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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

## MODERATING FUNCTIONS OF PASSIVE LEADERSHIP AND PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON INCIVILITY - CWB DYAD

Fatima Azam<sup>1</sup> and Ansar Waseem<sup>2</sup>

1. Minhaj University, Lahore.
2. University of Management and Technology, Lahore.

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### Abstract

This study aimed to inspect the effect of workplace incivility on organizational CWB and enlightened whether perceived organizational support and passive leadership strengthens or weakens the relationship between incivility – CWB-O dyad. Survey method was used to collect data from employees of diverse service organizations including banks, NGOs, IT and outsourcing companies located in Lahore, Pakistan. Outcomes of the study indicated that workplace incivility is positively related to CWB-O and this association is moderated by passive leadership and POS. While passive leadership strengthens the relationship between incivility and CWB-O, POS weakens the same. Results of this study show that a passive leader may aggravate incivility into CWB. On the contrary, if the employees perceive that their organization is supportive then they may not engage into such deviant behavior. Through POS, an organization may be able to reduce the workplace stress which is beneficial in improving work life quality and also diminishes the psychological effects of such hazardous behaviors. Organizational norms must be implemented to create a sense of equality among people and transformational leadership style should be endorsed. This is one of the first empirical studies that uncovers the moderating effects of passive leadership and POS in the workplace incivility and CWB-O relationship in South Asian Context.

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### Introduction:-

Organizational success depends critically on the behavior and performance of its employees as they make significant contribution in the functionality of the organization (Raza, Anjum & Zia, 2014). Positive behavior exhibited by the employees has always been entailed by organizations to make them flourish. But, when such affirmative behaviors diverge from the norms of organizations, then they become detrimental for organizational performance (Ying & Cohen, 2018). Any behavior of employees that acts against the interests of the organization is termed as counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (Chang & Smithikrai, 2010). These negative workplace behaviors have been the areas of interest for organizational researchers for more than two decades, because of its prevalence and unfavorable effects on both employers and employees (see e.g., Lebron, Tabak, Shkoler, & Rabenu, 2018). Such counter working behaviors have an adverse impact on organizational effectiveness and productivity because they jeopardize the relationship between the workers and performance of the organization (Ju, Xu, Qin, & Spector, 2018).

**Corresponding Author:- Fatima Azam**  
Address:- Minhaj University, Lahore.

Due to employee theft cases in USA in 2010, companies faced loss of approximately 15.9 billion dollars (Chernyak-Hai, Kim, & Tziner, 2018). By lowering commitment of employees, reducing productivity and efficiency of employees, increasing employee turnover, these counter working behaviors act as pebbles in organizational success, and may sometimes lead to organizational failure (see e.g., Nawaz, Zia-ud-Din, Nadeem, & Din, 2018).

Literature reveals that a possible and a potent precursor of CWB is workplace incivility (WI) which is an impolite behavior that infringes norms of respect and courtesy at workplace. It refers to low-intensity deviant behavior that lacks a clear intent to harm, yet violating social norms for mutual respect (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Examples of incivility include but not limited to making condescending or demeaning comments & ignoring someone (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Uncivil behavior is widely present in organizations and around 98% of the employees reported that they experienced different forms of incivility at workplace (Schilpzand, Pater & Erez, 2014).

Due to its adverse impact, every organization endeavors to limit the occurrences and effects of these detrimental behaviors (Nasir & Bashir, 2012; Nevins – Bennett, 2016). Previous studies have investigated the relationship between workplace incivility and counterproductive work behavior (Bibi, Karim & ud Din, 2013; Meier & Spector, 2013; Penney & Spector, 2005; Welbourne & Sariol, 2017). Their result indicates a positive correlation between workplace incivility; a workplace stressor and counterproductive behavior which is in fact a behavioral strain induced in response to the stressor (Meier & Spector, 2013; Penney & Spector, 2005; Welbourne & Sariol, 2017).

However, existing incivility research has mostly focused on affective and cognitive indicators of employee outcomes rather than behavioral responses such as CWB. Studying such behaviors would better enhance our understanding of the effects of incivility at the workplace. Moreover, role of the boundary conditions which aggravates or undermines the transformation of incivility to counter working behavior has received limited attention. To fill this gap in literature, this study attempts to explore the moderating effects of passive leadership and perceived organization support - on this underlying relationship between incivility and counterworking behavior by employing Social Exchange theory. For this purpose, data were collected from employees of diverse service organizations working in Lahore Pakistan.

In the light of Social Exchange theory, this study contributes to the incivility – CWB literature by addressing the moderators which influence the strength of incivility – CWB relationship. By doing so, this study contributes to the extant literature by providing empirical evidence whether perceived organizational support and passive leadership strengthens or weakens the relationship between workplace incivility and counterproductive work behavior or otherwise. According to Mao, Chang, Johnson and Sun (2019) incivility is characterized by an ambiguous intention to harm. When people experience incivility, what conditions stimulate or mitigate which may lead towards CWB? However, response of employees/victims of incivility is determined by how they appraise the mistreatment. Such appraisals are informed by the organizational and situational context (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2008). Unfortunately, less attention has been given to both these factors that might shape when employees of uncivil behaviors understand and manage their experiences. As incivility is different from other forms of workplace mistreatment, examining the role of different variables become important.

Following the introduction part, the succeeding section encompasses literature review of the constructs included in the study. Furthermore, subsequent sections pertain to the development of hypotheses as well as the research methodology. Lastly, results of the regression analysis are reported, recommendations to organizations and practitioners are made and conclusion is drawn.

## **Literature Review:-**

CWB takes place under different names including organizational retaliatory behavior, workplace deviance, workplace aggression, emotional abuse, revenge and retaliation, antisocial behavior, organizational misbehavior, destructive and hazardous behavior & delinquency, mobbing/bullying, harassment and social undermining (Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999). The occurrence of CWB can be the consequence of some potential factors that lead the employees to lessen the extent of employed time than the obligatory time required by the organization.

Counterproductive work behavior can occur due to employment uncertainty, unsuitable appraisal system (Shamsudin, Subramaniam & Ibrahim, 2011), job dissatisfaction, jealousy, negative emotions, lack of motivation (Barling, Dupré & Kelloway, 2009), abusive supervision (Shoss, Eisenberger & Zagenczyk, 2013), traumatic circumstances and injustice (Fatima, et al., 2012). For comprehending the sphere of CWB, there are three interlinked

models encompassing its internal structure suggested by different researchers (Marcus, Taylor, Hastings, Sturm, & Weigelt, 2013) are discussed below.

Bennett and Robinson (2000) proposed a two-facet model of CWB i.e., organizational deviance and interpersonal deviance. As deviance is non-compliance with norms and values of organization so organizational deviance is aimed towards the workplace and interpersonal deviance is directed towards the workers of the organization. In similar veins, Gruys and Sackett (2003), has proposed an eleven-dimensional model which encompasses theft and related behaviors, destruction of property, misuse of information, misuse of time and resources, unsafe behavior, poor attendance, poor quality work, alcohol use, drug use, inappropriate verbal action and inappropriate physical action.

CWB as a retaliation or aggression of employees can be the stimulation of their emotional reaction or as an intentional behavior (Spector & Fox, 2010). Organizational counterproductive work behavior (CWB-O) in the form of sabotage and production deviance create direct and an indirect effect on the effectiveness of the organization (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001). Employees who are the targets of this behavior reduce commitment towards organization, lower productivity and are inclined to leave the organization causing organizational failure (Jones, 2009; Penny & Spector, 2005). One notable feature of these behaviors is that it is focused on impacting the target's physical or mental well-being but not directly on his task performance (Berry, Carpenter & Barratt, 2012).

Earlier researchers have focused that counter working behavior leads to fraudulent practices and absenteeism (Meier & Spector, 2013). Henle (2005) has reported that financial impact of theft in the organization alone is as high as \$50 billion annually. Counter working behavior generates 'toxic organizations' in which organizational member doesn't perform their tasks according to the organizational norms and guiding principles (Nevins-Bennett, 2016). This is termed as 'sick organization' in which the organization highly depends on those employees whose individual goals are substantially different from organizational goals. Such people develop "bottom-line mentality" under which they regard ethics as a hurdle in achieving their personal goals. Moreover, such behaviors give rise to conflict between different organizational actors which hamper the decision making process (Appelbaum, Deguire, & Lay, 2005).

#### **Theoretical underpinning:**

CWB entails antisocial, detrimental and dysfunctional behaviors exhibited by employees in a deliberate attempt to harm the organization and its members, as well as legitimate interests of the organization (Chang & Smithikrai, 2010). This phenomenon is prevalent in almost all the forms of organizations and its consequences become a serious threat to the functioning of the organization (Ansari, Maleki & Mazraeh, 2013). Communal cases of counterproductive work behavior include deliberately making mistakes, wasting resources, subsiding productivity, defying orders, and refusal to cooperate (An & Wang, 2016). CWB is a broader term, an amalgamation of different behaviors and its diverse nature is regarded as one of the most prominent features (Marcus & Schuler, 2004). The interpretation of this phenomenon is well explicated by Social Exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). This theory states that when employees are respected, they respond with respect as they feel indebted to do so (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Daniels & Jordan, 2019), and social relationships which are built on respect proceed with gestures of goodwill. Thus, employees invest in their relationship with colleagues and supervisors by working diligently and contributing positively. However, when the other party doesn't return the favor, a feeling of hatred and inequality is produced. Such feelings compel employees to respond with inefficient working behavior. There are overwhelming evidences of Social Exchange theory (Knippenberg, Dick & Tavares, 2007). Researchers have concluded that this theory is beneficial in understanding the relationship of employees with their co-workers as well as supervisors. Organizational research have revealed that fair treatment is reciprocated with sense of obligation whereas coworkers and supervisors' incivility leads to negative emotions and counter working behaviors (Chiaburu & Harrison 2008).

#### **Hypotheses Development:**

##### **Workplace Incivility and Counterproductive Behavior:**

Workplace incivility is a form of workplace mistreatment that has been regarded as a ubiquitous phenomenon. In the literature of workplace negativity, it has been mentioned as a work stressor (Welbourne & Sariol, 2017) which brings forth strain as reaction and that strain can be psychological, behavioral and even physical. Uncivil behavior is widely present in organizations and around 98% of the employees reported that they experienced different forms of incivility at workplace (Schilpzand, Pater & Erez, 2014). In a recent study, it is found that more over 90% employees experience and witness incivility at workplace (Daniel & Jordan, 2019). A number of researchers have

found a positive correlation between these stressor-strain association (Meier & Spector, 2013; Penney & Spector, 2005; Welbourne & Sariol, 2017). Experiencing uncivil behavior from coworkers encompassing discourteousness, contemptuous behavior, avoiding and interrupting others, refusing to help colleagues, failing to inform a colleague about an important meeting, concealing imperative information and listening to others' discussion etc. act as a stressful work situation. Uncivil behavior is not only the infringement of norms of social respect but it also engenders negative emotions in the victim employees (Meier & Spector, 2013; Yang & Diefendorff, 2009).

Such instances have an ambiguous intention, but classified as emotional abuse as they create antagonistic, inauspicious and negative sentiments in the recipients of this behavior like anger, stress, and anxiety whereby employees become frustrated, humiliated, emotionally exhausted and hence exhibit counterproductive work behavior and retaliate as a form of protest by coming to work late, violating regulations and wasting organizational resources (Meier & Spector, 2013; Penny & Spector, 2005, Welbourne & Sariol, 2017). Theoretical foundation that beholds the causal effect of incivility – CWB association is Social Exchange theory (SET) highlighted in the study of Sakurai & Jex (2011). While describing the association between employees-organization and employees-supervisor, this theory also helps by highlighting the relationships among colleagues at workplace Sakurai & Jex (2011). This theory is concerned with reciprocal relationship that what employees perceive, they reciprocate accordingly (Blau, 1964). Since, positive treatment by coworkers brings forth positive emotional states likewise negative conduct of colleagues hinders the impulse of exchange partner to reciprocate beneficially. Their satisfaction from job and work commitment get diminished which consequently makes the employees to exhibit counterproductive work behavior towards the organization Sakurai & Jex (2011). Hence, contemplating the above theoretical rationale and empirical logic, the following hypothesis is suggested:

#### **Hypothesis 1:**

Workplace incivility is positively related to organizational counterproductive work behavior.

#### **Passive Leadership as Moderator:**

A leader stimulates the employees either to be committed with work or engage in dysfunctional behavior (Puni, Agyemang, & Asamoah, 2016). Passive leadership magnifies the level of incivility at workplace by failing to endorse positive shared norms and taking required preventative action to regulate negative behavior from employees (Harold & Holtz, 2015). As employees are likely to become discouraged since they feel underestimated and are provided with no helpful direction (Kessler, Bruursema, Rodopman, & Spector, 2013) then the incivility-CWB occurrences become frequent in organization. The negative behavior of leader leads to reduced performance, lower job satisfaction, stress, turnover intention and organizational retaliatory behavior in employees (Gwavuya, 2011). So, the link between incivility and counterproductive work behavior becomes stronger when employees perceive high passive leadership. Contrarily, when employees perceive low passive leadership, then the relationship between incivility and counterproductive work behavior is weak.

Since, the affirmative attitude of a leader towards employees develops their commitment and dedication towards work and the organization (Gwavuya, 2011). Inherently, leadership plays a crucial role in motivating and retaining the employees in the organization and when leaders are keenly involved in leading their subordinates they will condemn and penalize the acts of incivility. These actions will impede the further acts of workplace misbehavior and make the employees to develop intrinsic motivation which results in satisfaction from job, willingness to stay in the organization and avoiding the organizational misbehavior (Harold & Holtz, 2015; Puni, Agyemang & Asamoah, 2016). Poor leadership becomes a significant reason of reduced organizational commitment of employees, biasness, task conflict and non-conformity from the interpersonal ethics (Bhandarker, & Rai, 2019).

This relationship is rationalized through Social Exchange theory which is described as perception of people about the shared obligations that exists in an employment relationship (Blau, 1964). An organization is considered as a combination of different contracts. One such contract is executed between employees and leader. These contracts make employees aware about their responsibility towards organization and how organization is likely to reciprocate. Breach of this contract by the organization is subjectively viewed as negative by the employees (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Zeitlin, 1995). Under the condition of passive leadership, employees experiencing incivility may feel more agitated because they believe that organization is unable to meet the promised obligations (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). This lack of predictability and control leads to stress among them (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). Therefore, presence of passive leadership is likely to enhance the perception that organization has failed to meet the expectation. Thus, it can be concluded that passive leadership will reinforce the relationship between

incivility and counter working behavior due to increased perception of lack of reciprocation in the overall system of social exchanges.

### Hypothesis 2:

Passive Leadership moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB-O such that workplace incivility will have a stronger positive relationship with CWB-O when employees perceive high passive leadership than employees who perceive low passive leadership.

### Perceived Organizational Support as Moderator:

Perceived Organizational support influences stressor-strain relationships because incivility has been discussed as a stressor by many scholars (Kern & Grandey, 2009) and CWB is a behavioral strain which is triggered by workplace stressors like role ambiguity, job constraints, heavy workload, and uncivil behavior (Penny & Spector, 2005). POS acts as a buffer against stressors and shelters an employee's health and well-being by building their self-esteem and learning self-regulation. When an employee perceives that his or her organization cares about them, respects and values their work and contribution to the organization, they are likely to feel less threatened and anxious in circumstances where they are dealing with negative interpersonal mistreatment. The relationship between workplace incivility and counterproductive work behavior is weak when employees have high perceived organizational support (see e.g., Welbourne & Sariol, 2017).

Employees experience workplace misbehavior as a rare and unthreatening experience and may not experience much stress and consequently are less engaged in hostile behavior facing stressful situations because they know that the organization is backing them up (Sears & Humiston, 2015). On the contrary, when employees are having low organizational support then incivility – counterproductive work behavior relationship is stronger because minimum assistance and patronage by organization cause them to feel more stressed, experience burnout and negative emotions which invoke employees to indulge in negative behavior as a form of protest and retaliation (Eisenberger, et al., 2001).

Social Exchange theory (Blau, 1964) encapsulates when employees are supported by the organization encapsulating justice, rewards, appropriate job conditions and supervisory support then association between workplace incivility and CWB weakens as employees are sure that the fairness and adherence to the policies of the organization mitigate the chances of workplace misbehavior. Therefore, these employees try to reciprocate in return through favorable treatment. The perceived organizational support and fairness in the procedures of the organization assure them to ignore the uncivil behavior of others and this does not escalate to counter working behavior in return.

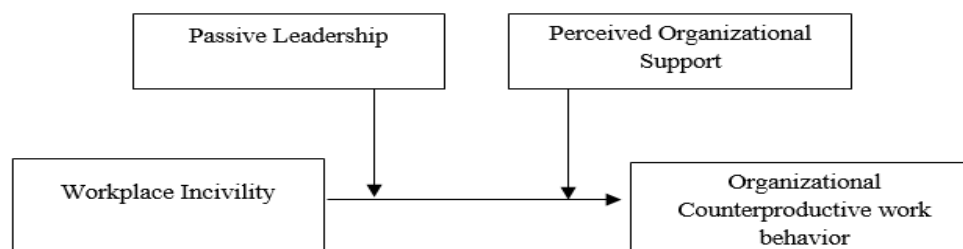
### Hypothesis 3:

POS moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB-O such that workplace incivility will have a weaker relationship with CWB-O when employees perceive high perceived organizational support than employees who perceive low perceived organizational support.

### Theoretical Framework:

Based on above discussed hypotheses, a theoretical framework has been proposed wherein predictor is workplace incivility and criterion variable is counterproductive work behavior while passive leadership and perceived organizational support are incorporated as moderating variables.

**Figure 1:-** Theoretical framework.



## **Methodology:-**

### **Participants and Procedure:**

In positivist paradigm, cross – sectional method has been followed for the collection of data. Since, occurrence of counterproductive work behavior prevails in almost every organization. Hence, employees (administrative staff) of diverse service organizations including banks, universities, NGO, IT, software and outsourcing companies of Lahore, Pakistan were incorporated as participants in this study. Research setting in this study was field survey that measured and tested the variables by collecting the responses through questionnaires using statistical procedures as compared to an experimental design (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In order to seize feedback from the respondents, a questionnaire was designed in an appropriate way and this questionnaire design was a paper and pencil response form which led the respondents to read, comprehend and respond to the questions clearly.

Consent from HR departments was attained before distribution of response forms which were attached with a cover letter containing proper guidelines describing the purpose of research. To elect entities in the sample, convenience sampling technique was adopted through which researcher collects the data according to the availability and ease of respondents (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This sampling technique is appropriate to use as it is also supported by prior literature (Khan et al., 2015). For ensuring ethical considerations, participation of respondents was kept voluntary and they were asked to not disclose their identity. From sample size of 287, total 245 questionnaires were obtained after an interval of almost three weeks adhering response rate of 85 percent. Among the received responses, 5 were incomplete and their data were not used. Hence, total questionnaires became 240. For data analysis, initially data cleaning procedure was applied then CFA followed by descriptive, demographics and correlational analysis were executed which followed multivariate analysis that covered regression and moderation was carried out via process procedure by Hayes (2013).

### **Measurement of constructs:**

In this explanatory approach, the measures incorporated for the assessment of counterproductive work behavior, workplace incivility, perceived organizational support and passive leadership were all self – reported and had closed – ended questions.

### **Organizational Counterproductive Work Behavior:**

For the measurement of CWB-O, a highly conventional measure developed by Spector and colleagues in 2006 has been utilized. This measure has been widely used in research studies (Bibi, Karim & ud Din, 2013; Makhdoom, Atta & Malik, 2019). Total 15-items from the 32- item CWB scale were included of Theft (five items), Sabotage (three items), Withdrawal (four items) and Production Deviance (three items). Participants were asked to indicate how often they commit or indulge in organizational counterproductive work behavior and the responses were verified on a 5-point scale ranging from Never (1) to Everyday (5).

### **Workplace Incivility:**

Experienced workplace incivility was evaluated with 12-item Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) developed by Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta and Magley (2013). This measure is adopted because it is an updated version of WIS and phenomenon workplace incivility has been extensively researched by the renowned scholar Lilia M. Cortina (Cortina et al., 2001; Cortina et al., 2002; Cortina, 2008). Participants were asked to specify how often they encounter uncivil behavior from their coworkers. Responses were documented on a 5-point scale ranging from (0 = never to 4 = many times).

### **Passive leadership:**

From the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass & Avolio, 1997), passive leadership (passive management by- exception and laissez – faire) subscales got measured with eight items. It is regarded as standard instrument for measuring leadership and non – leadership behavior and is widely used in several research studies around the globe (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). This instrument also got translated into many languages. Participants signified how often their manager exhibits passive leadership style. Responses were recorded on 5-point scale ranging from (0 = not at all to 4 = frequently).

Perceived Organizational support 8-item scale was used to measure OS (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli & Lynch, 1997). This measure is by conventional scholar Eisenberger who coined this construct. A number of research studies has utilized this measure (Dawley, Houghton & Bucklew, 2010; Lynch, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 1999). Participants were asked to report their opinion regarding working in that organization. Out of eight items, four items were

reverse coded and responses were documented on 5-point Likert – type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

#### Control variables:

Demographic characteristics of respondents were used as control variables including age, gender, education, marital status, employee's tenure with firm and department size.

#### Data Analysis:

Earlier to the execution of data analysis, a handful imperative assumptions and tests were applied. After applying data cleaning procedures, final sample used for analysis was (N = 235). Further, assumptions of regression analysis also fulfilled the criteria.

#### Confirmatory Factor Analysis:

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to judge the convergent and discriminant validity of each construct and to determine the fitness of the overall measurement model. AMOS was used to conduct CFA. Analysis of CFA indicated a moderate fit of the measurement model which is acceptable as mentioned by Hair et. al., (2010). Initially, results of measurement model did not generate a good model fit. Hence, Modification Indices (MI) were checked and found that there were redundant items. So, covariance was drawn between the error terms of the redundancy items. Goodness of fit (GFI) was above 0.80 is also considered acceptable (see e.g. Hair et. al., 2010). Model fit indices were achieved i.e.  $\Delta\chi^2 = 977.22$ ,  $p < .001$ ; GFI = .84, AGFI = .81, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .03, NFI = .71, TLI = .96, CMIN/Df = 1.3 see Hair et. al., 2010.

**Table 1:-** Convergent and Discriminant Validity.

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
Passive Leadership	0.81	0.67	0.16	0.83
Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.75	0.51	0.14	0.87
Workplace Incivility	0.77	0.67	0.16	0.80
Perceived Organizational Support	0.70	0.53	0.03	0.62

Note: Thresholds of composite reliability: CR > .70, Convergent validity AVE > .50, Discriminant validity MSV < AVE.

#### Common Method Bias:

In this study, data were collected at a single point of time that generates the issue of common method bias. In order to combat this, Herman's single factor test was executed as suggested by Podsakoff, et. al., (2003), in which all the items of variables were loaded as a single factor and the percentage of variance was 15 % (should be less than 50%) which fulfilled the criteria and indicated that data did not have common method variance.

#### Descriptive Statistics:

Table 2 presents statistics of demographic variables, an average age of employee was 29 years and most of them were single, male, job tenure was between 1 – 5 years and their average department size was 20.

**Table 2:-** Descriptive Statistics.

	N	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	158	67.2
Female	77	32.8
<b>Education</b>		
Matric/Inter	18	7.80
Bachelors	107	46.3
Masters/ M. PHIL	100	43.3
Doctorate	0	0.00
Other	6	2.60
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	151	64.8

Married	82	35.2
<b>Tenure</b>		
Less than 1 year	51	21.7
Between 1 – 5 years	127	54.0
More than 5 years	57	24.3
	Mean(SD)	Range
Age	29.02(8.86)	14-59
Dept. size of employee	20.53(40.65)	2-400

### Correlation Analysis:

Pearson correlation was performed and the effect of control variable i.e., employee's highest education that had significant correlation with criterion has been controlled. CWB has a significant and positive correlation with workplace incivility ( $r = .26, p < .05$ ), and passive leadership ( $r = .26, p < .05$ ) but has a negative and insignificant correlation with POS ( $r = -.02, p = .72$ ). Workplace incivility has a positive and significant correlation with passive leadership ( $r = .32, p < .05$ ) and a positive but insignificant correlation with POS ( $r = .09, p = .13$ ) whereas passive leadership has a significant but negative correlation with POS ( $r = -.13, p < .01$ ). Table 3 displays descriptive statistics (mean values and standard deviation), correlations among the variables and reliability analysis. For ensuring reliability, value of Cronbach alpha was computed as per the standard of Nunnally (1994) the least possible adequate value of Cronbach  $\alpha$  is 0.7 and the results of the study justified no issue of internal stability of measures.

**Table 3:-** Correlation Matrix

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
CWB - O	1.77	.49	(.75)			
Workplace Incivility	2.15	.65	.263*	(.77)		
Passive Leadership	1.15	.74	.260*	.321*	(.81)	
POS	3.38	.67	-.025	.098	-.134**	(.70)

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ . (N = 235); CWB: counterproductive work behavior, POS: perceived organizational support

### Effect of Workplace Incivility:

Linear regression analysis was performed to examine the independent and dependent variable which helped to inspect the variation in criterion caused by independent variable (Nawaz, Zia-ud-Din, Nadeem, & Din, 2018). Before conducting analysis the assumptions of regression analysis were also fulfilled incorporating linearity, normality, autocorrelation and multi-collinearity. Table 4 shows value of  $R^2$  which depicts that workplace incivility predicts 08% variance in CWB and regression revealed a significant positive relationship between workplace incivility and CWB( $b = .36, p < .05$ ). Thus, first hypothesis was substantiated.

**Table 4:-** Regression Statistics.

Model	B	R square	T	Sig. value
WI → CWB	1.30	.08	12.07	.00

### Dependent Variable:

Counterproductive Work Behavior

### Moderating Effects:

In carrying out moderation, interaction test and slope analysis was executed. In interaction test, interaction term (product of predictor and moderator) was calculated for both moderators by using process procedure (Hayes, 2013) followed by slope analysis which was generated by plotting data in MS excel.

Table 5 presents the statistics of interaction test, interaction term for moderator passive leadership appears significant as significance value is ( $p = .04$ ) it shows that hypothesis 2 is accepted. Interaction or moderating effect of passive leadership is significant i.e., the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB-O is moderated by PL. For perceived organizational support, interaction term also appears significant as significance value is ( $p = .00$ ) and it depicts that hypothesis 3 is accepted. Interaction effect of POS is significant i.e., the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB-O is moderated by POS.

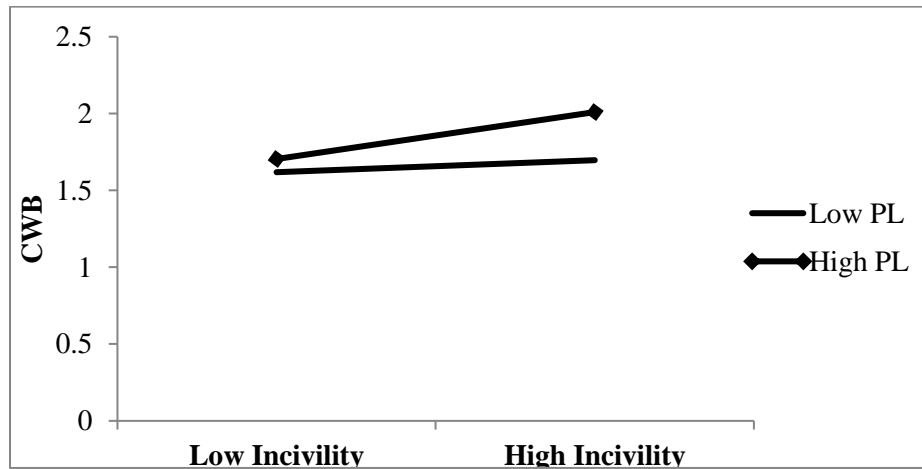
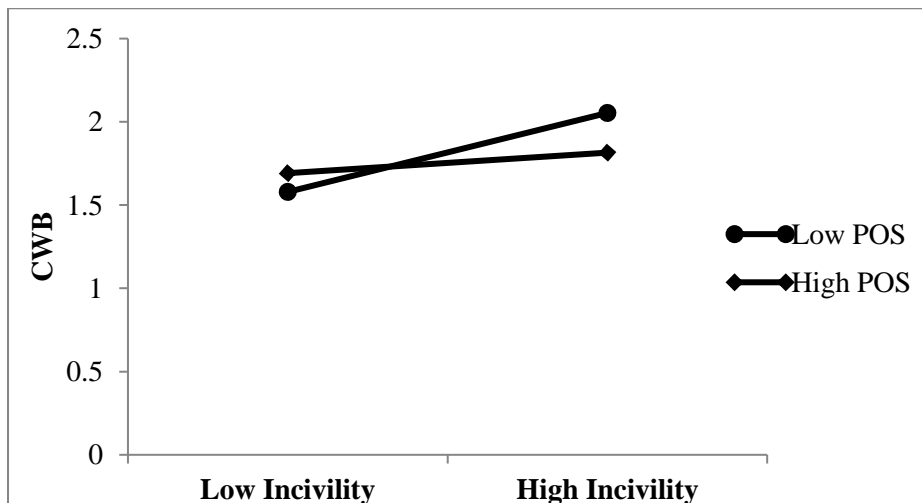


**Table 5:-** Moderating Effects.

	Coeff	SE	t-Value	p-Value	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.7573	.0321	54.8150	.0000	1.6941	1.8205
PL	.1345	.0443	3.0390	.0026	.0473	.2218
WI	.1464	.0504	2.9032	.0041	.0470	.2458
PLxWI	.1167	.0585	1.9952	.0472	.0015	.2319
POS	-.0468	.0461	-1.0147	.3113	-.1377	.0441
POSxWI	-.1989	.0738	-2.6965	.0075	-.3443	-.0536

Note: PL= Passive leadership; WI: Workplace Incivility; POS: Perceived Organizational Support; LLCI: Lower confidence interval; ULCI: Upper confidence interval; SE: Standard Error;

For analyzing the nature of interaction effect, slope analysis is performed and figure 2 illustrates that at high level of passive leadership, workplace incivility and CWB-O relationship is strong as compared to low level of PL and figure 3 illustrates that at high level of POS, relationship between workplace incivility and CWB-O is weak when compared with low level of POS.

**Figure 2:-** Passive Leadership as a moderator of the incivility and CWB relationship.**Figure 3:-** POS as a moderator of the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB.

### Discussion:-

The research in hand examined the relationship between workplace incivility and organizational counterproductive work behavior along with moderating roles of passive leadership and perceived organizational support in this relationship. Results of the study showed that workplace incivility is positively related to CWB-O and this association is moderated by passive leadership and POS as well. Findings of the study revealed the reaffirmation of hypothesis 1 i.e., workplace incivility has a positive relationship with CWB-O. Prior literature also sheds the light that employees carry out organizational CWB when they experience uncivil behavior (Bibi, Karim & ud Din, 2013; Meier & Spector, 2013; Welbourne & Sariol, 2017). Uncomplimentary events of work setting put up an effect on the emotional and psychological health of employees and stimulate them to exhibit CWB (Lim, Cortina & Magley, 2008). Social Exchange theory (Sakurai & Jex, 2011) which also justifies this association, based on an exchange relationship that employees respond towards unfavorable situations instigated by coworkers in a negative way.

According to the results, second hypothesis is supported and passive leadership moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB-O. This reaffirms that a relational contract exists between the employee and the employer, and a breach of this contract is perceived by the employee when employer (leader) doesn't seem to justify his duties (Lehner, Azeem & Haq, 2014). Passive leadership is likely to aggravate the negative consequence of incivility at workplace as employees feel that the leadership has failed to take any suitable action to curb negative behavior from employees. This may results into reciprocal negative behavior by the oppressed employee. These to-and-fro incidents negatively affect the team working. Therefore, failure of manager to prevent incivility leads to poor team and organizational performance.

Findings of this study also confirmed hypothesis 3 that workplace incivility and CWB-O relationship is moderated by perceived organizational support. POS is the viewpoint of employees about their organization concerning the appreciable treatment and acknowledgement given to them in terms of their task performance. Realizing the benefits and positive treatment, a sense of obligation is developed within employees and they accelerate their work efforts to help accomplish the goals of an organization (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart & Adis, 2017).

### Theoretical Contribution:

Counterproductive work behavior has been a pervasive and cut throat dilemma to organizations (Ferris, Spence, Brown & Heller, 2012). Previous research studies have uncovered the potential antecedents and outcomes of this phenomenon (Sulea, Maricutoiu, Dumitru, & Pitariu, 2015). By highlighting one of the strong reasons why employees indulge in CWB is experiencing discourteous behavior at workplace (Meier & Spector, 2013). This study aimed at explaining moderating conditions which could possibly strengthen or weaken the association between workplace incivility and CWB-O. In this attempt, passive leadership and perceived organizational support have been investigated as moderators and as per my information there is no study which investigates the moderating effects of these variables on this relationship in South Asian context to date. While passive leadership is high at workplace this relationship gets strong and when POS is high then this relationship gets weak. Finally, in the light of Social Exchange theory this study contributes to the incivility – CWB-O literature by addressing the boundary conditions that passive leadership and perceived organizational support play in mitigating the strength of incivility – CWB-O dyad.

### Practical Implications:

CWB is a hazardous issue for organizations (Ferris et al., 2012), and stressors such as uncivil behavior prevail at workplace and stimulates toxic reactions (Welbourne & Sariol, 2017). The direction of this research was inspecting the moderating roles of passive leadership and perceived organizational support on the association between workplace incivility and CWB-O and both moderators significantly moderated this relationship. Thus, findings of this study hold some suggestions for organizations. Firstly, an organization should eradicate the instances of uncivil behavior by condemning it and establishing clear norms and penalty for deviation as mocking and contemptuous behavior stems more harmful consequences. Secondly, working with a leader who acts passive becomes the cause of employees' dysfunctional behavior (Kessler et al., 2013). In order to combat this, an organization should evaluate the performance of a leader critically and also take the feedback from the employees anonymously about their leader since, leader is the one who is perceived by the employees as an agent of organization and is expected to guide and coordinate with employees in accomplishing the tasks and by setting clear norms for behavior and performance for employees motivate them to indulge in work heartedly (Kim, Eisenberger & Baik, 2016). Aside from passive leadership, beneficial treatment from the organization viewed as organizational support by the employees is considered a key factor that every single organization should foster and develop. Having multiple forms such as

formulating norms and policies that better approach the employees to get their job done, specifying behavioral conduct, caring about employees and acknowledging their performance boosts up self-esteem of employees. Valuable benefits of POS reciprocated by employees are indulgence and commitment with their work and they maintain intent to stay with the organization (Kim, Eisenberger & Baik, 2016).

### **Limitations and Future Research:**

Some limitations of this study are described here as suggestions for future research. First of all, in this study data were gathered from only one city of Pakistan i.e., Lahore. Future studies can be conducted by collecting the data from other cities of Pakistan as well. Secondly, cross – sectional design was used to collect the data which referred to collection of data without time intervals. It can be replaced by longitudinal design in future research to gain more insight about the causality among the relationships. Furthermore, all the measures used in this study were self – reported which were suitable according to the nature of the study but researchers can also use supervisor or peer – reported measures for counterproductive work behavior. Apart from passive leadership and POS researchers can also consider the variables organizational constraints, job ambiguity and perceived supervisor support as moderators and negative affectivity can be incorporated as a mediator in incivility – CWB relationship (see e.g. Daniels & Jordan, 2019 ; Ju et al., 2018).

### **Conclusion:-**

By integrating moderators passive leadership and perceived organizational support, the research in hand analyzes association of workplace incivility and organizational counterproductive work behavior. After inspecting the variables in a Pakistani context, results highlight the significant moderation of both variables and it advocates that when a leader becomes unsupportive and biased towards the employees then instances of incivility and counterproductive work behavior emerges and prevails at workplace. On the other hand, support of top management provides beneficial acknowledgements to employees to channelize their work efforts in the proper direction whereby the occurrences of incivility and counterproductive work behavior becomes diminished.

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