

TRANSLATION, CULTURAL ADAPTATION, AND VALIDATION OF THE
WORKPLACE INCIVILITY SCALE (WIS) IN PAKISTANUmama Ahmed^{*1}, Dr. Tehzeeb Sakina Amir²^{*1}National University of Modern Languages Karachi (NUML), Pakistan²Institute of Business Administration Karachi, Pakistan^{*1}umama.ahmed@numl.edu.pk, ²tamir@iba.edu.pkDOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15275018>**Keywords**

Workplace incivility, Urdu translation, cultural adaptation, job satisfaction, counterproductive work behavior.

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Umama Ahmed**Abstract**

The present study aimed to translate and validate the 12-item Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) into Urdu for use in Pakistani organizational settings. The translation process involved forward and backward translation by subject experts to ensure linguistic and conceptual accuracy. A pilot study with 50 participants confirmed the clarity of the translated items. Subsequently, 200 employees (145 males, 55 females) from various organizations participated in the main study to evaluate the reliability and validity of the Urdu version. Test-retest reliability was established over a 15-day interval with a subsample of 100 participants, yielding a high correlation ($r = 0.975$, $p < .01$). The scale demonstrated strong internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.916$), and factor analysis supported the structural integrity of the 12 items, with item-total correlations ranging from 0.902 to 0.918. Convergent validity was confirmed through a positive correlation with the Counterproductive Work Behavior Scale ($r = 0.182$, $p < .05$), while discriminant validity was established via a negative correlation with the Job Satisfaction Scale ($r = -0.187$, $p > .01$). These findings suggest that the Urdu version of the WIS is a reliable and valid instrument, suitable for assessing workplace incivility among non-English-speaking employees, particularly those in lower-level organizational roles.

INTRODUCTION

Human behavior in organizations is shaped by multiple factors, making it difficult to predict. Employees may display a range of behaviors, from supportive to disruptive, which significantly impact organizational dynamics and performance (Mathur & Gupta, 2012). While much research has focused on overt forms of workplace aggression, such as bullying, the subtler issue of workplace incivility has received less attention despite its growing prevalence and negative outcomes (Estes & Wang, 2008).

Workplace incivility is defined as low-intensity deviant behavior that violates norms of mutual respect, often without malicious intent (Andersson

& Pearson, 1999). Examples include interrupting others or dismissing their ideas (Estes & Wang, 2008). Incivility can escalate through a process known as the "incivility spiral" (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), where minor disrespectful acts can lead to larger conflicts. Although similar to bullying, incivility is generally less severe and lacks consistent harmful intent (Fritz, 2009; Hershcovis, 2010). Martin and Hine (2005) argue that incivility is a milder form of workplace aggression that does not follow a systematic pattern. Leiter et al. (2015) emphasize its distinct nature, with its frequency and low intensity often reflecting organizational culture

rather than individual behavior. Certain groups are more vulnerable to workplace incivility, including women (Cortina et al., 2013), new hires (Leiter et al., 2010), ethnic minorities (Cortina, 2008), and employees in lower organizational ranks (Pearson & Porath, 2009). This highlights the importance of addressing incivility to improve organizational well-being and employee experiences.

The theoretical framework collectively offer a multidimensional understanding of workplace incivility and its consequences. Hereby, social exchange theory suggests that abusive supervision disrupts the reciprocal employee-employer relationship, leading to negative outcomes such as deviant behavior, especially when employees perceive unfairness and organizational politics (Ali et al., 2022). Whereas, conservation of resources theory extends this by explaining how such experiences drain emotional and psychological resources, diminishing ethical self-efficacy and overall performance (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2000; Pearson & Porath, 2005). Social cognitive theory further explains that individuals tend to mirror behaviors in their environment; in uncivil workplaces, employees may adopt similar behaviors or withdraw, unless they possess strong ethical efficacy, which acts as a self-regulatory buffer against such stressors (Bandura, 2001; Huang et al., 2016; Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2010). This connects with social identity theory, which emphasizes how group membership—such as gender or race—can influence emotional responses to incivility, with emotional exhaustion mediating the link between perceived incivility and turnover intentions (Huang & Lin, 2019). Finally, social justice theory provides a structural lens, highlighting how inequities like gender pay gaps and racial discrimination contribute to feelings of marginalization and incivility, reinforcing an unsatisfactory and inequitable work environment (Collins, 2021). Together, these theories illustrate how interpersonal mistreatment, psychological depletion, behavioral adaptation, social identity, and systemic injustice interconnect to shape workplace experiences.

Selective Incivility and Workplace Dynamics

Selective incivility—subtle, discriminatory behavior targeting individuals based on gender, race, or other social identities—has been documented across

multiple professions, including law, education, law enforcement, and the military (Cortina et al., 2001; Buchanan et al., 2014). In Pakistan, women in government and nonprofit sectors report higher rates of incivility than men (Young et al., 2021). Ethical leadership, however, has been shown to weaken the link between gender and incivility, reinforcing the protective role of supportive leadership (Young et al., 2021). While most studies show that marginalized groups face more incivility, some exceptions highlight the complexity of intersectionality—for instance, Hispanic men reported more incivility than Hispanic women (Welbourne et al., 2015), and racial bias in customer incivility was found to be inconsistent (Kern & Grandey, 2009). Intersectionality—especially for individuals with multiple marginalized identities—worsens incivility experiences, requiring a more nuanced understanding of power dynamics (Smith et al., 2021; McCandless & Blessett, 2022).

Counterproductive Work Behavior and Job Satisfaction

Incivility can escalate into counterproductive work behavior (CWB), which may be intentional or stem from poor supervision (Anderson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al., 2001). CWB harms organizational functioning and employee well-being, often leading to disengagement, tardiness, and turnover (Akram & Akram, 2019; Spence et al., 2019). While companies may attempt to boost morale through perks, without addressing root causes, such practices can become counterproductive (Van et al., 2018).

Workplace incivility also directly affects job satisfaction, mental health, and emotional stability (Lim & Cortina, 2005; Schilpzand & Erez, 2016). Employees exposed to stressors like disrespect or interpersonal conflict report higher rates of burnout, disengagement, and psychological distress (Boitshwarelo, 2020; Khan, Elahi & Abid, 2021). Such outcomes diminish overall organizational commitment and employee retention (Spector & Jex, 1998).

Rationale of the study

It is need of time to identify and measure incivility because the issues that organizations, HR consultants, and researchers are confronted with is the lack of

measures in local languages to assess these characteristics. The study's goal was to make it easier to reach out to individuals in the middle and lower cadres, as well as blue-collar workers. The scale could also help with the feedback process and the making of rules about the code of conduct, deviant behavior, and sexual harassment, all of which are important for making sure that workers feel safe and happy at their firms.

Objectives of the study:

1. To translate and adapt the 12-item Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) from English to Urdu.
2. To establish the psychometric properties of the Urdu-translated version of the Workplace Incivility Scale.
3. To check if the Urdu version of the scale is reliable enough to use in Pakistan as per Pakistani norms.
4. To make it possible for organizations to use the Urdu version of WIS for employees who have trouble understanding English.

Research Methodology

Procedure

The study was divided into two steps in order to translate and adapt the Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) and its reliability and validity analysis. To start with WIS (English), the authors were consented for Urdu translation, and the scale was processed through forward and backward translation in accordance with Test Adaptation Guidelines (Hernández et al., 2020).

Pilot study

A pilot study with 50 participants was conducted to test the clarity of the Urdu translated scale. None of the items were re-evaluated and the Urdu version was forwarded for psychometric analysis.

Sample

The sample (N=200) was obtained through convenience sampling from different organizations of Karachi. The mode of gathering data was electronic and through in-person surveys. The sample comprised of mostly blue collar workers.

Instruments.

1. Consent and demographic form

The consent form was used to obtain respondents' consent to participate in the study.

2. Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS)

In this study Workplace Incivility Scale version by Cortina et al., 2013 (Cronbach alpha=0.89), was used. It was consisted of 12 items. A 5-point Likert scale oscillating from (1) Never (5) Many Times, was used.

3. Counterproductive Work Behavior-32 items Scale (CWB-32)

For convergent validity the Urdu version of the Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist (CWB-C 32) was used. This scale was originally designed to quantify detrimental and unnecessary employee conduct at work (Spector et al., 2005). This scale has been adapted for Pakistani culture through translation and validation and reliability analysis $\alpha = .87$ (Rauf & Farooq, 2014). The scale has 32 items with Likert response category ranges 1= Never to 5=every day.

4. Job Satisfaction Scale

For discriminant validity, the Urdu version of Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) by (Shahzad, 2011) was used, originally developed by (Spector, 1985), a 36-item, 9-facet survey for employee evaluation of jobs and its aspects. The reported reliability of this scale is $\alpha = 0.91$.

5. The Urdu version of Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS)

The translated version was utilized which was in Urdu language with similar number of items and response category. The reliability analysis of the scale reported that the scale has the reliability of Cronbach alpha=0.91.

Step Two

Step Two was followed to establish the test retest reliability 100 participants were selected to participate twice in the study, first data from 100 participants was collected, after a gap of 15 days the data was recollected from the same participants. Test-retest reliability was checked through Pearson correlation.

Validity

For validity analysis of Urdu WIS, the scale was presented to 100 participants along with Counterproductive Behavior Scale (Urdu version) and Job Satisfaction Scale (Urdu version).

Statistical measures

All statistical analysis was carried out through the edition 21 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Nie et al., 1975).

Results and Discussion

Demographic Information of the participant are as follows:

Demographic Variable		Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	145	72.5
	Female	55	27.5
Age(years)	20-29	75	37.5
	30-39	97	48.5
	40-49	22	11.0
	50+	6	3.0
Education	Matric	57	28.5
	Inter	31	15.5
	Graduation	44	22.0
	Masters	68	34.0
Experience (years)	1-5years	64	32.0
	6-10years	87	43.5
	11years-more	49	24.5
Income	20k-less	45	22.5
	21k-40k	39	19.5
	41k-60k	37	18.5
	61k-80k	23	11.5
	81k-1lac	37	18.5
	1lac-more	19	9.5
Designation	Labor/worker	58	29.0
	Supervisor	38	19.0
	Assistant Manager	15	7.5
	Manager	5	2.5
	Housekeeping staff	84	42.0

Item-Total Correlations. The total mean value of WIS was 24.79 and standard deviation was 10.975.

Mean	Std. Deviation
24.79	10.975

The item-total correlation(r) of 11 items of translated WIS was greater than 0.5 which shows strong correlations and statically adequate to keep them in

the scale except item no. 2 which has the correlation of 0.428 although the correlation is on the borderline, it is kept in the scale as well.

WIS item no.	Mean	Standard deviation	Item-Total Correlation (Corrected)
1	2.71	1.197	.512**
2	1.99	1.121	.428**
3	1.92	1.262	.811**
4	2.02	1.199	.691**
5	2.53	1.363	.658**
6	2.26	1.524	.581**

7	1.83	1.262	.840**
8	1.84	1.387	.671**
9	1.68	.982	.660**
10	2.06	1.302	.658**
11	2.13	1.324	.804**
12	1.84	1.223	.627**

** $p > .01$

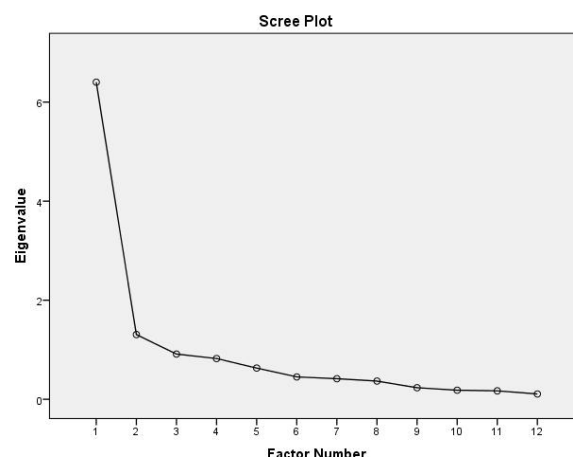
Factor analysis.

The Maximum Likelihood Extraction Method was used to assess the factor loading (Cole, 1987). According to Periantalo & Azwar (2017), a satisfying differentiation mode has a correlation coefficient greater than 0.30; but, if the number of items is

adequate, the minimum limit can be lowered to 0.25, with a significance level of 0.05. This analysis employs a significance level of 0.05 ($=0.05$) as a standard, and if the correlation coefficient is greater than 0.5 (0.05), the item is considered accurate. The assumption is that a reliable questionnaire would have items that are interconnected to form a single entity.

Item no	Statement	Factor loading	SMC	Cronbach's Alpha
1	آپ کے بیانات پر کم توجہ دی ہو یا آپکی رائے میں کم دلچسپی لی ہو	6.402	.429	.915
2	آپ کے کیے فیصلے پر شک کیا ہو جسکی ذمہ داری آپ پر تھی۔	1.307	.537	.918
3	آپ کو دشمن نظر سے دیکھا، گھورا یا حقارت آمیز رویہ اختیار کیا۔	.912	.761	.902
4	آپ کو غیر پیشہ ورانہ طریقے سے مخاطب کیا ہو چاہے سب کے سامنے یا اکیلے میں۔	.822	.629	.908
5	بولا ہو آپ کی گفتگو کے دوران مداخلت کی یا بیچ میں	.630	.603	.909
6	آپ کو آپ کے مستحق درجے سے کم درجہ دیا ہو۔	.452	.495	.914
7	آپ پر چیخا چلایا یا آپکو گالی دی ہو۔	.416	.832	.901
8	آپ کے بارے میں توہین آمیز رائے دی ہو۔	.367	.687	.909
9	آپکو نظر انداز کیا یا آپ سے بات کرنی چھوڑ دی۔	.233	.546	.910
10	آپ پر نکما ہونے کا الزام لگایا۔	.183	.668	.909
11	آپ کو اپنے غصے کا نشانہ بنایا یا آپکو غصہ دکھایا۔	.170	.801	.902
12	آپ کا مذاق اڑایا یا آپکو لیکر لوگوں کے سامنے مذاق بنایا۔	.107	.603	.910

The Scree Plot graph (Figure 1) further explains the concerned Eigen values for the relevant factors. Dropping of scree plot at 3rd factor confirms that there are two strong factors in the scale which has the Eigen value greater than 1.



In this study there are two Eigen values i.e. 6,402 and 1,307 of item 1 and 2 respectively. The Squared Multiple Correlations (SMC) of all items are greater than 0.5. As mentioned earlier, such correlation is

strong enough to keep the items in the scale.

Reliability analysis.

Cronbach Alpha test was used to check the internal consistency of the scale (Cronbach, & Meehl, 1955).

Scale	Cases (N)	Items (N)	Cronbach's Alpha
Workplace Incivility Scale (Urdu version)	200	12	.916

Test-Retest Reliability. As analyzed by Pearson Product Coefficient of correlation, the test-retest

A value of 0.916 appears to have a significant level of reliability. Here significant reliability means that the Workplace Incivility Scale has a high accuracy in assessing workplace incivility in different areas.

reliability for WIS was 0.975 ($p < 0.01$) which indicated strong adequacy between both the tests.

		2 nd Administration
1 st Administration	Pearson Correlation	.975**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

Validity Analysis.

To measure the convergent validity, the Pearson correlation coefficient between WIS and Counterproductive Work was calculated. The results showed that workplace incivility correlated positively

with counterproductive work behavior ($r = .182$, $p < .05$, and for discriminant validity Job Satisfaction Scale was used. The results indicated that WIS is negatively correlated with Job Satisfaction Scale ($r = -.187$, $p > .01$).

Work Ii Incivility scale (Urdu version)	
Job Satisfaction Scale Urdu	Sig -.0187**
Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist Urdu version	Sig .182*

*. $p < .05$

**.. $p > .01$

Consistent with a review of literature connecting incivility and counterproductive work behavior (CWB), researchers have demonstrated that employees' exposure to workplace incivility significantly predicts their engagement in degrading or withdrawal behaviors (Sliter et al., 2012; Sakurai & Jex, 2012). Beyond its impact on individual well-being, incivility has broader implications for organizational effectiveness. As Moon and Hur (2018) suggest, the costs associated with CWB underscore the need for organizational vigilance regarding workplace incivility. CWB is often used as an emotional coping mechanism to deal with work-related stress (Cannon, 1914; Krischer et al., 2010). Employees are more likely to adopt avoidance or emotion-focused strategies when they perceive a stressor as uncontrollable. Since workplace incivility is often unpredictable and outside of an employee's control, it can elicit maladaptive responses such as CWB (Lim & Cortina, 2008).

The discriminant validity of the Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) was examined by analyzing its

correlation with job satisfaction. A negative correlation was observed ($r = -0.187$), indicating that increased workplace incivility is associated with reduced job satisfaction. This aligns with previous findings that emphasize the detrimental effects of incivility on employees' emotional and professional engagement (Cortina et al., 2001).

While both employees and organizations are affected by incivility, there remains limited understanding of what drives individuals to engage in uncivil behavior or how they respond to their own misconduct. A self-regulation perspective helps bridge this gap by interpreting incivility as a failure in emotional self-regulation. Mindfulness, in this context, emerges as a key moderating factor that may help individuals manage their emotional responses and reduce enacted incivility (Hülshager et al., 2021).

Limitations

This study also has few limitations. First, the generalizability of the findings is constrained by the sample, which was limited to Karachi and consisted predominantly of blue-collar workers with a minimum education level of matriculation. A more

diverse sample from various regions, age groups, and educational backgrounds could enhance the applicability of the findings.

Second, social desirability bias may have influenced responses. Given the occupational backgrounds of the participants, some may have portrayed themselves in a favorable light to align with perceived organizational expectations.

Third, conceptual confusion between workplace incivility and bullying may have skewed responses, as some participants equated the two constructs, despite their distinct definitions.

Recommendation

Future research should evaluate the psychometric properties of the Urdu version of the WIS across a more diverse population, including adolescents, older adults, individuals with mental health conditions, and persons with physical disabilities. This will ensure its wider applicability and robustness in varied Pakistani workplace contexts.

Conclusion and Policy Implementation

The Urdu version of the Workplace Incivility Scale is a reliable and valid instrument for measuring incivility in Pakistani workplaces, particularly among lower-level and non-English-speaking employees. Early intervention and policy frameworks aimed at curbing incivility are essential for maintaining a respectful and productive organizational culture.

The WIS can serve as a useful tool in identifying early signs of workplace tension and in shaping training programs and behavioral codes. Organizations should invest in proactive measures, such as promoting a culture of mutual respect, training supervisors in ethical leadership, and implementing systems that encourage psychological safety and open communication.

Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest with this study.

Statements and Declarations/Compliance with ethical standards

Source of funding

No funding was received for conducting this study.

Conflict of interest

The authors have no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

Safety of human participants

No physical and psychological harm was intended for the participants of the study. A trigger warning was given to the participants of the experimental group before showing the self-made video.

Informed consent

Informed consent was taken from the participants in writing ensuring their right of privacy, non-disclosure of their identity, their right of withdrawal and use of the data only for academic/research purposes

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