivil employee may use demeaning language and voice tone, disparage others' reputations, or ignore others' requests. When employees perceive themselves as target of incivility, they need to decide how to react. Violence, aggression, bulling, tyranny, harassment, deviance and injustice each represent a related form of interpersonal mistreatment in the workplace. Anderson and Pearson (1999) referred to such behavior as workplace incivility. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying and lack of regard for others. They conceptualized this as a specific form of employee deviance (Robinson & bennett, 1995), which in turn represents a subset of antisocial employee behavior (Giacolone &Greenberg, 1997). When unambiguous intentions and expectations to harm the target or organization are present, definition of incivility overlap with psychological aggression. However, incivility differs from psychological aggression when behaviors lack clear, conscious intentionality. In other words, some uncivil behaviors can be attributed to instigator

ignorance or oversight, or they can be attributed to target misinterpretation or hypersensitivity (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Additionally, incivility is somewhat broader than interactional injustice, which refers to unfairness or insensitivity displayed when implementing organizational procedures and policies. The concept of interactional injustice is typically reserved for mistreatment by supervisors, managers, or other organizational decision makers (Bies & Moag, 1986), whereas incivility can derive from employees at any level of the organizational structure.

Workplace incivility merits serious research and organizational attention because of its theoretically harmful effects on organizations and individuals alike. Andersson and Pearson (1999) posited that incivility can represent the beginning of an upward spiral of negative organizational events, eventually escalating to coercive and violent employee behavior. The theoretical "snow-balling effect" of incivility described by Andersson and Pearson (1999) is similar to perspectives from the stress and coping literature on daily hassles (DeLongis, Coyne, Dakof, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1982; Kanner, coyne, Schaefer, & Lazarus, 1981; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Specifically, this literature suggests that when daily hassles that is, routine nuisances of everyday life are cognitively appraised as threatening (e.g., offensive, inappropriate) and occur with some frequency over time, they can impair

psychosomatic well-being. Partly because the concept is still new, little empirical research has documented characteristics and effects of workplace incivility.

END-OF-WORK NEGATIVE AFFECT

According to Affect Event Theory (AET, Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), events that occur in the workplace and one's affective disposition influence affects experienced at the work, which in turn influence work behaviors. In particular, events that elicit negative affect, such as conflict with one's supervisor or colleagues, are posited to increase the propensity with which employees engage in inefficient work behaviors. Past research has established that people experience negative affect as a result of interpersonal conflict at the workplace (Bowling &Beehr, 2006). Affects are thought to influence the way in which a person reacts because affect not only influence one's thought processes but also facilitate behaviors that are intent ended to reduce negative affect (Rusting & DeHart, 2000).

When employees experience rude and uncivil behaviors at work, it is likely that they first deplete some resources, such as positive mood. Further, targets might allocate other resources to cope with these experiences. For example, they might spend time figuring out the intention of perpetrators, devote cognitive resources to deciding what they need to do in response, and be worried about the potential threat of losing social connections. All these actual and/or threats of resource loss might interfere with employees' goals of completing work and sustaining social connections, and thus lead to negative emotions (Zohar et al., 2003). Over a working day, it is plausible that an individual who experiences more workplace incivility will have higher level of end-of-work negative affect. Porath and Pearson (2012) found that retrospective report of workplace incivility experience was related to negative

emotions. Bunk and Magley (2013) also found that individuals retrospectively reported negative emotional responses to the workplace incivility incident that bothered them the most in the past years. Sakurai and Jex (2012) found that workplace incivility experience in the past month was positively related to targets' negative emotions over the same month. Whereas the three studies demonstrated a link between workplace incivility experience and negative emotions, they did not examine people's short-term emotional reactions to workplace incivility experience.

LINKING WORKPLACE INCIVILITY WITH END-OF-WORK NEGATIVE AFFECT

According to COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001), people are likely to experience psychological distress when they face actual and/or threat of resource loss. When employees experience rude and uncivil behaviors at work, it is likely that they will first deplete some resources, such as positive mood. Further, targets might allocate other resources to cope with these experiences. For ex-ample, they might spend time figuring out the intention of perpetrators, devote cognitive resources to deciding what they need to do in response, and be worried about the potential threat of losing social connections. All these actual and/or threats of resource loss might interfere with employees' goals of completing work and sustaining social connections, and thus lead to negative emotions (Zohar et al., 2003). Over a working day, it is plausible that an individual who experiences more workplace incivility will have higher level of end-of-work negative affect.

Although there is theoretical basis for a positive effect of work-place incivility on targets' negative emotional reactions, studies that have directly examined the effect are limited. Among the few exceptions, Porath and Pearson (2012) found that retrospective report of workplace incivility experience was related to negative

emotions. Bunk and Magley (2013) also found that individuals retrospectively reported negative emotional responses to the workplace incivility incident that bothered them the most in the past year. Sakurai and Jex (2012) found that workplace incivility experience in the past month was positively related to targets' negative emotions over the same month. Whereas the three studies demonstrated a link between workplace incivility experience and negative emotions, they did not examine people's short-term emotional reactions to workplace incivility experience. On the one hand, although emotional reactions were studied in Porath and Pearson (2012) and Bunk and Magley (2013), they were measured by asking participant store call their short-term emotional reactions following a single recalled workplace incivility incident. In this case, it is likely that the recalled emotional reactions may not completely capture targets' actual short-term emotional reactions because the incident might have occurred a few weeks or months ago, and the recalled single incident might not represent all work-place incivility incidents targets have experienced. On the other hand, Sakurai and Jex (2012) examined relationships between workplace incivility experience over a period of time (one month) and negative emotions experienced over the same period of time.

Thus they did not examine targets' short-term emotional reactions, and overlooked the variations of people's workplace incivility experience and short-term emotional reactions across different days. Nevertheless, all three studies provided empirical evidence for the potential link between workplace incivility and targets' emotional reactions. In addition, previous studies using daily diary designs have linked other work stressors (e.g., injustice) and employees' short-term responses over a working day (e.g., Judge, Scott, & Ilies, 2006; Yang & Diefendorff, 2009). Building on the theoretical model and previous empirical findings, the current study extends what has been learned by examining effect of daily workplace incivility experience on targets' end-of-work negative affect. To better estimate the effect of workplace incivility on the actual change of negative affect over one working day, we included before-work negative affect as a control variable and pro-posed the following hypothesis for the main effect.

H1: Workplace incivility is positively and significantly related to end-of-work negative affect.

MEDIATING ROLE OF ANGER BETWEEN WORKPLACE INCIVILITY AND END-OF-WORK NEGATIVE AFFECT

Anger is a response to a perceived misdeed (Aveerill, 1983) that is energized by an offense or an injury for which another is viewed as responsible (Greenspan, 1988; Lazarus & Lazarus, 1994). The workplace setting can be an anger-inducing environment, and the most common predictor of anger at work is uncivil behavior by others (Domagalski, 1999). Targets may be anger that someone violated interpersonal norms of behaviors, their identity was threatened or challenged, or their self-esteem was bruised (cf. Porath, Overbeck, & Pearson, 2008). Anger has been conceptualized as a "hot" emotion (Aquino, Douglas, & Martinko, 2004). It has been found to correspond to negative events caused by others that elicit an action tendency to move against an object or individual. Angry emotions invoke antagonistic tendencies, such as punishing, or insulting another (Bougie, Pieters, & Zeelenberg, 2003; Frijda et al., 1989). Averill (1983) has demonstrated empirically that anger is associated with (a) aggressing directly or indirectly toward the offender; (b) displacing the aggression on another person other than the offender or on some nonhuman object or thing; and (c) Responding non-aggressively.

Based on these typical expressions of anger, we expect that targets of workplace incivility who feel angry will attempt to discharge their anger in similar ways. When angered, targets of incivility may retaliate directly or indirectly against the instigator, or they may displace negative affect on other individuals or on the organization to avert the risk of repercussion from the instigator (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Porath & Erez, 2007, 2009).

H2: Anger mediates the relationship between workplace incivility and end-of work negative affect.

MODERATING ROLE OF EMOTIONAL STABILITY BETWEEN WORKPLACE INCIVILITY AND ANGER

Individuals with high emotional stability tend to be calm and confident, and have high level of self-esteem and low level of negative affectivity (Johnson & Ostendorf, 1993; Mount, Barrick, & Strauss, 1994; Tellegen, 1985). Therefore, emotional stability will not only serve as a personal resources to help employees deal with work demands, but also function as a facilitator of additional resources (Rubino, Perry, Milam, Spitzmueller, & Zapf, 2012), suggesting that individuals with high emotional stability tend to experience less psychological distress when facing negative events at work.

Emotional stability and self-efficacy beliefs associated with the regulation of positive and negative emotions. The study capitalizes on previous contributions where the systematic study of individual differences has been instrumental to prove the utility of both traits and self-efficacy beliefs (e.g. Caprara, Alessandri, & Eisenberg, in press2012; 2010 Caprara, Alessandri, Di Giunta, Panerai, & Eisenberg, 2010; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, & Cervone, 2004; Caprara, Vecchione, Alessandri, Gerbino, & Barbaranelli, 2011). A large literature points to emotional

instability as the trait most frequently associated with a vast array of behavioral and mental disorders including depression, anxiety and substance abuse (Kotov et al., 2010), as well as the trait most frequently targeted by psychological treatments (Caspi et al., 2005; Chaplin, John, & Goldberg, 1988). Likewise, previous findings attest to the contribution of affective self- regulatory efficacy beliefs to promote well-being and to contrast shyness, loneliness and in particular depression, namely one of the most common and severe correlates of defective emotional stability (Bandura et al., 2003; Caprara, Alessandri, & Barbaranelli, 2010; Caprara et al., 2003; Caprara, Steca, Gerbino, Paciello, Vecchio, 2006). Both emotional stability and emotional self-efficacy beliefs appeared excellent candidates to examine the interplay of traits and self-efficacy beliefs, in view of possible interventions aimed to promote the full and positive expression of individual potentials.

Previous research has shown that people with high emotional stability reacted less negatively than people with low emotional stability in terms of well-being and behaviors (e.g., Bowling & Eschleman, 2010; Holtom, Burton, & crossley, 2012; Rodell & Judge, 2009; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012; Wang Liao, Zhan, & SHI, 2011) to experienced negative work events, supporting the moderating role of emotional stability on stressor-strain relationships.

H3: Emotional stability moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and anger such that if emotional stability is higher than the relationship between workplace incivility and anger would be weaken.

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES

The participants of this study were the employees from four public sector universities

of Pakistan. This was a field study as the questionnaires were got filled during working hours in their natural work environment and settings. The data has been collected within two months (November, 2016 to December, 2016). 200 respondents were contacted and requested to complete the questionnaires. 150 questionnaires were included in the analysis which found complete in all respect. The response rate was 75%. Out of 150 respondents 58.7% (88 n) were male while 41.3% (62 n) were female. The respondents were blend of different age groups however majority of the population was young within the age range of 26 – 33 years. The sample includes respondents having the education from Metric to MS/PhD, however majority of the respondents were having the MS/PhD degrees. The sample was also varied in term of job experience however 1-5 years' experience found more frequent in the sample.

MEASURES

The scales used for measurement in the study were 'Likert' scales which were ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) for workplace incivility, 1 (very slightly/not at all) to 5 (extremely) for emotional stability, whereas 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for anger and end of work negative affect.

WORKPLACE INCIVILITY

Workplace incivility was reported by employees, using 7-items scale developed by (Cortina, et al., 2001). Item examples include "Paid little attention to your statement or showed little interest in your opinion."The value of Cronbach alpha for this scale was .78.

ANGER

Anger was reported by employees, using 5-items scale developed by (Buss, & Perry, 1992).

Item examples include "When frustrated, I let my irritation show."The value of Cronbach alpha for this scale was .72.

EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Emotional Stability was also reported by employees, using 10-items scale developed by (Goldberg, 2006). Item examples include "I am relaxed most of the time."The value of Cronbach alpha for this scale was .71.

END OF WORK NEGATIVE AFFECT

End of work negative affect was reported by employees, using 5-items scale developed by (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Item examples include "Participants were asked to indicate how much they felt each of the following items at the moment of answering the questions: distressed, upset, scared, jittery, and afraid. The value of Cronbach alpha for this scale was .73.

CONTROL VARIABLES

Gender, age, qualification and experience affect end of work negative affect (Zhou, Yan, Che, & Meier, 2015). Therefore, these demographics variables had been included in the study. However, it was found that only education significantly affect end of work negative affect. Thus, we controlled education during the regression analysis.

RESULTS

The descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables are reported in Table 1. Workplace Incivility has been entered as independent variable to test the first hypothesis that workplace Incivility is positively related to end of work negative affect. Table (1) indicates that Workplace Incivility is significantly and positively related to end of work negative affect.

Table 1.Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	Education	4.00	.59861	1				
2	Workplace Incivility	2.52	.79410	.213**	1			
3	Emotional Stability	2.84	.59861	-.169*	.282**	1		
4	Anger	2.76	.80368	.121	.302**	.370**	1	
5	End of work negative affect	2.36	.88923	-.162*	.350**	.456**	.152	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2.Regressions Analysis

Predictor			Anger		EOWNA	
	B	R²	ΔRB	R²	ΔR	
Main Effect: WPI						
Step 1						
Control Variable		.01			.02	
Step 2						
WPI	.40***	.17	.16.49***	.21	.20	
Anger				.19*	.05	.04

***P・0.001, **P < 0.01, *P<0.05; WPI= Workplace Incivility; control variable was Education

I found that workplace incivility is positively and significantly related to end of work negative affect. Table (2) shows results of regression analysis for outcomes. In order to run mediation using Baron and Kenny method, three conditions need to be met. The regression analysis table indicates the three conditions being met, i.e. the direct relationship between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect is significant at β = 0.49*** as well as between workplace incivility and anger with β = 0.40***. Similarly, table indicates a significant relationship between anger and end of work negative affect at β = 0.19*. Therefore, mediation regression tests could be run, using Baron and Kenny method.

Similarly, workplace incivility is positively and significantly related to anger; I found that workplace incivility is positively and significantly correlated to end of work negative affect. Anger is positively and significantly related to end of work negative affect.

Table 3.Mediated Regression Analysis

Predictor	End of work negative affect		
	B	R²	ΔR
Step 1			
Control Variable		.02	
Step 2			
Workplace Incivility (without Controlling mediator)	.49***	.21	.20
Step 3			
Workplace Incivility (with controlling Mediator)	.49***	.21	.19

***P・0.001, **P < 0.01, *P<0.05; control variable was Education

Table 4.Moderated Regression Analysis

Predictor	Anger		
	B	R²	ΔR
Step 1			
Control Variable		.01	
Step 2			
Emotional Stability	.23*	.19	.18
Step 3			
Workplace Incivility x			
Emotional Stability	-.13***	.20	.18

***P · 0.001, **P < 0.01, *P<0.05; control variable was Education

The mediation analysis shows that although the relationship between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect is more significant when anger is incorporated as a mediator, the direct relation between the two shows stronger significance, indicating that anger partially mediates the relationship between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect,

leading to the acceptance of hypothesis 2. Table (4) shows the moderated regression analysis tests. The results found that emotional stability moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and anger, as the β value is significant at 0.02. Thus third hypothesis is also accepted.
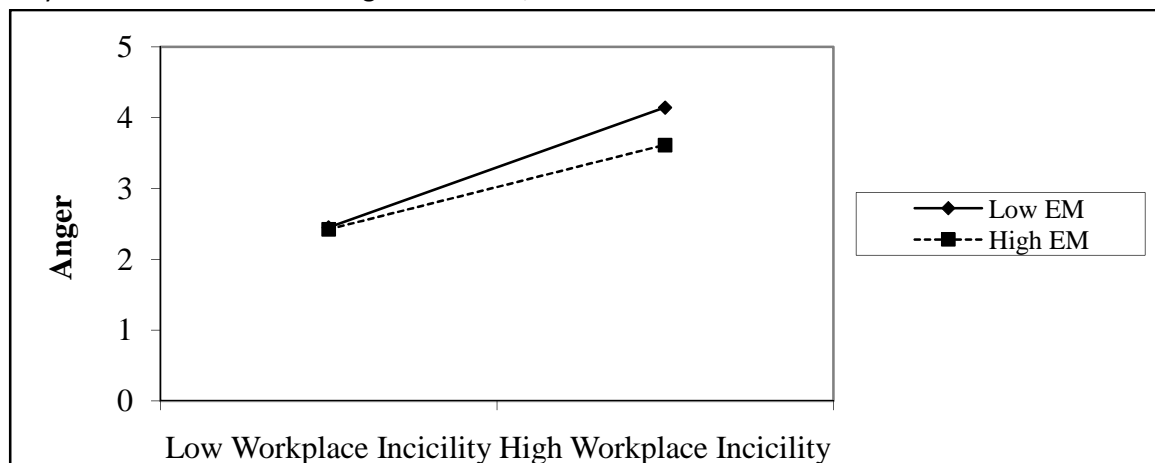
There is a positive link between workplace incivility and anger as indicated in upward slope of the bold line. The dotted line represents high emotional stability whereas bold line reflects low emotional stability. Position of the lines represents the relationship between workplace incivility and anger. As dotted line lies below the bold line with less steeper slope, it represents that in case of high emotional stability, the connection between workplace incivility and anger is weaker, while the bold line is above the dotted line with high steeper slope which shows that in case of low

emotional stability situation, the relationship between workplace incivility and anger is stronger. The graph elucidates the buffering role and direction of emotional stability between workplace incivility and anger which gives further support for the acceptance of hypothesis 3.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study was meant to investigate the positive relationship between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect with the mediating

mechanism of anger. The combined effect of emotional stability and workplace incivility on anger was also proposed. It was found through empirical evidence that workplace incivility has positive effect on end of work negative affect which is aligned with previous study (Zhou, et al., 2015). The anger mediates the relationship between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect. It is aligned with the literature that the most common predictor of anger at work is uncivil behavior by others (Domagalski, 1999). Anger in response to incivility and other forms of deviance has already been theorized (e.g., Andersson & Pearson, 1999).Anger as related to actual workplace experiences, it has already been identified that it causes negative consequences for individuals and organizations (Porath, & Pearson, 2012). In line with this argument our results suggest that anger causes end of work negative affect. According to our prediction, emotional stability also moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and anger. As when an individual is emotionally stable, there are less chances of anger as compare to low emotionally stable individual. The moderating role of emotional stability between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect is already evident in the literature (e.g Zhou et al., 2015).

This study empirically establishes that workplace incivility increases the end of work negative affect through mediating mechanism of anger. This study identified an important mediating mechanism which was previously not examined in such relationship. The current examination answers that how workplace causes anger which leads to end of work negative affect. It also examined that emotional stability moderates the relationship between workplace incivility andanger.

IMPLICATIONS

The study has certain implications, theoretically as well as practically. It not only enriches the existing literature of negative workplace behavior by providing empirical proves, the research can be useful practically, within organizations in understanding the consequences of negative workplace behaviors, that ultimately affect the performance of organizations. The current study has identified very important mediating mechanism i.e. anger between the association of workplace incivility and end of work negative affect. Yet further empirical research is required to identify more mediating variables between workplace incivility and end of work negative affect. The focus of the study was the employees of four universities. The scope of the investigation should be extended to other manufacturing industries for generalization of the findings. Moreover cross cultural analysis to the individualist societies would also increase the generalization of the results.

LIMITATIONS

The current study offered some useful theoretical as well as practical implications but isn't without some limitations also which can be addressed in future empirical research. Small sample size can be one of the biggest hurdles in the way of the generalization of the empirical proven findings of the current study. Data were not collected in time lags, due to time constraints. Collecting data in time lags, may help get clearer picture. Similarly, results are based on data collected from the Rawalpindi Islamabad region, which again hampers the generalization of the study results.

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