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The Role of Appraisals and Emotions in Understanding Experiences of Workplace Incivility

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Theoretically grounded in both the cognitive–motivational–relational theory of emotions and affect events theory, the present research used multiple analytic techniques and positioned appraisals and emotions as key variables in understanding the experience of incivility at work. Data consisted of survey responses from a stratified random sample of 522 U.S. working adults. K-means cluster analyses revealed interindividual differences in cognitive/emotional responding to workplace incivility experiences. In addition, multiple mediation analyses revealed that optimism and emotionality may play important roles in showing why the experience of incivility is related to job-related outcomes. The results help to advance workplace mistreatment research and suggest possible strategies for organizations to maintain civil working environments.

Keywords: workplace incivility, appraisal theory, affect events theory, workplace emotions

Regrettably, there is no shortage of uncivil behavior in today's workplaces. Examples of this insidious form of workplace mistreatment abound, including ignoring someone's greeting, using offensive nicknames, rolling one's eyes at someone else's comment, and failing to give credit when credit is due (Pearson, Andersson, & Wegner, 2001). Incivility is especially troublesome because of its characteristic low intensity. Thus, although they can be seemingly innocuous, such rude behaviors can have serious effects on targets (e.g., Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001).

The commonness and negative effects of *workplace incivility*, which has been defined as a low-intensity deviant behavior that violates workplace norms for mutual respect that may or may not be intended to harm the target (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), are beginning to be well documented. For example, Cortina et al. (2001) found that 71% of survey respondents reported experiencing uncivil behaviors within the past 5 years, and that targets reported decreased job satisfaction, increased job withdrawal, and increased psychological distress. In addition, Pearson and Porath (2005) found that 20% of survey respondents reported experiencing incivility at work at least once per week, and they discussed additional negative outcomes that included the desire to retaliate and diminished company reputations.

Although researchers are beginning to understand what negative outcomes are associated with the experience of workplace incivility, research has, for the most part, failed to address the question of why incivility is related to negative outcomes and in what situations experiences will be related to some types of negative outcomes on the one hand and other types of negative outcomes on the other. We address this gap in the literature with research that is theoretically grounded in both the cognitive–motivational–relational (CMR) theory of emotions (Lazarus, 1991, 2001; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1990) and affect events theory (AET; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and that positions appraisals and emotions as key variables in understanding the negative effects of experiencing workplace incivility. Briefly, the CMR theory of emotions (Lazarus, 1991, 2001; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1990) proposes that, in an effort to make meaning of and adapt to the events that occur in our lives, two intricately connected types of responses occur: (1) a cognitive response in the form of cognitive appraisal (i.e., an evaluation of the significance of what is happening) and (2) an affective response in the form of discrete emotions (e.g., anger, guilt, disgust). Within the organizational literature, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) have also discussed the importance of appraisals and emotions in reaction to workplace events with the AET. Of particular importance to the current research, the AET discusses how affective reactions to work events are related to different types of work-related outcomes. Thus, following from both of these theories, how we respond to incivility cognitively and emotionally will determine subsequent outcomes.

We had two specific goals with the present research. First, we wanted to capture the complexity associated with targets' appraisals and emotions surrounding their experiences of workplace in-

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civility. Second, we wanted to model the impact of this complex set of reactions on the outcomes associated with incivility. Although our ultimate goal was to more explicitly characterize the incivility–outcome relationship, given the importance of appraisals and emotions in understanding the experience of workplace incivility, it is first necessary to focus on these key variables to discover what specific appraisals and emotions individuals actually report in response to incivility. We ground our thinking in the literature on discrete emotions, to which we now turn.

Emotions Surrounding Incivility Experiences

Few individuals would deny that emotions are a ubiquitous part of our lives and organizational researchers have certainly recognized this. For example, Muchinsky (2000), speaking of job stress, has stated that "its emotional component is unmistakable and undeniable" (p. 803). Given the obvious significance of emotions in understanding organizational behavior, it is surprising that relatively little research has been devoted to this topic. Muchinsky has noted a "reluctance to formally address emotions in the workplace" (p. 801) and Brief and Weiss (2002), in their review of the study of affect in the workplace, concluded that although much research has focused on general affective states (e.g., positive and negative affectivity), research has not paid enough attention to the experience of specific discrete emotions (e.g., anger, guilt, frustration).

The area of workplace mistreatment is no exception in this lack of research on discrete emotions. Although it has been discussed theoretically that the experience of mistreatment can lead to general negative affect (e.g., Andersson & Pearson, 1999) and empirical work has supported this claim (Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, & Kelloway, 2000), researchers (including Van Katwyk and colleagues) acknowledge the need to investigate the role of specific emotions in understanding stressful work experiences such as mistreatment. To be sure, the mistreatment literature is not entirely devoid of studies investigating discrete emotions. For example, Wright and Fitzgerald (2007) investigated discrete emotional responses to sexual harassment during litigation. In addition, sociologists interested in the effects of everyday incivility (outside of work) have used focus group data to support the claim that the experience of incivility is related to anger, fear, and disgust (Phillips & Smith, 2004).

In addition, researchers in areas related to workplace mistreatment have conducted investigations into the importance of discrete emotions. For example, organizational justice researchers have explored the effects of discrete emotional reactions to unjust events (e.g., Mikula, Scherer, & Athenstaedt, 1998; Weiss, Suckow, & Cropanzano, 1999). In addition, in the area of counterproductive workplace behaviors (CWBs), researchers have investigated discrete emotions such as anger and hostility in predicting the enactment of CWBs (e.g., Fox & Spector, 1999; Lee & Allen, 2002).

We relied on the CMR theory put forth by Smith and Lazarus (Lazarus, 1991, 2001; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1990) as the theoretical framework in the current research. An expansion of the earlier work by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), the CMR theory explicitly incorporates discrete emotions into a framework for understanding how individuals react to and make sense of events, such as the experience of workplace incivility, that occur in their lives. The name of the theory provides important insights into its major principles. The major overarching principle is that there are certain *cognitive* appraisals that occur after experiencing an event that are central to defining the experience of emotion. In addition, according to Lazarus (1991), "emotions are first and foremost reactions to the fate of active goals" (p. 92). Thus, our *motivation* to achieve goals is a major factor in our experience of emotion. A final central principle of the CMR theory involves the idea that an interaction between the person and the environment produces appraisals and subsequent emotions. To this end, each emotion is associated with a core *relational* theme that summarizes this person–environment relationship.

Explicating the Cognitive Appraisal–Emotion Link

Akin to earlier transactional stress theory, the CMR theory separates cognitive appraisal into two components—primary appraisal and secondary appraisal. More specifically, primary appraisal comprises motivational congruence/incongruence and motivational relevance (C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1990). First, motivational congruence/incongruence involves deciding whether a situation helps (congruence) or hurts (incongruence) one's motivational goals, leading to positive and negative emotions, respectively. Second, motivational relevance involves deciding how much a given situation is relevant to personal goals; for example, "How much do I care about my experience of this rude behavior?" Hence, primary appraisal affects the valence and degree of emotion.

Because primary appraisal is necessary for every emotional encounter, it is secondary appraisal that determines which discrete emotions are experienced. C. A. Smith and Lazarus (1990) break secondary appraisal into four subcomponents: accountability, problem-focused coping potential, emotion-focused coping potential, and future expectancy. Given the decidedly negative nature of incivility, we explored only negative emotions in the current research; specifically, the connection between the four components of secondary appraisal and anger, guilt, fear/anxiety, sadness, and disgust are summarized below and in Table 1.

Blame, either self- or other-centered, is critical to the experience of anger and guilt. The defining characteristic of anger is that it is associated with an evaluation of other-accountability. When someone experiences workplace incivility and blame is placed on the instigator, the target is likely feeling angry. Guilt is, in a sense, directly opposite of anger in that its key secondary appraisal component is an evaluation of self-accountability. Thus, self-blame results in feelings of guilt. A fair bit of empirical support has been found for the anger–self-accountability and guilt–other-accountability relationships (P. Bennett, Lowe, & Honey, 2003; Ellsworth & Smith, 1988; C. A. Smith & Ellsworth, 1985; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1993).

Coping potential is key to fear and sadness. Fear/anxiety is characterized by low emotion-focused coping potential; when individuals experience incivility and feel that they cannot adjust psychologically to the situation, fear and/or anxiety will likely be felt. When low problem-focused coping potential is combined with unfavorable future expectancy, sadness is felt. Although sadness may not seem relevant to the study of workplace incivility, as this emotion is often associated with depressing life events such the loss of a family member, it is certainly possible that individuals

Table 1
Summary of Discrete Emotions and Their Related Secondary Appraisal Components

Emotion	Important secondary appraisal component[a]
Anger	Other-accountability
Guilt	Self-accountability
Fear/anxiety	Low emotion-focused coping potential
Sadness	Low problem-focused coping potential; unfavorable future expectancy
Disgust	No secondary appraisal components are crucial

Note. Information in this table is from Smith & Lazarus (1993) and Lazarus (1991).
[a] The primary appraisal dimensions of goal relevance and goal incongruence are important to all negative emotions.

can feel sad after experiencing incivility. Sadness may occur, for example, if an individual feels that he or she does not have the resources to engage in problem-focused coping and if the individual feels as if the uncivil experiences will continue (i.e., unfavorable future expectancy). Empirical support has been found for the propositions surrounding fear/anxiety and sadness (P. Bennett et al., 2003; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1993).

Disgust is perhaps the vaguest of the emotions discussed by the CMR model and thus has received little empirical support. However, given that it seems relevant to the experience of incivility, we examined this emotion in the current study. Lazarus (1991) proposed that there are no secondary appraisal components that are necessary for someone to feel disgusted (i.e., only primary appraisal is necessary). However, some researchers have found that disgust is associated with other-responsibility (e.g., C. A. Smith & Ellsworth, 1985). Such a finding, however, raises questions as to how disgust and anger are different. In the context of the present research, it is clear that someone who is angry in response to uncivil acts is blaming the instigator; someone who is, on the other hand, disgusted, would seem to be generally upset. Thus, it seems as though, in the context of the present research, disgust can be conceptualized as a general negative emotion that is not associated with any secondary appraisal component in particular.

Exploring Appraisal–Emotion Patterns

An exploration of the appraisal underpinnings of discrete emotions associated with experiences of workplace incivility has, to our knowledge, not been studied to date. However, it belies the nature of interpersonal exchanges to think that only one discrete emotion will arise from an incivility experience. Hence, we argue—as Weiss (2002) raised in reference to workplace emotions in general—that one limitation of the CMR framework is that emotions are modeled separately via unique secondary appraisal components, ignoring the experience of various emotions simultaneously. Indeed, emotion theorists have acknowledged the complexity of emotional experiences by suggesting that we can fluctuate between multiple discrete emotions (Li, Ashkanasy, & Ahlstrom, 2010). To counter this limitation, we empirically evaluated the connections among emotions for groups of individuals via K-means cluster techniques. A disadvantage of such an exploratory approach is that specific hypotheses cannot be generated. However, certain general predictions in the form of propositions that may help in interpreting the results of the exploratory analyses can be made. The first proposition, then, is very general and follows from the above discussion of the experience of simultaneous emotions.

> *Proposition 1:* A complex pattern of appraisal and emotions will emerge, with individuals experiencing more than one emotion.

The remaining propositions directly follow from the CMR explication of how appraisals and emotions are related as summarized in Table 1. The propositions predict that the groups of individuals that emerge from the exploratory analyses will have certain general characteristics. The next proposition follows from the CMR principle that the intensity of goal relevance is associated with the intensity of emotion.

> *Proposition 2:* The intensity of goal relevance will be associated with the intensity of emotion. For example, in groups with relatively low levels of goal relevance, the emotions present will also be relatively low; in groups with relatively high levels of goal relevance, the emotions present will also be relatively high.

The next four propositions follow directly from the CMR models of anger, guilt, sadness, and fear/anxiety, respectively.

> *Proposition 3:* Groups that report feeling moderate to high levels of anger will also report moderate to high evaluations of other-accountability.

> *Proposition 4:* Groups that report moderate to high levels of guilt will also report moderate to high evaluations of self-accountability.

> *Proposition 5:* Groups that report moderate to high levels of sadness will also report relatively low (i.e., unfavorable) evaluations of problem-focused coping potential and unfavorable evaluations of future expectancy.

> *Proposition 6:* Groups that report moderate to high levels of fear/anxiety will also report relatively low (i.e., unfavorable) evaluations of emotion-focused coping potential.

Finally, the CMR theory posits that only primary appraisal is central to defining disgust. Thus, disgust is a general emotion that results when negative experiences are appraised as relevant to one's personal goals. Following from this, and given the negative

nature of incivility, as long as moderate levels of goal relevance are reported, disgust should be reported as well.

> *Proposition 7:* All groups that report at least moderate levels of goal relevance will report moderate to high levels of disgust.

The Role of Appraisals and Emotions in the Negative Impact of Incivility

Documenting the negative consequences of experiencing workplace incivility (e.g., Cortina et al., 2001; Pearson et al., 2001) has been an important first step for researchers in that it has raised an awareness that seemingly innocuous uncivil behaviors are far from harmless. As mentioned earlier, we are interested, however, in the psychological processes that occur when an individual is targeted with these rude behaviors. Specifically, we consider appraisals and emotions to be the key explanatory variables in the process by which incivility harms individuals, as indicated in the model shown in Figure 1.

Our incivility process model is derived from AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). AET places "affective reactions" as a key mediating variable in understanding how workplace events affect job-related outcomes. Because the current research focused on workplace incivility, which is a specific workplace event, we operationalize affective reactions as discrete emotions (e.g., anger, guilt) as opposed to general emotional states (e.g., positive and negative affectivity). Furthermore, appraisals are also included in this operationalization as Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) aptly noted that "the experience of affect is intricately tied to the appraisal of that event" (p. 37). Below, we translate AET into the incivility literature, considering what characteristics of the uncivil event might trigger the appraisal/emotional reactions and how those reactions then lead to negative work states.

Antecedents of Appraisals and Emotions

AET suggests that workplace events predict appraisal/emotional reactions. What characteristics of the uncivil event might be relevant here? Cortina et al. (2001) compare the experience of incivility with the experience of daily hassles. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have discussed these everyday annoyances and cite evidence that, as they accumulate, their negative effects on individuals worsen. Thus, an important characteristic to investigate is frequency—that is, how often did the uncivil experience occur? Hence, it seems reasonable to expect that incivility frequency will play an important role in predicting one's appraisal/emotional reactions. In general, higher frequency of the incivility experience should be related to heightened appraisal/emotion. Indeed, Cortina and Magley (2009) found that more frequent incivility experiences were associated with stronger negative appraisals. Targets found these frequent experiences very frustrating, annoying, and offensive, for example.

Another characteristic of the uncivil experience that is worth considering is the status of the perpetrator relative to the target—that is, the perpetrator's power. Andersson and Pearson (1999) discuss workplace incivility as a social interaction and thus emphasize that we must consider attributes of the instigator and the target in understanding this phenomenon. Following from this, incivility researchers have discussed the importance of understanding organizational power differentials in uncivil encounters (Cortina & Magley, 2009; Cortina et al., 2001; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2005; Pearson & Porath, 2005; Porath, Overbeck, & Pearson, 2008). Most relevant to the current study, Cortina and Magley (2009) found evidence that incivility experiences from higher status targets invoke heightened negative appraisals.

Social power in organizations is a ubiquitous issue and one that can permeate many aspects of work lives. Researchers have used social stereotyping as a possible explanation for the consequences of power differentials. For example, Carli (1999) concluded that because men are (stereotypically) perceived as better performers than women, women therefore possess less organizational power and must work harder than men to be taken seriously. In addition, Tiedens, Ellsworth, and Mesquita (2000) used stereotyping to explain the effects that social hierarchies have on appraisals and emotions. Because of what they call "sentimental stereotypes," high-status workers are perceived more positively than low-status workers, and consequently, low-status workers are more likely to be blamed for negative events. Following from this, it seems likely that the status of the instigator relative to the target (i.e., perpetrator power) will play a role in the target's appraisal/emotional reactions to uncivil experiences.

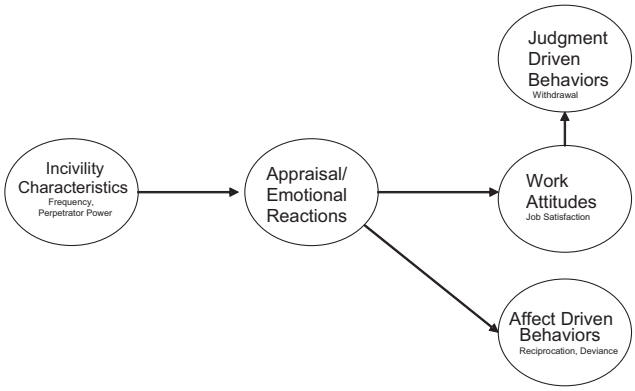

Figure 1. A heuristic model of the role of appraisals and emotions in understanding experiences of workplace incivility.

Outcomes of Appraisals and Emotions

Moving on to the consequences of appraisal/emotional reactions, as part of AET, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) discuss how these reactions are related to affect-driven behaviors (i.e., "direct responses to affective experiences"; p. 52), work attitudes, and judgment-driven behaviors ("behaviors which result from well considered decisions"; p. 52). Essentially, AET proposes that appraisal/emotional reactions mediate the relationship between affective experiences and both affect-driven behaviors and work attitudes. In addition, work attitudes mediate the relationship between appraisal/emotional reactions and judgment-driven behaviors.

A relevant affect-driven behavior that can occur as a direct response to the appraisal/emotional reactions of an uncivil episode

is *reciprocation*, that is, seeking retribution for the uncivil behavior by responding to the instigator in a similar (or worse) manner. This idea was introduced as the *incivility spiral* by Andersson and Pearson (1999), and it is said to occur when uncivil behaviors "spiral" into more and more intense behaviors (e.g., aggression or violence) because of desires to seek retribution. There is evidence that discrete emotions such as anger can predict similar types of retaliatory behaviors, including CWBs (Spector & Fox, 2004), aggression (Glomb, Steel, & Arvey, 2002), and revenge (Bies & Tripp, 2004). In addition, Barclay, Skarlicki, and Pugh (2005) found that outward-focused emotions mediated the relationship between justice perceptions and retaliation. Thus, because appraisal/emotional reactions are theoretically positioned as key explanatory variables in understanding the relationship between the experience of incivility and outcomes, we hypothesized the following:

> *Hypothesis 1:* Appraisal/emotional reactions will mediate the relationship between incivility and reciprocation.

A second affect-driven behavior to consider is *workplace deviance*. Robinson and Bennett (1995) define workplace deviance as "voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization" (p. 556). They go on to say that some employees engage in deviance because they "become motivated to violate [normative] expectations" (p. 556). In addition, Pearson et al. (2001) found that "displaced reciprocation" was a common outcome of experiencing incivility in that "directing . . . ill will toward nobody in particular [was a] very common response" (p. 1405). For example, Pearson et al. provide the following examples of such displaced reciprocation, which can be classified as workplace deviance:

> . . . feeling disrespected by his manager, a supervisor then hurled a rude remark toward his assistant; going without thanks from her manger for her extensive overtime hours, an emergency technician snapped at and withheld pleasantries from her peers; after a breakfast meeting in his office with several colleagues who neglected to throw away their trash, a computer programmer felt justified in taking the last drop of coffee from the departmental coffee pot, leaving it for someone else to refill. (pp. 1405–1406)

Thus, there is support for the relationship between the experience of workplace incivility and the enactment of workplace deviance. In addition, there is also empirical support for the idea that negative emotion predicts deviance in that Fox, Spector, and Miles (2001) found that a measure of negative job-related affect mediated the relationship between the experience of interpersonal conflict and a composite measure of counterproductive work behaviors that included workplace deviance items. Given this evidence, we hypothesized the following:

> *Hypothesis 2:* Appraisal/emotional reactions will mediate the relationship between incivility and workplace deviance.

Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) discuss job satisfaction as a key work attitude and given that it has been found to be an outcome of experienced incivility (Cortina et al., 2001), we investigated it as a relevant job attitude in the current study. Empirical support for the AET proposition that affective/emotional reactions are related to job satisfaction has been found in that various discrete emotions (e.g., anger, sadness, anxiety) are related to job satisfaction (e.g., Fisher, 2000; Grandey, Tam, & Brauburger, 2002; Mignonac & Herrbach, 2004). Moreover, Judge, Scott, and Ilies (2006) found that affect (in the form of state hostility) mediated the relationship between interpersonal justice and job satisfaction.

The construct of job satisfaction is thought to consist of several dimensions including global (general; Ironson, Smith, Brannick, & Gibson, 1989) as well as work, supervisor, and coworker satisfaction facets (P. C. Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969; Stanton et al., 2002). It is important to understand how the appraisals and emotions associated with the experience of incivility are related to these several aspects of job satisfaction, especially given our multifaceted approach to measuring both incivility (frequency and perpetrator power) and appraisal/emotion. This allowed us to explore, for example, whether the source of the incivility (e.g., high vs. low perpetrator power) affects job satisfaction facets differentially. Along these lines, it has been argued that the "social" facets of job satisfaction (supervisor and coworker) are particularly relevant to workplace mistreatment, given that people are the source of mistreatment (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). Thus, the following was hypothesized:

> *Hypothesis 3:* Appraisal/emotional reactions will mediate the relationship between incivility and job satisfaction facets including work, supervisor, and coworker, in addition to general job satisfaction.

AET discusses some work behaviors as attitudinally driven, or judgment driven. This is because these behaviors are not a direct response to affective/emotional reactions, but are mediated through job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction). For example, in support of this, Judge et al. (2006) found that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between affective reactions in response to interpersonal justice (i.e., state hostility) and deviance. Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) state that judgment driven behaviors "are likely to be behaviors which result from well considered decisions and specifically, those behaviors where the overall evaluation of the job enters into that decision" (p. 52), and they discuss job withdrawal behaviors (i.e., intentions to leave one's job) as highly relevant here. A related type of withdrawal behavior is *work withdrawal*—that is, avoiding essential work-related tasks (Hanisch & Hulin, 1990, 1991). Given that job withdrawal has been found to be an outcome of experienced incivility (Cortina et al., 2001), and that work withdrawal is a related construct, both withdrawal behaviors were investigated in the current study. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

> *Hypothesis 4:* Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between appraisal/emotional reactions and work and job withdrawal behaviors.

Project Summary

In sum, the present research proceeded in two phases. The first phase used K-means cluster analyses to categorize individuals into groups based on their patterns of appraisal and emotional responses to incivility experiences. Based on these results, the second phase then took a more complex look at the relationships

among appraisal, emotion, and outcomes by testing the heuristic model of workplace incivility experiences.

Method

Participants

Data for this research consisted of survey responses from working professionals who were recruited via an online service that maintains a database of individuals willing to participate in Web-based surveys. A random sample of 6,000 workers who had previously indicated full-time employment were e-mailed to participate, stratifying on age, sex, and ethnicity according to the 2000 U.S. census statistics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Given that approximately 20% (n = 1,391) of the 6,000 e-mail addresses were found to be invalid (several individuals register for the online service and subsequently change e-mail addresses), 4,609 individuals were recruited for the study. To encourage participation, respondents were entered in a drawing to win one of nine $100 Amazon.com gift certificates. Of those contacted, 604 people responded, yielding a 13% response rate, which is typical for this Web-based panel (The StudyResponse Project, 2006).

Despite the fact that this response rate is typical, it is still fairly low. Given that low response rate concerns can be alleviated with tests of representativeness, we conducted chi-square tests to determine whether this sample was representative of the U.S. population. Chi-square tests revealed that this sample did differ from U.S. Census Bureau statistics with respect to sex, with an overrepresentation of women, $\chi^2(1) = 179.90$, $p < .05$, $\phi = .55$. There were also significant differences in terms of age, $\chi^2(4) = 36.67$, $p < .05$, $\phi = .25$, with an underrepresentation of younger (20–34 years old) respondents and race/ethnicity, $\chi^2(4) = 13.31$, $p < .05$, $\phi = .15$, with an overrepresentation of Caucasian respondents and an underrepresentation of Asian respondents. Although significant, the phi coefficients (which represent the magnitude of the effect) for age and ethnicity indicate that these effects were small. With regard to gender, although the sample is overrepresentative of women with respect to the entire U.S. population, evidence suggests that women tend to be more likely to respond to surveys than men (Green, 1996). In addition, in this study, women were also slightly overrepresented in the recruitment sample (68.8% women). Chi-square tests revealed that the survey respondents (n = 604) did differ from the recruitment sample (n = 4,609) with respect to sex, $\chi^2(1) = 25.17$, $p < .05$, $\phi = .21$, with women still slightly overrepresented; the phi coefficient again indicates that the magnitude of this effect was small. We also compared survey respondents with nonrespondents. A between-subjects t test revealed that nonrespondents (M = 34.16 years, SD = 10.50) were significantly younger than respondents (M = 38.40 years, SD = 10.70). The effect size for this effect was large (d = 1.27). In addition, women made up a slightly higher percentage of the respondent pool (77.8%) as compared with the nonrespondent pool (69.2%), $\chi^2(1) = 17.38$, $p < .05$, $\phi = .06$; the phi coefficient indicates that the magnitude of this effect was small. Lastly, Caucasians (77.8%) made up a slightly higher percentage of the respondent pool as compared with the nonrespondent pool (72.0%), $\chi^2(4) = 12.32$, $p < .05$, $\phi = .05$; the phi coefficient again indicates that the magnitude of this effect was small.

Two cases were deleted from this sample because of excessive missing data (over 50%). Also, given that the original goal was to sample only full-time working adults, 80 individuals were deleted from the sample because they reported working fewer than 30 hr a week, yielding a final sample of 522. Seventy-eight percent of the final sample was women, and respondents were from 19 to 66 years of age (M = 40 years). Seventy-seven percent were White, European, or European American. Sixty-five percent were married/partnered and 52% had at least a college degree. Participants worked on average 42 hr a week, their average job tenure was 7 years, and they worked in a wide variety of jobs types, including management, health care, sales, and education.

Measures

All constructs were measured with acceptable internal consistency, as seen in Table 2, which also includes scale descriptive statistics and correlations among variables.

Overall incivility frequency. Frequency of overall incivility experiences was assessed using 15 items developed from the Cortina et al. (2001) Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS). Assessed within a 1-year timeframe and involving behaviors from either supervisors or coworkers, items include "put you down or been condescending to you" and "made demeaning or derogatory remarks about you." A 5-point frequency response scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*) was used.

Specific incident measures. After completing the WIS, respondents who endorsed at least one of the WIS items were directed to complete the Specific Incidents section. Eighty-two percent or 428 people did go on to complete this section. At the beginning of this section of the survey, respondents were given the following directions:

> Please think about the behavior(s) you indicated on the previous page. Which experience bothered you the MOST? An "experience" can be a behavior or a pattern of behaviors that came from the same person(s), even if the behaviors happened over a period of time. Please refer to this experience when answering the following questions.

The questions that followed measured respondents' cognitive appraisals of, and emotional responses to, the incident, the combination of which were examined jointly, as detailed below. In addition, assessments of perpetrator power were also made in the Specific Incident section of the survey, which was examined in the subsequent meditational analyses.

Cognitive appraisal was measured with an eight-item scale adapted from the work of Lazarus and colleagues (Lazarus, 1991, 2001; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1990) by using a slightly modified version of the scale developed by P. Bennett et al. (2003). Items were preceded by the stem, "At the time of the experience that bothered you the MOST, how much did you . . . ?" and were designed to tap into each of the appraisal dimensions discussed by Lazarus and colleagues including goal relevance (two items; e.g., "feel what was happening was important to you"), self-/other-accountability (two items; e.g., "consider yourself/someone else to be responsible for the situation?"), problem-focused coping potential (one item; "think you would be able to make things better"), emotion-focused coping potential (one item; "think you would be able to deal emotionally with what was happening"), negative

Table 2
Correlations, Descriptives, and Alpha Reliabilities for All Study Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
1. Goal rel.	2.17	1.15	(.90)																												
2. Self acct.	0.84	0.99	.20	—																											
3. Other acct.	2.08	1.31	.37	−.17	—																										
4. Prob. cope	1.80	1.30	.16	.33	−.03	—																									
5. Emo. cope	2.56	1.10	.05	.06	.14	.40	—																								
6. Pos. F.E.	1.99	1.30	.07	.19	.09	.64	.36	—																							
7. Neg. F.E.	1.17	1.17	.37	.11	.31	−.15	−.07	−.36	—																						
8. Anger	2.36	1.20	.61	.00	.36	−.08	−.02	−.18	.50	(.86)																					
9. Guilt	0.45	0.75	.33	.38	−.01	.16	−.09	.07	.31	.23	(.78)																				
10. Sadness	1.47	1.17	.55	.15	.28	.15	−.04	−.02	.41	.48	.51	(.81)																			
11. Fear	0.87	1.09	.45	.16	.18	.08	−.10	−.08	.45	.46	.67	.69	(.87)																		
12. Disgust	1.51	1.16	.54	.01	.39	−.06	.03	−.16	.51	.72	.33	.63	.53	(.80)																	
13. Emo. comp.	0.21	0.41	.41	.27	.13	.28	.06	.08	.36	.39	.61	.62	.70	.49	—																
14. Opt. comp.	1.13	2.58	−.28	.25	−.28	.71	.44	.78	−.60	−.59	−.12	−.34	−.37	−.57	−.15	—															
15. Ext. domp.	2.29	1.51	.06	−.31	.56	.10	.47	.37	−.18	.04	−.61	−.35	−.55	−.07	−.38	.25	—														
16. Ov. in. freq.	12.76	11.08	.33	.14	.19	−.13	−.09	−.25	.55	.42	.40	.46	.52	.54	.36	−.48	−.30	(.96)													
17. Sp. in. freq.	1.72	0.92	.33	.04	.16	−.24	−.09	−.35	.52	.49	.24	.38	.42	.48	.25	−.55	−.22	.64	—												
18. Perp. power	11.35	9.59	.46	.19	.08	−.02	−.11	−.12	.40	.40	.44	.49	.57	.42	.42	−.34	−.35	.45	.38	(.95)											
19. Work sat.	9.87	5.02	.08	.10	.02	.29	.13	.29	−.21	−.09	−.01	.03	−.10	−.06	.00	.29	.13	−.15	−.15	−.13	(.84)										
20. Sup. sat.	9.05	4.85	−.24	.05	−.15	.20	.07	.29	−.35	−.39	−.16	−.31	−.30	−.44	−.18	.45	.14	−.45	−.41	−.34	.25	(.81)									
21. Cow. sat.	10.59	4.59	−.05	.09	−.07	.25	.10	.21	−.19	−.25	−.01	−.07	−.09	−.26	−.05	.32	.04	−.23	−.19	−.03	.38	.23	(.84)								
22. Gen. job sat.	15.95	7.15	−.04	.11	−.05	.33	.16	.37	−.25	−.21	−.12	−.09	−.21	−.21	−.03	.42	.19	−.32	−.25	−.20	.69	.43	.46	(.89)							
23. Org. dev.	7.03	5.65	.00	.16	.03	−.13	−.11	−.13	.23	.08	.06	.06	.11	.11	.07	−.18	−.12	.23	.16	.09	−.17	−.14	−.12	−.15	(.83)						
24. Int. dev.	5.43	4.75	.07	.12	.02	−.05	−.10	−.12	.24	.20	.07	.07	.12	.17	.13	−.19	−.10	.36	.21	.08	−.06	−.09	−.28	−.08	.57	(.79)					
25. Work with.	9.92	6.18	.04	.06	.12	−.16	−.08	−.15	.27	.18	.01	.04	.11	.13	.04	−.24	−.02	.20	.22	.09	−.23	−.05	−.16	−.19	.80	.50	(.86)				
26. Job with.	3.94	3.43	.14	−.11	.10	−.20	−.12	−.25	.28	.23	.06	.16	.16	.24	.08	−.35	−.09	.30	.33	.23	−.47	−.36	−.31	−.58	.28	.16	.36	(.89)			
27. Reciprocate	1.02	1.66	.13	.23	.09	−.04	.02	−.07	.28	.21	.23	.13	.20	.23	.20	−.17	−.11	.34	.21	.12	−.11	−.07	−.15	−.11	.29	.33	.31	.10	(.85)		
28. Job stress	21.50	13.47	.22	.00	.08	−.18	−.10	−.23	.26	.37	.17	.30	.31	.38	.19	−.39	−.18	.27	.27	.24	−.08	−.33	−.25	−.40	.08	.07	.09	.34	.03	(.92)	
29. N.A.	12.70	6.23	.28	.11	.15	−.06	−.15	−.13	.40	.38	.45	.41	.55	.39	.36	−.35	−.33	.47	.40	.32	−.17	−.29	−.19	−.41	.30	.26	.30	.33	.20	.42	(.90)

Note. $n = 288$. Alpha reliabilities, where appropriate, are listed along diagonal in parentheses. Goal rel. = goal relevance; Self acc. = self-accountability; Other acc. = other-accountability; Prob. cope = problem-focused coping potential; Emo. cope = emotion-focused coping potential; Pos. F.E. = positive future expectancy; Neg. F.E. = negative future expectancy; Comp. = composite; Emo. = emotionality; Opt. = optimism; Ext. = externalizing; Ov. in. freq. = overall incivility frequency; Sp. in. freq. = specific incident incivility frequency; Perp. = perpetrator; Sat. = satisfaction; Sup. = supervisor; Cow. = coworker; Gen. = general; Org. = organizational; Dev. = deviance; Int. = interpersonal; With. = withdrawal; N.A. = negative affectivity.
$|r| > .151$, $p < .01$. $|r| > .115$, $p < .05$.

future expectancy (one item; e.g., "expect the situation to get worse"), and positive future expectancy (one item; e.g., "expect the situation to get better"). All items used a 5-point response scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*extremely*).

Emotional response to the incivility experiences was measured with a 15-item scale developed for the purposes of this research adapted from Lazarus (1991, 2001), Ellsworth and Smith (1988), and Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, and O'Connor (1987) that used a series of adjectives to tap into the core negative emotions of anger (*frustrated*, *irritated*, *angry*), guilt (*guilty*, *ashamed*, *regretful*), sadness (*sad*, *disappointed*, *hurt*), fear/anxiety (*nervous*, *anxious*, *afraid*), and disgust (*disgusted*, *repulsed*, *offended*). Respondents were asked, "How were you feeling DURING the situation that bothered you the MOST?" and then responded to the series of emotional adjectives using a 5-point response scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*extremely*).

Perpetrator power was measured with six items prefaced with the statement "The person(s) who bothered me could affect" using a 5-point frequency response scale with *not at all* to *extremely* as options. The six items included "my performance evaluations," "my pay raises," "my chances of being promoted," "whether I keep my job," "my ability to succeed," and "my professional reputation." As such, our assessment of this construct did not provide information about the position of the perpetrator relative to the target, but rather was designed to tap into the many ways that organizationally driven hierarchical power might manifest itself, providing a more continuous assessment of the construct than could be derived from simply asking whether the perpetrator was a supervisor, peer, or subordinate.

Finally, the *frequency* of the specific incident was assessed by one item that asked, "HOW MANY TIMES did the person(s) bother you?" using a 4-point frequency response scale with *rarely (1–2 times)*, *sometimes (3–10 times)*, *often (11–20 times)*, and *many times (more than 20 times*) as options. This measure is referred to as *specific incident incivility frequency* to differentiate it from the separate measure of overall incivility frequency explained above.

Job-related outcomes. The job-related outcomes were assessed with a variety of scales that measured job satisfaction, workplace deviance, work and job withdrawal, and reciprocation (i.e., seeking retribution for the uncivil behavior).

Job satisfaction facets were measured using three 5-item subscales of the Abridged Job Descriptive Index (P. C. Smith et al., 1969; Stanton et al., 2002): Work Satisfaction, Supervisor Satisfaction, and Coworker Satisfaction. Participants were asked to respond *Yes*, *?*, or *No* (scored 3, 1, 0, respectively) to indicate whether the given descriptor applied to their job most of the time. In addition, the eight-item version of the Job in General scale (Ironson et al., 1989) measured global job satisfaction. Participants were asked to respond *Yes*, *?*, or *No* (scored 3, 1, 0, respectively) to indicate whether the given descriptor applied to their job most of the time.

Workplace deviance was measured with 11 items of R. J. Bennett and Robinson's (2000) Organizational Deviance (i.e., behaviors harmful to one's organization; e.g., "Taken property from work without permission") and seven-item Interpersonal Deviance (i.e., behaviors harmful to individuals within one's organization; e.g., "Made fun of someone at work") scales.[1] Items were preceded with the stem," How often have you engaged in the following in the last year. . .?" and were measured with a 5-point frequency response scale with options ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*).

Withdrawal behaviors were measured with 10 items assessing work withdrawal (i.e., avoiding tasks associated with one's work) and three items assessing job withdrawal (i.e., planning to quit; Hanisch & Hulin, 1990, 1991). Sample items include "Have you ever made excuses to miss meetings?" (work withdrawal) and "Have you ever thought about leaving your job?" (job withdrawal). Items were measured using a 5-point frequency response scale with options ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*).

Reciprocation was measured with two items developed for the purposes of this research that asked respondents, as part of the Specific Incidents section, if they "responded similarly (or worse) to get even" or "responded in a similar way that they treated me" using a 5-point frequency response scale with options ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*).

Control variables. To reduce the effects that both general stress levels (Cortina et al., 2001) and general negative emotionality (Brief, Burke, George, Robinson, & Webster, 1988) would influence our results, we controlled for both job stress and negative emotionality in all of our analyses. Job stress was measured using the Stress in General scale developed and validated by Stanton, Balzer, Smith, Parra, and Ironson (2001). Fifteen items from both the Pressured and Threatening subscales were used to assess stress. Participants were asked to respond *Yes*, *?*, or *No* (scored 3, 1, and 0, respectively) to indicate whether the given descriptor applied to their job most of the time. Trait negative affectivity was measured with the 10-item Negative Affectivity subscale of the PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Sample items include *distressed*, *irritable*, and *nervous*. Respondents were asked to indicate how often they feel this way in general using a 5-point frequency response scale with options ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*almost always*).

Results

Relationships Among Appraisals and Emotions

Given that the goal in Propositions 1–7 was to arrive at patterns of appraisal/emotion across respondents, we explored these propositions using K-means cluster analyses (Aldenderfer & Blashfield, 1984). This type of multivariate analysis results in the creation of groups that are maximally dissimilar from one another while being maximally similar within-group. Another important decision that must be made prior to executing K-means cluster analyses is the choice of a similarity measure (i.e., measure of association). Analyses were conducted on a Euclidean distance matrix as both elevation and dispersion of item responses were important and meaningful to the analysis.

Given the exploratory nature of these analyses, two- to seven-cluster solutions were reviewed; the four-cluster solution was retained given its ease of interpretability, meaningfulness, and the resulting group sizes. Figure 2 shows graphical depictions of the four clusters. Individuals in the first cluster ($n = 71$) scored relatively low on all 12 variables; thus, they did not have any strong cognitive or emotional

[1] R. J. Bennett and Robinson's (2000) organizational deviance scale has 12 items, but one of the items, "Used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job," was omitted because of its sensitive nature.

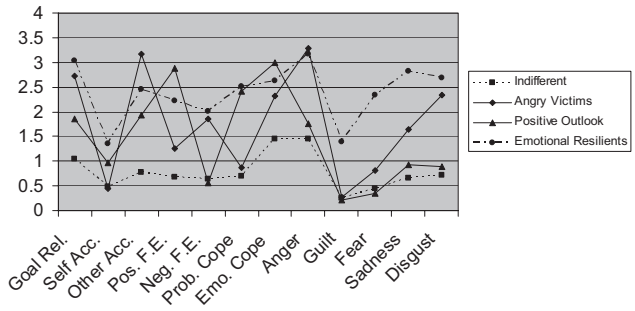

Figure 2. Results of K-means cluster analyses. *Note.* Each point represents the group average for a given variable scored on a 5-point scale, with 0 = *not at all* and 4 = *extremely*. Goal Rel. = goal relevance; Self Acc. = self-accountability; Other Acc. = other-accountability; Pos. F.E. = positive future expectancy; Neg. F.E. = negative future expectancy; Prob. Cope = problem-focused coping potential; Emo. Cope = emotion-focused coping potential.

reactions to their experience(s) of incivility, and this group was thus dubbed "indifferent." The defining characteristic of the second cluster ($n = 95$) is that individuals scored higher on other-accountability as compared with other clusters and these individuals also reported relatively high levels of anger. Also of note is that this group scored relatively low on problem-focused coping potential. This group was thus called "angry victims." Individuals in the third cluster ($n = 168$) scored relatively high on positive future expectancy, problem-focused coping potential, and emotion-focused coping potential and for this reason this group was called "positive outlook." The final cluster ($n = 94$) was dubbed "emotionally resilient" because individuals in this group scored relatively high on all emotions but were also resilient in that they reported relatively high levels of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping potential.

The propositions with regard to individuals' patterns of cognitive and emotional responses to incivility were largely supported based on the results of these K-means cluster analyses. Proposition 1 stated that a complex pattern of appraisal and emotions would emerge, with individuals experiencing more than one emotion. Individuals did indeed report experiencing more than one emotion, especially those in the emotionally resilient group who reported relatively high levels of guilt, fear, sadness, and disgust. Also interesting is that some emotions (e.g., anger) were reported more than others (e.g., guilt). Proposition 2 stated that the intensity of goal relevance would be associated with the intensity of emotion, and this was the case. For example, emotionally resilient individuals reported the highest level of goal relevance and they also reported the highest level of most emotions (with the exception anger). Also, indifferent individuals reported the lowest level of goal relevance, and they also reported the lowest levels of all emotions. Proposition 3 stated that groups that report feeling moderate to high levels of anger would also report moderate to high evaluations of other-accountability, and this was supported (see Figure 2). For example, the angry victims group reported the highest levels of both anger and other-accountability (while reporting relatively low levels of all other reactions), and the emotionally resilient group reported the second-highest levels of these two reactions. Proposition 4 stated that groups that reported moderate to high levels of guilt would also report moderate to high evaluations of self-accountability, and this was supported (see Figure 2). For example, the emotionally resilient group reported the highest levels of both guilt and self-accountability. Propositions 5 and 6, however, were not supported in that there was no pattern in the relationship between sadness and both problem-focused coping potential and future expectancy (Proposition 5) or fear/anxiety and emotion-focused coping potential (Proposition 6). Lastly, Proposition 7 was supported in that all groups that reported at least moderate levels of goal relevance also reported moderate to high levels of disgust. For example, the emotionally resilient group reported the highest levels of both goal relevance and disgust, and the angry victims group reported the second-to-highest levels of these two reactions.

Quantifying Appraisals and Emotions

The K-means cluster results provide important information on the patterned nature of appraisals and emotional responses to workplace incivility. However, because our goal was to examine the impact of these complex appraisals and emotions—and not the impact of belonging in a particular group of people—we needed to translate the K-means results into more construct-like parcels. We created weighted composites of the 12 appraisal/emotion variables (e.g., goal relevance, self-accountability, other-accountability) based on the linear function results from a discriminant function analysis (DFA). DFA is essentially the reverse of a K-means cluster approach, except that it provides the actual linear function of the variables used to maximally separate the groups of people. Three significant functions emerged from the DFA and they accounted for 56.8%, 28.5%, and 14.7% of the between-groups variation, respectively. The structure matrix, as shown in Table 3, suggests that the three functions represent emotionality, optimism, and externalizing. This structure matrix was then used to create three weighted linear composites. Thus, these weighted linear composites represent the complex appraisal/emotion patterns, and it is these composites that were used in subsequent hypothesis testing.

Given their complexity and as an aid in interpreting their meaning, Table 4 shows the corresponding values between the initial variables and low, average, and high levels of each of the appraisal/emotion composites. As examples to highlight the highest loading variables on each function, looking at Table 4 and across the Emotionality columns, as scores on the Emotionality composite increase, so do scores on all emotions and goal relevance. As scores on the Optimism composite increase, so do scores on positive future expectancy and both coping potentials. As scores on the Optimism composite increase, scores on negative future expectancy decrease. As scores on the Externalizing composite increase, scores on other-accountability increase and guilt decrease.

Model Testing

Taken together, Hypotheses 1–3 represent similar mediations with different outcomes; hence, they were tested concurrently. To review, we hypothesized that appraisal/emotion would mediate the relationship between incivility and reciprocation (Hypothesis 1), workplace deviance (Hypothesis 2), and job satisfaction facets (Hypothesis 3). We used the multiple mediation approach using nonparametric bootstrapping procedures recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008) to test these mediations. This procedure has several advantages over using the Sobel test (Sobel, 1986) or the causal steps approach (Baron & Kenny, 1986) because it allows one to test for multiple mediators simultaneously. The

Table 3
Discriminant Function Analysis Structure Matrix—Appraisal/Emotion Variables

Variable	Function 1 Emotionality	2 Optimism	3 Externalizing
Fear	.588	−.130	−.562
Sadness	.585	−.127	−.269
Disgust	.569	−.387	.016
Goal relevance	.479	−.088	.219
Anger	.476	−.378	.190
Future expectancy—negative	.386	−.342	.001
Future expectancy—positive	.151	.735	.324
Problem-focused coping potential	.244	.704	−.044
Emotion-focused coping potential	.143	.375	.345
Self-accountability	.170	.211	−.172
Other-accountability	.337	−.177	.564
Guilt	.412	.019	−.542

Note. Values represent the correlations between the given variable and the given function. The values were used to create the weighted linear composites of each of the three functions.

SPSS macro created by Preacher and Hayes (2010) was used to conduct these analyses. Job stress and negative affectivity were controlled for in all analyses to attempt to isolate the effects that incivility had on outcomes and to rule out the argument that these relationships could have been due to just feeling stressed about one's job (job stress) and just feeling generally negative about things (negative affectivity). In addition, because we were testing the effects of multiple predictors (e.g., overall incivility frequency, specific incident incivility frequency, and perpetrator power), we followed the procedure recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2010) and ran the macro three times for each dependent variable, each time entering one variable as the predictor and the other two as controls. For each analysis run, we requested 5,000 bootstrap resamples and used bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals, again as suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008).

Table 5 reveals the significant specific indirect effects, which are in bold type (i.e., these are the effects that did not include zero in their confidence intervals). (We report the total indirect effects as well for the sake of completeness, although these were not our focus.) For example, the bootstrap analyses revealed, with 95% confidence, that the specific indirect effect of overall incivility frequency on reciprocation through emotionality was significant, with a point estimate of .0100 and a 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval of .0020 to .0237. Thus, emotionality fully mediated the relationship between overall incivility frequency and reciprocation. From the results in Table 6, which show the unstandardized ordinary least squares regression coefficients, the direction of the paths are such that greater overall incivility frequency was associated with greater emotionality ($\beta = .1081$, $p < .01$), which in turn was associated with increased reciprocation ($\beta = .0926$, $p < .05$). For illustrative purposes, Figure 3 shows a graphical depiction of the complete multiple mediation results using reciprocation as the outcome.

To summarize the results of Tables 5 and 6, we found that emotionality fully mediated the relationships between all three incivility predictors and reciprocation. Greater incivility frequency

Table 4
Low, Average, and High Levels of Appraisal/Emotion Composites and Corresponding Values for Each Appraisal/Emotion Variable

Variable	Emotionality Low	Emotionality Average	Emotionality High	Optimism Low	Optimism Average	Optimism High	Externalizing Low	Externalizing Average	Externalizing High
Goal relevance	0.710	2.272	3.258	2.545	2.111	1.773	2.202	2.104	2.441
Self-accountability	0.565	0.858	1.210	0.573	0.948	1.109	1.403	0.886	0.309
Other-accountability	0.823	2.226	2.871	2.445	2.052	1.688	1.387	1.929	3.412
Future expectancy—positive	1.468	2.138	1.935	0.845	2.171	3.406	1.371	1.941	2.779
Future expectancy—negative	0.274	1.123	2.306	1.964	1.062	0.203	1.548	1.165	0.882
Problem-focused coping potential	1.048	1.954	2.113	0.764	1.986	3.172	1.597	1.871	1.912
Emotion-focused coping potential	2.048	2.579	2.661	1.973	2.550	3.281	1.532	2.561	3.191
Anger	0.935	2.386	3.586	3.094	2.286	1.255	2.387	2.297	2.490
Guilt	0.086	0.375	1.414	0.615	0.506	0.260	1.548	0.354	0.069
Fear	0.097	0.706	2.613	1.427	0.833	0.307	2.102	0.787	0.314
Sadness	0.339	1.328	3.156	1.976	1.374	0.875	2.237	1.403	0.985
Disgust	0.328	1.479	3.070	2.297	1.479	0.500	1.973	1.451	1.534

Note. Values represent scores on the given appraisal/emotion variables for the given level of the composite; low levels represent those individuals who fall more than 1 standard deviation below the composite mean, average levels represent those individuals who fall within ±1 standard deviation of the composite mean, and high levels represent those individuals who fall more than 1 standard deviation above the composite mean.

Table 5
Appraisal/Emotion as a Mediator of the Effect of Workplace Incivility on Affect-Driven Behaviors and Work Attitudes

Predictor/ mediator	Outcome						
	Reciprocation	Int. dev.	Org. dev.	Work sat.	Sup. sat.	Cow. sat.	Gen. job sat.
Predictor: Overall incivility frequency							
Mediators							
Emotionality	**.0100 [.0020, .0237]**	−.0094 [−.0407, .0133]	−.0240 [−.0693, .0056]	**.0434 [.0171, .0876]**	−.0022 [−.0267, .0191]	.0101 [−.0114, .0389]	**.0574 [.0212, .1148]**
Optimism	.0011 [−.0054, .0105]	.0087 [−.0057, .0366]	.0173 [−.0013, .0580]	**−.0409 [−.0826, −.0144]**	**−.0259 [−.0591, −.0066]**	**−.0319 [−.0680, −.0078]**	**−.0526 [−.1058, −.0161]**
Externalizing	.0013 [−.0010, .0085]	.0000 [−.0125, .0117]	.0009 [−.0088, .0191]	.0012 [−.0050, .0177]	.0035 [−.0029, .0211]	.0023 [−.0032, .0195]	.0037 [−.0040, .0307]
Total indirect effect	**.0125 [.0004, .0298]**	−.0007 [−.0363, .0344]	−.0058 [−.0550, .0393]	.0037 [−.0430, .0513]	−.0247 [−.0646, .0078]	−.0195 [−.0613, .0155]	.0085 [−.0536, .0744]
Predictor: Specific incident incivility frequency							
Mediators							
Emotionality	**.0445 [.0091, .1135]**	−.0482 [−.2314, .0650]	−.1161 [−.3713, .0119]	**.2036 [.0562, .4504]**	−.0110 [−.1386, .0951]	.0397 [−.0355, .1941]	**.2628 [.0798, .5605]**
Optimism	.0136 [−.0656, .0978]	.1149 [−.1083, .3484]	.2211 [−.0403, .05412]	**−.4768 [−.8317, −.2208]**	**−.3137 [−.5736, −.1275]**	**−.4104 [−.7030, −.1883]**	**−.6168 [−1.035, −.3011]**
Externalizing	−.0016 [−.0337, .0129]	.0001 [−.0487, .0579]	−.0019 [−.0881, .0436]	−.0020 [−.0722, .0251]	−.0043 [−.0876, .0398]	−.0035 [−.0867, .0269]	−.0061 [−.1217, .0327]
Total indirect effect	.0565 [−.0329, .1732]	.0668 [−.1886, .3138]	.1031 [−.2211, .4292]	−.2753 [−.6352, .0598]	**−.3290 [−.6163, −.0966]**	**−.3743 [−.6837, −.1282]**	−.3601 [−.8007, .0348]
Predictor: Perpetrator power							
Mediators							
Emotionality	**.0106 [.0018, .0293]**	−.0103 [−.0400, .0153]	−.0245 [−.0631, .0090]	**.0467 [.0227, .0790]**	−.0024 [−.0263, .0203]	.0101 [−.0019, .0359]	**.0596 [.0277, .1030]**
Optimism	.0002 [−.0010, .0041]	.0020 [−.0013, .0138]	.0041 [−.0014, .0189]	−.0088 [−.0265, .0054]	−.0060 [−.0173, .0027]	−.0081 [−.0228, .0025]	−.0104 [−.0320, .0082]
Externalizing	.0028 [−.0019, .0089]	−.0001 [−.0154, .0173]	.0021 [−.0197, .0240]	.0023 [−.0102, .0178]	.0089 [−.0037, .0267]	.0047 [−.0071, .0216]	.0077 [−.0085, .0318]
Total indirect effect	**.0136 [.0018, .0293]**	−.0084 [−.0436, .0278]	−.0182 [−.0609, .0263]	**.0402 [.0066, .0756]**	.0005 [−.0306, .0300]	.0068 [−.0222, .0394]	**.0570 [.0145, .1061]**

Note. Values are point estimates of the indirect effects of the predictor on the outcome through the proposed mediator, followed by bootstrapped, bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals. Values in bold type represent effects for which the 95% confidence interval does not include zero, which indicates mediation. Int. = interpersonal; Dev. = deviance; Org. = organizational; Sat. = satisfaction; Sup. = supervisor; Cow. = coworker; Gen. = general.

Table 6
Effect of Workplace Incivility on Affect-Driven Behaviors and Work Attitudes Through Appraisal/Emotion (Regression Path Estimates)

Predictor variable (*X*)	Mediating variable (*M*)	Outcome variable (*Y*)	Effect of *X* on *M* (a)	Effect of *M* on *Y* (b)	Total effect (c)	Direct effect (c′)	Overall R^2
Overall incivility frequency	Emotionality	Reciprocation	.1081**	.0926*	.0808**	.0683*	.1217
	Optimism		−.0754*	−.0152			
	Externalizing		−.0186	−.0709			
Specific incident incivility frequency	Emotionality		.4801**	.0926*	.0088	−.0477	.1217
	Optimism		−.8962**	−.0152			
	Externalizing		.0231	−.0709			
Perpetrator power	Emotionality		.1146**	.0926*	−.0032	−.0169	.1217
	Optimism		−.0163	−.0152			
	Externalizing		−.0388**	−.0709			
Overall incivility frequency	Emotionality	Interpersonal deviance	.1040**	−.0902	.2554**	.2561**	.1445
	Optimism		−.0705**	−.1238			
	Externalizing		−.0216	.0014			
Specific incident incivility frequency	Emotionality		.5345**	−.0902	−.0905	−.1573	.1445
	Optimism		−.9282**	−.1238			
	Externalizing		.0622	.0014			
Perpetrator power	Emotionality		.1147**	−.0902	−.0500	−.0416	.1445
	Optimism		−.0160	−.1238			
	Externalizing		−.0389	.0014			
Overall incivility frequency	Emotionality	Organizational deviance	.1081**	−.2219	.1590*	.1648*	.1456
	Optimism		−.0739**	−.2237			
	Externalizing		−.0170	−.0522			
Specific incident incivility frequency	Emotionality		.5234**	−.2219	−.2021	−.3052	.1456
	Optimism		−.9462**	−.2237			
	Externalizing		.0364	−.0522			
Perpetrator power	Emotionality		.1102**	−.2219	−.0202	−.0019	.1456
	Optimism		−.0176	−.2237			
	Externalizing		−.0411**	−.0522			
Overall incivility frequency	Emotionality	Work satisfaction	.1072**	.4047**	−.0563	−.0600	.1381
	Optimism		−.0752**	.5435**			
	Externalizing		−.0198	−.0608			
Specific incident incivility frequency	Emotionality		.5030**	.4047**	−.2997	−.0244	.1381
	Optimism		−.8744**	.5435**			
	Externalizing		.0331	−.0608			
Perpetrator power	Emotionality		.1155**	.4047**	−.0224	−.0626	.1381
	Optimism		−.0163	.5435**			
	Externalizing		−.0377	−.0608			
Overall incivility frequency	Emotionality	Supervisor satisfaction	.1055**	−.0213	−.2282**	−.2035**	.3340
	Optimism		−.0739**	.3503**			
	Externalizing		−.0154	−.2256			
Specific incident incivility frequency	Emotionality		.5188**	−.0213	−.7593**	−.4303	.3340
	Optimism		−.8954**	.3503**			
	Externalizing		.0192	−.2256			
Perpetrator power	Emotionality		.1120**	−.0213	−.0746**	−.0751*	.3340
	Optimism		−.0171	.3503**			
	Externalizing		−.0394**	−.2256			
Overall incivility frequency	Emotionality	Coworker satisfaction	.1121**	.0898	−.1453*	−.1258*	.1466
	Optimism		−.0736**	.4335**			
	Externalizing		−.0186	−.1230			
Specific incident incivility frequency	Emotionality		.4418**	.0898	−.3895	−.0153	.1466
	Optimism		−.9469**	.4335**			
	Externalizing		.0284	−.1230			
Perpetrator power	Emotionality		.1124**	.0898	.0635	.0567	.1466
	Optimism		−.0186	.4335**			
	Externalizing		−.0386**	−.1230			
Overall incivility frequency	Emotionality	General job satisfaction	.1085**	.5288**	−.1535	−.1620*	.3154
	Optimism		−.0752**	.6990*			
	Externalizing		−.0188	−.1991			
Specific incident incivility frequency	Emotionality		.4969**	.5288**	−.3316	.0284	.3154
	Optimism		−.8824**	.6990*			
	Externalizing		.0305	−.1991			
Perpetrator power	Emotionality		.1127**	.5288**	.0026	−.0544	.3154
	Optimism		−.0148	.6990*			
	Externalizing		−.0388**	−.1991			

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

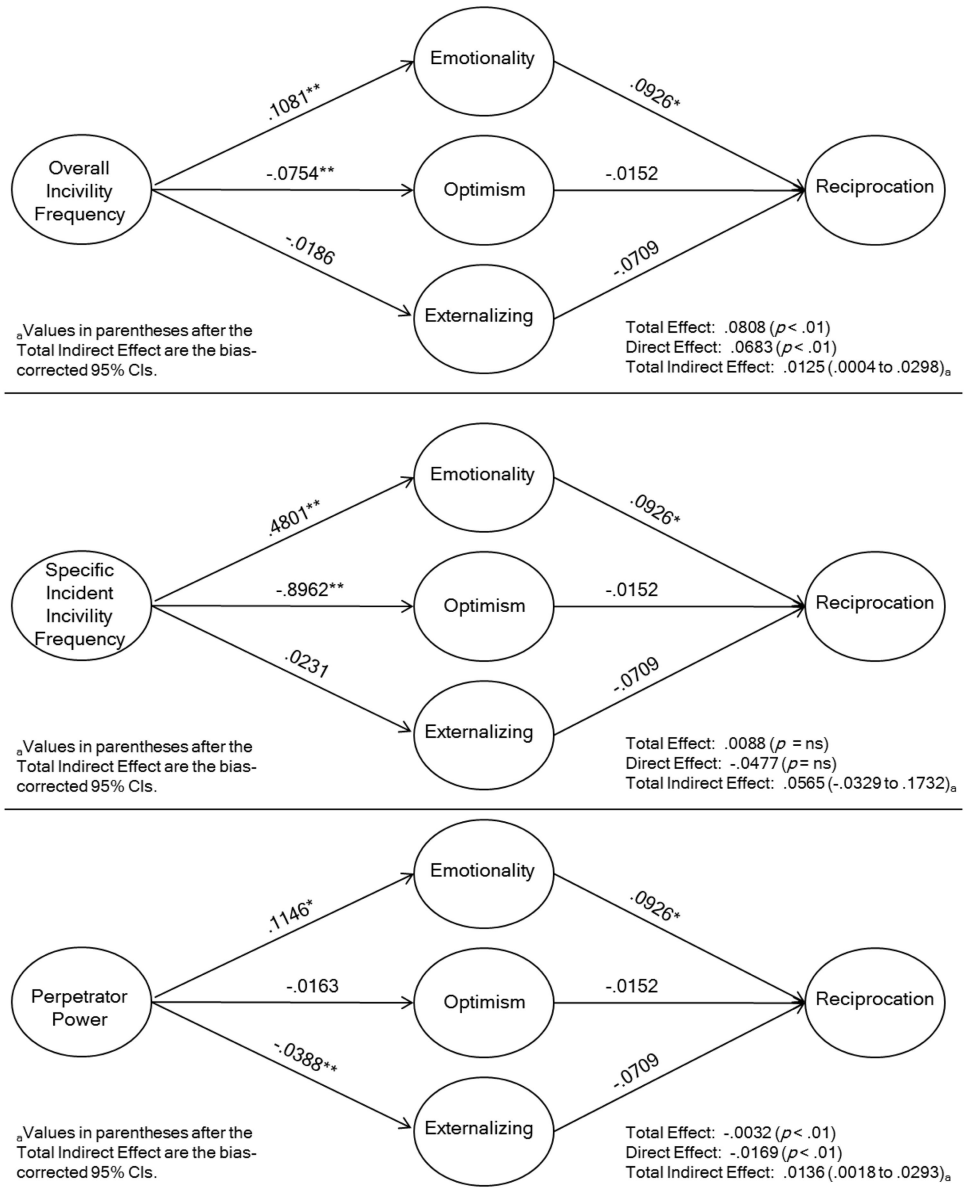

Figure 3. Example graphical depiction of multiple mediation results.

and perpetrator power are associated with greater emotionality, which in turn is associated with increased reciprocation. In addition, emotionality also fully mediated the relationships between all three incivility predictors and both work satisfaction and general job satisfaction. Greater incivility frequency and perpetrator power are associated with greater emotionality, which in turn is associated with increased satisfaction.[2] Lastly, optimism fully mediated the relationships between overall incivility frequency and specific incident incivility frequency and all four job satisfaction outcomes. Greater incivility frequency is associated with decreased optimism, which in turn is associated with increased satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4 stated that job satisfaction would mediate the relationship between appraisal/emotional reactions and both work and job withdrawal. This hypothesis was tested using the same multiple mediation approach with bootstrapping procedures recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Table 7 shows the results of the bootstrapping analyses and Table 8 shows the unstandardized ordinary least squares regression coefficients. To summarize the results of Tables 7 and 8, we found that work satisfaction fully mediated the relationships between emotionality

[2] Given that these effects are not intuitive—i.e., that greater (negative) emotionality would be associated with increased satisfaction—we performed follow-up regression analyses to investigate for possible negative suppression. These analyses revealed that the effect for work satisfaction is always positive, regardless of what combination of predictor variables are added. However, when general job satisfaction was the outcome, the effect turned positive only after adding the controls (i.e., the effect without controls is negative). Therefore, it seems safe to assume that this effect should be interpreted as negative. These analyses are available from the first author.

Table 7
Job Satisfaction as a Mediator of the Effect of Appraisal/Emotion on Judgment-Driven Behaviors

Predictor/mediator	Outcome	
	Work withdrawal	Job withdrawal
	Predictor: Emotionality	
Mediators		
Work satisfaction	**−.0716 [−.1675, −.0157]**	**−.0345 [−.0823, −.0070]**
Supervisor satisfaction	**−.0542 [−.1223, −.0115]**	.0122 [−.0078, .0411]
Coworker satisfaction	−.0010 [−.0286, .0105]	−.0001 [−.0105, .0078]
General job satisfaction	.0307 [−.0109, .1016]	**−.0489 [−.1090, −.0137]**
Total indirect effect	**−.0962 [−.1933, −.0180]**	**−.0713 [−.1374, −.0069]**
	Predictor: Optimism	
Mediators		
Work satisfaction	**−.1703 [−.3459, −.0573]**	**−.0762 [−.1585, −.0213]**
Supervisor satisfaction	**.0935 [.0202, .1893]**	−.0218 [−.0689, .0142]
Coworker satisfaction	−.0161 [−.0987, .0648]	−.0007 [−.0395, .0374]
General job satisfaction	.0749 [−.0378, .2204]	**−.1134 [−.2017, −.0496]**
Total indirect effect	−.1621 [−.1609, .1171]	**−.2121 [−.3184, −.1294]**

Note. Values are point estimates of the indirect effects of the predictor on the outcome through the proposed mediator, followed by bootstrapped, bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals. Values in bold type represent effects for which the 95% confidence interval does not include zero, which indicates mediation.

and optimism and both work and job withdrawal. Greater emotionality and optimism are associated with greater work satisfaction, which in turn is associated with decreased withdrawal. Also, supervisor satisfaction fully mediated the relationships between emotionality and optimism and work withdrawal. Greater emotionality is associated with lower supervisor satisfaction, which in turn is associated with increased work withdrawal. Greater optimism is associated with increased supervisor satisfaction, which in turn is associated with increased withdrawal.[3] Lastly, general job satisfaction fully mediated the relationships between emotionality and optimism and job withdrawal. Emotionality and optimism are associated with higher general job satisfaction, which in turn is associated with decreased job withdrawal.

Discussion

The current study explored the experience of incivility at work from the target's perspective by positioning appraisals and emotions as key variables in understanding the negative effects of experiencing workplace incivility. To serve the descriptive goal of determining what specific appraisals and emotions individuals actually report in response to experiencing incivility, we used K-means clustering to group individuals on the basis of their patterns of reactions. In addition, to gain a fuller appreciation for the experience of incivility from the target's perspective, we tested a heuristic model theoretically grounded in both the CMR theory of emotions (Lazarus, 1991, 2001; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1990) and AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) that associate the experience of incivility to job-related outcomes via the psychological processes of cognitive appraisal and emotional reactions. The results revealed several interesting relationships that capture the complexity of how workers respond to rude, disrespectful behaviors.

Patterned Appraisals and Emotions

The results of the K-means cluster analyses resulted in both meaningful and interesting groups of individuals that provide support for the theoretical propositions that link appraisals to emotional reactions. More specifically, the K-means groups show a link between both anger and other-accountability and guilt and self-accountability. No support was found for the link between sadness and both problem-focused coping potential and future expectancy or fear/anxiety and emotion-focused coping potential, which is not surprising given that previous research showing such links has been sparse. The lack of support here also raises the question as to whether fear and sadness are useful emotions to use when investigating reactions to incivility. In retrospect, anger and guilt do seem much more relevant than fear and sadness (i.e., it makes more sense that someone might feel angry or guilty in response to experiencing incivility as opposed to feeling scared or sad). It is certainly possible, however, that fear/sadness reactions could stem from experiences of greater duration—such as bullying experiences—which our present study did not examine. With regard to disgust, the results also question its usefulness over and above the other emotions, particularly anger. Looking at Figure 2, the pattern of anger across the groups is similar to the pattern for disgust, so future research should explore whether similar redundant patterns emerge.

Figure 2 depicts a number of interesting results. First, both the indifferent group and the angry victims group reported very low problem-focused coping potential. This may seem counterintuitive, but the two groups may be reporting low problem-focused coping potential for different reasons that have to do with a desire to cope versus a feeling of helplessness. Individuals in the indifferent group may be thinking, "I don't need to cope—there is no problem to cope with" (i.e., they have no desire to cope), whereas

[3] Given that these effects are not intuitive—i.e., that greater supervisor satisfaction would be associated with increased work withdrawal—we performed follow-up regression analyses to investigate for possible negative suppression. These analyses revealed that this effect turned positive only after adding the controls (i.e., the effect without controls is negative). Therefore, it seems safe to assume that this effect should be interpreted as negative. These analyses are available from the first author.

Table 8
Effect of Appraisal/Emotion on Judgment-Driven Behaviors Through Job Satisfaction (Regression Path Estimates)

Predictor variable (*X*)	Mediating variable (*M*)	Outcome variable (*Y*)	Effect of *X* on *M* (a)	Effect of *M* on *Y* (b)	Total effect (c)	Direct effect (c′)	Overall R^2
Emotionality	Work satisfaction	Work withdrawal	.2481**	−.2887**	−.0835	.0127	.1389
	Supervisor satisfaction		−.3079**	.1761*			
	Coworker satisfaction		.0300	−.0344			
	General job satisfaction		.3246**	.0945			
Optimism	Work satisfaction		.5898**	−.2887**	−.4111**	−.3930*	.1389
	Supervisor satisfaction		.5307**	.1761*			
	Coworker satisfaction		.4666*	−.0344			
	General job satisfaction		.7918**	.0945			
Emotionality	Work satisfaction	Job withdrawal	.2697**	−.1281**	−.0232	.0481	.3663
	Supervisor satisfaction		−.2951**	−.0415			
	Coworker satisfaction		.0605	−.0015			
	General job satisfaction		.3386**	−.1445**			
Optimism	Work satisfaction		.5952**	−.1281**	−.2991**	−.0869	.3663
	Supervisor satisfaction		.5263**	−.0415			
	Coworker satisfaction		.4603**	−.0015			
	General job satisfaction		.7845**	−.1445**			

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

individuals in the angry victims group may be thinking, "I can't do anything about this to cope—it's out of my power" (i.e., they are feeling helpless). Future research should investigate this matter further by explicitly assessing incivility targets' reasoning behind their reported levels of coping potential. Another interesting trend across all of the groups is that individuals seem to be very angry and not very guilty. Individuals in the emotionally resilient group were the most likely to feel guilty, but comparatively speaking, their levels of guilt were still low. This trend is promising as it reflects individuals' tendency to not blame themselves for what has happened and to realize that it is indeed the perpetrators' fault. Such an attitude is promising to the extent that it encourages targets of incivility to not wallow in self-pity and confront their instigators. One final note on anger: Although both the angry victims and emotionally resilient groups reported relatively high levels of anger, it seems as though the kind of anger experienced is different. It is clear that the reason the angry victims are angry is because they have high levels of other-accountability: They are angry at their instigators for being uncivil toward them. This was also true to some extent for the emotionally resilient individuals, but given that they also reported some guilt (in addition to fear, sadness, and disgust—and all at higher levels as compared with the angry victims), their emotional experience (and cognitive process as well) seems to be different. The emotionally resilient individuals seem a bit ambivalent—"Was it their fault and am I angry? Or was it my fault and am I guilty?" may be what they are asking themselves.

Beyond demonstrating evidence for appraisal–emotion linkages, the results of the K-means cluster analysis also reveal the variety of responses that targets of incivility demonstrate. Some of the variance in the groups may have been due to interindividual differences in cognitive/emotional responding. However, it is worth noting that, because respondents may have chosen different kinds of incivility experiences as the basis for their responses to the appraisal and emotion survey items, some of the variance in the groups could also be due to differences in the severity of these chosen experiences. However, our main goal with the cluster analysis was not to test the predictors of group membership, but simply to explore the link between cognitive and emotional reactions and demonstrate the variability of these reactions. Exploring predictors, as well as outcomes, was the main focus of our heuristic model, and we now turn to a discussion of those results.

Model

Incorporating the appraisals and emotions into an examination of the impact of incivility was the second major goal of the present research. Generally speaking, the heuristic model was fairly well supported.

Appraisal/emotion as a mediator. The multiple mediation analyses testing Hypotheses 1–3 revealed interesting patterns. Of note is that optimism was found to mediate the relationship between both overall and specific incident incivility frequency and all of the job satisfaction outcomes. Increased incivility frequency was related to decreased optimism, and this makes perfect sense as the more someone experiences incivility, the less optimistic he or she might to feel; if it keeps happening, who knows when it will stop? In addition, decreased optimism was related to decreased job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been defined as a "reaction to a job that results from the incumbent's comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired" (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992, p. 1). If individuals are not optimistic about potential future incivility experiences, which are arguably undesirable job "outcomes," this may result in decreased job satisfaction to the extent they feel that their actual feelings of optimism (or lack thereof) are worse than those desired. Thus, feelings of optimism may play a role in showing why the experience of incivility is related to job satisfaction.

Also of note is that emotionality was found to mediate the relationship between all of the incivility indicators (i.e., overall incivility frequency, specific incident incivility frequency, and perpetrator power) and both work satisfaction and general job satisfaction. Thus, emotionality may play a role in showing why the experience of incivility is related to work satisfaction and

general job satisfaction. What makes these satisfaction types different from the others investigated is that they are not directed toward people (e.g., supervisors or coworkers). The experience of incivility is a social one, so it makes sense that it may be related to the "social" satisfaction types (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). However, our research shows that it can be related to the "nonsocial" satisfaction types as well, and the reason for this may have to do with the overall sense of negative emotionality invoked by the experience of rude behaviors.

We also found that emotionality mediated the relationship between all three incivility indicators and reciprocation. Few researchers have empirically investigated the idea that the incivility spiral, as theoretically introduced by Andersson and Pearsson (1999), can actually occur. This research thus provides support for the idea that workers do in fact attempt to reciprocate their experiences of mildly rude, discourteous behaviors. Furthermore, this finding provides insight into why individuals might reciprocate: because they are responding emotionally to incidences of mistreatment.

One final note regarding the appraisal/emotion mediation results is worth highlighting. Our findings suggest that measuring incivility in multiple ways is useful and researchers should continue to explore multiple operationalizations of "incivility experiences," including not only frequency and perpetrator power, but also the position of the perpetrator relative to the target and other characteristics of the uncivil experiences including possibly the location and social context. In addition, research can investigate the difference between overall and specific incident frequency further by comparing, for example, those individuals with less frequent overall experiences (which may indicate a relatively strong interpersonal climate) but more frequent specific incident experiences (which may indicate a weak relationship with a close colleague). Given that our specific incidence item asked respondents to think of the person(s) who bothered them the most, this item may be measuring relational quality.[4] We suggest that researchers ask survey respondents to describe the specific incident of incivility that bothered them the most to provide more insight into the meaning of "specific incident incivility frequency." Our findings also highlight the utility of measuring job satisfaction in multiple ways and suggest that the psychological process that links incivility to satisfaction may vary depending on the kind of satisfaction that is being predicted.

Job satisfaction as a mediator. Another important piece of the model explored whether job satisfaction (a work attitude) mediated the relationship between appraisal/emotions and withdrawal behaviors (judgment-driven behaviors), following from AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). This was supported in that all job satisfaction types, with the exception of coworker satisfaction (largely because it was not a significant predictor of withdrawal), were found to be significant mediators. Thus, certain work behaviors (or behavioral intentions in this case) may not be necessarily the direct result of affective reactions, but rather may result from a careful cognitive evaluation of one's attitudes. Future research should explore other judgment-driven behaviors that could result from the experience of incivility including actual turnover and absenteeism.

Theoretical Importance

This research is an important step forward for incivility research in particular and workplace mistreatment research in general in that it provides a theoretical framework for grounding studies in this area. We hope that this framework will aid mistreatment scholars in continuing to build the body of knowledge surrounding the experience of mistreatment at work.

In addition to simply providing a theoretical framework, the actual framework itself attempts to uncover the psychological processes that link the experience of incivility to job-related outcomes. We thus add to the growing body of work that has applied the concept of sense-making in organizations (Weick, 1995) to the workplace mistreatment literature by investigating the "sense-making processes of victims" (p. 11; Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). This was achieved by combining two theories from different areas in psychology that, to our knowledge, have not been previously combined: AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and the CMR theory of emotions (Lazarus, 1991, 2001; C. A. Smith & Lazarus, 1990). The two theories by themselves are very useful and insightful; the CMR theory details the psychological processes of cognitive appraisal and discrete emotions, and AET details how affect relates to job attitudes and behaviors. Thus, although the CMR theory does not focus on linking psychological processes to outcomes and AET does not focus on explicating psychological processes, the two together are quite complementary.

Support for the two individual theories that make up the framework for this research was also found. Specifically with regard to the CMR theory, support was found for the premise that appraisal and emotions are related in important ways in that, within the K-means cluster groups, patterns were found that showed relationships between other-accountability and anger and self-accountability and guilt. Specifically with regard to AET, the utility of categorizing job-related outcomes as work attitudes, affect-driven behaviors, and judgment-driven behaviors was shown in that appraisal/emotional reactions were found to partially mediate the relationship between incivility experiences and both affect-driven behaviors (i.e., reciprocation) and work attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction). Also, work attitudes were found to partially mediate the relationship between appraisal/emotion and judgment-driven behaviors (i.e., job withdrawal).

Practical Importance

In our fast-paced business world where the main focus is the bottom line and workers will sometimes do anything—even risk legal action—to get ahead, it is no wonder that civility is lacking in today's workplaces. Although treating fellow workers in an uncivil manner is not illegal in the United States (other counties such as Canada, France, Sweden, and Norway do have "antipsychological harassment laws"; Meyers, 2006, p. 70), this is hardly a reason for organizations to sit idly by and tolerate this kind of behavior. For starters, being treated with civility is a basic human right. As humans, we all have the right to being treated with kindness and decency; as Confucius once said, "Without feelings of respect, what is there to distinguish men from beasts?" (Quotationsbook.com, 2006).

[4] We thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

Beyond human rights issues, organizations have another reason to worry about the spread of this "beastly" behavior in today's workplaces: It has a negative effect on employees, which can, in turn, affect their bottom line. The current research adds to the growing body of evidence that experiencing incivility can negatively affect employees in a variety of different ways (e.g., Cortina et al., 2001; Pearson et al., 2001; Pearson & Porath, 2005). Future research should continue with the trend of the current study by focusing on work-related outcomes to be able to "sell" the idea that incivility hurts organizations. Of course, incivility hurts individuals as well, and future research should also focus on psychological and health-related outcomes.

Another reason organizations should worry about incivility is that it can escalate into more intense forms of interpersonal mistreatment such as aggression and physical violence (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). This research provides some preliminary empirical evidence for this by showing that targets of incivility, do, in fact, reciprocate. Future research should be done to lend support to the claim that such reciprocation can, in fact, become more intense. However, given that the prevalence of workplace violence is relatively low (e.g., Schat, Frone, & Kelloway, 2005), it is worth exploring the extent to which, and the reasons why, the incivility spiral may or may not occur. Following from this, most acts of incivility may not escalate to more intense forms of mistreatment, and future research should explore why this may be the case.[5]

Once organizations become convinced that maintaining civility in their workplaces is a goal worth achieving, the next question becomes, How do they do this? Training is one answer and organizations have implemented innovative training programs to promote healthy interpersonal climates that include theater productions that illustrate the negative effects of mistreatment and small-group exercises that promote discussion about individuals' different perspectives on what constitutes unfair treatment (Dingfelder, 2006). The results of the current research can be used in designing and implementing such training efforts. For example, one highlight of the results shows that individuals may respond differently to the experience of incivility—both emotionally and cognitively. Such knowledge should be disseminated to employees as part of an organization's larger "respectful climate" training, as a way of promoting a climate in which workers' individual differences are understood and appreciated. Realistically, however, training may not always be successful, especially for certain individuals—for example, those with a "hot temperament" (Andersson & Pearson, 1999, p. 464). Future research that compares civility training outcomes among personality types and temperaments could be very insightful.

Limitations

No research is without its limitations. The cross-sectional nature of the data used in this study prevents the inference of causal relationships among the study variables. In the context of our mediation model, this would mean that we cannot conclude that incivility characteristics (predictors) cause appraisal/emotional reactions (mediators) and that these reactions subsequently cause work-related outcomes. Although this predictor–mediator–outcome causal sequence may be implied when conducting mediation analyses, there are criteria for establishing causality (i.e., establishing temporal precedence, ruling out extraneous variables; Cook & Campbell, 1979) that cannot be met with one cross-sectional study. Nevertheless, this research provides a useful theoretical framework for future researchers interested in investigating workplace incivility (or other forms of workplace mistreatment) via a longitudinal method. In addition, common method variance is often raised as a concern when using survey methodology. However, it has recently been suggested that such a concern is simply an "urban legend" because evidence for inflated correlations that ostensibly result from using a single survey is sparse (Spector, 2006). Indeed, several of the correlations in the current study, which had adequate power to detect even correlations of small effect size, were nonsignificant. Another potential limitation of the current study is the decision to control for both job stress and negative affectivity in all analyses. The potential concern here would be that this is statistically overcontrolling and is thus potentially masking significant relationships. We would argue that, given the exploratory nature of the current research, it would be worse to expose potentially spurious relationships than to mask significant ones; thus, we erred on the side of caution in choosing control variables. A specific concern relates to controlling (or overcontrolling) for job stress in the analyses that predicted job outcomes. Given that job stress is related to the experience of incivility, it could be argued that factoring out job stress here would be factoring out a potentially meaningful portion of the variance. However, to not control for job stress here would potentially expose spurious relationships as it could not be factored out that these significant relationships might be due to general job stress caused by other factors besides the experience of incivility. Thus, in the end, taking the conservative route seems justified.

One final limitation of our study has to do with potential nonresponse bias. We did find that our sample of nonrespondents was significantly younger compared with our sample of respondents. This may be due to the fact that younger participants perhaps felt that they did not have enough work experience to complete a work-related survey. Whatever the reason for nonresponse, future research should determine whether younger individuals' experiences and reactions to incivility are quantitatively or qualitatively different from those of older individuals.

Conclusions

Despite these limitations, this research is an important step forward for workplace incivility research. This study represents an exploratory first glance that illuminates the importance of incivility targets' psychological reactions. Still a nascent area, much more needs to be done to fully appreciate and understand the complexities of this widespread and menacing workplace phenomenon. It is our hope that this current research not only answered questions, but also, perhaps more important, inspired new ones.

[5] We thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

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