Organisational and Individual Aspects of Workplace Incivility

Dwi Novitasari\textsuperscript{a}, Asri Laksmi Riani\textsuperscript{b}, Joko Suyono\textsuperscript{c}, Mugi Harsono\textsuperscript{d}, \\
\textsuperscript{a}Institute of Economic Science Widya Wiwaha Yogyakarta & Doctoral Program in Economic Sciences Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta, Indonesia, \textsuperscript{b,c,d}Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta, Indonesia, Email: \textsuperscript{a}novita@stieww.ac.id, \textsuperscript{b}asrilaksmiriani@yahoo.com, \textsuperscript{c}jokosu_jmfeuns@yahoo.co.id, \textsuperscript{d}mugiharsono@gmail.com

Workplace incivility consists of subtle and imperceptible behaviours that are frequently ignored and considered normal occurrences in the work environment. Workplace incivility can result from organisational and individual interactions, so the impacts of both aspects are necessary to be explored. The aim of the study is to examine the impacts of organisational aspects (job security and job demand) and individual aspects (psychological contract and job satisfaction) on workplace incivility. This is a quantitative study with a survey method using a questionnaire. Data was collected from 350 respondents who work in the service sector in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Data analysis and hypothesis testing were conducted using multiple regression analysis. The study results show that organisational and individual aspects have significant influence on workplace incivility. The conclusion of the study is that workplace incivility can be caused by both organisational and individual aspects.

**Keywords:** Workplace incivility, organisational aspects, individual aspects, job insecurity, job demand, psychological contract, job satisfaction.

**Introduction**

The work environment is a place of social interactions. In the service sector, it generally requires primary service, so positive work behaviours are necessary. Workers in the service sector are required to display work behaviours and attitudes that are professional, polite, ethical and respectful. Work behaviours can be divided into two types: prosocial and antisocial behaviour. Prosocial behaviour poses benefits or generates positive results for other people at the meso level, for co-workers at the micro level and for the organisation at the macro level (Griffin & Lopez, 2005; Penner et. al., 2005). On the other hand, antisocial
behaviour refers to all dangerous behaviours or behaviour that is intended to endanger or harm other people, team/group, organisation or stakeholders. Antisocial behaviour is the opposite of prosocial behaviour and is categorised as bad behaviour in an organisation since it leads to negative consequences (Griffin & Lopez, 2005). This study focuses on the small proportion of antisocial behaviour that is referred to as workplace incivility.

The workplace incivility phenomenon occurs in various sectors and organisations in all parts of the world. Based on a study conducted on 3001 workers in Sweden, almost three-quarters of respondents experienced work incivility from co-workers and 52% from their supervisors. In addition, 75% and 58% of respondents witnessed their co-workers and supervisors committing workplace incivility respectively (Torkelson, Holm, & Bäckström, 2016). A study conducted in Egypt involving administrative employees from five Universities showed that workplace incivility increased from time to time for most respondents (Ewis, 2015). Additionally, a study conducted on various organisations in the service sector, such as educational institutions, banks, insurance companies and hospitals located in Lahore found that each working individual is a victim of workplace incivility (Abid et. al., 2015). Studies on workplace incivility were initially more widely developed in the Western regions, but several studies began in the Asian context, the results suggesting that most Asian females have experienced workplace incivility (Ghosh, 2017). This phenomenon indicates that as more organisations and workers are exposed to workplace incivility, studies on workplace incivility and its antecedents should be further investigated.

Previous research shows that organisational and individual aspects can affect employees’ work behaviours. Workplace incivility is a behaviour caused by a range of factors. There are two important factors that have considerable impact on workplace incivility, including organisational and individual aspects (Estes & Wang, 2008). Organisational aspects include leadership style, workplace empowerment, perceived organisational support (POS), job security, social support from co-workers and supervisors, job demands and organisational change. However, according to previous research, two factors within organisational aspects have a crucial impact on workplace incivility: job security and job demand (Harold & Holtz, 2015; Hur et. al., 2016; Nasrun et. al., 2019; Smith et. al., 2010; Torkelson, Holm, Bäckström, et. al., 2016).

Workplace incivility tends to occur in daily interactions in a workplace or Organisation. Organisation can be comprised of either only a few or large number of individuals, so each person has important roles in promoting healthy interactions. Previous studies found that individual aspects can include emotions manifested in psychological contract and job satisfaction (Bibi et. al., 2013; Kakarika et. al., 2017; Lanzo et. al., 2016; Rajalakshmi & Naresh, 2018; Sayers et. al., 2011; Shabir et. al., 2014).
Previous studies on workplace incivility have tended to discuss only one aspect as an antecedent, therefore little attention has been paid to empirical studies that combine organisational and individual aspects. In addition, previous studies have been more apt to specifically investigate organisational aspect related to job characteristics. Similarly, studies on individual aspects tend to examine individual characteristics and little research has been conducted on emotions or perceptions towards jobs. The current study attempts to bridge the gap by investigating the effects of organisational aspects (job security and job demand) and individual aspects (psychological contract and job satisfaction) on workplace incivility.

**Literature Review**

An Organisation is composed of diverse characteristics and behaviours, resulting in employee exposure to negative or deviant behaviours. Workplace incivility is associated with antisocial behaviour and part of deviant behaviour, which is violates the norm of mutual respect (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Roberson & Azaola, 2015). Workplace incivility is defined as behaviour with a low intensity of violence and aggression as the intention to jeopardise or harm others is relatively low (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al., 2001; Hutton, 2006).

Initially, incivility was considered to be an act committed unconsciously or accidentally and has become a common practice in normal behaviour. Low intention to harm or endanger others results in difficulty to recognise or detect incivility. However, when incivility is committed with high intention or with alarming frequency, the urge to retaliate against the perpetrator with the same treatment will emerge over time. This can be further explained as the victim or the witness of incivility can turn into a perpetrator or even an instigator of workplace incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999).

**Organisational Aspects and Workplace Incivility**

Organisational aspects are sourced from policies, conditions and structures related to jobs. According to previous research, organisational aspects play an important role and have an impact on workplace incivility. A conceptual study by Estes & Wang (2008) indicates that workplace incivility is greatly influenced by two primary factors in the organisational context, management philosophy and organisational culture. Another conceptual research reveals that experienced incivility is reinforced within the Organisational climate that creates or fuels perpetration or instigation of workplace incivility (Pearson et al., 2001). A further study shows that workplace adaptation from the organisational point of view is the antecedent of interpersonal and organisational incivility (Reio & Ghosh, 2009). Thus, although several other studies have touched on the other factors of organisational aspects,
research on organisational aspects such as job security and job demand need further investigation, (Holm et. al., 2015; Torkelson, Holm, Bäckström et. al., 2016).

Lack of job security can be defined as a powerless and insecure feeling when working due to a threatening situation in the workplace (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Sverke et. al., 2002). The results of previous studies found that job insecurity influences perpetrators to engage in bullying, which is an example of workplace incivility (De Cuyper et. al., 2009; Glambek et. al., 2018). Lack of job security induces burnout and workplace incivility for some nurses in Canada (Fida et. al., 2018). It is regarded as one of the factors that changes the workplace and is a common behaviour within an Organisation (Lee et. al., 2018).

Job demand is demand or pressure comprising of physical, social and organisational elements from work-related activities that requires physical and psychological effort (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Van Der Doef & Maes, 1999). Past research found that job demand has an impact on workplace incivility (Bibi et. al., 2013; Smith et. al., 2010; Van Jaarsveld et. al., 2010). High level of job demand results in emotional exhaustion and, in turn, brings about workplace incivility (Koon & Pun, 2018).

Based on the above discussion, this study proposes two hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1a:** organisational aspect, including lack of job security positively affects workplace incivility.

**Hypothesis 1b:** organisational aspect, including job demand positively affects workplace incivility.

**Individual Aspects and Workplace Incivility**

According to a conceptual study by Pearson et. al. (2001), another factor contributing to experiencing incivility which originates from individuals consists of individual differences in personality traits, as well as relative power and gender composition in an organisation. Incivility can occur in an interpersonal scope caused by affective experience (Reio & Ghosh, 2009). Individuals within an organisation possess a number of differences. One of these differences consists of attitudes such as agreeableness, neuroticism and extraversion, which can prompt workplace incivility (Milam et. al., 2009). In addition, to differences in gender composition, another individual factor is age. A study revealed that age affects workplace incivility (Cortina et. al., 2013). However, according to past research, individual elements such as psychological contract and job satisfaction are amongst the important factors that need further investigation (Estes & Wang, 2008; Sayers et. al., 2011; Sears & Humiston, 2015).
The definition of psychological contract is employees’ beliefs in mutual obligation between employees and their organisation, which are based on promises that are perceived but not necessarily acknowledged by the organisation agent (Bhutto et al., 2016; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Based on past research, psychological contract is found to influence workplace incivility (Sayers et al., 2011; Sears & Humiston, 2015).

Job satisfaction refers to behaviours in relation with individuals’ emotions to love or like all aspects of their job and can be measured in cognitive, affective and behavioural components (Locke, 1969; Weiss & Merlo, 2015). Past research reveals that job satisfaction as part of the individual aspects is found to negatively affect workplace incivility; this result signifies that the higher the job satisfaction, the lower the workplace incivility (Blau & Andersson, 2005). Job satisfaction is discovered as one of the antecedents of instigated incivility (Schilpzand et al., 2016).

Given the discussion in previous studies, this study formulates two hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 2a:** the individual aspect: psychological contract negatively affects workplace incivility.

**Hypothesis 2b:** the individual aspect: job satisfaction negatively affects workplace incivility.

The research model illustrates the relationships between research variables and the hypotheses formulated in the current study (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Research Model**
Research Method

Data Collection and Respondent Profile

Data was collected from respondents who work as employees in the service sector including hospitality, banking, financial services and property in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The sampling technique consisted of random sampling. The total number of questionnaire sheets distributed was 387 out of which 350 respondents returned them with a response rate of 90.43%. The questionnaire had two parts. The first part required collecting respondents’ information about gender, age, education level and years of work experience. The second part contained statements related to organisational aspects (lack of job security and job demand) and individual aspects (psychological contract and job satisfaction).

Based on the collected data of respondents, 147 respondents (42%) were female and 203 (58%) male. In terms of age, most respondents (55.14%) were 20-30 years of age; 98 (28%) were 31-40 years; 41 (11.71%) 41-50 years of age while 18 respondents (5.14%) were above 50 years of age.

In terms level of education, 201 respondents (57.42%) had a Bachelor’s degree; 96 respondents (27.42%) had an associate degree; 38 respondents (10.85%) were senior high school graduates and 15 respondents (4.30%) had a Master’s degree. Regarding years of work experience, most respondents (60.75%) had between 1-5 years of work experience; 78 (22.28%) had 6-10 years; 42 respondents (12%) between 11-15 years and 18 respondents (5.14%) had over 15 years of work experience. Respondent profiles based on their characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent profiles based on gender, age, education level and years of experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>58.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>42.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>55.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>28.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 50</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>27.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>57.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variable items were measured using self-reported questionnaires, and the questions were adapted from past research. Lack of job security was measured using a three-item subscale developed by Hellgren et. al. (1999). Statements included: “I am worried about having to leave my job before I would like to”; “there is a risk that I will have to leave my job in the years to come” and “I feel uneasy about losing my job in the near future” (Cronbach’s α = 0.74). The variable items of job insecurity were measured using the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Job demand was measured using four items developed by Bowen et. al. (2014) including: “how much experienced do you have working to tight deadlines”; “how often do you work long hours”; “do you have adequate time to balance work and family responsibilities”; and “do you have to work harder than others to ‘prove’ yourself (Cronbach’s α = 0.79). Each item was measure using the 5-point Likert scale (1 = most of the time; 2 = frequently; 3 = sometimes; 4 = seldom; and 5 = never).

Psychological contract was measured using 18 items developed by Raja et. al. (2004). The measurement was divided into two parts: (1) transactional contracts with 9 items; for example: “I work to achieve purely short-term goals of my job (Cronbach’s α = 0.76); and (2) relational contracts with 9 items; for example: “I expect to gain promotion in this Company with length of service and effort to achieve goals” (Cronbach’s α = 0.78). Each item was measured using the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Job satisfaction was measured using a scale developed in studies by Luthans et. al. (2007) and Connolly & Viswesvaran (2000). The scale consisted of 5 items: “I am generally very satisfied with my job”; “I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job”; “I seldom think of quitting my job”; “Very few people on this job feel that the work is useless or trivial”; “Most people on this job are very satisfied with the job,” (Cronbach’s α = 0.89). Each item was measured using the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
Workplace incivility was measured using the Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) developed by Cortina et. al. (2001). This scale is used to measure the frequency of incivility, consisting of 12 sample items: “Ignored or excluded others from professional camaraderie;” “Made unwanted attempts to draw others into a discussion on personal matters;” and “Paid little attention to others’ statement or showed little interest in others’ opinion” (Cronbach’s α = 0.82). Each item was measured using the 5-point Likert scale (1 = most of the time; 2 = frequently; 3 = sometimes; 4 = seldom; and 5 = never).

Data Analysis Technique and Results

The technique used in the analysis consisted of multiple linear regression analysis because there was more than one independent variable (lack of job security, job demand, psychological contract and job satisfaction). Moreover, independent and dependent variable (workplace incivility) were measured using the interval or ratio scale (quantitative or numerical). Multiple linear regression analysis was used to obtain and predict the values of independent variables on the dependent variable, as well as in assessing the effects of independent variables on the dependent variable either simultaneously or partially (Hair et. al., 2010). The first step of data analysis using multiple linear regression analysis was used to perform the classical assumption test consisting of a normality, multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity test. The second step consisted of hypothesis testing using multiple linear regression analysis.

Normality Test

The Normality test aims to determine if both independent and dependent variables in the regression model contain data normally distributed or approaching normal distribution. The test is conducted using the significance value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The criteria of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test consist of significance value or ρ > 0.05 and normality of data distribution, is normal, but if the significance value or ρ < 0.05, the data distribution is not normal (Ghozali, 2018; Hair et al., 2010). The results show that the significance value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.299, which was > 0.05. This signifies that the data distribution was normal.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity test aims to determine if there is a correlation between independent variables. However, an effective regression model should not show any correlation between independent variables. Multicollinearity test is based on tolerance value and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). Multicollinearity test criteria evaluate if the tolerance value > 0.10 and VIF < 10.00, multicollinearity is not present; however, if the tolerance value < 0.10 and VIF
> 10.00, multicollinearity occurs. The results of this study show that the variable of job insecurity had the tolerance value of 0.379 and VIF 2.145; the job demand variable had the tolerance value of 0.355 and VIF 2.448; the psychological contract variable had the tolerance value of 0.278 and VIF 3.371 and job satisfaction variable had the tolerance value of 0.312 and VIF 2.889. It can be concluded that there was no multi-collinearity in the regression model according to its independent variables.

**Heteroscedasticity Test**

The heteroscedasticity test aims to test if there is inequality of variance from the residual of one observation to another in a regression model. If variance remains the same, homoscedasticity occurs. However, if variance diverges from one observation to another, heteroscedasticity occurs. An effective regression model requires the existence of homoscedasticity or the absence of heteroscedasticity. The heteroscedasticity test is based on the results of Glejser test with the following criteria: the significance value or p > 0.05 means no heteroscedasticity, but the significance value or p < 0.05 means that heteroscedasticity is present. The results show that each variable had p value as follows: lack of job security p = 0.184; job demand p = 0.256; psychological contract p = 0.274; job satisfaction p = 1.767; and workplace incivility p = 0.298. It can be concluded that heteroscedasticity was absent since the p-value of all variables was > 0.05.

**Hypothesis Testing and Results**

Hypothesis testing conducted using multiple linear regression analysis aims to predict the effects and their strength of independent variables on dependent variables. The results of multiple linear regression analysis are presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models (Variable)</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.851</td>
<td>4.978</td>
<td>3.295</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Job security</td>
<td>0.370</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>2.585</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job demand</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>3.915</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological contract</td>
<td>-0.347</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>-3.361</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.383</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>-2.627</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = 0.811
R² = 0.782
Adjusted R² = 0.781

F = 75.276
Sig. = 0.000

Dependent Variable (Y) = Workplace Incivility
p = 0.05
Table 2 illustrates that all independent variables affected dependent variables, and no variable was removed from the model. The results of multiple linear regression analysis in Table 2 show that the regression equation is as follows:

\[ Y = 4.851 + 0.370 X_1 + 0.268 X_2 -0.347 X_3 -0.383X_4 + e. \]

The partial effects of each independent variable can be seen from the t-value in Table 2. Regression coefficient (β) for lack of job security variable was 0.370, therefore had a positive effect on workplace incivility. Based on the t-test, the t-value was 2.585 with the significance value of 0.002 < 0.05, meaning that the influence of job insecurity on workplace incivility was significant. Results showed that hypothesis 1a was acceptable.

Job demand had a regression coefficient (β) 0.268 with the t-value of 3.915 and the significance value of 0.002 < 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the influence of job demand on workplace incivility was positively significant, consequently hypothesis 1b was acceptable.

The results also showed that regression coefficient (β) was negative for psychological contract (-0.347), with the t-value of -3.361 and the significance value of 0.001 < 0.05. It can be concluded that psychological contract had a significant negative influence on workplace incivility. Thus, hypothesis 2a was acceptable. Negative regression coefficient (β) was also found for job satisfaction (-0.383) with the t-value of -2.627 and significance value of 0.004 < 0.05, so that job satisfaction had a significant negative influence on workplace incivility. This result suggests that hypothesis 2b was also acceptable.

R² value is used to predict the degree of contribution of independent variables used in the regression equation in this study (Ghozali, 2018). According to Table 2, the contribution of independent variables (lack of job security, job demand, psychological contract and job satisfaction) could affect the dependent variable (workplace incivility) by as much as 78.2%, while the rest are affected by other variables beyond the scope of this study or its regression equation.

The F value is used to discover the simultaneous effects of independent variables on the dependent variable, as well as to show the model’s goodness of fit. The criterion used is evaluates if simultaneous effect is present if the significance value is < 0.05 (Ghozali, 2018). The significance value of the F test seen in Table 2 is 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, based on the conclusion, all independent variables simultaneously affect dependent variables, and the model is categorised as fit to explain the effects of the variables discussed in this study.
Discussion

This study focuses on the causes of workplace incivility by combining two aspects (organisational and individual) that have been paid little attention by previous researchers. The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that organisational aspects, including lack of job insecurity and job demand, positively affect workplace incivility. This signifies that the higher the lack of job security, the higher level of workplace incivility. This result is consistent with the results of previous studies regarding organisational aspects that both instigate and increase workplace incivility (Estes & Wang, 2008; Glambek et al., 2018; Holm et al., 2015; Torkelson, Holm, Bäckström, et al., 2016).

Other factors concerning organisational aspects can reinforce and reduce workplace incivility. The establishment of a positive work environment in an Organisation can determine performance work outcome and shape work behaviours of organisation members, including employees. An Organisation is obliged to create a supportive and pleasant work environment for its employees (Laschinger et al., 2012). A sense of belonging and job satisfaction, as well as a desire to continuously fulfil duties at work are important to be established and instilled to all members of the Organisation (Hershcovis et al., 2017). In addition, Organisational climate that promotes mutual respect in the work environment and when doing work can neutralise the occurrence of negative work behaviours (Powell et al., 2015). Organisational aspects in the form of control and supervision of hierarchical-based exercise of power also need to be taken into consideration because it is related to the division of work tasks in the Organisation and the demand to fulfil work tasks (Hershcovis et al., 2017; Pattani et al., 2018; Paulin & Griffin, 2016). The decreasing level of workplace incivility has positive effects when the Organisation makes an intervention at the Organisational level (Hodgins et al., 2014).

The results of hypothesis testing show that the individual aspects, including psychological contract and job satisfaction make a negative impact on workplace incivility. This signifies that the higher psychological contract an individual has, the lower workplace incivility he or she has. In addition, the higher the level of job satisfaction, the lower the level of workplace incivility. These results correspond with the results of past research (Estes & Wang, 2008; Sayers et al., 2011; Schilpzand et al., 2016; Sears & Humiston, 2015). Negative feelings or emotions that come from individuals are related to work have been proven to affect workplace incivility, so employees who feel bad about their work are more likely to show workplace incivility.

Workplace incivility is considered to be one of the strategies to deal with selfish behaviours and negative work situations (Ogungbamila, 2013). Negative and positive work-related emotions have significant impacts on workplace incivility (Arab et al., 2013). Individuals in
the organisation need to be more aware of the importance of self-worth in order to be able to maintain their emotional, physical and spiritual health, resulting in the freedom of negative behaviours caused by turmoil in the workplace (Green, 2018). Job satisfaction can alter individual judgment to become contradictory to workplace incivility, as a result, the individual will think that incivility is not worth doing (Clark & Kenski, 2017; Marchiondo et al., 2018).

Conclusion

The results of the study provide empirical evidence and reinforce antecedents of workplace incivility in terms of organisational and individual aspects. Organisational aspects, consisting of lack of job security and job demand, significantly lead to the escalation of workplace incivility. On the other hand, individual aspects including psychological contract and job satisfaction, have significant influence on decreased workplace incivility. These results suggest that an Organisation should provide support and intervention by implementing policies that promote strict actions to prevent rather than tolerate workplace incivility. As part of the driving force of an Organisation, individuals need to have positive emotions and bond with their jobs in order to avoid workplace incivility.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The first limitation of the study is the use of self-reporting to fill in the questionnaire, which is more likely to cause bias. Thus, future studies should include reports or interviews from direct employers or use dyad reports between supervisors and subordinates. The second limitation is the sample collection that is focused only on the service sector, resulting in the inability to generalise results for other sectors. Future studies should use diverse samples from various sectors and jobs in order to create better generalisations based on the study results.
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