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Workplace Civility and Employee Commitment in Oil and Gas Industry

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the relationship between Workplace civility and Employee commitment in the Nigerian oil and gas industry. The objectives of the study was to examine the relationship between Workplace civility and employee commitment measures such as affective, continuance and normative commitment in the oil and gas firms. The design adopted is the cross-sectional survey and data collection was carried out using the structured questionnaire from a total of 343 workers within the firms. The Cronbach alpha reliability was also used in assessing the reliability of the instruments adapted in the study. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation for the univariate analysis while Spearman correlation coefficient was used to test all stated hypotheses. The tests on the hypotheses showed that workplace civility contributes significantly to measures such as affective, continuance and normative commitment in the Nigerian oil and gas industry. It was therefore concluded that workplace civility is a significant predictor of employee commitment as it enhances measures such as affective, continuance and normative commitment in the Nigerian oil and gas industry. The study recommends that Managers in the target oil and gas organizations create a more warm and supportive work atmosphere where workers get along easily and are able to relate cordially and politely with each other as such an environment fosters quality relationships and exchanges which allow for friendships and collaboration which also influence the workers level of enthusiasm, interest and commitment in work.
Keywords*:* Workplace civility, employee commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, employee's commitment has been seen as a major task of management. Many organisations in the countries are experiencing high rate of employee turnover, rising cost of replacing employees, pressure on remaining staffs and loss of social capital (Collins and Smith, 2006, Morell et al, 2004). Lack of commitment has been manifested by employee absenteeism and lateness to work, high turnover rate, job dissatisfaction and negative work attitudes in organisation. Nwachukwu (2006) has stated generally the negative poor attitude of Nigerian workers on performing their work. Other scholars (Okaro and Ohagwu, 2010) also reported unresolved poor satisfaction and commitment among Nigerian workers. The question on every ones lips becomes.'' What can be done to retain employees? The role of

employee commitment in organisations is well recognized all over the world. Today, everyone seems to agree that employee commitment has become a critical issue in sustaining competitive advantage, business success and financial performance in organisations. According to Masse & Tyokaa (2014) employee commitment is vital to any business enterprise that seeks to retain valued employees and have positive business outcomes.

In today's highly dynamic and competing work environment, employee commitment is regarded as an important ingredient to realizing competitive advantage. It is the emotional bond between an employee and its organization which affects their behaviour positively (Hunt et al, 1989; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Organisation cannot perform at optimum without the dedication of employees to the objectives of the organisation (Yucel, 2012; Lumley 2011; Suki, 2011). A committed employee is believed to consistently deliver beyond expectations, drive the intangible assets of the organisation, work towards the goals of the organisation and also have the interests of the organisation at heart.

Rhodes & Eistenberger (2002) contended that those employees who feel that they are looked for by their organisations not only show high level of commitment but are more conscious about their roles, thus put greater impact in actualization of the organisation objectives and more innovative in carrying out their duties. Farndale et al (2011) believed that commitment is an important factor in trying to achieve longer organizational goals. Zabid et al (2003) asserted that employee commitment enhances performance and organizational effectiveness. Employee commitment has positive relationship with intention to stay & increase in performance (Angler & Perry, 1981). Salami (2008) pointed out that employee commitment in the workplace produces a healthy organisation climate, increased morale and motivates staff productivity.

Owing to the importance attached to employee's commitment, several empirical studies have been conducted around the globe on this subject (Muhammed et al, 2012; Wageeh, 2014; Amangala, 2014; Naveed et al, 2014). They have sought to examine different variables in a bid to increase employee commitment. For example, Muhammad et al (2012) examined the impact of organizational justice on employee commitment with moderating effect of employee work attitudes. The findings of their study showed that there is a positive relationship between organizational justice, organizational commitment and employee work attitude. Muhammad et al (2014) conducted a study on enhancing organizational commitment through employee empowerment. The findings of their showed a strong correlation between workers empowerment and commitment to the organisation. Wageeh (2014) investigated the employee's attitude concerning employee commitment and change in Saudi Arabia. The study found that a relationship exists between employee commitment to the organisation and change.

Amangala (2014) examined the role of job position, education, age and organizational tenure as predicators of commitment of 118 salesmen from selected firms in the soft drinks industry in Rivers and Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The findings of the study show that job position, age, education and tenure are all interrelated with employee commitment to the organisation. In recent studies, Naveed et al (2014) examined the impact of employee commitment and job satisfaction. Findings showed that a strong relationship exist between employee commitment and performance on workers satisfaction. Other constructs on employee commitment are on withdrawal intention (Cameli and Gofen, 2005; Sommers, 1995; Hackett et al, 1994; chen et al, 1998), communication climate and job satisfaction (Trombetta and Rogers, 1998), income and age (Ogba, 2009) and others. These studies showed that communication climate, income, job satisfaction will influence employee's commitment.

Inspite of the several studies and importance placed on employee commitment, studies have sadly shown that the rate of turnover among Nigerian Workers is high (Adeneyi, 2014). Research have focused on factors such as organizational justice, job satisfaction, employees' empowerment and others as possible factors to increase employee commitment. While it is true that these factors may possibly increase employees commitment at work, one other factor is neglected; workplace civility i.e. the interactions of employees and values of exchange at the workplace ("behaviours that help to protect the rules for common respect in the workplace). To bridge this identifiable gap, this paper will discuss the relationship between workplace civility and employee commitment in the oil and gas sector in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

In order to pursue with clarity and precision the purpose of this study, the conceptual framework in figure 1 reflecting workplace civility as the independent variable (IV) was used as a unidimensional construct while employee commitment as dependent variable (DV) was measured with affective, normative and continuance commitment.

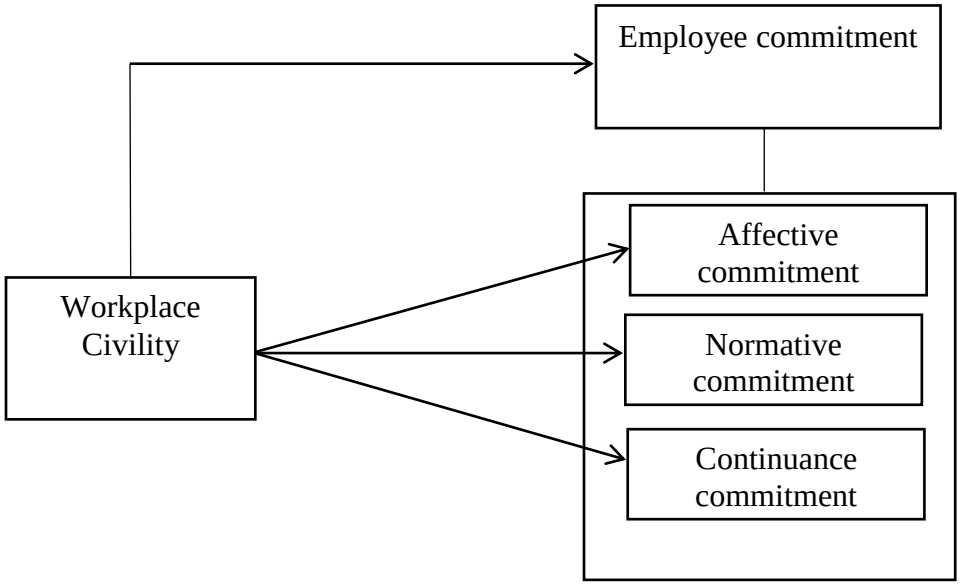

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of workplace civility and employee commitment of Oil and Gas Companies in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

In line with the purpose of the study, the following are the objectives this study intends to seek:

1) To examine the relationship between workplace civility and affective commitment of Oil and Gas companies in Nigeria.
2) To examine the relationship between workplace civility and normative commitment of oil and gas companies in Nigeria
3) To examine the relationship between workplace civility and continuance commitment of oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions serve to detail and assess the operational relationship between workplace civility and employee commitment in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry. They are as follows:

1) Is there a relationship between workplace civility and affective commitment of oil and gas companies in Nigeria?
2) Is there a relationship between workplace civility and normative commitment of oil and gas companies in Nigeria?
3) Is there a relationship between workplace civility and continuance commitment of oil and gas companies in Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The social exchange theory is adopted as the theoretical foundation for this study**.** The social exchange theory believes that individuals who feel that they had have benefits from others would be compelled to give in return their loyalty and efforts to the organisation. These loyalty can usually be seen through the employee's affective commitment to the organisation. Employee's commitment undoubtedly fits within the framework of social exchange theory since it centers on commitment behaviour whereby employee stops looking for job outside their organisation since he feels obliged to remain and pay the organisation for assistance and support they have gotten from it (Rhoades and Eistenberger, 2002)

Conceptual Review

Workplace Civility

Decorum seems to be eroding in society and basic etiquette is fast elapsing into oblivion (Ramsey, 2003). The employees of organisations are extractions from the wider society. The concomitant implication is the transfer of such ill-mannered conduct to organisations where they work. If organisations are allowed to subsist without the strict implementation of civility, the workplace will be another war front. The lack of this essential aspect of organisations will make the attainment of objectives of an organisation for its stakeholders a mirage. It is on this premise that the researchers interest has risen on this aspect of organizational life.

Anderson (2001) define civility at workplace as "behaviors that help to protect the rules for common respect in the workplace; civility shows concern for others. It entails the demonstration of respect for fellow human beings. Civility equally extricates a whole lot of unnecessary interruptions and distractions and conserves energy for more productive pursuits. It produces a workplace that gets along and releases energy for more productive pursuits. A workforce where there is respect concentrates its energy on the mission of the organisation (Gill and Sypher, 2009) this implies that civility in the workplace enables an organisation to be focused on the essence of its existence. Similarly, Bergman (2006) maintained that civility at workplace helps increase productivity, commitment, ethics and quality of life at workplace.

Employee commitment

Employee commitment has been defined by various scholars (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002), but the most common idea in all the definition notion of all the definitions is that the Employee commitment can be seen as the emotional attachment that exists between the employees and their organisation. These attachment and recognition with their organisation can be displayed by their strong belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and objectives (affective commitment), the willingness to take up challenges on behalf of the organisation (normative commitment) and finally, the burning desire to stay with the organisation (continuance commitment).

Measures of Employee Commitment

Affective Commitment: Affective commitment has to do with the employee's emotional attachment to identify and get involved in the organisation (these could be due to employee's emotions and positive mentality towards the organisation). In this case, employees strongly get involved in the organisation and wishes to stay in the organisation. The employees could be seen to be in a happy state of mind. This type of commitment can be seen to be the most common in commitment literature (Kantar, 1968).

Normative Commitment: Normative commitment has to do with an employee's feeling of indebtedness to stay in an organisation (this is due to the employees inner values and goals of the organisation) In other words, the individual remains in the organisation due to the feeling of indebtedness/commitment he/she has towards the organisation. For instance, where an organisation has invested in the training of an employee, he may be obliged to repay the debt, hence he stays with the organisation. Meyer et al (2002) opined that normative commitment is based on the feeling of gratitude towards the inducements they have received from the organisation. These could prevent them from searching for job opportunities elsewhere.

Continuance Commitment: Continuance commitment refers to commitment that has to do with the costs that is associated when an employee leaves the organisation. Bennet (2000) sees continuance commitment

as an intention the employee has to stay with the organisation when he feels that the cost of leaving is high. Hence, he stays with the organisation to avoid cost. This can be evident in cases where an individual stays in an organisation and is committed to an organisation when he/she is not able to match the salary/ benefits gotten from his present employers with another employer.

Relationship between Workplace Civility and Employee Commitment

Civility is putting the civil in civilization. It has to do with being polite and courtesy in behaviour amongst management and employees at the workplace. When basic manners is scarce on the job relationships, organisations work writhe and the whole organisation wavers (Cortina, and Marley, 2009) Civility equally extricates a whole lot of unnecessary interruptions and distractions and conserves energy for more productive pursuits. It produces a workplace that gets along and releases energy for more productive pursuits and leads to a committed workforce. A workforce where there is respect concentrates its energy on the mission of the organisation (Gill and Sypher, 2009) this purports that civility in the workplace enables an organisation to be focused on the essence of its existence. Fonni (2003) opined that doing the decent thing promotes positive interrelationships and helps work life flow better. Although your employees may not always understand the culture of every co-worker, encouraging them to behave in a civil way helps to ensure a peaceable work experience. Nevertheless Studies conducted by (Day and Oore, 2000) in Baltimore University reveals that employees who experience incivility at work report lowered commitment to the company. Harrison (2007) also conducted a study among employees in public sector in Nigeria and found out that 46 percent of workers exposed to workplace incivility had thought about leaving their jobs. Frone (2003) states that uncivil behaviors negatively affect employee loyalty, organizational commitment and overall productivity. It is therefore expedient to empower employees with a high degree of civility in/among them to increase employee commitment. Theoretically, the combined effect of both factors is greater than each one alone. We infer from the foregoing discussion that:

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between workplace civility and affective commitment in oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

HO_2: There is no significant relationship between workplace civility and normative commitment in oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

HO_3: There is no significant relationship between workplace civility and continuance commitment in oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study will adopt the cross sectional survey of quasi- experimental design. The cross sectional survey was chosen because it takes a snapshot at a situation in the organization under study and analyzes same. In the context of our current study, the target population consists of all employees totaling 10785 workers in 3 selected multinational oil and gas companies in South- South Region, Nigeria. The selection of companies was done through the purposive sampling techniques. These companies can be seen to possess the characteristics of a full organization as suggested by Todaro and Smith (2003). Also, it was based on companies that were said to be in operation for a long period of time (Organization that have operated for over 15 years in Rivers, Balyesa, Edo, Delta, Akwa Ibom and Cross-Rivers). In determining the sample size, for this study, the Taro Yamene's formula (Baridam, 2001) was used with a 95% confidence interval. The Taro Yamene's formula is given by:

$n = N/1 + N(e)^2$

Where n = Sample size sought

e= Level of Significance

N= Research accessible population

Therefore $n=10758/1+10758(0.05)^2$

$= 10758/27.895$

=386 employees.

Employee commitment is measured using 17 items taken from ECQ by Allen and Meyer (1991) Questions were measured on a 5-point Likert's scale ranging from strongly agree (score 5 points) to strongly disagree (score 1 point) based on the 3 dimensions of commitment, affective, continuance and normative. Workplace civility is measured using 4 items taken from the Scale by Mayer, Davis and Schorman (1995). Questions were measured on a 5-point Likert's scale ranging from strongly agree (score 5points) to strongly disagree (score 1 point).

Table 1. Reliability results for the instruments for the variables

S/N	Variables of the Study	No. of Indicators	Alpha Values
1	Workplace Civility	3	.874
2	Affective Commitment	5	.940
3	Normative Commitment	6	.889
4	Continuance Commitment	6	.943

Source: SPSS Output, 2022.

Presented in table 1 is the result for the reliability (Cronbach Alpha) for the instruments adapted in the study in investigating the variables: workplace civility, and employee commitment. The results from the analysis reveal that all indicators are consistent and suggest high tendencies for repetitiveness. From the results, the instrument used in assessing continuance commitment are revealed to have the highest reliability coefficient (where α = .943) while the instrument used in assessing workplace civility is revealed to have the lowest coefficient on the list (α = .874). However, all coefficients surpass the adopted Nunnally (1978) 0.70 reliability criterion.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this section of the study, the findings are presented and analysed**.** The questionnaire administration process records a success rate of 343 which accounts for an 89% success rate of the activity. Out of the total of 343 copies retrieved, 6 copies were observed to have minor issues related to double entries for single indicators, and blank indicators (both were classified as missing data values in their treatment). These were addressed using mode imputation method given the nature of the data. Thereafter, all data was coded into the SPSS version 21.

Univariate Analysis

The Univariate analysis for the distribution of the variables describes the properties and its manifestations within the context of the investigation.

Table 2: The Univariate Distributions for the Constructs of the Study

Workplace Civility	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
The people I work with take a personal interest in me	343	4.0058	.81289
A spirit of cooperation and team work exist in my work group	343	4.1195	.95834
I consult widely with people working in the unit.	343	4.0583	.89970
Affective Commitment	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in the organization	343	4.1895	.97435
I really feel as if this organisations problems are my own	343	4.0991	.89611
I do not feel emotionally attached to the organization (R)	343	4.1574	.91686
This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	343	4.1224	.88993
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization (R)	343	4.0350	.87121
Continuance Commitment	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
It would be very hard for me to leave my job at this organisation right now even if I wanted to.	343	4.0408	.85057
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I leave my organisation.	343	4.1166	.80447
Right now, staying with my job at this organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire	343	4.1749	.96655
I believe I have too few to consider leaving this organization	343	4.1458	1.01841
One of the few negative consequences of leaving my job at this organisation would be the scarcity of available alternative elsewhere	343	4.1895	.98628
One of the major reasons I continue to work for the organisation is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice.	343	4.0175	.97916
Normative Commitment	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
I do not feel obligation to remain with my organization (R)	343	4.0496	.96148
Even if I were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave	343	4.0641	.91221
I would feel guilty if I left this organisation now	343	4.1399	.95404
This organisation deserves my loyalty	343	4.0058	.96728
I would not leave any organisation right now because of my sense of obligation to it.	343	4.0233	.96702
I owe a great deal to this organization	343	4.0729	.91316

Source: Data Survey, 2022

The Table 2 above illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distribution which is based on a 5-point likert scale format of 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=moderately agree, 4= agree and 5=strongly agree. The distributions for the variables demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (X) are observed to range mostly between x = 3.0 -4.0, it is evident that

constructs such as workplace civility, affective, normative and continuance commitment are substantial and well manifested realities within the context of the study.

Bivariate Analysis

The bivariate analysis involving the test for the bivariate relations is presented on Table 4. The decision rule which applies for all bivariate test outcomes is stated as follows: where P<0.05, reject hypothesis on the basis or evidence significant relationship; and where P >0.05, accept hypothesis on the basis of insignificant relationship between the variables.

Table 3: Relationship between civility and employee commitment

		Civility	Affective	Continuance	Normative
Civility	Pearson Correlation	1	.871**	.905**	.826**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	343	343	343	343
Affective	Pearson Correlation	.871**	1	.931**	.830**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	343	343	343	343
Continuance	Pearson Correlation	.905**	.931**	1	.808**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	343	343	343	343
Normative	Pearson Correlation	.826**	.830**	.808**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	343	343	343	343

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

SPSS Output, 2022

The result for the tests on the relationship between workplace civility and the measures of employee commitment as shown in table 3 indicates that civility is a significant antecedent to the measures of employee commitment. The evidence indicates that workplace civility has a strong and positive significantly relationship with affective commitment (where rho = .871 and P = 0.000), workplace civility has a very strong and positive significantly relationship with continuance commitment (where rho = .905 and P = 0.000) and workplace civility has a strong and positive significantly relationship with normative commitment (where rho = .826). The result indicates that civility contributes towards the emotional, obligatory and sustained commitment of the workers in the oil and gas organizations investigated in this study.

The evidence indicates that the prevalence or manifestations of workplace civility which comprises politeness and respectful behaviour within the workplace, there is a higher tendency for workers to be committed and more attached to the organization. The result reveal that civility within the workplace has a stronger and more significant relationship with continuance commitment (r = .905) than affective (r = .871) and normative (r = .826). This suggests that the manifestations of respectful behaviour and politeness have a stronger effect on the workers retention and continued commitment to the organization. The result also indicates that all three measures are high on their relationship to the manifestations of civility within the organization (where P < 0.01). Based on the evidence presented all hypothetical statements which addressed the relationship between civility and the measures of employee commitment are rejected.

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study show that workplace civility contributes positively towards employee commitment in the target oil and gas organizations in this study. The findings indicate that behaviour and actions which reflect civility within the organization enhance the workers affective, normative and continuance commitment. This suggests that the observations or experiences of civility such as politeness

and courtesy in behaviour and communication with significant others, enhances workers commitment and desire to remain or continue with the organization.

The finding on the relationship between civility and employee commitment supports the earlier observations put forward by Gill and Sypher (2009) who argued that civility creates a more warm and supportive work atmosphere where workers get along easily and are able to relate cordially and politely with each other. Such an environment fosters quality relationships and exchanges which allow for friendships and collaboration which also influence the workers level of enthusiasm, interest and commitment in work. The finding also highlights on the imperative for sensible interactions and politeness in workplace interactions and exchanges. Practices as such, transform the workplace into a more conducive and inviting setting wherein workers would be more inclined to continue with.

The findings also reiterate the evidence presented by previous scholars (Day & Oore, 2000; Frone, 2003; Cortina & Marley, 2009) which connect outcomes such as employee retention, satisfaction and productivity to civility within the workplace. In their study Cortina and Marley (2009) showed that civility increased the workers feelings of relevance and meaning. Such behaviours also impact on the workers self-esteem and confidence. He's options for leaving the organization will therefore tend to include organizations with better working relationships and values for their workers.

The findings indicate that civility as expressed within the target oil and gas organizations of this study significantly impact on the commitment of the employees. In this light it is evident that practices of politeness, courtesy and cordiality within workplaces have greater implications for the working relationships between staffs and between employers and their employees. This is as it not only facilitates a warm and conducive work setting, but it also contributes positively towards the commitment levels of the employees.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the relationship between workplace civility and employee commitment in the oil and gas Industry in Nigeria. The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between workplace civility and employee commitment. The study also revealed that (i) The use of civility at the workplace significantly enhances employees affective commitment in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria (ii) The use of civility at the workplace significantly enhances employees normative commitment in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria (iii) The use of civility at workplace significantly influences employees continuance commitment in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. This relationship between these two variables is explained with the help of the social exchange theory. The theory believes that individuals who feel that they had have benefits from others would be compelled to give in return their loyalty and efforts to the organisation. These loyalty can usually be seen through the employee's affective commitment to the organisation.

In essence the study concludes that workplace civility creates the enabling state and conditions upon which employee commitment thrives or develops. It is as revealed by the study, important for the actualization of employee commitment as it not only allows for dependency and mutuality, it also creates meaningful relationships and exchanges between co-workers and even between superiors and their subordinates Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

- Efforts should be made by management to introduce and sustain civility at the workplace in the target oil and gas companies. When there is reverence for superiors and colleagues in workplaces, it will enable employee to concentrate their efforts in the pursuit of organisational goals.
- Managers in the target oil and gas organizations need to create a warmer and supportive work atmosphere where workers get along easily and are able to relate cordially and politely with each other. Such an environment fosters quality relationships and exchanges which allow for friendships and collaboration which also influence the workers level of enthusiasm, interest and commitment in work.
- Managers in the target oil and gas organizations should involve employees who are adherent to ethical values and norms for the growth, development, expansion and programmes of their organizations.

- Managers needs to ensure that law and order are kept in the target oil and gas organization. When law and order are kept, the issue of physical assault and molestation among workers will be eschewed.

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