

Summary

Reliability and Validity of the Turkish Version of the Workplace Incivility Scale

Sibel Gök

Marmara University

Işıl Karatuna

Marmara University

Oğuz Başol

Kırklareli University

Incivility has been considered as one of the most pervasive forms of antisocial behavior in the workplace (Cortina, 2008). It is distinguished from other forms of interpersonal mistreatment like workplace bullying or psychological aggression by the low intensity of deviant behaviors and the ambiguous motivation of the perpetrator. Examples of incivility in the workplace may include behaviors like neglecting to say thank you or please, answering the phone with a “yeah”, making derogatory jokes about individuals at work (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Even these milder types of behaviors may seem harmless when compared to more severe ones; there is evidence that incivility has a range of negative impacts on employees as well as on organizations. For example, workplace incivility is found to be negatively related to employee health, job satisfaction and commitment and positively to turnover (Cortina, Magley, Williams & Langhout, 2001; Holm, Torkelson & Backström, 2015; Kern & Grandey, 2009; Laschinger, Leiter, Day & Gilin, 2009; Lim & Cortina, 2005; Lim & Lee, 2011; Schilzand, De Pater & Erez, 2016).

Research on workplace incivility has advanced in the years since the studies of Anderson and Pearson (1999) and Cortina et al. (2001). Cortina et al.’s (2001), Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) has been one of the most frequently used instruments to assess the prevalence of incivility and its associations with possible antecedents and outcomes. However, to date, incivility has gained little academic interest in the area of anti-social behavior in workplace in Turkey. Some of these studies investigated the correlates of workplace incivility using the seven-item WIS (Kanten 2014; Kaya 2015; Kutlu & Bilgin, 2017; Polatçı & Özçalık 2013; Ülbeği, Özgen & Özgen, 2014). However, none of these studies have examined the psychometric properties of this scale, with the exception of Kutlu and Bilgin’s study (2017). Kutlu and Bilgin (2017) have investigated the psychometric properties of a modified version of the WIS among a

sample of nurses. The modified scale includes 12 items and assesses the workplace incivility within the previous year. Although the 12 item WIS is more updated than the seven-item WIS, majority of the workplace incivility research is still being conducted using the seven-item WIS (Di Fabio ve Ghizzani, 2010; Hershcovis ve ark., 2017; Marchiondo, Cortina ve Kabat-Farr, 2018; Miner ve Cortina; 2016; Schad, Torkelson, Bäckström ve Karlson, 2014). The seven-item WIS is widely used since it has a high reliability and validity coefficient and is shorter, thus, it increases the probability that respondents complete the questionnaire especially when the questionnaire includes several scales at the same time (Balducci et al., 2017). Therefore, the current study aimed to adapt the original seven-item WIS to Turkish and explore its psychometric properties as it is currently one of the most widely used instruments in the research on workplace incivility.

Method

Participants

We conducted a cross-sectional survey of white-collar employees working in finance, health, education, informatics and work and management sectors, identified by snowball sampling, in which participants are recruited on a voluntary basis through direct contacts. 350 employees from various private organizations in Istanbul participated in the study. 62% of the respondents were female and 38% of them were male. All the respondents had a university degree and majority of them were between the ages of 20-39 ($M = 30.3$, $SD = 5.71$).

Instruments

Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS). The participants completed the seven-item WIS developed by Cortina et al. (2001). The scale measures the frequency of experienced uncivil workplace behaviors from supervisors or

co-workers, within the previous five years. In the current study, we adopted the approach of Cortina, Kabat-Far, Leskinen, Huerta and Magley (2013), Schad, Torkelson, Bäckström and Karlson (2014) and Trudel and Reio Jr. (2011), thus, changed the time frame to one year in order to reduce the possibility of recall bias. Respondents are asked to rate each item on a five-point scale from never (0) to most of the time (4). Sample items include “put you down or condescending to you” and “made demeaning or derogatory remarks about you”. The Cronbach’s alpha in this study was .92.

Modified workplace bullying questionnaire (M-WBQ). Workplace bullying was measured using the WBQ developed by Tınaz, Gök and Karatuna (2010). Tınaz, Gök and Karatuna (2013) revised the WBQ by adding two more items and modifying the four-point scale to five-point scale ranging from never (1) to almost every day (5). The revised scale contains 30 items. Respondents are asked to indicate how often they have been exposed to the negative behaviors within the previous six months. Sample items include “being shouted at or being the target of rudeness” and “being treated like air”. This scale has been shown to be a valid and reliable instrument for the assessment of exposure to workplace bullying. The Cronbach’s alpha in this study was .85.

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). Job satisfaction was measured using the validated Turkish version (Baycan, 1985) of the 20-item short form of the MSQ developed by Weiss, Davis, England ve Lofquist (1967). Respondents are asked to rate each item on a five-point scale from very dissatisfied (1) to very satisfied (5). Sample items include “On my present job, this is how I feel about being able to keep busy all the time” and “On my present job, this is how I feel about the chance to work alone on the job”. The Cronbach’s alpha in this study was .96.

General Health Questionnaire- (GHQ). In order to measure the general health (physical and mental) of the respondents, we used the validated Turkish version (Kılıç, 1996) of the 28-item GHQ developed by Goldberg and Hillier (1979). Sample items include “Have you recently felt that you are ill?” and “Have you recently felt that life isn’t worth living?”. Response alternatives were 0 = not at all, 1 = no more than usual, 2 = rather more than usual, 3 = much more than usual. The higher the score, the lower the degree of perceived well-being. The Cronbach’s alpha in this study was .93.

Turnover intention questionnaire (TIQ). Turnover intention was measured using a single-item measure of turnover intention “Have you looked for another employment during the past year” (Schad et al., 2014). Respondents answered the question on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (extremely often).

Procedure

The WIS items were translated into Turkish by the authors and a bilingual translator and then back-translated into English by a different bilingual translator. The authors and the translators unanimously agreed on the translation of the five items. And for the remaining two items (item 2: paid little attention to your statement or showed little interest in your opinion, item 5: ignored or excluded you from professional camaraderie), each recommendation was discussed until unanimous agreement was reached. The translated items were read by two academics trained in organizational behavior and they agreed that the translated items reflect the original meaning of the WIS items. Then, the translated scale has been administered to 10 academics from labor economics and industrial relations department and business administration department for testing its comprehensibility. Finally, the Turkish version of the WIS, M-WBQ, GHQ, MSQ and TIQ were distributed to the respondents in person or by e-mail between the dates 1-30 November 2017.

Results

The reliability of the Turkish version of the WIS was examined by calculating item-total correlations, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and split-half reliabilities. The results indicated that the internal consistency reliability for the Turkish version of the WIS was .92. Each of the seven items was positively and significantly correlated with the total scale scores. The item-total correlations ranged from .62 to .83. The split half reliabilities were found to be .79 for the odd/even splits and .77 for the first half- second half splits. The Spearman-Brown corrected coefficients were .92 (odd-even splits) and .93 (first half-second half splits).

The structure validity of the scale was assessed with confirmatory factor analysis. Convergent validity was investigated by correlating the WIS scores with the M-WBQ scores. In addition, criterion-related validity was evaluated by examining the associations between the WIS scores and job satisfaction, general health and intention to leave scores. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) test of a one-factor model, resulted in adequate fit indexes ($\chi^2 = 55.62$, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .03, NFI = .98, NNFI = .98, CFI = .99, GFI = .96, AGFI = .92). Both convergent and criterion-related validity results were in line with the previous research. Accordingly, workplace incivility correlated positively with both general health problems ($r = .35$, $p < .01$), intention to leave ($r = .47$, $p < .01$) and workplace bullying ($r = .34$, $p < .01$), and negatively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = -.52$, $p < .01$).

Discussion

This study examined the psychometric properties of the Turkish version of the WIS. The results suggested that the Turkish version of the WIS is a valid and reliable instrument to assess workplace incivility in Turkey. Some limitations should be noted. First, we could not manage to develop a probability-based representative sample due to the organizational access barriers, owing to the nature of the research problem. Nevertheless, snowball sampling technique has been used in many prior studies investigating negative organizational behaviors (D'Cruz & Rayner, 2014; Harold & Holtz, 2015). Second, the sample was limited to white-collar employees in private organizations. Future research should include samples from public sector for generalization.