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Linking workplace incivility to counterproductive behaviour: Roles of satisfaction and control

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Orientation: Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) refers to employee actions that harm organisations or colleagues, such as absenteeism, frequent resignations, workplace conflicts and low job commitment. These behaviours negatively impact productivity and workplace harmony across various settings.

Research purpose: This study examines the influence of workplace incivility on CWB, the role of job satisfaction in CWB and the mediating effect of job satisfaction. It also explores self-control as a moderating factor in the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB.

Motivation for the study: Understanding these relationships helps organisations develop targeted strategies to mitigate CWB and foster a healthier and more productive work environment.

Research approach/design and method: This study utilised structural equation modelling (SEM-PLS) to analyse data from 385 local employees in Karawang, Indonesia, using convenience sampling. PLS analysis was conducted using SmartPLS4 to evaluate both the measurement and structural models.

Main findings: Workplace incivility significantly increases CWB, while job satisfaction negatively impacts CWB. However, workplace incivility does not affect job satisfaction, and job satisfaction does not mediate the incivility-CWB relationship, suggesting other influencing factors. Moderation analysis confirms that self-control does not weaken the effect of workplace incivility on CWB.

Practical/managerial implications: Organisations should implement workplace policies promoting respect, clear communication and supportive leadership to reduce incivility and CWB. Future research should explore additional moderating factors, such as leadership styles and organisational culture.

Contribution/value-add: This study enhances understanding of how workplace incivility influences CWB and how personality traits mitigate its impact, providing valuable insights for organisation strategies and workplace behaviour research.

Keywords: counterproductive work behaviour; workplace incivility; job satisfaction; self-control; organisational behaviour.

Introduction

Karawang, as a major industrial hub in Indonesia, offers significant employment opportunities. Despite this, certain workplace challenges have emerged, particularly regarding counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) among local employees. Reports indicate that some companies are hesitant to hire employees because of concerns over workplace conduct and performance.

According to company feedback in March 2023, issues such as high absenteeism, frequent resignations and delays in returning to work after personal leave have been observed. Furthermore, disruptive behaviours, including workplace conflicts and open disagreements with colleagues, contribute to uncomfortable work environment. These behavioural tendencies align with CWB, which negatively impact workplace efficiency, cooperation and overall productivity.

Counterproductive work behaviour refers to employee actions that intentionally harm the organisation or co-workers, including absenteeism, workplace conflicts and lack of job commitment (Fox & Spector, 2005; Spector et al., 2010). These behaviours reduce productivity, disrupt workplace harmony and have been observed across various cultural and economic

settings (Searle, 2022; Spector & Fox, 2005). According to Spector et al. (2010), CWB describes employees' frustrations that lead to deviant actions aimed at harming or endangering other employees and compromising the sustainability of the company. In this study, the aspects of CWB refer to Spector et al. (2010), which includes CWB directed towards the company and counterproductive behaviour directed towards co-workers.

Counterproductive work behaviours can significantly impact organisations by causing disruptions and leading to substantial financial and reputational damage. Such effects arise from theft, financial losses, workplace accidents and other forms of misconduct that may result in penalties or legal consequences (Searle, 2022). Furthermore, studies highlight that CWBs contribute to a negative cycle, intensifying employee stress and further reinforcing these detrimental behaviours (Meier & Spector, 2013).

Studying CWB is crucial because of its significant implications. Counterproductive work behaviour can be indicative of underlying mental health issues, such as stress or burnout. If left unaddressed, these behaviours can escalate, leading to more severe problems like workplace violence or substantial organisational losses. Understanding and mitigating CWB is essential for promoting employee well-being and maintaining organisational effectiveness. Counterproductive work behaviour can also extend beyond the workplace, negatively impacting various stakeholders, including customers, service users, their families, communities and society at large (Searle, 2022). This article examines CWB by defining its scope, categorising its forms and discussing methods for assessing it.

To deepen our understanding, four key perspectives are analysed: individual, situational, socio-cognitive and moral licensing. Individual traits (e.g. personality and self-control), situational factors (e.g. workplace incivility), socio-cognitive processes (e.g. learned responses and coping mechanisms) and moral licensing (i.e. the tendency to justify unethical behaviour after prior good deeds). These perspectives provide insights into better detection strategies and offer guidance on effective approaches to prevent and mitigate such behaviours.

Research has identified various predictors of CWB, which can be broadly categorised into individual and situational factors. Individual factors refer to stable personality traits and demographic characteristics such as age and gender, which shape how employees perceive and respond to workplace experiences. These inherent traits influence emotional regulation, decision-making and behavioural tendencies, ultimately affecting the likelihood of engaging in CWB. On the other hand, situational factors pertain to aspects of the organisational environment, including workplace culture, leadership style and interpersonal interactions. One significant situational factor linked to CWB is workplace incivility, defined as rude or disrespectful behaviour that violates norms of mutual respect. Experiencing workplace incivility can trigger negative emotional responses such as frustration and resentment, which may, in turn, lead to CWB as a coping mechanism or form of retaliation. Studies have consistently shown a positive correlation between workplace incivility and various forms of CWB, suggesting that a toxic work environment can significantly contribute to counterproductive behaviours (Butt & Yazdani, 2021; Herschcovis et al., 2007; Șulea et al., 2010).

Interpersonal relationships within the workplace are not always harmonious, and conflicts or tensions often arise in professional settings. As a result, incivility is frequently observed not only among employees but also in interactions with external stakeholders such as clients or customers. Such behaviours, whether intentional or not, create an unpleasant work atmosphere that can undermine employee well-being and organisational effectiveness (Vasconcelos, 2020). Handoyo et al. (2018) further noted that workplace incivility encompasses both verbal and non-verbal behaviours, including dismissive remarks, exclusion and a lack of professional courtesy. These behaviours, though often subtle, can accumulate over time and negatively impact individual employees, teams and overall company performance. Andersson and Pearson (as cited in Handoyo et al., 2018) described workplace incivility as a low-intensity form of behavioural deviation, often with ambiguous intent, that violates workplace norms and can lead to broader organisational dysfunction. Although these actions may seem minor in isolation, their cumulative effect can erode workplace morale, reduce collaboration and contribute to an increase in CWB.

Furthermore, according to Clark et al. (2009), incivility itself is a condition that shows disrespect towards other individuals, cannot appreciate the perspective of other individuals and cannot appreciate the performance of other individuals properly. However, it should be emphasised that incivility in the workplace is different from abusive behaviour. Kane and Montgomery (in Handoyo et al., 2018) describe incivility in the workplace through rude, impatient or disrespectful treatment of the dignity of other individuals. In such conditions, counterproductive behaviour from employees is very likely to arise because of perceived incivility in the work environment.

Penney and Spector (2005) conducted a study that revealed discrepancies in findings regarding the impact of workplace incivility on CWB, depending on whether the data were gathered through self-reports or co-worker reports. Their analysis found a significant relationship between workplace incivility and CWB when assessed through employees' self-reports. However, this relationship was not observed in reports provided by co-workers.

According to Penney and Spector (2005), this discrepancy may arise because co-workers do not witness all workplace behaviours, making them less likely to recognise the presence

of CWB resulting from incivility. Nonetheless, this gap in findings highlights the need for further empirical investigation to confirm the interaction between workplace incivility and CWB. Nonetheless, this inconsistency between self-reported and co-worker-reported data highlights a methodological gap, specifically the need for further empirical investigation using multi-source or alternative data collection methods to more accurately understand the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB.

This discrepancy underscores a methodological gap, suggesting that future research should explore alternative or multi-source approaches to validate the link between workplace incivility and CWB. To address this gap, the present study incorporates a mediating variable, job satisfaction. The decision to include job satisfaction as a mediating variable in this study is grounded in established theoretical frameworks and supported by empirical research. Workplace incivility is widely recognised as a social stressor and a violation of interpersonal norms, often perceived by employees as a breach of the psychological contract (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al., 2001). When employees experience disrespect, exclusion or belittlement, it can undermine their sense of fairness, dignity and belonging – leading to decreased job satisfaction. This is consistent with the Affective Events Theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), which posits that negative workplace events (such as incivility) evoke emotional responses that influence work attitudes, including job satisfaction.

From this perspective, incivility may not lead directly to CWB but rather initiates a chain reaction, beginning with emotional distress and dissatisfaction. Over time, reduced job satisfaction may increase the likelihood of employees engaging in CWB as a form of withdrawal, retaliation or coping mechanism. This link is also supported by Equity Theory (Adams, 1965), which suggests that individuals who perceive unfair treatment may attempt to restore perceived balance by reducing effort, breaking rules or engaging in deviant behaviours to compensate for emotional or relational inequity.

Empirical studies reinforce this theoretical logic. For example, Cortina et al. (2001) and Rachmanadya and Handoyo (2022) found that incivility erodes satisfaction across multiple job facets. Similarly, research by Khoirunnisa et al. (2022) and Kanafa-Chmielewska (2019) indicates that low job satisfaction significantly predicts CWB, suggesting that dissatisfaction, rather than the incivility itself, may be the proximal trigger for counterproductive acts.

Therefore, this study posits job satisfaction as a psychological mechanism through which the adverse effects of incivility manifest into behavioural outcomes, particularly CWB. Understanding this mediating pathway enables a more nuanced view of how workplace conditions influence employee behaviour and offers more targeted points for intervention.

Hills et al. (2011) describe job satisfaction as a construct derived from experiences of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, shaped by feelings of enjoyment and a sense of appreciation specifically related to one's job. Similarly, Spector (2022) defines job satisfaction as an individual's feelings towards their job, encompassing various aspects of their work. It reflects the degree to which an individual feels satisfied or dissatisfied with their job. Additionally, Spector (2022) emphasises that job satisfaction is an attitude, meaning it represents an individual's evaluation of whether their work is pleasant or unpleasant.

Rather than focusing solely on direct effects, this study adopts a moderated mediation framework, in which self-control moderates the indirect relationship between workplace incivility and CWB through job satisfaction. Specifically, while workplace incivility can diminish job satisfaction by depleting emotional resources, violating psychological contracts and reducing perceived fairness, not all individuals respond to this dissatisfaction in the same way. Self-control, as a personality trait, may buffer or amplify how dissatisfaction translates into CWB.

According to self-regulation theory (Baumeister et al., 2004), individuals with high self-control possess a greater capacity to regulate emotions and inhibit impulsive or retaliatory behaviours, even in frustrating situations. Therefore, for employees with high self-control, the negative affect arising from low job satisfaction may not necessarily lead to CWB. In contrast, employees with low self-control may be less capable of managing these negative emotions, making them more likely to act out through CWB in response to dissatisfaction.

This interaction provides deeper insight into when and for whom incivility is most likely to result in harmful work behaviours. It suggests that the indirect effect of workplace incivility on CWB is conditional, and highlights the importance of individual self-regulatory capacities in shaping behavioural responses. Practically, this underscores the value of developing self-control through training or recruitment strategies to help mitigate the downstream effects of workplace incivility.

Tangney et al. (2004, as cited in De Ridder et al., 2011) define self-control as the ability of individuals to regulate their behaviour according to certain standards, such as morals, values and societal rules, to develop positive behaviour. According to Hua et al. (2023), self-control is a uniquely human capacity that enables individuals to regulate and modify their behaviours to align with broader societal or organisational expectations. DeWall et al. found that high self-control is an important internal faculty, which can help employees to resist temptation and hold back from acting on their impulses (Hua et al., 2023). Some evidence also shows that self-control helps buffer the effects of negative reciprocity beliefs, that is, the tendency to retaliate when treated unfairly by overriding automatic impulses towards aggression (e.g. Restubog et al., 2010). In addition,

individuals with high self-control tend to exhibit better psychological adjustment, fewer emotional or behavioural problems (less pathology) and stronger interpersonal functioning, making them less likely to respond to workplace incivility with counterproductive behaviours (Tangney et al., 2004).

This study seeks to enhance our understanding of CWB by investigating the intricate interplay of workplace incivility, job satisfaction and self-control. Specifically, it aims to determine the indirect effect of workplace incivility on CWB through job satisfaction and the contingent role of self-control in this relationship.

Literature review

A comprehensive literature review suggests that both individual factors, such as self-control, and situational factors, such as workplace incivility, contribute significantly to the emergence of CWB. Beyond examining these direct effects, this study incorporates job satisfaction as a mediating variable based on established theoretical models of mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Hayes, 2009). According to this framework, mediation requires that: (1) the independent variable (workplace incivility) significantly affects the mediator (job satisfaction), (2) the mediator (job satisfaction) significantly affects the dependent variable (CWB) and (3) the effect of incivility on CWB is at least partially explained by the intervening role of job satisfaction.

The rationale is grounded in Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), which posits that negative workplace events, such as being treated with disrespect or exclusion, lead to adverse emotional reactions, thereby diminishing job satisfaction. This dissatisfaction, in turn, increases the likelihood of CWB as employees become disengaged, frustrated or seek to restore a sense of fairness or control, consistent with Equity Theory (Adams, 1965). Thus, job satisfaction serves as the psychological mechanism through which the harmful effects of workplace incivility are transmitted into counterproductive behaviours. By articulating this indirect pathway, the model provides a nuanced understanding of how and why incivility can deteriorate employee conduct, highlighting job satisfaction as a key target for organisational interventions aiming to reduce CWB.

Workplace incivility and counterproductive behaviour

Among the various individual and situational factors that contribute to CWB, workplace incivility has garnered significant attention because of its direct and observable impact on employee behaviour. Research by Murtaza et al. (2021) conducted on health employees in Pakistan revealed that incivility in the workplace has a direct effect on CWB. Similarly, a study by Hameed et al. (2017) on bank employees in Pakistan indicated that workplace incivility influences CWB. Furthermore, Sowe and Arslan's (2023) research on public and private sector employees in Ghana and Gambia found a significant positive relationship between workplace incivility and CWB, meaning that the higher the level of incivility in the workplace, the higher the counterproductive behaviour among employees. According to Murtaza et al. (2020) and Hameed et al. (2017), perceived workplace incivility contributes to CWB. Workplace incivility may include disrespectful behaviours, such as belittling or insulting colleagues, disregarding their opinions and ignoring their presence (Cortina et al., 2001).

Sowe and Arslan (2023) state that CWB itself is a form of response to the incivility experienced by employees in the workplace. Porath and Pearson (in Hameed et al., 2017) stated that employees who experience disrespect or impolite treatment from their work environment will tend to reduce efforts to behave productively in the workplace, are reluctant to increase the quality of work results and experience a decrease in commitment to work. In addition, employees who feel they have experienced incivility in the workplace also report disturbances to their mental condition, physical health and are also tempted to leave the company where they work (Porath & Pearson in Hameed et al., 2017).

Workplace incivility, job satisfaction and counterproductive behaviour

Cortina et al. (2001) demonstrated that workplace incivility can significantly diminish job satisfaction by undermining key elements of the work experience. Theoretically, job satisfaction is a multifaceted construct that encompasses various domains, including satisfaction with the work itself, supervision, co-workers, pay and benefits and opportunities for promotion. However, in this study, job satisfaction is modelled as a latent construct, measured using the Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS), which captures both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of job satisfaction. This operationalisation aligns with the structure shown in the measurement model and Figure 1, where job satisfaction is treated as a second-order construct composed of two primary dimensions. By integrating this conceptual and empirical alignment, the study enhances construct validity and reliability and maintains consistency between the theoretical definition and the measurement approach. A study by Rachmanadya and Handoyo (2022) revealed a direct negative relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction. Fadhilah (as cited in Haryono, 2020) argues that even when employees receive salary, promotions or are part of a supportive workgroup, they may still experience a decline in job satisfaction if they harbour negative feelings towards their work. In the context of this study, such negative feelings can be triggered by experiences of workplace incivility, which may lead employees to feel disrespected, undervalued or emotionally drained, ultimately diminishing their satisfaction regardless of material or structural rewards.

Employees with low job satisfaction tend to exhibit inefficient work behaviours and contribute to an unfavourable work

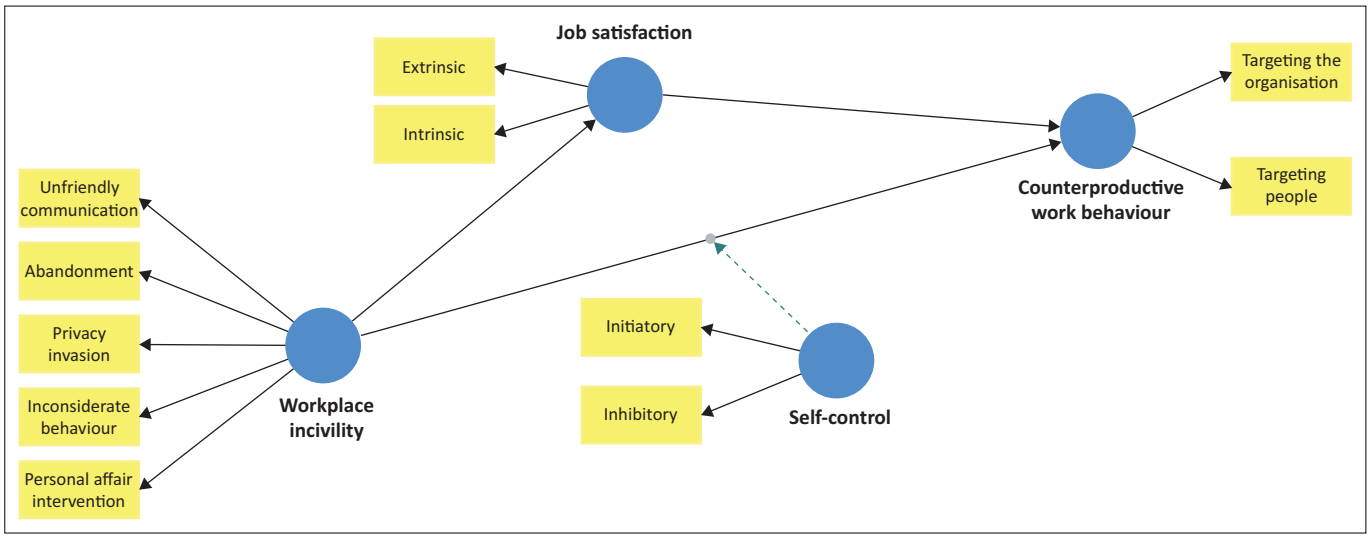

FIGURE 1: Proposed conceptual framework by smart PLS 4.

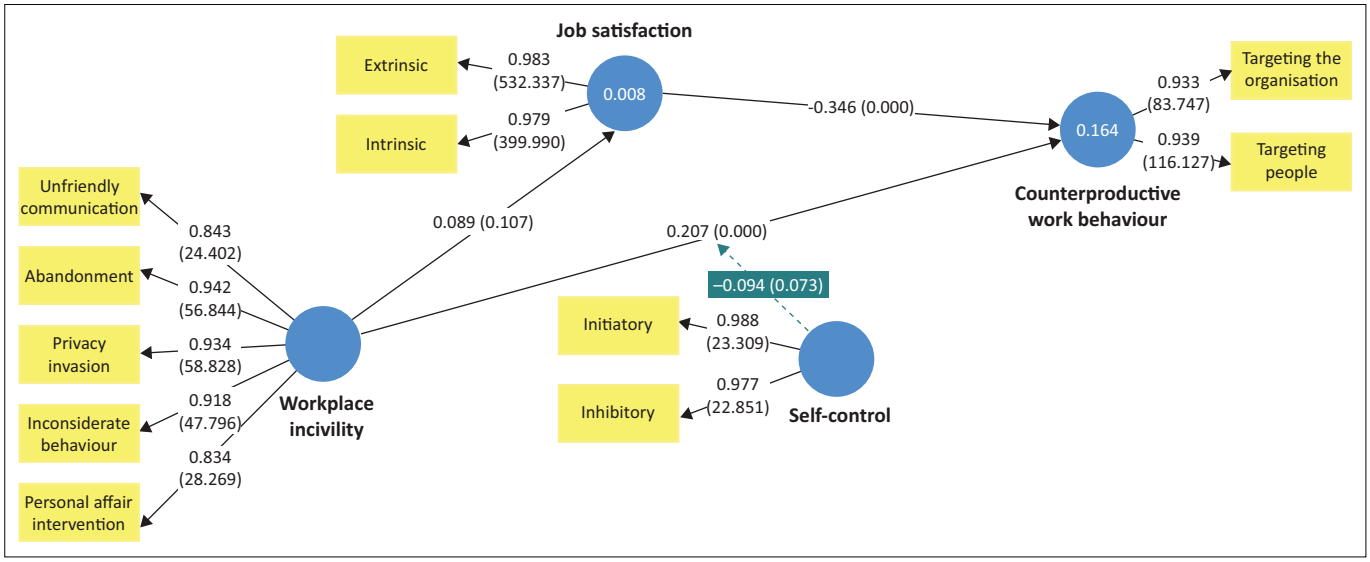

FIGURE 2: Model structural hypothesis result by smart PLS 4.

climate, ultimately harming the organisation. Since employee behaviour is a key factor in organisational efficiency, job satisfaction remains a critical concern for researchers and organisational leaders (Özpehlivan & Acar, 2016). Kanafa-Chmielewska (2019) suggests that employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend to demonstrate positive work behaviours while minimising negative (counterproductive) behaviours.

However, conflicting findings have emerged in previous studies. Bojarska (2015) and Cosmina et al. (2023) argue that low job satisfaction does not always lead to an increase in CWB. Cosmina et al. (2023) further suggest that intrinsic motivation among employees may mitigate the negative effects of low job satisfaction. These inconsistent findings highlight a theoretical and empirical gap in understanding the relationship between job satisfaction and CWB. While some studies suggest that low job satisfaction leads to increased CWB, others argue that this relationship is not always direct and may be influenced by individual factors such as intrinsic motivation. This divergence underscores the need for further investigation into the conditions under which job satisfaction predicts CWB, particularly in the context of workplace incivility.

Workplace incivility, self-control and counterproductive work behaviour

While workplace incivility is widely acknowledged as a contributor to CWB, research has primarily focused on its direct effects, with limited exploration of moderating factors. Self-control, the ability to regulate impulses and emotions, may play a crucial role in determining how employees respond to workplace incivility (Tangney et al., 2004). Self-control refers to a global capacity to regulate emotional and behavioural responses to stimuli in which instinctual but socially inappropriate impulses are subordinated to socially appropriate responses (Pechorro et al., 2021).

While workplace incivility is widely acknowledged as a contributor to CWB, research has primarily focused on its direct effects, with limited exploration of individual traits that may moderate this relationship. One such trait is self-control, which refers to the ability to regulate impulses and emotions in accordance with social and organisational norms (Tangney et al., 2004). Individuals with higher self-control are more capable of suppressing instinctive, yet inappropriate, reactions to stressors – such as retaliating or withdrawing in response to incivility (Pechoroo et al., 2021). Thus, rather than being influenced by workplace incivility, self-control functions as a psychological resource that can buffer its negative impact and reduce the likelihood of CWB.

Researchers have thus identified self-control as a crucial factor in alleviating uncomfortable feelings and reducing negative behaviours in the workplace (Conte & Landy, 2019). Consequently, employees need self-control as a mechanism to manage negative behaviours. Individuals, including employees who struggle to exercise self-control or to manage negative impulses, are more likely to exhibit problematic behaviours, including undisciplined actions that deviate from established norms (Boer et al., 2015). Furthermore, CWB is characterised by conscious, repeated acts of aggressive deviance. In efforts to exercise self-control, cognitive processes help individuals suppress negative impulses and redirect them towards more positive behaviours aligned with workplace values and expectations. Based on the issues, the authors are interested in studying the effect of workplace incivility on CWB, with self-control as a moderator.

Research hypotheses

H1: Workplace incivility is positively related to CWB

H2: Job satisfaction is negatively related to CWB

H3: Workplace incivility is negatively related to job satisfaction

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB

H5: Self-control moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB

To ensure alignment between theory and measurement, each construct used in this study is defined and operationalised based on established multidimensional frameworks.

Counterproductive work behaviour is conceptualised according to Spector et al. (2010) as comprising two dimensions: CWB directed towards the organisation (e.g. absenteeism, reduced effort) and CWB directed towards individuals (e.g. hostility, gossip). These two forms reflect both structural and interpersonal harm and are measured using the Counterproductive Work Behaviour Checklist (CWB-C).

Workplace incivility, based on the model by Handoyo et al. (2018), consists of multiple behavioural domains including unfriendly communication, abandonment, privacy invasion, inconsiderate behaviour and interference in personal affairs. These reflect various subtle yet harmful social behaviours that violate norms of respect and dignity.

Job satisfaction is measured as a second-order construct, encompassing two major dimensions: intrinsic satisfaction (e.g. recognition, meaningful work) and extrinsic satisfaction (e.g. salary, promotion opportunities), based on the JSS (Hills et al., 2011; Spector, 2022).

Self-control is conceptualised as a trait-like psychological capacity to regulate emotions, thoughts and actions, using the Brief Self-Control Scale (Tangney et al., 2004). It includes two dimensions: initiatory self-control (starting goal-directed behaviour) and inhibitory self-control (resisting impulses), following the distinction proposed by De Ridder et al. (2011).

Research design

This research employed a cross-sectional design to examine the associations among four key variables: workplace incivility (independent variable), job satisfaction (mediating variable), self-control (moderating variable) and CWB (dependent variable). While this design allows for the identification of patterns, directions and strengths of relationships among variables, it does not permit conclusions about causality.

Participants

The target population of this study comprised local employees working in Karawang, Indonesia, aged between 19–50 years, across various industries. A convenience sampling method was used, in which prospective participants were identified through personal networks, local community forums and informal collaborations with Human Resource (HR) staff in several manufacturing and service companies. The survey link was distributed via Google Forms using email, WhatsApp and workplace group chats, allowing for broad and rapid dissemination. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were first presented with an informed consent statement outlining the purpose of the study, confidentiality measures and their right to withdraw at any time. No incentives were offered. A total of 385 employees completed the survey. The sample consisted of 268 male employees (69.6%) and 117 female employees (30.4%). The majority of respondents (93.8%) were aged between 19 and 40 years, while 6.2% were aged between 41 and 50 years. In terms of marital status, 51.2% were single and 48.8% were married. Regarding work experience, 78.4% had worked between 1 and 5 years, 17.7% had 6–10 years of experience and 3.9% had worked for more than 10 years. Further details on participant characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Measuring instruments

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of four validated scales to measure the constructs

in this study. Each scale was adapted into Bahasa Indonesia using a back-translation method to ensure semantic and conceptual equivalence. The translation process followed standard guidelines and was reviewed by bilingual experts in psychology and organisational behaviour. The internal consistency of each scale in this study met acceptable thresholds, as shown in Table 2.

Counterproductive work behaviour was measured using the CWB-C developed by Spector et al. (2006). This scale assesses behaviours that harm the organisation (e.g. wasting time, being late) and individuals (e.g. arguing, spreading rumours). It comprises 10 items divided into two dimensions: CWB targeting the organisation and CWB targeting co-workers. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (very often). Example item: 'I have purposely worked slowly when things needed to get done'. The composite reliability (CR) for this construct in the current study was 0.934 (see Table 2).

Workplace incivility was assessed using the Indonesian Workplace Incivility Scale (IWIS) adapted by Handoyo et al. (2018), based on the original framework by Cortina et al. (2001). This scale consists of 28 items measuring five subdimensions: unfriendly communication, abandonment, privacy invasion, inconsiderate behaviour and interference in personal affairs. Items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Example item: 'Colleagues ignore you when you speak'. The CR of the overall scale in this study was 0.953.

TABLE 1: Descriptions of the participants.

Variable	*n*	%
Age (years)		
19–40	361	93.7
41–50	24	6.3
Gender		
Male	268	69.6
Female	117	30.4
Marital status		
Single	197	51.1
Marriage	188	48.9
Length of work (years)		
1–5	346	78.4
6–10	24	17.7
More than 10	15	3.9

TABLE 2: Measurement model reliability and convergent validity.

Variable	*N* of items	Cronbach's alpha	CR (Rho_c)	AVE
CWB	10	0.859	0.934	0.876
Self-control	10	0.961	0.981	0.963
Job satisfaction	10	0.965	0.982	0.965
Workplace incivility	28	0.938	0.953	0.802

Note: Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (Rho_c) assess internal consistency, with values ≥ 0.70 generally considered acceptable. Average variance extracted assesses convergent validity, with values ≥ 0.50 indicating sufficient variance explained by the construct. *N* of items reflects the final number of indicators for each construct after measurement model refinement. All criteria are based on recommendations by Hair et al. (2017).

CWB, counterproductive work behaviour; CR, composite reliability; AVE, average variance extracted.

Job satisfaction was measured using the JSS developed by Spector (1985), which evaluates overall satisfaction based on both intrinsic (e.g. recognition, meaningful tasks) and extrinsic (e.g. pay, benefits) aspects of work. In this study, the scale included 10 items, rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).

Example item: 'I feel satisfied with my chances for promotion'.

Composite reliability for job satisfaction was 0.982 in this sample.

Self-control was measured using the Brief Self-Control Scale (BSCS) developed by Tangney et al. (2004). This scale assesses the general ability to regulate thoughts, emotions and behaviour and includes two dimensions: initiatory self-control and inhibitory self-control, as adapted by De Ridder et al. (2011). The scale consists of 10 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (not at all like me) to 5 (very much like me).

Example item: 'I am good at resisting temptation'. The CR for the self-control scale in this study was 0.981.

Analytical techniques

Data analysis in this study was conducted using structural equation modelling (SEM) with Smart PLS 4 software. SEM-PLS is particularly well suited for models involving **latent constructs** variables that are not directly observable and enables the simultaneous estimation of **multiple relationships** between independent, mediating, moderating and dependent variables. The use of SEM-PLS in this study was justified by several factors. Firstly, the data showed indications of non-normal distribution, making PLS-SEM a more robust option than covariance-based SEM. Secondly, although the hypothesised model is theoretically grounded – with clear constructs and relationships derived from literature – this study adopts an exploratory approach by testing these relationships within a novel context (i.e. local employees in Karawang, Indonesia). Additionally, the model includes both mediating (job satisfaction) and moderating (self-control) variables, which makes PLS-SEM particularly suitable because of its ability to simultaneously estimate complex relationships involving latent constructs.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Research Ethics Committee (No. 071/KEP-FPsi/UINJKT/V/2025).

Results

Measurement model results

The assessment of the measurement model was carried out in two main steps using SmartPLS4, focusing on internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant

validity. In the initial assessment, each indicator's outer loading, CR and average variance extracted (AVE) were examined. Items with outer loadings below the recommended threshold of 0.70 were evaluated for removal. Several indicators, specifically IWIS3, IWIS5, BSCS2 and BSCS9, showed loadings below 0.60 and were therefore removed to improve the model's construct validity and reliability. The removal of these items led to improved AVE values across affected constructs. Following these modifications, the final measurement model demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with all CR values exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.70 (see Table 2). Convergent validity was confirmed as all AVE values exceeded 0.50, indicating that each construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators.

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). In the initial model, the HTMT value between workplace incivility and CWB slightly exceeded the 0.90 threshold, indicating potential overlap. After item refinement, HTMT values were all below 0.90, confirming improved discriminant validity among all constructs. The final measurement model, after modification, meets all required psychometric standards, ensuring the validity and reliability of the constructs used in the structural model.

In the evaluation of the original measurement model (see Table 3), all second-order constructs demonstrated adequate internal consistency and convergent validity. The final measurement model was assessed for internal consistency and convergent validity after removing indicators with low outer loadings (see Table 2). All constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.895 to 0.971 and CR values ranging from 0.913 to 0.980, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021).

Convergent validity was also confirmed, as all constructs achieved AVE values above 0.50, ranging from 0.594 to 0.873, indicating that the constructs explained more than 50% of the variance in their indicators. Furthermore, all outer loadings exceeded the threshold of 0.70, confirming that the indicators strongly represent their respective latent variables. These results affirm the internal consistency and convergent validity of the final measurement model. Table 2 presents a complete summary of the final item count, outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha, CR and AVE values for each construct following refinement. This indicates that all indicators used to measure the latent variables are valid and have met the criteria for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021).

Discriminant validity was assessed using three complementary criteria: the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Table 4), cross-loadings (Table 5) and the HTMT ratio (Hair et al., 2017). The Fornell-Larcker criterion provides theoretical support by ensuring that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs. Cross-loadings offer a practical validation, confirming that each item loads highest on its corresponding construct. Furthermore, the HTMT ratio, a robust and highly recommended method in PLS-SEM, was used to assess discriminant validity. In the initial measurement model, the HTMT value between workplace incivility and CWB slightly exceeded the threshold of 0.90, suggesting potential multicollinearity. However, after refining the model by removing low-loading items, all HTMT values fell below the conservative threshold of 0.85, further supporting adequate discriminant validity among the

TABLE 3: Result of the original measurement model assessment (second-order construct).

Second-order construct	First-order dimension	Outer loading	*t*	Criteria
CWB	Targeting the organisation	0.933	35.621	≥ 0.70, Significant
CWB	Targeting people	0.939	38.174	≥ 0.70, Significant
Workplace Incivility	Unfriendly communication	0.843	27.382	≥ 0.70, Significant
Workplace Incivility	Abandonment	0.942	40.516	≥ 0.70, Significant
Workplace Incivility	Privacy invasion	0.934	39.802	≥ 0.70, Significant
Workplace Incivility	Inconsiderate behaviour	0.918	36.559	≥ 0.70, Significant
Workplace Incivility	Personal affair Intervention	0.843	26.127	≥ 0.70, Significant
Job Satisfaction	Extrinsic	0.983	78.201	≥ 0.70, Significant
Job Satisfaction	Intrinsic	0.979	74.944	≥ 0.70, Significant
Self-Control	Initiatory	0.988	93.310	≥ 0.70, Significant
Self-Control	Inhibitory	0.977	87.665	≥ 0.70, Significant

CWB, counterproductive work behaviour.

TABLE 4: Discriminant validity testing result (Fornell-Larcker Criterion).

Construct	Counterproductive work behaviour	Job satisfaction	Self-control	Workplace incivility
Counterproductive work behaviour	0.936	-	-	-
Job satisfaction	-0.333	0.981	-	-
Self-control	-0.130	0.134	0.983	-
Workplace incivility	0.169	0.089	-0.068	0.895

Note: Diagonal values (in bold) represent the square root of the AVE. Off-diagonal values represent the correlations between constructs. For discriminant validity, each diagonal value should be greater than any value in its corresponding row or column. All constructs meet the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017).

TABLE 5: Discriminant validity testing result (cross-loadings).

Indicator	CWB	Job satisfaction	Self-control	Workplace incivility
Targeting people	0.939	-0.311	-0.130	0.174
Targeting the organisation	0.933	-0.313	-0.113	0.141
Extrinsic	-0.350	0.983	0.108	0.070
Intrinsic	-0.301	0.979	0.158	0.108
Inhibitory	-0.105	0.106	0.977	-0.080
Initiatory	-0.145	0.151	0.988	-0.057
Abandonment	0.175	0.083	-0.091	0.942
Inconsiderate behaviour	0.161	0.054	-0.072	0.918
Personal affair intervention	0.165	0.075	-0.019	0.834
Privacy invasion	0.153	0.054	-0.104	0.934
Unfriendly communication	0.087	0.142	-0.011	0.843

Note: Values represent outer loadings of indicators on their respective latent constructs. Values in bold indicate the highest loading of each indicator on its intended construct. For adequate discriminant validity, each indicator should load more strongly on its assigned construct than on any other construct (Hair et al., 2017). All indicators in this study demonstrated satisfactory discriminant validity through cross-loading analysis,

CWB, counterproductive work behaviour.

constructs. These results collectively confirm that the constructs are conceptually distinct and suitable for inclusion in the structural model (Hair et al., 2017).

Based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion test presented in Table 4, the square root of the AVE for each construct, namely CWB (0.936), job satisfaction (0.981), self-control (0.983) and workplace incivility (0.895), was greater than its correlations with all other latent variables. This indicates that each construct is empirically distinct from the others, thereby fulfilling the requirement for discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, the results of the cross-loading analysis shown in Table 5 confirmed that each indicator's outer loading was highest on its respective construct compared to its loadings on other constructs. This further supports the discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurement model. As shown in Table 2, both Cronbach's alpha and CR values were reported for each construct. Reporting both indices provides a more comprehensive assessment of internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha, although widely recognised and commonly used, assumes equal factor loadings across items and may underestimate reliability in the presence of heterogeneous items. Therefore, CR was also calculated, as it provides a more accurate and refined estimate by accounting for the actual outer loadings of each indicator. All constructs CWB, workplace incivility, job satisfaction and self-control demonstrated Cronbach's alpha and CR values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. These results also affirm that the four constructs can be considered multidimensional. This finding aligns with Brunner and Suß (2005), who emphasised that CR is a robust method for evaluating the reliability of multidimensional constructs and supports the psychometric standards recommended by Hair et al. (2013).

Furthermore, according to Chin (2010), an indicator is considered valid if the AVE value exceeds 0.5 or if all outer loading values of the variable's indicators are greater than 0.5. The AVE score is greater than 0.50. This indicates that the items used in the measurement instrument are valid and appropriate for measuring their respective latent variables (see Table 2).

The fit indices suggest a well-fitting model, with the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) being 0.045 for the saturated model and 0.057 for the estimated model. Model is considered to have a good fit if the SRMR value is less than 0.08 (Hair et al., 2021). These results indicate that the model effectively captures the intended constructs and provides a clear framework for analysis (see Table 6).

This is further supported by the results of the Q-square test, which confirm the model's fit. Q^2 value greater than 0 indicates that the structural model has predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs and their associated reflective indicators. According to Hair et al. (2017), a Q^2 value above 0 suggests that the model possesses good predictive relevance, meaning it can effectively predict the endogenous variables. Conversely, a Q^2 value of 0 or below implies a lack of predictive relevance, indicating that the model fails to predict the endogenous constructs adequately (see Table 7).

Table 4 presents the discriminant validity assessment using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. As shown, the diagonal values (in bold) represent the square roots of the AVE for each construct, while the off-diagonal values indicate the inter-construct correlations. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, discriminant validity is established when the square root of each construct's AVE exceeds its highest correlation with any other construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). The results demonstrate that all constructs meet this criterion, confirming that each latent variable is empirically distinct from the others.

Table 5 displays the cross-loading values used to assess discriminant validity among the constructs. Each item's outer loading on its assigned latent construct was compared with its loadings on other constructs. The results show that all items load more highly on their respective constructs than on any other, indicating that the items are strongly associated with their intended constructs. This supports adequate discriminant validity, as recommended by Hair et al. (2017).

TABLE 6: Model fit and predictive relevance.

Index	Value	Recommended criterion
Model fit		
SRMR (saturated model)	0.045	< 0.08
SRMR (estimated model)	0.057	< 0.08
Predictive relevance (Q^2)		
CWB	0.028	-
Job satisfaction	0.003	-

Note: Standardised root mean square residual values < 0.08 indicate a good model fit (Hair et al., 2021). Q^2 *(Predictive Relevance)* values > 0 indicate that the model has sufficient predictive accuracy for endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2017). Predictive relevance was assessed using the blindfolding procedure in SmartPLS.

SRMR, standardised root mean square residual; CWB, counterproductive work behaviour.

TABLE 7: Hypothesis testing result.

Hypothesis	Variable	Original sample	*t*	*p*	f^2 effect size	95% CI (BCa)	Conclusion
H1	Workplace Incivility → CWB	0.207	5.731	0.000	0.042	[0.132, 0.282]	Supported
H2	Job Satisfaction → CWB	-0.346	9.128	0.000	0.064	[-0.421, -0.271]	Supported
H3	Workplace Incivility → Job Satisfaction	0.089	1.615	0.107	0.004	[-0.020, 0.199]	Not supported
H4	Workplace Incivility → Job Satisfaction → CWB	-0.031	1.567	0.118	-	[-0.073, 0.012]	Not supported
H5	Workplace Incivility → Self-Control → CWB	-0.094	1.794	0.073	0.008	[-0.198, 0.010]	Not supported

Notes: β = Standardised path coefficient from PLS-SEM. f^2 effect size thresholds: small = 0.02, medium = 0.15, large = 0.35 (Cohen, 1988). Confidence interval (bias-corrected and accelerated bootstrapping with 5000 samples).

WI, workplace incivility; CWB, counterproductive work behaviour; CI, confidence interval.

TABLE 8: Structural Model Results (PLS-SEM).

Hypothesis	Path	β (Coefficient)	*t*-value	*p*-value	f^2 Effect size	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Conclusion
H1	Workplace Incivility → CWB	0.207	5.731	0.000	0.042 (small)	0.132	0.282	Supported
H2	Job Satisfaction → CWB	-0.346	9.128	0.000	0.064 (small)	-0.421	-0.271	Supported
H3	Workplace Incivility → Job Satisfaction	0.089	1.615	0.107	0.004 (neglig.)	-0.020	0.199	Not Supported
H4	Workplace Incivility → Job Satisfaction → CWB (Mediation)	-0.031	1.567	0.118	-	-0.073	0.012	Not Supported
H5	Workplace Incivility × Self-Control → CWB (Moderation)	-0.094	1.794	0.073	0.008 (neglig.)	-0.198	0.010	Not Supported

Note: β = standardised path coefficient; f^2 effect size thresholds: small = 0.02, medium = 0.15, large = 0.35 (Cohen, 1988). Lower and upper level confidence intervals have been bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals from bootstrapping (5000 resamples).

neglig, negligible; CI, confidence interval.

Table 2 summarises the results of the reliability and convergent validity assessment for each construct after the refinement of the measurement model. Internal consistency was evaluated using both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (Rho_c), with all values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Convergent validity was assessed using the AVE, with all constructs demonstrating AVE values greater than 0.50, thus meeting the minimum requirement for adequate convergence. The number of items reflects the final count of indicators retained for each construct following the removal of low-loading items during model refinement.

Table 6 presents the model fit and predictive relevance indices of the structural model. The SRMR values for both the saturated and estimated models are below the recommended threshold of 0.08, indicating that the model exhibits a good fit (Hair et al., 2021). In addition, the Q^2 values for the endogenous constructs – CWB and job satisfaction – are greater than 0, confirming that the structural model has adequate predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2017).

Hypothesis testing results

Based on the results (see Table 2), Hypothesis 1 can be accepted. The path coefficient is 0.207 with $p < 0.000$, therefore, leading to the conclusion that workplace incivility has a positive and significant effect on CWB. This means that the higher the level of incivility in the workplace, the higher the CWB. Furthermore, this yielded an r-square value of 0.164. This indicates that 16.4% of the variance in CWB is explained by workplace incivility, while the remaining 83.6% is influenced by variables outside of this study.

Job satisfaction negatively impacts CWB, with a path coefficient of −0.346, $p < 0.000$ and with an r-square of 0.008 or 0.8% influence, leading to the conclusion that Hypothesis 2 is accepted, indicating that the higher the level of job satisfaction, the lower the CWB.

Workplace incivility positively impacts job satisfaction, with a path coefficient of 0.089, $p > 0.107$, leading to the conclusion that Hypothesis 3 is rejected. This finding suggests that there is no sufficient evidence to support the claim that higher levels of workplace incivility lead to lower levels of job satisfaction. Instead, other factors may influence the relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction, necessitating further research.

The results of the analysis indicate that the indirect effect of workplace incivility on CWB, with job satisfaction as a mediator, yields a path coefficient of −0.031 with $p < 0.118$. Since the *p*-value exceeds the conventional significance threshold ($p < 0.05$), the effect is not statistically significant. As a result, Hypothesis 4 is rejected, suggesting that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB in this study. This finding indicates that other factors may play a more influential role in shaping the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB, warranting further investigation.

Based on the results of the moderation regression analysis, examining the effect of workplace incivility on CWB moderated by self-control, the t-test result for the interaction between workplace incivility and self-control is −0.094 with *p*-value 0.073. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 is rejected; calculation results demonstrated that self-control does not weaken the impact of workplace incivility on CWB. Although the coefficient suggests a weakening effect, it is not statistically significant.

The results of the structural model analysis (see revised Table 8) indicate that workplace incivility positively and significantly predicts CWB (β = 0.207, $t = 5.731$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.042$, 95% confidence interval [CI]: [0.132, 0.282]). This supports Hypothesis 1, suggesting that higher perceived incivility in the workplace corresponds to increased CWB. Similarly, job satisfaction negatively predicts CWB (β = −0.346, $t = 9.128$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.064$, 95% CI [−0.421, −0.271]), supporting Hypothesis 2. This confirms that lower job satisfaction is associated with increased CWB. However, the path from workplace incivility to job satisfaction was not statistically significant (β = 0.089, $t = 1.615$, $p = 0.107$, $f^2 = 0.004$), leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 3. Regarding Hypothesis 4, the indirect effect of workplace incivility on CWB through job satisfaction was also not statistically significant (β = −0.031, $t = 1.567$, $p = 0.118$, 95% BCa CI [−0.073, 0.012]), suggesting that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between incivility and CWB. Lastly, Hypothesis 5, examining the moderating role of self-control, was not supported. Although the interaction term showed a negative trend (β = −0.094, $t = 1.794$, $p = 0.073$, $f^2 = 0.008$), the bootstrapped confidence interval [−0.198, 0.010] includes zero, indicating no significant moderation effect.

Discussion

The present study examined the associations among workplace incivility, job satisfaction, CWB and self-control using a cross-sectional design. While the findings provide insights into potential relationships, they do not establish causal effects, and all interpretations must be approached with caution.

Structural model results indicated that workplace incivility significantly predicted counterproductive work behaviour, while job satisfaction negatively predicted CWB. However, the paths from workplace incivility to job satisfaction, as well as the mediating and moderating effects, were not supported. These relationships are illustrated in the structural model output (see Figure 2).

Hypothesis 1 (H1) proposed that workplace incivility is positively associated with CWB. The results support this hypothesis ($\beta = 0.207$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.042$), indicating that higher perceptions of incivility are statistically related to greater reported counterproductive behaviours. This finding is consistent with prior research demonstrating that perceived disrespect or rudeness in the workplace may coincide with employee withdrawal, retaliation or disengagement (Hameed et al., 2017; Murtaza et al., 2020). While the relationship is modest in magnitude, it aligns with theoretical perspectives suggesting that hostile environments can undermine normative behaviour.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) posited that job satisfaction is negatively associated with CWB. The results support this hypothesis ($\beta = -0.346$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.064$), suggesting that employees who report lower satisfaction also tend to report more CWB. Although no directional causality can be inferred because of the study design, this finding supports previous literature that views job dissatisfaction as a correlate of behavioural withdrawal or defiance (Kanafa-Chmielewska, 2019; Khoirunnisa et al., 2022). The moderate effect size further indicates that job satisfaction may explain a meaningful proportion of the variance in reported deviant behaviour.

Hypothesis 3 (H3), which proposed a negative association between workplace incivility and job satisfaction, was not supported ($\beta = 0.089$, $p = 0.107$, $f^2 = 0.004$). This finding suggests no statistically meaningful relationship between the two variables in this sample. Although a weak positive coefficient emerged, it was non-significant and therefore cannot be interpreted as evidence of a positive or negative association. This result diverges from past studies that link incivility to reduced job satisfaction (Rachmanadya & Handoyo, 2022) and may reflect contextual or cultural moderators not captured in the present analysis. It also reinforces the importance of not overinterpreting small or non-significant coefficients, especially when confidence intervals include zero.

Hypothesis 4 (H4) tested whether job satisfaction mediates the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB. The indirect path was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.031$, $p = 0.118$, 95% CI [−0.073, 0.012]), indicating that job satisfaction does not explain the link between incivility and CWB in this study. While theoretically plausible, this mediational pathway may be contingent on unmeasured variables such as organisational justice or emotional exhaustion, which were not included in the model. Future research should consider alternative mechanisms or serial mediators that could clarify how incivility contributes to behavioural outcomes.

Hypothesis 5 (H5) explored the moderating role of self-control in the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB. The moderation effect was not statistically supported ($\beta = -0.094$, $p = 0.073$, $f^2 = 0.008$, 95% CI [−0.198, 0.010]). Although the direction of the interaction was consistent with expectations – suggesting that higher self-control might buffer the association, it failed to reach significance. This finding suggests that, within this sample, self-control does not reliably condition how incivility relates to CWB. While some prior studies have found moderating effects (e.g. Restubog et al., 2010), the lack of support here may reflect contextual or measurement-related factors, such as domain-specific self-regulation or exposure to chronic stressors that deplete self-control resources (Inzlicht & Schmeichel, 2012). The findings related to H5 must be interpreted with precision. It would be incorrect to claim that self-control significantly mitigates the effects of workplace incivility, as this study found no such statistically significant interaction. However, the theoretical rationale remains relevant and points to the need for further investigation under varying organisational climates or with larger samples.

Taken together, these results underscore the complex and potentially conditional associations among interpersonal mistreatment, affective states and behavioural responses. They highlight the value of examining both attitudinal (job satisfaction) and dispositional (self-control) factors within the same framework. Nonetheless, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw firm conclusions about the temporal or causal ordering of variables. Future research employing longitudinal or experimental designs is needed to substantiate directional hypotheses.

However, the findings of this study diverge from previous literature, as they indicate a non-significant and weak positive association between workplace incivility and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.089$, $p = 0.107$, $f^2 = 0.004$). Although the direction of the association is positive, the effect size is negligible and statistically unsupported, indicating that workplace incivility does not meaningfully explain variance in job satisfaction within this sample. This result highlights the importance of considering contextual or unmeasured moderating variables that may influence this relationship.

Sharma and Singh (2016) highlight that workplace incivility is a highly sensitive issue, particularly in Asian countries such as Indonesia, where research on this topic remains scarce. Their study also found that the relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction is weak, with organisational culture and justice being stronger predictors of job satisfaction. Similarly, Cingöz and Kaplan (2015) concluded that workplace incivility does not have a significant impact on job satisfaction. Additionally, workplace incivility may lead to feelings of isolation and detachment, which could encourage employees to work more independently (Vickers in Reio & Gosh, 2009). Furthermore, Reio and Gosh (2009) suggest that employees with strong adaptive abilities tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction, implying that variables such as organisational culture, perceived fairness and employee adaptability may serve as mediators in this relationship. Jamal and Siddiqui (2020) further argue that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have a greater influence on job satisfaction compared to workplace incivility. Given these findings, it is possible for workplace incivility to have a positive effect on job satisfaction although the impact remains weak and marginal

The impact of workplace incivility on CWB, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable, demonstrates a negative directional influence. This suggests that a decline in job satisfaction does not necessarily lead to an increase in CWB. Instead, employees may be more inclined to adhere to workplace rules or maintain productivity as a coping mechanism in response to an unwelcoming or uncivil work environment. Individuals may recognise that engaging in counterproductive behaviours could further deteriorate their situation or even jeopardise their careers. In this context, moral responsibility and professional ethics play a crucial role in discouraging unethical or unprofessional behaviour.

These findings align with previous research by Bojarska (2015) and Cosmina et al. (2023), which also reported that low job satisfaction does not always result in increased CWB. Cosmina et al. (2023) further suggest that intrinsic motivation may serve as a protective factor, allowing employees to maintain their professional conduct despite experiencing low job satisfaction.

When comparing these findings with previous research, the study provides additional insights into the role of self-control as a moderator. Prior studies have extensively documented the direct effects of workplace incivility on CWB (e.g. Murtaza et al., 2020; Porath & Pearson, 2012). However, the current study contributes by demonstrating that self-control can significantly mitigate these effects. While previous research has emphasised external interventions, such as organisational policies and leadership strategies (Hameed et al., 2017), this study highlights the importance of internal factors, specifically individual self-control, in reducing CWBs. Moreover, these findings align with research conducted in Western contexts (Restubog et al., 2010) but add value by confirming the moderating role of self-control in a different cultural and organisational setting, particularly in Indonesia.

Based on test results examining the influence of workplace incivility on CWB, with self-control as a moderator, the direction of influence was negative. Johnson et al. (2018) state that self-control can reduce negative behaviour, and for employees to complete tasks efficiently and collaborate well with colleagues, they need to manage their emotions, thoughts and actions while at work. Self-control is a highly adaptive and distinctive human trait that allows individuals to alter their responses and even their behaviours, enabling them to align with societal and organisational standards (Baumeister et al., as cited in Hua et al., 2023). As a result, strong self-control helps individuals seek alternative perspectives on situations. High self-control is a key internal resource that enables employees to endure temptations and refrain from acting on impulsive urges (DeWall et al., as cited in Hua et al., 2023). On the other hand, low self-control suggests that employees lack the strength of will to restrain impulses and are more likely to be governed by automatic emotional reactions (Hua et al., 2023).

Further, the results of this study indicate that self-control does not moderate the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB, as shown by a *p*-value greater than 0.05. In other words, although self-control is theoretically expected to reduce individuals' impulses to respond negatively to uncivil treatment at work, this study did not support that assumption.

There are several possible explanations for this finding. Initially, in certain work environments such as those with high pressure, strong collective norms or weak mechanisms for reporting workplace incivility, self-control may not be strong enough to prevent negative reactions. Even individuals with high self-control may experience psychological stress that pushes them to act counterproductively, especially when incivility is ongoing or not addressed by the organisation.

This result is also in line with previous research, which found that in highly stressful interpersonal situations, even people with high self-control may fail to resist emotional impulses (Bechtoldt et al., 2007). Self-control is not an unlimited psychological resource. When it is used continuously, a person's ability to control their impulses can decrease a phenomenon known as ego depletion. Under such conditions, it becomes more likely for individuals to react to stressors like workplace incivility (Inzlicht & Schmeichel, 2012).

Therefore, this study suggests that self-control is not the only protective factor in dealing with incivility at work. Other factors, such as social support, organisational norms and procedural justice, should also be considered in efforts to reduce CWB. These findings open up opportunities for future research to explore other, more contextually relevant moderators, especially within local workplace cultures.

These findings confirm the primary hypothesis that workplace incivility contributes to CWB. In addition, the

study examined the role of self-control as a moderating variable. The results indicate that self-control does not moderate the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB. Employees with higher self-control are still likely to respond to workplace incivility with counterproductive behaviours; the hypothesis that self-control acts as a buffer against negative workplace experiences is not supported.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the use of convenience sampling resulted in a sample drawn from employees across various industries without sector-specific representation. As a consequence, the findings may lack specificity with regard to particular occupational groups or organisational contexts. Future research could benefit from employing more rigorous sampling strategies, such as purposive or stratified sampling, to obtain a more targeted and representative sample. This would enhance the generalisability and practical relevance of the results within specific sectors.

Secondly, the study employed a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to infer causal relationships between the variables. While the analysis identifies statistical associations among workplace incivility, job satisfaction, self-control and counterproductive work behaviour, it does not establish temporal or directional effects. Longitudinal or experimental designs are recommended in future studies to assess causality and the stability of these relationships over time.

Thirdly, all constructs were measured using self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce common method bias and social desirability effects. Although validated scales were used, the reliance on a single data source may inflate observed relationships. Future research should consider using multi-source data, such as supervisor ratings or behavioural observations, to mitigate the potential for response bias and improve the robustness of findings.

Implications for behavioural science

These findings have important practical implications. Organisations, managers and human resource professionals can benefit from this research by recognising the detrimental impact of workplace incivility and implementing strategies to mitigate its occurrence. Workplace policies promoting respect, clear communication and supportive leadership can help create a healthier work environment, reducing the likelihood of counterproductive behaviours.

Furthermore, this study highlights the crucial role of self-control in regulating workplace behaviour. Training programmes focused on self-control development can be beneficial for employees, equipping them with the necessary skills to manage incivility without engaging in CWB.

Future research should further explore additional factors that may influence this relationship, such as organisational culture, leadership styles and personality traits. By continuing to investigate these dynamics, organisations can develop more effective interventions to foster a positive and productive work environment. The ultimate goal is to enhance employee well-being, improve workplace harmony and strengthen overall organisational performance.

Conclusion

Based on the outcomes of descriptive and structural analyses, this study found that workplace incivility is positively associated with CWB. Job satisfaction is negatively associated with CWB, indicating that higher levels of job satisfaction tend to correspond with lower levels of CWB. However, the association between workplace incivility and job satisfaction was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.089$, $p = 0.107$), suggesting that this study does not provide sufficient evidence to support a meaningful relationship, positive or negative, between the two variables. Instead, other factors may influence the relationship between workplace incivility and job satisfaction, necessitating further research. The results of the analysis indirect effect of workplace incivility on CWB with job satisfaction as a mediator, concluded that job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB in this study. This finding indicates that other factors may play a more influential role in shaping the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB, warranting further investigation.

Furthermore, the outcomes of the moderated regression analysis indicate that while the interaction term between self-control and workplace incivility showed a negative direction, the effect was not statistically significant ($p = 0.073$). Therefore, this study does not provide sufficient evidence to support the claim that self-control significantly moderates the relationship between workplace incivility and CWB.

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Authors' contributions

N.M. contributed to this research by providing conceptualisation, conducting research methodology, investigation, software, writing the original draft and funding acquisition. N.M., W.L.R. and N.R. contributed to managing project administration, validation and editing the manuscript. T.R. and K.T.Y. contributed to formal analysis and validation.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, N.M., upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

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