Synopsis

Workplace incivility and employee satisfaction: Developing a framework for improving customer service in high-pressure environments.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Workplace incivility is low-level bad behavior that isn't clearcut meant to hurt someone. It includes rude and disrespectful speech or actions that go against the rules for respect at work. Things like ignoring coworkers, spreading stories, or making rude comments can be considered rude. Research has shown that rude behavior at work has a big effect on how happy and committed employees are with their jobs. It causes more stress and less job happiness (Lee, 2024). For example, Andersson and Pearson's (1999) study found that workers who are treated rudely at work are more likely to be less satisfied with their job, feel more stressed, and want to quit more (Andersson, 1999).

Businesses need to provide great customer service in high-pressure situations to keep customers happy and loyal. People who work in these places often have to deal with difficult people, tight deadlines, and a lot of work. Customer service that works well can help calm customers down, solve problems quickly, and build good ties with them (Rajput et al., 2023). Five factors were found by Bitner, Booms, and Mohr (1994) to describe the quality of service: tangibles, dependability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. It's especially important for workers in high-pressure situations to listen to what customers want, give reliable service, and show empathy (Luk et al., 2005).

When it comes to Pakistan's banking business, which is known for being high-pressure, customer service is very important for keeping customers happy and loyal. Customer service that works well can help calm customers down, solve problems quickly, and build good relationships. But rudeness can hurt customer service by lowering employee morale and making them less good at their work (Ahmad, 2020). Hussain and Aslam's (2015) study found that bullying at work, which is a form of rudeness, can hurt employee performance in the Pakistani banking industry. Because

of this, it is very important for banking companies in Pakistan to deal with rude behavior at work and encourage a good atmosphere for everyone. By encouraging a culture of respect and courtesy, businesses can make their employees happier, provide better customer service, and eventually be more successful (Imam et al., 2023).

1.2. Scope of the Study

The people who work in high-pressure jobs in Pakistan's banking industry are included in this study. These jobs include customer service reps, office managers, and relationship managers. The main focus of the study will be on looking into how rude behavior at work affects employee happiness and the quality of customer service. The study will use a quantitative survey design to get information from a wide range of banking workers in different job roles and locations. This will make sure that the study shows a variety of points of view within the industry (Bamfo et al., 2018). Qualitative information will also be gathered through open-ended questions to learn more about how workers deal with rudeness at work and how it affects their lives. The study will also look at how Pakistani culture affects the way people interact at work, as well as how company rules can either make rudeness worse or lessen it (Kashif et al., 2024). By looking at these aspects, the study hopes to give banking companies useful advice on how to create a more supportive work atmosphere that makes employees happier and improves the quality of customer service (Bhardwaj et al., 2021).

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The main goal of this study is to look into the complicated link between rude behavior at work and employee happiness in the Pakistani banking industry, especially in high-pressure settings. The goal of this study is to find out how employee happiness affects the link between rude behavior at work and poor customer service. By finding effective ways to stop rude behavior at work, the study aims to create a complete system that improves the health and happiness of employees and the quality of customer service. Ultimately, the goal of this study is to help us learn more about how creating a respectful workplace can improve customer service and staff happiness in Pakistan's banking industry.

1.4. Problem Statement

How does rudeness at work affect employee happiness, which in turn affects the quality of customer service in high-pressure situations?

1.5. Research Objectives

- To investigate the relationship between workplace incivility and employee satisfaction in high-pressure environments.
- To examine the impact of employee satisfaction on customer service quality.
- To develop a framework for mitigating the negative effects of workplace incivility and improving customer service.

1.6. Research Questions

- What is the link between rude behavior at work and job happiness in Pakistan's banking sector?
- In high-pressure banking settings, how does the happiness of employees affect the quality of customer service?
- What specific steps can be taken to lessen the negative effects of rude behavior at work on customer service and staff satisfaction?

2. Literature Review

Low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect" is the definition of workplace incivility. When an individual or group of individuals believes that other people (workers, customers) are acting rudely and disrespectfully, breaching their dignity and respect, this is known as workplace incivility(Yao et al., 2022). The last 20 years are providing a substantial amount of evidence demonstrating the frequency of this issue as well as the detrimental impacts of incivility on employee and organizational functioning has resulted from the growing interest in incivility. Concerningly little study has been done on how the organizational environment affects

leadership, culture, and structural mechanisms that could help or prevent rudeness from occurring (*Understanding the Consequences of Workplace Incivility: The Roles of Emotional Exhaustion, Acceptability and Political Skill | Emerald Insight*, n.d.)

Thus, a key concern is raised regarding the systems in place to improve or mitigate the negative effects of workplace rudeness on worker productivity. Three primary sources of workplace incivility are identified by research: supervisory, coworker, and customer incivility(Chen et al., 2021). Although their definitions and contexts are similar, their offenders differ; those who engage in rude behavior toward coworkers and supervisors are internal, whilst those who engage in rude behavior toward customers are external to the company. Based on OST's presumptions, a decline in numerous important work outcomes that are pertinent to the effectiveness of the organization results from a lack of access to the resources that the organization offers and, consequently, from a lack of opportunities to satisfy needs like affiliation, esteem, and emotional support. This is because workers don't feel obligated to give back to the company (through social exchange processes) or have the developed sense of respect, approval, and caring that would encourage them to integrate their role status and organizational membership into their social identities (self-enhancement processes) (Tanesab & Park, 2020).

Furthermore, they do not believe that the company acknowledges and rewards improved performance during the attribution process. The stressor-emotion model of workplace behavior states that behavioral dysregulation is a result of negative affect. Deviant, reactive behavior results from this, including interpersonal sabotage (e.g., causing someone to fail) or animosity. More generally, multidisciplinary studies have discovered that, aside from impulsive, reactionary conduct. When consumers act rudely, one may react quickly and reflexively with hostile behaviors like rolling their eyes or speaking in an improper tone. This would be simple to do if one were experiencing behavioral dysregulation (Eben et al., 2020).

Customer orientation significantly reduces the emotional tiredness of frontline staff, according to study. At the same time, the association between emotional tiredness and customer orientation is moderated by supervisor monitoring. The impact of customer orientation on frontline personnel emotional weariness increases with the level of interactional or observational monitoring. Additionally, there is a three-way interaction model between supervisor monitoring, customer

incivility, and customer orientation. Implications for practice. Previous study offers useful recommendations for assisting frontline staff members of service-oriented businesses in reducing a variety of interpersonal workplace stressors (Chen et al., 2021).

Value and originality These studies also focused on supervisor monitoring, customer orientation, and customer rudeness as interpersonal stressors using a novel technique based on resource conservation theory. Both the number and quality of public services are currently under greater demand. Employees in the public sector require a high level of job satisfaction since contented workers are more inclined to fulfill their responsibilities and deliver quality service. Numerous internal and external factors affect how satisfied employees are with their jobs. Although we acknowledged the substantial body of existing literature on the relationship between workplace incivility and employee satisfaction, there aren't many empirical studies that have looked at whether workplace incivility affects employees' satisfaction of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) in Nigeria. Therefore, they also looked into whether rudeness at work has an impact on workers' satisfaction in Nigerian small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) (Xie et al., 2023).

Unsuitable interpersonal treatment that employees experience from consumers can be summed up as customer incivility or mistreatment. It includes a variety of rude and disrespectful behaviors, like shouting at staff members, saying offensive things to them, or unfairly condemning them. Customer mistreatment is more common in-service businesses, including health care organizations, than other forms of mistreatment because service personnel engage with customers more frequently than they do with coworkers or superiors. As a result, this kind of abuse is considered a daily annoyance that is "particularly powerful and lamentably common" in the service industry (Wu et al., 2023a).

A satisfying service encounter occurs when clients and service providers read from the same "script," which includes details about each person's expected behavior as well as that of others. Customers that treat employees rudely, impolitely, or uncivilly are transgressing societal norms. As a result, rudeness from customers toward service staff is seen as a violation of the standard protocol for a service encounter. Since the service interaction no longer follows a predictable sequence, this departure from scripted behaviors or the disparity between role expectations and actual behaviors may lead to further confusion (Wu et al., 2023b) (Lu et al., 2022) (Mostafa, 2021).

Employee job demands will rise, which will limit their physical and mental capacity and lead to increased weariness (Nasharudin et al., 2020).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

There will be a quantitative survey design used to get numbers from a big group of employees who work under a lot of stress, mostly in the banking industry in Pakistan. This approach works for this study because it lets us collect standard data, do statistical analysis, and find out how one variable can cause another variable to change (Bhardwaj, 2021).

Using a structured questionnaire, we can find out about things like rudeness at work, job happiness, and the quality of customer service. Statistics tools like correlation analysis, regression analysis, and structural equation modeling will be used to look at how these factors are connected.

A quantitative method has a number of benefits. First, it makes it possible to measure factors in a methodical and objective way, which lowers bias and makes the results more reliable. Second, it lets results be applied to a bigger group of people, which gives policymakers, managers, and HR workers useful information. Finally, quantitative research is good at gathering and analyzing data quickly, which lets you use a large sample size and do thorough statistical analysis (Bamfo, 2018)

3.2. Data Collection

A self-administered questionnaire will be the main way that data is gathered. This method works quickly, doesn't cost much, and lets people remain anonymous, which may lead to more honest answers. The questionnaire will be made to find out things like rudeness at work, job satisfaction, and the quality of customer service (Bhardwaj, 2021).

There will be both closed- and open-ended questions on the questionnaire. Likert scales will be used in closed-ended questions to find out how often and how badly people are rude, how

satisfied they are, and how good they think the customer service is. On a scale from 1 to 5, participants might be asked to rate how much they agree with statements.

With open-ended questions, people will be able to give detailed accounts of their encounters with rudeness, happiness, and customer service. These questions can lead to a lot of rich qualitative data that can help us understand the phenomenon better. People might be asked to talk about specific rude things that have happened to them or to suggest ways to make customer service better.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it will be pilot-tested with a small sample of employees to identify any issues with clarity, wording, or question order. Based on what people said about the pilot test, the questionnaire will be changed. Also, standard scales and measurements will be used as much as possible to make the instrument more reliable and valid.

3.2.1. Target Population

The target population for this study will be employees working in the banking industry in Pakistan, specifically those in high-pressure roles such as customer service representatives, branch managers, and relationship managers (Kashif, 2024).

3.2.2. Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique will be employed to ensure that the sample is representative of the diverse range of employees within the banking industry. The population will be stratified based on factors such as job role, tenure, and geographic location. Random sampling will then be used to select a specific number of participants from each stratum.

3.2.3. Sample Size

The sample size will be determined using a power analysis to ensure adequate statistical power. A sample size of approximately 300-400 participants is expected to be sufficient to detect significant relationships between the variables of interest.

3.3.Data Analysis

**3.3.1. Quantitative Data Analysis:**

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the data, including measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) and dispersion (standard deviation, range).

- **Correlation Analysis:** Correlation analysis will be used to examine the strength and direction of the relationships between workplace incivility, employee satisfaction, and customer service quality.

- **Regression Analysis:** Regression analysis will be used to predict employee satisfaction and customer service quality based on levels of workplace incivility.

- **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM):** SEM will be used to test the hypothesized relationships between the variables and to assess the overall model fit.

3.3.2. Qualitative Data Analysis:

- **Thematic Analysis:** Thematic analysis will be used to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns within the qualitative data collected from open-ended questions.

- **Content Analysis:** Content analysis will be used to systematically analyze the content of qualitative data, such as interview transcripts and focus group discussions.

By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, this study will provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between workplace incivility, employee satisfaction, and customer service quality in the Pakistani banking industry.

3.4. Framework Development
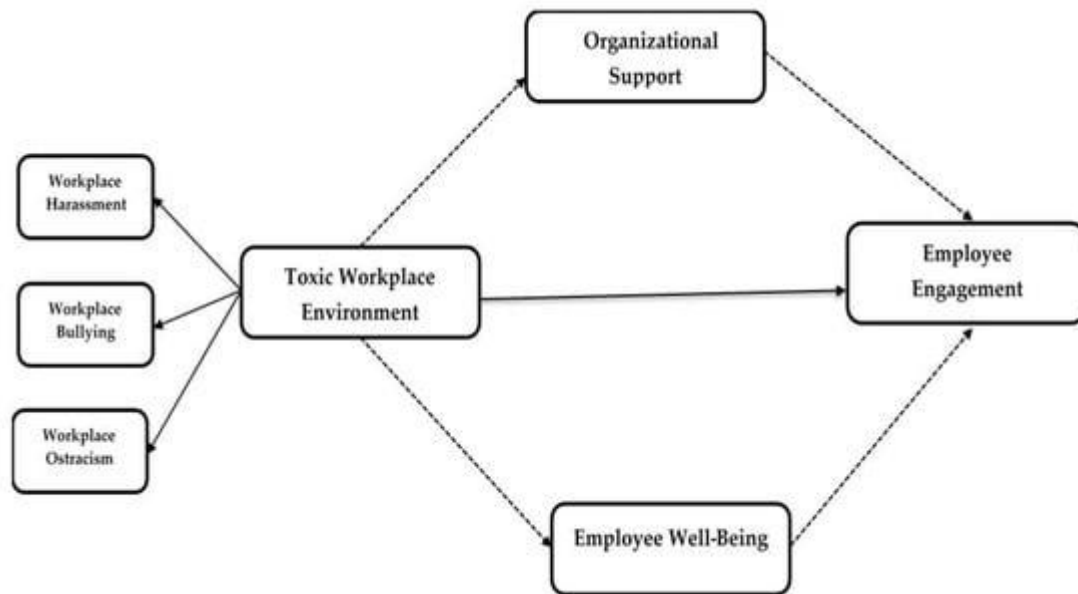
Several theories, such as social exchange theory, affective events theory, and service quality theory, form the basis of the suggested conceptual framework.

3.4.1. Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory says that people connect with others by weighing the pros and cons of each situation. People trade their time, effort, and skills at work for benefits like job happiness, recognition, and moving up in their careers. Incivility at work can get in the way of this social exchange by making the workplace unpleasant, which can make employees less satisfied and motivated (Jamal et al., 2020).

3.4.2. Affective Events Theory (AET)

Affective Events Theory (AET) says that things that happen at work can make people feel emotions, which can then change how they act and think. Being rude at work can be seen as a bad thing that happens at work and makes people feel bad feelings like anger, frustration, and anxiety. When you're feeling bad, it can affect how you talk to people, which can make them less satisfied and loyal (Wang et al., 2020).

3.4.3. Service Quality Theory

This theory stresses how important good service is for keeping customers happy and coming back. Service quality is affected by how happy the employees are, since happy workers are more likely to give great customer service. Being rude at work can make employees unhappy, which can lower the level of service and make customers unhappy (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020).

The suggested framework says that rudeness at work has a direct effect on how happy employees are with their jobs. Customer service quality is also directly affected by how happy employees are with their jobs. So, lowering rudeness at work can indirectly lead to better customer service.

By understanding how these relationships work on a theoretical level, businesses can come up with specific ways to stop rude behavior, make employees happier, and ultimately improve the quality of customer service.

The main parts of the suggested framework to reduce rude behavior at work and boost customer service in high-stress situations are as follows:

1.Incivility Prevention Strategies

- Organizations should teach their workers how to be polite at work by giving them training programs that stress how important it is to be polite and what happens when people are rude (Maslach, 2022).
- Clear Policies and Procedures: Having clear policies and procedures in place about how to behave at work can help set standards and stop rude behavior.
- Leadership Role Modeling: Leaders should treat their workers with respect and dignity and set an example of how to be polite.

- Effective Complaint Mechanisms: Setting up effective complaint mechanisms can make workers more likely to report rude behavior without worrying about being punished.

2. Programs to improve employee satisfaction

- Job Enrichment: Giving workers difficult and important work can make them happier at work and more motivated (Celestin et al., 2024).
- Reward and Recognition: Recognizing and rewarding employees for their work can boost spirit and drive.
- Supportive Work Environment: Making the workplace more supportive by fostering open conversation, trust, and teamwork can also make employees happier (Celestin et al., 2024).
- Work-Life Balance Programs: Wellness programs and flexible work schedules can help employees keep a good work-life balance.

3. Customer Service Improvement Techniques

- Service Recovery: Using good methods for service recovery can help you deal with customer complaints and make them happy again.
- Empowering employees: Giving workers the power to make choices and figure out issues can make them happier at work and improve their customer service.
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems: Companies can keep track of their contacts with customers, figure out what those customers want, and provide better service by using CRM systems (Aljawarneh et al., 2020).
- Continuous Training and Development: Giving workers opportunities for ongoing training and development can help them stay up to date on the newest customer service trends and methods.

Companies can make the workplace happier, boost employee satisfaction, and eventually improve the quality of customer service by using these strategies.

3.5. Framework Implementation

Using this framework in organizations with a lot of stress needs a planned and organized method. Here are the steps that need to be taken:

3.5.1. Commitment to leadership:

Sponsorship by an executive: Get strong support from the top of the company to lead the project and give it the resources it needs (Bolliger, 2022).

Goals and vision: Make it clear what the company wants its work setting to be like and how committed it is to providing excellent customer service.

3.5.2. Needs Analysis:

Figure out where the pain is: Surveys, conversations, and focus groups can help you figure out where rudeness and bad customer service are most common (Bolliger, 2022).

Look at the culture of the organization: Check out the company's current culture and see if there are any things that might lead to rudeness or poor customer service.

3.5.3. Training and growth:

Incivility Awareness Training: Teach all of your workers how to spot and deal with rude behavior, including how to help someone who is being rude (Ahamd, 2020)

Customer Service Skills Training: Teach your workers the skills they need to deal with customers well, such as how to actively listen, solve problems, and show empathy.

Leadership Training: Teach leaders how to be fair, make the workplace a good place to be, and deal with rude people in a polite way (Bolliger, 2022).

3.5.4. Making policies and procedures:

What the Code Says: Come up with a complete code of conduct that spells out what kind of behavior is expected and how to deal with rudeness.

Standards for Customer Service: Set clear standards for customer service, such as how to respond, how to solve problems, and how to communicate.

Procedures for Handling Complaints: Set up a formal way to deal with customer comments and complaints (Rajput et al., 2023)

3.5.5. Performance Management: Performance Metrics:

Make performance metrics that include both measures of how happy customers and employees are with the work (Imam, 2023)

Reviews of Performance: Include tests of politeness and customer service in reviews of performance.

Promotional Programs: Use promotional programs to give workers rewards for great customer service and polite behavior.

3.5.6. Help for employees:

Employee assistance programs (EAPs): Provide your workers with EAPs so they can get private counseling and help (Lee, 2024)

Techniques for Dealing with Stress: Teach people how to deal with stress through activities like mindfulness and relaxation.

Initiatives for Work-Life Balance: Set up policies and programs, like health programs and flexible work schedules, that help employees balance their work and personal lives.

3.5.7. Monitoring and evaluating all the time:

Examination on a regular basis: Do regular polls and surveys to find out how happy your employees are, how happy your customers are, and how common rudeness is (Luk, 2005)

Data Analysis: Look at the data to find patterns and places where things could be better.

Changes and improvements: Based on the results of the review, make any changes to the framework that are needed.

By doing these useful things, organizations with a lot of stress can use the framework to make the workplace happier, make employees happier, and improve the quality of customer service.

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