

**The Influence of Workplace Incivility on Creativity and Performance: A Study in
India's Construction Sector**

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Summary

This study explores the impact of Workplace Incivility (WpI) on Creativity (CRVTY) and Individual Work Performance (IWP), with Interpersonal Conflict (IC) as a mediator. It also examines the moderating role of General Self-Efficacy (GSE) in the IC-CRVTY and IC-IWP relationships. Data were collected from 542 employees in India's construction industry using time-lagged surveys and analyzed with IBM SPSS Statistics 22 and Amos 24. Findings indicate that IC partially mediates both WpI-CRVTY and WpI-IWP relationships, while GSE significantly moderates these associations. Notably, employees with high GSE perform better and exhibit greater creativity regardless of IC levels. This study uniquely contributes to research on WpI and IC in the construction sector, emphasizing the role of GSE in mitigating negative effects and enhancing employee performance and creativity.

Keywords: Workplace Incivility, Interpersonal Conflict, Creativity, Individual Work Performance, General Self-Efficacy

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Introduction

The construction industry is a cornerstone of India's economy (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2023), contributing 9% to the GDP (Invest India, 2023) and projected to contribute 13% by 2025, positioning India as the third-largest construction market globally (Invest India, 2023; NDTV, 2023). It is crucial to focus on the growth of this industry, as the sector being the second-largest employer and the sixth-largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2023 (Invest India, 2023), is integral to achieving India's ambitious goal of a \$5 trillion economy by 2025 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2023).

Despite its importance, the construction industry faces challenges with stagnant productivity (Blanco, Janauskas and Ribeirinho, 2016). Enhancing productivity and fostering creativity among employees are essential for the industry's sustained growth. However, Workplace Incivility (WpI) and Interpersonal Conflict (IC) are identified as significant impediments to employee performance (Rahim and Cosby, 2016) and creativity (Sharifirad, 2016) of employees.

WpI is reported to have significantly increased in workplaces (Park and Martinez, 2022) causing substantial problems for employees and organizations alike (Schilpzand, De Pater and Erez, 2016; He *et al.*, 2021; Han *et al.*, 2022). WpI comprises "seemingly inconsequential words and deeds that violate conventional norms of workplace conduct" (Pearson and Porath, 2009, p. 21). It consists of behaviours such as paying little attention to others' opinions, personal attacks, excluding some employees from work activities, sarcasm, hostile stares, disparaging tones, demeaning in front of others, leaving a jammed printer, etc. (Johnson and Indvik, 2001; Lim, Cortina and Magley, 2008; Cortina *et al.*, 2017; Irum, Ghosh and Pandey, 2020; Qian, Lim and Gao, 2022). The perception of uncivil workplace behaviour depends on how the "ambiguous intents" make the victims feel. The ambiguity refers to the different interpretations of what constitutes WpI (Andersson and Pearson, 1999). WpI can have similar damaging effects on the psychology of employees as those posed by harassment or other forms of workplace mistreatment (Loh and Loi, 2018). Despite two decades of research, incidents of WpI continue to rise in organizations (Manzoor, Manzoor and Khan, 2020; Kuriakose, Paul V and Bishwas, 2023).

WpI is known to trigger IC (Andersson and Pearson, 1999; Zahid and Nauman, 2023), which involves hostile or aggressive interactions (Ilies *et al.*, 2011; Parent-Lamarche and Saade, 2023). IC negatively impacts employee performance, general well-being, and life outside of work (Notelaers *et al.*, 2018; Bonaccio, Lapierre and O'Reilly, 2019; Kuriakose *et al.*, 2019; Ye, Liu and Gu, 2019), and can cause serious psychological and physiological issues (Dawson, O'Brien and Beehr, 2016; Lin *et al.*, 2016).

Based on the literature reviewed and following the concept of the Conservation of Resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989), we argue that employees experiencing resource-draining scenarios, such as incivility, in their work environment would be motivated to reciprocate with negative behaviours by intentionally underperforming. This allows them to conserve time and energy for tasks they consider more important, ultimately harming their organization. Performance, a heavily researched work-related criterion (Devonish and Greenidge, 2010; Shaukat, Yousaf and Sanders, 2017), encapsulates an employee's contribution to achieving an organization's strategic goals (Schat and Frone, 2011; Zhang *et al.*, 2014; Shaukat, Yousaf and Sanders, 2017). This study examines Individual Work Performance (IWP), which is conceptualized as "things that people actually do, actions they take, that contribute to the

organization's goals" (Campbell and Wiernik, 2015). IWP focuses on the behavioural aspects of employees rather than outcomes as a result of the behaviours (Koopmans *et al.*, 2012).

Though research that identifies the negative effect of IC on employee performance is evolving (Shaukat, Yousaf and Sanders, 2017; Ye, Liu and Gu, 2019), it is yet not clear how IC negatively affects employee performance (Kundi and Badar, 2021). Additionally, past research explains that the effect of IC varies among individuals, hinting at the possible effect of moderators intervening in the relationship between IC and its outcomes (Kuriakose *et al.*, 2019; Kuriakose and S, 2023). Therefore, we test the moderating role of General Self-Efficacy (GSE) in the relationships between IC and the creativity of employees, and IC and IWP. GSE is a motivational trait and is defined as "individuals' perception of their ability to perform across a variety of different situations" (Judge *et al.*, 1998, p. 170). GSE is about focusing on the capability of handling obstructions and difficulties along the path (Zhang, Gao and Liu, 2022) and having the mindset to perform well even when situations are not in favour.

Employee creativity, crucial for organizational competitiveness, involves generating novel and useful ideas, solutions, products, and processes (Anderson, Potočnik and Zhou, 2014; Madjar, Oldham and Pratt, 2017; Jafri, 2020). Interestingly, research shows that individual creativity is guided by social processes as people (coworkers, supervisors etc.) can influence the creativity of employees (Anderson, Potočnik and Zhou, 2014; Amabile and Pratt, 2016). Employees who deal with WpI become less creative in their work endeavours (Zhan, Li and Luo, 2019). Also, past research demonstrated a negative relationship between IC and the creativity of employees (Hu *et al.*, 2017; Chen *et al.*, 2019).

The underpinnings of the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll *et al.*, 2018) guide us in understanding that employees who face adverse, resource-draining work conditions, turn away from productive work behaviours as they prioritize conserving their energy for other necessary activities (Hobfoll, 2001; Abbas *et al.*, 2014). IC generates strong negative emotions (Pooja, De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2016) and this emotion-based conflict is likely to lead to decreased creativity (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2021) as employees will focus on protecting their energy rather than generating novel ideas that might be disregarded by colleagues and supervisors anyway (Hobfoll and Shirom, 2000; Shaukat, Yousaf and Sanders, 2017; De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2021). Thus, we argue that when employees face IC in their workplaces, they tend to be less creative in their work endeavours.

Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

The Conservation of Resources Theory (COR)

The COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) posits that employees experiencing unfavourable, resource-draining working conditions will typically reduce their engagement in productive, discretionary job activities to conserve personal energy for essential tasks (Hobfoll, 2001; Abbas *et al.*, 2014). According to COR theory, individuals have finite resources that are influenced by their organizational environment, advocating for the restoration and protection of lost resources (Zahid and Nauman, 2023). Stressors in the environment deplete resources, thus people attempt to avoid them to protect their resources (Hobfoll, 1989).

WpI researchers took the help of COR theory to elucidate that WpI results in victims losing their mental and emotional resources because of unfavourable work conditions, such as

rude coworkers who intentionally try to create hurdles in their work endeavours (Li, Jiang and Xu, 2020; Anjum *et al.*, 2021; Zahid and Nauman, 2023). Consequently, the victims exhibit behaviours that gradually lead to interpersonal conflict (IC) in their workplaces. This cascade of events eventually results in an environment of low creativity and performance. Therefore, based on COR theory, we theorize that under such conditions of WpI, employee creativity and performance will decline as victims conserve their personal energy for activities they deem essential (Hobfoll, 2001; Abbas *et al.*, 2014; De Clercq, Fatima and Jahanzeb, 2022).

Workplace Incivility

A key indicator of WpI is disrespectful behaviour that disturbs the self-esteem and dignity of employees (Vasconcelos, 2020). Side effects of WpI include decreased work quality, reduced time spent at work, and intentionally putting low effort at work (Porath and Pearson, 2013). Valuable work hours are lost as employees spend time worrying about incivility and devising strategies to avoid offenders (Porath and Pearson, 2013; Vasconcelos, 2020). Researchers associate WpI with issues of interpersonal behaviour (Hodgins, MacCurtain and Mannix-McNamara, 2014). If organizations tolerate incivility (Hatmaker, Smith and Hassan, 2024), employees may feel compelled to distance themselves from their workplaces, even if they enjoy their work (Andersson and Bateman, 1997; Megeirhi, Ribeiro and Woosnam, 2020). Alarming, WpI is now prevalent in nearly all workplaces (Vasconcelos, 2020), leading to devastating consequences for employees and organizations (He *et al.*, 2021). Indian managers are sensing the compulsion to tackle the growing WpI situation that is costing Indian businesses in terms of decreased productivity (Mehra, 2011).

Interpersonal Conflict

IC is said to exist when one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party (Wall and Callister, 1995; Kundi *et al.*, 2023), resulting in poor relationships among colleagues (Losada-Otálora, Peña-García and Sánchez, 2021). It is important to understand that the individuals involved in an IC situation can be at the same level and have similar abilities (De Wit, Greer and Jehn, 2012; Losada-Otálora, Peña-García and Sánchez, 2021). IC creates unpleasant experiences in the workplace (Dijkstra, Beersma and Evers, 2011). Jaramillo *et al.* (2011) referred to IC as particularly distressing among various organizational stressors and noted that it is very common in workplaces (Kundi and Badar, 2021). IC significantly impacts project outcomes (Senaratne and Udawatta, 2013; Brockman, 2014), with managers spending about 30-42 per cent of their time intervening in IC scenarios among employees (Zhang and Huo, 2015). Several researchers have expressed concerns about the impact of IC on construction project performance (Brockman, 2014; Zhang and Huo, 2015).

Creativity

Workplace creativity, simply defined, is “the process of generating novel/original ideas that are useful” (Hughes *et al.*, 2018, p. 551). Contemporary organizations must foster employee creativity (Anderson *et al.*, 2014; Cai *et al.*, 2019; Chaubey and Sahoo, 2022) to gain a competitive edge (Hou *et al.*, 2024). Creativity is also considered essential for organizational survival (Ghafoor and Haar, 2022). In the construction sector, creativity spans from building sustainable structures and streamlining projects to leveraging technological tools such as Computer-Aided Design (CAD), Building Information Management (BIM), and Digital Twin technology. It also involves choosing the right construction approaches for various weather conditions.

Given that construction projects require the joint efforts of multiple specialists, continuous creativity is essential to address diverse challenges. In this context, WpI and IC are particularly detrimental, as they harm relationships among the different stakeholders involved.

Individual Work Performance

IWP refers to actions or behaviours that are relevant to the objectives of the organization (Campbell, 1990). WpI and IC are known to lead to counterproductive work behaviours among employees (Kundi and Badar, 2021; Henderson and Matthews, 2023). Counterproductive work behaviours in most cases remain personal to employees, and supervisors or peers might not be able to judge these behaviours (Dalal, 2005). Additionally, evaluating self-reports of behaviour has proven more practical in some situations than peer or supervisor ratings (Berry, Carpenter and Barratt, 2012). While previous research indicated that individuals tend to rate themselves positively, newer studies suggest that self-evaluations can be beneficial when employees do not feel pressured to overrate their contributions (van der Heijden and Nijhof, 2004; Tripathi, 2023). Furthermore, current research supports using self-reported performance measures to meet contextual needs (Tripathi, 2023). Given the intricate challenges of construction projects, this study employs IWP as a measure to gauge employee performance.

General Self-Efficacy

GSE is defined as “one’s estimate of one’s capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to exercise general control over events in one’s life” (Judge, Locke, et al., 1998, p. 19). Wood and Bandura (1989) initially defined self-efficacy as beliefs in one’s capabilities to meet situational demands. Bandura (1995) later conceptualized it as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations”. However, the reliance on terms like “given situational demands” or “prospective situations” has faced criticism in the literature (Gist and Mitchell, 1992; Lee and Bobko, 1994; Marcionetti and Rossier, 2021).

Furthermore, Bandura (1977) suggested that self-efficacy is domain-specific, whereas GSE is not tied to any particular domain (Sari and Bayazlt, 2017). Consequently, researchers now prefer to use the construct GSE (Chen et al., 2001; Judge, Erez, et al., 1998), which refers to an individual’s general problem-solving and coping abilities when confronted with various challenging, unexpected, demanding, and novel situations (Marcionetti and Rossier, 2021). GSE enables individuals to adapt more easily to their work by instilling the belief that they can overcome obstacles (Savickas, 2005).

Employees with high GSE can fulfill diverse job requirements and are flexible enough to provide additional support based on their perceived general capabilities (Abuelhassan and AlGassim, 2022; Miles and Maurer, 2012).

The Mediating Role of Interpersonal Conflict in the Workplace Incivility-Creativity Relationship

Workplace incivility contributes to interpersonal conflict (IC) among employees (Irfan et al., 2020; Zahid and Nauman, 2023). These conflict situations, whether directly experienced or observed, threaten individuals to avoid unpleasant social interactions (Paletz et al., 2014).

Consequently, these threats impede individuals' ability to navigate complexity and engage in creative endeavours at work (Friedman and Förster, 2002, 2005; Miron-Spektor et al., 2011). IC evokes strong negative emotions (Pooja et al., 2016). Drawing from the COR theory, it becomes evident that when employees face IC situations, their personal resource reservoirs get depleted to an extent that restricts them from engaging in creativity that can add to their organizational well-being (Chen et al., 2011; De Clercq et al., 2020; Hobfoll, 2001). Moreover, in this state of diminished energy, employees struggle to advocate for and defend their novel ideas (De Clercq et al., 2020; Hu et al., 2017; Quinn et al., 2012). Additionally, research suggests that IC fosters frustration and disappointment among employees, diminishing their inclination towards creative behaviours (Chen et al., 2011; De Clercq et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). Hence, we posit the following:

Hypothesis H1: IC mediates the relationship between WpI and creativity

The Mediating Role of Interpersonal Conflict in the Workplace Incivility-Individual Work Performance Relationship

Research suggests that WpI breeds IC (Irfan et al., 2020; Zahid and Nauman, 2023). In line with the COR theory, it can be deciphered that the adverse effects of IC prompt employees to redirect their cognitive focus towards interpersonal issues, diverting their time, commitment, and energy away from task performance (Bouckennooghe et al., 2014; Shaukat et al., 2017). Performance hinges on the congenial relationships among people concerning how they comply and cooperate (Shaukat et al., 2017). WpI undermines employees' self-esteem and dignity (Vasconcelos, 2020), often culminating in IC (Zahid and Nauman, 2023). One of the most detrimental consequences of IC is the generation of negative emotions among participants, which can reduce individuals' attention span and subsequently decrease performance (Frijda, 1994; Zhang and Huo, 2015). The disturbed mental states resulting from IC are likely to further hinder employee performance (Cortina et al., 2001; Torkelson et al., 2016; Ye et al., 2019). Furthermore, past research highlights that IC positively mediates the stressor-strain relationship (Girardi et al., 2015; Zahid and Nauman, 2023). In this study, WpI is assumed to be the stressor and the resultant strain is the performance of employees. Therefore, based on the aforementioned discussion, we posit the following:

Hypothesis H2: IC mediates the relationship between WpI and IWP.

The Moderating Role of General Self-Efficacy

In this study, we utilize the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) to examine how general self-efficacy (GSE) moderates the impact of workplace incivility (WpI) on employee outcomes. According to COR theory, employees facing challenges such as IC (Kundi et al., 2023; Kundi and Badar, 2021; Prince et al., 2023) may tap into their personal resources to mitigate resource depletion (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2021; Hobfoll, 2001). IC is perceived as a loss of resources (Prince et al., 2023), and following the "loss begets loss" principle (Hobfoll, 2001), researchers suggest that IC leads to further losses, diminishing employees' energy, motivation, and concentration (Shaukat et al., 2017). These losses, in turn, are likely to adversely affect employee performance (Ye et al., 2019; Zhang and Huo, 2015) and creativity (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2021; Lee et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2011) of employees.

GSE, as a motivational trait, enables individuals to navigate stressful and challenging experiences (Ekinici and Koç, 2023; Luszczynska et al., 2005), making it a valuable personal resource for overcoming professional challenges (Marcionetti and Rossier, 2021). Therefore, we argue that employees with high GSE will demonstrate resilience in maintaining their performance and creativity despite facing IC situations. This study aligns with previous research exploring the moderating role of personal resources in employees dealing with IC scenarios (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2021). Therefore, in this study, we also test the moderating role of GSE in the i. IC-IWP and ii. IC-CRVTY relationships respectively and posit the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis H3: GSE will moderate the relationship between IC and CRVTY such that the relationship is weaker at higher levels of GSE.

Hypothesis H4: GSE will moderate the relationship between IC and IWP such that the relationship is weaker at higher levels of GSE.

The theoretical framework is shown in Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Methods

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

Data was collected using a convenient sampling technique over two periods of time from employees working with various organizations in the Construction Industry in India. The study design was such that in Time 1 (T1), participants responded to demographic information (provided in Supplementary Table I) and the measures of WpI, IC and GSE. Next, after a gap of 30 days, at Time 2 (T2), the same participants responded to the measure of CRVTY and IWP. The gap in collecting data for the mediating variable (IC) and the corresponding effects (CRVTY, IWP) is followed according to the suggestions of Stone-Romero and Rosopa (2007) so that the effect of IC on CRVTY and IWP can be assessed accurately.

At T1, questionnaires were sent out to 700 full-time employees of different organizations in India, and we received 610 responses (response rate – 87.14%). The same participants were approached for participating in the second part of the survey at Time 2 (T2). At T2, 567 responses were received (response rate – 92.95%). After the exclusion of outliers and incomplete responses, we were left with 542 valid responses (response rate – 88.85%). The analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 22 and IBM SPSS Amos Version 24 software.

Measures

Workplace Incivility. WpI was measured using a twelve-item scale developed by Cortina et al. (2013). A sample item is “During the past year, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers targeted you with anger outbursts or “temper tantrums”?”

Interpersonal Conflict. IC was measured using the method adopted by Ilies et al. (2011) using five items. A sample item is “Supervisor showed disapproval of the way I handled a work situation.”

Creativity. It was measured using a twelve-item scale developed by Zhou and George (2001). A sample item of the scale is “I develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas”.

Individual Work Performance. Fourteen items for measuring Contextual Performance were used from the individual work performance questionnaire (IWPQ) developed by Koopmans et al. (2012). Participants were asked to choose their answers based on their perceived work performance in the past three months. A sample item is “I managed to plan my work so that it was done on time.”

General self-efficacy. GSE was measured using an eight-item scale developed by Chen et al. (2001). A sample item of the scale is “Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.” The scale measures an individual’s perceived level of GSE.

Control Variables. We controlled for the influence of employees’ gender, age, tenure (Tripathi, 2023), level of education (Volery and Tarabashkina, 2021) and organizational position (Ye et al., 2020) as has been done in past studies.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Insert Table I about here

All the main variables under the study significantly correlated with each other ($p < 0.01$). Means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables are presented in Table I.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA)

We conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) using SPSS AMOS version 24 to assess the validity of our measurement model. Each item was loaded on its relative factor, and the results showed that factor loadings on the specified factors were significant, which meant that the items were acceptable indicators of the designated latent variables. As per the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999), the prescribed threshold values of χ^2/df (< 3), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; > 0.90), Comparative Fit Index (CFI; > 0.90), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR; < 0.09) and Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA; < 0.06) were taken into consideration to evaluate the model fits. The hypothesized three-factor models for both the mediation analyses yielded the best fits to the data when: i. WpI, IC and CRVTY [$\chi^2/df = 2.344$, CFI = 0.988, TLI = 0.984, SRMR = 0.010, RMSEA = 0.050] and ii. WpI, IC and IWP [$\chi^2/df = 1.861$, CFI = 0.991, TLI = 0.989, SRMR = 0.009, RMSEA = 0.040] loaded on their respective factors. Similarly, for both the moderation analyses, the hypothesized three-factor models reflected best fits to the data when: i. IC, GSE, CRVTY [$\chi^2/df = 1.456$, CFI = 0.998, TLI = 0.995, SRMR = 0.004, RMSEA = 0.029] and ii. IC, GSE and IWP [$\chi^2/df =$

1.767, CFI = 0.995, TLI = 0.992, SRMR = 0.005, RMSEA = 0.038] loaded on their respective factors. The detailed results of the CFA are provided in Supplementary Tables II – V.

Construct Reliability

Construct reliability was assessed using cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values. A construct is reliable if the alpha (α) value is greater than 0.70 (Hair, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2013). α values of WpI, IC, CRVTY, IWP and GSE are 0.950, 0.901, 0.875, 0.891 and 0.983 respectively. Composite reliabilities of the constructs were above the 0.70 benchmark, which follows the recommendations of Hair et al. (2010). Composite reliabilities of WpI, IC, CRVTY, IWP and GSE are 0.952, 0.900, 0.873, 0.895 and 0.984, respectively. Hence, construct reliability was established for each construct in the study.

Convergent and discriminant validity

Following the recommendations of Fornell and Larcker (1981), we computed average variance extracted (AVE) estimates to check for convergent validity of the study constructs. AVE values for WpI, IC, CRVTY, IWP and GSE are 0.717, 0.687, 0.632, 0.649 and 0.884, respectively; where all values were above the threshold value of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and confirms the convergent validity of the study constructs.

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio. The HTMT values are as follows: i. for the model testing mediation effect on CRVTY; CRVTY-IC, CRVTY-WpI and IC-WpI ratios are 0.435, 0.234 and 0.456 respectively; ii. for the model testing mediation effect on IWP; IWP-IC, IWP-WpI and IC-WpI ratios are 0.347, 0.421 and 0.245 respectively; iii. for the moderation model testing the effect on CRVTY, CRVTY-IC, CRVTY-GSE and IC-GSE are: 0.377, 0.213 and 0.417 respectively; iv. For the moderation model testing the effect on IWP, IWP-IC, IWP-GSE and IC-GSE are 0.351, 0.271 and 0.362 respectively. All ratios were less than the required limit of 0.85 (Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2015) which confirms the discriminant validity of the variables.

Common Method Variance

Adhering to the suggestions provided by Podsakoff et al. (2003), we performed Harman's one-factor test to check for common method variance (CMV). For the same, all items were loaded onto a single factor and were then constrained to avoid any rotation. The variance explained by a single factor was 25.07% which was below the threshold limit of 50%. This confirmed that CMV was not an issue in the study.

Hypotheses Testing

The results show a negative and significant indirect effect of the impact of WpI on CRVTY ($\beta = -.814$, $p < .001$, Confidence Interval: Lower Bound = $-.984$, Upper Bound = $-.638$). Furthermore, the direct effect of WpI on CRVTY in the presence of the mediator was also found to be significant ($\beta = -.103$, $p < .05$). Hence, the results confirm that IC partially mediates the relationship between WpI and CRVTY which supports H1.

Next, the results show a negative and significant indirect effect of the impact of WpI on IWP ($\beta = -.778$, $p < .001$, Confidence Interval: Lower Bound = $-.938$, Upper Bound = $-.612$). In addition, the direct effect of WpI on IWP in the presence of the mediator was also

found to be significant ($\beta = -.128, p < .001$). Hence, the results confirm that IC partially mediates the relationship between WpI and IWP which supports H2.

Next, the results show a positive and significant moderating impact of GSE on the IC-CRVTY relationship [$\beta = 0.048, p < .001$] which supports H3.

Furthermore, the results show a positive and significant moderating impact of GSE on the IC-IWP relationship [$\beta = 0.056, p < .001$] which supports H4.

From both the moderation slope analyses as shown in Figs 2 and 3, it is seen that employees high in GSE remain more creative and productive in any level of IC situations than those of employees low in GSE. However, it is also important to note that with increasing levels of IC, the creativity and performance of employees go down which indicates that measures need to be taken to curb IC among employees.

All results can be found in Table II.

Insert Table II about here

Discussion

Theoretical Contributions

The study offers important theoretical contributions. Firstly, it examines the impact of WpI and IC within the construction sector in India, filling a gap in the existing literature as prior research lacks comprehensive analysis of both WpI and IC in this specific industry.

In addition, the study highlighted why the construction sector is vulnerable to WpI and IC scenarios (Zhang and Huo, 2015). The results of the study show that in the IC-mediated relationships of both WpI-CRVTY and WpI-IWP, negative and significant indirect effects exist for the impact of WpI on creativity and IWP respectively. The findings are consistent with prior research (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2021; He *et al.*, 2021; Han *et al.*, 2022; Singh, Srivastava and Bhumika, 2023) that advocates that WpI and IC are detrimental to the performance and creativity of employees.

Secondly, by exploring the moderating role of GSE in the IC-CRVTY and IC-IWP relationships, the study advances our understanding of how employees leverage the personal resources of GSE during IC scenarios. This extends prior research (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2021) highlighting the significance of personal resources in coping with IC. The moderation analyses indicate that GSE positively moderates both IC-CRVTY and IC-IWP relationships.

Lastly, the study enriches the limited literature on WpI in Asian countries. Investigating WpI within the Asian cultural framework is crucial (Ghosh, 2017) as national culture significantly shapes the effects and perceptions of WpI in workplaces (Chaudhary, Lata and Firoz, 2022). By exploring WpI in the construction sector of India, this study provides valuable insights into the cultural nuances influencing workplace incivility in the region.

Managerial and Practical Implications

Senior management must take proactive measures to prevent workplace incivility (WpI) and interpersonal conflict (IC) within organizations, as advocated by (Russell, 2024). However, recognizing the practical limitations of micromanaging all employee behaviours, the paper offers actionable recommendations based on insights from management experts on how employees can effectively address WpI and IC situations.

It is best to be well prepared for the discussion and share the planned confrontation with trustworthy colleagues, superiors etc. ahead so that their feedback can be gained on handling the process. Additionally, involving trusted individuals as witnesses or mediators during discussions can provide added support and facilitate resolution (Porath, 2016).

Moreover, it is crucial to communicate to the offender(s) that the discord between them is impeding their collective efforts to contribute to organizational goals (Porath, 2016). By fostering open dialogue and emphasizing the importance of mutual respect, organizations can create a culture of civility and cooperation.

Organizations should prioritize fostering general self-efficacy (GSE) among their employees. Recognizing and celebrating employees' incremental achievements, or "small wins," as proposed by Amabile and Kramer (2011), instils confidence in their abilities and encourages continuous improvement.

Encouraging employees to select tasks aligned with their interests and strengths is another effective strategy for enhancing GSE (Thoman, Smith and Silvia, 2011). Additionally, organizing well-being initiatives, counselling sessions, and tailored training programs can motivate employees and equip them with the skills necessary to overcome challenges, ultimately promoting GSE and enhancing overall organizational performance.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

While the study provides valuable theoretical and managerial insights, it is not without limitations. Firstly, the generalizability of the study's results to other industries remains uncertain. Future research should explore WpI and IC scenarios in diverse industries susceptible to these stressors, enhancing the breadth of understanding in this area.

Secondly, the present study only examined the moderating role of one personal resource, namely general self-efficacy (GSE). Future studies can explore the moderating effects of various other personal resources (e.g. emotional intelligence, empathy etc.), to gauge their effectiveness in mitigating the impact of workplace stressors on organizational and employee outcomes. In addition, future studies can explore moderating effects of support received from organizations (e.g. supervisor support, co-worker support etc.), to assess their efficacy in alleviating the impact of workplace stressors on employee outcomes.

Lastly, the study focused on assessing the impact of WpI and IC on employee creativity and IWP. Future research avenues could investigate the effects of WpI and IC on a broader range of organizational and employee outcomes (e.g. organizational commitment, employee retention, etc.), providing a more comprehensive understanding of the implications of these workplace stressors.

Conclusion

The study explored the IC-mediated impact of WpI on the creativity and IWP of employees working with various organizations in the construction sector of India. The study articulates the reason behind choosing the ‘construction sector’ for studying the impact of WpI and IC. The results of the study revealed that IC significantly and negatively mediated both WpI-CRVTY and WpI-IWP relationships. Also, GSE was found to significantly and positively moderate the IC-CRVTY and IC-IWP relationships. Additionally, the article elaborates on the theoretical contributions of the research along with presenting managerial implications for boosting the GSE of employees and curbing WpI and IC in workplaces. Furthermore, the study also discusses its limitations and how future research can be carried out based on the present study.

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Table I*Means, standard deviations, and correlations of variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. WPI	3.03	1.651									
2. IC	3.16	1.636	0.888**								
3. CRVTY	2.92	1.649	-0.865**	-0.937**							
4. IWP	2.93	1.627	-0.869**	-0.933**	0.994**						
5. GSE	2.87	1.350	-0.865**	-0.931**	0.992**	0.995**					
6. Gender	0.75	0.435	0.022	0.021	-0.064	-0.060	-0.054				
7. Age	1.77	1.136	-0.606**	-0.610**	0.588**	0.593**	0.587**	-0.074*			
8. Education	0.28	0.450	-0.145**	-0.147**	0.180**	0.178**	0.174**	-0.015	0.012		
9. Organizational Position	1.23	0.703	-0.676**	-0.662**	0.631**	0.636**	0.631**	-.048	0.897**	-0.003	
10. Tenure	2.18	1.311	-0.420**	-0.438**	0.428**	0.435**	0.427**	-0.074*	0.916**	-0.022	0.745**

Note. *M* and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female). Age (1 = 18-25, 2 = 26-35, 3 = 36-45, 4 = 46-55, 5 = Above 55). Level of Education (1 = Diploma, 2 = Graduation, 3 = Post Graduation, 4 = Doctorate, 5 = Post Doctorate). Tenure (1 = Less than 5 years, 2 = 5-10 years, 3 = 10-15 years, 4 = 15-20 years, 5 = Above 20 years).

N = 542

**indicates $p < .01$, one-tailed.

Table II*Results of Data Analysis*

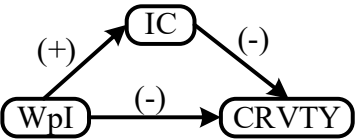
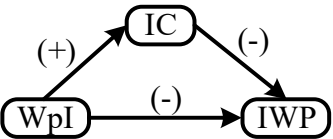
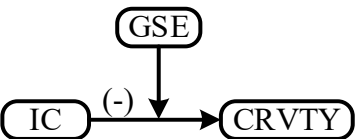
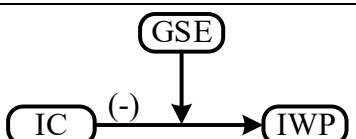
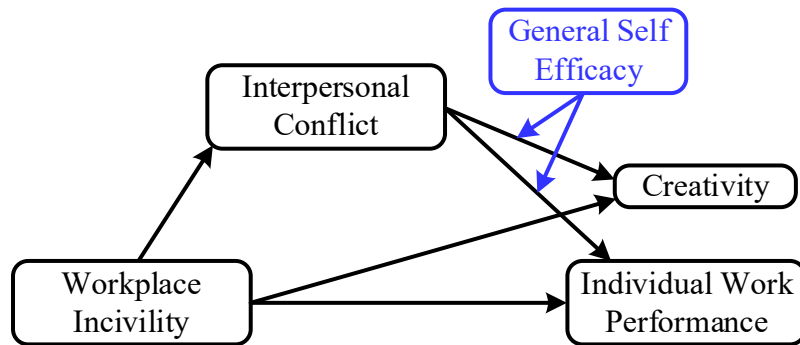
Hypothesis	Pictorial View	SEM Results			Mediation Analyses Summary			
		Path	β	p	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		Remarks
						L.B.	U.B.	
H1		WpI $\rightarrow$ CRVTY	-.103	.010	-.814 ($p < .001$) (WpI $\rightarrow$ IC $\rightarrow$ CRVTY)	-.984	-.638	Partial Mediation
		WpI $\rightarrow$ IC	.903	***				
		IC $\rightarrow$ CRVTY	-.855	***				
H2		WpI $\rightarrow$ IWP	-.128	.001	-.778 ($p < .05$) (WpI $\rightarrow$ IC $\rightarrow$ IWP)	-.938	-.612	Partial Mediation
		WpI $\rightarrow$ IC	.903	***				
		IC $\rightarrow$ IWP	-.826	***				
H3		Interaction IC * GSE $\rightarrow$ CRVTY	0.048	<0.001	-	-	-	Significant Moderation
H4		Interaction IC * GSE $\rightarrow$ IWP	0.056	<0.001	-	-	-	Significant Moderation

Figure 1*Theoretical Framework*

Supplementary Table I*Demographic Characteristics*

Category	Frequency	(%)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	405	74.72
Female	137	25.27
<i>Age (in years)</i>		
20 – 29	89	16.42
30 – 39	133	24.53
40 – 49	156	28.78
50 - 59	139	25.64
Above 60	24	4.42
<i>Educational Level (EL)</i>		
Graduate	389	71.77
Post Graduate	153	28.22
<i>Organizational Position (OP)</i>		
Junior level	85	15.68
Middle level	247	45.57
Senior level	209	38.56
<i>Tenure</i>		
Less than 5 years	88	16.23
5 – 10 years	67	12.36
11 – 15 years	110	20.29
16 – 20 years	232	42.80
21- 25 years	20	3.69
More than 25 years	24	4.42

Supplementary Table II*Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the WpI-IC-CRVTY mediation model*

Models	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
3-Factor model where WpI, IC and CRVTY load on their respective factors	2.344	0.988	0.984	0.010	0.050
2-Factor model where WpI and IC load on one factor	5.731	0.956	0.944	0.048	0.094
1-Factor model where WpI, IC and CRVTY load on one factor	14.304	0.876	0.841	0.052	0.157

Note. For the CFA, we considered the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999), the prescribed threshold values of χ^2/df (< 3), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; > 0.90), Comparative Fit Index (CFI; > 0.90), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR; < 0.09) and Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA; < 0.06) for evaluating the model fits.

Supplementary Table III*Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the WpI-IC-IWP mediation model*

Models	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
3-Factor model where WpI, IC and IWP load on their respective factors	1.861	0.991	0.989	0.009	0.040
2-Factor model where WPC and IC load on one factor	5.030	0.960	0.949	0.046	0.086
1-Factor model where WpI, IC and IWP load on one factor	13.241	0.877	0.844	0.059	0.420

Note. For the CFA, we considered the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999), the prescribed threshold values of χ^2/df (< 3), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; > 0.90), Comparative Fit Index (CFI; > 0.90), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR; < 0.09) and Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA; < 0.06) for evaluating the model fits.

Supplementary Table IV*Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the IC-GSE-CRVTY moderation model*

Models	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
3-Factor model where IC, GSE and CRVTY load on their respective factors	1.456	0.998	0.995	0.004	0.029
2-Factor model where IC and GSE load on one factor	4.150	0.982	0.968	0.039	0.076
1-Factor model where IC, GSE and CRVTY load on one factor	5.421	0.974	0.955	0.047	0.090

Note. For the CFA, we considered the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999), the prescribed threshold values of χ^2/df (< 3), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; > 0.90), Comparative Fit Index (CFI; > 0.90), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR; < 0.09) and Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA; < 0.06) for evaluating the model fits.

Supplementary Table V*Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the IC-GSE-IWP moderation model*

Models	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
3-Factor model where IC, GSE and IWP load on their respective factors	1.767	0.995	0.992	0.005	0.038
2-Factor model where IC and GSE load on one factor	3.847	0.981	0.970	0.048	0.073
1-Factor model where IC, GSE and IWP load on one factor	4.777	0.974	0.960	0.057	0.084

Note. For the CFA, we considered the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999), the prescribed threshold values of χ^2/df (< 3), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; > 0.90), Comparative Fit Index (CFI; > 0.90), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR; < 0.09) and Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA; < 0.06) for evaluating the model fits.