A Regional Study on Spillover Perspective: Analyzing the Underlying Mechanism of Emotional Exhaustion between Family Incivility, Thriving and Workplace Aggression

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Abstract   This study intends to scrutinize the underlying mechanism of employee exhaustion in the relationship between family incivility, and outcomes of thriving and workplace aggression with the spillover theory serving as the overarching explanation. The data was collected through distribution of 300 self-reported questionnaires administered in a single wave. The final sample turned out to be 246 workers of service sector organizations operating in Rawalpindi and Islamabad region. The data analysis revealed acceptable model fit indices for CFA conducted for full measurement model. Subsequently, SEM was used for testing different structural paths. The statistical findings of the study confirm that emotional exhaustion serves as underlying mechanisms, which validate the assumptions of spillover theory that the exposure to family incivility spills over to the work-life domain and emotional exhaustion is experienced followed by reduction in thriving capability and development of aggressive behavior at workplace at the same time.

Key Words: Family Incivility, Emotional Exhaustion, Thriving, Workplace Aggression and Spillover Theory

Introduction

Family incivility is covert and vague but is an important stressor outside work which negatively impacts work performance and productivity (Bai, Lin & Wang, 2016; Lim & Tai, 2014). Both family and work domains have permeable boundaries due to which it is important to consider that negative spillover can happen in the work domain when family circumstances are difficult to deal with (Frone et al, 1992; Gutek, Searle & Klepa, 1991; Hall & Richter, 1988; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Research on family incivility is still in its infancy stage as the current literature clearly states that the family to work interface has been a topic of inquiry previously, but the future studies should focus on expanding the spillover effect of family stressors on the work-related outcomes in culturally diverse context (Cheng, Zhuo & Guo, 2019). Previous empirical investigations clearly indicate the prevalence of family incivility in Pakistani culture (Ain, 2017; De Clercq, Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018).

The current literature reveals that the impact of family incivility has been investigated previously with diverse set of outcomes which include job performance (Lim & Tai, 2014), employee sabotage (Cheng, Zhou & Guo, 2019), stress and employee's intention to leave (Yozgat & Kamanli, 2016), family-work conflict (Khanum, 2017), counterproductive work behaviors (Bai, Lin & Wang, 2016) and organizational citizenship behaviors (DeClercq, Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018). Although, the negative influence of family incivility on employees' work-related outcomes has been studied but not on how it reduces thriving. Prior research supports that family incivility reduces positive work outcomes as is studied by (DeClercq, Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018) that it reduces organizational citizenship behaviors so it is proposed that it reduces thriving at workplace.

Emotional exhaustion has already been studied as a mediation mechanism between family incivility and organizational citizenship behaviors (DeClercq, Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018), between family incivility and family-work conflict (Khanum, 2017). However, it not yet been studied as an underlying mechanism between family

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incivility, thriving and workplace aggression. Therefore, the literature does not provide widespread empirical support to justify specifically the mediation of emotional exhaustion between family incivility and the selected outcome variables (workplace aggression and thriving). Although, recently a study (Ilies, Koopman, Christoforou & Arvey, 2018) established that workplace incivility leads to hostility which leads to anger and withdrawal in marital relationships. But the current study is significantly different as it has utilized a theoretical perspective to explain how the family incivility emotionally exhausts the worker due to which the employees become aggressive towards their coworkers and don't thrive at work. And this unique mediation model has not yet been empirically investigated.

The spillover theory is the overarching theory to explain how the family domain impacts the work domain. According to this theory different emotions, attitudes and behaviors experienced either domain spills over to the other life-related domains. Such spill over's can be of positive or negative nature. In accordance with the assumptions of the spillover theory this study discusses the negative spillover from family to work domain. Therefore it is proposed that when the employees of any organization face family incivility, then such negative experience from family domains spills over to the work domain. Therefore, as a result of bad behavior of family, the employees feel emotionally exhausted at work and as a result they show workplace aggression and are unable to thrive at work.

Literature Review

Family Incivility, Thriving and Workplace Aggression

Family incivility creates dissatisfaction about work-life (Ford,, Heinen & Langkamer, 2007), enhances the counterproductive work behaviors (Bai, Lin & Wang, 2016) reduces the job performance (Lim & Tai, 2014) and the organizational citizenship behavior(De Clercq, Haq, Azeem, & Raja, 2018). There is sparse empirical support to hypothesize the existence of relationship between family incivility and thriving. However, the previous literature supports that workplace incivility reduces the thriving capability as, such events are appraised as negative as such incidences discourage one socially to learn and experience thriving (Gkorezis, Kalampouka, & Petridou, 2013; Mushtaq, Abid, Sarwar & Ahmed, 2017; Nawaz, Abid, Arya, Bhatti & Farooqi, 2018; Spreitzer et al., 2012).

Therefore, based upon the spillover theory it is proposed stress faced by the employees in their personal life domains taking the shape of uncivil family behavior has a negative spillover the thriving capability of the employees (Ford et al, 2007; Leiter & Durup, 1996). Employees were exposed to disrespectful behavior and incivility at home face a social discouragement to engage in learning and experience vitality.

H1 (i) Family Incivility has a Negative Relationship with Thriving.

A recent study confirms that workplace incivility leads to hostility (Lim, Ilies, Koopman, Christoforou & Arvey, 2018). However, employees are most likely to spill over the experience of stress in one domain and have a negative impact on their functioning in another domain such as stress from family affects workplaces badly (De Clercq, Haq, Azeem, & Raja, 2018). In this regard, the work of Ain (2017) is relevant, who studied the mediation mechanism of aggression between family incivility and counterproductive work behaviors. This previously mentioned empirical study provides staunch support to propose a direct negative relationship between family incivility and thriving. Furthermore, such negative association has been hypothesized in line with the assumptions spillover theory. Hence it is argued that due to family incivility, a "negative spillover" occurs in work realm in form of aggression displayed at work.

H1 (ii) Family incivility has a positive relationship with workplace aggression
Family Incivility and Emotional Exhaustion

Past research point out that family can negatively influence work as employees are unable to focus on job demands because of excessive family duties and thus they get stressed out at work (Anand, Vidyarthi, Singh & Ryu, 2015; Zhang, Griffeth & Fried, 2012). More specifically, the previous literature clearly indicates an affirmative connection between family incivility and emotional exhaustion based upon assertion of COR theory (De Clercq,

Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018). However, the current study argues a positive association based upon the spillover theory. Therefore, it is proposed that a negative spillover in form of exhaustion of emotions at work takes place when negative behaviors are observed from family members,

H2 Family Incivility has a Positive Relationship with Emotional Exhaustion.
Emotional Exhaustion, Thriving and Workplace Aggression

There is a paucity of empirical studies confirming that emotional exhaustion hampers the thriving capability of the employees. However, a recent study took the imitative to study the emotional exhaustion as a boundary condition between transformational leadership and thriving (Niessen, Mäder, Stride & Jimmieson, 2017). Another study analyzed the mediation mechanism of thriving between transformational leadership and burnout. Their empirical findings suggested a negative association between thriving and burnout (Hildenbrand, Sacramento & Binnewies, 2018).

Furthermore, the "socially embedded model of thriving" provides indirect support as it proposes that positive affective resources facilitate the thriving (Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, & Grant, 2005). It directly implies that emotional exhaustion characterized as a negative affective resource will depreciate the employees' capability to thrive at work.

The existing literature reports that the aggressive behavior of supervisors and employees generally results in emotional exhaustion of target employees (Merecz, Drabek & Mościcka, 2009). Moreover, the vice versa can also happen as the emotionally exhausted generally employees emotionally generally become impulsive to indulge in aggressive behavior towards other organizational members (Liu, Wang, Chang, Shi, Zhou & Shao, 2015). Moreover, Zaczyk, Młocek, Wilczek-Rużyczka, and Kwak (2018) recently studied the polish nurses and established a positive association between emotional exhaustion and workplace aggression.

H3 (i) Emotional Exhaustion has a Negative Relationship with the Thriving
H3 (ii) Emotional Exhaustion has a Positive Relationship with Workplace Aggression.

The Mediation Mechanism of Emotional Exhaustion between Family Incivility, Thriving and Workplace Aggression

The spillover theory provides a viable explanation that the family and work domain interference exists where different sets of emotions, values, attitudes, behaviors, and skills generally travel from one domain to another (Belsky, Perry-Jenkins & Crouter, 1985; Radó, Nagy & Király, 2016; Tammelin, 2009). Xu (2009) states that the negativities and problems faced in either of the domains can negatively spillover negative emotions in another domain. So, the current study utilizes the assumptions of this theory and proposes that when negative behavior is experienced in the family domain. Then such negative experience spills or travels to the work domain where one feels emotionally exhausted, and this negative emotional state results in display of angry behavior at work and reduced thriving capability. According to this theory the incidence of family incivility results in a negative spillover at the workplace due to which the employees feel emotionally exhausted and as a result they become unable to thrive and develop aggression in workplace settings.

Methodology

The data was collected through self-reported questionnaires administered in a single wave. The convenience sampling technique was employed to time and resources constraints. Initially 300 questionnaires were administered but due to dropouts and discarding incomplete questionnaires, the final cases or study sample consisted up of 246 workers belonging to different organizations belonging to service sector operating in Rawalpindi and Islamabad region.

The majority of the sample was 60.4% male and only 39.6% were female. Moreover, 33years (SD=1.19) was the average age of the sample with mostly being married (74.5%). The majority had an educational qualification of Masters and M.Phill (65%). The sample employees worked in different types of organizations which included government and semi-government organizations (54.5 %), private organizations (35.4%) and

MNCs (9.9%). Moreover, the employees reported to work in different departments which included Finance (21.7%), HR/admin (12.3%), marketing/sales/CRM (6.6%), IT/IS/SE/Telecom (33.5), procurement/logistics/purchase (0.5%) and other areas (25.5%).

Measures

Family Incivility

Family incivility was assessed by a 6 items scale developed by Lim and Tai(2014), anchored on a 5-point scale "(1= not at all, 2= once or twice, 3= sometimes, 4=often and 5= most of the times)". The sample items were, "Put you down or were condescending to you, Paid little attention to your statement or showed little interest in your opinion? Made demeaning or degrading comments about you?" Moreover, the alpha-reliability of family incivility was 0.907 which is acceptable.

Workplace Aggression

Workplace aggression was measured by adapting 20 items from the aggression scale established by Buss and Perry (1992), anchored on a "five-point Likert scale" ("1= Never, 2=seldom, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=always"). This 20 item scale is divided into three subscales; with 5 items for verbal aggression dimension, 7 items for anger dimension and 8 items for hostility dimension. A few sample items are: "I tell my colleagues openly when I disagree with them (verbal aggression), I flare up quickly but get over it quickly (anger), and other colleagues always seem to get the breaks (hostility)". The alpha-reliability of workplace aggression was 0.918 which is acceptable.

Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion was evaluated from a 9 items scale of "Maslach Burnout Inventory" developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). This scale anchored on a "seven-point Likert scale(0 = Never, 1 = A few times a year, 2 = Once a month or less, 3 = A few times a month, 4 = Once a week, 5 = A few times a week, 6=Everyday)". A few sample items are: "I feel emotionally drained from my work, I feel used up at the end of the workday, I feel fatigued up when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job." The alpha-reliability of emotional exhaustion is 0.918>0.700 which is acceptable.

Thriving

Thriving at work was assessed with a 10 items scale established by Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, and Garnett (2012) anchored at "a five-point scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree)". A few of the sample items state, "I find myself learning often (learning), I have energy and spirit (vitality)". The alpha reliability of thriving was 0.70 which is acceptable.

Results

Table 1 exhibits the descriptive information and bivariate correlation for the selected study variables. Moreover, this table indicates that family incivility had positive relationship with emotional exhaustion(r=.475, p<0.01), workplace aggression(r=.459, p<.01) and a negative relationship with thriving(r=.258, p<0.01). Moreover, this table clearly indicated that the study variables utilized for the current study were valid; as the discriminant validity of all measures was achieved with the MSV was less than AVE for all study variables. Moreover, the convergent validity was as well established as the AVE for all study variables was above .50(Hair et al., 2010).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics, AVE, MSV and Bivariate Correlations of Main Study Variables

Variables	Mean	SD	AVE	MSV	1	2	3	4
1. FINC	2.03	.898	.626	.292	(.907)			
2.EEX	2.02	1.14	.559	.345	.475**	(.918)		
3.THR	3.94	.868	.735	.345	-.309**	-.417**	(.760)	
4.WAG	2.38	.662	.680	.333	.459**	.420**	-.258**	(.918)

Note: FNIC, Family Incivility, EEX, Emotional Exhaustion, THR, Thriving; WAG, Workplace Aggression

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)". The alpha reliabilities are mentioned in parenthesis.

As shown in Table 2, so as to establish the discriminant validity of all four measures (CFA for full measurement model) tapped at the same time, the CFA was done for the hypothesized measurement model. The model fit indices for four factors depict a better fit(X^2=1241.5, df= 913, X^2/df=1.3, CFI=.94, NFI=.81, GFI=.80, RMR=.09, RMSEA= .04) as compared to the three, two and one-factor model.

Table 2. CFA for the Hypothesized and Alternate Measurement Models

Model Test	X^2	Df	X^2/df	CFI	NFI	GFI	RMR	RMSEA
Four Factor Model (FINC, EEX, THR, WAG)	1241.5	913	1.3	.94	.81	.80	.09	.04
Three Factor Model (FNIC, EEX, WAG)	1991.3	918	2.1	.80	.70	.70	.11	.07
Two Factor (FNIC, EEX)	2843.0	924	3.0	.70	.60	.53		.09
One Factor (All Factors Comined)	3272.8	925	3.5	.60	.50	.50	.14	.11

Note: FNIC, Family Incivility, EEX, Emotional Exhaustion, THR, Thriving, WAG, Workplace Aggression

Table 3. Model Fit Indices for Direct and Indirect Hypothesized Models

Model Test	X^2	Df	X^2/df	CFI	NFI	GFI	RMR	RMSEA
Direct Path (FINC →THR & WAG)	876.6	586	1.5	.92	.81	.81	.07	.05
Indirect paths (FINC → EEX→ THR & WAG)	1152.5	906	1.3	.95	.82	.82	.08	.03

Note: FNIC, Family Incivility, EEX, Emotional Exhaustion, THR, Thriving, WAG, Workplace Aggression.

Table 3 shows that the hypothesized mediation model has better model fit indices (X^2=1152.5, df= 906, X^2/df=1.3, CFI=.95, NFI=.82, GFI=.82, RMR=.08, RMSEA= .03) than the direct model. Moreover, followed by the establishment of an acceptable model fit indices for the full measurement model, the structural equation modeling was done to test the direct and indirect hypothesis. The outcome of SEM for direct effects in Table 4 show that the H1(i) describing a negative relationship between family incivility and Thriving got accepted(b= -.460, p=.001). Moreover, the H1(ii) stating a positive relationship between family incivility and workplace aggression got accepted(b=.541, p=.001). The H2 describing a positive relationship between family incivility and emotional exhaustion got accepted (b=.498,p<.001). The H3(i) describing a negative relationship between emotional exhaustion and thriving got accepted(b= -.589, p=.001). The H3(ii) describing a positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and workplace aggression(b=.577, p=.001).

For testing the indirect effects the bias corrected bootstrapping method was utilized, which indicated significant negative indirect effect for confirming H4 (i) (IE= -.219,CI= -.326, -.163, p=.006), where as a positive indirect effect for H4(ii) (IE= .329,CI= .119, .298, p=.009).

Table 4. Regression Output for Direct and Indirect Paths

Hypotheses	Direct Path	Direct Effect		
		B	SE	P
H1(i)	FNIC →THR	-.460	.063	.001
H1(ii)	FNIC→WAG	.541	.077	.001
H2	FNIC→EEX	.498	.664	.001
H3(i)	EEX→THR	-.589	.047	.001
H3(ii)	EEX→WAG	.577	.059	.001

Indirect Effects

Hypotheses	Path	Indirect Effect	Bias Corrected 95 % CI		P-Value
			LLCI	ULCI	
H4(i)	FNIC→EEX→THR	-.219	-.326	-.162	.006
H4(ii)	PWE→EEX→WAG	.329	.119	.298	.009

Note: FNIC, Family Incivility, EEX, Emotional Exhaustion, THR, Thriving, WAG, Workplace Aggression

Discussion

The current findings proved a negative association between the family incivility and thriving. However, the literature does not empirically validate it. However, there is extensive literature available which confirms workplace incivility hampers thriving (Gkorezis, Kalampouka, & Petridou, 2013; Mushtaq, Abid, Sarwar & Ahmed, 2017; Nawaz, Abid, Arya, Bhatti & Farooqi, 2018; Spreitzer et al., 2012). Moreover, it was empirically established that family incivility instigates the employees to exhibit anger at the workplace. This finding is in accordance with different existing studies (Ain, 2017; Ford, Heinen & Langkamer, 2007; Leiter & Durup, 1996). The current study established a positive association between family incivility and emotional exhaustion, which validates the existing literature propositions and findings (Anand, Vidyarthi, Singh & Ryu, 2015; Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; De Clercq, Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018; Zhang, Griffeth & Fried, 2012). The current empirical findings validate that emotional exhaustion has a negative association with thriving. The detailed analysis of existing literature indicates the presence of only one study suggesting a negative association between thriving and burnout (Hildenbrand, Sacramento & Binnewies, 2018). Moreover, emotional exhaustion had a positive relationship with workplace aggression. Moreover, the existing literature validates it as well (Liu, Wang, Chang, Shi, Zhou & Shao, 2015; Zaczyk, Młocek, Wilczek-Rużyczka & Kwak, 2018).

The measure of family incivility was initiated by Lim and Tai (2014) who proposed an underlying mechanism of psychological to relate it to reduced job performance. Moreover, followed by it recently the emotional exhaustion has been employed as a mediating variable in between family incivility and organization citizenship behavior by utilizing conservation of resource theory (DeClercq, Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018). However, the existing study has enriched the current knowledge and theoretical base by utilizing emotional exhaustion as a mediation mechanism between family incivility, thriving and workplace aggression. Therefore, in the light of spillover theory it has been proved that the negative experience in the family domain spills over the work realm due to which employees feel emotionally exhausted.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The current study has offered a new theoretical perspective to the emotional exhaustion as an underlying mechanism which has been predominantly explained by the conservation of resource theory(DeClercq, Haq, Azeem & Raja, 2018; Nauman, Fatima & Haq, 2018) and the affective events theory (Hur, Moon & Jun, 2016). However, the current article took a new angle of the spillover theory to explain that how family domain spillovers the work domain and emotionally exhausts the employees, who resultantly become unable to thrive and display aggression at work. Moreover, the current study augments the literature of thriving, by identifying and establishing family incivility as an important antecedent. Moreover, previously the literature cites that workplace incivility compromises the thriving (Gkorezis, Kalampouka & Petridou, 2013), whereas workplace civility promotes the thriving capability (Mushtaq, Abid, Sarwar & Ahmed, 2017).but the empirical evidence of family incivility reducing the thriving at work is sparse. In addition, emotional exhaustion as well has been proposed to act as a predictor that compromises the thriving capability of the employees and they are unable to feel energized and alive at work. This is a unique addition to the literature as this negative association has not been extensively empirically evidenced in the current literature on thriving.

This study clearly establishes how family incivility results in a "negative spillover" in the work realm as the employees become emotionally exhausted and are unable to thrive and exhibit aggression at work. Therefore, it is important for the managers to recognize that that stress due to family incivility might negatively influence

work-related outcomes. Moreover, they need to develop and devise strategies to help employees overcome the negative consequences of family incivility in their work. In this regard, self-management and stress management training should be provided to employees as to how they can deal with stress-induced due to uncivil behavior of the family. Consequently such initiatives will help the employees to leave the home problems at home so that their work lives don't get affected. Moreover, the victims of family's uncivil behavior should not be given tough tasks and manger should console such employees so that they can rehabilitate and resume their normal routine assignments and targets after some time.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The study at hand mainly suffered from the common method bias (MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012) owing to cross-sectional study design and self-reported data. Therefore in order to overcome the aforementioned bias, it is recommended that researchers can opt for time-lagged study design.

Moreover, the data was collected from only service sector employees, so future studies can include the manufacturing sector companies as well. Moreover, the selected sample was from Islamabad and Rawalpindi region, so the generalizability of the study findings can only be established by replicating it to a diverse sample representing the whole nation of Pakistan.

Moreover, it is recommended that future studies can include different moderators like personality traits, perceived supervisor or coworker support between family incivility and emotional exhaustion. Future studies can broaden the proposed study model by employing serial mediation with outcomes like counterproductive work behaviors, job performance, and turnover intentions

Conclusion

The current study proposed two simple mediation models with seven mediation hypotheses. All of the hypotheses (5 Direct and 2 indirect) got accepted. A detailed analysis of the existing studies reveals that the spillover theory uniquely contributed to the literature by hypothesizing a unique theoretically supported mediation model that has sparse empirical evidence. More, the assumptions of spillover theory were verified as the family incivility leads to emotional exhaustion due to which the thriving capability of employees is reduced and he or she indulges in aggressive behavior at work.

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