

# Customer Incivility towards Frontline Employees' Deviant Behaviour: The Moderating Role of Emotional Labour

<sup>1</sup>Narehan Hassan, <sup>2</sup>Tasnimul Islam, <sup>3</sup>Rozilah Abdul Aziz, <sup>4</sup>Mazuin Mat Halif, <sup>5</sup>Sharifah Fazirah Syed Ahmad, <sup>6</sup>Afiza Abdul Majid

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA

Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

## ABSTRACT

Customer interaction is considered to be the heart of a hospitality employee's daily activities. Customer service expectations have risen to such an extent that they can become upset at the slightest delay of service delivery, such as waiting to check-in, slow Wi-Fi speed, tardy service, etc. Frontline service employees tend to be used as punching bags by dissatisfied customers and become targets of their impolite and incautious behavior. Nevertheless, restaurants are found to struggle for maintaining a productive work environment and reported to have an association with immense incivility and deviant behaviour which in long run create huge productivity loss. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the enormous effect of customer incivility on employees who engage in deviant behaviour, using emotional labour as a moderator. Purposive sampling technique is considered and a total of 120 questionnaires was distributed to the frontline employees of casual dining restaurants in the Klang Valley. The results ( $\beta = .806$ ,  $p < .05$ ) pointed out that there was a significant positive moderating effect of emotional labor towards customer incivility and deviant behaviour among casual dining restaurants' frontline employees.

**Keyword-** Deviant behaviour, Customer incivility, Casual dining restaurants, Klang Valley.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism and hospitality is characterized by the need to invest in human capital to ensure organization success and provide superior service quality in rapidly changing competitive markets, which explains why managers and scholars value it (YuSheng & Ibrahim, 2019). Customer incivility, defined as a breach of social norms (e.g., respect and courtesy), is a minor annoyance that service professionals face on a regular basis (Wang & Chen, 2020). More than 70 percent of employees in the workplace have come across incidents of uncivil customers' reactions (Boukis & Koritos, 2020). There are a variety of detrimental outcomes resulting from this phenomenon of customer incivility, both for service employees and for organizations (Zhu & Lam, 2019). Employees who work with customers, particularly those in service-oriented businesses, are subjected to a stressful work environment that is often characterised by complaints and frustrations from customers, co-workers, or an irate supervisor (Alola & Olugbade, 2019). These customer-contact employees are always required to operate under the situation that 'the customer is always right' even in situations involving bad and rude mannered customers (Saadeh & Suifan, 2020).

According to Ferreira and Costa Ferreira, (2019) the type of work environment in which individuals operationalize their given responsibilities accounts for 80% of the challenges and concerns about employee productivity. Stress may be an unavoidable part of everyone's life. It is becoming increasingly difficult and impossible to avoid job pressures. In recent years, one sort of workplace stressor that has gained a lot of academic attention is workplace incivility. (Kim & Karatepe, 2019). Previously recent research found that targets of incivility demotivated well-being, job satisfaction, work effort, and increased work turnover (Raja & Azeem, 2020).

Keeping clients happy at all times can be an emotionally draining responsibility in and of itself, but establishing a welcoming environment, feigning emotions, and seeming cheerful in any situation can add to the burden, resulting in negative consequences on their overall work outcomes and wellbeing (Smith, 2019). Employees in customer-service roles tend to be dissatisfied and unable to concentrate on their jobs in such challenging conditions, and are more likely to exhibit negative consequences such as task-related stress, psychological retreat behavior, poor performance, and a lack of passion for the job (Lampert & Unterrainer, 2019).

In addition, studies show that victims of incivility have lower levels of affective well-being and are less satisfied with their jobs (Jin & Kim, 2020). Employees are exposed to incivility on a regular basis or may have witnessed it numerous times; yet, it has an impact on a number of work outcomes, including turnover intentions and job satisfaction.

A study conducted by Lata and Chaudhary (2020), showed a significant rise in incivility in an organization which leads to a different response by the employees. According to Zhu and Lyu (2019), incivility triggered by customers is commonly observed in a service organization. When confronted with incivility, employees develop a system to control their inner emotional state, which is generally referred to as emotional labour. According to Hochschild (1983), emotional labour entails the production or suppression

of feelings in order to maintain an external appearance that gives others the impression of being cared for in a convivial, safe environment (Delgado & Roche,2020).

Workers involved in emotional labor have three characteristics: face-to-face or voice contact with the public; a requirement for developing emotions in others; and the ability to control employees' emotional activities through training and supervision (Winter & Morrison, 2019). Emotional labour is a concept that emphasises the parallels and distinctions between emotional and physical labour. Emotional labour necessitates a tailored but well-trained response that aids in the control of emotions in the workplace (Lavee & Strier, 2018).

Correspondingly, when employees are not able to manage their emotional state properly they engage themselves to perform a different activity to remove their frustration (Alola & Olugbade, 2019). Afsar and Shahjehan (2018) conducted interviews with numerous front-line employees to identify the coping methods used to reduce employee deviance that occurred prior to the event, during the incident, and after the incident. Paying little attention to tough clients, bribing customers, employing emotional labour, using sexual attractiveness, generating patron support, changing personal speech habits, and influencing the 'servicescape' are some of the tactics used during uncivil incidents. Social isolation, conversations with coworkers, physical release of emotion, and revenge were all used as post-incident techniques (Robertson & O'Reilly, 2020). Most of the activities performed by frustrated employees are not in favour of the organization (Bala & Bhagwatwar, 2018). Work-related negative behaviour which is deviant work behaviour termed as a voluntary act that aims to harm individuals or the organization. Researchers Arina and Jayanti (2020) concluded that deviant work behavior is quite responsible for causing workplace aggression, interpersonal conflict, discouragement, and mischief, and that it is to blame for workplace aggression, interpersonal conflict, and discouragement in an organization. Furthermore, deviant work behaviour also creates misfortune towards organizational purpose, reduces the organization's effectiveness, harms equity perceptiveness, and negatively affects the organization's social structure (Haider & Nisar, 2018). A deviation from normative work behavior undermines not only organisational standards, but also social norms within an organization. (Di Stefano & Scrima, 2019). From a study conducted by Lin and Yu, (2020), the alleged number of deviant behaviour was increasing in between victimized employees working under extreme working condition and measures must be taken to control this ongoing event and find protective measures to control deviant behaviour.

There is a need for organizational researchers to better understand customer incivility and employee behaviors and how to reduce their occurrences at work (Jang & Kim, 2020). As a result, this article seeks to alleviate the catastrophic impact of customer incivility on frontline staff deviance through the moderating function of emotional labour among casual dining restaurant employees in the Klang Valley.

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

One scenario pointing out to customer incivility as reported by The Washington Post (2018) reported

*“A customer verbally attacks an order taker in front of other customers and other members of staff; the shift manager intervenes kindly asking the yelling customer to leave the restaurant. In response, the customer escalates into a fight with the employee, with other customers becoming involved, resulting in the shift manager physically attacking the perpetrator. Customer-captured videos of the event go viral, undermining Chick-Fil-A's long-standing reputation as the most friendly fast-food restaurant chain”* (The Washington Post, 2018), (p.16).

As the above incident showcases, customer incivility, which is defined as “the low-quality interpersonal treatment that employees receive from their customers during service interactions” (Baker & Kim, (2020) p.2). Employee experiences, customer service experiences, and brand reputation could be negatively impacted by interpersonal treatment towards employees. Customers' incivility is a worldwide problem, with a survey of Australian front-line service workers showing that 87 percent had experienced rude treatment from their customers (ABC News, 2018). Likewise, According to Gallup's 2017 study of US employees, supervisors, co-workers, and customers mistreating them at work is the leading reason for burnout (Heisler & Bandow, 2018). Whereas, According to Tremmel and Sonnentag, (2018) an astonishing 98% of employees have had to deal with offensive behaviours repeatedly over the course of 14 years. The management of civility episodes in the service and hospitality industry has attracted scholarly attention due to alarming statistics concerning incivility.

An incivility-infested workplace can lead to worry, stress, depression, health issues, absenteeism, job burnout, and counterproductive work behaviour, all of which can lead to a decrease in productivity (Sarwar & Bashir, 2019). In their study, Matthews and Ritter (2019) found that incivility within the service sector is at an all-time high and a huge number of employees are constantly confronted with it. Front-line employees' critical mental processes, such as memory and creative thinking, are hampered by consumer incivility, reducing their ability to properly handle client requests and consequently influencing their job performance (Boukis & Koritos, 2020). Customer service personnel are found to be more vulnerable towards committing self-harms (Hur & Moon, 2018). According to data, the suicide rate among service industry employees aged 16–64 years in the United States climbed 34% from 12.9 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2000 to 17.3 per in 2016. (Peterson & Stone, 2018). According to Yamauchi and Sasaki (2018), the frequency of suicides among service industry professionals is on the rise, and corrective actions must be done to protect their lives.

Customer incivility is very much responsible for treating the employee in an uncivil manner (e.g., rudeness, speaking in a disrespectful or insulting manner). Customer incivility is endemic in various sectors of the service industry, including in the hospitality sector (Baker& Kim, 2020). According to McClure & Killian, (2019) restaurant employees are one of the worst victims of incivility as they constantly face and interact with emerging demands of customers. Restaurant employees are reported to perform

in an unsocial manner which partially responsible for the financial downfall of the company's future growth (Kim & Karatepe, 2019). The moral health of restaurant employees and their act of deviance have been the focus of a few studies (Jin & Kim, 2020).

### 3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

**RO1:** To identify the relationship between customer incivility and employee deviant behaviour.

**RO2:** To examine the moderating role of emotional labour towards the relationship between customer incivility and employee deviant behaviour.

### 4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**RQ1:** Is there any relationship between customer incivility and employee deviant behaviour?

**RQ2:** What is the moderating roles of emotional labour towards the relationship between customer incivility and employee deviant behaviour?

### 5. LITERATURE REVIEW

The core product of casual dining restaurants is services (Prayag & Hosany, 2019). Although services are intangible, frontline employees "produce tangible services" through direct customer contact (Belanche & Casalo, 2020). It happens for the reason that frontline employees are one of the most critical elements of service quality. A restaurant's employees must have the attitudes and values that customers expect from them in their jobs so that they can better serve customers (Afsar & Shahjehan, 2018). Previous study has shown that engaged or satisfied frontline staff are a hallmark of high-performing service-related businesses (Johnson & Park, 2018). Engaged employees provide better service, which can increase customer loyalty, on the other hand, satisfied frontline employees can maintain high performance and deliver quality services (Stamolampros & Korfiatis, 2019). Frontline staff are critical in a service-based organisation because they are continually in contact with consumers, giving them a strong feel of what customers want and enjoy about the company's core offering (Choi & Mohammad, 2019). The phenomena of productive attitude by frontline employees can be disrupted when front line employee comes across any unjustified attitude or situation (Boukis & Koritos, 2020).

On the other hand, according to Balaji & Jiang, (2020) "customer incivility is treating the employee in an uncivil manner (e.g., rudeness, speaking in a disrespectful or insulting manner)" (p.12). The prevalence of uncivil customer behavior is pervasive across multiple service industries, including those dealing with hospitality. (Wang & Chen, 2020). However, in this context, workplace dynamics remain largely unexplored that may alleviate or aggravate uncivil attitude's impact on employee results. (Gaucher & Chebat, 2019). Dormann and Zapf's (2004) research identified four major factors contributing to the stress and burnout of FLEs' in customer-employee interactions, two of them relating to customer incivility and unreasonable customer expectations. Confirming the prevalence of these two forms of uncivil customer behaviors towards FLEs, In order to undermine FLEs' work well-being and morale, Durand and Bompard, 2019 found that uncivil behavior (verbal aggression and unreasonable service levels) is the most common form of customer incivility associated with customers' desire to achieve their consumption goals rather than to intentionally harm FLEs.

Frontline staff are a valuable asset to the firm and a great source of ideas for product enhancements and innovations. During the service delivery process, frontline employees have a direct impact on the quality of service and development of marketing programs in the food service industry (Liewendahl & Heinonen, 2020). In recent years' service industry is going through huge amount incivility which is destroying service value and service provider intension to provide better service (Jang & Kim, 2020).

Moreover, studies have shown that a low power relationship between employees and customers can foster incivility behaviours (Sanders & Yang, 2019). On average, employees say they encounter verbal hostility ten times a day or in about 15% to 20% of all customers they interact with (Caillier, 2020). It has been acknowledged that acts of incivility occur more frequently than aggression. However, multiple sources of incivility can accumulate and become harmful and intolerable for the employees (Zhou & Meier, 2019). Employees and organizations can suffer adverse effects from customer incivility, with uncivil acts leading to decreased job satisfaction with the spiral of incivility. (Daniels & Jordan, 2019). According to AL-Zyoud and Mert, (2019) incivility can have negative effects on employee's health and job perceptions. As a result of being a victim of incivility, employees adopt a revenge attitude which might cost the company financially (Bani-Melhem & Quratulain, 2020. so, after having a review over literature, the researcher constructed the following hypothesis,

***H1: Customer incivility has significant relationship with employee's deviant behaviour.***

#### **The moderating role of emotional labour between customer incivility and deviant behaviour**

Customers must be served by front-line service workers (FLEs) through face-to-face or voice interactions. Communication quality and customer satisfaction during the service contact process is directly influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of both FLEs and customers (Holmqvist & Vaerenbergh, 2019). Most studies, however, focus on how to manage employee attitudes and behavior to

improve customer satisfaction rather than the impact of customer behavior on employee morale and psychological well-being. (Roy & Shekhar, 2018). Considerable emphasis has thus been placed on the belief that “the customer is always right,” ignoring employees’ feelings and emotional reactions to customers’ bad behaviors (Afthanorhan & Awang, 2019). In fact, the customer is not always right with their actions and attitude, so incidents where frontline employees are treated unkindly or impolitely by customers are becoming more frequent and significantly more serious (Sommovigo & Setti, 2019). Specifically, customer incivility has been reported to occur frequently and over a longer period of time. (Trent & Allen, 2019). FLEs may experience poor affectivity while dealing with rude customers, which can lead to a decline in their job habits and service performance (Medler-Liraz, 2020). Therefore, the issue of customer incivility and its impact on front line employees is worthy of getting attention in service-oriented hospitality enterprises.

According to Jang and Kim, (2020) “customer incivility can lead to loss of productivity, low participation in voluntary efforts by the employee, a need to fight back towards the instigator, and turnover” (P.6). In the case of a customer’s incivility, it drains resources, such as self-esteem or energy to perform task, self-confidence from employees by making them physiologically stress and creating a sense of unwillingness to perform a task (Zhou & Meier, 2019). Employees might be directly engaging themselves in sabotage behaviour towards customers to conserve the existing resources and prevent the exhaustion of future resources (Serenko, 2020). Nevertheless, Holm and Torkelson, (2019) argued that multiple acts of incivility can lead to a vicious spiral, which would then later lead to more intense forms of deviance, such as violence or aggression by the employee. Khattak and Khan, (2019) found that organizational deviance takes place as an effect of frustration, perceived injustice, and other reactions to unsocial experiences of employees, and also affect their personality traits such as dispositional aggressiveness and anger. In the service organization Service providers are found frequently experience huge work stress and burnout by the aggressive conduct of customers (Powell & Yuma, 2020). Even though, service providers are expected to behave pleasantly and efficiently towards customers and moreover, react to aggressive behaviours with non-aggressive way as obligatory by the organizations (Zhu & Lam, 2019).

To address employee’s emotional controlling problems, previous researchers focused their attention on various coping strategies undertaken by service providers, which include emotional labour (Xu & Cao, 2020). According to Yao & Zhang, (2020) “In spite of the negative effect of customer misbehavior, managers want the employees to be rational, hide their emotions and reactions, calm down, and pacify the customer”(p.3). Potipiroon and Srisuthisa, (2020) suggested that emotional labor can play an essential role in altering emotion. Based on the literature review the researcher has developed the following hypotheses:

**H2: Emotional labour moderates the relationship between customer incivility and employee deviant behaviour.**

## 6. UNDERPINNING THEORY

A theory known as General Strain Theory (GST) argues that stressful situations strongly lead to negative emotions such as anger and frustration (Barbieri & Clipper, 2019). Negative emotions put a victim under a lot of pressure to take action (Yıldız & Solakoglu, 2019). Crime is a form of escapism that involves seeking retribution or changing negative personal perspectives related with sentiments (e.g., stealing money for your desire) (e.g., through illicit drug use), (Liu & Miller, 2019). According to (McKenna and Golladay, 2020), “GST strengthens by comparing with previous theories by identifying several new categories of strain, including the loss of positive emotion (e.g., loss of a romantic partner, death of a friend), the presentation of negative stimuli (e.g., physical assaults and verbal insults) and new categories of goal blockage (e.g., the failure to achieve justice goals)” (p.8). Kim and Siennick (2018) discovered that high-magnitude strains coupled with a person's lack of self-control resulted in an unjust character, prompting the person to seek vengeance. Thus, Negative emotions provide pressure on certain people to take corrective action or engage themselves in deviant behaviour. Stress factors such as adverse treatment by others, working too much, interpersonal relationships, role conflict, role ambiguity, inability to achieve goals, and losing valuable possessions are considered in GST (Agnew & Brezina, 2019).

Moreover, Thaxton and Agnew (2019) defined strain as “‘negative or aversive relations with others’” which has three types: “strain as the actual or anticipated failure to achieve positively valued goals, strain as the actual or anticipated removal of positively valued stimuli, and strain as the actual or anticipated presentation of negative stimuli” (p. 59). Accordingly, strain's unmitigated effects can be explained in alternative theoretical ways, making the empirical validity of General Strain Theory dependent on the extent to which negative emotions can mediate the effects of strain on crime and deviance. Moreover, In addition to deviance metrics, GST can also be used for other activities that correlate with deviance. (Peck & Childs, 2018).

Furthermore, A meta-analysis conducted by Nguyen and Stinglhamber (2020) found that interpersonal mistreatment can induce negative affective reactions, including dissatisfaction at work, depression, self-esteem erosion, and anxiety. Thus, Individuals' unpleasant emotional responses might be triggered by interpersonal abuse. Similarly, experiencing incivility from peers, such as being treated rudely or condescendingly, is detrimental to the emotional well-being of the targeted persons (Taylor & Hardin, 2018). According to Aanonsen (2020), “If spiralling behaviour is left unchecked, targets may retaliate intentionally, contributing to the spiral of increasingly intense, aggressive behaviour that can negatively affect a wide range of worker attitudes and practices, including worker engagement” (p.6).

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

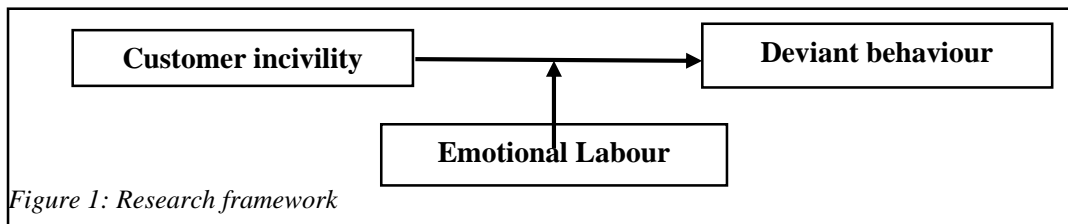


Figure 1: Research framework

## 7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative method was used and adopted questionnaires was considered for customer incivility (Wilson & Holmval, 2013), deviant behaviour (Bennett & Robinson, 2000), and for emotional labour (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) questionnaires were distributed personally to each respondents. Several sections were highly considered for the questionnaires which is based on the objectives of the study. Non probability Purposive sampling was considered for getting research data. Respondents were limited to frontline staff working at Sunway Pyramid shopping mall's selected casual dining businesses. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement for each item on a 5-points Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

In total, 128 questionnaires were distributed during the study, and 107 were subsequently collected for further analysis. The data were recorded and analysed with the help of (SPSS) version 25. Results and discussion are available in the next section.

Overall, 43.3% of the respondents were female, while 56.7% were male based on the total number of respondents. The majority of responders (76.6 percent) were between the ages of 16 and 25, followed by those between the ages of 26 and 30. (23.4 percent). It is evident that this research included a bigger proportion of the generation Y population.

In the demographic section as well, the employees were asked about how many hours does they worked in a day. Over half of the employees, 58.9%, worked from 5 to 10 hours each day, 42.1% worked from 11 to 15 hours. Also, results successfully found that for work experience it shows 48.6% of having work experience of 7 months to 1 year, followed by 28% having work experience that's stands from 1 months to 6 months followed by 23.4% with work experience of 2 to 3 years.

Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
Age of respondent	<b>16 to 25 years old</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>76.6</b>
	26 to 30 years old	25	23.4
Gender of respondent	<b>Male</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>56.7</b>
	Female	47	43.3
Race of respondent	Chinese	13	12.1
	<b>Malay</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>44.8</b>
	Indian	22	20.6
	International	24	22.4
Mood of work	Full time	39	36.4
	<b>Part time</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>63.6</b>
Working experience	1 to 6 months	30	28
	<b>7 months to 1 year</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>48.6</b>
	2 to 3 years	25	23.4
Working per day	<b>5 to 10 hours</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>58.9</b>
	11 to 15 hours	45	42.1

Table 1.1: Demographic of Respondents

## 8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between customer incivility and deviant behavior among frontline staff working in casual dining restaurants in Klang Valley, along with the moderating impact of emotional labor. In order to examine the relationship between variables, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients were used. Throughout this analysis, the results determined whether or not these hypotheses were accepted or rejected. Cohen (1988) argues that Pearson Correlation ( $r$ ) will help the researcher understand the direction and strength of the correlations among the study's variables, thus by providing more insight into the correlations. The interpretation of the correlation is as guided in Table 1.2.

Degree of Correlation	r- Values
Small	-0.10 to -0.291 and +0.101 to +0.29
Medium	-0.30 to -0.491 and +0.301 to +0.49
Large	-0.50 to - 1.001 and +0.501 to +1.00

Table 1.2: Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient (Cohen, 1988)

		Total Customer Incivility	Total Deviant Behaviour
Total Customer Incivility	Pearson Correlation	1	.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	107	107
Total Deviant Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.291**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	107	107

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1.3: the correlation between customer incivility and workplace deviant behaviour

Table 1.3 shows the findings from this study's respondents about the relationship between customer incivility and workplace deviant behaviour. Using the correlation coefficient ( $r=.291$ ,  $p<.01$ ), the results revealed that there was a significant moderately positive correlation between customer incivility and deviant behavior. Based on the results, customer incivility is highly influential over workplace deviance among employees. Therefore, research hypothesis was answered and supported.

## 9. Effect of Emotional Labour Moderating the Relationship between customer Incivility and Deviant Behaviour

In the table below, present the results of the hierarchical regression analysis, which investigated the impact of emotional labor on the relationship between customer incivility and deviant behavior. The first model explains 46.2% of the variance, whereas the second model explains 49.7%. Finally, the third model explains 52.0% with an increase of 2.4 percent in the total variance explained. The study found that emotional labor played a significant role in explaining the relationship between customer incivility and deviant behavior ( $\beta = .806$ ). Furthermore, the link between emotional labour and deviant behaviour among frontline staff did enhance the association between customer incivility and deviant behaviour ( $\beta=.720$   $p>.05$ ). Beta-values suggest that emotional labour plays a unique role in determining the relationship between customer incivility and deviant behavior. Customer incivility leads to a high adaption of emotional labour. As a result, the hypothesis was validated because emotional labour had a moderating influence on the association between customer incivility and deviant behaviour.

Hierarchical Regressions between emotional labour, customer incivility, and deviant behaviour is shown below:

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<b>Independent variable</b>			
Customer incivility	.043	.109	.437
<b>Moderator</b>			
Emotional labour		.200	.806*
<b>Interaction Terms</b>			
Customer incivility*Emotional labour			-.720
R Square	.462	.496	.520
R Square Change	.462	.034	.024
F Change	53.039	25.039	3.007
Sig. of F Change	.000	.000	.007
F	53.039	51.985	30.291
Sig.	.000	.000	.000
Durbin Watson			1.900

\*significant with the p-value < .05 **Table 3**

As seen in the (figure 2.1), emotional labor has a moderating effect on the relationship between customer incivility and deviant behavior. There are two distinct lines that represent low and high emotional labour, according to the graph. According to the findings, those in frontline positions who spent a high amount of time in emotional labour and were uncivil towards clients performed at a high deviant level. In the second line, we find frontline employees who possess a low level of emotional labour, and who are low in customer incivility, thus demonstrating low deviant behavior.



**Figure 2. 1:** Illustration of Moderating Influence of Emotional Labour (Customer Incivility and Deviant Behaviour)

Researchers conducted this study among casual dining restaurants in the Klang Valley's Sunway Pyramid shopping mall to examine frontline employees' response to the incivility they encountered every day at work. They found that both frontline employees and deviant behavior were positively related. Moreover, Acts of incivility have been highlighted by researchers as having the potential to develop into more serious kinds of deviance such as violence and physiological disease (Kim & Qu, 2019).

In fact, according to past study incivility can lead to a loss of productivity, a drop in volunteer efforts, retaliation against the aggressor, and turnover, (Alshehry & N Alquwez, 2019). According to a previous study conducted by Smith (2019), incivility at work causes employees to engage in antisocial behaviour that carries a financial cost to the organization. Thus, an employee's negative attitude is influenced by customer incivility as one of the most significant triggering factors (Keller & Yule, 2020). Customer incivility is prevalent in casual dining establishments, according to this study, and front-line personnel do not have access to tanning facilities which would give them lead in handling incivility. Therefore, performance of deviant behaviour is quite being tough to control by the concern authority. Radical measures and policy must be implemented to have a good control over deviant behaviour.

## 10. CONCLUSION

Working in an uncomfortable work environment not only degrades employees' moral values and work ethics, but it also has a substantial financial impact on the company's future plans and policies. In our society, deviant behaviour is like an infection that is spreading and spilling over from one individual to the next. In this study, frontline employees working at casual dining restaurants in the Sunway Pyramid Shopping Mall in Klang Valley were specifically studied. Based on the findings of this study, customers incivility was discovered to have an effect on frontline personnel' performance toward deviation with the effect of emotional labour. Throughout the investigation, the researchers acknowledged certain limitations. For starters, the sample was restricted to the (Sunway Pyramid shopping mall) Klang Valley. As a result, it does not represent the entire picture of Malaysian casual dining workforce. It is suggested that the study be expanded to Peninsular Malaysia in order to provide a more comprehensive view of the situation. Furthermore, it is suggested that in the future, probability sampling be considered for generalisation in the context of Malaysian food and beverage services. It is also possible to perform future studies using a different population, since introducing a new moderating variable may yield different results or offer new perspectives.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to express our highest appreciation to the Federal Research Grant Scheme (FRGS/1/2019/SS03/UITM/02/10) and employees at casual dining restaurants who took part in our study for their wonderful cooperation and assistance towards the completion of this study. Also, to Research Management Institute (RMI), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Selangor, for the assistance rendered.

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