

**WORKPLACE INCIVILITY AMONG ACADEMICS, PREVALENCE AND JOB
SATISFACTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE**

Ugwu, Ifeanyichuwku PhD

Phone: 08036052742

E-mail: if.ugwu@unizik.edu.ng

&

Obiekwe, Kingsley K. PhD

Phone: 08037373641

E-mail: kk.obiekwe@unizik.edu.ng

Department of Educational Management & Policy, Faculty of Education
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Abstract

The spate of unruly conducts and uncensored tantrums thrown at one another among lecturers on social media space within the school as well as verbal and all manner of discourteous behaviour among lecturers prompted the researchers to embark on this study titled: workplace incivility among academics, prevalence and job satisfaction in public Universities in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 5,100 lecturers, 2,500 lecturers from Nnamdi Azikiwe University and 2,600 from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University. The sample size was 255 lecturers drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique. Two researchers-structured instruments “Workplace Incivility Scale” (WIC) and Lecturers’ Job Satisfaction Scale (LJSS) were used for data collection. The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Cronbach alpha method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The overall coefficients of 0.86 and 0.84 were obtained for the two instruments respectively. The researchers with the help of two research assistants collected the data for the study. Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation was used for data analysis. Based on the data analysis the result revealed among others that workplace incivility among academics in public Universities in Anambra state is prevalent and the relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction is positively significant. Accordingly, it was recommended among others that in order to stem the tide of prevalent incidence of uncivil behaviour among academics, a workshop should be organized by the school authorities to sensitize the lecturers on the potential harms associated with workplace incivility.

Keywords: Workplace Incivility, Incivility, Job Satisfaction, Public Universities.



Introduction

The school as a human organization is a conglomeration of individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, exposures, trainings, idiosyncrasies and proclivities. These individuals although coming from different persuasions, are expected to work together as though they are from one family if the organization is to achieve its predetermined goals. Ikhsan (2020) posits that membership of a cohesive group can be a rewarding experience for each individual, because it can contribute to the promotion of morale, and aid the release of creativity and energy among the members who are the employees of the organization. One of the critical sets of employees of the school organization is the teachers or lecturers depending on the level of education. University teachers are professors, readers, lecturers and such other persons as may be appointed for imparting instruction or conducting researches in the university or in any college or institution maintained by the University and are designated as teachers by the Statutes. Haastrup and Ayodele (2019) observed that to maintain a lecturer's service delivery, apart from increasing pay package, creating opportunity for professional growth, promoting them when due and providing safe and healthy environment for teaching and learning, the respect and courteous behaviours exhibited by individual lecturers towards one another is essentially helpful-this is what Walsh, Magley, Reeves, Davies-Schriels, Marmet, and Gallus (2016) refer to as workplace civility.

Workplace civility involves treating others with dignity, showing appreciation for their contributions, and refraining from any behavior that may be perceived as rude, aggressive, or disrespectful. It also encompasses active listening, empathy, and constructive communication, which contribute to fostering positive relationships, increasing job satisfaction, and improving organizational outcomes. In contrast Workplace incivility refers to "low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others, though there is some conceptual and empirical overlap between incivility and ostracism, bullying, and abusive supervision, incivility is considered distinct (Yao et al., 2021). Workplace incivility is ubiquitous and has been estimated that ninety eight percent of workers experience incivility, with fifty percent experiencing such conduct at least weekly (Porath & Pearson, 2013).

A plethora of classifications of incivility by scholars abound but this study will subscribe to the classification put forward by Porath and Pearson (2013). They conceived workplace incivility as

either subtle or obvious. Subtle workplace incivility can come inform of giving somebody a dirty look, asking for input or suggestion from somebody and then ignoring it, speaking with condescending tone, not listening to others etc. on the other hand obvious workplace incivility involves sending a nasty or demeaning notes to a colleague, verbal attack on a colleague on a group whatsapp platforms, giving public reprimands or insults on others, making accusations about a colleague's professional competence among others. Hutchinson and Jackson, (2013) posit that a hostile workplace environment where unsavory comments or behavior based on gender, nationality, race, religion, disability, competence etc affects a worker's job satisfaction and creates an unfavorable and toxic work environment for the person being harassed.

Meanwhile, observation made by the researcher in the area of the study as well as literature evidence appear to suggest that, notwithstanding that academics in the universities are highly revered and are expected to live above board as role models and intellectuals, some still engage in this workplace incivility. This is evidenced in the noticeable frustration, mutual suspicion among lecturers, increased stress level, dissatisfaction with the work and workplace, gossips and cliques at both the faculties and departmental levels with the attendant consequence of heightened fear, discontent and japa syndrome among lecturers in public universities in Anambra state. The researcher suspects that all of these symptoms of workplace incivility among lecturers are related to their job satisfaction. Accordingly, the study will determine the prevalence of and the relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction among lecturers in public universities in Anambra State.

Statement of the problem

The philosophy of university education is premised on a tripod of: teaching, community service and empirical investigation into the ever-existing and unending challenges confronting the society with the ultimate aim of providing the solutions thereto.

Lecturers occupy a very critical and strategic position in ensuring that these expected objectives of university education are realized through greater level of commitment to their job. But the increasing incidence of workplace incivility among lecturers such as petty gossips, speaking to a colleague with condescending tone, the use of abusive words on fellow lecturer and all manner of uncensored comments and attacks on the social media space within the University communication

environment is to say the least worrisome. This has made the school environment so toxic that many lecturers remember their offices with fear, frustration and angst. There is therefore urgent need to mitigate this practice that is fast becoming a tradition, otherwise the satisfaction level and productivity of the lecturers will be adversely impacted.

Purpose of the study

The general purpose of this study is to determine the prevalence and relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined:

1. The prevalence of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State
2. The relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State.
3. The relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following three research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of prevalence of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?
3. What is the relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?

2. There is no significant relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?

Method

The study adopted correlational research design. Anaekwe (2016) stated that correlational research design indicates the direction and magnitude of the relationship between or among the variables of the study. The study was conducted in public universities in Anambra State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 5,100 lecturers, 2,500 lecturers from Nnamdi Azikiwe University and 2,600 from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University. The sample for the study was 255 (representing 5% of the entire population) lecturers drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Two researchers-structured instruments “Workplace Incivility Scale” (WIC) and Lecturers’ Job Satisfaction Scale (LJSS) were used for data collection. The first instrument WIC contains two sections, A and B. Section A sought background data of the respondents (lecturers) while section B contains 12 items spread across two clusters (A-B) to elicit data on the two dimensions of workplace incivility. The second instrument LJSS contains 10 items designed to elicit data from the respondents on their job satisfaction. The WIC was anchored on a seven-point scale of Very Frequently (VF), Frequently (F), Sometimes (S), Once a While (OW) Rarely (R), Very Rarely (VR), Never (N), while the LJSS was anchored on a 4-point rating scale of Very Satisfied (VS), Satisfied (S), Neither Satisfied (N), Dissatisfied (D), Strongly Dissatisfied (SD). Three lecturers, two in Department of Educational Management and Policy and one in Department of Educational Foundation (Measurement and Evaluation Unit), all in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka validated the instruments. Internal consistency co-efficient of 0.89, and 0.83, were obtained for the two clusters of LWIC with overall co-efficient of 0.86 while 0.84 was obtained for LJSS using Cronbach’s Alpha method. On the spot delivery method was used by the researchers and five research assistants to administer copies of the instrument to the respondents in their respective schools. Out of the 255 copies of the instruments administered, 242 copies (95%) were duly completed, retrieved, and used for data analysis. Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation was used for data analysis. In interpreting the result, Nworgu (2015) interpretation for correlation co-efficient was adopted where: 0.80 and above (negative or positive) = very high relationship, 0.60 to 0.80 (negative or positive) = high relationship, 0.40 to 0.60 (negative or positive) = medium relationship, 0.20 to 0.40 (negative or positive) = low relationship 0.00 to 0.20 (negative or positive) = very low or no relationship. The



p value was used to determine the significance of the correlation for all hypotheses. A null hypothesis was rejected where the calculated p-value was less than the stipulated level of significance (p-value). The null hypothesis was not rejected where the calculated p value was greater than the stipulated level of significance (p-value $>.05$). All analyses were carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 25

Result

Research Questions One: What is the level of prevalence of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean score on the level of prevalence of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State

	Mean	SD	Remark
Level of Prevalence of Work Place Incivility	5.11	2.18	High

Table 1 shows the mean score of 15.11 indicating that the prevalence of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State is high.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson r on the relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	R	Remark
Subtle Work Place Incivility	401	0.16	Very low Positive Relationship
Lecturers' Job Satisfaction			

Table 2 shows that there is a very low positive relationship existing between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Relationship Coefficient r, which is 0.16.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson r on the relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	R	Remark
Obvious Work Place Incivility	401	0.03	Very low Positive Relationship
Lecturers' Job Satisfaction			

Table 3 shows that the Pearson's $r=0.03$, indicating that there is a very low positive relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 4: Test of significance of Pearson relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State.

Source of Variation	N	R	p-value	Remark
Subtle Work Place Incivility	401	0.16	0.00	Sig
Lecturers' Job Satisfaction				

Analysis in Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.16) had $P.value < 0.05$. The 1st null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 5: Test of significance of Pearson relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State

Source of Variation	N	R	p-value	Remark
Subtle Work Place Incivility	401	0.03	0.00	Sig
Lecturers' Job Satisfaction				

Analysis in Table 5 shows that there is a significant relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.03) had $P. value < 0.05$. The 2nd null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The prevalence level of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State

Research question one focused on the level of prevalence of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State. The result on table 1 shows the mean score of 15.11 indicating that the prevalence of workplace incivility among lecturers in public Universities in Anambra State is high. The finding of this study corroborates the finding of Thomas and Stephanie (2011) whose study indicated that 85% of the teachers in Unites States experienced coworker incivility over the past year. Despite the time lag and disparity in location and level of education where the two studies were conducted, the results have remained consistent indicating that workplace incivility is indeed a global scourge and ubiquitous phenomena that cuts across cultural and geographical lines. The finding of this study is equally consistent with the result of the study conducted by Nkporbu and Douglas (2016) whose result revealed that Work place bullying among tertiary institution workers in Nigeria was common and verbal abuse was the most prevalent (43.9%), followed by assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the employee's job (41.2%). Risk factors capable of making a worker vulnerable to Work place bullying included work load (98.2%) as the most prevalent risk factor perceived by the respondents, followed by home-work interface (82.0%), lack of possibilities to advance (70.1%), interpersonal relationship (64.0%). The consistency in the findings of both studies strengthens the view that workplace incivility is fast becoming an unpleasant tradition in public Universities in Nigeria.

The relationship between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State

The result on table 2 shows that there is a very low positive relationship existing between subtle workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Relationship Coefficient r , which is 0.16. The finding of this study is curiously at variance with the finding of the study conducted by Okudero, Genty and Bankole (2023) on workplace incivility and employees' psychological status among staff of Lagos state ministry of home affairs. The result among others showed that rude and discourteous behaviours which are forms of subtle incivility was significantly associated with the measures of employee's psychological health. The only plausible explanation that must have accounted for the

disparity in the findings of the two studies could be the population and the prevailing organizational climate operational in the areas of the studies. More so, Jones, K. P et al (2017) conducted a study which revealed a new employee at a law firm who got dissatisfied and resigned because he was not invited to happy hour and wonders whether it is because he recently disclosed his bisexuality to a group of coworkers or because he just does not know his colleagues well enough yet to be included in social gatherings. This is a typical manifestation of subtle discriminatory behavior that can manifest in workplace settings and exemplifies the consequence that characterizes subtle discrimination. Time lag and location and/or cultural difference that may exist in the areas where the two studies were conducted could be responsible for the difference in the results of the studies.

The relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State

Table 3 shows that the Pearson's $r=0.03$, indicating that there is a very low positive relationship between obvious workplace incivility among lecturers and their job satisfaction in public universities in Anambra State. The finding of this study is in agreement with the result of a similar study conducted by Xu shio and Shalendra (2020) on the effect of workplace incivility on organizational outcome. The result shows that workplace incivility was found to be negatively significant to organizational commitment, job involvement and job satisfaction. Notwithstanding the difference in location where the two studies were conducted, the results have come to be consistent, suggesting that people feel nearly if not exactly the same way if they received or experience obvious workplace incivility. It further suggests that whatever remedial interventions that this study will provide, would be globally applicable and effective other things being equal. The finding of this study is equally consistent with the result of the study conducted by Ehibor and Enaruna (2024) which revealed that hostile behaviour among employees of selected tertiary institutions in Edo state has adverse (negative) and significant impact on their organizational citizenship behaviour. The congruence in the findings of these studies may not be unconnected with similarity in proximity of time, method of data collection and analysis and population (tertiary institutions workers)

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that workplace incivility among academics in public Universities in Anambra state is prevalent and the relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction is positively significant.

Recommendation

Based on the findings the following recommendations are made:

1. In order to stem the tide of prevalent incidence of uncivil behaviour among academics, a workshop should be organized by the school authorities to sensitize the lecturers on the potential harms associated with workplace incivility.
2. More so, school administrators should institute sanctions that will punish colleagues who bully or emotionally torment other colleagues or engage in any form of workplace incivility.

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